UKRAINIAN IDENTITY 20 YEARS AFTER INDEPENDENCE

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[Panel 1]

JAN TECHAU: Thanks for joining us again here at Carnegie Europe for the second part of what is our eastern neighbourhood offensive this fall. We had a big and fascinating event here last week on Belarus, where Commissioner Füle was giving a very strong and forceful sign of solidarity with a civil society in their country, which was very well received and it created a very special atmosphere here.

We’re now today focusing on Ukraine and thereby adding focus to one of the countries of the region that has been much in the news over the last few months, lots of breaking news, lots of spectacular developments that all of us have followed very closely. All of those things, and sometimes the extent to which we didn’t understand them, made us ask questions that go beyond the daily here and now, the politics of it all.

We were wondering whether it might make sense, actually, to look at Ukraine from a perspective of identity, something that goes deeper, something that might be able to explain a couple of things that are not so visible on the surface but might lead to answers that we won’t be able to just squeeze out of the news as they are. We try to also, by focusing on some of the deeper issues, to prevent Ukraine fatigue, news fatigue, by looking a bit deeper. I hope that this will be an instructive kind of exercise here for all of you.

We have for this purpose two speakers who are powerhouses and strong players in this field. To my right is Gunnar Wiegand; he’s the Director for Russia, the Eastern Partnership and Central Asia at the External Action Service. He has been a follower of the region for quite some time. I remember hosting Mr Wiegand as a speaker in my previous duty in Berlin, the think-tank of the German Council on Foreign Relations, and he gave us a rundown of Russian politics that left most of the people in the room with a sense of awe. This is a great thing that we can have him here today to give us also on this related issue his version of what to think about that country, really.

Then, on the other hand, as a commentator, we have the head of the EU Ukraine Civic Experts Council, which is basically a network of think-tanks and of civil society institutes that do two things, that analyse the situation on the ground, but also give advice to the government without being dependent on it, which is a rare mix and quite a unique kind of creature. He will give us the Ukrainian perspective from the other side of the aisle.

Gunnar Wiegand needs to leave us pretty much at 2:10 or 2:15 sharp, so without much further ado we’ll just give the floor to him, followed by the comments and then, if we do have the time, followed by questions and, hopefully, answers from the audience. Thank you very much for coming. Mr Wiegand.

GUNNAR WIEGAND: Thank you, Jan Techau. I will do something that I normally never do, which means I will read out a statement to you. Why do I do this? Because, of course, I wasn’t invited to address you, but Commissioner Füle was invited to address you. I just spoke to him five minutes ago; he’s on his way to Kyiv, which is a good excuse for why he couldn’t be here. He sends his very best regards and he tries to make his best so that we will have a successful summit in a week’s time.

If you allow me, therefore, I will deliver his speech, exactly what he would have told you, trying to give an EU perspective on the question for which you have a whole seminar, on the Ukrainian identity 20 years after independence.
Today we are looking beyond our daily business. The answers to the questions we pose will help shape Ukraine’s future. This vision of the future will be the key to unlock the problems that we face at present. National identity is, of course, important. As the experience in Europe has shown over the last 20 years, seeking a national identity can bring benefits in terms of reform, in terms of transformation, but it can also bring conflicts, repression and stagnation.

The focus today on Ukrainian identity will allow us to look at the impact that this identity could have on the future direction of the country. Identity encompasses many things, the way Ukrainians see themselves and their country, but also the way we on the outside perceive the aspirations of Ukrainians and the direction which the country and citizens wish to follow.

Ukraine has also been a territory of great geo-strategic importance and sensitivity. For centuries, military, religious and ideological battles for influence have unfolded in front of Ukrainians, each has left its mark and its legacy; each family and each individual will have their own view of Ukrainian history. These views of the past are one element in shaping the future, and it is the future which I, Štefan Füle, wish to focus on.

For a positive future, a spirit of reconciliation and the renewal of trust are essential. It is essential and especially true for those citizens who would assume responsibility in taking Ukraine forward, and we believe there are several of those citizens sitting here. Ultimately, it is for Ukrainians themselves to define the character they want for their country; it is for the Ukrainians themselves to determine the long-term goals they wish to attain; and it is for the Ukrainians themselves to set out the path of development which they wish to follow.

At the same time, the task of self-definition is not at all easy. Ukraine is a huge country, a diverse country, from sophisticated urban centres to remote rural areas, from traditional industries and crafts to high-tech research and productions, and, of course, a range of religious, cultural and ethnic traditions. It is a challenging environment in which to define common goals. The answer to the challenge must come from Ukrainians themselves. However, it is always useful, of course, to have an outside perspective.

I would like to address three main issues today; first, the political identity of Ukraine and the impact of the European choice on this identity; second, identity from the perspective of citizens. Here I will draw on the European Union’s experience of bringing together diverse identities. Finally, I will suggest some core themes on which Ukrainian national identity should be built, and the opportunities for achieving that.

Let me start with the political identity at the national level. Ukraine has already made some important policy choices in which we as its partners are implicated. The so-called European choice is the most important of these. Our active role in helping to see these choices fulfilled is based on solid and legal international undertakings.

At the recent Eastern Partnership summit in Warsaw, everyone was in agreement that economic reform requires political reform; the two must go hand in hand if they are to be sustainable. This means access to a plurality of information opined through free media. This means, also, the right to debate and discuss through freedom of assembly, and it means the right to express political positions through effective representative structures. All of these elements need protection through the rule of law.

Next week we will attend the EU-Ukraine summit in Kyiv. No one here needs to be told that there are problems in EU-Ukraine relations at this moment. Some tough messages will therefore be passed at the
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summit, probably in both ways. Let me be clear, about one thing we will start our dialogue, as we always do, with the recognition of Ukraine’s European choice and of its European ambitions.

Ukraine has chosen a policy of closer integration with the European Union. It has agreed that we should jointly set goals to build EU values and standards in Ukraine, across all the areas of our co-operation. We welcome this, but we also expect a lot from Ukraine as the pioneer of the Eastern Partnership and as a beacon to other neighbouring states.

I would like to highlight that today we are launching the DCFTA negotiations with Moldova and with Georgia and their respective prime ministers. The association agreement and the CFTA, which we are very close to completing, show that Ukraine has not been afraid to match this ambition and to be in a pole position.

Let there be no doubt - we wish to see this association agreement; it is truly a great prize for both sides. Its benefits go far beyond either actor. It can be a catalyst for modernisation and development. It can help Ukraine at last to fulfil its truly global, as opposed to regional, potential. It can help to establish an identity which is linked to positive values, to promise and to opportunity.

One of the frustrations with the current political climate in Ukraine is that it holds us back from legally finalising, signing and ratifying this agreement. This delays us from getting down to the business of launching a comprehensive regulatory approximation programme and supporting this with our own resources and expertise. We in the EU must move from a reactive to a proactive role to get this programme moving. There is no time to lose. Political association is the core identity of future EU-Ukraine relations. It is worth fighting for.

I would like to say a few words now about the identity from the perspective of citizens, which is likely to be the emphasis of your discussions later today. I want to stress the complexity of identity in today’s world. Here in the EU, we deal with this issue by agreeing that we are united in diversity, but based on a community of values and of norms. This is the only way forward for the EU. We also believe that, more than anything, shared values will bring closer relations with Ukraine and other countries of the Eastern Partnership.

Viewed from the outside, Ukraine is a highly diverse society. It is home for numerous and highly active minority groups with their own cultural and linguistic traditions. To respond to this, the EU must have more direct contact with Ukrainians, beyond Kyiv, and with minority populations across the country. I believe this is essential to improving our understanding of developments on the ground and to seeking a consensus on the role we should play as friends and partners.

We have already made good progress in establishing a physical presence and a focused support programme in Crimea. We should try to do more of this in more parts of Ukraine. We should also look to see how our policy instruments can be used to support this diversity with more impact. Ukrainians are interconnected also globally and have access to many different perspectives and many different ideas about how their country should develop. This is a vital factor to consider in any assessment of identity.

More and more young Ukrainians are studying abroad, others work abroad; for those who study in Ukraine, for example in European studies and other multidisciplinary courses which the EU has supported, I trust that Ukraine can enhance these opportunities by guaranteeing the protection of autonomy and the promotion of quality in higher education.
I've been talking at the individual level, but the state can also be an active and positive force on the international stage, to enhance its profile and to build the Ukrainian identity. Just look at Ukraine’s positive role in global peacekeeping and, closer to home, in relation to conflicts or disputes such as those in Transnistria and Georgia. This is an important source of support for the EU and is highly valued.

Now, what are the common goals which Ukraine can unite around while respecting its own diversity? I believe that at this point in its evolution, Ukraine should focus on three aspects of its identity; first is a state based on values; second is a state based on the rule of law; and third is a state which defines its own long-term goals in a sovereign manner certainly, but does so with the active support and input of its citizens. Focusing on these issues will help to open the way to fulfilling Ukraine’s potential.

We cannot escape the fact that Ukraine’s international identity suffers at present from some very serious image problems. It is a tragedy that a country with Ukraine’s human and physical resources should be rated as one of the worst business and investment locations in the world, ranked 152nd out of 182 countries in the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, as just published.

Frankly, I would expect more outrage, or at least curiosity, inside Ukraine, in Ukraine’s own debate, when this is reported year after year. I’m disappointed at the lack of progress to tackle the systemic problems with both Ukrainian and foreign investors are facing. There must be more focus on implementing the reforms which have already been promised so far. Only this will provide new opportunities for the many rather than just for the few, the well connected.

I also regret that the benefits of political association and economic integration with the EU are invisible behind the fog of controversy and criticism surrounding politically motivated justice in Ukraine. This issue has to be addressed; it is not about personalities but about processes. Fundamentally, it is a test of whether Ukraine has the identity of a state where the rule of law is observed.

Next year, the year 2012, will bring hundreds of thousands of visitors to Ukraine and will open Ukraine up to hundreds of millions of television spectators. Many will discover this country for the first time and they will draw their own conclusions as to what kind of a place it is. This will certainly have an indirect impact on EU policy and its importance should not be ignored, the same thing we say to Azerbaijan – Eurovision Song Contest.

If the right lessons are drawn from today’s situation, I think this could still be a positive experience which will serve Ukraine’s development, and I hope for a very successful tournament. I often say that we are living in a unique moment of opportunity for Ukraine; I say it because it is true. Next week’s summit will show very clearly that the long-term goal of association remains unchanged, but we need rapid changes now to bring this to reality.

Core reforms of criminal justice, the judiciary and the constitution need to be driven forward, with more transparency and more public involvement. Defenders of human rights and fundamental freedoms need to be brought into the policy-making process, and citizens, as much as possible. Economic governance needs a systemic overhaul, covering the management of public finance and, of course, also the framework for business and investment in Ukraine, including, notably, taxation monopolies, customs and intellectual property.

Opposition figures, whose prosecutions were politically motivated and flawed, should be released and free to resume their political activity. Parliamentary elections need to meet international standards, not just in terms of voting, but also with regard to media freedom and freedom of assembly. We are pleased
that some cross-party consensus could be found in recent changes to electoral legislation, even if the recommendations of the Venice Commission are not fully addressed. This momentum must be built on.

Mr Chairman, working towards a shared identity means bridging gaps between rich and poor, town and country, between one culture and the other. It also means reconciliation led by examples at the top, and the consensus on the right strategic path to take and the best values to share. Ukraine’s friends are ready to help, but we need clarity first - those of you in the room who are Ukrainians, who are in the lead in this. Thank you.

JAN TECHAU: Thank you very much, Mr Wiegand. I very much hear the sound of the Commissioner speaking, as he spoke last week when he addressed the Belarusians here in the room. It’s great to hear that he sends us this message of confidence.

I would like to welcome, via our phone conferencing system, our colleagues in Washington who, I think, have joined us in the meantime. Is there a sign of life over there in Washington? Well, that’s not exactly a sign of life, but we stay confident that they will join us at some point. I will now hand over the floor to Mr Oleh Rybachuk, who will give us, I think, his version of things. Then, maybe one question or two before I think you have to head out, Mr Rybachuk.

MYKOLA RYBACHUK: Thank you, Mr Chairman. First of all, I’m really impressed by the speech, because it’s not a bureaucratic, typical, carefully worded statement, but you can feel the person who was speaking, and we actually do know Mr Füle for that quality, where it’s not only niceties you can expect from the person. I guess Ukrainian journalists who are present here will get today already the words of his statement and it will be publicly welcomed in Ukraine.

I am positively surprised by the issue we are discussing today, because you can imagine how many times I, myself, many colleagues of ours, have been talking recently about the summit, about what’s happening in my country, about perspective. Just three days ago I came from Berlin where we were discussing with ex-Commissar for Enlargement, Mr Verheugen - he was my panellist, my vis-à-vis on those discussions - and the issue was Ukraine-EU political association, pros and contras.

You can imagine how heated this debate was there, and the room was also full – there were maybe more than 100 people participating there. For me, it means that this is the moment when people would like, really, to understand each other better, because the irritations are coming from European capitals and this is the most debated issue today on Ukrainian internet news, on social networks, on you-name-it, amongst people in the street.

When I hear about identity, I have my own representative case; I have a grandson who is four years old and his father is from Donetsk, and Donetsk is known as the city which is represented today at the highest hierarchy of Ukrainian government. People from Donetsk are known to be tough, good implementers, maybe not best; outspoken personalities. This guy comes to my house on weekends and he takes pleasure in occupying my favourite place and showing that he’s the boss, so I ask him, who are you? You must really be somebody from Donetsk, a Donetsker; and he objects: no, no, I am Ukrainian – he’s four years old.

I say, no, you’re not Ukrainian; Ukrainians do not behave the way you behave. He takes a pause and he says, well, then I’m Donetsk and Ukrainian; so probably this is something close to the issue which we are discussing today. That generation of people couldn’t understand that being assertive is not so good. At the same time, he understands that he is Ukrainian and he has no doubt that he’s Ukrainian.
Coming closer to what we’re discussing today, the major problem in the country today is not people actually lacking understanding of identity or of what they would like to live in, what kind of values they would like to share. Probably every Ukrainian, from all parts of the country, feels that there is no justice in the country, that you may not find justice in any court, that you are helpless in front of government, of bureaucracy, of others taking over your business. They clearly understand that this is something which you can find only in European countries; you cannot find this in Eurasia, where we are so warmly welcomed and persistently welcomed, not in Russia, not in Belarus, not in Kazakhstan.

Every common Ukrainian understands that whatever, we respect our past history or culture or tradition. People would like to have the possibility to get their children educated properly, to be sure about their future. The fact that Ukrainians are very worried about the future shows how vulnerable they feel themselves, how they don’t see political leadership and they don’t see their state, their government, as something which comforts them. Rather, I would say, the opposite: they feel threat coming from government, threat coming from politicians, no trust in politicians, and no chance to be treated fairly.

Therefore, if you would ask, overall, Ukrainians the question: where would you like to live, in what kind of country, in what kind of system, with what standards, no doubt you will hear about European Choice. Does it mean that all Ukrainians understand what it actually means in terms of efforts, standards? I don’t think so. Ukrainians probably believe that Europe is clearly better: better education, better living standards, better salaries, working opportunities, better pensions... everything is better; roads, lifestyle, police is much better; they all understand that.

It’s interesting that when they are being asked, for example, about economy, they live under the stereotype that we are not wanted here economically, that probably Eurasian market could give us better opportunities, that the products which we produce have better chances to be sold in those markets. That is the result of the informational space we are living in, and this must be understood, not only because the best and independent-thinking Ukrainians have been physically destroyed for years and years... It’s like negative selection.

The last massive, massive campaign where best Ukrainians have been put into prison and shot just took place in the last century, and it was not a one-period event, it was an event which was repeated many times. Therefore, when you have dozens of millions of best-minded people, independent-minded people, destroyed, you can probably understand that there is a certain price to pay for that.

Only nowadays, 20 years after we got independence, that generation which is represented also by some speakers here, doesn’t have that maybe background horror of just being active, being independent, being able to criticise, being able to take responsibility. Ukrainians, actually, were never, in the last 400 years of history, electing their leaders. Those leaders have been actually imported into Ukraine, therefore Ukrainians did not feel, and still, I guess, do not feel responsibility for those who they elect.

They are shifting responsibility: we elect you and now you have to deliver. That is the result of probably the biggest disappointment which is in the air today, where we have more than 200 parties, and those who have the highest possibility to get into next parliament are not trusted. Maybe more than 30% of Ukrainians are demanding or expecting a totally new quality of politics. They can describe to you what kind of politics or politicians they would like to have, but they cannot find it yet as a proposal.

There is this market: if there is a demand, there would be supply. What Ukrainian politicians try to achieve – they do sociology, they know what people want, and they try to imitate this process. Here, again, Ukrainians have good memory; they’ve been so disappointed by the event of 2005, which is called the Orange Revolution, because they trusted those leaders very much – I mean Yushchenko and
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Tymoshenko – therefore, now, if you’re just speaking the right words, very pathetically [sic], very convincingly, it is not enough. You have to get confidence back, you have to prove that you have people, that you are not dependent on big, big money guys, because big money guys are giving you money not to change the things but to leave things as they are, and Ukrainians really want those changes.

Therefore, the biggest challenge is restoration of confidence among people, and probably, unlike Georgia – I’m always repeating that – you cannot expect reforms in Ukraine coming from the top or initiated by political leaders or by political elites. They must be first understood, required and demanded by grassroots. This is where we now mostly concentrate.

This is why we need, and this why I like so much what Mr Füle emphasised, we need next programme with European Union, we need this free trade agreement and political association where we can explain to every Ukrainian what does it actually mean, for business, for people, for journalists, for students, for everybody, because that is the document which was prepared or cooked for a number of years – I guess it took five years or even more – of different negotiations.

We would very much like the document to be fixed, meaning initialled, because... not signed; many people confuse that in Ukraine - signing an agreement and just fixing the agreement the way it is. I would like to wish Mr Füle a successful trip in my country today. I am looking into future with full understanding; there is no easy way, there is no short way, but if you ask me what most Ukrainians would like to live in, in what kind of future they choose, it is clear; this is the future of the countries which join the European Union. Understanding of that is major motivation for so many Ukrainians to be much more responsible when they go to the next election.

The Ukrainian event is when somebody doesn’t deliver, you don’t get him elected. Unlike many other post-Soviet countries, it’s only through election that we change political leadership. This gives us the chance to function better.

JAN TECHAU: Thank you very much. I would like to ask one question to Mr Wiegand before we lose him, actually. Commissioner Füle has said that ultimately the answer to the identity issue in the Ukraine has to come from the Ukrainians themselves, but at the same time he also offered a couple of recommendations to them as to how they could possibly build it or around what larger themes they could build it.

From your experience in this business over the last 20 years or so, watching the region and looking at the conditions on the ground, to what extent can outside players provide help? To what extent are those recommendations useful, or is really a 100% job that the Ukrainians have to do themselves?

GUNNAR WIEGAND: It’s certainly both. There are pull-and-push factors and some of them need to be done inside the society and others come from the outside, and what this speech, I think, tries to clarify, is that it is not for the EU to do the job of reforms in Ukraine, it is not under pressure of the EU. It must be a societal choice, must be a citizens’ choice to go for it.

To take the necessary steps, you can be a convincing associated partner, and, particularly, you can be harbouring your ambitions to become a member state of the European Union only, if that societal choice is made. If we have to have long arguments over every single possible reform law, and if we have differences of opinion about what an independent judiciary means, then it means that that choice hasn't been made, that it is just a rhetorical choice.
JAN TECHAU: You might have two or three more minutes, because I also have a question to Oleh. You told this great story about the four-year-old, and then you said in the very end that rebuilding confidence is key. This young fellow sounded very confident, from the little anecdote that you were telling.

My question is, looking at the generational gap, obviously we do have an identity issue now, but when you look at the confidence of the little ones, is it only a matter of time...? Do we really have to worry about all of this? Isn’t this just a function of time passing, with the younger generation embracing these things a lot more naturally, and all of our efforts here really adding only footnotes to it all, or is this too little?

OLEH RYBACHUK: We have a situation where this fame was... as... I started my career in independent... the Ukraine from working in the Central Bank and in the banking sectors where the known phrase that time is money is actually literally present here. The time of delays, the time of uncertainties, the time of backward tendencies have a huge price, and if in the last century it was not so sharply evident. What is happening in 21st century, countries which are wasting that time pay much more than it used to be before.

You’ve been asking about outside factors, but there are also negative outside factors. Ukraine Assembly [?] is under enormous informational campaign not to join the EU, from other neighbours who believe that the real chances for us lie in a different union, Eurasian union, and we are all aware of that.

The price of countries not making decisions is too high. The young people, on the one hand, are of a different nature, but on the other hand, they are very impatient. They would like to see perspective; if they don’t see perspective, they’re looking for [inaudible]. This is, actually, the biggest challenge for the country, that it’s losing its brains.

Best brains, whilst western educated, open-minded, independent, if they cannot realise themselves their ambitions in the country, they either lose interest and just close or they leave the country. Therefore, I believe that this is the price of indecision, the price of delay, the price of putting off immediate reforms is getting much higher than it used to be even ten years ago.

JAN TECHAU: This was the very brief tour de force, really. It’s now quarter-past; we will move into the next panel. If I were to sum this up, I think the point is we are at a point where it’s decision time for Ukrainians. They have to make the decisions themselves and time is not an option for them, it’s urgent, it’s pressing. They have to make the decisions now, both for themselves and also for the partners they seem to be working with on these things.

If this is not a great opener for a conference on this issue, then I don’t know what is. Thank you very much for giving us your insights here. Thanks to Commissioner Füle for being represented here, but, also, thanks for your time. We’ll shift the panel around after a one-and-a-half-minute break, and then we’ll move on. Thank you very much.

OLGA SHUMYLO-TAPIOLA: Dear participants, good afternoon. We’ll start the next panel; I think we just had a very good start with Mr Wiegand and Mr Rybachuk. My name is Olga Shumylo-Tapiola; I am a visiting scholar at Carnegie Europe, and I would like to welcome you again at our office.

The event, when we were thinking about that, came into a very difficult moment when the European Union and Ukraine started having some problems. We thought, what would we like to bring to Brussels? We would like to bring a bit more of real Ukraine to Brussels, to talk a little bit about how we’ve walked these 20 years since gaining independence in 1991.
Also, we wanted to talk a little bit about how Ukrainians and those who live in Ukraine feel about their country, where they want this country to go, and, also, to see whether they can unite over language or culture, or whether they can just find projects that would be uniting the country despite which language you speak or which part of Ukraine you come from.

We’ll have two expert panels today; the first panel will look into the past 20 years and today; and we have two distinguished speakers, Mykola Ryabchuk and Olena Betlii, who I will present later, from Ukraine. We’ll have Pirkka Tapiola from the European External Action Service. I would like to also welcome our colleagues from Washington who I heard actually joined us. Matthew, can you hear us?

MATTHEW ROJANSKY: Yes, Olga, we can hear you. It’s a little bit faint, but we’re working on that, so if you guys can speak...

OLGA SHUMYLO-TAPIOLA: I hope it will be fixed soon, but welcome and thank you for joining us. I would like to also thank our partner from Kyiv, Pact Ukraine, and the UNITER initiative that, basically, made this event possible.

We look at the 20 years of Ukraine, as I said, that the country finds itself moving in a certain direction, but still the direction, for many people in Ukraine, seems unclear. I would like to suggest that we will move straight to Mykola to talk about how we’ve walked these 20 years, whether Ukrainians see the direction that they want their country to go, whether they understand where the country is or how it should develop, and is there any national identity for Ukrainians. Please...

MYKOLA RYABCHUK: Thank you, everybody. My very short answer would be, yes and no. Ukraine within the 20 years predictably strengthened Ukrainian national identity, but at the same time something unexpected happened, primarily that the alternative type of national identity emerged, which ultimately may result in emergence of two nations within one territory, which, as you know from the example of Ulster, may be a very, very dangerous case.

In more detail, from my professional observations, I’ve noticed that in international media Ukraine is very often presented as a country consisting of two parts; one part is defined as nationalistic west and the other part is defined as pro-Russian east. It’s a kind of journalist cliché which has very, very broad currency everywhere.

It distorts reality, of course, and what is the most dangerous is this primitive simplified formula that binary opposition is created of two things which are actually not binary opposed, because if you prefer to speak about pro-Russian east, probably you should oppose it to pro-European west. If you speak about one kind of nationalist in the west, probably you should look for another type of nationalist in the east. In this case, it would be fair to create these kinds of oppositions, but not to oppose things which belong to different semantic fields, actually.

What it implies, why I insist that it’s very dangerous, because if you oppose nationalistic west versus pro-Russian east, you implicitly suggest that the west is probably maybe too nationalistic, it’s nationalistic obsessions there, maybe xenophobia, maybe whatnot. No sociological surveys prove it. The western part of the country is not more nationalistic than any other neighbouring country in Europe, from Austria to Poland and so on.

Moreover, it doesn’t mean that the east is more tolerant or pluralistic or less xenophobic. On the contrary, again sociological surveys prove that the east is less tolerant. There was a very nice study, for example, from my colleague from Kharkiv who unexpectedly discovered that students from L’viv are
much, much less anti-Semitic than students in Kharkiv, for example. It was a great surprise for the international audience; for me, it was no surprise.

Of course, such a conceptualisation of a country is very, very simplistic and distorts the reality, but at the same time, of course, as any stereotype, as any myth, it's not completely groundless. Of course, it reflects some reality, but what kind of reality? It reflects, of course, the ideas that, really, there are two different types of identity in Ukraine. Both of them could be called Ukrainian, but, of course, they are very different because they are based on different notions of Ukrainian past, of Ukrainian future; they refer to different symbols, and heroes and villains, etc.

One type is very simple, because it's a classical type of identity of olden Eastern Europe - everywhere, in Slovakia, in Croatia - since the 19th century and followed all these stages formulated by Miroslav Hroch: stage A, stage B and probably, ultimately stage C, which means the emergence of political nations. It's a typical East European nation which was created by intelligentsia, by intellectuals, and based on language, culture and some commitment to things cultural - a stateless nation.

The other identity is very difficult to define because it's a relatively new phenomenon. It emerged, actually, after independence. Its roots come, of course, from the previous period, not from some sort of national or nationalistic project but from sort of regionalism. Within the Soviet Union, obviously, in the Russian Empire there were some territorial sentiments, there was territorial loyalty, which did not contradict the overarching Russian or Soviet identity; it was just part of it.

Since independence, suddenly a huge group of people, colonisers or heirs of the colonies who moved to Ukraine since late 18th century and a huge number of aboriginals who got assimilated into the dominant imperial culture, who, of them, could be defined as a sort of Creole, without any prejudice, without any insult – it's just an aboriginal type of identity and Creole type of identity – and since independence, this Creole identity became a nation building [?] identity.

Suddenly they... they never fought for any independence, and all of today's rulers of Ukraine, all the elite who rule Ukraine, never participated in any national liberation struggle, but they inherited a rather rich country. Of course, they jumped at the opportunities, they took advantage of it, and today they dominate this country and they try to develop the new identity, which is also a Ukrainian identity. They have a very strong commitment to their country; they believe it's our country.

The only problem is the attitude of these two groups to each other, because both of them believe that it's my country and the other group should be marginalised and should accept my idea about the nation. This is really a profound contradiction and it's very difficult to solve this issue, because I would say that, of course, there is...

I have to explain this; of course, there is some correlation between these types of identity and language, culture, ethnicity, geographic location, but only correlations, it's not strictly defined. The main dividing line between these two groups is their attitudes towards the legacy of colonialism, either: was there any colonialism or not, should these wounds be cured and healed or not?

For aboriginals, it's obvious, it's clear; yes, we suffered from some injustice, our language was oppressed, culture marginalised, and still we are socially marginalised because we are less urbanised, less cultured, less educated, poorer; so it's a huge problem from the point of view of the aboriginal group.

From the dominant Creole group: of course, there was no colonialism, because anybody could be easily incorporated into the dominant culture, just to change identity and to make any career, either in the
Russian empire or in the Soviet empire, so as individuals, Ukrainians have not been discriminated against, they have been discriminated against only as a group. Today, of course, the Creole group insists on a lesser fair policy, no protectionism is needed for Ukrainian language and culture and so on and so on.

There is a very serious contradiction, though the main problem is not mutual understanding of languages, because both languages are mutually comprehensible, but attitude was a very serious problem. How is this problem solved? I have some recipes, but my time is over; I had ten minutes, so probably I’ll stop here, but maybe I’ll provide these recipes eventually.

OLGA SHUMYLO-TAPIOLA: Thank you, Mykola. I’m sorry – I didn’t mention at the beginning that he is one of the most prominent Ukrainian scholars on not only national identity but he’s well known both in Ukraine and also in the EU and the US. He’s basically shuttling between Kyiv and other capitals, and sharing his view on Ukraine. Thank you very much for your presentation.

I think we’ll move to Olena Betlii, who is a professor of history at the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy; it’s probably the only independent university, and perhaps the best university, in Ukraine. She’s also Director of the Centre for Polish and European Studies. Aside from that, she’s an expert on, also, national identity issues in the context of European integration. She is basically a combination of [inaudible] who teaches in new generations of Ukrainians in the best school, but, also, she’s trying to study the subject. The floor is yours.

OLENA BETLIII: Thank you, Olga, for introducing me, and good afternoon, dear colleagues. I think that I’ll give you probably quite a different perspective from what you’ve already heard from Mykola Ryabchuk.

Before starting, actually, I would like to make several introductory statements. While discussing the issue of Ukraine’s identity, I think that we have to keep in mind that we are talking about a young state, first of all, a late nation, and, finally, the result about uncompleted modernisation. Above that, current Ukraine’s nation is mostly rooted in the Soviet style of life, which is characterised by paternalistic sentiments of population and business.

Why that is like this - I think that, actually, that is because many people have spent the last 20 years in the same neighbourhood; it means that people just didn’t have the chance to look at what other styles of life, actually, the European style of life, looks like. It means how we can actually imagine ourselves to be whoever we want; but to become a state of a dream we should know not only how but, at least, what it actually means to be the European Union state and what it actually means to be European, not only imagine that, really, Europe is something better than what we have in Ukraine, that you can…

I think that we actually talk here mostly about mental maps. I think all of you are aware of this fact that we just talk about the images we have about some countries which we probably have never been to. As far as many Ukrainians have never been to any European member states, they still think that Europe is very clean, that Europe is very nice, that everything is perfect here, that Europe probably does not have any troubles and so on and so forth. I think that you know well that such a Europe does not exist at all.

Of course, actually, people are not aware of all this, of how very complicated this mechanism which we call the European Union is. People just are not aware of all this, what actually is Europeanisation or what is Bristolisation [?] and whatever.

Coming back to the issue about Ukraine’s identity, I would like to start also with a question which I’d like all of us to try to think about: what does it mean to talk about the collective identity in the 21st century? What collective national identity is a collective identity, social identity? What does it actually mean to talk about who is German? What does it mean to be a Belgian at the moment? Will Belgium probably just
I don’t know - collapse in some years or... I don’t know what the situation is. It’s just quite difficult; it’s a really complicated issue to talk about all these collective identities.

Another issue is, what does it mean to talk about a national identity today, remembering the 20th century experience? That experience included the creation of new nation states in the so-called New Europe after World War One, and in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. That experience also included Nazi Germany, we should not forget about that. That experience also included post-colonial uprisings after the Second World War, when the European empires finally collapsed and hundreds of states appeared on the lens, of former European colonies in Africa and Asia.

Do you actually remember how many people died during wars or conflicts which accompanied proclamations of independence? [Inaudible] we do not talk about this often, that in order to have a strong national identity, there we have to have victims, many victims. As you know, the Soviet Republics, including Ukraine, joined this period of sovereignty quite late, only in 1991. Luckily, it was a peaceful process for Ukraine, and I think that we all are proud of that.

Having this in mind, I call Ukraine a young state; the Ukrainians are a late nation. Ukraine as a state missed its train to a nation state station in the beginning of the 20th century, but it found it in the end of the century and tried to use it as if they were still at the beginning of the century.

It means Ukraine as a nation state has been constructed with a focus on ethnic component, I mean Ukrainian ethnicity, Ukrainian language, an appropriate gallery of heroes, with national history collinearity which emphasised all the stages of struggle for Ukrainian state and independence in the past.

Actually, this past feeds any history of national building. We just have to remember again the German case, as Wagner was just obsessed with finding what this German soul is, how to express it in his music and so on and so forth, but it was actually still the 19th century not the 21st or the end of the 20th century.

I think that this path for nation states is not the path for the nation state in the contemporary world. It cannot work with a post-industrial society which is characterised by multi-identities. In such a society, each of us picks up an identity which best suits us at the current moment. For example, if I ask you not who you are - and who you are is written in your ID documents: your name, your surname, your date of birth - but what if I ask you what are you, so what is your identity? It is likely that the answer will contain your occupation, like a diplomat, a politician, a journalist, or maybe someone else. If you ask me what I am, I will tell you a woman, first of all, and so on. We just pick up whatever suits us better at the moment.

Possibly, not least of all identities, the national identity is not likely to take a top position, at least in the contemporary world, and I think so. In other words, in peaceful times people do not think of their national identity. Actually, it is rather a consciousness of citizenship than a national identity that really matters in peaceful times in the contemporary world. If Ukraine had based its identity construction on the notion of citizenship rather than ethnic, as well as developed a civic nation, like America, for example, we would have had quite a different situation in the state by now.

Citizenship is an inclusive not exclusive category. In the case of Ukraine, it would include all those who live in the country despite one’s ethnic, religious, language, whatever else, background. Otherwise, by now too many people were excluded from the nation building process.
Finally, the language issue and all the struggles of the past have become one of the most politicised in several election campaigns. There is no win in the struggle for right Ukrainians; there are only losers, at least in my point of view.

Let me just give you one example; this is a short story of my own experience. I was born in Soviet Ukraine and I went to the Soviet kindergarten. Actually, that was a place where I learnt I am Ukrainian; I think that's the same story as with Mr Rybachuk's grandson. When I was four, I think I also was proud to be Ukrainian, and I knew actually, only, also during the Soviet time, that I am Ukrainian. I sang Ukrainian songs and danced Ukrainian dances; I had a Ukrainian traditional dress at home and I was proud of it. I remember all the girls who invited guests for wedding celebrations in Ukrainian traditional costume. Actually, I do not see them any more. I knew that it's good to be Ukrainian.

Then I went to school; we had to choose to which group I would go – I am with my parents – either to Russian-speaking or to Ukrainian-speaking. As far as there was only Russian language group out of four groups, and it was not quite popular; we chose the Russian one. It was actually a good choice; there were only 25 pupils in that group, and the Ukrainian usually had, at least in my school, about 32, 35 pupils. The result was quite bad, if we just compared the results in education.

However, in 1991 we all were very patriotic and switched into Ukrainian language without any troubles. Indeed, we did have a strong feeling of belonging to an independent state and we were proud of that. That was the time when we got new history textbooks in which we write about the Ukrainian revolution after the First World War and more truth about the Second World War. At the beginning of the 1990s it was quite certain what being a Ukrainian could mean and it was widely accepted. After school I entered university and focussed mostly on my studies. In 1999 I started working for a Czech advertising agency and in a year I went to Prague for a short internship. For the first time I felt what it meant to be the other.

People asked me where I am from and hearing my answer, from Ukraine, they usually told me, you do not look Ukrainian. That meant that I am a normal person, not a member of the mafia or penniless immigrant or whatever. Of course I didn't like that situation and it was always for me as if something was wrong with Ukraine in a Czech’s mental map.

In 2001 I had a research trip to Poland. I spent four months in Lublin studying on a new Polish/Ukrainian programme. During those months for the first time in my life I completely switched into Ukrainian language. In Poland I got the strong impression that if there is a state there should be only one spoken national language and it's impossible that you as a Ukrainian would speak Russian in Poland because those Polish guys do not like that. They don't like it even more than I probably don't like someone speak Russian in Ukraine or whatever. It was Polish pressure, I would say, as well.

It was 2005 when I went to the United States and what a surprise. I appeared to be in the bilingual state with many ethnic groups which perfectly felt themselves under one umbrella called America. I actually was surprised by this, that really two languages are spoken in the United States – English, of course, and Spanish. Don’t forget about that. They do not also discuss this issue.

Actually, I think the American model is one that Ukraine could study and implement. We often forget how huge Ukraine is, how many people with very different grounds live there. There are ruthless people, let’s say ruthless, who came to work in Ukraine from different parts of the former Soviet Union.
There are native people who remember very different stories from the recent past. I do not know how many mentalness [?] of Ukraine one can count within it but I guess that all diversities present in Ukraine could be managed only in a very sensitive, well thought way. Here we run into a real problem. There is no politician in Ukraine who’s ready for this challenge.

There are many individuals who dream of power but whose political culture is definitely on the civilised level. Their only aim seems to be a brutal battle with an enemy and actually they really like to use identity issues as a political tool.

Actually, this reminds me not of a Creole issue but more of caudillism in Latin America when actually we had not a political leader but someone who seems to be like a Caudillo who just promises everything and manages his, I don’t know, family in order to give it more power in the state.

However, actually, I do hope Ukraine will not follow the Latin American model, from a colony through dictatorship towards an institutional state. What I really hope, that people would finally realise that everything depends on them and not so much on the state, actually, and that probably they will find a new inspiration in the European model and that finally they will be able to come here to also probably participate in such events here and then just to bring this experience back home and to change everything what they can change within the Ukraine. Thank you very much for your attention.

OLGA SHUMYLO-TAPIOLA: Thank you, Olena, and thank you for sharing the personal experience because I basically started thinking about the whole national identity issue and questioning myself as Ukrainian when I moved here to Brussels. When I lived in Ukraine that was not really an issue, that we would discuss with friends, at work and, actually, when I was asked first time in London in 2004 as a student, who are you, and I said, I’m Ukrainian, I actually am not sure how proud I felt before the Orange Revolution. After the Orange Revolution it, of course, changed but the issues that we ask ourselves or the experiences that we have are quite similar perhaps when we come from a similar age.

I will now move to Pirkka who has been observing Ukraine for ten years and who was a Finnish diplomat and a person who worked for Fran Javier Solana and now for the External Action Service and who actually challenges me a lot on the issues of national identity in Ukraine but also the ways out, whether we can build a political nation in Ukraine instead of focussing on other issues. Tell us about that but also if you could tell us how do Europeans understand Ukraine. Do they understand the complexity? Do they know how to relate to us or is it just a grey zone which is somewhere between the EU and Russia which nobody can understand?

PIRKKA TAPIOLA: Thank you, Olga, very much and I think this is really a very important issue to discuss and I think that your last question on how do Europeans... well, how do people in the EU, because Europe is broader than the EU, understand Ukraine is a very important one and I have to say not very well. We are looking at Ukraine very often based on experiences of other transition countries.

I think that this is where some of the main fallacies come. Before I go on, I’ll just mention that since the EU naturally has no position on Ukraine’s national identity or identity, so I will make my comments to a large extent in a personal capacity as somebody who loves the country and has been working on it, really, for the last decade and hopes to continue working on it for a very, very long time.

Now, one of the things I deal with nowadays is democratic transition and looking at different countries and preconditions and I think that this is where identity and politics really come in in a very close way
and if you look at where transition has been successful, let’s just look at countries like Greece, Portugal, Spain, the Central European countries which joined the European Union in 2004/2007, it’s been the existence of a local vision and local ownership of this transition which has been important.

For Central Europe it was a return to Europe after having been dominated by an outside power which had not been welcome from the populations, for the southern European countries it had been the want for a constitutional democracy but these were all based on existing identities.

Ukraine is much more complex but this is where maybe some of the misunderstandings on the side of many people in Europe come from, that in a way there is an expectation that Ukraine will move and act and behave in the same way as those countries which did their transition processes beforehand and I think that that’s why sometimes we get a little bit too hung up on whether EU integration being pulled from the outside can be a motive for change. It wasn’t that for Central Europe either.

The outside perspective came after a lot of things had happened inside and countries had pulled together to start changing themselves. Moving from here, Ukraine is clearly seen as a state. Ukraine exists. It’s strongly unified and I do see a big change in that and that’s also to what Oleh Rybachuk said earlier – people do feel themselves Ukrainian but from an outsider’s viewpoint it’s still an identity based on an ID document, on a passport, but that’s already a very good point of departure. There’s nothing bad about that.

Then comes the issue which Mykola mentioned, the issue of division – East/West, Russian speaking/Ukrainian speaking. Imaginary or not, this is part of the Ukrainian political discourse and it’s an issue which complicates the way forward and, yes, the fact that you’ve had a party of the east and a part of the west coming out from elections shows a certain tendency which needs to be recognised as something there.

I think that one of Ukraine’s fundamental problems, and I really want to thank Olena for having mentioned that, Mykola as well, is that the narrative which in romantic terms maybe on building identity or nation-building, the narrative which has been used is quite often maybe outdated. We’re talking about the old-fashioned Wagnerian idea of building a nation state in a time where even in more modern societies, societies which have had a strong identity earlier, the identity of a nation state is already going away with immigration, with a number of other issues.

The US is a difficult example because the US is a country largely built on immigration and Ukraine has been there and the Ukrainians have been there but the reality is that if you look at Ukraine’s borders, the Ukrainian citizenry and their ancestors haven’t really existed within the borders of a single nation earlier and in that case 1991 in a way is the departure point in building a modern Ukraine.

Now, the modern Ukraine I believe as an observer can certainly be built and there’s a lot of basis for that but the fact that not enough maybe discussion has taken place on this has led to structural weaknesses, which I will return to in one or two minutes when I conclude. One of the weaknesses is that the discourse in Ukraine is very often, whether it was during the Orange Revolution, before, now is very often in negative terms.

I’ll use a couple of examples and then I’ll see how a new narrative could be built. One is the divisions in our society provide us with lots of difficulty. The second, we’re divided on language, which brings divided loyalties. Third, geopolitically we’re in an extremely difficult situation in the fault line between the east and the west.
Now, let’s try to rehash that narrative. We have many nationalities, many ethnicities, two major language groups. Now, this is a huge richness. We have a cultural richness which can be built on. We have a geographical position or situation – I won’t use the word geopolitical but geographical – which brings us into two areas where we can really build on that and we can put something there on where we can use this. Now, unfortunately I sometimes see that there’s this want, that EU please give us this, that and so on and a negative approach on Russia but, for instance, a positive Russia agenda would be extremely good. There’s a lot of elements on which to build a vision for a political nation. An ethnic nation Ukraine will not be. Modern Ukraine can not be an ethnic nation but a political nation is what matters. Populations alone can not take this from the grass roots up, there needs to be a bit of moderation and this is where civil society needs to come in. If you want accountability, you need to build a common vision of a political nation. It’s there to be had and the elements are there but turning the negative into the positive is the point of departure. Thank you.

OLGA SHUMYLO-TAPIOLA: Thank you very much, Pirkka. I think we will move to the discussion because I see that there are people whose eyes tell me that they would like to comment or ask questions, so I would like to open the floor both for comments and questions. I also would like to suggest that our Washington colleagues would be able to ask questions or participate in the discussions through the telephone.

If so far no questions, I would like to suggest that Mykola and Olena, they heard what Pirkka was saying about whether we should keep that phase and focus on building a political nation, which may be a feasible scenario but is it feasible in today’s Ukraine and how long may it take us to build this political nation and what are the problems on the way looking over the last 20 years and how society is still trying to unite around language or culture or history and reconcile.

MYKOLA RYABCHUK: Well, as I understand, political nation means that people are united primarily by constitutional civic rights and equal rights, a strong constitution and so on. It’s a very good idea and I fully agree, I fully support it, but also we should understand that political nation is just a condition for peaceful coexistence but not an ultimate solution. It’s just a mechanism that provides the best possible mechanism to solve different problems, conflicts and so on but it doesn’t solve them automatically is also the problem.

Any political nation, whether we like it or not, has some cultural and linguistic core, even America and whatever, there is something like the core and the relations between this core and all the other people are always a problem and a problem which should be negotiated permanently. Most European nations and Americans, of course, they have been proud of their institutions and of opportunities which are provided by this notion of political nations for coexistence of different ethnic groups and languages.

But at the same time we noticed today that this doesn’t solve all the problems automatically. Wherever a strong minority emerges, the voices from the majority are coming, demanding to restrain cultural and other rights of these minorities. We have this problem in some American states where a Spanish-speaking minority emerged and grew up numerically and now in these states legislations are changed and try to restrain the usage of Spanish and Spanish education and so on.

I believe that the same problems may emerge or even are emerging in Western Europe to the extent of immigration and so on. It’s not a panacea. I fully accept this concept and this idea but you should remember it’s only the beginning of the way, not the end point.
Secondly, of course I understand that people, especially in East Ukraine – and we have theoretical surveys which proves this – that they don’t care much about national identity, it’s located on the second or third place, because identity, number one, is regional or local or professional.

Of course I know this but at the same time, as long as we speak about nation-building, we cannot ignore this issue. You cannot be a nation without addressing the issue of national identity, this or that, and of course we cannot ignore the unsolved problem, unsolved relations between these different groups.

Moreover, we need also to remember what’s another issue, another problem, that the identity issue is not value-free, especially in the case of Ukraine. Both identities are related to two different projects in Ukraine and these projects are based on different values because historically Ukrainian ethnic or, as I put it, aboriginal identity evolved since the 19th Century in opposition to Russian because they were forced to do this because the Russian empire did not recognise Ukraine as a separate nation, so in order to emphasise their separateness, to decouple themselves from Russia, they had to stress their distinction and, of course, to identify themselves with some other symbolic centre in order to get allies, in order to get some symbolic power, and they found this in Europe.

From the very beginning this Ukraine nationality was pro-Western, not slightly liberal democratic but pro-Western, whatever it means. And vice versa, this Creole identity which became nation-building identity today in Ukraine, of course it was all the time pro-Russian, this is true. They did not separate themselves strongly and clearly from Russia because all of them to some extent belonged to this mythical Ruski Mir [?] and the West is the main other. What does it mean? It means also that all the Western values are not accepted. They are also perceived as alien, unfortunately. This is the main problem with all these identity issues.

OLGA SHUMYLO-TAPIOLA: Olena, would you have something to say?

OLENA BETLII: First of all, and I think I also mentioned this in my speech, that really political nation or let’s call it civic nation in terms of [unclear] at least, it’s the only solution, I think, for Ukraine and I think that it can be achieved in the future but how fast, I don’t know. Actually, it depends on the politicians.

When politicians stop using these identity issues in their political campaigns, then we can change the situation because you know what happened here. Actually during the Orange Revolution it was okay but after the Orange Revolution, what happened, that really – and we discussed this also yesterday – many people Russian-speaking Ukrainians were offended that they are not right Ukrainians, that they brought this which excludes people but in Ukraine the only chance is actually to talk about what includes us, what actually unites us and so on and so forth.

At the moment also the same is with Ukrainian history, that non-stop these textbooks are rewritten in a different way, that some heroes finally are in the textbooks, others are not there represented anymore and so on and so forth. I think that political life makes it worse. Hopefully they understand that it’s not the issue where they have actually to struggle and play with identities, in order if they, of course, want to build really strong society and a really strong state.

OLGA SHUMYLO-TAPIOLA: Well, I have a feeling that it’s kind of a chicken and egg problem because you say that the politicians should stop and that they may want to do something but what if we or you live in a country which is a country with politicians who actually enjoy this ride and they enjoy speculating
because, as Pirkka said, there is the East party and the West party and basically they have their constituencies which they keep growing, so perhaps a society change would be an answer.

I'm looking at numbers. I'll just read to you that people basically don't believe in their own power. Before the 2010 presidential elections about 85% of voters in Ukraine felt disenchanted and nearly 60% had little faith that the elections would bring any positive change. Then nearly 50% of Ukrainian voters believed that their participation in elections would have no impact on government policies.

Of course before the 2010 presidential elections the disenchainment was the Orange Revolution but how would these numbers change within these two years? How do you feel, even if we don't have the numbers just in front of us? I would say that 80% of Ukrainians still support independence according to recent studies of the Democratic Initiative Foundation, which means that people are still for the state of Ukraine but do they feel that they can change something? Do they feel that it's actually worth going and voting? Again, coming back to the discussion that we had yesterday, do we have to wait for the politicians to change or can we do something? Are Ukrainians ready to do that?

OLENA BETLII: Actually, I think that people are already quite mobilised now. There are different initiatives. People just try also to establish their own civic and NGOs on different issues. They really want to start probably a revolution in mind, let's call it like this, which really we do need.

I really hope that even in 2012 something will be changed, that society will take part in the next elections, will really focus on the quality of political parties but, really, what I would like and really what we need, we need this discussion about what it is, this political nation, and probably our intellectuals have to start it.

What's going on now, there is the Svoboda Party, for example, that they focus mostly on these narratives which is very connected with the Second World War experience and actually it's a bad start for their narrative because of course they want to make heroes from those who participated in Upam [?] Army but they really do forget that those guys also took part in the Holocaust and so on.

There are very many issues which are still not discussed openly and everything is very much connected with what was going on in the past in different parts of Ukraine. Probably if intellectuals could influence these kinds of discussions, it will be also good but really I do believe in people. That is what I am observing in social networking and so on, that people are more and more active in this.

Let's say just organising different groups, for example, we are Europeans. Also it was like just those who support these negotiations and those who do believe that a summit has to bring good results for Ukraine and so on. There's also such a group like Ukrainian Alternative which really tries to mobilise people around this issue of political nation and so on. There are examples.

OLGA SHUMYLO-TAPIOLA: Mykola, would you agree? Olena sounds very optimistic. No, no, that's a good thing. I have a bunch of negative studies on Ukraine that I was reading over the last months and one of them from Mr Yurmelayav [?], who unfortunately couldn't join us today, from the National Institute of Strategic Studies, a centre that is affiliated with him made a study which is called Ukrainian Character. It's a 40-page long report that basically dissects an ordinary Ukrainian and what the report said is that Ukrainians are rather individualistic, they like to talk to their family and friends and narrow circles.
Now with these new modern technologies they may go to Facebook. Basically it supports this very low trust in their own feeling. Would you be as optimistic as Olena that the future may be brighter or do you think that this Ukrainian character is something that will basically stop us from moving forward?

**MYKOLA RYABCHUK:** I rather agree with you, not with Olena, but you mentioned that this is a chicken and egg dilemma. I would reformat this as a vicious circle because in order to establish we call political nation or civic identity, overarching civic identity in Ukraine, of course we need some sort of compromise between different groups and we need some very strong institutions to provide the civic values, to assert them, and only in this case we can do this.

Moreover, in order to achieve some sort of compromise, we need open debate in society and we need some trust in institutions which are mediators, which can secure, which can enforce the achieved compromise, which is not the case in Ukraine, so a vicious circle emerges. In order to change the paradigm we need strong institutions, in order to have strong institutions we need some sort of compromise in society.

So far we have serious identity cleavages in Ukraine which do not coincide with ethnic or linguistic or cultural, I stress this once again. There is correlation but they do not coincide. We have a lot of examples from different areas.

We may find, for example, a lot of Russian-speaking people who are patriots of Ukraine and who have a very strong Ukrainian identity. For example, they had a lot of [unclear] in Central and East Ukraine who speak Ukrainian. Just as long as they live in the Ukrainian environment they maintain this habit but when they move to the city, of course they change the habit.

The cleavages of course are very harmful because, first of all, they lower social trust. They undermine social cohesion in the countries. They facilitate the survival of bad politicians because people tend to support our bad guys versus their bad guys. That’s the only reason why bad politicians survive in Ukraine and are not trashed in the elections.

Also, these cleavages make the country very vulnerable vis-à-vis external influences and migrations from Russia and of course they also support some sort of besieged consciousness and preclude or limit scope and agenda of any discussion on Ukraine and this case of Upam and so on is a very good example.

Personally I believe that the paradigm can be changed but it requires some extraordinary efforts and I believe that such an opportunity actually existed after the Orange Revolution. There was a very short period, a very short window of opportunity, when people suddenly had very high trust in institutions.

Opinion surveys within the first month after the Orange Revolution revealed very strong support for changes, for institutions and so on. If the proper policies had been implemented, of course the entire paradigm of Ukraine development could be changed. Regretfully it didn’t happen but it doesn’t mean that it cannot happen again. It just requires more time and more efforts. This is my answer.

**OLGA SHUMYLO-TAPIOLA:** Thank you. And the Orange Revolution was mentioned and I will open up to Q&A. I now have two, three hands. Just one question to Pirkka. You’re observing the Tunisian/Egyptian cases and it’s also the revolution and it’s brought by Facebook and other devices. How sustainable do you think it is in their case, very shortly on them but more in relation to Ukraine, is this optimism that Olena shared with us feasible?
PIRKKA TAPIOLA: Thank you. I think it depends very much on what comes out of the civil society and I'm firmly a believer in a political nation because I do not see that it is possible to build an ethnic nation in a very multi-ethnic country, so the political nation is then the only choice where you can go.

Now, looking at these revolutions or revolts which we've seen now, Tahrir Square, Kasbah in Tunisia and the Orange Revolution, and I've seen them and I was in Kiev during the Orange Revolution, one thing that struck me then was, again, that the scripting of the Orange Revolution, the narrative, was negative in a way. We do not want our vote to be stolen. Understandable.

We are shocked seeing the poisoned face of our presidential candidate but then after the political solution which was facilitated also by the outside partly, was found the accountability stopped. People did not go to the Square anymore and say, hey, guys, you're causing a mess here, we want to keep you accountable.

Yes, they went and voted and power changed hands but now, when you look at Tahrir Square and when you look at this, the agenda which has come out has been positive in that we want more freedom, we want more economic justice, we want more this and this and a willingness to keep accountable. Now a word on Facebook.

Somebody once said that Ukrainians, and some other people in the region, are good at complaining in their kitchens. I hope that Facebook does not become a virtual kitchen because I see that happening a little bit in our southern neighbours where younger people prefer to stay on virtual Facebook and social networking sites but don't go and get their hands dirty in politics. I was a bit worried about that when Olena said that it's the fault of our politicians.

Yes, Ukraine has a major problem in political party structures and internal accountability in political parties but politicians are there at the will of the people and so far there has been electoral democracy and one of the important things which should happen is that that accountability of politics comes as part of the political nation-building and then it's no longer the fault of the politicians for causing this division but then there comes a moment when the electorate should no longer accept when there are bigger things at hand, like what's a shared benefit, how do we get a better life, how do we get better education, how do we get those things where you then don't allow that to happen. I hope I answered your question. Thanks.

OLGA SHUMYLO-TAPIOLA: Thank you. Please, a microphone here and please present yourself.

[UNIDENTIFIED MALE]: Just one sentence. It was a very good point about people who do not accept agendas imposed upon them by politicians and the Orange Revolution was a very good example of this because they tried to impose this divisive agenda upon the people. People did not accept and only because of this the Orange Revolution won. That's a very good point.

NADIA TSOK: Nadia Tsok, Deputy Head of Ukrainian Mission to the European Union. I actually liked very much your analysis, Mr Ryabchuk. It's really a good analysis according to my understanding of the realities. You mentioned that you will then maybe provide your understanding, how to get out of this situation.
Transcript Not Checked Against Delivery

Just to explain, yes, we need to understand what a lot of people are thinking, like Madame Betliii, but it could work in some idealistic society, idealistic conditions where after your speech politicians will change their attitude, people will become better, kind, more understanding and everything will be solved and everybody will be together building out some kind of a very positive political nation.

The realities are so that we are different and some people just do not want to be nice and kind and understanding. So, do you have some other kind of answer to this situation? Thank you.

OLGA SHUMYLO-TAPIOLA: Thank you. I think we'll collect just a few questions.

IRINA SOMER: Thank you, Olga. My name is Irina Somer. I'm a Ukrainian journalist and I live here for, I guess, seven years. I do hope that you will not kill me if I will say that Europeans start to lose their own national identities. What do I mean?

Take a look, for example, at Belgium. I have a neighbour, he's pure Belgian, who is married with both. I have a Belgian, his father was an Italian immigrant here. He lives here. He was born here and he speaks perfect French but he is married to a Moldavian girl. Who are they? It's like this in every country.

Take a look at Germany, France, Italy – the same picture. They just became European and their own nationality is only on their ID and on their passport. I have a friend who's Ukrainian but she is Belgian and right now Ukrainians looking for their own unique identity, maybe it's time to look for a European identity. Thank you.

OLGA SHUMYLO-TAPIOLA: Thank you for your comment, Irina.

[UNIDENTIFIED MALE]: I'm [unclear] of the University of Antwerp. A question largely out of ignorance but I think that can be done. With respect to Ukraine we have a sort of perception here, those who don't know it directly, that this is a large country with two blocks. You mentioned it is much more complex than that.

My question as an economist would be between these so-called blocks, Russian and more Western-leaning, is there a large economic diversity or, rather, disparity? That's rather important, I think. That's one.

Second, you have the legacy certainly also of the Soviet regime in the economic field in two fields. One has to do with, let's say, the state enterprises. I should confess, I might have looked it up but I don't know much about what happened. Probably you went into privatisation.

Apparently, from what I read here in your text – it's quite depressing, this text – this has been done in a way that it was not a management buy-out but a management steal-out. Kleptocracy.

Second, with respect to agriculture, I always have thought that Ukraine has excellent soil, the very best in the world for agricultural production. You had certainly also the collectives under the Soviet system. What has been done about that? Probably privatisation in a way, I don't know. What is the situation broadly speaking of agriculture today? Perhaps a large question but economics are rather important, I think.
OLGA SHUMYLO-TAPIOLA: Olena, if you want to, you can answer that.

OLENA BETLII: Okay. To the first question, actually I don’t want people to be kinder, I want people to understand that they have to follow universal values which actually are sharing. There should be not like a country which is called Ukraine, there should be a state which is actually based on the rule of law. That is what really I want people to understand and that is actually what demands this revolution had in mind.

This Orange Revolution, really, it was the first actual step. This first step was that you cannot steal our vote and that is why we actually were in Moidan [?]. We wanted our vote to be important but then people just, again, started to rely on the state, that the state owes them everything, that the state actually has to organise their life and whatever else. They just don’t think that they are also responsible for their own future and they are responsible today for what will be tomorrow.

What’s going on with this Soviet style of life, the people still pretend, as it was in the Soviet Union, that if you pretend that you pay us, we pretend that we work. The same is nowadays, that we pretend the state exists. We pretend that there is a school where it is possible to get good education, that there is a hospital where you can go and actually be cured without money. We all know that nothing like this exists but we pretend and we really like the situation. That is actually what I do not like and actually I wrote about this in my articles.

I’m optimistic because I’m a historian and for me 20 years is not so much for building a good state and nation-building or whatever. Just think about Belgium in 1850. It was 20 years after it was an independent kingdom in the 19th Century. More and more people really realise that they have to change themselves first of all and then we can actually build a really good and strong state. That is actually what I want people to realise and not play so much with all these identities which really do not matter, they just make people angry. Politicians are still responsible for that.

Also, we do not have to forget that this identity issue is also played like this in European countries. Don’t forget about why, actually. The European Constitution was refused in France and so on and so forth. That’s why Le Pen’s party, for example, also had good results during the French elections and so on. This national identity within member states, you can actually feel it during all national elections in each European member state, I think.

Again, what was quite interesting in the European Union, coming back to Irina’s comment that also national identity is being lost in the European Union, I would suggest you to read these articles which are published in [unclear] Journal. There is a huge discussion this year what it means to be European, that the European identity is in crisis, that really what’s going on with the national identities.

I think what’s really going on now with this eurozone, it also shows you that probably at the moment there is a huge problem within the European Union, that it doesn’t have such a long-term perspective of how it will be developed in the future and also it is quite connected with all these identity issues.

As for the economic situation, I’m also not a specialist in this field but I think that the major difference between Eastern and Western Ukraine is that all the resources are actually in Eastern Ukraine and that is why so many people from western Ukraine go to work abroad, actually. They probably consist of this legal and illegal immigration from Ukraine. Not so much places were created for them in Western Ukraine and this is really a problem.
As to business, I think that also the main problem is that it’s corrupted and it’s criminalised somehow but there’s also this politics which is nowadays present in Ukraine after Yankovych became President.

As to agriculture, again there is a lack of normal long-term perspective, agricultural policy because the lands are just used nobody knows how and we really do not know for how long we’ll have this resource available for us. Mykola can probably explain it a bit better.

**MYKOLA RYABCHUK:** Okay. Well, I feel that your conclusion about dissolution or disappearance of national identity in Europe is too far-reaching.

**IRINA SOMER:** Take a look in 20 years. You’ll see.

**MYKOLA RYABCHUK:** Well, I can take a look at 2000 years and I see the same phenomenon everywhere, in all empires, including the Soviet Union. People moved here and there and they changed their identity because of resettlement, inter-marriages and so on and so on. Still, if you take a look at opinion surveys, you’ll find out that on the list of identities in any European country, European identity is somewhere at the bottom and national is at the top.

You cannot avoid this and wouldn’t avoid it in the foreseeable future. Of course there is some number of people who change and they are free to change but still on each territory you have nation state and you have, as I mentioned before, some cultural and linguistic core which is dominant on this territory. Well, we can have some fantasy about some remote future but I’m not going to live to 100 years or something like this. This is my answer to the problem, to the issue.

We should distinguish individual rights and group rights. Individually people are free to move, to choose their identity, to choose language, to choose whatever. I’m personally liberal and I’m more liberal than most people in Belgium or European Union because I support also free movement of people without visas and free employment. Yes, if you are liberals, if you support free market, you have to allow real competition on the labour market, not to restrain it. Let’s be sincere. That’s my point. It’s maybe a too radical point.

This is in regard to individual rights but we shouldn’t neglect some sort of group rights, especially if those are rights of the native people, people who used to live in this territory and suddenly they have to change their language and whatever, just because there are too many in Congress who impose upon them their own habits and so on.

This is what happens in the case of many Ukrainians or Crimean Tatars or Belarusians. Nobody would be happy if the Belarusian language disappeared, even though this can be a majority choice. We have to construct some mechanism for protection because there are some rights which cannot be provided individually. Those are group rights. You cannot get education in Belarusian if you don’t have enough people who needs the same, who can go to Belarusian schools, to go to the Belarusian university to get an education in Belarusian language. That’s obvious.

We have to distinguish these two issues – individual rights which should be as broad as possible and group rights which should be in some cases guaranteed, supported by some protectionist measures from the state and this is the issue of Ukraine. It’s not normal in Ukraine if you have, for example, a policeman
who insults a person who speaks Ukrainian and says, well, you shouldn't speak this cow language, speak human language to me. It was not told by any Russophobe, it was told by the official, that person who is a policeman and there are a lot of such cases. This case became prominent just because it was recorded by mobile phone and gone to the internet. It’s not that society which is tolerant enough.

This is now my answer to your question. I believe that my problem of Ukraine is lack of liberalism, of tolerance. We speak a lot of our democracy but we forget all the time that in the West we have not just democracy, we have liberal democracy. Democracy is about majority rights. Liberalism is about minority rights and this is the main problem.

My remedy for the Ukraine case is, of course, to develop more liberalism in the country, to make the country more liberal and only in this case we would have more tolerance in the country. It’s not Utopia. Well, it’s a very tough task because of course identity politics is injected in all Ukrainian issues, that’s true, and in Ukraine we have actually only two parts.

We don’t have parties in Ukraine, we have two political movements, one of them which is based and exploits Ukrainian identity, Ukrainian projects and the other one which exploits the so-called Creole or I don’t know how to call this, unionist identity. This makes them very peculiar. This supports very strange coalitions in Ukraine.

For example, how can you imagine political coalition between communists in Ukraine which are very pro-Russian and Party of Regions, part of huge oligarchs. They made a government coalition because both of them hate all this… well, maybe not hate but they despise these Ukrainian projects, the subregional projects, and this is the only reason why they support these monuments to Lenin in Donetsk and elsewhere or to Catherine the Great and so on, not because they love Lenin too much but just because for them Lenin is somebody who can counterbalance there all these Ukrainian symbols. They have not developed their own symbolism yet, so they still rely upon old Soviet symbols.

This is symbolic fighting, symbolic struggle in Ukraine. It’s like parades of Orangeists in Londonderry in Northern Ireland. Each group tries to impose upon the other its own dominance, its own symbols of our victory, our historical truth. It’s a way to nowhere, of course, and of course we have to explain this everywhere as much as possible.

I believe that a compromise is possible, as I mentioned before, but it should be based on some overarching political and civic identity. It’s possible, just because we have a very good example of Kiev. It’s not perfect. Kiev is also very problematic but if you take a look at various opinion surveys, you would find very interesting phenomena, that Kiev, which is a mostly Russian-speaking city outside on the street.

Opinion surveys say that one-third in Kiev speaks Ukrainian at home, one-third Russian and one-third speaks both languages. It’s a very interesting phenomenon in Ukraine, this bilingualism. What is interesting is that Kiev, which is mostly Russian-speaking outside, politically it behaves like West Ukraine. They support European integration, they support European Union membership and so on.

Moreover I happen to read very nice, very interesting research carried out by Stephen Shulman. He published a number of articles about Ukraine identity and he tried to figure out the strength of national identity. He employed three different notions.

He put three different questions. One was how proud are you to be a citizen of Ukraine, the second question was how often do you think of yourself as a citizen of Ukraine and the third question was which
one of the following groups do you consider yourself to belong to primarily? The list was citizen of Ukraine, inhabitant of the region, inhabitant of the village and something else.

What is interesting is that in Kiev even more people considered themselves to be proud citizens of Ukraine than in West Ukraine, which is believed to be very nationalistic and so on. Moreover, in Kiev 67% refer to themselves primarily as citizens of Ukraine. In West Ukraine the figure was only 52%, in Central Ukraine 53%, in the Crimea it was only 13%. That's a huge difference.

What does it mean? Why do I mention this case? Kiev is, of course, the only place in Ukraine where people feel the benefits of independence more than elsewhere. Kiev is a place where people really enjoy to live, in the capital of the independent state and to have a lot of benefits from this.

I can imagine the situation. If the people all over Ukraine feel the same benefits as people in Kiev have, they may change also their attitudes towards citizenship, towards all these national identity values.

OLGA SHUMMYLO-TAPIOLA: Thank you. Pirkka, a short comment.

PIRKKA TAPIOLA: Yes, I'll just make a short comment inspired by this discussion and Irina’s question, okay, provocation but, Irina, we're used to you provoking, so that's fine. Journalists are supposed to provoke. I’m a bit worried about the concept of exclusive identity and I agree with Mykola and the importance of liberalism.

When I talk about a political nation, I’m precisely talking about the idea of inclusiveness and acceptance. You know that I’m Finnish and I have a strong Finnish identity. I’m a European federalist personally. I have a very strong European identity. I am married to a Ukrainian and that is part of my identity as well.

None of these identities become weakened at any stage. They build on each other and they are layered. This leads me to think about the political nation from pretending to demanding and this is where I think this issue becomes crucial.

If we accept that we’re stuck on the same territory, we speak different languages, we come from different ethnic groups and I’m not going to change you and you’re not going to change me and if I try to change you forcibly, you will revolt and we will again go back into our corners. We will miss the point of where the common benefit, the shared benefit, is and we will not demand accountability and then the institutions won’t come either.

If you do start by accepting the fact that this is modern day Ukraine, this is what it looks like – Donetsk, Lviv, Luhansk – this is Ukraine and you accept who live in it and you accept the fact that you are stuck in the same boat and that you need to build something together to maximise your wellbeing, when you get to that point, then you have a political nation and that can be sustained.

OLGA SHUMMYLO-TAPIOLA: Thank you. I see that there are no questions now in the audience but what I would suggest is stay with us for next panel because we raised too many questions now and we probably came to a certain conclusion here, that there is a way forward for Ukraine and it’s not necessarily about being united in our own language, culture, history or any other issue rather than trying to find problems that are common for East and West and trying to find solutions.
My colleague Roland Kovats from Kiev will be moderating the next panel and will have very interesting speakers who are now working on projects that basically try to unite Ukraine. We now have a coffee break for 15 minutes and then stay with us for the next panel. Thank you.

[Panel 2]

ROLAND KOVATS: My name is Roland Kovats and I'm not a Ukrainian but I'm a Hungarian and I represent PACT which is an American organisation which runs a project funded by USAID from the American people. I would like to thank first Olga and Carnegie Europe for hosting us today and our Ukrainian colleagues, it's a real privilege for me and other colleagues to be here and talk to the crème de la crème of the Brussels community, those that are still interested in Ukraine. I thank you for still being interested in Ukraine because we know that it's not that easy these days, neither of us. I thought, when Oleh made his introduction, that he used the best example of his private life about what he feels on identities.

This next panel where we have, as you can see, very young, enthusiastic activists sitting at the table, we would like to focus on the future and perhaps not from the perspective of a 40-year-old but perhaps from the perspective of those who are representing a new generation, a new adult generation in Ukraine. We will hear from their perspective, the vision that they have for the nation, of their own identity and the country as such.

When I moved to Ukraine three years ago my objective was exactly to try to find those people who are still willing to make changes in that country. Three years ago it was a total decline of the orange feeling, the Orange Revolution, and everybody inside and outside of Ukraine were extremely disappointed on what’s going on in the country and actually what is not going on in the country.

Now we have, and I'm very proud to say that, really such activists who can come to Ukraine and tell you that things are still going in the right direction and these are these ladies and gentlemen here next to me.

Without much further ado, I would like to give the floor first to Svitlana Zalischuk who represents Centre UA, which is a very new NGO in the country which manages a number of social movements around the country.

Svitlana comes from the journalism community, hence she’s able to attract your attention, I’m very sure.

SVITLANA ZALISCHUK: Thank you, Roland, for this kind representation. From the very beginning I would like to make a disclaimer, that I’m a desperate optimist and I came here deliberately to make a message that everything is not that bad in Ukraine. Of course we, me personally, are together very upset at what is going on in Ukraine, I mean this backsliding of democracy, criminalisation of regime and political repression and censorship is definitely enforcement.

At the same time I would like to look at this problem from the citizen’s perspective, from the long-term perspective, if you wish, and I would like to touch at least two problems which analysis gives us some premise for moderate optimism which was actually touched on already by some of the previous panellists.
First of all I would like to talk about distrust to authorities, to the politicians. Of course it’s really bad because if authority has an ambition to realise reforms, especially if we are talking about painful reforms, it has to enjoy public support, otherwise there is no cred, there is no confidence that citizens would trust these reforms and would follow these reforms.

At the same time, what do we see in Ukrainian society? Society doesn’t buy anymore the populism. They demand new quality. They demand a new level of deliverance. They want to see something more, something behind the ideology. What is the solution for, I don’t know, energy security, for example, which results of prices for every payor of communal services? What about rules for business, for, I don’t know, corruption in universities? You name the problems. These new demands are emerging and we feel it in civil society.

The second problem which I would like to touch is the disappointment of so-called blue/orange ideologies. There are very important lessons we have learnt first after the Orange Revolution in 2005 and, secondly, after Yanukovych being elected two years ago.

What have we learnt? What we see is that our society deserved a right to be disappointed by two of these approaches, by two of these divisions and it means that people are united with confidence that it has to be something behind the ideology, some real strategy, their vision to solve our problems and both parts of Ukraine are united by those problems.

I would like to talk about the reflection of those problems in the society. Me personally, I'm an activist of several civic movements, several civic initiatives. I see every day how vibrant society is, mobilised by this disappointment and by this distrust and these problems really had a potential to unite us in the civil society.

We see that these new forms of communication, Facebook, horizontal initiatives, new forms of communications, it gives people some leverages to influence. Of course they don't solve all the problems we have but it gives some potential to voice up our problems, to be visible to politicians and to society.

Let me underline that since Yankovych came into power two years ago, it was the strongest factor of the mobilisation of civil society and in two years we can count a number of real civic initiatives, powerful initiatives, influential initiatives, civic initiatives which are not backed up with oligarchs or money of politicians and they united around a certain agenda which is important for them, for these civic initiatives, for these different civic groups vibrant in the civil society of Ukraine.

I would like to raise several examples, first of all probably the Stop Censorship initiative. One year ago, when we saw the first signs of censorship coming back on two national TV channels, dozens of journalists came up with public statements, that they are against these things and they established a civic movement called Stop Censorship.

It’s a horizontal initiative. They do not have a leader. It’s not financially supported by any other entities, neither internal Ukrainian nor international any donor, and they became a real influential power. Every politician reacts at their statements. Journalists take into account their statements. Experts rely on their facts. Diplomats and international media take their facts and publish it and disseminate the information and I can say that, once again, they did not solve all the problems.

They could not stop a real Stop Censorship at the main TV channels which are owned by the oligarchs. Definitely it’s an asymmetrical answer to the situation we face now in the media situation in Ukraine.
the same time it gives a certain, if you want, symbol or pattern for other civic movements, for other journalists living all around the country.

A second example which I would like to draw your attention to is a new citizen platform. New Citizen Partnership was established two years ago amongst different non-governmental organisations. Today they have around 51 NGOs and these are people from very different spheres.

You have a youth organisation, ecological organisation, analysts, sociologists, you name it, and these people came together without, I don’t know, a common budget, let’s say, but they are looking for synergy, they are looking for new leverages to influence the situation in Ukraine. Amongst a number of successful results/initiatives they launched, I would probably talk about the new adopted law on access to public information.

One year ago approximately they launched this campaign in favour of the law on access to public information, which was written by the civic experts, and it enjoyed massive support among hundreds of journalists and more than 100 of non-governmental organisations and every day our speaker of the Parliament, our President, our MPs were asked the questions about when this law will be adopted. Eventually it resulted in a new law which was signed by the President in January this year and we now have this new piece of really European legislation.

What I’m trying to say is that of course this law doesn’t give us at once the transparency of the whole government and all the authorities but my message is that people have a potential to influence if they are mobilised with energy, with common aim, with a will to change something in their countries.

Probably the last initiative which I would like to talk about is a future initiative, emerging initiative which is called Chessna [?]. In Ukrainian it means fair and it’s devoted to the next parliamentary elections which are going to take place in 2012. This idea was actually probably exported from Romania.

The coalition of NGOs developed civic criterias of what our MPs should be and this coalition of NGOs is going to screen first all MPs now incumbent in Parliament and then all candidates who have the will to become new parliamentarians and going to show the real faces of those people to broad society.

These are just several initiatives which I would like to show you, that there is a potential in civic society to be mobilised, to be united around certain problems which are probably not divided into blue and orange colours but they have something different which goes in line into European integration and European reforms.

My message is that there is a huge role of civil society in these changes we are looking for and this probably civic active nation is a very important identity which we have to develop because – and this is one of the New Citizen slogans – it’s not politicians who change the country, it’s citizens who can change the country.

I do believe that Ukraine in the post-Soviet region is one of the most vibrant and pro-European and democratic country and I’m sure it will proceed that way.

To conclude my speech, I would like to tell you this story. Yesterday we enjoyed the hospitality of [unclear], a scholar of Carnegie Centre, at her house and she has at her home two paintings. One painting is a blue and orange colour and I thought that it very symbolically represents this division of Ukraine, blue and orange.
Sometimes I’m painting as well, so I thought if you put orange over the blue you will have a brown colour and the brown colour, it immediately comes to my mind, is a symbol of chocolate and chocolate is Brussels and Brussels is the capital of European integration.

Probably this is the very core of our politer, if you want, the Ukrainian politer. I think this vibrancy, this civic activism we have in our country, in Ukraine, goes in line with European integration and this is the way we can change our country. Thank you.

ROLAND KOVATS: Thanks, Svitlana. I think we’ll come back to this colour issue a little later but we also have Dmytro Ostroushko with us representing the Gorshenin Institute which annually surveys and publishes its survey on youth in Ukraine and some other countries.

I took the liberty to peep at your folder. That's very interesting and I ask you to show that to the crowd too. It's a very interesting folder cover that you have. This reminds me of the 1980s/1970s when we were living behind the Iron Curtain and we were longing that kind of stuff, that it's now widespread and it's part of the identity of the youth, I believe, all over in those countries.

DMYTRO OSTROUSHKO: Thank you for these words. Well, actually, first of all I would like to thank Olga for inviting me here and Carnegie Endowment for this possibility to share here. Also I would like to apologise a little bit for maybe shifting from the subject that Svitlana was because I am going to talk more about the surveys that we make. That might be an interesting illustration for you to talk about this subject.

Well, I represent Gorshenin Institute which is a Ukrainian thinktank on the political and social issues and we make different surveys all the time, small surveys and bigger surveys, but every year we make an annual survey that we choose, depending on the subject that we consider topical for the year and every year it deals inevitably with the national identity, the identity of the Ukrainians with the different types of identities – civil, political, those types – and of course that gives us a certain image.

Last year we decided to make a survey that would be quite different from the regular surveys that we make. First of all the difference was in the fact that we decided to conduct that survey among only the younger generation, among students, and the other difference was that we conducted it not only in Ukraine but also in other countries in order to have the possibility to compare the values, the perception of life, the perception of the world, of the younger generation.

We took four countries – Ukraine, Poland, Russian and Kazakhstan – and that was a kind of cross-cultural study because in that way we tried to compare the countries that were quite different but also that had much in common. For example, Ukraine and Russia, very similar and have a shared history. Poland was quite close to Ukraine and that is the closest Western neighbour for Ukraine, had a Soviet past but now in the European Union, and Kazakhstan, the country that is the country that is situated much further to the east and it is neighbouring to some other influential centres such as China.

It was interesting for us to assess the younger generation. In our assumption we thought that the younger generation must be quite different from the previous generation or even from the same generation but maybe ten years older than the actual students. People that are 30 years old now, these are people that are making careers already, they have already a certain experience and of course they are quite different.
What is interesting about the students is that we have only 20 years of independence and these are the people that were born already or just before the independence or already after the independence and they grew up with a new understanding, a new belonging to a new country and of course their perception of life must be quite different from the perception of their parents.

Well, the survey showed us quite interesting things. For example, we saw that the basic values in these countries among the younger generation, these remained traditional. It's a kind of sober conservatism and it is an evidence of the transmission of behavioural models or the traditional values and main principles in life from generation to generation.

At the same time we saw some differences. We saw that the younger generation – and of course this is obvious – they do not have any obstacles such as the frontiers for the country, for example, the boundaries that doesn't count anymore for the Ukrainians or the Poles or Russians or Kazakhi people. In that understanding people are more open and integrated in the world.

The vast majority of the younger generations speak foreign languages, the vast majority English but also French and German. What is interesting is that in Kazakhstan there were many people that spoke Chinese and less English. Of course that's understandable also.

What we saw different from the older generation is a level of the patriotism. For example, in the national survey Ukrainians, when they talk about their patriotism, about 80% of people consider that they are patriots of Ukraine. As for the Ukrainian youths, only 51% I think... Just a sec. It is 55% of Ukrainian youths are feeling patriotic.

The trend is also observed because actually only 68% of the young Kazakhs say they are patriots. Maybe that's not about the scepticism towards their country but maybe that's a sign of some kind of way, an integration in the global world and evidence of the fact that they are more open to their world and they are not too stuck to the country they are living in.

We found out that the basic moral orientation remained quite similar in the four countries. When young people answer the question what is absolutely unacceptable for the young people, most of them said drugs, human trafficking and abortions. These were the top three social taboos in the four countries.

There were some divergences between the countries, depending on the cultural and historical specificity. For example, Kazakhs are very negative about the alcohol addiction and they are very conservative for marriage. They are criticising sexual relations before marriage or living together without being married. At the same time Poles, who are quite tolerant to homosexual marriages and to prostitution, they are quite negative about euthanasia or adultery, which is explained by their belonging to the Catholic Church.

Also, we could observe it is quite related to the historical and cultural traditions in the countries, which challenges and problems they have in the societies. For example, the common problem the four countries have quoted is bribery and corruption and the other issues was the economic development.

What was different is that Ukrainian students were very preoccupied by the political instability and Russians were more anxious about alcohol and drug addiction and the threat of terrorism. The threat of terrorism was not an issue for the Ukrainians and the Kazakhs.

What is interesting also is the question how people assess their success. For Ukrainians and Kazakhs and Russians the success was self-accomplishment and a good career, good welfare. What was surprising is that for Poles success means love and friendship, which is quite interesting.
We saw also that if we talk about the relation between the traditional values and the acquired values, we see that the traditional values occupy only 40% and the acquired values 60%. Actually, we saw that it might be even a positive sign because if in such a difficult time the older generation, the parents’ generation, has managed to transfer such traditional values, they have made a big jump, actually.

I think that I have exhausted my time.

ROLAND KOVATS: Appreciate it. Thank you, Dmytro. It was quite an in-depth view into how Ukrainian youth see themselves and one finding that immediately caught my attention, your first finding actually, is very traditional and soberly conservative. I would like to come back to that in the Q&A session, on what does sober conservatism mean in the Ukrainian context.

Since you already pointed there to the display or to pick up copies of this publication, let me ask you how many of you took a look at those pictures around the wall and windows when you came in or in the breaks?

Well, I would like to encourage all of you then, when we break from this panel, go and take a look at those cartoons there because we have today with us Alyona Getmanchuk from the Institute of World Policy who also is coming from the journalist community and one of the interesting things they do is that they try to promote Ukraine a little differently than the traditional oligarchic or political class would do it. They do it from the fun part as well beside doing very serious research work too.

Part of their work in the past year was to commission these cartoons that are all around the wall and at the entrance area and I would like to ask Alyona to tell us a little bit about why and how and what people think of Ukraine these days.

ALYONA GETMANCHUK: Thank you, Roland, and thank you, Carnegie Europe and PACT, for inviting me. In order to answer the question how Ukraine is seen by its neighbours, not only to those cartoons. Cartoons is actually part of our big project which is called Ukraine’s Soft Power in the Region, are they effective for foreign policy.

Unfortunately I don’t have many hard copies but it’s available on our website, so everybody who’s interested in this research I would share my business cards, both in Ukrainian and in English.

That project was realised by the Institute of World Policy and implemented under USA PACT and United Programme. Thank you, all, for the support. I will also share some of my own observations.

Using a specially-developed methodology approved personally by Harvard Professor Joseph Nye of Soft Power Concept, we estimated the potential Ukraine soft power in six countries, EU member states Poland and Romania, Ukraine’s partners in European integration Moldovia and Georgia and the neighbours in the north, Belarus and Russia.

Of course some cartoons was the creative part of this project and maybe some of them say much more than any words and I hope that all of you will have a chance to look at them. Actually, these cartoons reflect how Ukraine is perceived by ordinary people in those six countries I mentioned and surprisingly ordinary people’s vision of Ukraine turned out to be more politicised than expert community and opinion makers’ perception in those six countries.
When we ask political analyst, statesmen, politicians, journalists to name five main notions associated with Ukraine in their country, and they identified the top notions, we were very surprised to note and count such words as gas pipeline, Yanukovych, Timoshenko which are present on our cartoons. Instead the associations were friendly, big country, [unclear], strategic partner, the Orange Revolution, Kiev or Ukrainian cuisine or something like that.

Obviously the sources of Ukrainian Soft Power in this case cannot be identical because our neighbours, as all of you know, have a different vision of politics but even despite a different vision of politics in different neighbouring countries, our study allowed for quite a surprising conclusion. The main component of Ukraine Soft Power in the region is democracy.

Ukraine is much more attractive in countries like Georgia, Poland or Moldova and much more respected in countries like Belarus and Russia when it sets its own trends rather than copies those made in Russia or, for example, in Belarus.

Democracy as well as the European integration are, and I’m sure Ukrainian trends on post-Soviet space or maybe in CIS countries. According to an expert survey in six neighbouring countries, Ukraine expectedly hit the highest index of soft power in the Republic of Moldova. This was an unexpected outcome since Ukraine is not the most attractive country in Moldova.

Only in the period immediately following the Orange Revolution there was a sudden burst of enthusiasm over Ukraine while the old Moldovan politicians from different political sources strived to take at least one picture with newly-elected President Yushchenko.

In all other periods Ukraine is not an example to be followed by the Moldovan policymakers. The internal political crisis in Moldova is often called the Ukrainian syndrome and this has definite negative connotations and the way the Ukrainian side conducts dialogue with Moldovan, as arrogant as the Russians used towards the Ukrainians, sometimes also does not add to Ukrainian interactiveness.

Today there are also doubts in Moldova that Ukraine can be seen as an example or a role model in the European integration. There are grounds to assume that the atmosphere of the bilateral relations can get better since some acute problems have been solved and now we can absolve like a mini reset [?] in the relations of the two countries, which is good.

The most powerful source of Ukraine soft power in Moldova today is an overwhelming quantity of the Ukrainian foot products in the Moldovan supermarkets. Sometimes I’m under the impression that some Ukrainian brands are more popular in Moldova than in Ukraine and in trade and commerce Ukraine is a major partner for Moldova.

Georgia ranks second after Moldova where Ukraine soft power potential is [unclear]. I was almost convinced that it would be first because Georgia remains the only country in the post-Soviet space which acknowledges Ukraine’s right to be original leader and the alternative to Russia as, let’s say, a centre of influence.

Ukraine soft power in Georgia is very stretched forward. In order to remain attractive in Georgia, Ukraine must remain Ukraine. If Ukraine wants to be received well in Georgia, the declaration of his or her nationality is enough. That is also the advantage that the Ukrainian business has in Georgia.
Paradoxically about the Russian/Georgian conflict in general had a positive effect on the soft power of Ukraine in Georgia. Georgia started buying Ukrainian goods more often than Russian. It’s important to know that the most of the goods in Georgia are Russian or Ukrainian.

As one of my friends, a Georgian expert put it, I never buy Russian products, we are at war, so that’s why I’m buying only Ukrainian products. Ukrainian businessmen became welcome in Georgia, so there is only Ukrainian in the West and Georgia, financial group Privat.[?]

Paradoxically for now Georgian economic reforms and liberalisation in the field of entrepreneurship is rather separated than attract business partners from Ukraine in Georgia. Business conditions in the two countries for the moment are very different.

Ukraine soft power index was thought highest in Belarus. Until recently many in this country perceived Ukraine as an unsuccessful experiment with democracy. In fact, an artificial model prevailed in the Belarus public opinion, Ukrainian democracy against the Belarusian wonder that is economic and political stability.

Many Belarusians have been for years brainwashed that the democracy in Ukraine provoked constant instability and undermined prosperity. I know many Belarusians who are really surprised to discover that the average salary in Ukraine is not lower but sometimes even higher than in Belarus.

Ukraine really succeeded in oppressing many Belarusians in different periods of time is the fact how Ukraine managed to balance between Russia and the EU and how it still remains Western-oriented despite the pressure from the Russian side.

Another important element of Ukraine soft power in Belarus is Ukrainian foot products also but many of you probably know that it’s easier to start business in Belarus but it’s quite difficult to run business there. That’s why Ukrainian products in Belarus are overpriced sometimes and that is the real obstacle, to expend our soft power in terms of economic and business.

Poland is next according to the index of Ukraine soft power. My feeling that the general perception of Ukraine in Poland now is perception of an underdog country which is very unlucky but which still needs to be assisted in development and the European integration. Both the lead[?] and the ordinary polls understand that.

Poland is a unique case also in terms of Ukraine’s business presence because Poland is a country where Ukrainian investments come from large enterprises. At least ten enterprises with the Ukrainian capital are operated in Poland today. Poland is the only country among all covered by the research where even many average citizens know the names of contemporary Ukrainian writers, for example, Ukrainian singers whose works have been translated into Polish.

The main ambassadors of the culture of Ukraine in Poland according to some Polish experts are Ukrainian caregivers and domestic workers who form a very positive impression of Ukrainian people. In the rating of the countries where Ukraine soft power is strongest, Russia comes last but one. However, it’s obvious that Ukraine’s potential of influence in Russia through its soft power is far from being exhausted.

This refers to politics, business and popular culture. There are no certain proofs of the fact but I believe that Ukraine encouraged Russia to talk about its own European integration while they only talked about partnership with the EU before and accelerate its accession to WTO.
Ukraine also got ahead of Russia and in a way stimulated in some domestic political matters. A shorter term of service in the armed forces or Soviet savings bank deposits. However, I personally think that neither the Russian population nor the Russian decision-makers believe that the Ukrainian European choice is definite, that Ukraine will sign the Association Agreement, including the CFTA Agreement with EU and will never join Russian integration projects like custom or later Eurasian Union.

The country with the lowest index of the soft power of Ukraine is Romania. There is a significant information vacuum concerning Ukraine in Romania. Out of all neighbours of Romania, Ukraine is the least known. According to public polls conducted by the Romanian Institute for Assessment and Strategies, Ukraine is considered to be a friend by only 2% of Romanians and Ukraine is considered to be the main enemy of Romania only by 2% of Romanians.

Ukraine is mainly seen through some icons like the trainer of Shakhtar Donetsk Football Club, Mircea Lucescu and some Romanian players of this football club. The Ukrainian brands and Ukrainian foodstuff in Romania meanwhile is perceived as Russian. So, Ukraine has potential to attract its neighbours by different elements. Some of them I mentioned and I’ll be happy to answer your questions because there are a lot of different elements. Thank you for your attention.

ROLAND KOVATS: Thanks, Alyona. And you didn’t mention the gas pipelines at all as the attraction. I have to make an announcement regarding our discussant who unfortunately could not join us over the phone for this next panel. We had some technical difficulties. Matt is unfortunately not going to be reflecting on your points but it gives me the liberty to add three additional points, if you’ll allow me.

Those are things that, if you allow a little bit of criticism, that I haven’t heard either from the first panel nor from you guys in terms of some uniting factors or things that I know, and there’s sociological research on it, that impacts millions of Ukrainians and they don’t at the moment necessarily find the channels of expressing those interests.

The first, actually, is the land issue, the one that Ukraine is predominantly still an agricultural country and it does have a fertile soil to a degree that it’s a national treasure in Ukraine and agricultural land which we’re talking about as masses is not marketed. There is no competitive market at all in Ukrainian land. Quite the contrary. There’s a moratorium. It cannot be privatised. It cannot be sold.

It’s currently a very hot topic in Ukraine too because there are signs of liberalising the land market but it would impact millions of Ukrainians who are living everyday life from working on their teeny tiny pieces of land. More to the point, in Crimea, which a couple of times was mentioned in the first panel, land itself is the fundamental pillar of their identity, of Crimean Tartar. No land, no Crimean Tartars.

When the discussions are percolating about land reform in Ukraine, very few of the political or interest groups, not to mention youth who are actually not those who are students but those who are already working in their lands, those views are not channelled through the political processes. If there is a point of identity that you can tap on in Ukraine, that is going to be the agricultural tradition in the country.

The second where I thought we will have disagreements, but I think Pirkka mentioned it very briefly, that is football. Alyona just brought up football as being a strong factor in Donetsk and in that region and it really is giving the hope of survival for many who are living on very dire personal income levels in those regions.
The only hope for them is football and the [unclear] every week. There was a fantastic documentary movie done by Germans on the other Chelsea, which sheds light on how the young generation of Ukrainians only see [unclear] and Ukrainian football as the uniting force, as the panacea for survival. Next year there will be a European Championship in Ukraine. No one can stop the UFA now, not even Ukrainians anymore

It is definitely going to be a moment in Ukrainian history where everything is going to be about football and it’s clearly a breaking point for Ukraine as a nation, it could be, and there is lots of stakes from the financial and the political spectre to use [unclear] or the European Championships as the anchor to the global [unclear].

We’re talking here about Europe predominantly. We’re talking here about those traditional Western nations where maybe they have a collapsing government or a collapsing state budget. Football is still best in the world or best in Europe.

Finally, there is one political thought that these days receives, I feel, very little attention in Ukraine. In the drive for reforms in the IMF or the international financial institutions or Ukrainians themselves, they say we need reforms, we need reforms, we need reforms, one thing they forget is that reforms are not necessarily producing only winners but there are losers and the losers of reform again could be millions of people.

Changing businesses in the East, catching up with European methodologies, it may mean lots of people losing their jobs and there is no, right now in the Ukrainian political spectrum, a party or a political grouping which would talk about those losers, which would produce some sort of a Occupy Shevchenko Park movement. There is no progressive Left in Ukraine.

If we see something that’s a lesson from Europe, there was in the 1960s a progressive Left emergence and then again in these very days in the globalised world the Left is at least speaking up again in a different view. In Ukraine we don’t necessarily have that. In terms of anchoring Ukraine to the choice it made, I think it would be important for the next couple of years and decades to develop this new crowd of progressive left views.

There’s a wealth of questions I have for all of you, so I’m just going to throw the first one at you, Svitlana, because you talked about the need for new quality and that activists want a different quality, whether it’s community services or other. Could you please tell us what sort of qualities the activists are really looking for? We had a prescription from Commissioner Shulet [?] on a number of things that he sees Ukraine needs to be still progressing on.

I wonder how much that reflects the activists. I’m not going to list out all but he talked about criminal justice, rule of law, judiciary, human rights, freedoms, economic governance and so on and so forth. What kind of qualities do you see that are necessary in Ukraine?

SVITLANA ZALISCHUK: I would start answering your question from the latest surveys which disclosed that more than 65%, I believe, of the Ukrainians in favour of European integration support the European integration in the eastern part, in the southern part, in the western part, of course, and in the centre. It means that this idea European idea enjoys the biggest probably support from different parts of Ukraine, from different groups of Ukraine.
Answering your question, what kind of quality Ukrainians expect, I don’t think that talking to these people every day, I mean in the field not to experts and to analysts and thinktanks but to real people, citizens in the street, they can not really explain what this quality is and to what extent it has to be improved, what percentage has to be done. But they do understand, they do feel that European integration means real changes and these real changes probably could be explained by the fair rules of the game.

Government has to be fair in business. People should have the right to start their business, to have their business without being repressed by the government, by the authorities. I’m talking about small and medium business. I’m talking about those people who suffer every day from some services which the government gives to those people. So, talking about the quality, it’s a question probably to analytics, what is this quality. What does it mean, quality of life in general?

Talking about people, we see these protests every day and people are defending something, people are against something and the government enjoys only, I don’t know, 15% of support from the people. So, this is the expression. This is the demand for real changes, for real reforms in the country.

[UNIDENTIFIED MALE]: [Inaudible] agriculture in Ukraine and there are millions we see. What is it, really? Is it private ownership? Is it usufruct? What is it? Is it collective? It’s not very clear to me.

ROLAND KOVATS: Let me collect another question from over there.

IAN BOAG: Thank you. My name is Ian Boag. I used to be the Head of the Commission Delegation in Ukraine from 2004 to 2008. One comment and one question. The comment clearly is that if civil society is to flourish, it requires the rule of law and this is almost the definition of civil society. Without that it’s not possible.

The question I would ask is we heard, I think it was from Olga in the previous session, the very high level of dissatisfaction of the Ukrainian public with Ukrainian politics and politicians. It seems to me that while I was in Ukraine and in the time since I’ve left the line-up of parties and leading personalities really hasn’t changed at all but if the figures that Olga quotes are correct, there is a huge constituency out there waiting for somebody or some group of people to present themselves with an alternate way of doing things.

Is there any sign, and I ask this out of ignorance, having not been in Ukraine for three years, that such a political movement might be preparing to present itself?

ROLAND KOVATS: Do we have any other questions to Svitlana? Svitlana is going to be the one who has to leave relatively soon. Perhaps you want to answer this question first, Svitlana, the question on emerging third or fourth or fifth.

SVITLANA ZALISCHUK: It’s a very good question and I’m asking myself the same question. Is there an alternative in our country? Everyone who is now in Ukraine seeing and realising and understanding what’s going on is asking himself whom to vote for during the next, for example, parliamentary elections in 2012.
When I was talking about fair rules, new rules in the society, they’re talking that we need not only new leaders and new faces because there are a number of them. We have Yatsenyuk, for example, party and we have Klitschko party and we have some others, right, but this is not alternative because their party is built at the same basis. It’s not grass root movements. It’s not grass root parties. Except those leaders, except those faces like Klitschko and Yatsenyuk, we don’t know who are the members of that party and we know that these parties are financed by some groups, industry groups, and so on and so forth.

This is another question. It’s about the rules, it’s about the new approaches to the establishing of these political alternatives. Whether we have one, I don’t know, probably it will be an advertisement for a small party but I know one party and these are our colleagues. It’s called Democratic Alliance.

These people have representatives in every region of Ukraine and they really were built first as a civic initiative and NGOs and then they decided to become a party and they registered as a party and probably they will run for elections. These are young people. They are not financed by anyone and there’s a big challenge and ambition to run for elections.

I would say they do not fit into Ukrainian political ambience at all. They are like extraterrestrials because everyone would laugh at them but without money, without support, without media they have no chances, really, to be real players in the political situation. This is a challenge not only for them but for the whole Ukrainian society.

Whether Ukrainian society is ready to develop those rules, demand those rules from the politicians and accept those rules from those who are ready to play by these rules, these would be my answer.

ROLAND KOVATS: Alyona and Dmytro would like...

ALYONA GETMANCHUK: If I could add a little bit, yes. I think it’s important to understand that 99% of Ukrainians now are in opposition to current government. Some of them are in like moral opposition because they don’t like the policy of Ukrainian government in terms of morality, in terms of political prisoners and some other issues.

Some are in, let’s say, social opposition, people who are against a reduction of different social benefits. Some of them are in intellectual opposition because they don’t like maybe President Yanukovych in terms of his education. There are many, many groups of different opposition. Even people who are inside government, they are in opposition to their President Yanukovych and his cronies and so-called family.

The problem we have today is to find a message which could unite all those groups. Unfortunately we lack such a message and we should find it. My hope is that this message will be connected with European choice of Ukraine. I doubt that there will be a message connected with some social benefits or economic situation. We never had such a bad economic situation as, for example, Georgians had in the mid-90s.

I think that it would be an ideological message. That is my hope. The problem with new faces, we actually are facing now, I think, that, yes, there are only two real new faces, or more or less new faces, Yatsenyuk and Klitschko, and of course maybe some new faces will emerge because we still have some time but the problem is if they will be allowed to be elected by current government, Yatsenyuk will bail out but I doubt that Klitschko will bail out or even will bail out to enter the Parliament.
That is a really interesting problem. On the one hand, people don’t like politicians who are too loyal or who are in so-called controlled opposition but, on the other hand, if you are not under control even to some extent by presidential administration, you simply don’t have a chance to be elected.

[UNIDENTIFIED MALE]: [Inaudible] brave man who tells Mr Klitschko what he can and cannot do. More seriously, I hear what you say about approaching the public with an ideological message, namely the European choice but that is very difficult to sell if you haven’t got a European perspective from the European Union.

ALYONA GETMANCHUK: Exactly. That’s why we would like to have this European perspective or at least some other strong signals from the European Union on visa liberalisation or some others because I’m not sure that 65% or 60% of Ukrainians who support European integration, that they support Ukraine’s membership in the European Union.

I think they support other things. They support visa-free travel, they support real economic integration which could help to import some values to Ukraine and to improve their living standards, for example. They support some important steps of European integration. It’s not necessary to support Ukraine’s membership in the European Union.

DMYTRO OSTROUSHKO: As for the question about the possibility of emergence of a new alternative force, actually there is a cliché in the Ukrainian society among Ukrainians – maybe luckily, maybe not – that we are very frustrated, we are totally unhappy about what is happening in Ukraine but what we’d like is a new leader.

Actually, a new leader, it would be fine if there was one but we see that in the Ukrainian landscape there is no new leader and at the same time the events of the Arab Spring, they show definitely that there is not necessarily a need for a new leader. That might be a big mass of people self-organised doing something. This is why I’m talking about maybe luckily, maybe not. There is not such a stereotype, that we need a new leader. Maybe if Ukrainians realised that without a leader they could do something, maybe that might result in quite dramatic events. Or maybe not. Maybe it’s positive, we do not know.

We see that in Ukraine there are signs of self-organisation. We see that people unite to protect their rights, like Chernobyl veterans or teachers or students. They gather together and they do that but I think that so far they do that because they have a kind of internal feeling and not a real understanding. So, let us observe how it will evolve.

PIRKKA TAPIOLA: One comment and question, which is a bit of a follow-up to what Dmytro just said. The comment is on this discussion of European integration which comes, again, to the forefront. The problem is that the integration will not go very much forward before Europe is demanded internally and started being built in Ukraine.

I think we’ve heard Ukrainian politicians say... well, there’s no left and right in Ukraine but from different colour palettes saying that we will build a European Ukraine. We’re still looking for that.
Dmytro, my question is, you talked about the survey, which is fascinating in many ways and then you put out the question will people really mobilise and organise and you looked at the Arab Spring. When you did your survey, did you ask young people and to which extent, are they willing to organise and take ownership of political processes?

I don’t necessarily mean going on the streets. That’s an extreme method. I mean trying to work in political parties, trying to work in NGOs, trying to push the agenda forward, did you touch upon that and what were the results?

**Dmytro Ostroushka:** Yes. Actually, we had such a question. We had the question about the willingness to take part in the political life of the country and especially the young people, of course it is quite romantic and idealistic but the majority of them were talking about the need of being involved in the political life of the country, the elections, involvement in activist movements, in political parties, different kinds of activities. They do say so.

What we see in Ukraine – and this is not based on the study, this is just what we see – is that there is a huge apathy in the Ukrainian society. People do go on the streets to defend their rights but actually they do that when they find themselves in a desperate situation and there is no solidarity, actually, this is just one person that is suffering a desperate situation and then they go to the street.

If there is another cluster that is suffering the same situation, then they go to the street but there is no unity among different strata of society. As for the people, ideally, they say, they would like to be involved in the processes but we do not see that they are really involved. This is the problem.

Maybe that’s also related to the thing that was mentioned in the previous session, is that the people, due to the Soviet history, they were so reliant on the state and on the delivery from the state, that they just thought that their duty is just to go and vote and that’s finished and now you have to delivery and now they’re absolutely frustrated about the political class but at the same time they haven’t learnt yet to be proactive and to demand and do something in order to make things progress.

**Roland Kovats:** Can I challenge you a little more, please, Dmytro, because I told you we’re going to come back to this sober conservatism and you just said that there are people who are willing to go out on the street, there is no unity among them but you also shed light on the students being more traditional and conservative in their values.

I don’t want to challenge that as a fact, quite the contrary, I would like to introduce you to some other similar studies on that. The European Values Survey that’s being done on a regular basis, it actually includes Ukraine and a gentleman named Dmitriy Krakovich did an analysis of the 2006 and 2008 surveys. This is the most recent, I believe, published this year.

He shed light on something really sobering to me, about Ukrainians trying to raise their children and what values and attitudes they’re implanting at a very early age in their kids and such words as obedience, unassumingness, frugality, those are the values that young Ukrainians are being taught, according to his survey and looking at the European Values Survey, and that to me is even sobering than what you’re saying.

If you can give us a bit of a more optimistic view from your survey on what’s there, I’d very uh appreciate that.
DMYTRO OSTROUSHKO: Actually, when I was talking about the transferring of the traditional values, I would stress that they were different values than the ones that you have quoted. I'm a father myself and my daughter is five years old today, it's her birthday today, so it's a huge issue for me, what to transfer to my children. Among the values that are transferred, it is to be generous, to be good, to be kind, to be fair, the standard set of human values that makes a person a fair member of society.

It's not pessimistic, it's rather a good sign that we have such a transmission of the values, the traditional values, and we have a second set of values that are added but these are good values that are borrowed from outside but these are the values that are already approved as good elsewhere, so no problem with that.

ROLAN KOVATS: Honestly, I'm not sure if we're really there on the optimism but we are on the right track, for sure. In order to stay on the right track I would like to ask both of you. I don't know for which one of you it would be easier to answer this question. Basically it comes back to Svitlana, one of her points, that in 2004 and 2005 there was a lot of disappointment and now there is again a vibrancy in our society because people are willing to go and defend things and express disappointment and distrust. Now, what would turn this disappointment and distrust into proactively asking for something concrete and be constructive and positive about the message?

ALYONA GETMANCHUK: Maybe I’ll start. I think that, yes, there are many young people who would like to participate in different political movements, in different NGOs, in different independent thinktanks because I receive a lot of CVs every day from young people who graduated from Western universities and Ukrainian universities but who would like to work for independent thinktanks or NGOs and they wouldn't like to work for current government or some state institutions.

The main difference between those young people who participated in different street demonstrations, street actions in 2004 and those who want to participate in different political movements now, that today young people, they would like to participate but they don’t want to participate or affiliate themselves with any current politician in Ukraine. That is the main difference.

They are able to self-organise themselves. We have new indicators maybe of patriotism and of opposition to government in Ukraine. This indicator is the small national flag which is set in your car. For example, I already changed the flag in my car because I had a really small one, now I have a bigger one and if I’m standing somewhere at a light, on the crossroad and if there is another car with a national flag, we are signalling each other. There is eye contact and there is a smile and we understand each other from this eye contact.

I noticed even such national flags in Donetsk two weeks ago, some of them, and it’s good. We had orange flags during the Orange Revolution but it was a party colour, it was a political colour. Today we have national flags because everybody... not everybody, unfortunately, but many young Ukrainians and not only young Ukrainians but many people in Ukraine understand that we shouldn’t rely on politicians and on government anymore, we should rely on ourselves and I think that is a good motivation to overcome this distrust or disappointment.
If you feel that you initiate something by yourself, you receive a lot of drive and energy. Like already mentioned by Olena, we are Europeans which are organised by people on Facebook and some other movements.

DMYTRO OSTROUSHKA: Honestly speaking, I do not know how to transform the aspirations into the positive acts or some tangible things but, well, I’m just hoping that it is maturing. The ideas are maturing. It is not mature yet but it should become one day. Well, the understanding must come and then we will see what will be the result but so far, yes, on Facebook it’s...

There is a current joke on Facebook. Due to the Russian events people are talking about, well, I have put a white ribbon on my avatar, well, I have signed for the group in support of protests, well, I have done my job for today for manifesting my protest. Well, we’ll see what will be the real actions by the society. So far it is just maturing. I do not know whether it will be given some tangible outputs quite soon.

ANASTASIA RAPCHECK [?]: My name is Anastasia Rapcheck and I am from KML Academy but currently a scholar at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam and I had a comment about the ideological versus social type of protests and also it’s linked to the question of the progressive left.

There is a social monitoring that is being conducted by a young sociologist at KML Academy lately with support of the National Endowment for Democracy and they’re doing monitoring of protest events in Ukraine, looking at more than 100 regional and local and national websites, including also websites of different parties and organisations like environmental or student movements.

They’re doing it on a daily basis and they’re taking note of all the protests that took place, what were the demands and what were the reactions, was it a repression or concessions and things like that, using the European protest data methodology. What they see is that the majority of protests are actually socioeconomic and that’s a very big ground for the progressive left, in fact, but the problem is that these issues, first of all, they’re very rarely supported by any groups at all, trade unions almost never, parties almost never.

For example, in Cherkasy there was for several weeks a strike of trolley bus drivers who were not paid salaries. There were almost no other groups who came out to support the strikers. That’s one thing. There is actually no interest on the side of the civil society in different NGOs, they are so vibrant in the socioeconomic protests of the ordinary people, and then I think they’re also not covered in mainstream media or are less likely to be covered in mainstream media.

When some sociologists from the West come and do research on civil society in Ukraine, and I was at one presentation by one scholar who was doing a wonderful PowerPoint and she was saying, so I’m looking at these kind of civil society initiatives, I’m looking at charitable initiatives and environmental and I said, well, how come, for example, trade unions are not on the list, or independent trade unions, and that’s not the kind of civil society, for example, that these initiatives would be interested in whereas trade unions are an important part of the civil society in Western Europe as well. That’s one question.

I also wanted to say that there was a question about land and nobody has answered it.

ROLAND KOVATS: Yes, sorry.
ANASTASIA RAPCHECK: It was raised twice.

ROLAND KOVATS: I won’t escape the answer. Our panel really is about future and common visions. A two-minute rundown on the land. It’s in private hands, small really teeny tiny strips of land we’re talking about. There is no real cadastre of the land, in other words no one can actually tell where one land ends and where the next starts. Ownership is not recorded. Ownership is basically people carry their papers from before the war and right after the war in their bags in order to be able to prove that once in a lifetime it was theirs.

This is all the remnants of basically the forced collectivism of the Communist times and after that most of the collectives were dissolved. The productivity is very, very low. It’s basically not industrialised to the degree it could be or should be.

Now, the new reform is trying to put an end to it and bring a solution, so there’s talks about developing a cadastre, there’s talks about finally agreeing on which is agricultural land and what is not agricultural land and other types of titles you can have. It also would liberalise the land market as such so that small landowners and farmers could freely sell or buy new land.

The fear is that the playing field will not be levelled for basically three major interest groups – small farmers and landowners who are either trying to trade or trying to create better productivity, and those are the millions we’re talking about who have some rights on land. The other large interest group is the wealthy Ukrainians, euphemistically called oligarchs, who are looking for large lots of land in order to really run major domestic industries and that would be a next stage in capturing the state, to use the World Bank terminology here.

There’s a third interest group which is also not very benevolent, I would say, but it’s definitely high in Ukraine and that’s the foreign investor, the large foreign agriculture investors, and it’s from east, west, south, north, from anywhere, because the land is fantastic in Ukraine.

[UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE]: [Inaudible]

ROLAND KOVATS: Potentially, yes. Some are strategic investors and some of the foreigners, they literally just need the land in order to build. There’s fertile ground not just to produce but to produce corruption in that area. Sorry for the detour on that.

We’re slowly coming to an end to our conversation, so I wonder if we have any additional comments from the crowd. Questions?

SVITLANA ZALISCHUK: I have a short, short comment on social economic protests. Yes, we have a lot of small mine dumps every day around the country and they have a social economic dimension but I think that we should be careful with those social economic protest statistics because I know, and I have some proof that many of these protests are inspired and even organised by some members of current government and that is like a part of internal fighting in the government. That is a very short comment.
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ROLAND KOVATS: Dmytro, would you like to add a last sentence?

DMYTRO OSTROUSHKO: I don’t have anything to add, no.

ROLAND KOVATS: Appreciate it. In summing up I would like to, first of all, thank Olga again for hosting us and Carnegie. I did mention to you that’s also part of my identity, from Pittsburgh CMU, and I’m really very honoured to have all of you stay until the very end. When I look back at this panel, then I see that there is optimism for people defending their right again. I see that there is optimism that positive traditional values will be embedded in the future generation of Ukrainians. I also see that there is more and more Europeans in Ukraine and not just Mia Urepetsi [?] but those who are not registered on the Facebook but they’re true Europeans in Ukraine and there’s many of those young individuals or even elderly individuals and not just in Kiev, not just in the western part of Ukraine but, as a matter of fact, in the eastern part too.

Those football fans are definitely the ones like European football fans. One thing perhaps as sort of my advice for the future is looking at Ukraine and European values, not just from the perspective of attitudes and behaviours and processes but also from the outcomes and the first panel, I can’t remember who said that, it’s been enough of talk. People don’t have such a long timespan to have to wait for the actual results to arrive.

I know this from my colleagues who are in their 30s and early 40s and they are not going to be the ones who are leaving the country for another country, for another fortune but they have kids, they have a job and they want to live a normal life in Ukraine and they want to see that happen now, not just for their young kids but for themselves too. They have too much at stake here.

I actually think that that generation is going to be the real driving force, those who have the most to lose. In terms of shedding light on what I mean by outcome versus outcome, let me give you my story with being registered in Ukraine as a foreign citizen but with a residency and the process is exactly the same as in the European Union in immigration – police, stamps, signatures, forms, six months minimum – and I know this because my very good friend, a Ukrainian friend, just registered in Hungary. Also a six-month process. We share the experiences but in the end there is a difference in terms of the outcome.

This is what Ukrainians produce as a residence permit and this is the type of card that my Ukrainian gets in Hungary. Same process, same many bureaucrats to deal with.

[UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE]: In France first you get one like the Ukrainian one.

ROLAND KOVATS: This is permanent. There’s even place there for extending it for another five years or something. I really hope that when Ukraine is further Europeanised, that it actually has in front of it what sort of outcomes they would have to have. Thank you very much.

OLGA SHUMYLO-TAPIOLA: Just to conclude, I thank you for coming and thank you for staying and I hope it was a very interesting debate for you because this is exactly what we are planning on doing. We want to bring new people, we want to bring new topics to Brussels because we are a bit tired of talking about
politics and lack of democracy. We want to show real people who are doing something on the ground and who are actually achieving things and bringing parts of Ukraine together. So, to conclude on this note, I want to say that in an hour we'll have a book launch by Dmitri Trenin, the Director of our Moscow office, so if you can come back in an hour, we will have a book launch and we will have a cocktail after that. My colleagues nodded yes. You are welcome. I wish you good luck and hope to see you next year as well. Thank you.