



~FACTSHEET~

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The European Union and Ukraine

The EU is committed to a policy of sequenced engagement with Ukraine towards political association and economic integration based on the respect for common values, acknowledging the European aspirations of Ukraine and welcoming its European choice.

At the EU-Ukraine Summit in Kyiv on 19 December 2011, the leaders of the EU and Ukraine reached a common understanding that Ukraine's performance, notably in relation to respect for common values and the rule of law, will be of crucial importance to the speed of its political association and economic integration with the EU, including in the context of conclusion of the Association Agreement and its subsequent implementation.

Following a debate at the 14 May 2012 Foreign Affairs Council, the EU presented three areas in which Ukraine was invited to make progress in order to create the political circumstances for the signing the Association Agreement and its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. The three areas were: (i) progress in addressing the issue of selective justice and preventing its recurrence; (ii) the compliance of the 2012 parliamentary elections with international standards; (iii) implementation of reforms defined in the jointly agreed Association Agenda. The Cooperation Council with Ukraine of 15 May 2012 provided the opportunity to convey these messages to Ukraine.

The European Union has repeatedly expressed concern regarding the politically motivated convictions of members of the former Government of Prime Minister Tymoshenko, after trials that did not respect international standards as regards fair, transparent and independent legal process. The EU regretted that, as a consequence, opposition leaders were prevented from standing in the parliamentary elections. On 11 October 2011, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission Catherine Ashton issued a Declaration on behalf of the European Union on the verdict in the case of Yulia Tymoshenko. The High Representative and Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle and their spokespersons have since then issued joint statements on the outcome of the appeal in the case of Yulia Tymoshenko (24 December 2011), on the verdict in the case of Yuriy Lutsenko (27 February 2012), on the verdict in the case of Valeriy Ivashchenko (13 April 2012), on the situation regarding the detention of Yulia Tymoshenko (26 April 2012) and on the judgment by Ukraine's Higher Specialised Court for Civil and Criminal Cases in the case of Yulia Tymoshenko (29 August 2012).

The High Representative, in joint statements with Commissioner Füle, has also referred to the pre- and post-election situation in Ukraine (statements of 12 October 2012, 29 October 2012 and 12 October 2012). Based on assessment of the elections, they concluded that determined action by the Ukrainian Government and Parliament to consolidate the country's democratic credentials, to pursue the rule of law, to address the consequences of selective justice and to vigorously pursue judicial and other critical reforms is necessary. The EU has taken note of the public commitments made by the Prime Minister of Ukraine in the aftermath of the elections. It looks forward to seeing real and concrete steps in view of their implementation.

The EU-Ukraine Association Agenda aims to prepare for and facilitate the entry into force of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA). It was conceived as a practical, focused and living document based on the principles of joint responsibility and joint ownership. A Joint Committee of Senior Officials has been established and meets regularly to steer the overall process of implementation, including to jointly assess and report on progress.

The Action Plan on Visa Liberalisation, conclusion of the amended Visa Facilitation Agreement, access to EU financial assistance, EU Macro-financial Assistance of €610M and the EU's role in actively encouraging International Financial Institutions to contribute to Ukraine's Gas Transmission System modernisation are all important areas of the EU-Ukraine bilateral agenda.

EU-Ukraine Contractual Relations

Relations between the EU and Ukraine are currently based on the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (PCA) which entered into force in 1998. At the Paris Summit in 2008, the leaders of the EU and Ukraine agreed that an Association Agreement should be the successor agreement to the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement.

The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement is the first of a new generation of Association Agreements with Eastern Partnership countries. Negotiations on this comprehensive, ambitious and innovative Agreement between the EU and Ukraine were launched in March 2007.

In February 2008, following confirmation of Ukraine's WTO membership, the EU and Ukraine launched negotiations on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area as a core element of the Association Agreement.

At the 15th Ukraine-EU Summit of 19 December 2011, the EU leaders and President Yanukovich noted that a common understanding on the text of the Association Agreement was reached.

On 30 March 2012 the chief negotiators of the European Union and Ukraine initialed the text of the Association Agreement, which included provisions on the establishment of a DCFTA as an integral part.

Both the EU and Ukraine expressed their common commitment to undertake further technical steps required to prepare conclusion of the Association Agreement.

More information – What does the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement offer:

http://eeas.europa.eu/images/top_stories/140912_eu-ua_aa_what_does_the_agreement_offer_v.pdf

Quick guide to the Association Agreement

http://eeas.europa.eu/images/top_stories/140912_eu-ukraine-associatin-agreement-quick_guide.pdf