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FACT SHEET

EU-Ukraine relations

The European Union is currently focusing its efforts on [de-escalating the crisis in Ukraine](#). The EU calls on all sides to continue engaging in a meaningful and inclusive dialogue leading to a lasting solution; to protect the unity and territorial integrity of the country and to strive to ensure a stable, prosperous and democratic future for all Ukraine's citizens. The EU has also proposed to step-up its [support](#) for Ukraine's economic and political reforms.

A priority partner

The EU is committed to a policy of sequenced engagement with Ukraine and to a close relationship that encompasses gradual progress towards political association and economic integration. Ukraine is a priority partner country within the [European Neighbourhood Policy](#) (ENP) and the [Eastern Partnership](#) (EaP). The [Partnership and Cooperation Agreement](#) between the EU and Ukraine, which entered into force in 1998, provides a comprehensive framework for cooperation between the EU and Ukraine in key areas of reform.

A new [Association Agreement](#), including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, was negotiated in 2007-2011 and initialled in 2012. On 10 December 2012, the Council of the European Union adopted [Conclusions on Ukraine](#) that affirmed the EU's commitment to signing the Agreement as soon as Ukraine had taken determined action and made tangible progress towards achieving the benchmarks set out in the Conclusions. An

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updated version of the [EU-Ukraine Association Agenda](#) was also endorsed by the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council on 24 June 2013¹.

On 21 November 2013, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine took a decision to suspend preparations to sign the Association Agreement at the [Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius](#). The EU has taken note of the unprecedented public support in Ukraine for political association and economic integration with the EU.

The EU [has committed](#) to the signing of the political provisions of the Association Agreement on 21 March in Brussels and to proceed to the signature and conclusion of the remaining parts of the Agreement, which together with the political provisions constitute a single instrument. These steps will confirm Ukraine's free and sovereign decision to pursue Ukraine's political association and economic integration with the European Union.

Recent events

The EU has been following the political situation in Ukraine closely and has been deeply engaged in seeking a solution to the crisis that developed after months of peaceful protest on the central 'Maidan' in Kyiv following the government's announcement regarding the Association Agreement.

Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission, and Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle have [visited Kyiv on multiple occasions](#) since the outbreak of the protests, as have Foreign Ministers from numerous EU Member States and Members of European Parliament in a near-constant demonstration of this engagement. In meetings with the authorities, opposition leaders and representatives of civil society, the EU's efforts have been focused on facilitating dialogue and assisting efforts to stabilise the political situation.

The Council of the European Union in its Foreign Affairs formation (convened and chaired by HR/VP Ashton) adopted [Conclusions](#) on 10 February 2014 underlining its concern notably over reported abuses of human rights and cases of violence, intimidation and missing persons, expressing its readiness to react quickly to any deterioration on the ground.

HR/VP Ashton convened an extraordinary session of the Foreign Affairs Council on 20 February 2014, where in light of the deteriorating situation, the EU decided notably to introduce targeted sanctions and Ministers agreed to suspend export licences on equipment which might be used for internal repression. Expressing the EU's deep dismay at the deteriorating session and condemning in the strongest terms all use of violence, the EU urged all sides to engage, without further delay, in a meaningful dialogue, to fulfil the legitimate democratic aspirations of the Ukrainian people (see [Conclusions](#)).

¹ Originally adopted in 2009 and [updated in 2011](#), the Agenda replaced the former [Action Plan](#) preparing for and facilitating the entry into force of the Association Agreement.

A second extraordinary meeting of the Foreign Affairs Council adopted [Conclusions](#) on 3 March 2014 condemning the clear violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity by acts of aggression by the Russian armed forces as well as the authorisation given by the Federation Council of Russia on 1 March for the use of the armed forces on the territory of Ukraine. The EU called on Russia to immediately withdraw its armed forces to the areas of their permanent stationing, in accordance with the Agreement on the Status and Conditions of the Black Sea Fleet stationing on the territory of Ukraine of 1997. The EU also commended the measured response demonstrated by Ukraine.

The Council on 5 March [adopted EU sanctions focused on the freezing and recovery of misappropriated Ukrainian state funds](#), targeting 18 persons identified as responsible for such misappropriation and whose assets within the European Union have been frozen. The sanctions also contain provisions facilitating the recovery of the frozen funds, once certain conditions are met.

In a [statement of the Heads of State or Government](#) following an extraordinary meeting of the European Council on 6 March, the EU underlined that a solution to the crisis must be found through negotiations between the Governments of Ukraine and the Russian Federation, including through potential multilateral mechanisms. Having first suspended bilateral talks with the Russian Federation on visa matters and discussions on the New (EU-Russia) Agreement as well as preparations for participation in the G8 Summit in Sochi, the EU also set out a second stage of further measures in the absence of de-escalatory steps and additional far-reaching consequences for EU-Russia relations in case of further destabilisation of the situation in Ukraine.

In the absence of de-escalatory steps by the Russian Federation, the EU on 17 March [adopted restrictive measures](#) against persons responsible for actions which undermine or threaten the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine as well as persons and entities associated with them. In this regard, 21 persons have been identified and targeted with a travel ban and a freeze of their assets within the EU. The EU also strongly [condemned](#) the holding of an [illegal "referendum" in Crimea](#) on joining the Russian Federation, in clear breach of the Ukrainian Constitution. The EU does not recognise the illegal "referendum" or its outcome.

HR/VP Ashton [said](#): *"We want to underline very clearly that there is still time to avoid a negative spiral and to reverse current developments. We call on the Russian leadership not to take steps to annex Crimea and instead to take steps to deescalate this crisis."*

The European Union stands by the efforts of the new Ukrainian Government to stabilise the situation and pursue the course of reforms. The EU reaffirms the necessity of further constitutional reform in Ukraine and to hold free, fair and transparent Presidential elections with OSCE-ODIHR observation. The EU reaffirms the utmost importance of ensuring inclusiveness at all levels of government by the Ukrainian authorities, including through steps designed to reach out to all Ukrainian regions, population groups and to ensure full protection of national minorities in accordance with Ukraine's international commitments. In this regard, it encourages Ukraine to draw on the expertise of the Council of Europe and the OSCE.

Increased support and cooperation

On 5 March 2014 the European Commission [proposed a series of economic and financial support measures](#) as part of international efforts in support of Ukraine's economic and political reforms. € 11 billion could be available over the next years from the EU budget and EU-based international financial institutions. This is to stabilise the economic and financial situation, assist with the transition and encourage political and economic reform. As part of this approach the European Commission [proposed on 11 March](#) to temporarily remove customs duties on Ukrainian exports to the EU, advancing implementation of the tariffs-related section of the Association Agreement's provisions on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area without waiting for its entry into force.

The signature and implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, while not constituting the final goal of EU-Ukraine cooperation, would bring opportunities for sustainable economic development and prosperity to all the regions of Ukraine, including Crimea, as well as to its neighbours. The EU reiterates its commitment to enhance people to people contacts between the EU and Ukraine, notably through the [visa liberalisation process](#).

More information on EU-Ukraine relations

<http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ukraine/>

EU Restrictive measures

Focused on the freezing and recovery of misappropriated Ukrainian state funds:
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/141324.pdf

Legal text:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:066:0026:0030:EN:PDF>

Against actions threatening Ukraine's territorial integrity:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/141603.pdf

Legal text:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:078:0016:0021:EN:PDF>