

PASOS, the Policy Association for an Open Society, is a network of 23 policy centres in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

PASOS promotes and protects open society values, including democracy, rule of law, good governance, respect for and protection of human rights, economic and social development by supporting policy centres.

UKRAINE'S EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE – RESOLUTION OF PASOS

1. The diplomatic efforts in Kyiv in the final weeks of 2004 demonstrated that the European Union really is capable of formulating and implementing a common foreign policy, at the very least on its eastern border. By responding promptly and substantively to the vote-rigging and abuse of democratic procedures in its near abroad, the EU reaffirmed its commitment to its founding values of democracy and equity, and rejected a short-termist approach to regional politics. As a network of 23 independent policy centres from 17 different countries in Europe and Central Asia, PASOS welcomes the success of the mediation efforts, which paved the way to a rerun of the presidential elections in Ukraine on 26 December.
2. The changes taking place in Ukraine are in no small part a result of the enlargement of the EU to its borders since Poland, Hungary and Slovakia, together with seven other countries, became the newest members of the EU in May 2004. The prominent role played by the Presidents of Poland and Lithuania, two new EU members, in negotiations to find a peaceful and democratic solution to the crisis in Ukraine saw the EU demonstrating a new proactive approach. Combined with the diplomacy of the EU's High representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, this dynamic engagement signalled a strong commitment to supporting democratic processes in a neighbouring country. This new diplomatic initiative is welcomed most by the courageous Ukrainians who spent night after night camping out on the streets of their capital, but also by those new EU members who share Ukraine's experience of a recent authoritarian past under the shadow of communism.
3. PASOS believes that the events in Kyiv have reinforced our conviction in the importance of sharing the lessons of our history and applying core values of democracy, equity and pluralism to our foreign policy. It is only through such an approach that we can ensure that no country's freedom and sovereignty are held back

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Ukraine's European Perspective, a resolution of PASOS

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by the old cold-war mentality, where “spheres of influence” overrode national self-determination. It is now crucial that the EU sustains its interest in the welfare of Ukraine, the EU’s largest neighbour after Russia and Turkey. Just as a date was set last month for negotiations to commence with Turkey on EU membership, an open door to Ukraine’s membership would send an important signal to Ukrainians that their bravery in fighting for fair elections has been welcomed with open arms by their EU neighbours.

4. We call on the EU Member States and EU institutions to offer a credible and ambitious policy package to Ukraine in recognition of its society’s demonstrated commitment to core European values and of the country’s key role for maintaining stability in the larger region of eastern Europe. Current EU proposals (Partnership and Co-operation Agreement, Action Plan, Neighbourhood Policy) suffer from a lack of focus and do not adequately acknowledge Ukraine’s rapid evolution away from post-Soviet “controlled democracy” towards a genuinely pluralist system, increasingly closer to the European political model.
5. Unless we risk sending a misleading signal to the EU’s other neighbours, EU institutions are advised to pursue a differentiated neighbourhood policy, based on a maximum openness to change in each neighbouring country. Clearly, the interest of Ukraine in adopting reforms currently sets the country apart from another neighbour, Belarus, therefore the EU framework for relations with both states should not remain unchanged. Making the policy offer responsive to the immediate needs of neighbouring countries is the first step towards acknowledging the positive change in Ukraine.
6. The EU must be able to adapt to changed circumstances in neighbouring countries. Back in the historic year of 1989, the PHARE programme was quickly introduced to support the transition in Poland and Hungary, and swiftly extended to all the states that set out upon the path of transition to democracy and a market economy. Many of the member institutes of PASOS are located in countries that benefited from this initiative and whose societies remember well the crucial EU support extended to our

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new democracies. We are all the more aware of the urgent need to use the positive momentum for reforms before the inevitable period of societal demobilisation and fatigue sets in, eventually slowing down or even reversing some of the early gains. Therefore, we call on all interested EU member-states and the European Commission to convene an EU-Ukraine summit at the earliest possible date. At such a summit, the priorities of EU financial assistance should be agreed upon jointly.

7. Technical assistance and support to budding democratic institutions in Ukraine presupposes transparency and the rule of law, which can be achieved if the country's determination to be recognised as a working market economy and to join the World Trade Organisation is reinforced. Moreover, the popular character of the peaceful Ukrainian revolution places greater demands on European policy-makers. A state of 48 million people on the footsteps of the enlarged EU will not be drawn closer to Europe if mere corrections are adopted to a current policy which is widely perceived by Ukrainians themselves as inadequate to their aspirations. The transition experience of Central and Southeast European states in the nineties demonstrated that the process of closer integration with other democracies and market economies is a strong anchor for reforms. The EU-Ukraine summit should hold out the prospect of association with the EU as an open possibility and conclude with the commitment that the degree of integration is dependent solely on Ukraine's will. Such a declaration would require that the Action Plan until 2006 contain mechanisms for reviewing and assessing Ukraine's progress on key points of the jointly agreed agenda.

8. In the long term, EU institutions should upgrade the de facto status of Kyiv as a partner for discussion by adopting the principle that "all issues in EU-Ukrainian relations are dealt with directly with the Ukrainian side" so that no prior consultations are conducted with third countries and that the position of third countries does not place conditions or limitations on the nature or substance of these relations. Ukrainian voters have demonstrated an impressive independence of mind and we should respect it accordingly. Societies of new EU member-states remember well that one of the

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fundamental demands of all the 1989 revolutions was the clear abandonment of the concept of “spheres of influence”.

9. The Ukrainian public is expecting a prompt and clear signal from the EU that the country is welcome into the European fold. Facilitating the conditions of Ukrainians’ travel into EU territory, and especially into the new member states with whom they share multiple ties of history, culture and economy, would be one short-term measure of direct importance to people’s everyday lives. At the same time, the European Commission should spell out conditions and a timetable for the eventual lifting of visa requirements for Ukrainians to travel into EU territory.

10. The member institutes of PASOS are all convinced that an active eastern policy of the European Union should promote the core values of the community within and among the neighbouring states, including Russia. Ukrainian-Russian relations based on mutual respect for sovereignty are in the direct interest of the entire EU (given the interdependence of the enlarged EU, Ukraine and Russia in energy policy and migration). Russia’s recent statements confirm that Moscow realises that Ukraine’s progressive integration in the European architecture of security, markets and democratic norms would turn Kyiv into a valuable predictable partner for Moscow. The EU’s model of consensual trust-building, applied in the region of Southeast Europe, may be of direct interest to our eastern neighbours.

PASOS, 10 January 2005

PASOS comprises the following policy centres:

- * Institute for Contemporary Studies (ICS), Albania
- * Centre for Economic Development (CED), Bulgaria
- * European Institute (EI), Bulgaria
- * International Center for Minority Studies and Intercultural Relations (IMIR), Bulgaria
- * EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy, Czech Republic
- * PRAXIS, Centre for Policy Studies, Estonia
- * Institute for Policy Studies, Georgia
- * Centre for Policy Studies, CEU (CPS), Hungary

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- * Public Policy Research Center (PPRC), Kazakhstan
- * Centre for Public Policy Providus, Latvia
- * EuroBalkan Institute (Institute Euro-Balkan Center for Public Administration and Public Policy), Republic of Macedonia
- * Institute of Public Policy (IPP), Moldova
- * Institute for Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) 'Viitorul', Moldova
- * Institute of Public Affairs (IPA), Poland
- * Center for Rural Assistance, Romania
- * Center for Economic Policies, Romania
- * Institute of Public Policy (IPP-Romania), Romania
- * STRATEGIA - St Petersburg Center for Humanities and Political Studies, Russian Federation
- * Center for Legal Support to Local Government, Russian Federation
- * Institute for Public Affairs (IVO), Slovakia
- * Peace Institute, Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies, Slovenia
- * LGI Development, United Kingdom
- * International Centre for Policy Studies (ICPS), Ukraine.

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