



EU defense cooperation with Ukraine

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Table of contents

Executive summary	2
1. General overview of the Russian economy under the sanctions regime	4
1.1. Cooperation in the framework of Common Foreign and Security Policy, CSDP	4
1.1.1. European Peace Facility (EPF)	4
1.1.2. European defense Agency (EDA)	5
1.1.3. Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)	6
1.1.4. EU-Ukraine Dialogue on Cybersecurity	6
1.1.5. EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine)	7
1.2. Military aid to Ukraine from EU member states	7
2. Assessment of EU contribution to Ukraine's defense against Russia: when and how it influenced changes in the battlefield	13
2.1 The EU's contribution as an organization	13
2.2. The impact of military aid from the EU countries on the defense capability of Ukraine	14
Policy Recommendations	21
Cooperation on the level of the EU institutions	22
Cooperation on the level of the EU member states	23
Commentary to "EU defense cooperation with Ukraine"	24
Commentary by Johan Huovinen LtCol, Swedish Defence University	25
Background	25
European Peace Facility (EPF)	26
European defense Agency (EDA)	26
Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)	27
EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine)	27
Military aid to Ukraine from EU member states	27
The EU's contribution as an organization	28
Policy Recommendations	28
Commentary by Tony Lawrence, Head of the Defence Policy & Strategy Programme / Research Fellow at the International Centre for Defence and Security (ICDS)	29
EU Defence Cooperation with Ukraine	29
Military Assistance	29
The European Peace Facility	30
Western Caution	31
The Military Assistance Mission	32
Building Cooperation and Consolidating Assistance	32
Conclusion	33
Commentary by Eglė Murauskaitė Senior Scholar, ICONS Project with the University of Maryland	34
Commentary by Martins Vargulis Deputy Director at Latvian Institute of International Affairs, Lecturer at Rīga Stradiņš University	37
The "rise of strategic autonomy" within the context of Russian aggression un Ukraine	37
Spectrum of various "senses of urgency and danger"	38
Shortage of EU military industry	39
Having Ukraine integrated into EU programs and cooperation platforms	40
About the Authors of "EU defense cooperation with Ukraine"	42

Executive summary

One year of full-scale Russian aggression against Ukraine demonstrates that despite creativity and innovations introduced by Ukrainian Armed Forces, Kremlin still maintains a significant advantage in terms of manpower and military hardware. Amidst heavy casualties and a lack of operational success on the battlefield, Putin and his military team are set to continue the war of attrition with expectations of growing fatigue on the side of European partners of Ukraine.

Both NATO and EU members declare a willingness to support Ukraine as long as it is needed for Ukraine to prevail. Some instruments appeared to be effective in generating military assistance for Ukraine, but some were not flexible enough to keep pace with reality on the ground.

The lessons of one year of the largest high-intensity war in Europe have to be learned in the EU capitals both in respect of buttressing the military capabilities of Ukraine and in generating sufficient combat power in EU member states, relying on the cooperation of European and Ukrainian defense industries.

The agility and flexibility of the European Union member states have empowered the significance of the European Peace Facility in 2022. In 2023, it becomes more obvious that the instrument was not designed to handle such a scale of security challenges. Now the European institutions and member states (MS) have to find a viable path to preserve the financial stability of the EPF as well as its global outreach in years to come.

Since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, EU member states, in particular with the support of European institutions and funds, have been providing military aid to official Kyiv every month to meet the urgent needs of Ukrainian defenders and their own capabilities. However, certain decisions regarding the types and quantities of weapons allocated required political will from some governments, resulting in delays. Nevertheless, the EU countries provided military aid to Ukraine starting with non-lethal packages and small arms in the early weeks, and subsequently shifted to urgent searching for available Soviet weapons and providing modern Western models of air defense, armored vehicles, and artillery. If, at the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the largest number of heavy weapons to Ukraine among all EU countries came from Central European countries, then by the end of 2022, almost all member states have joined this process.

The provision of armored vehicles, artillery, multiple launch rocket systems, and air defense from EU countries with the support of European institutions (along with supplies from the USA and the United Kingdom) played a key role in the fact that Ukraine was able to restore losses in equipment after the first months of a full-scale invasion, to create a qualitative advantage in defeating enemy forces in the summer and in the autumn of 2022, to accumulate resources for the partial liberation of Kharkiv and Kherson Oblasts in

the autumn, to protect Ukrainian citizens and energy infrastructure from Russian missiles in the cold period of the year. Currently, deterring the attacks of Russian manpower and preparations for a counteroffensive by the Defense Forces of Ukraine are underway. The EU and its member states participate in this by training the Ukrainian military and providing modern Western main battle tanks, armored vehicles, and artillery. At the same time, there is no reason to expect that Russia's challenges to the security of Ukraine and the whole of Europe will diminish in the coming year. Therefore, the military aid of the EU countries to the official Kyiv should finally move from responding to critical needs to systematic work on mutual strengthening of defense capabilities.

1. EU military assistance to Ukraine since February 24, 2022

1.1. Cooperation in the framework of Common Foreign and Security Policy, CSDP

The full-scale war of Russia against Ukraine has changed the geopolitical posture of the European Union, nudging Brussels toward more proactive and responsible actions in the Eastern neighborhood. Although, on the one hand, the high-intensity war waged by Russia in Ukraine proved that US military presence and assistance is vital for the defense of the European continent, on another, European Union felt its own potential to complement NATO in defending the borders of the EU and NATO member-states as well as deliver significant help to Ukraine. At this juncture, it's clear that some EU instruments and agencies have been effective in addressing the situation, while others appear to be outdated and inflexible.

1.1.1. European Peace Facility (EPF)

Established in 2021, the European Peace Facility, as an off-budget instrument, remains the core channel of the EU for assisting Ukraine with military assistance. The fund supports activities of the European Union under the Common Foreign and Security Policy worldwide, both on the level of CSDP missions led by the EU in different parts of the globe and bilateral support to third parties in the fields of military and defense. The main aim is to prevent conflicts, provide mechanisms and capabilities for conflict resolution and crisis management, and strengthen the military and law-enforcement capabilities of partner states. With an initial budget of 5.7 billion Euro for 2021-2027, the EPF, as the off-budget fund, appeared as an emergency mechanism to support Ukraine.

In December 2021, the EU made the decision to provide its first assistance measure from the European Peace Facility by delivering non-lethal military aid to Ukraine.

With the start of full-scale aggression in February 2022, the European Union was very swift with the decision taken already on February 28 to open the EPF resources for reimbursing the costs of lethal and non-lethal military equipment of the EU member states, which was delivered to Ukraine. It's important to mention that reimbursement levels and rates are determined by consensus among EU member states. The European Peace Facility was utilized to reimburse the Member States' deliveries of lethal and non-lethal nature. The information about volumes and types of equipment, delivered with the financial support of the Facility, is not disclosed, and only MS, at their own discretion, can comment on their contributions.

As of February 2023, seven tranches of the EPF financial resources with a total amount of 3.6 billion Euro were directed to cover the needs of Ukraine in matériel and ammunition, supplemental assistance, maintenance, and repair services.

Ukraine, apart from an Assistance Measures Pillar of the European Peace Facility, also benefitted from an Operations Pillar, financing the common costs of Common Security and defense Policy (CSDP) military missions and operations. As of March 2023, the EU via EPF has delivered 61 million Euro as part of common costs for the EU Military Assistance Mission.

The extensive shrinking of the costs available in the EPF prompted the EU to increase the financial ceiling of the fund by 2 billion Euro (in 2018 prices) in March 2023, with the possibility of a further increase at a later stage by 3.5 billion Euros. At this moment, the EPF budget for 2027 is 7.98 billion Euro¹.

In response to the situation of artillery ammunition shortage in Ukraine, the EU doubled down on a joint effort to help the Ukrainian army. On March 2023, The European Council made the decision to deliver artillery ammunition to Ukraine in an urgent manner, including through joint procurement and the mobilization of financial resources from the EPF. The ambitious goal is to deliver one million artillery rounds within a period of twelve months. During the meeting of the EU member states' foreign and defence ministers at the end of March, the decision was agreed to allocate 2 billion Euro, with 1 billion Euro to cover the deliveries of the ammunition both of NATO and Soviet calibers from existing stockpiles in the EU member states. An additional 1 billion Euro has been allocated for joint procurement of ammunition of the 155-mm NATO standard caliber. The EPF will reimburse the costs of ammunition, both from stockpiles and procured, which will be transferred to Ukraine.

1.1.2. European defense Agency (EDA)

Although Ukraine and the European defense Agency established a cooperation framework in 2015, the scope and intensity of their cooperation have not been very high. Under the Administrative Arrangement, the Ministry of defense of Ukraine has possibilities for participation in ad hoc projects and initiatives under the EDA's framework. The Arrangement outlined 4 directions of possible cooperation: Single European Sky SES, logistics (including spare parts and airlift), standardization, and training (including helicopter training)².

Later on, both the Ukrainian and European sides demonstrated interest in extending the areas of cooperation. New areas of interest, including the cyber domain, anti-mine activity, and participation in CSDP missions and PESCO projects, have been declared, but they have yet to gain much traction in terms of cooperation with the EDA.

To add to that, Ukraine did not participate in the European defense Fund, the program administrated by EDA, or any other projects, connected to defense industries. Ukraine wasn't also among the participants (in any status) of the defense Joint Procurement Task Force, established

¹ European Council conclusions: 23 March 2023: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/03/23/european-council-conclusions-23-march-2023/>

² Administrative Arrangement between the European defence Agency and the Ministry of defence of Ukraine, European defence Agency, 07.12.2015: <https://eda.europa.eu/docs/default-source/documents/aa---eda---ukraine-mod-07-12-15.pdf>

following the Joint Communication on defense investment gaps in May 2022. And subsequently, the EU's new defense investment programs like the European Defense Investment Program (EDIP) or the European Defense Industry Reinforcement through the Common Procurement Act (EDIPRA), do not foresee any meaningful participation of Ukraine.

The situation may change with the recently adopted decision of the European Council aimed at joint ammunition procurement, both for delivering to Ukraine and for replenishing own arms inventories in MS. The defense Joint Procurement Task Force, which operates with the participation of the EDA, may be used for procuring ammunition for Ukraine.

1.1.3. Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)

Despite significant interest demonstrated by Ukraine to join the Permanent Structured Cooperation projects, the EU was reluctant to admit Ukrainian participation in the collective defense initiatives launched in the framework of PESCO. That resulted in the situation that, prior to full-scale aggression, Ukraine had no direct involvement as a project member or even observer in any of the 60 PESCO projects officially adopted by the EU as of the end of 2021.

At the same time, Ukraine benefitted from some defense capabilities elaborated under the PESCO framework. For the first time, the Lithuanian-led Cyber Rapid Response Teams and Mutual Assistance in Cyber Security (CRRTs) were enacted in an operational context at the request of Ukraine in February 2022³.

1.1.4. EU-Ukraine Dialogue on Cybersecurity

The EU and Ukraine launched a special bilateral platform devoted to multilayered cooperation in the domain of cyberspace in 2021. In September 2022, parties held the second meeting of the Dialogue, this time focusing primarily on boosting the cyber resilience of Ukraine and protecting Ukrainian critical infrastructure. For Ukraine, on the other hand, it is important not only to rebuff the Russian aggression in cyberspace but also to align its legislation in this area on its way to EU accession.

For the purposes of cyber and digital resilience in Ukraine, the European Union has directed 29 million Euro, with 10 million being spent on issues related to cybersecurity, including supplies of equipment and software. Another part of 19 million was allocated to support of digital transformation of Ukraine⁴. As previously mentioned, the European Peace Facility also delivered support for cyber-related issues during the first assistance measures in December 2021.

³ Activation of first capability developed under PESCO points to strength of cooperation in cyber defence, 24 February 2022: <https://eda.europa.eu/news-and-events/news/2022/02/24/-of-first-capability-developed-under-pesco-points-to-strength-of-cooperation-in-cyber-defence>

⁴ Ukraine and EU held the second round of the UA-EU Cybersecurity Dialogue, 29.09.2022: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/ukraine-and-eu-held-second-round-ua-eu-cybersecurity-dialogue_en

1.1.5. EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine)

In November 2022, the Council of the EU adopted a decision to start the European Union Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine. The main aim of the mission is to prepare the Ukraine Armed Forces personnel, strengthening military capabilities to defend Ukrainian territory. Under the non-executive mandate of the EUMAM, military training is provided on individual, collective, and specialized levels in multiple locations in the EU member states.

The Mission was established in the framework of the CSDP in October 2022 as a response to urgent appeals from Ukraine. The initial duration of the EUMAM is set for 24 months. Financial resources to support the mission's activity are disbursed from the European Peace Facility. The financial reference of common costs for two years period is 106.7 million Euro.

Core training sites of the EUMAM are located in Germany and Poland. 24 member states have agreed to complement the mission's activity with modules and training⁵.

The EU institutions within the EUMAM have undertaken a commitment to training up to 30 000 Ukrainian personnel till the end of 2023.

1.2. Military aid to Ukraine from EU member states

Since the EU as an international organization does not possess weapons, does not have armed forces, and can only make political decisions on the introduction of joint initiatives in the field of military assistance and their support, concrete promises and provision of equipment and ammunition should be monitored at the level of actions of the member states. At the same time, it is worth noting that without the will of European institutions and the redirection of EU spending on the relevant tasks, such assistance would not be systematic, large-scale, and, most importantly, unified from a general European perspective. Thus, from February 24, 2022, to today, the European Commission and the European Council approved seven decisions on providing assistance to Ukraine within the framework of the European Peace Fund in the total amount of 3.6 billion Euro⁶. A certain part of the weapons transferred to the Ukrainian side by the EU states was financed from these funds. In general, according to the estimates of the European Commission, in the first 11 months from the moment of the full-scale invasion, the contribution of the EU countries to the defense capability of Ukraine amounted to more than 12 billion euros, taking into account funds from the EPF⁷.

⁵ European Union Military Assistance Mission Ukraine (EUMAM), 2 December 2022 https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/european-union-military-assistance-mission-ukraine-eumam_en

⁶ Council of the EU. 2 February 2023. Ukraine: Council agrees on further military support under the European Peace Facility: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/02/02/ukraine-council-agrees-on-further-military-support-under-the-european-peace-facility/>

⁷ European Commission. 2 February 2023. Ukraine: College of Commissioners travels to Kyiv to boost EU support and sectorial cooperation with Ukraine: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_461

According to the tracker of international aid to Ukraine of the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, from February 2022 to February 24, 2023, every month, EU countries expressed their readiness to provide weapons to Ukraine⁸. In addition, the monitoring data of the international OSINT group Oryx indicate that the commitments and deliveries from the EU states were recorded in each of the first three months of 2023⁹. If we group the relevant announcements of military aid by quarter, then the most commitments in terms of the value of the promised military aid were in the second quarter of 2022 (at least 5.78 billion Euro), followed by the first quarter of 2023 (at least 3.76 billion Euro; full figures are currently available only for January and February), the fourth quarter of 2022 (at least 3.74 billion Euro), the third quarter of 2022 (at least 1.13 billion Euro) and the first quarter of 2022 (at least 0.63 billion Euro). Full data for the first quarter of 2023 is currently not available due to delays in reporting by some EU governments.

The fluctuations in the amount of military aid could be attributed to the developments in the hostilities in Ukraine and the information that emerged throughout the year in response to these events. Thus, in April 2022, the Ukrainian Armed Forces demonstrated the first significant success in the war, forcing Russian troops to refuse the siege of Kyiv and withdraw from the north of Ukraine; also then, for the first time, the world witnessed evidence of the crimes of Russian troops in the temporarily occupied Ukrainian territories. Official Kyiv required support to sustain the fight against a more powerful opponent who was still active in other directions. At the end of 2022, the frontline was relatively stabilized, the Armed Forces of Ukraine, by liberating most of Kharkiv Oblast and part of Kherson Oblast, finally broke the primary Russian plan to seize most of the country and narrowed Russian offensives (excluding missile and artillery attacks) to operations in Donetsk, Luhansk, and Kharkiv Oblasts. At that time the need to support the planned offensive operations of the Ukrainian troops and actions in the conditions of a war of attrition manifested themselves.

Since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the military aid of the EU countries has undergone several stages of evolution in the sense of a qualitative expansion of the weapon types range. Monitoring by the Kiel Institute for the World Economy shows that in the first quarter of 2022, the states of United Europe concentrated primarily on promises to provide small arms, light portable anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons, ammunition for them, as well as personal protective equipment and medical equipment¹⁰. In total, 14 EU countries participated in such assistance during the specified period.

In the second quarter of 2022, the commitments mostly related to the provision of main battle tanks (such as 40 units of T-72 from the Czech Republic and 240 units of T-72 from Poland) and infantry fighting vehicles of Soviet design (such as 5 units of BMP-1 from the Czech Republic), armored personnel carriers (such as 85 units of M113 from Denmark, Lithuania and Portugal and an unknown number of YPR-765 from the Netherlands), maintenance vehicles (13 units of M1070 from Germany), self-propelled (such as 13 units of ShKH vz. Dana, about 30 units of

⁸ Kiel Institute for the World Economy. 21 February 2023. Ukraine Support Tracker. A Database of Military, Financial and Humanitarian Aid to Ukraine. Figure A3. In-kind over Time: <https://www.ifw-kiel.de/topics/war-against-ukraine/ukraine-support-tracker/>

⁹ Oryx. Permanently being updated since 11 April 2022. Answering The Call: Heavy Weaponry Supplied To Ukraine: <https://www.oryxspioenkop.com/2022/04/answering-call-heavy-weaponry-supplied.html>

¹⁰ Hereinafter the data on the specific types of the weapons is provided following the information by the Kiel Institute for the World Economy "Ukraine Support Tracker", "Bilateral Assistance, MAIN DATA" dataset with few exceptions: <https://www.ifw-kiel.de/topics/war-against-ukraine/ukraine-support-tracker/>

Dana M2 and an unspecified number of 2S1 from the Czech Republic, about 20 2S1s from Poland, 18 CAESAR units from France, 8 units of Panzerhaubitze 2000 from the Netherlands, 7 units of Panzerhaubitze 2000 from Germany, an unknown number of FH70 from Italy and 18 units of AHS Krab from Poland) and towed (such as an unspecified number of FH-70 from Italy and an unspecified number of M114 from Portugal) Western-origin artillery, multiple launch rocket system (such as 3 units of Mars II from Germany, over 20 units of RM-70 from the Czech Republic, more than 20 units of BM-21 Grad from Poland), air defense systems (20 self-propelled Gepard anti-aircraft guns from Germany), mortars, as well as ammunition for the mentioned types of weapons. In addition, an important step was the provision of equipment for air operations and air defense: 7 Mi-24 helicopters from the Czech Republic and 4 Mi-17 helicopters from Slovakia, as well as 1 S-300 system from Slovakia. Also, during this period, countries continued to provide small arms, light portable anti-tank, anti-ship and anti-aircraft systems, personal protective equipment and medical equipment. A total of 17 EU countries contributed to military aid to Ukraine at this time.

In the third quarter of 2022, the EU states primarily committed to providing Ukraine with main battle tanks (such as 60 units of PT-91 Twardy from Poland and 28 units of M55 from Slovenia), infantry fighting vehicles (such as 70 units of BMP-1 from Greece and Slovakia) and armored personnel carriers (such as 50 units of M113 from Lithuania and Spain), maintenance equipment (such as 15 units of Bergepanzer 2 and 16 units of BIBER from Germany), artillery (such as 7 units of self-propelled guns Panzerhaubitze 2000 from Germany, 6 units of self-propelled guns M109, sent by Latvia, and an unspecified number of M50 and M101 howitzers from Lithuania) and ammunition for it (primarily 1000 units from Spain), multiple launch rocket systems (such as 2 units of Mars II from Germany), helicopters (2 units of Mi-17 and 2 units of Mi-2 from Latvia), air defense systems (1 delivered and 3 promised IRIS-T systems from Germany), ammo for machine guns, personal protective equipment, sets of winter clothing and medical equipment (including a field hospital from Estonia). In total, 13 EU member states joined the respective aid at this time.

It is also worth noting that during this period, Ukraine began to receive from Slovakia and Poland the first self-propelled artillery Zuzana 2 (out of 8) and AHS Krab (out of 60), ordered from these countries in June 2022. These supplies can only partially be considered as military aid because that were the cases of contracts between governments and partial payment from the state budget of Ukraine. But first, the order from the Polish side was mostly paid for by EU support¹¹. Secondly, in the Slovak case, the first contract became the basis for the conclusion of the second contract for the production of 16 Zuzana 2 self-propelled guns, which Germany, Denmark and Norway undertook to pay¹².

In the fourth quarter of 2022, the EU countries, in particular, undertook the commitment to provide Ukraine with Soviet-origin main battle tanks (such as 90 T-72 units from the Czech Republic), Western artillery (such as 6 units of Panzerhaubitze 2000 self-propelled howitzers and 30 units of M109 self-propelled howitzers from Italy, 6 units of CAESAR self-propelled howitzers

11 Укрінформ. 30 July 2022. Перші вісім гаубиць Krab готові до відправлення в Україну з Польщі: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-ato/3540244-persi-visim-gaubic-krab-gotovi-do-vidpravlenna-v-ukrainu-z-polsi-zmi.html>

12 Interfax Ukraine. 25 January 2023. Україна хоче отримати ще 11 додаткових гаубиць Zuzana 2 від Словаччини: <https://interfax.com.ua/news/general/886970-amp.html>

from France, 18 units of AHS Krab self-propelled howitzers from Poland, 6 units of OTO Melara Mod 56 from Spain, 18 units of RCH-155 self-propelled howitzers from Germany), multiple launch rocket systems (2 units of M270 from France and 2 units of M270 systems from Italy), anti-aircraft defense (2 units of Cortale SAM from France, 6 units of MIM-23 HAWK SAM from Spain, 7 units of Gepard self-propelled anti-aircraft systems from Germany and an unknown number of Aspide SAM from Spain), ammunition for these types of weapons, as well as a significant number of armored utility vehicles. In total, 17 EU countries have openly pledged to provide military aid to Ukraine within the specified time. It is worth noting that during this period, the number of statements from representatives of European states increased, in which they promise to provide military assistance to Ukraine, but do not specify what kind. This may be related to security considerations (as in the case of Finland and Italy), as well as the fact that financial aid to Ukraine was allocated for targeted orders from national producers (as in the case of France).

From the beginning of 2023, the EU countries promised to provide Ukraine with such heavy weapons as main battle tanks (an unspecified number of AMX-10 RC from France, 30 units of PT-91 Twardy from Poland¹³, a total of up to 45 units of Leopard 2 from Germany, Poland, Spain, up to 10 Stridsvagn 122 units from Sweden, up to 100 Leopard 1 units from Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands¹⁴), infantry fighting vehicles (40 Marder units, an unknown number of Fenneks¹⁵ from Germany, more than 50 CV9040 units from Sweden¹⁶), armored personnel carriers (20 units of M113 from Spain¹⁷, up to 30 units of Bandvagn BvS from Italy and the Netherlands), artillery (16 Zuzana 2 self-propelled howitzers purchased at the expense of Denmark, Germany and Norway, 8 Archer self-propelled howitzers¹⁸, an unknown number of FH-70 howitzers from Estonia¹⁹), air defense systems (not estimated number of SAMP/T, Spada, Skyguard systems from Italy²⁰, Patriot system battery from Germany²¹ and 2 Patriot launchers and 100 Viktor mobile anti-aircraft guns from the Netherlands²²), as well as fighter jets (4 MiG-29 aircraft from Poland and 13 MiG-29 aircraft from Slovakia²³).

13 CTV News. 27 January 2023. 'Better late than never': Polish PM applauds West for sending tanks to Ukraine: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/better-late-than-never-polish-pm-applauds-west-for-sending-tanks-to-ukraine-1.6248472>

14 Oryx. Permanently being updated since 11 April 2022. Answering The Call: Heavy Weaponry Supplied To Ukraine: <https://www.oryxspioenkop.com/2022/04/answering-call-heavy-weaponry-supplied.html>

15 The Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Germany. 30 March 2023. Military support for Ukraine: <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/news/military-support-ukraine-2054992>

16 Regeringskansliet för Kungariket Sverige. 19 Januari 2023. Ökat militärt stöd till Ukraina: <https://www.regeringen.se/contentassets/634b4886da604030b767aa1039ec77b8/presentationbilder-vid-presstraff-den-19-januari-2023.pdf>

17 EuropaPress. 1 February 2023. España enviará a Ucrania 20 vehículos blindados de transporte de personal: <https://www.europapress.es/nacional/noticia-espana-enviara-ucrania-20-vehiculos-blindados-transporte-personal-20230201164934.html>

18 Regeringskansliet för Kungariket Sverige. 19 Januari 2023. Ökat militärt stöd till Ukraina: <https://www.regeringen.se/contentassets/634b4886da604030b767aa1039ec77b8/presentationbilder-vid-presstraff-den-19-januari-2023.pdf>

19 ERR. 19 January 2023. Estonian military support to Ukraine to increase to more than 1 percent GDP: <https://news.err.ee/160885524/estonian-military-support-to-ukraine-to-increase-to-more-than-1-percent-gdp>

20 Европейська правда. 21 February 2023. Італія передає Україні інші системи ППО на додаток до SAMP/T: <https://www.euointegration.com.ua/news/2023/02/21/7156639/>

21 Associated Press. 5 January 2023. Germany to send armored carriers, Patriot battery to Ukraine: <https://apnews.com/article/biden-united-states-government-olaf-scholz-germany-84fc07af2356d8d02adec2e987d06c0a>

22 Ministry of Defence of Netherlands. The Dutch supply of Patriot air defence system to Ukraine: <https://english.defensie.nl/latest/news/2023/01/20/the-dutch-supply-of-patriot-air-defence-system-to-ukraine>

23 Euronews. 22 March 2023. Poland and Slovakia become first NATO countries sending MiG-29 jets to Ukraine: <https://www.euronews.com/2023/03/17/poland-the-first-nato-country-sending-mig-29-jets-to-ukraine>

A cross-analysis of data from the Kiel Institute for the World Economy and Oryx shows that most of the military aid (especially heavy weapons) promised by EU states in 2022 has arrived by the end of the year or in the first month of 2023. At the same time, it is worth noting that at the end of February 2023, among the EU countries, the Czech Republic and Slovenia fulfilled their obligations for the supply of main battle tanks, the fulfilment of Poland's obligations regarding 30 PT-91 Twardy was in the process (more than 260 tanks have already been provided from Poland); for the provision of artillery – Poland fulfilled its obligations, the promised supplies from Germany and Italy were partially fulfilled; All EU states that made commitments followed through on their promise to deliver the Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS)²⁴. It should be added that the Central European states that expressed their readiness to help with Soviet-origin heavy weapons (primarily Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Slovenia) have almost exhausted or are about to exhaust all their reserves of the appropriate equipment²⁵. This was the aid that could be deployed and transferred to the Armed Forces of Ukraine the fastest. Also, according to data from the Kiel Institute for the World Economy and Oryx, as well as additional information²⁶, only three EU states did not participate (at least publicly) in the transfer or sale of weapons and non-lethal defense equipment to Ukraine: Hungary, Cyprus and Malta. At the same time, it is worth noting that some countries, such as Bulgaria²⁷, found a way to help Ukrainian partners with weapons, even despite internal political opposition.

Starting from the second quarter of 2022, the Armed Forces of Ukraine began receiving Western-style weapons from European partners. The volume of such aid, due to the limited stocks of Soviet weapons and the need to find long-term solutions, only grew and will continue to grow. Accordingly, the Ukrainian military needed the training to operate such equipment. Furthermore, the Ukrainian Defense Forces required reliable and secure resources to train their fighters for a sustained conflict against a more formidable adversary, particularly in the context of mobilizing of an increasingly large number of personnel. An ad hoc response to these challenges was the training of Ukrainian operators of CAESAR and Panzerhaubitze 2000 self-propelled howitzers in France and Germany in the spring and summer of 2022²⁸. Bearing in mind the need for systematic training, in October 2022, the EU launched the Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine²⁹.

24 Kiel Institute for the World Economy. 21 February 2023. Ukraine Support Tracker. A Database of Military, Financial and Humanitarian Aid to Ukraine. Figure A5. Weapon Delivery: <https://www.ifw-kiel.de/topics/war-against-ukraine/ukraine-support-tracker/>

25 Kiel Institute for the World Economy. 21 February 2023. Ukraine Support Tracker. A Database of Military, Financial and Humanitarian Aid to Ukraine. Fig 17. Share of stocks pledged: <https://www.ifw-kiel.de/topics/war-against-ukraine/ukraine-support-tracker/>. For comparison see: International Institute for Strategic Studies. The Military Balance 2022

26 The Irish Times. 27 February 2022. Ireland to fund provision of non-lethal equipment to Ukrainian military: <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/ireland-to-fund-provision-of-non-lethal-equipment-to-ukrainian-military-1.4813568>

27 Politico. 18 January 2023. Bulgaria to the rescue: How the EU's poorest country secretly saved Ukraine: <https://www.politico.eu/article/bulgaria-volodymyr-zelenskyy-kiril-petkov-poorest-country-eu-ukraine/>

28 Politico. 16 September 2022. Ukraine's military recruits need training. Only one of Europe's giants is pulling its weight: <https://www.politico.eu/article/uk-and-france-at-odds-over-military-training-for-ukrainians/>. Deutsche Welle. 11 May 2022. Ukrainian troops arrive in Germany for howitzer training: <https://www.dw.com/en/ukrainian-troops-arrive-in-germany-for-howitzer-training/a-61755368>

29 EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine. 8 December 2022. EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eumam-ukraine/about-eu-military-assistance-mission-support-ukraine-eumam-ukraine_en?s=410260

An important component of supporting the Armed Forces of Ukraine was also the creation of mechanisms for repairing Ukrainian military equipment that were introduced by Bulgaria³⁰, Slovakia and the Czech Republic³¹ in the spring of 2022, as well as by Lithuania in October 2022³². Also, throughout the entire time, the question of supplying Ukraine with sufficient quantities of ammunition for various types of equipment was and remains critical, given that the Ukrainian Armed Forces are fighting the biggest force on the continent, particularly in terms of the power of artillery, main battle tanks and armored vehicles. Important steps for the long-term provision of the capabilities of the Defense Forces of Ukraine in this context were the donor conference in August 2022, where the representatives of the EU member states and the EU itself undertook the commitment to ensure the production of shells for the Ukrainian military. Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic expressed their readiness to increase their output³³. Another systemic solution was found by the EU in March 2023, when the European Commission and the Council of the EU decided to allocate 1 billion Euro for the purchase of 1 million 155-millimetre artillery ammunition (Western caliber) for Ukraine and 1 billion Euro to increase the production of such weapons in the EU countries³⁴.

Also, the topic of demining liberated Ukrainian territories has been addressed by EU member states and the EU itself since the beginning of the Russian invasion. In particular, the Netherlands³⁵ and Poland³⁶ launched respective missions in Ukraine in the summer of 2022. In autumn, the government of the Czech Republic declared its intention to participate in demining³⁷. In February 2023, the EU launched a program to clear the liberated Ukrainian soil of munitions³⁸.

After all, since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion, the EU has increased its support for Ukraine in cyber defense issues. As the Ukrainian state has made significant progress in digitalization in recent years, the field of threats in this context has expanded. From March 2022 to February 2023, the "EU Support to Strengthen Cyber Security in Ukraine" program focused on securing data exchange between Ukrainian state institutions, strengthening the protection of government registers, other information and critical infrastructure³⁹.

30 Reuters. 4 May 2022. Bulgaria approves repairs to Ukrainian military equipment, not military aid: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/bulgaria-approves-repairs-ukrainian-military-equipment-not-military-aid-2022-05-04/>

31 Czech Army and Defence Magazine. 19 April 2022. Ukrainian armoured vehicles will be repaired in the Czech Republic: <https://www.czdefence.com/article/ukrainian-armoured-vehicles-will-be-repaired-in-the-czech-republic>

32 Interfax Ukraine. 29 October 2022. Lithuania to repair at least 12 Panzerhaubitze for Ukraine: <https://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/868822.html>

33 Reuters. 11 August 2022. Western countries pledge \$1.55 bln in military aid to Ukraine: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/denmark-will-contribute-additional-110-mln-euros-ukraine-pm-2022-08-11/>

34 Euronews. 26 March 2023. EU greenlights €2 billion Ukraine ammunition but doubts remain over ability to deliver on time: <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2023/03/20/eu-close-to-2-billion-ammunition-deal-for-ukraine-but-doubts-remain-over-ability-to-delive>

35 Government of the Netherlands. 22 August 2022. Extra Dutch support for Ukrainian war effort and reconstruction: <https://www.government.nl/latest/news/2022/08/22/extra-dutch-support-for-ukrainian-war-effort-and-reconstruction>

36 Ukrainska Pravda. 23 February 2023. Polish police conducts secret operation in Ukraine, clearing mines in Kyiv Oblast for five months: <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/02/23/7390580/>

37 Governmental Portal of Ukraine. 31 October 2022. Joint Statement on the outcomes of the Intergovernmental consultations between Ukraine and the Czech Republic: <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/en/news/joint-statement-outcomes-intergovernmental-consultations-between-ukraine-and-czech-republic>

38 Delegation of the European Union to Ukraine. 3 February 2023. Ukraine: EU supports de-mining of liberated areas with additional €25 million programme: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ukraine/ukraine-eu-supports-de-mining-liberated-areas-additional-%E2%82%AC25-million-programme_en

39 Delegation of the European Union to Ukraine. 20 October 2022. EU supports cybersecurity in Ukraine with over 10 million euro: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ukraine/eu-supports-cybersecurity-ukraine-over-10-million-euro_en?s=232

2. Assessment of EU contribution to Ukraine's defense against Russia: when and how it influenced changes in the battlefield

2.1 The EU's contribution as an organization

The European Union as an institution has sought to adopt a comprehensive assistance approach toward the needs of Ukraine in times of full-scale war. Many EU instruments and agencies have been employed to support Ukraine militarily or in areas of defense.

As of March 2023, the total amount of the European Peace Facility resources for covering Ukrainian needs in military shipments equals to:

- 3.6 billion Euro in seven tranches for reimbursing costs of EU MS military equipment, both lethal and non-lethal, delivered to Ukraine as well as its maintenance and repair;
- 61 million Euro for supporting activities of the EUMAM Ukraine, including ammunition, military equipment, transportation, custody, and maintenance and repair of the military equipment provided for supporting training;
- 31 million Euro - the initial assistance measure of the EPF, delivered in December 2021 for the needs of military medical service, anti-mine activities and engineering equipment, mobility, and logistical support and cyber-defense.

It is not possible to determine precisely what types and scope of equipment were delivered to Ukraine under the EPF reimbursement scheme. Certainly, it covers shipments in large numbers of Soviet-era military equipment, which was operational or in military inventories in the EU member states. But it also covers some modern state-of-art military equipment of NATO standards.

We may name Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, and the Baltic States as beneficiaries of this mechanism. The full list is much longer. But a very important precondition is that the existence of the EPF gave member states confidence that they have resources for rearming themselves while they transfer important parts of military hardware and ammunition to Ukraine.

Otherwise, the assistance may not have been provided, and Ukraine would have been left in a more dire situation. From this perspective, it can be argued that the EU's contribution to the situation on the battlefield has been tremendously positive.

The EU's recent commitment to provide 1 billion ground-to-ground artillery rounds to Ukraine within a year is a significant contribution towards maintaining a steady pace of the Ukrainian counter-offensive. However, the timely provision of ammunition is crucial for success on the battlefield.

Moreover, Ukraine relies on the EU for issues of military personnel training under the framework of the EUMAM Ukraine. It is an essential part of the Ukrainian strategy to win on the battlefield with capable and prepared soldiers and officers. The EU's announced number of 30 thousand prepared representatives of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other law-enforcement agencies is the crucial manpower to launch and sustain an effective counter-offensive.

Overall, both EU and member-states have delivered about 12 billion Euro of military assistance. With the new 2 billion “ammunition package” earmarked for delivering artillery ammunition, it may potentially reach 14 billion, increasing the share of the EU as the institution.

In aggregated form, it looks impressive, but it does not cover the pressing needs of the Ukrainian army in military hardware and ammunition to launch a counteroffensive and liberate its territory.

In February 2023, while addressing the leaders of EU member-states and institutions, President Zelenskyy once again drew attention to the necessity of the timely provision of the necessary equipment in the right amount. At this stage, Ukraine needs tens and hundreds of pieces of artillery, armored vehicles, air defense, main combat tanks, and fighter jets.

2.2. The impact of military aid from the EU countries on the defense capability of Ukraine

The above list of military aid provided to Ukraine by EU states since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion is not complete, as some governments do not publicly inform about the content or facts of support due to security concerns. Only key positions are listed. However, based on this information, it is possible to draw conclusions about general trends, primarily in the domain of providing weapons.

EU countries' military assistance to Ukraine has evolved from a crisis response to a more sustainable approach. Thus, in the first quarter of 2022, European states did not provide Ukrainian partners with heavy weapons. In the second quarter of 2022, Soviet-era main battle tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, armored personnel carriers, artillery, multiple launch rocket systems, and helicopters from Central European countries began arriving in Ukraine. At the same time, some EU states undertook to provide the official Kyiv with the first Western types of artillery, MLRS and anti-aircraft arms. Also, it is worth special noting the provision of the S-300 air defense system from Slovakia at that time – the first of its kind provided to Ukraine from abroad. Also important was Germany's decision to provide the Mars II MLRS, which would allow the creation of a qualitative advantage on the battlefield by the remote attack of the enemy.

The trends of the previous period continued in the third quarter of 2022, allowing the Armed Forces of Ukraine to increase their arsenal of Soviet-style main battle tanks, armored vehicles, and Western-style artillery.

A notable step at this time was the decision to provide the first modern (non-Soviet origin) air defense system – IRIS-T from Germany (which arrived in October). In the same period, European partners began to discuss the need for a permanent supply of ammunition to Ukraine in a protracted war, and Germany undertook to provide the largest batch of maintenance equipment – Bergepanzer 2 and BIBER.

In the fourth quarter of 2022, the share of Soviet weapons in the expressed commitments of the EU states decreased significantly (the bulk of it from previous aid packages arrived during the summer and autumn), and the main promises of military assistance by European countries related to Western models of artillery, MLRS and air defense systems.

At the beginning of 2023, Soviet types of heavy weapons almost disappeared from the promises of the EU states (with the exception of Poland's commitment), but there were announcements about the provision of Western-style main battle tanks and armored vehicles – Leopard 1 and Leopard 2 (the first arrived in March), Marder (arrived in March) and CV9040. In addition, the EU states continued to provide and express commitments regarding new arrivals of air defense systems (Patriot appeared among them) and Western-style artillery. Also, during this period, for the first time, foreign partners undertook to provide Ukraine with MiG-29 combat aircraft.

At the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation outnumbered the Armed Forces of Ukraine by five times in terms of personnel⁴⁰ and eleven times in terms of budget expenditures for defense⁴¹. Simultaneously, during the full-scale invasion, the Russian command deployed forces that were similar in strength to the Ukrainian military in terms of personnel. They aimed to create an imbalance in specific areas of the front by utilizing a significant concentration of armored vehicles, air superiority, high-precision long-range missile strikes, and also counting on buying time due to the need for additional deployment of Ukrainian troops. Thus, in the battle for Kyiv (February – April 2022) – the key operation of the first stage of the full-scale war – the ratio of forces in the artillery and MLRS component was 2:1 in favor of Russia, and in general (personnel and equipment) – 12:1⁴².

Ukraine succeeded in disrupting the Russian blitzkrieg due to mobile operations, the low maneuverability of Russian troops, the widespread use of UAVs, and the mobilization of Ukrainian society. A significant role in this was also played by the supply of short-range weapons, which were provided by the USA and the United Kingdom in January-February. However, in early June, the Russian invaders strengthened their artillery component, primarily by using their vast ammunition reserves. At that time, Russia's advantage in the number of artillery shots per day reached 10:1⁴³. In a day, the Russian army could release up to 50,000 shells at Ukrainian military positions and cities⁴⁴.

The supply of main battle tanks and armored vehicles from the EU countries in the second and third quarters of 2022 was primarily intended to urgently restore the corresponding losses of the Ukrainian troops and to decrease the difference in capabilities amid high losses in equipment by

40 International Institute for Strategic Studies. The Military Balance 2022

41 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. SIPRI Military Expenditure Database: <https://milex.sipri.org/sipri>

42 Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies. 30 November 2022. Preliminary Lessons in Conventional Warfighting from Russia's Invasion of Ukraine: February–July 2022: <https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/special-resources/preliminary-lessons-conventional-warfighting-russias-invasion-ukraine-february-july-2022>

43 Ibid

44 Eliot A. Cohen. Putin Is Cornered. 20 September 2022. The Atlantic: <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/09/zelensky-ukraine-west-military-aid-supplies/671485/>

the Russian army in the first months of the full-scale invasion⁴⁵. At the same time, the supply of artillery and MLRS from European states (as well as from other NATO member states) could not create parity in counter-battery combat on the front line due to Russia's significant advantage in ammunition reserves.

Under these circumstances, a qualitative advantage was needed, which in the second, third and fourth quarters of 2022 was provided by the HIMARS, Mars II and M270 MLRS (the two last types were from EU countries) due to the ability to make targeted strikes using a limited amount of firepower⁴⁶.

These capabilities, in particular, made it possible to gradually reduce the intensity of Russian artillery fire from the summer of 2022 (although by the beginning of 2023, the ability to replenish losses through production became a key factor in the lower activity of Russian artillery)⁴⁷ by destroying the munition storages near the frontline and remotely strike concentrations of Russian personnel. Together with the supply of Soviet types of main battle tanks and armored vehicles, this circumstance laid the foundations for stopping the large-scale offensive actions of Russian troops on most of the front in Ukraine and the successful counteroffensive of the Ukrainian Defense Forces in the Kharkiv and Kherson regions in September – November 2022.

The supply of artillery, both Soviet and Western-style, which began in the second quarter of 2022 with a gradual increase in the share and number of Western weapons, could not create parity for the Ukrainian troops in the confrontation with the Russian aggressor. However, the systematic work of the European countries in this direction played a significant role in the course of hostilities in Ukraine.

Firstly, the Russian-Ukrainian war has become a war of attrition⁴⁸, and therefore it requires timely and constant replenishment of equipment and ammunition.

Secondly, the ability to effectively strike the Russian artillery potential⁴⁹ and limited ammunition production capabilities have already reduced the advantage of the invader in this component to 10:3⁵⁰.

45 For more precise data see: Russia's losses tracker (Based on the daily reports of the General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces; With the support of the Special Operations Forces): <https://www.minusrus.com/en>

46 Isabelle Khurshudyan, Dan Lamothe, Shane Harris and Paul Sonne. The Washington Post. 9 February 2023. Ukraine's rocket campaign reliant on U.S. precision targeting, officials say: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/02/09/ukraine-himars-rocket-artillery-russia/>

47 Matthew Luxmoore and Evan Gershkovich. 14 March 2023. Artillery Shortage Hampers Russia's Offensive in East Ukraine, Western Officials Say. The Wall Street Journal: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/acute-artillery-shortage-is-hampering-russias-offensive-in-east-ukraine-western-officials-say-6f2fb94a>

48 Seth G. Jones, Riley McCabe, and Alexander Palmer. Ukrainian Innovation in a War of Attrition. 27 February 2023. Center for Strategic and International Studies: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/ukrainian-innovation-war-attrition>

49 As of 1 April 2023, since the beginning of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the Russian Forces have lost 2687 artillery systems and 527 MLRS, according to the Defence Ministry of Ukraine: <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/en/news/zahalni-boiovi-vtraty-protyvnykacz-24022022-po-02042023>

50 Matthew Luxmoore and Evan Gershkovich. 14 March 2023. Artillery Shortage Hampers Russia's Offensive in East Ukraine, Western Officials Say. The Wall Street Journal: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/acute-artillery-shortage-is-hampering-russias-offensive-in-east-ukraine-western-officials-say-6f2fb94a>

Thirdly, by providing Western-style artillery to Ukraine, the EU countries contribute to the building of the country's long-term military stability and the gradual full transition to NATO weapons.

Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksiy Reznikov repeatedly spoke about the plans for such rearmament during and after the war⁵¹, pointing out that Ukraine has already become the eastern shield of the Alliance⁵². The allocation and procurement of Panzerhaubitze 2000, CAESAR, Archer, Zuzana 2, AHS Krab, FH-70 and other types of artillery is both a response to events at the frontline and an investment in the future, as is the EU decision on joint procurement of 155 mm ammunition for Ukraine.

However, Russia is still the most powerful force in terms of projectile production on the continent, so European actors should take into account the need to further increase industrial capacity to help Ukrainian partners and ensure their own capabilities in the long term. In addition, when the Russian army on the frontline uses its main advantage, which is a larger number of personnel, the artillery (howitzers and mortars) is able to react qualitatively to this imbalance.

The start of deliveries of Western models of air defense systems (both from EU states and from other states) was aligned with the beginning of the Russian army's systematic massive missile and drone attacks on the energy infrastructure and civilian objects of Ukraine – in October 2022. The increasing assistance in this component and the professional actions of the Ukrainian Air Force made it possible to shoot down more than 80% of all missiles launched by Russia over Ukraine since September (the first attack on the energy infrastructure)⁵³, although, during the first attacks, the average rate of the downed targets was from 53% to 71%⁵⁴. In addition, the use of Western models of air defense within the country allows the use of a larger number of Soviet-style SAMs in the areas of the use of Russian combat aircraft. As of September 2022, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, General Valerii Zaluzhnyi, reported an acute shortage of artillery and air defense equipment at the frontline⁵⁵. In the context of aerial operations, the use of UAVs should also be mentioned. In the first months of the full-scale invasion, the active use of strike and reconnaissance drones became one of the reasons for the success of the Defense Forces of Ukraine⁵⁶. Almost every month since the beginning of the invasion, military aid packages from EU countries have included some UAVs. However, losses in this segment of weapons reach 90%⁵⁷, so Ukraine should receive an even greater number of strike and reconnaissance drones in order to be more agile than the enemy.

51 Україна переходить на калібри і техніку НАТО, - Резніков. 27 April 2022. Лівий Берер: https://lb.ua/society/2022/04/27/514929_ukraina_perehodit_kalibri_i.html

52 Міністр оборони Резніков: Росія використовує тактику м'ясорубки. У нас немає ресурсу засипати тілами території. 11 August 2022. Українська Правда: <https://www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2022/08/11/7362749/>

53 За пів року росія випустила по Україні понад 800 ракет та 650 дронів-камікадзе – Ігнат. 15 March 2023. Укрінформ: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-ato/3682654-za-piv-roku-rosia-vipustila-po-ukraini-ponad-800-raket-ta-650-dronivkamikadze-ignat.html>

54 Наскільки зростає ефективність української ППО від початку повномасштабної війни. 12 February 2023. Texty.org.ua: <https://texty.org.ua/fragments/108378/naskilky-zrosla-efektyvnist-ukrayinskoji-ppo-vid-pochatku-povnomasshtabnoyi-vijny/>

55 Валерій Залужний та Михайло Забродський. Перспективи забезпечення воєнної кампанії 2023 року: український погляд. 7 September 2022. Укрінформ: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-ato/3566162-ak-zabezpeciti-voennu-kampaniu-u-2023-roci-ukrainskij-poglad.html>

56 Seth G. Jones , Riley McCabe , and Alexander Palmer. Ukrainian Innovation in a War of Attrition. 27 February 2023. Center for Strategic and International Studies: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/ukrainian-innovation-war-attrition>

57 Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies. 30 November 2022. Preliminary Lessons in Conventional Warfighting from Russia's Invasion of Ukraine: February–July 2022: <https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/special-resources/preliminary-lessons-conventional-warfighting-russias-invasion-ukraine-february-july-2022>

After the liberation of part of the Kharkiv and Kherson Oblasts, as well as during the protracted assault on Bakhmut (which has been going on for eight months) by the Russian army, it became clear that Russia had lost the overall initiative in the war. Russian further efforts would be primarily aimed at achieving limited military-political goals and at the greatest possible exhaustion Ukrainian forces⁵⁸.

Under these conditions, a window of opportunity opened for Ukraine and there was an urgent need to liberate its territories. The reduction of the front line and the defeat of the enemy would lead to a general improvement of the current situation for the Ukrainian side⁵⁹.

Providing the Defense Forces of Ukraine with means for a counteroffensive – main battle tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, armored personnel carriers, artillery, MLRS and others – has become a key task of the allies, in particular from the EU.

From the beginning of 2023, it is possible to observe how the states of United Europe express their readiness and provide appropriate equipment, mostly of Western design, because the stockpiles of Soviet weapons in Europe are running out. It is the EU states that are the key link in this process, taking into account the logistical possibilities of quick delivery of weapons to Ukraine. The launch of the Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine by the EU is also part of the preparation for the Ukrainian counteroffensive and shows the special role of European states in Ukraine's potential successes.

At the same time, the amount of military assistance in the context of the expected counteroffensive of the Ukrainian forces is still far from the estimates of needs provided by Valerii Zaluzhnyi⁶⁰. They probably cannot be significantly larger, due to the problems with the storage of weapons that most European states reveal today, and the significant reduction in the stockpile of weapons that has taken place during the last thirty years⁶¹.

However, this circumstance should push the EU states to take initiatives to increase their own potential of main battle tanks and armored vehicles, similar to the decisions to increase the production of ammunition. Ukraine's technical needs will not end with the counteroffensive (even during it, there will be an urgent need to replace and repair resources). Similarly, by investing in increasing the production of armored vehicles, the EU states would not only make efforts to strengthen Ukrainian defense capabilities but also to ensure their security in the long term. In this context, it is worth noting the interest of the German concern Rheinmetall in the

58 Nataliya Bugayova. Target Russia's Capability, Not Its Intent. 20 December 2022. Institute for the study of the war: <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/target-russia%E2%80%99s-capability-not-its-intent>

59 Валерій Залужний та Михайло Забродський. Перспективи забезпечення воєнної кампанії 2023 року: український погляд. 7 September 2022. Укрінформ: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-ato/3566162-ak-zabezpeciti-voennu-kampaniu-u-2023-roci-ukrainskij-poglad.html>

60 An interview with General Valery Zaluzhny, head of Ukraine's armed forces. 15 December 2022. The Economist: <https://www.economist.com/zaluzhny-transcript>

61 Max Bergmann, Pierre Morcos, Colin Wall, and Sean Monaghan. Transforming European Defense. 18 August 2022. Center for Strategic and International Studies: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/transforming-european-defense>

construction of a plant to produce main battle tanks and armored vehicles in Ukraine⁶² and the creation of a repair base for vehicles in Romania⁶³.

Despite all the promised and provided military assistance from the EU and EU states (as well as other allies), some gaps remain in ensuring Ukraine's effective fight against the aggressor.

One of these gaps is in combat aviation. Ukraine's air fleet is not expected to surpass Russia's, which currently has the largest air fleet on the continent by a significant margin⁶⁴. Even the promised MiG-29 aircraft from Poland and Slovakia will not cover the estimated Ukrainian losses of these fighters over the past months⁶⁵. At the same time, in this area, the Ukrainian Air Force has been conducting a successful asymmetric fight for more than a year of the full-scale war, so any replenishment of resources is important.

However, in the medium and long term, another problem arises: maintenance of Soviet-style aircraft requires parts that are running out in EU countries and can only be obtained from Russia and its allies. Accordingly, there is a need to transit the Armed Forces of Ukraine to the use of aircraft produced in Western countries as soon as possible. In January, the Dutch government announced that it would consider the transfer of F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine if there is a request from official Kyiv⁶⁶. In February, the request was officially sent⁶⁷, but the transfer of such aircraft would require approval from the United States, the government of which has not yet given an affirmative answer⁶⁸. Under these conditions, the determination of which type of Western aircraft Ukraine will use in the future will depend on which Western country will be the first to train Ukrainian pilots and provide the first fighter jets.

Furthermore, the Western allies' refusal to provide Ukraine with long-range weapons (over 100 kilometers) remains a problematic issue. Under the conditions when the Russian army outnumbers (and will outnumber) the Ukrainian army in the figures of personnel and equipment, it is asymmetric responses that can cause critical losses to the enemy's operations. This is proven by the use of the HIMARS, Mars II and M270 systems in the summer of 2022.

Information about the impact of weapons from EU countries on the course of hostilities in Ukraine and the prospects for the further transformation of Russia's aggression against the Free World should push European countries and the EU in general to increase the production

62 The New Voice of Ukraine. 16 March 2023. Rheinmetall develops proposal for tank plant in Ukraine: <https://english.nv.ua/business/rheinmetall-develops-proposal-for-tank-plant-in-ukraine-news-50311001.html>

63 Ukrainska Pravda. 3 April 2023. Rheinmetall concern building hub in Romania to service Ukraine's military equipment: <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/04/3/7396137/>

64 International Institute for Strategic Studies. The Military Balance 2022

65 Oryx. Permanently being updated since 20 March 2022. List Of Aircraft Losses During The 2022 Russian Invasion Of Ukraine: <https://www.oryxspioenkop.com/2022/03/list-of-aircraft-losses-during-2022.html>

66 NL Times. 20 January 2023. Netherlands would consider helping Ukraine with F-16 fighters, Leopard 2 tanks: <https://nltimes.nl/2023/01/20/netherlands-consider-helping-ukraine-f-16-fighters-leopard-2-tanks>

67 NL Times. 9 February 2022. Ukraine asks Netherlands for F-16 fighter jets; Still some obstacles, Defense Min. says: <https://nltimes.nl/2023/02/10/ukraine-asks-netherlands-f-16-fighter-jets-still-obstacles-defense-min-says>

68 Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies. 22 February 2023. The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: Assessing a Year of Military Aid to Ukraine: <https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/good-bad-and-ugly-assessing-year-military-aid-ukraine>

of various types of weapons and an integrated approach in planning assistance to Ukrainian partners. This means that military support to Ukraine should not only be a reaction to current events but also ensure future steps in the medium and long term. Further decisions of the EU countries in this context should be made not only from the perspective of defense and liberation of Ukraine (although this is task #1) but also from the perspective of guaranteeing the security of all of Europe, of which the Ukrainian state is and will be a part.

Policy Recommendations

As the war in Ukraine enters its second year, it is becoming increasingly clear that the military hostilities of Russia may take the form of a protracted military conflict. The Ukrainian state and society have demonstrated a resilience, unexpected by Western partners, and will to fight for its soil regardless of the army size of the aggressor. Ukraine's progress on the battlefield is directly connected to the level of military support of Western partners.

In December 2022, at the EU Foreign Affairs Council, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba mentioned three ways to boost military and defense cooperation between the EU and Ukraine. First, it is the delivery of weapons and ammunition along with Ukrainian requests. Second, the European Peace Facility has to be extended to finance further arms purchases. Third, the swift unfolding of joint production lines of ammunition by the EU and Ukrainian defense manufacturer⁶⁹.

These priorities are the foundation for short-term and midterm prospects of cooperation, both on the level of the EU institutions and EU Member States.

⁶⁹ Дмитро Кулеба закликав ЄС суттєво підвищити військову підтримку України, 12 December 2022: <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/dmytro-kuleba-zaklykav-ies-suttievo-pidvyshchyty-viiskovu-pidtrymku-ukrainy>

Cooperation on the level of the EU institutions

1. The European Peace facility is an effective instrument but it is not stable in financial terms from a midterm perspective. Even the proposed top-up of 2 billion and potential future raise of 3.5 billion Euro creates a challenge for long-standing commitments of the EU towards Ukraine. As a global instrument with a horizon to 2027, it is obvious that future extensions of the ceiling are needed. The question of how to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the EPF still needs to be answered.
2. Ukraine demonstrates its wide interest in joining the Permanent Structured Cooperation, despite a rather restrictive approach of the EU member states. It is in the common interest to open the initiative for the participation of Ukraine. Ukrainian representatives may join the existing ongoing projects under the PESCO scheme or join the future military projects under the next waves of calls.
3. The relations between the European defense Agency and the Ministry of defense of Ukraine should be revisited and extended to other priority areas of cooperation, which reflect the modern needs of the Ukrainian army and defense industries.
4. While describing some sectoral successes of Ukraine's integration track with the EU, Ukrainian authorities often use the term "visa-free regime." The time is ripe for yet another "visa-free regime" in the area of defense industries cooperation. This track should be oriented on both covering short-term needs and medium-term. New initiatives proposed in 2022 to boost joint procurement, namely EDIPRA and EDIP, are still at the stage of adoption by European institutions. But the political will should be there to secure a meaningful participation of Ukraine in these investment programs for defense industries.

Cooperation on the level of the EU member states

1. The most urgent types of weapons that Ukraine needs today are main battle tanks, armored vehicles and Western-style artillery. Ukrainian forces need a stable supply and restoration of these resources in the fight against a more powerful enemy.
2. In the context of daily combat operations, Ukraine has a constant high demand for strike and reconnaissance UAVs. Such equipment is destroyed quite quickly, but it allows the Ukrainian Armed Forces to dominate the enemy on the battlefield qualitatively.
3. Ukraine and its allies in the EU need to increase the production of ammunition even more than is considered by the decision of the Council of the EU in this context. With the provision of one million shells of 155 calibers per year, the daily consumption of ammunition by the Ukrainian artillery will remain at the current level. Even more shells are needed for parity on the battlefield, and even larger stockpiles of shells are needed to keep Russia from aggressive actions against EU countries.
4. In the future, Ukraine needs to be provided with a sufficient number of air defense systems and Western-style combat aircraft for effective protection against Russian threats from the air (both on the front line and throughout the entire territory of the country). Ukrainian forces also need long-range weapons that will allow them to hit the superior Russian forces at a distance.
5. The full development of the security system and defense industry of the EU is impossible without the inclusion of Ukraine and Ukrainian specialists in them, and vice versa. The creation of production facilities in Ukraine and the involvement of Ukrainian professionals should become one of the priorities of cooperation between European capitals and Kyiv.
6. Security guarantees should be provided to Ukraine as soon as possible. Effective reconstruction and development of the state as a full-fledged partner within the EU are impossible without creating a safe environment.

Commentary to “EU defense cooperation with Ukraine”

Commentary by Johan Huovinen LtCol, Swedish Defence University

The report on EU defense cooperation with Ukraine written by Hennadiy Maksak, Mykhailo Drapak and Sergiy Gerasymchuk for the Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism” describes in a logical and structured way the current intensified defense cooperation between Ukraine and EU.

The authors fairly correctly describes how EU member states during 2022 been struggling to find common ground on how to use the EU mechanisms within the CSDP in order to develop the mechanisms for support of Ukraine’s defense against the Russian full-scale aggression.

The establishing of the European Peace Facility (EPF) in 2021 was a first step forward for EU as an institution to be able to support Ukraine with military hardware equipment and military training. EU member states have so far agreed upon three major topics to support Ukraine using EPF; reimbursing member states supporting Ukraine with military equipment, supplying Ukraine with ammunition and funding the European Union Military Assistance Mission. Since 2014 up to the of the full-scale invasion in February 2022 EU and many of its member states had moved cautiously while other partners like US, UK and Canada been more pro-active providing Ukraine with weapons and training. It all changed during 2022 and now is there established a well-functioning military EU support for Ukraine.

The policy recommendations provided in the report by the authors, to both EU institutions and to EU member states, are highly relevant. Regarding EPF the report points out the need for a financial stable midterm perspective, which would pull EU away from its previous re-active mode to a more pro-active mode for its support to Ukraine.

Regarding a continuously support of military hardware and ammunition to Ukraine the report links its well to the midterm perspective of EPF. It is clear that the establishing of EUMAM for technical support and training as well support and production of ammunition will be needed.

Background

When the full-scale war of Russia against Ukraine was launched in February 2022 Ukraine managed to halt the Russian offensive towards Kyiv in April. US had well ahead of the full-scale invasion provided Ukraine with vital weapons like Javelin and Stinger⁷⁰. The European Union and its member states have since 2014 been struggling with creating a pro-active Common Foreign and Security Policy (CSDP) regarding Ukraine. The first visual result of EU’s CSDP in Ukraine was the launch in 2014 of the European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM), aiming to reform Ukraine’s civilian security sector. EU had no active lethal military assistance to Ukraine before the full-scale invasion in February, which has reactively changed over the last 14 months. EU’s CSDP has always acted more of a foreign policy than as a defense policy, even though some member states been striving for an increased militarization of CSDP⁷¹.

⁷⁰ U.S. Department of State, 19 April 2023, <https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-ukraine/>

⁷¹ Luis Simón, 28 November 2022, Royal Institute Elcano, <https://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/en/analyses/european-strategic-autonomy-and-defence-after-ukraine/>

The authors fairly correctly describes how EU members states during 2022 been struggling to find common ground on how to use the EU mechanisms within the CSDP in order to develop the mechanisms for support of Ukraine's defense against the Russian full-scale aggression. The lack of a common understanding among the EU member states on how to militarily and economically support Ukraine has forced the member states to go bilateral with Ukraine in order to provide requested military support⁷².

European Peace Facility (EPF)

As rightly described by the authors the EPF was established in 2021 as an off-budget instrument for assisting Ukraine with military assistance. The main aim with the fund was to prevent conflicts, provide mechanisms and capabilities for conflict resolution and crises management, and strengthen the military and law-enforcement capabilities of partner states. And as late as December 2021 EU made a decision to deliver non-military aid to Ukraine, even though US reported on a Russian planned invasion of Ukraine⁷³.

It was only after the 24th February that EU got its act together and started to act more swiftly.

EU member states have so far agreed upon three major topics to support Ukraine using EPF; reimbursing member states supporting Ukraine with military equipment, supplying Ukraine with ammunition⁷⁴ and funding the European Union Military Assistance Mission⁷⁵.

European defense Agency (EDA)

The cooperation between EDA and Ukraine was established already in 2015 but as the authors describes in the report it has not develop into some noticeable results. The 4 directions of possible cooperation in the Arrangement have had very little impact on improving Ukraine's combat fighting capability so far. The authors rightly points out that it might change with the recent adopted decision of the European Council aiming at joint ammunition procurement.

The authors do not elaborate on why Ukraine and EDA as well as other EU programs like European Defense Investment Program (EDIP) or European Defense Industry Reinforcement through the Common Procurement Act (EDIPRA) not been further developed. It could be of interest for both sides to reengage since February 2022 which is also the authors' recommendation.

72 Kiel Institute for World Economy, 26 April 2023, Ukraine Support Tracker, <https://www.ifw-kiel.de/topics/war-against-ukraine/ukraine-support-tracker/?cookieLevel=not-set>

73 Mark Temnycky, Wilson Center, 28 January 2022, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/europes-dangerous-divide-ukraine>

74 European Union, 13 April 2023, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/04/13/ammunition-for-ukraine-council-agrees-1-billion-support-under-the-european-peace-facility/>

75 European Union, 2 February 2023, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/02/02/ukraine-council-agrees-on-further-military-support-under-the-european-peace-facility/>

Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)

The Permanent Structured Cooperation has by some EU member states been seen as a process towards an EU defense but it has also divided the member states. It has been described as a way to awaken the Lisbon Treaty. The authors points out the interests that Ukraine demonstrated for it but EU member states inability to agree upon the way forward for PESCO has most likely made members states reluctant to admit Ukrainian participation in the collective initiatives launched in the framework of PESCO⁷⁶.

EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine)

In the last Quarter of 2022 EU member states agreed upon establishing EUMAM in order to provide Ukraine will military training on different levels. The authors correctly describes the broad mandate for EUMAM which includes the multiple levels of training. It should be pointed out here that the military training funded from EPF has a clear connection to the military hardware provided bilaterally by the member states. Ukrainian tank crews, combat vehicle personnel and artilleryists have been given training to fight and to maintain the equipment⁷⁷.

Military aid to Ukraine from EU member states

It is clear to the authors that EU, much like NATO, is an international organization that does not possess weapons. That is why its member states been acting bilaterally when it comes to providing Ukraine with weapons. Several member states were initially hesitant to provide Ukraine with weapons and ammunition, among them Germany⁷⁸.

The report covers the military support given to Ukraine by Quarter. The reports points out that several members states were rather re-active than pro-active with their military technical hardware support but it is not critical towards EU members states or EU as organization.

The reports gives a good understanding of the types and quantity of equipment that Ukraine has received bilaterally from EU member states. The authors could had pointed out that France lead the way for EU members states to provide Ukraine with the much requested and contested tanks by providing Ukraine with AMX-10RC⁷⁹, something that triggered UK and US to announcing that they would provide Ukraine with tanks that later triggered other EU member states to provide Ukraine with the Leopard 2 tank⁸⁰. The French initiative created a domino effect for tanks.

76 Alice Billon-Galland and Martin Quence, 6 October 2017, <https://www.gmfus.org/news/can-france-and-germany-make-pesco-work-process-toward-eu-defense>

77 Embassy of France in Valetta, Malta, 2 Feb 2023, <https://mt.ambafrance.org/The-European-Union-agrees-on-further-military-support-to-Ukraine>

78 David M. Herszenhorn, Lili Bayer and Hans von der Burchard, Politico, 26 February 2022, <https://www.politico.eu/article/ukraine-war-russia-germany-still-blocking-arms-supplies/>

79 Michael Peck, Insider, 8 January 2023, <https://www.businessinsider.com/france-is-sending-tank-killing-amx10rc-armored-vehicles-to-ukraine-2023-1?r=US&IR=T>

80 Ellie Cook, Newsweek, 26 January 2023, <https://www.newsweek.com/cost-western-battle-tanks-m1-abrams-leopard-2-challenger-2-1776725>

The EU's contribution as an organization

It is described in the report that European Union as an institution has sought to adopt a comprehensive assistance approach towards the needs of Ukraine in times of full-scale war. It is true that EU as an institution has adopted itself but it happen only in the times for a full-scale war. EU and many of its member states have moved cautiously since 2014 while other partners like US, UK and Canada been more pro-active providing Ukraine with weapons and training⁸¹.

The establishing of EPF, and EUMAM, is clearly an adoption to the current situation and shall be seen as platform for structured military support to Ukraine. Since the current EPF budget for 2027 is nearly 8 billion EURO it gives some stability for the coming years.

Policy Recommendations

The assessment by the authors that the military hostilities of Russia might take the form of a protracted conflict should not be underestimated. It is true that the Ukrainian side has demonstrated resilience and a will to fight the Russian aggressor. It is though still to be seen what the boost of military equipment that Ukraine has received can do for its warfighting capability.

The policy recommendations provided in the report by the authors, to both EU institutions and to EU member states, are highly relevant. Regarding EFP the report points out the need for a financial stable midterm perspective, which would pull EU away from its previous re-active mode to a more pro-active mode for its support to Ukraine.

Regarding a continuously support of military hardware and ammunition to Ukraine the report links its well to the midterm perspective of EPF. It is clear that the establishing of EUMAM for technical support and training as well support and production of ammunition will be needed.

⁸¹ Rod Nickel, Reuters, 4 Augusti 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/canada-help-train-ukrainian-recruits-united-kingdom-minister-2022-08-04/>

Commentary by Tony Lawrence, Head of the Defence Policy & Strategy Programme / Research Fellow at the International Centre for Defence and Security (ICDS)

EU Defence Cooperation with Ukraine

When Ursula von der Leyen presented her College of Commissioners to the European Parliament in November 2019, she outlined her vision for a “geopolitical Commission”: a Commission that would offer leadership, strengthen partners through cooperation, and be a force for peace and positive change and shaper of a better global order⁸². This vision echoed aspirations first set out in the EU’s 2003 Security Strategy and elaborated in the 2016 Global Strategy and 2022 Strategic Compass for an EU that was a global actor, that both protected its own citizens and contributed to international peace and security. It also reflected the Union’s real-world experience of a series of international crises—including the global financial crisis (2007-8), Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea and intervention in Donbas (2014), the European migration crisis (2015), and the COVID-19 pandemic—that had, in effect, obliged it to take on a growing role as a geopolitical actor.

In its response to Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the EU as an institution transformed more than NATO did. While NATO took necessary and substantial steps to reinforce its deterrence and defence posture, it essentially continued to do more of the same.

The EU, however, struck out in new directions, including imposing sanctions of unprecedented range and scope on Russia, establishing an assistance mission that greatly advances the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), and fundamentally re-imagining an existing security assistance mechanism to allow it to supply Ukraine with large quantities of sophisticated, lethal weapons. The fact that the authors of this study have chosen to focus on EU-Ukraine defence cooperation, a subject that would perhaps have been dismissed as trivial only a decade ago, is testament to the maturing of the EU as a global actor. In addition to soundly analysing the content of and prospects for EU-Ukraine defence cooperation, their work, even if this was not their main intent, illustrates an important chapter in the EU’s own development.

Military Assistance

Much of the study concerns the bilateral military assistance provided to Ukraine by the EU member states, some of which was supported by the off budget, but still commonly funded arrangement known as the European Peace Facility (EPF). This has been the EU’s most visible contribution to Ukraine’s war efforts, although in monetary terms its financial assistance—grants, loans, loan guarantees—has been larger. The latest data from the Kiel Institute for the World Economy’s ‘Ukraine Support Tracker’, probably the most reliable public source of data on this subject, estimates that the EU member states provided 16 billion euros’ worth of

⁸² European Union, European Commission, “Speech by President-elect von der Leyen in the European Parliament Plenary on the occasion of the presentation of her College of Commissioners and their programme,” 27 November 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/es/speech_19_6408

military assistance on a bilateral basis between 24 January 2022 and 24 February 2023⁸³. To put this figure into context, it equates to around 7.5% of the total annual defence expenditure of the EU member states⁸⁴. The EU's central institutions have had no role in determining the scale and nature of the military assistance provided by the member states, or in coordinating their donations. The coordination function has been partly achieved by the member states' participation in the ad hoc International Donors Coordination Cell at US European Command, Stuttgart, and in the political-level Ukraine Defense Contact Group, both of which seek to best match Ukraine's needs with donor offerings.⁸⁵

The European Peace Facility

In the same period, January 2022 to February 2023, the military assistance for Ukraine funded through the EPF—i.e., common EU, rather than individual member state funding—amounted to the much smaller sum of around 3.6 billion euros (in April 2023, beyond the timeframe of the Kiel Institute's data, an additional one billion euros was committed to the EPF to fund the delivery of artillery ammunition)⁸⁶. Although these commonly funded amounts are relatively small, the use of the EPF has nonetheless been an important signal of the EU's readiness to support Ukraine—the more so as it has involved the rather inventive use of an existing EU instrument for purposes far from those originally intended—and offered a means by which the member states could encourage each other to do more. It has also given the member states the confidence that they could donate equipment from their own inventories and be able to replace it—a key consideration for member states such as those to the Union's east who themselves feel vulnerable to Russian military aggression.

Because it works by reimbursing member states for their bilateral donations and because its procedures for doing so are somewhat unclear, there may be some double counting between the bilateral and EPF figures⁸⁷. The opaque workings of the EPF are not, however, just a trivial accounting problem for defence analysts or a concern for good governance, but a potential source of tension among the member states. In one notorious incident, Estonia was accused of “gaming” the EPF for its own benefit at the expense of the other member states; Estonia

83 According to the methodology applied by the Support Tracker, military assistance was provided bilaterally by all EU countries except Cyprus, Hungary, Ireland, and Malta: C. Trebesch, A. Antezza, K. Bushnell, A. Frank, P. Frank, L. Franz, I. Kharitonov, B. Kumar, E. Rebinskaya, and S. Schramm, “The Ukraine Support Tracker: Which countries help Ukraine and how?” Kiel Working Paper, No. 2218, Kiel Institute for the World Economy, 9th update, February 2023, and dataset, 10th release, April 2023, <https://www.ifw-kiel.de/publications/kiel-working-papers/2022/the-ukraine-support-tracker-which-countries-help-ukraine-and-how-17204/>. The EU's financial assistance is estimated at 28 billion euros in the same period

84 The member states spent a total of 214 billion euros on defence in 2021: EU, European Defence Agency, “Defence Data,” <https://eda.europa.eu/publications-and-data/defence-data>

85 Vivienne Machi, “Inside the multinational logistics cell coordinating military aid for Ukraine, Defense News, 21 July 2022, <https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2022/07/21/inside-the-multinational-logistics-cell-coordinating-military-aid-for-ukraine/>

86 EU, Council of the European Union, “Ammunition for Ukraine: Council agrees €1 billion support under the European Peace Facility,” press release, 13 April 2023, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/04/13/ammunition-for-ukraine-council-agrees-1-billion-support-under-the-european-peace-facility/?utm_source=dsms-auto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Ammunition%20for%20Ukraine%3A%20Council%20agrees%20%25u20ac1%20billion%20support%20under%20the%20European%20Peace%20Facility

87 C. Trebesch, et al., “The Ukraine Support Tracker,” 11.

responded that it was working entirely within the rules and had, in any case, always been open about its intent to seek maximum reimbursement⁸⁸. As the authors of this study correctly point out, the EPF has been an important symbol and source of European unity in its assistance to Ukraine. To the surprise of Vladimir Putin, who calculated on being able to divide the west, and indeed to many observers in the west itself, the unity of the EU and NATO throughout the full-scale war has been both remarkable and durable⁸⁹. The imperative of ensuring continuing practical support to Ukraine is too important to be held hostage to bickering in the supporting coalition, and any possible cause for this should be eradicated.

On a more positive note, as the EPF is funded proportionately according to a measure of national income, meaning that wealthier member states pay a larger share of the total, it assists fairer burden sharing: another key component of maintaining cohesion. At least part of the growing belief among Americans, especially Republicans, that the US is providing too much aid to Ukraine is presumably because the value of US military assistance has been substantially greater than Europe's (43 billion euros according to the Support Tracker—about 5% of US annual defence spending)⁹⁰. In Europe, at least, the reputation of some member states that have been criticised for not pulling their weight can be partly salvaged by reference to the value of their assistance once their EPF contribution is included (for example: according the Support Tracker France has provided 0.5 billion euros' worth of military assistance bilaterally and 1.1 billion euros' worth including its share of the EPF commitment; the corresponding figures for Germany are 4.2 and 5.2 billion euros—Germany's share of the EPF alone was greater than the total (bilateral and EPF) donations of 21 of the 27 member states).

Western Caution

This study illustrates in some detail how the military assistance provided by the EU member states has steadily increased throughout the war, both in terms of numbers and in the sophistication and lethality of the weapons supplied. This may be so, but it is hard to avoid concluding that western assistance—both European and American—has been broadly cautious, especially considering the grave dangers for Europe's and, indeed, the world's security of a Russian victory. The authors of the study attribute the growth of military assistance to developments on the ground in Ukraine. Certainly, the supporting coalition has closely observed how Ukraine has made use of the donated weapons and attempted to match its supply to the changing conditions on the battlefield, but it has often been behind the curve. Ukraine's summer 2022 counter-offensives

88 Jakob Hanke Vela and Nicolas Camut, "EU allies query Estonia's bumper refund from weapons to Ukraine," Politico, 28 March 2023, <https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-estonia-bumper-arms-reimbursement-ukraine-european-peace-facility/>; Joakim Klementi, "Estonia hopes to recoup from EU full €400 million military aid to Ukraine," ERR, 23 January 2023, <https://news.err.ee/1608860060/estonia-hopes-to-recoup-from-eu-full-400-million-military-aid-to-ukraine>

89 Nigel Gould-Davies, "The Astonishing Endurance of Unity on Ukraine," Foreign Affairs, 8 March 2023, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ukraine/astonishing-endurance-unity-ukraine>

90 Andy Cerda, "More than four-in-ten Republicans now say the U.S. is providing too much aid to Ukraine," Pew Research Center, 15 June 2023, <https://www.sipri.org/news/2023/world-military-expenditure-reaches-new-record-high-european-spending-surges-0#:~:text=The%20United%20States%20remains%20by,the%20world's%20second%20largest%20spender>

in Kharkiv and Kherson, for example, may well have pushed Russian forces further back had the coalition been ready to supply NATO-standard air defence systems and armoured vehicles, and the necessary training and logistics packages for these, earlier—when it was already apparent that western inventories of ex-Warsaw Pact equipment were running low⁹¹. The use of the EPF may have calmed fears of empty inventories among the member states, but a more fundamental brake on their response has been the fear, not equally shared, that their assistance will be seen as escalatory, with dangerous, unpredictable consequences. Russia has been only too ready to encourage this fear even as it has worked hard to underplay the value of donated equipment on the battlefield⁹². Russia, though, has done little except threaten, even as the west agreed to supply Ukraine with iconic main battle tanks and MiG-29 combat aircraft—the wisdom of supplying both had earlier been the subject of very public disputes amongst the donor states⁹³.

The Military Assistance Mission

The EU's establishment of the Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM) was another important, practical step in its building of a more geopolitical role. While previous CSDP training missions, for example in Mali, Somalia, the Central African Republic, and Mozambique, had aimed to build capacity in local forces to operate against non-state actors, through EUMAM the EU is providing training for the armed forces of a state actively engaged in large-scale, peer-to-peer conflict. The mission includes aspects that are substantially more ambitious than those of previous CSDP operations, and even new territory, including: its scale (the goal is to train 30 000 Ukrainian Armed Forces personnel by the end of 2023), its scope, which at the upper end involves battalion-level collective training; and the use of the EU's own operation headquarters, the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (rather than a member state national headquarters assigned to the EU) for an operation of this size and complexity⁹⁴.

Building Cooperation and Consolidating Assistance

The EUMAM and the EPF are clearly helpful to Ukraine in defeating Russia's aggression. Yet both initiatives are short term and essentially take the form of EU assistance to Ukraine, rather than mutual defence cooperation. As the authors of this study point out, the EU has its own cooperative defence programmes—notably Permanent Structured Cooperation and the European Defence Fund—that have developed criteria for the involvement of third states, and

91 Frederick W. Kagan, Kimberly Kagan, Riley Bailey, Grace Mappes, Angela Howard, Mason Clark, Kateryna Stepanenko, and George Barros, "Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, January 29, 2023," Institute for the Study of War, 29 January 2023, <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounders/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-january-29-2023>

92 "Moscow warns Western military aid to Ukraine could lead to 'unpredictable' escalation of war," Euronews, 8 February 2023;

"Russia to keep destroying Western armor supplied to Ukraine, says Putin," TASS, 16 June 2023, <https://tass.com/politics/1634053>

93 Ben Hall and John Paul Rathbone, "Why are Ukraine's allies arguing about tanks?" Financial Times, 26 January 2023, <https://www.ft.com/content/f8ba6d3d-0688-4b0e-b3e9-99d83953999e>; Hans von der Burchard, Gabriel Rinaldi, Lili Bayer, and Clea Caulcutt, "Tanks, no tanks: Scholz holds key to Leopards for Ukraine, but waits for Biden," Politico, 19 January 2023, <https://www.politico.eu/article/olaf-scholz-germany-joe-biden-united-states-ukraine-war-tanks-leopards-waiting/>

94 European Union, "About EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine)," 8 December 2022, <https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eumam-ukraine/about-eu-military-assistance-mission-support-ukraine-eumam-ukraine-en?s=410260#:~:text=The%20EU%20Military%20Assistance%20Mission,offensives%20by%20Russia%20and%20other>

with some of which Ukraine has agreements in principle to participate. As its role as a defence actor grows, the EU seems likely to become more involved in the later stages of collaborative defence procurement too, with several proposed initiatives (the European Defence Investment Programme, the Joint Defence Strategic Programming and Procurement process) that may also offer opportunities for third state participation⁹⁵. There are many advantages to bringing Ukraine into all these initiatives, including the contribution they can make to re-arming Ukraine in the longer term and the opportunity for EU member states to learn from Ukraine's wartime experience in designing the next generation of European military capabilities. But perhaps above all, including Ukraine in a wide range of the EU's activities sends an important signal of long-term support and strengthens Ukraine's EU perspective. As Ukraine is unlikely, in the immediate term at least, to be offered full EU (or NATO) membership, the greater the range of EU (and NATO) institutions and processes it can take part in, the more secure it will be and the stronger the signal of its belonging to the democratic west.

Conclusion

Notwithstanding the enormous courage, determination and resourcefulness of Ukraine's armed forces and people, it is doubtful they would have achieved so much without the equipment and weapons donated by European and other western states. These donations have been not only vital on a tactical level but have also had strategic effect. At the start of the full-scale war, handheld Javelin and Stinger missiles made an important contribution to forcing the Russian army to retreat from Kyiv and focus on much more limited war aims.

Donated armoured vehicles supported the summer 2022 counteroffensives that forced Russia to partially mobilise, exposing to the public the true nature of the 'special military operation', and to rely more heavily on the Wagner Group and other private armies, setting in train a drama of infighting and instability whose impact may yet be catastrophic for the regime.

Ukraine's victories are its alone, but EU member states can be inspired by the evidence that their donations have been vital to its successes. It is time for the member states to take a longer-term view and a collective approach to the acquisition and management of future assistance.

The EU's ammunition procurement scheme and the coalition of the willing's F-16 training programme are good examples of the better coordination of western support⁹⁶. The EU, hand-in-hand with Ukraine, can play an important role in similar efforts. The stakes are high: the outcome of the war will depend, to a large extent, on the continued will of EU and other states to supply weapons and equipment, and the efficiency with which they are able to do so.

⁹⁵ Louis Pernotte and Tony Lawrence, "A New Capabilities Agenda," EU Defence after Ukraine Brief No. 2, ICDS, October 2022, <https://icds.ee/en/series-eu-defence-after-ukraine/>

⁹⁶ European Union, Council of the European Union, "EU joint procurement of ammunition and missiles for Ukraine: Council agrees €1 billion support under the European Peace Facility," 5 May 2023, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/05/05/eu-joint-procurement-of-ammunition-and-missiles-for-ukraine-council-agrees-1-billion-support-under-the-european-peace-facility/>; Anthony Deutsch, "Exclusive: Coalition aims to begin Ukrainian F-16 pilot training by summer, Dutch minister says, Reuters, 13 June 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/coalition-aims-begin-ukrainian-f-16-pilot-training-by-summer-dutch-minister-2023-06-12/>

Commentary by Eglė Murauskaitė Senior Scholar, ICONS Project with the University of Maryland

As the conflict in Ukraine turned to a conventional war in February 2022, the United States has consistently been the first and largest provider of military support, also playing a significant part in rallying various global partners to the cause. While advance American warnings of the forthcoming Russian invasion were initially met with considerable skepticism, the consistent narrative was helpful in mobilizing the EU for a swift reaction in the shape of progressively strict sanctions once the events started to unfold⁹⁷.

In this contribution to global assessments of the role of the international community during the first year of this war, the author offers a valuable quarterly technical summaries of specific military equipment provided by various European states, as well as the different EU instruments used to facilitate and encourage such assistance. Drawing on open-source materials, the author traces how the changing flow of the battle was accompanied by a change of pace and type of military assistance, moving from light weapons to heavy artillery of progressively longer range. The author shares a personal assessment of the battlefield impact of several types of equipment, such as heavy equipment compensating for Ukrainian losses, the HIMARS providing a qualitative advantage against a quantitatively superior adversary, and air defense systems being helpful against increasingly aggressive civilian target shelling.

While the opinion seems largely consistent with public commentary and assessments in other analytical sources, providing a larger contextual reference base would have strengthened the argument. Furthermore, the absence of first-hand accounts (e.g., of Ukrainian forces using the equipment, NATO trainers teaching them to do so, Ukrainian policy makers lobbying for the provisions and/or their foreign counterparts approving/denying it etc.) begs the question of how such retroactive insights were perceived on the front lines, at the time and/or in retrospect. Typically, assessments on the ground (from both, Ukrainian and foreign sources) have regularly indicated the urgent need for spare parts and operational training as constituting the most pressing needs – factors that had regularly hampered the impact of the broad variety of weapons arriving during 2022. In addition, while the deliveries of the systems are specified by country, the impact assessment paints a more generalized picture without offering comparable individualized insights. Again, keeping in mind that the United States, rather than the EU or its individual member states, remained the largest provider of military assistance in terms of both, financial and equipment contributions to Ukraine, the reader must be careful not to mistake the discussion of the impact of foreign-provided UAVs or systems like Patriot and HIMARS for the impact of European input⁹⁸.

Nevertheless, the study is one of the first systematic efforts to look at the EU instruments for facilitating military assistance – significantly complementing the discourse on EU's sanctions' impact. The author assesses the European Peace Facility as an important confidence booster for Central and Eastern European states to provide military equipment to Ukraine with the view of getting reimbursed for it, and also points to the prominence of the EU Military Assistance

97 Murauskaitė, E. E. (Feb 2023). "U.S. Assistance to Ukraine in the Information Space: Intelligence, Cyber, and Signaling." START UMD. <https://www.start.umd.edu/publication/us-assistance-ukraine-information-space-intelligence-cyber-and-signaling>

98 For impact assessments of U.S.-provided military assistance, see Murauskaitė, E. E. (Jan 2023). "U.S. Arms Transfers to Ukraine: Impact Assessment." START UMD. <https://www.start.umd.edu/publication/us-arms-transfers-ukraine-impact-assessment>

Mission to Ukraine in troop training. Input from the armed forces involved in such training or from European officials involved in the equipment transfers and acquisition authorizations would have strengthened the perspective.

These observations are valuable in landscaping the military side of EU's response and point to synergies with member state political decisions. Nevertheless, not including a NATO perspective leaves a significant gap, given that this is the primary European military forum. Russia's turning of the conflict in Ukraine into a conventional war has played into NATO's strengths, marking its rather prominent return to European security agenda. Indeed, NATO has long been searching for an appropriate mission focus, delving into cyber security, information operations, and – significantly – operational support in delivering medical aid and equipment at the height of the COVID pandemic. As transatlantic relations with Russia had been cooling and thawing over the past twenty years, the alliance has been reviewing its nuclear and deterrent posture, seemingly on the verge of a shift away from the focus on conventional and nuclear capabilities before 2022. With national military forces of European countries participating in out-of-area operations under various multilateral (e.g., French-led European Intervention Initiative) and bilateral (e.g., UK's Joint Expeditionary Force) auspices, and concepts like European armed forces sometimes seen as competing with NATO, it is important to note the complementary dynamics between NATO's and EU's military assistance to Ukraine.

Another important aspect to appreciate is the divergence between the highly public Ukrainian political campaigns – typically focusing on requests for the most advanced Western weapons systems – and the often more basic operational needs on the ground. While the political campaign by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and his cabinet has been widely assessed as effective, it was also a lengthy effort that cost the Western leaders considerable amounts of political capital in gradual compliance with those requests. As a result, some of the painstakingly negotiated advanced weapons systems have not, and will not, be arriving in time to make a difference. It could be argued that channeling such efforts to less visible albeit operationally crucial aspects of military assistance would have had a significant battlefield impact and been available faster. Notable failure points of Western military assistance, regularly discussed in the public commentary, include the problems of diversity of armaments and spare parts provided (preventing any scalable Ukrainian troop training updating); the challenges in arranging for equipment repairs outside of Ukrainian territory; as well as the limited technical support available to the troops, particularly during the first two quarters of 2022. Thus, while the author echoes Ukrainian leadership calls for Europe to provide and produce more advanced weaponry, more operationally-focused efforts, like advocacy for foreign (including European) assistance for on-site equipment repairs and troop training could offer impactful advances faster and arguably expending less public political capital in a Europe that is showing signs of struggle to maintain focus on the grinding war in Ukraine.

Overall, this war has quickly revealed the extent of European shortages of military equipment, and the capacity to produce it – neither of which is surprising, given the substantial reliance

of European defense on collaboration with the U.S. While some countries were able to revive certain latent military production aspects, others (including Ukraine) have used the window of opportunity to boost, test, and field new and niche military technologies. The prospect of reviving Europe's military-industrial complex merits a broader debate, including not only assessments of the types of security threats the region is likely to face in the short, medium, and long term, but also the competitiveness (e.g., internally among emerging European producers, as well as with the long-established U.S. firms) and sustainability of such industry. If protracted debates over NATO-standard adherence or economic and legal battles over protectionism (e.g., between Airbus and Boeing) are any indication, the process itself promises to become a minefield.

Finally, in order to accurately appreciate the relative scope and speed of the military assistance provided by various European nations, it is important to grasp their domestic political context, as well as the broader geopolitical landscape of 2022. The author notes in passing Hungary's failure to contribute in this respect – a product of deep and long-lasting processes tearing this EU (and NATO) member state ever further away from Western political values, and making it a painful outlier in many strategic security decisions, more closely reflecting Russian or Chinese positions. Similarly, volleys of critique to German commitments vis a vis Ukraine seemed to pay little attention to the drastic shifts this war has instigated in the country's broader political agenda – with time and effort required not only to make and implement decisions, but also for the change to fully trickle down through the political culture and the sizable apparatus involved, to say nothing of the public attitudinal shifts involved. The global context of the spiraling U.S.-China security dynamics and simmering conflicts in the Middle East also had considerable bearing on the manner that global, as well as European, power centers, have chosen to divide their attention, financial, and military commitments. Furthermore, the substantive crises in the global south triggered by food and fuel shortages and other second-order effects of this war, have significantly shaped the attitudes in those regions not only towards Ukraine and Russia, but also towards the West. Failure to offer swift assistance, and limited efforts to onboard the global south to the anti-Russia campaign, has caused many to drift away from Western alliances towards China or Russia, subsequently requiring additional political and economic resources to address such third-order effects.

Commentary by Martins Vargulis

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The authors of this policy paper analyze an important issue: the development of autonomous military capabilities of the European Union in the context of the necessary assistance to Ukraine. As indicated by the analysis conducted, it is precisely the Russian aggression in Ukraine that has identified the deficiencies that exist at the EU level. In the conclusion of the analysis, authors recommend closer cooperation both at the institutional level and in the context of financial and military resources. Therefore, in this commentary, the emphasis will be placed on diversified and emerging “schools of thoughts” within the European Union, how they can influence the Union's support for Ukraine, and what mechanisms can still be used to promote Ukraine's approximation to the EU, thereby strengthening its capabilities and capacity to counter Russian aggression.

The “rise of strategic autonomy” within the context of Russian aggression in Ukraine

In the last decade, the EU has experienced several security shocks that have influenced how it develops its external and security policy. Both internal and external shocks have served as a driving force for closer cooperation. One of the most significant crises in Europe that undermined the existing order was the Russian aggression that began on February 24, 2022. It should be noted that the Russian aggression in Ukraine in 2014 marked certain changes. However, the events in Ukraine in 2014 served as a wake-up call mainly for Eastern European countries that share borders with Russia, rather than for the EU as a whole and its key driving forces such as France, Germany, Italy, and Spain. However, February 24, 2022, can be considered a “game changer”. Similar to other international actors, this crisis challenged the unity and ability of the EU to react swiftly, providing a collective response. It has identified both strengths and significant shortcomings within the EU. The shortcomings are related not only to the timeframe in which decisions are made but also to significant deficiencies in human and military resources.

Both the Russian aggression in Ukraine in 2014, the Russian-Georgian conflict in 2008, and the US administration's perspective on shifting focus and relations with the EU have contributed to discussions within Europe about the development of strategic autonomy. The concept of strategic autonomy has various dimensions and interpretations, including among EU member states. Regardless of different understandings of this concept, its development has created some divisions within the EU. However, this discussion has also had a positive impact on strengthening the collective capabilities of the EU, not only in the military field. It is a political gesture and holds significance in a broader global context.

Regardless of how the term “European strategic autonomy” is interpreted, the Russian aggression in Ukraine and the support provided by the Euro-Atlantic community have identified that without significant contributions from the United States, the community as a whole would not be able to fully supply Ukraine with the necessary resources. Looking at pledges of military

aid to Ukraine between January 24, 2022, and January 15, 2023, the U.S. government has committed to providing more financial assistance for military purposes than any other country, with a substantial gap compared to other countries⁹⁹. The United States is prepared and capable of providing Ukraine with more military and financial aid than all EU member states combined.

Support for Ukraine and measures of adaptation within the EU should be viewed through the prism of other threats that still exist among EU member states. The Russian aggression in Ukraine in 2022 came as a significant surprise, disbelief, or even shock to many international actors, causing significant internal and external shocks. Unlike other international actors, the Baltic states, if they did not predict such escalation, did not exclude its possibility. Often, the Baltic states have been regarded as "Russophobic" from the perspective of other European countries, suggesting that calls for additional security-enhancing measures in the region, to be implemented within the framework of Transatlantic relations, would rather escalate tensions than enhance security. Attempts to understand Russia, reach agreement on a common threat classification, and the resulting adaptation measures have been challenging among European Union allies. Despite several indications that Russia has posed over the past two decades, it is only in 2022 that we can speak of a turning point that also affects the perception of Western European countries and their societies regarding providing support to Ukraine.

Spectrum of various “senses of urgency and danger”

As indicated in this analysis, the most urgent types of weapons that Ukraine needs today are main battle tanks, armored vehicles, and Western-style artillery. This discussion has been present among EU leaders in various formats and capacities over the past 12-15 months. In this context, the transformation of Germany is particularly noteworthy, as its position will have a medium- to long-term impact on EU support for Ukraine. Germany's perspective has emphasized that strengthening economic ties would create mutual interdependence among countries, reducing the likelihood of conflict. It is now clear that this approach has not worked. Despite Germany's longstanding partnership with Russia, particularly in the energy sector, it has not deterred Russia from military aggression, resulting in the imposition of sanctions and energy diversification. Attempts to find a "win-win" situation with Russia have also proven unsustainable. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, there has been a prevailing belief in Germany that it is possible to find cooperation that would benefit both Russia and the EU as a whole. It was believed that it is not a "zero-sum game" where the gains of one party come at the expense of the other. However, the understanding of Putin's Russia and Russia itself has been deceptive over the past two decades.

Each era seeks its own answers, and this applies to Germany and its new Ostpolitik, which needs to adapt to changing realities and transition into the new era - also becoming part of the

⁹⁹ Statista.com, The Countries Sending the Most Military Aid to Ukraine <https://www.statista.com/chart/27278/military-aid-to-ukraine-by-country/>

Zeitenwende¹⁰⁰ proclaimed by Chancellor Olaf Scholz. As announced in the famous speech on February 27, 2022, Germany is ready to spend 2% of its gross domestic product (GDP) on defense, invest an additional 100 billion for critical military capability gaps, and contribute to supporting its partners. It should be noted that while "heavy" combat equipment has not been sent to Ukraine, Germany has actively supported Ukraine since the beginning of Russian aggression. Its support ranks immediately after the assistance provided by the United States and the United Kingdom. It is important to consider that as the richest country in the European Union, Germany also provides a significant portion of the EU funding allocated to Ukraine.

The support of the EU for Ukraine should also be viewed through the lens of different societies. From the first days of the war, the Baltic states and their societies have held the belief that Ukraine is "fighting our war." In other words, if Ukraine loses against this aggression, the next ones could be the Baltic states. Such understanding is not necessarily prevalent in Western and Central European countries. As indicated by recent polls in Germany, 64% of the public is against supplying Ukraine with weapons, 43% of respondents believe that the number of weapons delivered is sufficient, 37% think it is too much, and 14% consider it insufficient¹⁰¹. This clearly illustrates that only 14% of the population has an "acute" understanding and feeling that Germany is not doing enough. One can agree or criticize Olaf Scholz or Emmanuel Macron, but their reference point is the sentiment of the society. In the context of France as well, analyzing the assembly elections that took place a year ago, it could be concluded that the Russian aggression in Ukraine is not among the most pressing issues and priorities. This is a significant difference compared to the Baltic states. And it is precisely this sentiment dominating Europe that influences the type and extent of cooperation that could be provided to Ukraine from the overall EU "pot".

Shortage of EU military industry

Reflecting on the need expressed in this analysis to provide broader support to Ukraine from the EU, it should be noted that one of the strategically significant vulnerabilities highlighted by the Russian aggression in Ukraine is related to the capabilities of the European military industry to produce the necessary equipment and heavy artillery. It vividly illustrates that Europe not only lacks sufficient military resources to fully support Ukraine's defense capabilities, but its defense industry is also unable to produce the quantities required in the context of a broader conflict.

100 The Federal Government, 2023, Policy statement by Olaf Scholz, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany and Member of the German Bundestag, 27 February 2022 in Berlin, <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/news/policy-statement-by-olaf-scholz-chancellor-of-the-federal-republic-of-germany-and-member-of-the-german-bundestag-27-february-2022-in-berlin-2008378>

101 ARD-DeutschlandTrend, Zufriedenheit mit Ampel-Regierung auf Rekordtiefe <https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/deutschlandtrend/deutschlandtrend-3368.html>

This reinforces the previously mentioned thesis that until February 24, 2022, NATO's focus has been primarily on crisis management outside NATO's borders. Only with the decisions made at the Madrid Summit and the adoption of the new strategic doctrine can we talk about a return to NATO's origins. This has also affected the capabilities of weapons and ammunition stockpiles for such a large-scale conventional war involving tanks, artillery, fighter aircraft, and other assets.

The prevailing assumption that this type of 20th-century warfare is rather impossible after the end of the Cold War is reflected in military, logistical, and capability plans. As NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg pointed out, Ukraine currently experiences significantly higher volumes of ammunition being fired on a daily basis than Europe, along with the United States, is capable of producing¹⁰². According to estimates by several military experts, a single day of ammunition usage in Ukraine is equivalent to a month's worth in Afghanistan.

The prevailing notion that this type of 20th-century warfare is rather improbable after the end of the Cold War is reflected in military, logistical, and capability plans. As NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg pointed out, Ukraine currently experiences significantly larger volumes of ammunition being fired on a daily basis than Europe, together with the United States, is capable of producing¹⁰³. According to estimates by several military experts, in terms of ammunition usage, a single day in Ukraine is equivalent to a month in Afghanistan.

Having Ukraine integrated into EU programs and cooperation platforms

One of the conclusions drawn in the context of this work is related to Ukraine's involvement in EU projects, such as PESCO. It should be noted that there is also no consensus among EU member states regarding the necessity and contribution of this collaborative project. Concerns persist, particularly from the perspective of the Baltic states, that closer integration of capabilities within the EU context may create challenges and duplications with NATO.

And most importantly... regardless of any initiatives and platforms, the EU needs to be able to invest more funding in defense. Despite years of criticism about insufficient defense spending, only a third of NATO member states allocate at least 2% of their gross domestic product to this goal. Even after the events of 2022, the majority of NATO member states have not reached the necessary 2% threshold. This also demonstrates that while public sentiment has changed, economic, welfare, and social issues still prevail over defense in the view of the majority of NATO countries.

102 Sabine Siebold and Andrew Gray, NATO to increase targets for ammunition stockpiles as war depletes reserves, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/natos-stoltenberg-we-plan-increase-targets-ammunition-stockpiles-2023-02-13/>

103 Sabine Siebold and Andrew Gray, NATO to increase targets for ammunition stockpiles as war depletes reserves, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/natos-stoltenberg-we-plan-increase-targets-ammunition-stockpiles-2023-02-13/>

This is also related to the aforementioned notion: the situation where NATO security could be threatened from the Russian side was perceived as impossible. In this regard, there is a significant difference in understanding between Western and Eastern European countries. It also highlights several areas where NATO already needs to invest. In the context of Ukraine, the most important ones are:

1. long-range missiles;
2. combat aircraft;
3. tanks and heavy armored vehicles;
4. modern air defense.

The problem with the European defense industry lies in the production of complex weapons in very small batches over long periods of time. This approach corresponds to peacetime situations but not to wartime conditions.

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