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POLISH-UKRAINIAN RELATIONS IN 2014 – 2022: MILITARY DIPLOMATIC VECTOR OF COOPERATION

Abstract. *The purpose of the research is to clarify the Polish-Ukrainian relations formation in the context of the foreign policy concepts of the Republic of Poland and the conditions of the process of activating Ukraine's European integration, Russia's war against Ukraine since 2014. The methodology of the research is based on the principles of historicism, scientific objectivity. There have been used the problem chronological, logical, deductive and inductive methods. The Scientific Novelty.* There have been outlined the main principles of the Polish foreign policy in the article, taking into account the geopolitical concepts developed in previous decades, in particular the modernized ideas of Giedroyc, the “Jagiellonian” and “Piast” doctrines. The role of Ukraine in these geopolitical regional concepts has been analyzed. The system of the military political interaction between Ukraine and Poland within the framework of the trilateral regional alliance “The Lublin Triangle”, the joint military formation “LitPolUkrBrig”. There have been considered various levels of political and military cooperation between Ukraine and Poland in the context of countering the armed aggression of the Russian Federation after 2014, military and technical assistance of the Republic of Poland from 2014 to 2023. **Conclusions.** Intensification of the Polish-Ukrainian relations took place at the turn of 2013 – 2014 in the context of Euromaidan, the Revolution of Dignity, and the Russian armed aggression in 2014. During the period of 2014 – 2022, Poland provided significant support to Ukraine at the bilateral and international levels. The establishment of good-neighbourly relations and military political assistance to Ukraine was implemented by Poland through the prism of implementing the “Intermarium” concept, and later the “Three Seas Initiative”, which reflect a broader geopolitical doctrine that takes into account the historical past and the desire to become one of the dominant powers in Central and Eastern Europe. Since 2015, after the victory of Andrzej Duda in the presidential elections, the parliamentary elections of Jarosław Kaczyński, and even more intensively since 2017, Poland has been abandoning a unilateral policy oriented towards the West. Instead, Poland is implementing a policy of integration of EU member states located between the Adriatic, Baltic, and Black Seas. That is, the interwar project “Intermarium” in the context of the new European geopolitical configuration is transforming into the “Three Seas Initiative” – “Three Seas”. It is worth noting that the security sphere remained a priority in the Polish policy, as evidenced by a number of

initiatives, including the creation of the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade (“LitPolUkrBrig”); joint military training, “the Lublin Triangle” project. A set of measures that contribute to strengthening military cooperation between states, mastering advanced technologies and training standards of the Armed Forces of Ukraine is extremely important in the context of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation in February of 2022 and the threat of further aggression in the region. Therefore, Poland increased its assistance to Ukraine in the military, financial, and humanitarian spheres significantly. From mid-2022 to early 2023, it became the second country after the United States in terms of the scale of military assistance to Ukraine.

Key words: Ukraine-Poland, Polish-Ukrainian relations, Jerzy Giedroyc’s postulates, “Jagiellonian” and “Piast” doctrines, the concept of “Intermarium”, “Lublin Triangle”, Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade («LitPolUkrBrig»), security issues, countering Russian aggression, cooperation in the field of defense, military and technical and humanitarian assistance to Poland.

ПОЛЬСЬКО-УКРАЇНСЬКІ ВІДНОСИНИ У 2014 – 2022 рр.: ВІЙСЬКОВО-ДИПЛОМАТИЧНИЙ ВЕКТОР СПІВПРАЦІ

Анотація. Мета дослідження: розкрити еволюцію взаємовідносин України та Польщі на фоні розгортання російської агресії впродовж 2014 – 2022 рр. Висвітлити особливості становлення оновлених концепцій “Міжмор’я”, “Тримор’я”, та нового проекту “Люблінського трикутника”. Окреслити головні заходи Республіки Польщі, які сприяли зміцненню оборонного потенціалу України напередодні повномасштабного вторгнення РФ та в його перший рік. **Методологія дослідження** ґрунтується на засадах історизму, наукової об’єктивності в оцінках. Використано проблемно-хронологічний, логічний, дедуктивний та індуктивний методи викладу матеріалу. **Наукова новизна.** У статті окреслено головні засади зовнішньої політики Польщі, із врахуванням геополітичних концептів, напрацьованих у попередні десятиліття, зокрема модернізованих ідей Гедройця, “Ягеллонської” та “Пястської” доктрини. Проаналізовано роль України у цих геополітичних регіональних концептах. Окреслено систему військово-політичної взаємодії України та Польщі в рамках тристороннього регіонального альянсу “Люблінського трикутника”, спільного військового формування “LitPolUkrBrig”. Розглянуто різні рівні політико-військової співпраці між Україною та Польщею у контексті протидії збройній агресії РФ після 2014 р., військово-технічної допомоги Республіки Польща від 2014 до 2023 р. **Висновки.** Євромайдан, Революція Гідності стали переломним для Української держави та її зовнішньо-політичної орієнтації на Захід. Польща з перших днів протестів підтримувала проєвропейський вибір українського суспільства, поступово ставши “адвокатом” України у структурах ЄС та НАТО. Збройна агресія Російської федерації у 2014 р. актуалізувала питання безпеки в Центрально-східній Європі, відтак роль Польщі трансформувалася до одного із головних союзників України. У зовнішньополітичній стратегії польська держава переглянула геополітичні концепти “Міжмор’я”, “Тримор’я”. Їхня актуалізація відбулася на тлі докорінних змін у безпековій сфері регіону після 2014 р. Основоположим для розбудови регіональної системи протидії військовим загрозам стали регіональні ініціативи “Тримор’я”, “Люблінського трикутника”. Поглиблення військово-політичного співробітництва України та Польщі стала одним із визначальних елементів системи колективної безпеки в Центральноевропейському регіоні. Суттєвим чинником впливу залишався вектор прокладних кіл. Більш системний рівень підтримки Україні у безпековій сфері Польща надала напередодні повномасштабного вторгнення РФ у лютому 2022 р., надалі допомагаючи посилювати обороноздатність.

Ключові слова: Україна – Польща, польсько-українські відносини, постулати Єжи Гедройця “Ягеллонська” та “Пястська” доктрина, концепція “Міжмор’я”, “Люблінський трикутник”, Литовсько-польсько-українська бригада (“LitPolUkrBrig”), питання безпеки, протидія російській агресії, співробітництво у сфері оборони, військово-технічна та гуманітарна допомога Польщі.

Problem Statement. There were held the presidential elections and a referendum for independence in Ukraine on December 1 of 1991. The Republic of Poland was one of the

first to welcome the Ukrainians and recognize the sovereignty of the state, declaring its desire to establish diplomatic relations on December 2 of 1991 (32 roky tomu, 2023). Since the 1990s, the Republic of Poland has supported the democratic and pro-European changes in Ukraine, considering our state as a guarantee of stability in the region. From the point of view of the geopolitical strategy, Ukraine was supposed to play the role of a buffer zone between Europe and Russia (Pih, & Ruda, 2022, pp. 185–186), hence, our country was one of the priority areas in Poland's foreign policy. The concept of the existence of independent states of Ukraine, Lithuania, and Belarus, which in the future would form "a kind of security buffer that was to protect Poland from possible Russian expansion" arose in the émigré intellectual environment, mainly due to Jerzy Giedroyc and Juliusz Mieroszewski activities. The "Declaration on the Ukrainian Issue", which was published in 1977 on the pages of the Parisian magazine "Culture", became one of the most important postulates that was later used to build the foreign policy strategy of the already post-socialist Poland (Artymyshyn, & Kostiuk, 2020a, pp. 4, 71; Chmelyk, & Khakhula, 2022, p. 219).

The Euromaidan and the Revolution of Dignity became one of the most powerful challenges for the Ukrainian public (Kyrydon, 2015, p. 17). Large-scale protests by the Ukrainians became a top topic for foreign media, including the Polish ones (Nowacki, 2017, p. 108). The Polish politicians expressed concern about the revolutionary events in Ukraine, Polish President Bronisław Komarowski advocated a peaceful settlement of the issues, and Prime Minister Donald Tusk supported the European integration choice of the Ukrainians, calling on the European politicians to be tolerant of the authorities and at the same time support the Ukrainians. At the same time, the Polish political class condemned sharply the violent dispersal of the Euro-demonstrations and the introduction of the so-called "dictatorship squads" on January 16 of 2014. The diplomatic corps of the Republic of Poland insisted on developing a common programme of the European community regarding the events in Ukraine. Owing to the activity of Prime Minister D. Tusk, the European Union formulated a single position on Ukraine. In summary, it can be stated that such activity of the Polish authorities was the beginning of its mediation mission of foreign ministers, which also included representatives of Germany and France. (Artymyshyn, & Kostiuk, 2020a, p. 64).

Review of the Recent Research and Publications. The Polish-Ukrainian relations development in the 1990s–2010s was the subject of numerous publications. It is feasible to single out the following researches conducted by the Polish scholars: Andrzej Chojnowski (Chojnowski, 1997), Jan Draus (Draus, 2011; Draus, 2009), and Ewęgi Kozakiewicz (Kozakiewicz, & Najder, 1997; Kamiński, & Kozakiewicz, 1997; Kozakiewicz, 2000), who studied the partnership relations formation between the states in the 1990s. The foreign policy vectors of the Polish state were covered thoroughly by the Polish scholars Roman Kuźniar (Kuźniar, 2008; Kuźniar, 2005), Józef Fischer (Fischer, 2021; Fischer, 2022), and Beata Ociepka (Ociepka, 2013; Ociepka, 2019). The studies carried out by the Ukrainian scholars should be mentioned among the others, in particular, Stepan Vidnyansky (Vidnyansky, 2011; Vidnyansky, 2018), Ihor Todorov (Todorov, 2006; Todorov & Todorov, 2016), Natalia Buglai (Buglai, 2012; Buglai, 2018), Yuriy Klyuchuk (Klyuchuk, 2016; Klyuchuk, 2017), Kyrylo Mieliekiestsev (Mieliekiestsev, 2014; Mieliekiestsev, & But, 2020) and Lesia Aleksiyevets (Aleksiyevets, 2009), which were dedicated to Poland's strategic partnership and Ukraine, Poland's support for Ukraine's European integration aspirations. Hryhoriy Perepylytsia (Perepylytsia, 2018), Oleh Pikh (Pikh, 2019; Pikh, 2021a; Pikh, 2021b; Pikh, & Ruda, 2022), Oleh Kostiuk and Pavlo Artymyshyn (Artymyshyn, & Kostiuk, 2020a; Artymyshyn, &

Kostiuk, 2020b) studied Poland's foreign policy and Ukraine's European integration in their research. The peculiarities of understanding the full-scale stage of the Russian-Ukrainian war by analysts of the Marek Karp Center for Oriental Studies (Republic of Poland) were studied by Vasyl Ilnytskyi and Vitaliy Telvak (Ilnytskyi, & Telvak, 2023; Ilnytskyi, & Telvak, 2024). Taking into consideration the increase in publications on military political and humanitarian support for Ukraine by the European institutions and states, there is a drastic need for a comprehensive outline of the foreign policy doctrines and strategies of neighbouring states, in particular the Republic of Poland.

The purpose of the research is to clarify the Polish-Ukrainian relations formation in the context of the foreign policy concepts of the Republic of Poland and the conditions of the process of activating Ukraine's European integration, Russia's war against Ukraine since 2014.

Results of the Research. In 2014, after the Presidential elections and the inauguration of the new President Petro Poroshenko, Ukraine signed the political part of the "Association Agreement" in Brussels, in March. The signatories were Ukraine, the Council of the European Union, the European Commission and the heads of 28 states (including the Republic of Poland). The economic part of the above-mentioned agreement was signed in June. Poland and Ukraine signed a number of international multilateral agreements during 2014, including "Amendments and Supplements to the Agreement on International Rail Freight Services (IRF)"; "Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on the Creation of a Joint Military Unit"; "Protocol on Sustainable Transport to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians", the issue on the cross-border cooperation in the interdepartmental protocols and agreements was updated. According to the Head of the Polish Foreign Ministry at that time, such kind of activity by the Polish Republic reflected the updated Giedroyc's postulates and modernized by the "Jagiellonian" and "Piast" doctrines (Mieliekiestsev, & But, 2020, pp. 107–108).

The Russian annexation of the Crimean peninsula and the aggression in Eastern Ukraine highlighted the security issue on the European continent and the hybrid dimension of the modern military conflicts (Bilichak, & Huz, 2024, p.164). The Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs condemned the annexation of the Crimean peninsula and emphasized when he delivered a speech before the Sejm and stated that the events in Ukraine demonstrated problematic areas in the EU policy, since the European community has only a limited ability to respond to crisis situations in May of 2014. At the same time, R. Sikorski emphasized that the basis of the Polish Eastern policy is the existence of independent Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic countries, which are in good terms with Poland. At the same time, Poland carried on to support Ukraine consistently, despite the personnel changes (the government was headed by Ewa Kopacz), in particular, after the signing of the political and economic agreement on cooperation between Ukraine and the EU, on November 28 of 2014, the Polish Sejm ratified the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, and on December 4, the Senate ratified it (Artymyshyn, & Kostiuk, 2020a, p. 65).

Taking into consideration the threats in Central and Eastern Europe and the need for regional cooperation, Lithuania, the Republic of Poland and Ukraine signed an agreement in Lublin on the establishment of the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade in September of 2014 (Stănică, 2022, p. 119). According to the Technical Agreement signed on July 24 of 2015 in Lviv, the Heads of the Defense Departments of Ukraine, Lithuania and Poland agreed on the key mission of the brigade "the brigade must be ready to participate in the

international operations in accordance with the provisions and principles of the international law” (Grand Hetman Kostiantyn Ostrogski Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade. Mission, 2018), the brigade’s functioning aspects (Technical Agreement on the Functioning of the Joint Military Unit “Litpolukrbrig”, 2015). There were also developed joint information and media support systems later on (Poronyuk, & Gapeyeva, 2023, p. 231).

There was a drastic need to revise Poland’s foreign policy orientation, the so-called “Komorowski doctrine” in the context of Russia’s hybrid war against Ukraine, hence, a new “National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland” was approved after the September NATO summit in November of 2014. It emphasized that due to the conflict and crisis in Ukraine, Russia is the main military threat to the Republic of Poland. The above-mentioned postulate became innovative, because such a status of the Russian Federation regarding Poland was not indicated anywhere (Strategia Bezpieczeństwa, 2014). The speech, delivered by the President of the Republic of Poland in the session hall of the Verkhovna Rada on April 9 of 2015, was symbolic and important step in supporting interstate cooperation for the first time in history. B. Komorowski highlighted the following while taking the floor: “Poland is doing and will do everything to ensure that other countries of the free West lend a hand to Ukraine. Poland’s hand is not a matter of political circumstances, but our understanding of historical processes that contribute to the vision of Ukraine as an important partner and neighbour” (Istorychnyi vystup, 2015).

A new stage in the Polish-Ukrainian relations began after the election of Andrzej Duda as President of the Republic of Poland in 2015. The newly elected president expressed dissatisfaction with the format of the Ukrainian-Russian peace talks, noting that only France and Germany were mainly involved in them, and not all EU countries, and therefore proposed a new format for the negotiation process in which Ukraine’s neighbours would be participants. These statements were first voiced during a telephone conversation between A. Duda and P. Poroshenko on August 15, 2015 (Duda zaproponuvav, 2015). The leadership of the Republic of Poland broadcast statements that from now on the state should switch to the doctrine of J. Piłsudski and Je. Giedroyc, and most importantly, the “project of Intermarium – Poland at the head of the states of Eastern Europe” should be restored. At the same time, according to Giedroyc’s ideas, the sovereignty of the eastern neighbouring states should be respected (Mieliekiestsev, & But, 2020, p. 109).

It should be noted that the concept of the Intermarium itself is not an innovative approach in the foreign policy concepts of the Republic of Poland and Ukraine. This idea was also developed by the Ukrainian figures at the beginning of the 20th century (Mykola Mikhnovsky, Stepan Rudnytsky, Mykhailo Hrushevsky, Yuriy Lypa, defending the idea of the importance of the alliance between the Polish and Ukrainian states). In the 1990s, Viacheslav Chornovil was interested in this idea among the Ukrainian politicians, and there were published diverse studies in Poland, which provided a geopolitical overview of the outlined region, put forward various options for a possible alliance, considered its further prospects in the context of relations with Western Europe, Russia, Scandinavia, etc. (Todorov, & Todorov, 2016, p. 28). During the period of the 1990s and 2000s, the format of a possible alliance was discussed at the highest level among Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania, but there was not created any active institution in order to implement the declared postulates. The above-mentioned issue was again brought up in expert circles, in particular in the circles of the possible member states of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Romania and Ukraine after the Russian aggression in Ukraine in 2014 and the statements made by A. Duda

in 2015. The most active position regarding the implementation of the Intermarium concept was taken by Poland, which at the same time also supported the European integration course of Ukraine (Todorov, & Todorov, 2016, pp. 30–31). At the same time, such a pro-Ukrainian policy, as a scholar Kateryna Zarembo noted, “became an electorally unpopular position in Poland” (Zarembo, 2019).

The idea of the interwar project “Intermarium” was also updated, which was somewhat changed in the context of the new geopolitics into the concept of “Trymoria”. It should be noted that these concepts were used actively both in the scientific and expert spheres. American researchers Marlene Laruelle and Ellen Rivera from the Institute for the European, Russian and Eurasian Studies at George Washington University, who analyzed the role of the concept of “Mizhmoria” in the politics of the European Union and the United States, described it as an “imaginary geographical concept (subject)” (Laruelle, & Rivera, 2019, pp. 3–4). The scholars M. Laruelle and E. Rivera noted that the new Polish President A. Duda from 2015 became a promoter of increased regional cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe, but this idea had primarily an economic basis, not a political or military one: “Initially, the project grew out of the debates sparked by a report published jointly by the Atlantic Council and the EU energy lobby group Central Europe Energy Partners (CEEP) in order to promote the interests of large Central European companies in the EU... Pawel Olechnowicz, CEO of the Polish oil and gas giant Grupa Lotos, called for the accelerated construction of the North-South energy, transport and communications corridor stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Adriatic and Black Seas” (Laruelle, & Rivera, 2019, pp. 18–19).

According to Ukrainian historians Oleh Kostyuk and Pavlo Artymyshyn the above-mentioned concept “in its content it became a return to the Jagiellonian idea, taking into account the lack of intentions to create a Central European association independent of the EU and NATO. The inaugural summit of the “Three Seas Initiative” (the Baltic, Adriatic, Black) was held in Dubrovnik, Croatia in August of 2016, 12 countries of Central and Eastern Europe took part in it (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia)” (Artymyshyn, & Kostyuk, 2020a, pp. 66–67).

Geopolitical vectors influence the historical narratives articulated by the state, in particular those relating to the common Polish-Ukrainian past (Syrnyk, 2022, p. 161). Since 2015, especially after the victory in the Parliamentary elections of Jarosław Kaczyński, the Polish state decided to abandon a single-vector pro-European foreign policy, since then more and more focus was on the eastern direction, and the political course became more internally “state-centric”. It could be also evidenced by the decisions made by the Polish authorities on the “controversial” issues of common Polish-Ukrainian history. In the summer of 2016, first the Senate, and then the Sejm of Poland voted to adopt a resolution “On establishing July 11 as the Day of Remembrance of the Poles, Victims of the Genocide Committed by the OUN-UPA”. These steps by the Polish authorities, despite the readiness of the Ukrainian side for dialogue, a number of appeals from both politicians and church hierarchs, affected negatively the possibility of reconciliation between the two states on sensitive historical topics. The result of further aggravation of the Polish-Ukrainian relations in the humanitarian sphere, according to the definition of the Ukrainian historian Liudmyla Strilchuk, there were the so-called “wars on graves” – desecration of the Ukrainian memorial sites in Poland (Artymyshyn, & Kostyuk, 2020a, p.67; Strilchuk, 2018, pp. 179–180).

On December 2 of 2016, the General Agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Poland on cooperation in the field of defense

was signed. This agreement provided for 24 points on various areas of cooperation in the field of military weapons and technologies (Heneralna uhoda, 2016). At the same time, according to a scholar Oleksiy Polegkyi, “The Foreign Policy Strategy of the Republic of Poland for 2017 – 2021 is aimed at strengthening the infrastructure connection between the Baltic and Central European countries, including those located between the Baltic, Adriatic and Black Seas, and continuing the Polish-Lithuanian-Ukrainian military cooperation as part of a joint brigade”. In addition, identifying the most serious threat, the policy of the Russian Federation provides for the need to strengthen the NATO and the European Union, “develop cooperation in bilateral, regional and global formats to strengthen Poland’s position”. The NATO Warsaw Summit became the final outcome of the above-mentioned statements in July of 2016, where it was agreed to strengthen the military presence of the NATO members in Central and Eastern Europe (Polegkyi, 2021, pp. 39–40).

In order to respond to modern challenges effectively, the “LitPolUkrBrig” began the first joint exercise “Brave Band” as part of the brigade command in Lublin on February 1, 2016. In June of 2016, the first field training took place at the “Nowa Demba” training ground “under the scenario of stabilization operations within the framework of the NATO exercise “Anaconda – 2016””. It should be noted that it was attended by servicemen from 23 countries of the world, including the Ukrainians as part of the Polish battalion. No less important was the completion of the NATO certification exercise “Common Challenge – 2016”. According to the results, “the brigade confirmed its readiness to carry out peacekeeping missions in accordance with the NATO standards, and the command of the “LitPolUkrbryg” was recognized as a fully combat-ready unit, which was supported by the signing of the corresponding Certificate” (Turianytsia, 2018, p. 433).

The period of years 2017 – 2018 were tense for the Polish-Ukrainian relations, as misunderstandings arose in the economic sphere and humanitarian policy sporadically (Wroński, 2017). At the same time, in the “Polish Foreign Policy Strategy for 2017 – 2021” it is noted that “The security environment of the Republic of Poland has seriously deteriorated as a result of the Crimea annexation by Russia and the conflict it provoked in eastern Ukraine. The war, aggression against neighbouring sovereign states and violations of territorial integrity have returned to the European political landscape on such a scale and so openly for the first time since World War II. The entire European security architecture, based on OSCE principles, has been called into question” (Strategia Polskiej Polityki Zagranicznej, 2017). Therefore, in order to create a secure environment, Poland must simultaneously act at three levels: allied, i.e. strengthen its authority in NATO and EU structures, maintain relations with the USA; regional – strengthen cooperation with the countries of the region, in particular the Visegrád Group, Romania and the Baltic and Nordic countries, and strengthen the Eastern dimension of policy; national – strengthen its own defense capabilities (Strategia Polskiej Polityki Zagranicznej, 2017). Therefore, important tasks are to achieve NATO-Russia communication, which should be based “on the principle of “3xD” (defense, deterrence, dialogue). In the context of relations with Ukraine – “strengthening cooperation between the defense industries of Poland and Ukraine” (Strategia Polskiej Polityki Zagranicznej, 2017).

In May of 2020, Poland adopted the “Polish National Security Strategy”, which determined that the priority for the state is the formation of an international order based on international law and solidarity, which would also guarantee a secure development of Poland. At the same time, in the document it is noted that the illegal annexation of the Crimea and actions in the eastern regions of Ukraine are a direct violation of international law. Therefore, given the

threat from the Russian Federation and the situation in the region, the experts-authors of the Strategy believed that the most important task for Poland was to represent itself as strongly as possible in the EU and NATO, and to further develop cooperation with its neighbours (National Security Strategy of The Republic of Poland, 2020).

A new important international initiative aimed at strengthening stability, self-defense and security in the Central-Eastern region between Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine is the project launched on July 28, 2020 – “The Lublin Triangle” (in Lithuanian – Liublino trikampis, in Polish – Trójkąt Lubelski). Its main goal is the integration of Ukraine into NATO and the European Union, and strengthening resistance to the Russian aggression. A Joint Declaration was signed among the countries, which emphasized the common historical ties among the signatory countries, and the foreign ministers committed to holding joint meetings and strengthening trilateral cooperation. In the context of Russian aggression, it is important to establish joint work, especially the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian brigade (“LitPolUkrBrig”); as well as coordination of work both at the level of trilateral cooperation and within international organizations (NATO, European Union, UN, Council of Europe, OSCE) (Spilna deklaratsiia, 2020). The importance of “the Lublin Triangle” format is also evidenced by the fact that it is approved in the Strategy of Foreign Policy Activities of Ukraine. As international relations expert Serhiy Herasymchuk noted, “The Lublin Triangle”, together with the Associated Trio, Quadriga, and the Crimean Platform, these new formats are an expression of Ukraine’s new proactive foreign policy and are aimed at creating a belt of security and prosperity for Ukraine and the region between the Baltic and Black Seas” (Herasymchuk, 2022).

In July of 2021, during a regular meeting in Vilnius, the member states of “The Lublin Triangle”, Ukraine, Lithuania and Poland signed a joint agreement on further cooperation and declaration on European heritage and values, and mainly agreed on a plan of joint actions to counter disinformation (mainly Russian) (Nechaieva-Yuriichuk, 2022, p. 152).

Taking into consideration the priorities of this intergovernmental association in the field of countering the expansionist policy of the Russian Federation, military and defense interaction using the potential of NATO and the EU, its participants within this organization, as well as individually, provide a multi-vector support in the political and military spheres. In particular, in December of 2021, the presidents of Ukraine (Volodymyr Zelensky), the Republic of Poland (Andrzej Duda), and the Republic of Lithuania (Gitanas Nausėda) signed a joint declaration, which confirmed support for Ukraine’s membership in NATO and the European Union (Riabchun, 2021). At the same time, during a joint press conference, the Polish president noted the importance of Ukraine’s security, which he described as a “fundamental issue”, because it is necessary not only to prevent an attack on Ukraine, but also “first of all, everything must be done to prevent such an attack” (Zhelikhovskiy, 2021).

On February 23, 2022, in Kyiv, the Presidents of Ukraine, Poland, and Lithuania signed a joint statement supporting Ukraine’s accession to the European Union, in particular, the heads of European states expressed support for granting Ukraine the status of a candidate country for accession. Also, the arrival of European leaders, as A. Duda noted, is essentially “an expression of support in the face of the Russian threat” (Zelensky, Duda, and Nausėda signed a statement, 2022). The President of Ukraine stated that during the meeting, the consequences of Russia’s actions were discussed, efforts were coordinated with the aim of “countering aggression from the Russian Federation”. Volodymyr Zelensky noted that Poland and Lithuania also provided specific support to Ukraine, in particular, “protective

helmets, ammunition, and Stinger portable anti-aircraft missile systems were transferred to our security and defense forces” (Zelensky, 2022).

On March 14, 2022, the states participating in the Lublin Triangle condemned Russia’s military invasion of Ukraine. The joint declaration also formulated a demand for the Russian leadership to “immediately cease all its military actions and unconditionally withdraw all its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders” (Nechaieva-Yuriichuk, 2022, p. 153). In June of 2022, the President of Ukraine took part in the summit of the “Three Seas” states for the first time. Ukraine acquired the status of a “participating partner of this regional alliance” (Knysh, 2022).

The Republic of Poland, on the eve of a full-scale invasion, contributed to increasing Ukraine’s defense capabilities, in particular, at the end of January of 2022, the Head of the National Security Bureau (BBN) of Poland, Paweł Soloch, announced the transfer of defensive weapons (Польща передасть Україні оборонне озброєння, 2022). A political scholar and international relations researcher Ireneusz Topolski noted that after February 24, 2022, Poland became one of the “first countries to provide military assistance in a critical situation, gradually expanding its scope to heavy weapons” (Topolski, 2024, p. 131).

A political scholar Agnieszka Biencyzk-Missala argued that in 2022 the main slogan of Polish foreign policy was the motto “to help Ukraine by all possible means”, as the Republic of Poland significantly intensified international attention and assistance to Ukraine, at the same time, in 2023 among the priorities of Poland’s foreign policy were “the search of military, financial and humanitarian assistance for Ukraine, the formation of an international policy of sanctions against Russia, and taking measures to strengthen the defense potential of Poland and the entire eastern flank of NATO”. At the same time, the researcher emphasized that the Republic of Poland provided significant logistical support, as military equipment and humanitarian aid were transported through its territory. According to A. Biencyzk-Missala, during the period from “February 24, 2022 to January 10, 2023, more than 9.5 million refugees crossed the border with Poland, of which more than 1.5 million were registered” (Biencyzk-Missala, 2023, p. 341).

From the end of January and the first months of the war until mid-2022, the Polish military support included: “1) bullets and ammunition – initially several tens of thousands of pieces; 2. individual equipment and medical aid; 3. light weapons; 4. small arms; 5. reconnaissance drones – FlyEye” (Topolski, 2024, p. 137). According to Ireneusz Topolski, in April of 2022, the volume of Polish military aid to Ukraine amounted to about 1.6 billion euros. In the following months, this aid increased and in May of 2022 amounted to more than 1.8 billion euros (7 billion zlotys). According to the Kiel Institute for the World Economy (IfW), in mid-2022, Poland was the second largest military aid giver after the United States and by January 15, 2023, it had provided assistance worth 2.43 billion euros, including heavy weapons worth approximately 1.2 billion euros (Topolski, 2024, p. 141).

Conclusions and Prospects for Further Research. In 1990 – 2000 Poland’s systematic support for Ukraine and its European development vector is part of a broader geopolitical vision of Ukraine as one of the countries (along with Lithuania and Belarus) called upon to resist Russian imperialism. In 2004 Poland’s accession to the EU was a turning point for the Polish-Ukrainian relations, as the Polish ruling circles strongly promoted the rapprochement of Ukraine and the EU. Intensification of the Polish-Ukrainian relations took place at the turn of 2013 – 2014 in the context of Euromaidan, the Revolution of Dignity, and the Russian armed aggression in 2014. During the period of 2014 – 2022, Poland provided significant support

to Ukraine at the bilateral and international levels. The establishment of good-neighbourly relations and military political assistance to Ukraine was implemented by Poland through the prism of implementing the “Intermarium” concept, and later the “Three Seas Initiative”, which reflect a broader geopolitical doctrine that takes into account the historical past and the desire to become one of the dominant powers in Central and Eastern Europe. Since 2015, after the victory of Andrzej Duda in the presidential elections, the parliamentary elections of Jarosław Kaczyński, and even more intensively since 2017, Poland has been abandoning a unilateral policy oriented towards the West. Instead, Poland is implementing a policy of integration of EU member states located between the Adriatic, Baltic, and Black Seas. That is, the interwar project “Intermarium” in the context of the new European geopolitical configuration is transforming into the “Three Seas Initiative” – “Three Seas”. It is worth noting that the security sphere remained a priority in the Polish policy, as evidenced by a number of initiatives, including the creation of the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade (“LitPolUkrBrig”); joint military training, “the Lublin Triangle” project. A set of measures that contribute to strengthening military cooperation between states, mastering advanced technologies and training standards of the Armed Forces of Ukraine is extremely important in the context of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation in February of 2022 and the threat of further aggression in the region. Therefore, Poland increased its assistance to Ukraine in the military, financial, and humanitarian spheres significantly. From mid-2022 to early 2023, it became the second country after the United States in terms of the scale of military assistance to Ukraine.

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