

Europeans but outside of the EU - the EU Soft Power of Attractiveness in Ukraine Between the Orange Revolution and Euromaidan

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Abstract

The role of the EU in the promotion of Europeanization and the EU political identity in potential member states of Eastern Europe prior to the 2004 enlargement was important for these states' future acceptance in the EU community. However, most research and literature have discounted the role of the EU and its attractiveness in the countries neighbouring with the EU that did not have a prospect of joining the EU in 2004. This article studies the process of formal and informal Europeanization in Ukraine before and after the Orange revolution, which occurred five months after the bloc's 2004 enlargement, and Euromaidan of 2013. Despite the EU's passive leverage in Ukraine between 2004 and 2013, and the country's weak prospects for potential membership, the EU's soft power of attractiveness was still an effective tool that was used by Ukrainian political elite and media in promoting informal Europeanization after the 2004 enlargement. Furthermore, confidence in the EU was associated with support for such liberal values as human rights, tolerance of minorities, and political efficacy. This article posits that notwithstanding weak incentives and support offered from the EU to implement formal Europeanization in Ukraine, the EU attractiveness was successfully applied by local elite and media to promote the informal Europeanization.

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Introduction

Studies of the impact of the European Union (EU) in post-communist states indicate that the EU pre-accession process significantly improved states' willingness to implement political and economic reforms (Herrmann, Risse and Brewer 2004; Vachudova 2009). Moreover, the EU created two sets of requirements for potential candidates – normative (or formal) and informal (Hansen 2006, 117). The formal mandatory requirements for future membership included an established market economy, free and fair elections, and the rule of law. The informal ones were those that built on the idea of “we feeling” and conforming to European values (Hansen 2006; Castiglione 2009). Applicant states' identification with the values in a common community, such as the EU, was perceived as necessary for sustaining political stability within the EU. “When communities have a strong feeling of shared identity, political leaders can draw on this as a resource to promote the legitimacy of institutions” (Herrmann, Risse and Brewer 2004, 4). Democracy promotion was one of the most powerful discourses that was used by the EU in the process of its assessment of prospective future members (Raik 2004).

For Eastern European states that joined the EU in 2004, the path to membership was formally stringent. Nevertheless, these states' future as part of the EU was not in doubt because of their European ideals and their acceptance of the shared system of values (Kubicek 2009). The process of European integration was perceived as their return to the place where they belonged, or a “return to Europe” (Vachudova 2005, 83). This was not the case for the former Soviet republics, with the exception of the Baltic states, which had been annexed by the USSR before the Second World War. The role of the EU in these countries was more difficult to define and measure, considering that “the painful discussion of membership” was never raised (Hansen 2006, 116). The EU European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) in the states of the former USSR combined relatively high demands for reform with weak conditionality (Commission of the European Communities (Commission) 2003; Gawrich, Melnykovska and Schweickert 2009, 19), which led to limited incentives to comply with those demands. Furthermore, after the 2004 enlargement, the discussion shifted towards “enlargement fatigue” rather than future expanding of the boundaries of the European Community (Schimmelfennig 2008).

The 2004 Orange revolution in Ukraine, which took place less than six months after the EU enlargement, brought hopes for the country's democratization and closer collaboration with the EU.² However, the EU's conditionality rules were not clearly defined due to the remote prospects of EU membership for Ukraine (Dimitrova and Dragneva 2013) and Ukraine's inability to meet the three criteria used in the assessments, such as 1) stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and respect for and protection of minorities; 2) market economy; and 3) administrative and institutional capacity to effectively implement EU *acquis*, and ability to take on the obligations of membership (Commission, Accession Criteria).

Instead of membership, the EU applied the soft power of attractiveness, built on a state's EU membership aspirations rather than on the realistic prospect of EU accession. Although some argue that no amount of soft power can replace the lack of capability and absence of effective hard power

² The Orange revolution was a peaceful protest against the results of the second round of the presidential election which were falsified to advance then Prime Minister Yanukovich. The result of the Orange revolution was a re-election of the second round that led to a victory of Viktor Yushchenko. For more details see Wilson (2005).

from the EU (Nilsen 2013, 725; Börzela and Schimmelfenning 2017, 279), this article contends that the EU soft power of attractiveness was effectively applied by the political elite and media in their creation of discourse about Ukraine's Europeanization. Citizens' attitudes towards the EU were correlated with their political orientations and values. Citizens who professed higher degrees of confidence in the EU expressed higher levels of political awareness, political competence, tolerance and political activity – orientations and values that are associated with liberal values and that are promoted by the EU as European values. These correlations were stronger for young and well-educated citizens.

This article contributes to the discussion of the EU's role in non-members states political and civil development by illustrating that the EU power of attraction remained an important political instrument in Ukraine after 2004. In the absence of formal Europeanization, the political elite and media's promotion of this concept may have impacted citizens' level of confidence in the EU, which increased after the Orange revolution.

This article is divided into five sections. The first part discusses the concept of Europeanization, passive and active leverage, and soft power by the EU. The second part looks at the relations between the EU and Ukraine after 2004 and before 2013. The third part analyses the Ukrainian leadership and media's promotion of the EU and Europeanization in Ukraine. Following this, the author looks at citizens' perception of the EU and the relationship between the level of confidence in the EU and citizens' political values and orientations. The conclusion provides the main findings of this research.

Methodology

The research in this article was developed and assessed through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The texts of the official documents between the EU and Ukraine were analyzed to assess their relationship. A content analysis of the Presidential speeches in Ukraine after the Orange revolution and before Euromaidan, and of the titles of newspapers articles (450 in total) of the leading political newspaper *Dzerkalo Tyshnya* (*Mirror Weekly*)³ was performed to evaluate how the concept of European identity and Europeanization was promoted in Ukraine by its media and political elite. In order to test citizens' support for the EU and their espousal of the EU corresponding liberal political values, this paper draws on the results of public opinion from the World Values Survey in Ukraine before and after the Orange revolution and the results of European Values Survey and International Foundation for Electoral systems.

³This newspaper, together with newspapers *Den'* and *Kommentarii*, is considered neutral and independent in its coverage of the political events in Ukraine (Szostek 2014). Although it is not the most circulated (57,000 as of 2006), it is considered one of the most influential newspapers by political elite (BBC 2006).

Europeanization, EU passive and active leverage, soft power

Scholars who study the role of the EU define Europeanization as a process in which states adopt EU rules (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005, 7), or as the emergence and the development of a distinct structure of government to the European level (Risse 2001, 3). The adaptation and emergence may be formal with a focus on the institutionalization of the EU rules, or discursive (informal Europeanization) by incorporating “a rule as a positive reference into discourse among domestic actors” (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005, 7).

The EU gained two types of leverage in the pre-accession states prior to their membership – active and passive (Vachudova 2005). Active leverage is defined as deliberate policies of the EU towards candidate states. “Active leverage is animated by the fact that the tremendous benefits of EU membership create incentives for the state to satisfy the enormous entry requirements, setting the stage for the effectiveness of conditionality within the EU’s pre-accession process” (Vachudova 2005, 4). The higher the potential for EU membership, the more likely that candidate countries will implement political and economic reforms that meet EU requirements. In contrast, passive leverage is defined as the attraction of the EU membership without deliberate conditionality exercised in the EU’s pre-accession process (Vachudova 2005, 63).

The passive leverage is similar to the notion of the EU’s soft power, which is mostly based on the idea of the EU attractiveness (Tuomioja 2009; Nielsen 2013). Soft power is defined as “the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country’s culture, political ideal and policies” (Nye 2004, 77). Soft power rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others (Nye 2008, 95). Joseph Nye identifies three primary sources of a country’s soft power: its culture (in the places where it’s attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to these values at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority) (2008, 96).

In the case of the EU, soft power was based on the idea of a collective European identity and the EU’s commitment to certain normative principles, particularly democracy and human rights (Nielsen 2013, 730). Therefore, to become European in cultural terms was to adopt European values, “to become more like the EU with the latter assessing the degree of normative convergence/divergence” (Wolczuk 2016, 65). For candidate states, to become European meant that they not only had to fulfil the official criteria for accession but that they were obligated to express their Europeanization and sense of belonging to the European community (Neumann 1998; Herrmann, Risse and Brewer 2004). Very often, this involved applicant countries constructing and implementing discourse on how their state’s identity is relevant to the concept of ‘Europe’ in comparison to other states (Neumann 1998, 405). “In their competition for accession to Western organizations, the Central and Eastern European (CEE) states, furthermore, combined the assertion of their own European identity with the claim “that the next state to the East is not European” (Neumann 1998, 406). From this perspective, the enlargement was understood as the expansion of the international community and inclusion of the countries that have similar liberal values and norms as the EU (Schimmelfennig 2001). The EU’s soft power of shared identities helped candidate countries to be persistent in their democratic commitment even after their accession (Sedelmeier 2012).

Potential membership in the EU was not discussed for ENP countries. The 2004 enlargement, although perceived as successful at that time, limited the EU's ability or willingness to engage in further enlargement (Wolczuk 2016).⁴ Moreover, the countries that were going to integrate to the EU after the 2004 enlargement were "less capable of managing the 'overload' of EU requirements than the countries that joined the EU in 2004" (Raik 2004, 594) due to their different preconditions. For that reason, the EU built relations with these countries within the ENP's strategy that offered the neighbourhood countries "a stake in the EU's internal market, through gradual economic integration, but not membership, conditional on the adoption of EU rules." (Wolczuk 2016, 61).

The EU rules and criteria for the ENP countries are often portrayed as a kind of wilderness of exclusion, a scenario of a weak voice and asymmetric dependency (Wallace 2005; Smith 2005). They did not provide sufficient incentives for the countries to implement them, nor did they have a clear final goal as in the case of accession to the EU. "It was the fallacious assumption that conditionality patterns which were successful for the CEE countries would also be successful for post-Soviet countries with no-membership perspective" (Moskalenko and Streltsov 2015, 112). As a result, for many Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) members, the principle of exclusion from the EU enlargement process was a constant reminder that they belonged to a different category of states (Hansen 2006, 130). The EU's soft power in these countries was based on their membership aspiration rather than a concrete promise of membership association (Sasse 2008; Pridham 2011; Langbein and Wolczuk 2012). As was stated by Lehne, "the core elements of the EU's offer to ENP partner countries have been summed up as the 'three Ms': money, mobility, and markets" (2014, 12), which were not strong enough to result in long-term transformation. Furthermore, the EU's ability to promote democracy in these countries was constrained by the stability-democratization dilemma that made the "EU often reluctant to push incumbent regimes towards democratization" (Börzel and Lebanidze 2017, 25) which could trigger instability within the region.

Research also demonstrates that during neighborhood Europeanization domestic actors could use weak EU conditionality for their own political agenda to regain or consolidate their power (Börzel and Risse 2012; Börzel and Pamuk 2012; Gawrich 2009). "Domestic actors have other choices in responding to Europeanization than endorsing or resisting EU induced reforms; they can instrumentalize EU policies and institutions to advance their own interests, decoupling them from their normative contents" (Börzel and Pamuk 2012, 80).

Was this the case in Ukraine? As this article demonstrates, despite limited formal Europeanization after 2004 enlargement and weak EU conditionality, the country's leadership and media actively promoted the concept of European identity and informal Europeanization. And although more research is needed to test causal relations between informal Europeanization and political values, this article shows that citizens' support for the EU, which increased after 2004, was correlated with liberal democratic values.

⁴ Except West Balkans.

EU and Ukraine Relations: Formal Europeanization

Although the question of Ukraine's future membership in the EU was not then discussed, in 1994 Ukraine signed the Partnership and Co-Cooperation Agreement (PCA).⁵ In 2003, the EU introduced the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) which was then launched in 2004 (Commission 2003). The main goal of the ENP was "to provide a framework for the development of a new relationship which would *not*, in the medium-term, include a perspective of membership or a role in the Union's institutions" (Commission 2003, 5). Since the EU was preoccupied with the future accession of ten new members,⁶ Ukraine was not a priority for that organization in the years leading up to the Orange revolution.

Nonetheless, the concept of European identity was reflected in the 2004 presidential election campaign of Viktor Yushchenko, the opposition candidate who competed against Prime Minister Yanukovich (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) 2005). Soon after his victory, newly elected President Yushchenko declared the Europeanization of Ukraine as one of his main priorities. In his inauguration speech in January, 2005, he declared:

Our way to the future is the way followed by United Europe. We are the people of the same civilization sharing the same values. History, economic prospects and the interests of people give a clear answer – where we should look for our fate. Our place is in the European Union. My goal is – Ukraine in United Europe (Ukrayinska Pravda 2005).

This optimism was not reciprocated by the EU. "The Orange Revolution presented the EU with a dilemma: despite the pan-European expression of support for democratization in Ukraine, there were divergences between member states on how to deal with Ukraine" (Wolczuk 2016, 61). Nevertheless, the ENP Action Plan was signed in February, 2005, one month after Yushchenko's inauguration speech. The ENP Action Plan contained two parts and included a list of priorities for Ukraine, such as free and fair elections, judicial reform and adoption of a nuclear waste strategy (Wolczuk 2009). Europe was absorbing its new states and recovering from the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty by France and the Netherlands in 2005 (Hobolt and Brouard 2010). Ukraine's desire to have a closer relationship with the EU beyond the ENP action plan, worried the EU (Averre 2005, 187). The EU switched towards a value-based foreign policy strategy, implemented through activities such as cultural and academic exchanges (Jarvie 2017).

In 2005, Ukraine did not meet the three Copenhagen criteria for accession, namely: 1) stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and respect for and protection of minorities; 2) market economy; and 3) administrative and institutional capacity to effectively implement EU *acquis*, and ability to take on the obligations of membership (Commission, European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement). The Ukrainian market economy was only partially developed, the rule of law was incomplete, and more importantly, the level of corruption was still high (Transparency International 2005). Nevertheless, the European Parliament passed a

⁵ "Partnership and co-operation agreement between the European Communities and their member states, and Ukraine," European Union, Communities, Council and Commission.

⁶ On May 01, 2004, eight countries of the Eastern Europe joined the European Union. For details about the EU Accession in Eastern Europe, see Raik (2004).

declaration calling for the European Council, the European Commission, and the EU member states to speed up the process of Ukraine's integration and possibly future EU membership (Hansen 2006, 124). In December of 2005, the Council of the European Union granted Ukraine Market Economy Status (Commission 2005).

The relations between Ukraine and the EU could have improved after the 2006 Ukrainian parliamentary election when the parties of the Orange team gained the majority of the seats. However, they failed to secure a parliamentary coalition and thus lost the position of Prime Minister to Viktor Yanukovich. Political infighting within Ukraine not only created an image problem for the country but decreased the EU's willingness to collaborate with Ukraine (Pridham 2011, 25). The EU-Ukraine Visa Liberalization Dialogue commenced in October 2008, which may be attributed in part to an external event. Conflict broke out between Georgia and Russia in August of 2008 over the territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The hostilities compelled the EU to reconsider its future policies towards the post-communist countries. As a result, the EU offered Ukraine the Eastern Partnership, which "was established in part as a response to the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008" (MacFarlane and Menon 2014, 96).

The Eastern Partnership, which was signed in May, 2009, provided Ukraine with the prospect of visa liberalization, signing of the Association Agreement, and opportunities for establishing Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTA) for partner countries (Council of European Union 2009). However, the prospect of political association for Ukraine was not a sufficiently strong incentive for reforms. For conditionality rules to be effective they should be stated in the official documents and legally specified in the EU *acquis* and International Treaties with the real prospect of integration to the EU (Langbein and Wolczuk 2012). This was not the case for signing the Association Agenda (AA). "Both the European Neighborhood Policy and Eastern Partnership avoided the question of potential enlargement to the states of this region. Instead, the EU offered 'association': closer political ties, deep and comprehensive free trade, and the possibility of visa liberalization" (MacFarlane and Menon 2014, 96). Within Ukraine, this created frustration regarding its prospects of joining the EU, thus causing negative feelings in the Ukrainian society and often leading to disappointment among its pro-European part (Moskalenko and Streltsov 2015, 112). The European Commission's many progress reports stated that Ukraine needed to undertake significant economic and democratic reforms prior to consideration of a possible future application for membership (Commission 2008, 2009a).

Relations between the EU and Ukraine deteriorated further after the 2010 presidential election that brought Viktor Yanukovich to power (Smith 2015). The election was recognized as fair and free by OSCE (OSCE 2010). Once in power, Yanukovich instituted constitutional changes to strengthen his power and took steps to improve fractured relations with Russia by signing the Kharkiv Agreement, which reduced the price of gas for Ukraine for the next 10 years from Russia in exchange for an extension of Russia's lease of the Sevastopol Naval base for the next 25 years.⁷ The opposition strongly criticized the Agreement since it was perceived by many inside and outside Ukraine as subordination to Russia (UNIAN 2010). However, Yanukovich,

⁷ On April 21, 2010, Yanukovich signed the Kharkiv Agreement, which reduced the price of gas for Ukraine for the next ten years from Russia in exchange for an extension of Russia's lease of the Sevastopol Naval base for the next 25 years (Pan 2010).

acknowledging Ukraine's economic dependence on Russia, was determined to strengthen Ukraine's relationship with its northern neighbor.

The European Commission's (2011) final progress report posited that the Ukrainian judicial system had still not been reformed after 20 years of independence (Commission 2012). Extensive corruption and an unfavorable environment for businesses were also cited as obstacles to Ukraine's future integration. In these circumstances, "the EU used the negotiation process on the Association Agreement to address the lack of democratic change" (Borzel and Lebanidze 2017, 19). In March 2012, the EU and Ukraine initialled the text of the Association Agreement and its DCFTA (Commission 2012), which indicated Ukraine's willingness to adhere to the priorities of the Agreement prior to its implementation in 2013. However, in the spring of 2013, the EU stated that "in 2012, Ukraine did not address most of the key recommendations contained in last year's European Neighbourhood Policy progress report" (Commission 2013, 3). Nevertheless, in February, 2013, President Yanukovich reaffirmed Ukraine's commitment to the signing of the Agreement by the time of Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius in November, 2013, thus promising formal Europeanization of Ukraine (Delegation of the European Union to Ukraine 2013).

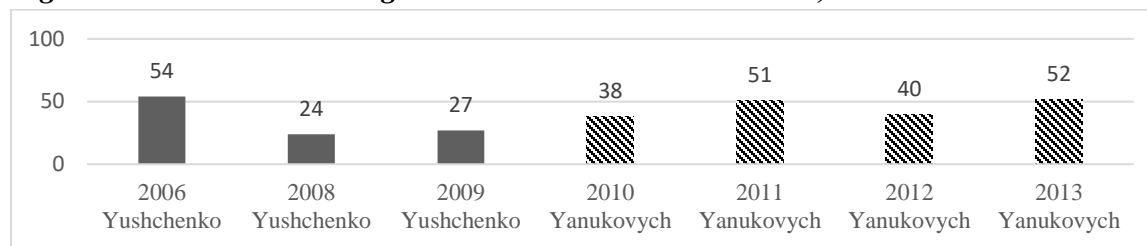
However, it was argued that "Yanukovich was spared to meet the demand of the EU to free Yulia Timoshenko and adopt an anti-corruption law and an election reform as the conditions for signing the Association Agreement" (Borzel 2015, 524). Instead he accepted Russia's economic support, including low gas prices and postponed the signing of the AA.

Euro-integration and Discursive Europeanization in Annual Presidential Addresses to the Parliament

Despite modest progress in the official relations between the EU and Ukraine, the EU, Euro-integration, and European identity were actively promoted by politicians for their electoral purposes. A contextual analysis of the annual speeches to parliament (*Verhovna Rada (Rada)*) of President Yushchenko and President Yanukovich between 2005 and 2013 reveals the extent of emphasis placed upon EU integration.⁸ Both presidents in their official annual addresses emphasized the importance of Euro-integration and collaboration with the EU and attempted to capitalize on the mechanism available to them to promote closer ties with the EU (Wolczuk 2016, 62). They also sought to promote the discourse of Ukraine Europeanization, thus signalling the country's European identity and belonging to the EU community.

The highest frequency for the root word 'Europe' was in 2006, one year after the Orange revolution. President Yushchenko, in his first official address to the Parliament, mentioned 54 times the words Europe, European, Euro-integration.

⁸ The author used the NVivo program to calculate the frequency of the words "Europa" (Europe), "Eurosoyuz" (European Union), "europeysky" (European) and "Euointegratsiya" (Euro-integration) among the top 1000 frequent words in each speech.

Figure 1: EU and Euro-integration in Presidential Addresses, 2005-2013

Data Source: This figure represents the frequency of the words “Europe”, “European Union”, “Euro-integration” and “European” in each presidential address among the top 1000 frequent words (using NVivo).

In 2007, the year after the Orange coalition collapsed, Yushchenko did not address the Parliament, in contravention of his constitutional obligation.⁹ In 2008 and 2009, the frequency of the mention of the topic of Eurointegration significantly decreased to 24 and 27. At the same time, President Yushchenko stated in his 2008 address: “[w]e are continuing the logic of geopolitical processes of United Europe. Ukraine has created conditions for democracy and freedom” (Rada 2008). Within the same speech, Yushchenko mentioned that “our middle term goal – progress in European and euro Atlantic integration as an indicator and results of real changes within the country.” In 2009, his last presidential speech, Yushchenko referred to Ukraine as a country that historically belonged to EU community. “We have continued global historical process of uniting Europe. Our integration into European and Euro Atlantic unions is not an abstract idea. Every step is a real return of Ukraine to European world” (Rada 2009).

Significantly, the references to the topic of the EU and Euro-integration were not limited to President Yushchenko, who was reputed to be pro-Western. In his first official address after his election in 2010, President Yanukovych employed the words EU, Europe, European and Euro-integration 38 times. Moreover, Yanukovych referred to Euro-integration, Europe and the EU, in higher numbers than his predecessor. In 2010, Yanukovych made the following comments:

The most important priority in our foreign policy was and is Euro-integration. Not only for the course of our foreign policy, but as a vector of our overall transformation. The most important question in our relationship with the EU is the signing of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, including the creation of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area and the implementation of a visa free regime (Rada 2010).

In 2011, Yanukovych mentioned the Association Agreement between the EU and Ukraine as a confirmed plan. “Today Ukraine is having active negotiations about this Agreement. Signing of this Agreement will create preconditions for Ukraine’s full integration into the European economic, social, cultural and legal community” (Glavnoe 2011). In 2013, the year of the Euromaidan, the frequency of the use of the words Euro-integration, Europe, and the EU in his annual address approached 2006 levels at 52 times. President Yanukovych stated that the “Signing of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU will promote economic growth and increase the welfare of Ukrainian citizens” (NISS 2013, 243). The discrepancy between

⁹ The Parliament implemented a Decree about Yushchenko not following the Constitution of Ukraine (Postanova Verkhovnoyi Rady 2007).

Yanukovich's statements and official actions in 2013, when he postponed the signing of the Association Agreement, led to political protests in 2013-2014.

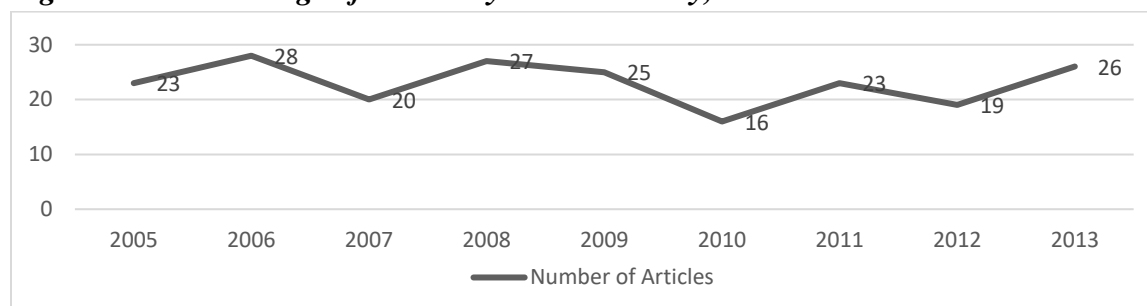
Discursive Europeanization in Ukrainian media

Beyond having two presidents who actively promoted the Europeanization of Ukraine, Euro-integration was also widely promoted by the Ukrainian media. For example, the national weekly newspaper *Dzerkalo Tyzhnya* (*Mirror Weekly*), extensively covered the topic of the EU and Ukraine's prospective membership in the first two years after the Orange revolution. Almost every issue from January to early July covered the EU, with generally positive coverage. Out of 51 issues in 2005, the EU was mentioned 23 times on the front pages.¹⁰ Terms including "positive signal", "membership", "hope", "the agreement", and "community" were mentioned in the titles of the articles. Such positive coverage continued in 2006, when the words EU, Euro-integration, and European were mentioned 28 times on the front pages. In 2007, the year when the Orange coalition collapsed, and the public was disappointed with the performance of the Orange team government, there was a decline in the coverage of the topic of the EU to 20 times. Titles such as "Asian EU", "the end of Euro-federalism", and "Euro-chaos" were published by the newspaper.

In 2008, the frequency of mentions increased to 27 times, which was almost at the 2006 level. Titles such as "Our future in the EU depends on ourselves", "Ukrainians want into the EU", "In support of the EU plans", and "Perspectives of the visa dialogue with the EU" appeared in connection to the Euro-integration. The coverage declined in 2009 and 2010, when the frequency was 25 and 16, respectively. The lowest frequency was observed in 2010, the year when Viktor Yanukovich was elected. The words EU and Euro-integration were mentioned 16 times in 49 issues. The tone of coverage also changed. Words such as "warning", "scary", "readmission", "concern" and "rethink" were used in the titles of the articles about EU in the newspaper.

Interestingly, the word Russia was mentioned twice in the titles of the articles about EU in 2010. In the three years leading to the Euromaidan, the frequency of use of the phrases EU and Euro-integration increased to 23, 19, and 26. However, it never reached the level of 2006. The coverage was also more critical of the Ukrainian government than previously. Titles such as "Yanukovich closed a window to Europe", "Europe gave Ukraine D for the fight against corruption", and "EU asked Kyiv to stop selective justice" appeared. The name of former Prime Minister Tymoshenko, who was imprisoned in 2011, appeared four times in the titles of the articles about the EU. In 2013, the newspaper coverage of the EU was intensive, especially in the months leading to the EU summit in Vilnius. Titles included, "The right choice – EU", "By foot to the EU", "Subway to Europe", "European parliament recommends signing", and "In Europe step by step-from visa-free to the association". Articles informed the public about the importance of signing the Association Agreement, thus increasing pressure on the government to sign it.

¹⁰ The search words were the same as for the analysis of the Presidential speeches: "eurosoyuz" (European Union), "Europa" (Europe), "europeyskiy" (European) and "Eurointegratsiya" (Euro-integration).

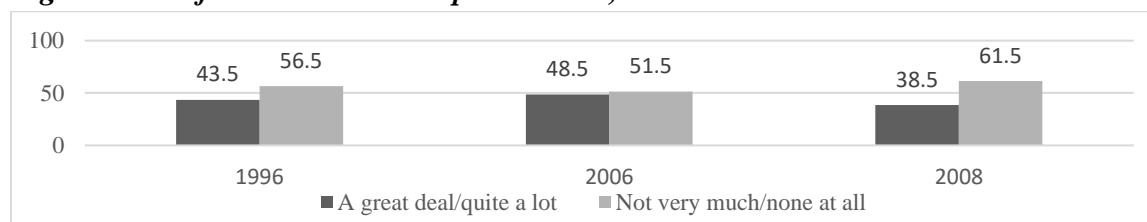
Figure 2: The Coverage of the EU by Mirror Weekly, 2005-2013

Data Source: the figure was created by the author based on the analysis of the frequency of the articles on the front pages of the newspapers. The articles for 2013 did not include the month of December when Euromaidan started.

The Ukrainian media not only raised awareness of the ‘Europeanization’ in Ukraine after the Orange Revolution, but they informed Ukrainians about the choices of the Ukrainian government concerning the EU. Hence, favorable coverage of the EU and Ukraine’s potential to join the EU may have influenced citizens’ perceptions of ‘belonging’ to the EU after the Orange revolution. The negative and more pessimistic tone about Ukraine’s prospects in the EU in the years leading to the Euromaidan, combined with criticism of the government’s ineffectiveness, could have made citizens more willing to unite against the government in 2013.

Citizens’ confidence in the EU and political identities

Citizens’ perceptions of the EU, and their degree of identification with the EU, differed over time. The results of the World Values Survey (WVS) before and after the Orange revolution (1996 and 2006) and the 2008 European Values (EV) survey of public opinion in Ukraine showed that the percentage of citizens who had “great deal or quite a lot” of confidence in the EU increased from 43.5 percent in 1996 to 48.5 percent in 2006. In 2008, confidence in the EU decreased by 10 percent to 38.5 percent, the lowest since 1996. Importantly, the majority of Ukrainians nationwide did not have confidence in the EU.

Figure 3: Confidence in the European Union, 1996 - 2008

Data Source: the figure was created by the author based on the results of online analysis of the WVS (1996, 2006) and EVS (2008) in Ukraine. The survey question asked was: “I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?” The [European Union].

Across the regions, Western Ukraine, due to its history and closer geographic proximity to the EU,¹¹ had the highest level of confidence in the EU, with 70.1 percent expressing high confidence in the EU. The lowest confidence was in Eastern and Southern Ukraine, regions that historically

¹¹ The region of Galicia (Western Ukraine) was part of Austro-Hungarian Empire and later Poland.

belonged to the territories of the Russian Empire prior to the 1917 revolution, and to the Soviet Union after 1921. These also were the regions that experienced the largest decline in the level of confidence in the EU between 1996 and 2006.

Young citizens expressed high levels of confidence in the EU in 1996, but not in 2006. In 2006, the highest confidence in the EU was found in the 30-49 year-olds, (the group that was 18-25 in 1996). Before and after the Orange Revolution, Ukrainians with the highest level of education (university complete) expressed the highest level of confidence in the EU in comparison to those with primary and secondary level of education.

Table 1: Confidence in the EU (region, education and age) 1996- 2006

1996					
REGION	Western	Eastern	Central	Southern	
A great deal/quite a lot	70.1	55.2	66.9	65.5	
AGE	18-25	26-36	36-47	48-58	59-69
A great deal/quite a lot	80.3	71.4	79.5	72.9	71.4
EDUCATION	Primary	Secondary	University complete		
A great deal/quite a lot	60.4	74.3	75.5		
2006					
REGION	Western	Eastern	Central	Southern	
A great deal/quite a lot	82.8	37.1	57.7	53.6	
AGE	Up to 29	30-49	50 and up		
A great deal/quite a lot	54	61.4	54.6		
EDUCATION	Primary	Secondary	University complete		
A great deal/quite a lot	12.2	52.9	68		
2008					
REGION	Western	Eastern	Central	Southern	
A great deal/quite a lot	70.5	26.3	44.2	23	
AGE					
A great deal/quite a lot					
EDUCATION	Primary	Secondary	University Complete		
A great deal/quite a lot	18.2	31.6	71.4		

Data Source: created by the author based on data from WVS and EVS. The question was asked as followed: "I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all? The [European Union]. The table represents the category "a great deal" and "Quite a lot" combined.

Public opinion regarding the potential membership in the EU after the Orange revolution, revealed differences based on age, education, language at home, and region of residence. Respondents with higher levels of education, and who spoke Ukrainian at home supported the membership in the EU. The lowest support was observed in the Eastern and Southern regions and among those who spoke Russian as the primary language at home.

Table 2: Membership in the EU, 2008

EDUCATION	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary complete	Secondary and specialized	University incomplete	University complete
Would vote in favor	20.3	40.7	44.7	38.4	46.4	45.1
Would vote against	23.2	23.1	30.9	27.3	30.4	28.3
AGE	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+		
Would vote in favor	45	41.2	41.7	35.7		
Would vote against	22.1	31.6	28.1	28.4		
LANGUAGE AT HOME	Ukrainian	Russian				
Would vote in favor	52.5	27.2				
Would vote against	17.3	38.6				
REGION	Western	Central	Southern	Eastern	Kyiv	
Would vote in favor	78.8	72	44.7	38.4	77.8	
Would vote against	21.2	28	55.3	61.6	22.2	

Data Source: table created by the author based on data files from IFES (2008).

The next step in examining political identities is to assess whether citizens' level of confidence in the EU was associated with their political orientations and actions. Table 3 illustrates that Ukrainians who expressed a prominent level of confidence in the EU reported higher levels of interest in politics, higher levels of interpersonal trust, and higher levels of political participation. They also had a higher level of national pride in comparison to those who did not have confidence in the EU. Higher confidence in the EU was also correlated with a higher level of intolerance for accepting bribes. These differences in political orientations of Ukrainians increased in 2006. The results of the Chi-square test of independence indicated that there were relationships between confidence in the EU and political values and orientations in 1996 and 2006 that were statistically significant for some categories. For example, confidence in the EU in 1996 was positively correlated with the following characteristics and actions: trust in people of another religion and race, intolerance for accepting a bribe, signing a petition and attending peaceful demonstrations. In 2006, confidence in the EU was positively correlated with membership in different forms of organizations (labour unions, art clubs, and charitable and professional organizations) as well as with interpersonal trust and participation in political activities

Table 3: Confidence in the EU/Political Orientations, Values and Actions, 1996-2006

DV/IV	EU (a great deal/a lot)	EU (not very much/not at all)	Chi- square test p-value	EU (a great deal/a lot)	EU (not very much/not at all)	Chi- square test p- value
	1996	1996		2006	2006	
Interest in politics (very interested and somewhat interested)	49.4	39.1	.000	58.5	46.2	.001
How proud of nationality? (very and quite proud)	67.7	60.3	.009	80.2	68.4	.000
Membership of labor unions	36.6	37	.647	24.2	20.3	.310
Membership of political party	2.4	2.4	.310	10.8	4.7	.003
Membership of professional organizations	3.1	3.1	.262	8.4	6.4	.032
Membership of church or religious organization	9.8	9.4	.186	20.9	14.6	.035
Most people can be trusted	34.4	28.9	.026	36	23.6	.000
Trust: your family	n/a	n/a		97.8	97.4	.742
Trust: people you know personally	n/a	n/a		86.3	81.4	.151
Trust: people you meet for the first time	n/a	n/a		23.9	16.1	.043
Trust: people of another religion	n/a	n/a		51	29.5	.000
Trust: people of another nationality	n/a	n/a		55.5	34	.000
Justified: claiming government benefits for each you are not entitled (category 1- never justified)	42	42.7	.738	43	35	.417
Justified: avoiding a fare on public transport	27.8	27.9	.114	31.9	29.5	.209
Justified: cheating on taxes	41.3	39.8	.036	38.2	33.3	.322
Justified: someone accepting a bribe	72.7	67.4	.000	55.2	48.5	.032
Justified: homosexuality	68.3	67	.087	51.6	51.8	.232
Justified: abortion	30.4	27	.443	28.4	31.3	.020
Justified: divorce	16.9	18.6	.265	18.5	19.9	.066
Political action recently done: signing a petition	17.6	15.1	.000	8	8.1	.975
Political action recently done: joining in boycotts	4.8	5.7	.124	3.3	3.3	.982
Political action recently done: attending peaceful demonstrations	22	19.3	.005	23.3	12.6	.000
Men make better political leaders than women?	62.8	60.3	.013	53	50.5	.370
Having a strong leader is better	54.7	56.5	.002	66.5	63.7	.245
Education (complete university)	23.4	22.9	.839	35.6	25.6	.037
Number of cases	955	548		361	396	

Data Source: table was created by the author based on the data filed from WVS (1996, 2006). The cases were selected in two groups: 1 (great deal and/ a lot) and 2 (not very much, not at all). For a level of trust, the percentage represents those who answered, "trust completely" and "somewhat" combined. For questions on Justifiability, the percentage represents those who answered category 1- never. (the questions were recorded from 1 to 10, where 1 – never justified and 10-always justified).

Why are these findings important? Ukrainians who had confidence in the EU showed more democratic political orientations in comparison to those who did not have confidence or who had low confidence in the EU. Ukrainians who expressed confidence in the EU were more politically aware, political competent, and consequently politically active. These are orientations that perceived as democratic (Norris 1999; 2011). They are also orientations that are associated with values and norms that are promoted by the EU. As stated in 1993 at the Copenhagen European Council on the EU membership, “[m]embership requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities and market economy” (European Council 1993,13). Moreover, according to Kataryna Wolczuk, “[w]hile there are significant cultural disparities within the EU, key shared European values – liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law – have been defined as what turns the participating states into a community” (2016, 64). It is evident that Ukrainian citizens who had confidence in the EU expressed higher support for liberal values that are promoted by the EU. The association between the confidence in the EU and democratic political orientations of Ukrainians after the Orange revolution became even stronger. Those who expressed higher confidence in the EU increased their trust in people, whereas those who had low or no confidence in the EU decreased their trust towards people. Furthermore, the confidence in the EU in 2006 was positively correlated with the variable “I see myself as a citizen of the European Union.” This indicates that those who expressed support for the EU also were more likely to perceive themselves as citizens of the European community.

Table 4: Correlation between confidence in the EU and citizens’ perception of belonging to the EU, 2006

	1	2
1. Confidence in the EU446**
2. I see myself as a citizen of the EU	.446**	...

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, $p < .001$, 2-tailed

Data Source: table was created by the author based on the data filed from WVS 2006

Ukrainians who had higher confidence in the EU not only possessed more democratic orientations and values, but they also perceived themselves as belonging to the “community of the European Union” (Schimmelfennig 2001). And although this group of citizens was in the minority in comparison to the whole population, they expressed values and orientations that are common to the EU normative principles. At the same time, the data showed no difference in stated tolerance of gender equality and homosexuality – attitudes that are associated with a population that is more accepting and are indicative of democratic changes (Inglehart and Welzel 2003). Ukrainians also had high tolerance towards unlawful actions such as accepting bribes and cheating on taxes between 1996 and 2006, indicating that they have not developed strong preferences for the normative rules and principles of obedience.

In the year of 2013, when asked if Ukraine would be better off if it had closer economic relations with Europe or Russia, 39.1 percent of Ukrainians chose Europe and 37.3 percent chose Russia. However, when testing for correlations between support for Europe or Russia and political orientations and values, the results show that those who chose closer collaboration with Europe once again had higher level of education, were younger, were more often employed full time, and spoke Ukrainian at home. They also expressed higher interest in politics and political activities. The biggest difference was observed in responses relating to the justification of actions such as limiting the rights of citizens to protest and limiting freedom of the media. The majority of those

who supported closer collaboration with Russia (82.7 percent and 72.3 percent) agreed with limitations to these freedoms. Among those who supported closer collaboration with Europe, only 17.3 percent and 27.2 percent agreed with such limitations. This group of citizens also expressed higher levels of political efficacy and support for democratic freedoms – core values of the European Union *Community*.

Table 5: Support for EU versus Russia and Political Orientations, Values and Actions, 2013

DV/IV	Europe	Russia	Chi-square, p value
Interest in politics (very interested and somewhat interested)	65	56.2	.006
Membership of labor unions	7.1	11.7	.000
Membership of political party	1.4	4.6	.000
Membership of church or religious organization	1	.3	.000
Justified: limit the rights of citizens to protest (category 1- justified)	17.3	82.7	.000
Justified: limit freedom of the media	27.2	72.3	.000
Justified: limit authority of the courts	41.7	58.3	.081
It is more important that political leaders maintain order than protect democratic rights of citizens (Strongly agree and somewhat agree)	38	65.1	.000
How necessary are non-government organizations or NGOs for Ukraine (Essential and Necessary combined)	87.3	80.3	.001
People like you can have influence on decisions made by the government (strongly agree and somewhat agree)	23.5	16.7	.078
I have a role to play in solving problems in my country (strongly agree and somewhat agree)	25.3	20.2	.030
Political action recently done: signing a petition	8	10.6	.104
Political action recently done: attending peaceful demonstrations or protests	17.7	10.2	.002
Political action recently done: using social media to express your views on political issues	8.3	3.2	.000
What is your employment (full time at one job)	38.5	37.9	.000
Education (complete university)	33.8	25.2	.000
Age group			.000
18-29	30	16.1	
30-44	30.3	26.9	
45-59	21.2	23	
60+	18.5	34	
Number of cases	528	498	1026

Data Source: table was created by the author based on the data filed from IFES (2013). The cases were selected in two groups: 1 (closer collaboration with Europe) and 2 (closer collaboration with Russia). For questions on Justifiability, the percentage represents those who answered category 1-justified.

These findings may help to explain the November 2013 protests following President Yanukovich's decision to postpone the signing of the Association Agreement with the EU. Those citizens who supported closer collaboration with Europe, according to the data, possessed intolerance towards injustice and corruption and supported democratic freedoms, which are the core principles of the EU. In combination with a higher level of interest in politics, and higher levels of political efficacy and participation, they could express their readiness to stand for their values and for their place in the European community.¹² Yet the official Europeanization on the part of the EU, and the Ukrainian government's implementation of political and economic reforms that would speed up the process of country's democratization, was missing.

¹²According to Olga Onuch (2014), who interviewed 1304 protesters between 26 November, 2013 and 10 January, 2014 in Kyiv, the early protesters solely focused on supporting closer EU ties.

Conclusion

The conditionality rules that were applied by the EU before the 2004 enlargement were based on official criteria of assessment and unofficial rules of belonging to Europe. Although they were not easy to achieve, the incentive of membership encouraged candidate countries to follow these rules.

In Ukraine, after the Orange revolution, the EU refrained from the use of active leverage towards Ukraine, which would have required particular programs and policies for future implementation. Instead, the EU employed soft power of membership aspiration, built on a commitment to shared values such as democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, without the promise of potential membership (Kubicek 2017). Although Ukraine's future membership in the EU was not discussed, the discourse of Ukraine's Europeanization was actively promoted and implemented within the country. As this research has demonstrated, the idealistic image of the EU and its prosperity was actively promoted by President Yushchenko and later President Yanukovich as well as by the Ukrainian media. Both Presidents used the idea of Ukraine's future within the EU for political and electoral purposes. It was built on the ideas of European values and beliefs and their similarities with Ukrainian values and orientations and through the enticing practical possibility of visa-free travel to countries of the Schengen zone for Ukrainians.

A comparison of political orientations of Ukrainians based on their level of confidence in the EU before and after the Orange revolution showed that there was a correlation between confidence in the EU and more democratic political orientations. Some Ukrainians reported increased confidence in the EU as well as identification with EU liberal values such as support for democratic freedoms and rights, and intolerance of injustice. Those who showed higher confidence in the EU had a higher level of interest in politics, higher membership in the socio-political groups, higher political participation, tolerance, and level of trust towards other people. The confidence in the EU was also positively correlated with citizens' perception of their belonging to the EU. The highest level of confidence in the EU was observed among the young citizens who possessed high levels of education, resided in Western or Central regions, and were fully employed. This group of citizens also expressed high level of political awareness, political efficacy, and political participation in 2013, the year of Euromaidan. At the same time, Ukrainians expressed a mixed of materialist and post-materialist orientations, which are associated with lesser developed democracies and unstable economies (Inglehart and Welzel 2003).

The main findings of this research indicate that the EU soft power of attractiveness was an effective tool that was used by political elites and media in Ukraine to promote discursive Europeanization without the implementation of formal Europeanization, which was too costly to achieve without strong incentives from the EU. In these circumstances, it is essential to increase the credibility of political and economic conditionality of the EU by offering a membership perspective. Otherwise the EU is missing an opportunity to increase its transformative impact (Börzel and Schimmelfennig 2017) and domestic elites may take much longer time to introduce reforms and fulfil the requirements of the EU (Moravcsik and Vachudova 2005) because "[t]he cultural and legal dimensions of inclusion do not compensate for the geopolitical exclusion" (Wolczuk 2016, 70).

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Published by the Centre for European Studies at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada

Available online at: <https://ojs.library.carleton.ca/index.php/CJERS/index>

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ISSN: 2562-8429
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