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## COOPERATION OF UKRAINE WITH EU AND NATO ON COMBATTING THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION HYBRID THREATS

Global trends in the development and transformation of military conflicts into “hybrid wars” in the world in the 21st century are changing the structure of world politics. Hybrid war not only changes the principles of military confrontation, but also distorts the difference between the state of war and peace in their classic sense. For a reason the conflict in Ukraine in 2015 was identified at the NATO Advanced Research Workshop (ARW) (Bucharest, Romania) as the most serious geopolitical crisis since the end of the Cold War in Central and Eastern Europe, the consequences of which extend far beyond Ukraine<sup>1</sup>.

With the onset of aggression by the Russian Federation, Ukraine felt the danger of hybrid threats: the annexation of Crimea, the start of the war in Donbas, economic sanctions, subversive activities of special services in Ukraine, the start of a large-scale information campaign to discredit Ukraine – all these are just Kremlin tools in a hybrid war against the Ukrainian state and society. It is impossible to resist it on its own, so the extremely important task for the Ukrainian foreign policy is to unite efforts in this fight with the European and Euro-Atlantic communities, adoption and use of the developed methods and technologies to counter hybrid threats, so there is a task of rethinking the real state policy of Ukraine in this direction during the period of open aggression of the Russian Federation in the period of 2014–2021.

Despite a quite thorough analysis of hybrid threats in the works of such researchers as M. Galeotti, F. Hoffman, R. Walker, V. Gerasimov, A. Datsenko, O. Kuchmiy,

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<sup>1</sup> *Countering Hybrid Threats: Lessons Learned from Ukraine*, dostępny w World Wide Web: [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_142012.htm?selectedLocale=en](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_142012.htm?selectedLocale=en)

E. Makarenko, A. Martynenko, V. Petrov, K. Paul et al., collective works of research institutes and think tanks, the issues of establishing contacts and joint activities of Ukraine, the EU and NATO in the combat against hybrid aggression remain insufficiently discussed, which led the authors to address this topic.

*The purpose of the article* is to study the cooperation of Ukraine with the EU and NATO on combating hybrid threats from the Russian Federation. To achieve this goal, the following objectives were identified:

- to monitor the formation of legal and institutional support for combating hybrid threats in Ukraine;
- to analyze the effectiveness and prospects of cooperation between the state institutions of Ukraine, the EU and NATO in such counteraction.

*The methodological basis* of this study is the theory of realism, neoliberalism, the concept of hybrid warfare, “soft power” using historical, comparative, statistical and other methods.

In recent years, Russia’s current top authority has seen its foreign policy relations with the West through the prism of a hybrid war. These are the EU and NATO countries, not Ukraine, that are Russia’s main rivals, whose leaders, by their own logic, believe that they are protecting themselves from hybrid aggression by the West and are therefore forced to take measures and countermeasures to defend themselves. However, whatever the logic of high-ranking Kremlin officials, the fact remains that EU and NATO countries have also become targets for hybrid attacks, which is an additional argument for closer cooperation with Ukraine.

Russia’s plans for the West are much more moderate than, for example, in the case of Ukraine, but they are still quite ambitious. According to Razumkov Center experts: “The tactical tasks of the Russian hybrid aggression are to gradually discredit and erode the basic European values that unite the EU countries, disorient public opinion, form an influential pro-Russian lobby in the European establishment, and deepen differences between the European countries and EU institutions. In other words, it is no longer a question of counteracting European influence in the post-Soviet space, the Kremlin’s area of privileged interests, but of conducting large-scale hybrid expansion in the EU in order to weaken / fragment (disintegrate) the European Union, minimize the American presence on the continent and redesigning of established European political order according to the Russian scenario”<sup>2</sup>.

Among other purposes, Moscow uses other methods and means of aggression. If against Ukraine the Kremlin actively uses military force and the Eastern territories

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<sup>2</sup> Національна безпека і оборона : журнал / за ред. А.Чернова та ін. Київ: Укр. центр економічних і політичних досліджень ім. Олександра Разумкова, 2016, № 9/10 (167/168), с. 2–3.

of our state still serve as a training ground for the Russian military, then Russia, for objective reasons, did not dare to open confrontation with the West, preferring non-military methods. Experts consider the most dangerous means of hybrid aggression against the EU countries to be: the formation of a pro-Russian political lobby, financial assistance to pro-Russian political forces, interference in electoral processes, informational influence, the activities of special services, and cyberattacks<sup>3</sup>.

In the early stages of hybrid aggression, the EU and NATO failed to adequately respond to hybrid threats, but over time the Western community began to adapt to the hybrid Kremlin reality. This, in particular, concerns the problem of studying hybrid warfare and its further conceptualization into strategic documents in the field of governance. If in Ukraine, after seven years of aggression in this direction, the situation is unsatisfactory, the West is ahead in this matter. Back in 2010, NATO published a document entitled "NATO Capstone Concept for The Military Contribution to Countering Hybrid Threats", which defines: "Hybrid threats are those posed by adversaries, with the ability to simultaneously employ conventional and non-conventional means adaptively in pursuit of their objectives"<sup>4</sup>. Since then, hybrid issues have been quite common in official NATO documents, especially in recent years, and more recently in the context of Ukraine itself.

After the start of the Russian-Ukrainian war, the most important legal documents determining the possibility of such cooperation were adopted on May 6, 2015. Euro-Atlantic integration as a key factor for Ukraine's independence and future development was determined as the main strategic direction of Ukraine's foreign policy in the National Security Strategy of Ukraine<sup>5</sup>. A significant disadvantage of the strategy is the focus on fairly common and standard methods and directions of foreign policy, even the very mention of hybrid war in the text appears only once. Similar problems exist in the Military Doctrine of Ukraine of September 9, 2015<sup>6</sup>, in which the concept of hybrid warfare is completely absent. However, in the list of current trends in the security environment there is a definition that can be generally attributed to the concept of hybrid war: "the transfer of focus in military conflicts to the

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, с. 42.

<sup>4</sup> *Bi-SC Input for a New Capstone Concept for the Military Contribution to Countering Hybrid Threats*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, August 25, 2010, p. 2, dostępny w World Wide Web: [https://www.act.nato.int/images/stories/events/2010/20100826\\_bi-sc\\_cht.pdf](https://www.act.nato.int/images/stories/events/2010/20100826_bi-sc_cht.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> *Про рішення Ради національної безпеки і оборони України від 6 травня 2015 року «Про Стратегію національної безпеки України»*: Указ Президента України від 6.05.2015 р. № 287/2015, dostępny w World Wide Web: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/287/2015/ed20200916#Text>

<sup>6</sup> *Про нову редакцію Воєнної доктрини України*: Указ Президента України «Про рішення Ради національної безпеки і оборони України» від 2.09.2015 року № 555/2015, dostępny w World Wide Web: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/555/2015>

asymmetric use of military force by armed groups, shifting the emphasis in military conflicts instruments (economic, political, informational and psychological, etc.), which fundamentally changes the nature of the armed struggle”<sup>7</sup>.

Only in March 2021, the Ukrainian authorities adopted the Strategy of Military Security of Ukraine (signed), which finally states the existence of a hybrid war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which is conducted in the form of a combination of various actions for covert use of regular troops (forces), illegal armed groups and terrorist organizations, use of propaganda, sabotage, terror, subversions, intentional harm to citizens, legal entities and state property in Ukraine”<sup>8</sup>. All these actions are aimed not only at capturing the territory, but also at destabilizing the socio-political situation “by slowing down socio-economic development, European and Euro-Atlantic integration, and restoring its influence in Ukraine”<sup>9</sup>. There is an important clarification: the Strategy emphasizes the need to coordinate measures in case of aggression or armed conflict “with measures taken to support Ukraine by the institutions of the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and their member states, other states and international organizations”<sup>10</sup>, the application of effective defense management based on “democratic civilian control, other Euro-Atlantic principles and standards, innovative solutions and modern business practices, program and project management of defense resources, improved processes for identifying and meeting Ukraine’s defense needs”<sup>11</sup>, which will ultimately lead to compliance of national defense forces with the criteria of Ukraine’s full membership in NATO, further integration into European security structures, pragmatic international defense cooperation. The need to ensure cybersecurity and cyber defense of Ukraine, the importance of international technical assistance and support to partner countries “in military education and training of troops (forces), improvement of control systems, automation, logistics, medical and other support, development of military-technical cooperation were especially emphasized”<sup>12</sup>. The significant role of the diplomatic service in restoring the territorial integrity of Ukraine, the need to take into account the experience of countering the hybrid war against Ukraine, in the Middle East for the defense of the state were also mentioned. In general, this document is much more progressive than the previous ones.

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>8</sup> *Стратегія воєнної безпеки України. Воєнна безпека – всеохоплююча оборона. Затверджена Указом Президента України від 25 березня 2021 року № 121/2021, Dostępny w World Wide Web: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/121/2021#n8>*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem.*

At the same time, the Strategy of Public Diplomacy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine for 2021–2025<sup>13</sup> was adopted, which states the possibility of using the tools of cultural and expert diplomacy to promote the topic of countering Russian aggression, in particular on issues of deoccupation, human rights violations, misinformation, for politicians, civil servants, experts and scholars of foreign countries, within international organizations, etc. At the time of the adoption of the Strategy, the political establishment of the state recognized that its success is possible only with the political will of the government and support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, because of external armed aggression, occupation of part of the territory, populism of government decisions, lack of trust to government authorities, reforms slowdown, immediate European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine is out of step with the time. It is significant that the existing threats to public diplomacy include disinformation attacks and hybrid forms of war on the part of the Russian Federation, and the strategic goals are to ensure that Ukraine is perceived in the world “as a democratic European country moving towards full membership in the EU and NATO in the conditions of external aggression”<sup>14</sup>.

Adoption of the above documents became possible after the new leadership of Ukraine (since 2019 – President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky) realized the need to intensify Ukraine’s relations with the EU and NATO, which changed dramatically in 2020, when it received NATO status with enhanced capabilities, proposals of Ukraine was taken into account in developing its strategic program until 2030, and the dialogue on the Association Agreement and Ukraine’s accession to the European Green Course was resumed. According to Olha Stefanishyna, Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, for the first time European integration issues have been given priority at the governmental, parliamentary and presidential levels<sup>15</sup>. However, the Ukrainian authorities are in no hurry to comply with the requirements of Western partners to create an inclusive political system and implement NATO principles.

Similar dynamics was present in relation to Ukraine and in terms of recognizing / perceiving hybrid aggression as a threat not only to it but also to the EU. The European Union has adopted a number of documents in this area in recent years,

<sup>13</sup> *Стратегія публічної дипломатії Міністерства закордонних справ України / 2021-2025*. Ухвалена Наказом МЗС від 24.03.2021, доступny w World Wide Web: <https://mfa.gov.ua/storage/app/sites/1/%D0%A1%D1%82%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%B3%D1%96%D1%97/public-diplomacy-strategy.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>15</sup> Ольга Стефанішина. *Новий рівень відносин: як минулий рік змінив співпрацю України з ЄС та НАТО*. 29 січня 2021, доступny w World Wide Web: <https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/articles/2021/01/29/7119111/>

for example, the Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats (2016), which contains a European vision of the concept of hybrid warfare, identifies main areas that are most vulnerable to hybrid threats and contains ways to counter them<sup>16</sup>. However, the authors of the document evade the statement of who is the source of hybrid threats, only briefly pointing out at the beginning that the main challenges for the EU come from the eastern and southern borders<sup>17</sup>. The EU's global strategy, adopted the same year, already makes it clearer: "Russia's violation of international law and the destabilization of Ukraine, over the protracted conflicts in the Black Sea region as a whole, have challenged the basis of the European security order"<sup>18</sup>. However, the EU has not given up trying to engage in dialogue with Russia on some issues. Hybrid threats have prompted the EU to work more closely with NATO. For example, the European Parliament's report "Countering Hybrid Threats: EU-NATO Cooperation" identifies the foundations of this cooperation, and hybrid threats to Europe are directly linked to the activities of Russia and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)<sup>19</sup>.

In addition to the development of the conceptual framework for combating hybrid threats, the EU institutional structure is also developing. In particular, the EU Hybrid Threat Analysis Center, which collects and analyzes information on hybrid dangers that pose a threat to the EU institutions and EU member states, has been established at the EU Intelligence and Situation Center, which operates under the European External Action Service. Besides, a joint EU-NATO information and analysis center called the European Center for Hybrid Threat Research has been opened in Finland<sup>20</sup>.

A similar format of cooperation is formally used in Ukraine as well. The Ukraine-NATO platform for studying the experience of hybrid warfare in Ukraine has been operating for the last few years and is coordinated by the Government Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of the Cabinet of Ministers, but the real achievements of this platform are meager<sup>21</sup>. Instead of creating

<sup>16</sup> *Joint Communication of the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European Parliament and the Council of 6 April 2016 entitled 'Joint framework on countering hybrid threats: a European Union response'* (JOIN(2016)0018) 18 p., dostępny w World Wide Web: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52016JC0018&from=EN>

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>18</sup> *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe*. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy. June 2016. 60 p., dostępny w World Wide Web: [https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/top\\_stories/pdf/eugs\\_review\\_web.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/top_stories/pdf/eugs_review_web.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> *Countering hybrid threats: EU-NATO cooperation*, p. 2, dostępny w World Wide Web: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/599315/EPRS\\_BRI\(2017\)599315\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/599315/EPRS_BRI(2017)599315_EN.pdf).

<sup>20</sup> Мартинюк В. ЄС у протидії гібридним загрозам та Україна: нечіткість у підходах, dostępny w World Wide Web: [https://zn.ua/ukr/internal/yes-u-protidii-gibridnim-zagrozh-ta-ukrayina-nechitkist-u-pidhodah-253570\\_.html](https://zn.ua/ukr/internal/yes-u-protidii-gibridnim-zagrozh-ta-ukrayina-nechitkist-u-pidhodah-253570_.html)

<sup>21</sup> Співробітництво у сфері оборони та безпеки, dostępny w World Wide Web: <https://nato.mfa.gov.ua/ukrayina-ta-nato/spivrobitnictvo-u-sferi-oboroni-ta-bezpeki>



a powerful information and analytical center following the example of the EU and NATO, the achievements of this platform are limited to individual research projects, such as a joint international conference on this topic<sup>22</sup>. However, after the change of leadership in October 2019, the desire of NATO member countries to maintain and intensify these relations was confirmed: especially as for strengthening Ukraine's resilience to hybrid threats<sup>23</sup>.

The non-use of such a format of cooperation can be explained by many reasons, ranging from the "traditional unpopularity" of involving information and analytical centers in the development of decisions and policies in Ukraine to the trivial lack of funding for such projects.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its structural subdivisions and representations such as the EU and NATO Department and the Mission of Ukraine to NATO, as well as the Representation of Ukraine to the EU, have a key role in the formation, implementation and coordination of foreign policy activities in Ukraine. In addition, the Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration plays a key role (until 2017 – the Government Office for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration). It should be noted that in recent years in most ministries and other central executive bodies, separate structural units were established, which were responsible for the implementation of programs in the framework of the European and Euro-Atlantic integration, which are overseen by relevant deputy ministers.

In order to improve the system of coordination of the state apparatus within the framework of the Euro-Atlantic integration and implementation of NATO's annual national programs (which will be discussed below), a special coordination commission under the President P. Poroshenko was set up in 2016. It was headed by Ivanna Klymush-Tsintsadze, the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration and Vadym Prystaiko, then Deputy Chairman and Chief of Staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs became the coordinator in the foreign policy sphere<sup>24</sup>.

One of the key areas of cooperation between Ukraine and NATO in combating hybrid threats is implementation of the annual national programs under the auspices of the NATO – Ukraine Commission. According to analysts, about

<sup>22</sup> Про підготовку та проведення міжнародної конференції "Уроки гібридного десятиліття: що треба знати для руху вперед": Розпорядження Кабінету Міністрів України від 4.07.2018 року, № 471-р, доступny w World Wide Web: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/471-2018-p/ed20180704#n10>

<sup>23</sup> Statement of the NATO-Ukraine Commission. Kyiv, 31 October 2019, доступny w World Wide Web: [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_170408.htm?selectedLocale=en](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_170408.htm?selectedLocale=en)

<sup>24</sup> Питання координації євроатлантичної інтеграції України: Указ Президента від 8.07.2016 № 296/2016, доступny w World Wide Web: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/296/2016/ed20160708#Text>

60% of the measures of these programs are related to non-military cooperation<sup>25</sup> and affect such important areas in a hybrid war as economic and energy security, combating information and cyber threats, and more. These programs have existed in Ukraine for more than a year, but for many years their coordination and implementation have been rather weak. Qualitative changes in this direction began at the end of 2016, when the Decree of the President of Ukraine changed the management structure for the implementation of these programs. Formally, the Cabinet of Ministers coordinated the programs, but the key role and the largest amount of work in it was actually transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs<sup>26</sup>, and a certain system for evaluating the implementation of these programs was developed and requirements for project development were more clearly defined.

Improvements in the management and coordination system, as well as the presence of some interest in this topic by politicians and managers have brought some results. In particular, in 2018, the annual program of cooperation between Ukraine and NATO in 2017 was fulfilled by 82%, namely, 307 out of 375 activities planned for the year were carried out<sup>27</sup>. It should be noted that holding of the various events – mainly trainings, seminars or conferences, as well as various consultations, is one of the main forms of Ukraine's cooperation with NATO, both in the format of Annual National Programs and other formats of cooperation. Particularly relevant for Ukraine is the implementation of the Science for Peace and Security (SPS) program, in the framework of more than 33 different projects are put into effect – the largest number among other recipients of the NATO SPS program<sup>28</sup>. The same program assists in the joint development of a hybrid threat early warning system for Ukraine and Lithuania<sup>29</sup>. In addition, quite successful interaction takes place within the framework of the Platform for Counteracting Hybrid Threats.

Already at the end of 2018, there were made other changes in governance in the development of annual national programs under the auspices of the NATO-Ukraine Commission. The key coordinating role here remained with the government, most of the work was transferred from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to

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<sup>25</sup> Аналітична записка: Україна – НАТО: Невійськова співпраця і спільна відповідь на гібридні загрози, с. 2, доступny w World Wide Web: [https://www.kas.de/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=6005a2fa-2bb8-6db6-800b-2cc792ae62d8&groupId=252038](https://www.kas.de/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=6005a2fa-2bb8-6db6-800b-2cc792ae62d8&groupId=252038)

<sup>26</sup> Про річні національні програми під егідою Комісії Україна – НАТО : Указ Президента від 7.11.2016 р. № 547/2016, доступny w World Wide Web: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/547/2016#Text>

<sup>27</sup> Річна програма співпраці України з НАТО виконана на 82% – Климпуш-Цинцадзе, доступny w World Wide Web: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-politics/2415982-ricna-programa-spiivpraci-ukraini-z-nato-vikonana-na-82-klimpuscincadze.html>

<sup>28</sup> NATO intensifies scientific cooperation with Ukraine. 28 Mar. 2019, доступny w World Wide Web: [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news\\_165665.htm?selectedLocale=en](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_165665.htm?selectedLocale=en)

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*.



the Government Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration<sup>30</sup>, but more importantly, the methodology for evaluating the effectiveness of these programs has changed. If earlier the effectiveness of the program was evaluated by the number of measures taken, now the evaluation is based on the availability of certain strategic and tactical indicators, in addition, under the new rules, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs submits an analytical report to the President of Ukraine.

It should be pointed out that although Ukraine has shown interest in this format of cooperation with NATO in recent years, however, due to the position of Hungary, which is blocking the meetings of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, the development of cooperation in this format has somewhat slowed down.

One of the key areas of Ukraine's cooperation with the EU and NATO, including the above-mentioned format, is the field of strategic communications, which is one of the main areas in the security and defense system in a hybrid war, and its foreign policy is based on public diplomacy.

The first crucial step in this direction was made in September 2015: it was signing of the Strategic Communications Partnership Roadmap between the National Security and Defense Council and the NATO International Secretariat by Oleksandr Turchynov, the Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council and Ian Stoltenberg<sup>31</sup>, NATO Secretary General, which provides for the implementation of a number of strategic, tactical and operational tasks, from the development of national strategies to holding trainings and seminars. The coordination of this process on the part of Ukraine was entrusted to the Office of the National Security and Defense Council, and a number of state bodies, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, took part in the implementation of the Roadmap<sup>32</sup>.

As part of the implementation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Roadmap, a number of trainings were conducted for diplomats and managers, including trainings on the use of public tools to counter hybrid threats<sup>33</sup>. It should be emphasized that the activity of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine in this direction is more intensive. In particular, at the end of 2017, the Order of the Minister of Defense approved the Concept of Strategic Communications of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine and

<sup>30</sup> Про річні національні програми під егідою Комісії Україна – НАТО: Указ Президента від 2.10.2018 р., № 298/2018, доступny w World Wide Web: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/298/2018#n14>

<sup>31</sup> Дорожня карта Партнерства у сфері стратегічних комунікацій між Радою національної безпеки і оборони України та Міжнародним секретаріатом НАТО 4 с., доступny w World Wide Web: <http://stratcom.nuou.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Дор.карта-Партнерства-у-сфері-СТРАТКОМ-між-РНБО-України-та-МС-НАТО.pdf>.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>33</sup> Петров В.В. Щодо становлення системи стратегічних комунікацій органів державної влади у контексті розвитку відносин з НАТО // Стратегічні пріоритети. 2016. № 4 (41), с. 27.

the Armed Forces of Ukraine, which identified public diplomacy as one of the ways to implement the system of strategic communications<sup>34</sup>.

The potential for cooperation with the EU institutions, in particular the Task Force on Strategic Communications set up by the European External Action Service to combat Russian disinformation and propaganda, remains not fully exploited. The cooperation of this group with Ukraine is not institutionalized and is of informal character<sup>35</sup>, which, in our opinion, is a serious drawback, as some projects implemented by the Task Force, including the debunking of fakes in Russian, can not only improve information protection of Ukraine, but also positively affect implementation of the state policy on the Ukrainian diaspora.

Energy security remains one of the key areas of Russia's hybrid aggression, as the use of a "gas valve" for foreign policy purposes has become a common practice in official Moscow, but hybrid threats from Ukraine's eastern neighbor to Ukraine and the West are not limited just to this. Energy facilities as part of the critical infrastructure of the state is one of the main targets of hybrid attacks, and this refers to both cyberspace and the direct threat of sabotage. In this context, close cooperation and accession to the NATO Center of Excellence in Energy Security is becoming important for Ukraine, and if there are some shifts in the first area of cooperation, including participation in joint exercises, then in the second issue of joining the NATO Center of Excellence, the process has actually stopped. Talks and statements by politicians and managers about Ukraine's accession to the Center have been going on since 2017, but they have not yielded any results.

It is worth noting that at the end of 2018, the People's Deputy of Ukraine N. Katsar-Buchkovska even sent parliamentary inquiries to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Energy regarding the process of Ukraine's accession to the NATO Center of Excellence. The official responses of both ministries stated that the process of joining the Center depends on the so-called "Technical Agreement", which must be discussed both within Ukraine and between Ukraine and all Allies, after which the latter must approve it. According to the ministries, the duration of this process should have lasted at least two months<sup>36</sup>, but in practice this process has been delayed

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<sup>34</sup> *Про затвердження Концепції стратегічних комунікацій Міністерства оборони України та Збройних Сил України: Наказ Міністерства оборони від 22 листопада 2017 року № 612, доступny w World Wide Web: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/rada/show/v0612322-17#Text>*

<sup>35</sup> *Стратегічні комунікації у фокусі співробітництва Україна – ЄС – НАТО в сучасних умовах, с. 15, доступny w World Wide Web: <https://www.kas.de/documents/270026/4625039/UA+2019+S-tratcom+in+the+focus+of+Ukraine+-+EU+-+NATO+cooperation+under+the+present+conditions.pdf/22eb804c-24cb-7198-5898-43db562e0fa6?version=1.0&t=1571730232653>*

<sup>36</sup> *Депутатські запити, доступny w World Wide Web: [http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/wcadr43D?s\\_klikannja=9&kodtip=6&rejim=2&KOD8011=17967](http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/wcadr43D?s_klikannja=9&kodtip=6&rejim=2&KOD8011=17967)*

for two years. Given the confidentiality of the negotiation process, it is difficult for us to predict the timing of Ukraine's accession to the NATO Center, as well as to indicate the reasons why this process is delayed.

Given the above, it is necessary to mention Ukraine's cooperation with the EU and NATO in the field of cyber security. Here, in recent years, Ukraine has increased cooperation with both the EU and NATO, in addition to the use of the already mentioned forms and formats of cooperation, Ukraine actively receives assistance from the EU through the EU Advisory Mission to Ukraine and NATO Trust Funds. Cybersecurity is one of the crucial areas of Ukraine's cooperation with the EU in the framework of the Eastern Partnership with the EU, and Ukrainian specialists participate in various programs, trainings and joint exercises with the NATO specialists<sup>37</sup>. However, Ukraine's cooperation with the EU and NATO, both in the fight against cyber threats and in general in combating hybrid threats, has several problems.

First, this area of foreign policy is critically lacking systematic character; therefore the cooperation with Western partners is rather sporadic.

Secondly, this cooperation is usually unilateral and consists of assistance provided to Ukraine by the EU and NATO in various fields. Under such conditions, the activities of Ukraine's foreign policy authorities are limited to coordination activities, which, in turn, give the impression that Ukraine has nothing to share with Western partners when it comes to countering hybrid threats, although this is not the case. In fact, Ukraine is the first country in the world to face targeted and large-scale hybrid aggression, has a successful (and not very) experience of resisting hybrid attacks, so Ukraine not only can, but must contribute to the development of the European security architecture.

To solve this problem, it is necessary to develop and approve both the Strategic Vision of Public Policy in Countering Hybrid Threats and certain tactical steps, as well as to create an appropriate institutional system for coordinating public policy in this area.

#### Conclusions:

1. Russia's hybrid aggression has long "passed" through Ukraine far to the West and spread to the EU and NATO, the latter, as it turned out in practice, were not ready to adequately respond to the latest challenges and threats, which certainly brought grist to the aggressor's mill. However, the EU and NATO

<sup>37</sup> Співробітництво Україна – ЄС – НАТО з протидії гібридним загрозам у кіберсфері, с. 15–19, доступny w World Wide Web: <https://www.kas.de/documents/270026/4625039/UA+Ukraine+-+EU+-+NATO+cooperation+to+counter+hybrid+threats+in+cyber+sphere.pdf/c970b17f-d9db-aba3-7990-bb4441a3e041?version=1.0&t=1554283399>

are now pursuing a much more active and, what is really important, common policy to counter hybrid threats.

2. The following stages can be distinguished in the cooperation of Ukraine, the EU and NATO on counteracting hybrid aggression:
  - 1) 2014–2016 – a period of awareness of hybrid threats to all actors and the need for joint response;
  - 2) 2016–2019 – the period of development of the regulatory and institutional basis for such cooperation and a clear definition of the main source of hybrid threats – the activities of the Russian Federation;
  - 3) 2020–2021 – formation and implementation of policies to jointly repel hybrid threats.
3. Given that, in addition to combating hybrid aggression from its northern neighbor, Ukraine is officially declaring its European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations, the activities of foreign policy bodies to form and provide a joint response with Western partners to hybrid aggression is strategically crucial.
4. The work of foreign policy bodies, first of all, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the government office in this direction is aimed not only at improving the internal security of the state, but also directly influences the tools to counter hybrid threats in the foreign policy sphere. To achieve this, in recent years Ukraine has strengthened cooperation with both the EU and NATO in non-military security areas, such as energy, cyber defense, strategic communications, Ukraine's involvement in various institutions, etc. This cooperation is implemented in various forms and formats, which usually involve the provision of unilateral assistance or advice to Ukraine on these issues, and therefore the activities of foreign ministries in this case is actually reduced to the coordination of this process.
5. Weak subjectivity in this area is a significant shortcoming of the foreign policy, public authorities should act more actively and show more initiative. Despite the large number of different forms of cooperation with the EU and NATO, this area is critically lacking order and system, therefore this cooperation is often sporadic.

### Резюме

Співробітництво України з ЄС та НАТО щодо протидії гібридним загрозам із боку Російської Федерації

У статті прослідковано формування правового та інституційного забезпечення протидії гібридним загрозам в Україні, проаналізовано ефективність та перспективи співпраці державних інституцій України, ЄС та НАТО щодо такої протидії, виокремлено та охарактеризовано основні етапи їх співробітництва, динаміку його інтенсифікації внаслідок наявності політичної волі суб'єктів. Особливу увагу звернено на діяльність зовнішньополітичних органів України, яким критично не вистачає впорядкованості та системності, через що дане співробітництво часто має односторонній та епізодичний характер.

Ключові слова:

гібридні загрози, Україна, ЄС, НАТО, співробітництво

### SUMMARY

UKRAINE COOPERATION WITH EU AND NATO ON COUNTERFEITING HYBRID THREATS FROM THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The article traces the formation of legal and institutional support for combating hybrid threats in Ukraine, analyzes the effectiveness and prospects of cooperation between state institutions of Ukraine, EU and NATO in such counteraction, identifies and describes the main stages of their cooperation, the dynamics of its intensification due to the subjects' political will. Particular attention is paid to the activities of Ukraine's foreign policy bodies, which critically lack order and system, therefore this cooperation is often unilateral and sporadic.

KEY WORDS:

hybrid threats, Ukraine, EU, NATO, cooperation

## RÉSUMÉ

### WSPÓŁPRACA UKRAINY Z UE I NATO W ZAKRESIE PRZECIWDZIAŁANIA ZAGROŻENIOM HYBRYDOWYM ZE STRONY FEDERACJI ROSYJSKIEJ

Autorzy zbadali kształtowanie prawnego i instytucjonalnego wsparcia zwalczania zagrożeń hybrydowych na Ukrainie. Ponadto analizują skuteczność i perspektywy współpracy instytucji państwowych Ukrainy, UE i NATO w tym przeciwdziałaniu. Identyfikują i opisują główne etapy ich współpracy oraz dynamikę jej nasilenia. Szczególną uwagę zwracają na działalność organów polityki zagranicznej Ukrainy, w których brakuje porządku i spójności, przez co współpraca ta jest często jednostronna i epizodyczna.

#### SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:

zagrożenia hybrydowe, Ukraina, UE, NATO, współpraca