






Ukraine between 'the East and the West'

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- Independent since 1991, **Ukraine has veered** between the East and the West
 - While wishing **to broaden its ties with the West** (EU/NATO), it has nevertheless **muddled through democratization**
 - **Russian influence and meddling** have, particularly in the last several years, **destabilized** the country considerably
 - However, **has the Western policy** towards the country **always been positive** as such?
 - <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-18010123>
 - <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/euoppblog/2017/03/30/western-populism-ukraine/>

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- “When Ukraine became independent in 1991, there were **expectations** that it would in the near future **become a wealthy free market democracy and a full member of the European and Euro-Atlantic communities..... Ukraine never fulfilled those expectations.** Instead, it is seen as an **underachiever....**” (Carnegie Endowment)
 - *Was/Has this (been) really fair to expect from Ukraine?*
 - <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/03/09/underachiever-ukraine-s-economy-since-1991-pub-47451>
 - Major **issues in democratization and transformation (i.e., botched privatizations, major corruption scandals, very slow institutional reforms, etc.)** have held the country back
 - <https://www.economist.com/blogs/freeexchange/2015/05/ukrain>
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- Hence, an important question in this regard remains: *How democratic is today's Ukraine?*
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QcqBi4UCOOOQ>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GH4LoOCSmMQ>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWNxHYUUxs>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNKsLIK52ss>
 - “Following **Ukraine's Orange Revolution in 2004/2005** and the **Euromaidan demonstrations that began in November 2013**, Ukraine's path towards democracy and European integration finally appeared to be a smooth one. Almost three years later, however, the initial euphoria has given way to frustration. **The Ukrainian government is constantly accused of delaying its fight against corruption and of enforcing reforms.**” (DW)
 - <http://www.dw.com/en/ukraine-democracy-is-not-a-free-gift/a-19553995>

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- As in the case of many other post-communist societies, **dealing with the past, (in)stability of state institutions, acceptance of civic values, necessary state reforms, and finally statehood issue**, just to name the few, have remained problematic for Kiev
 - **Russian occupation of Crimea** and rising regional tensions in this regard, with **particularly sharp rise of nationalist agendas and existing national divisions (particularly in the east of the country)**, have only added to uncertainty that the has met the country
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CLx7QjewL_A
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pReGybeBjO0>
 - Coupled with **economic problems**, it seems that Ukraine will be having **hard times** in managing the problems it has

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- *Hence, what will future bring to Ukraine? Can, for instance, the EU help the country? In what way is this to be done? Will Ukraine be able to join the Union one day?*
 - https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu_ukraine_relations_fact_sheet_6_november_2017.pdf
 - **“EU leaders offered Ukraine closer ties** on Friday at a summit meant to cement Kiev’s ties with the West, but **they declined to promise** that the country could one day **join the bloc.”** (Reuters)
 - <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-eu/ukraines-promise-of-eu-membership-remains-elusive-idUSKBN1DO18R>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ruzxGCz5dU>