Two birds one stone

Supporting Kyivs's fight against Russian aggression and advancing EU strategic autonomy

Editors: Sophie Blandin, Carlos Salvador, Gabriella Memarian, Valentin Pfeffer, Alain Tao
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Introduction

Six months from the Russian invasion in February, the European continent is undergoing waves of political shifts. In Ukraine, a war of attrition is dragging on longer and longer, while in the European Union, political decisions are being taken to aid Ukraine in its defence alongside taking economic actions against Russia. The EU is being tested on its ability to not only defend a democratic neighbour in a war of self defence, but also its ability to do so in a united and autonomous manner. With a difficult winter ahead as member states search for new energy sources and the Ukrainian resistance continues to fight, the EU should focus on continuing to aid the defence of Ukraine. At the same time, the Union must promote its own strategic autonomy in its ability to take its own political decisions on issues such as energy, sanctions, and humanitarian assistance, and lastly, on promoting liberal, democratic values in all of its actions.

EU strategic autonomy was first described by the Council of the European Union as the capacity "to act autonomously when and where necessary and with partners wherever possible" (Council of the EU, 2016). This is a concept with more implications than it might seem, as it does not only mean launching its own military and civilian operations (operational autonomy), but also being able to take its own security decisions (political autonomy) and building the capabilities for doing so (industrial autonomy) (Kempin and Kunz, 2017).

The rationale for prioritising the sanctioning of Russian gas and oil is due to the EU's political autonomy. From this point on, the EU must not allow a single country, especially an aggressive one such as Russia, to ensure the plurality of its energy sources and must **drastically abate the dependence on Russian gas and oil**. Therefore, focusing on reducing EU dependency on Russian gas and oil is at the heart of EU strategic autonomy, as well as being a main tool of economically harming the Russian war machine.

"Any liberalism worth its name should support and defend individual dissent and resistance against oppressive and dictatorial governments, not punish those unfortunate enough to find themselves living under such regimes" (Mulder, 2022:18).

The EU must take such decisions while advocating for liberal, democratic values. These very values form the basis for the aid of Ukraine. The liberal obligation of the EU is to take a punitive stance towards the actions of the Russian government under Vladimir Putin, while not taking actions which will cause excessive suffering for Russian civilians. For this reason, sanctions should remain targeted with the main objective of bringing an end to the current war in Ukraine, but also hindering the Russian government's ability to wage a war of this nature again.

Resulting from the Russian invasion in Ukraine, the European Peace Facility (EPF) instrument is being deployed to send lethal weapons and equipment to support Ukraine's efforts in defending their homeland. This has been a united response by the EU in working together to ensure the ability of Ukraine to defend itself. As the war becomes a protracted war of attrition, the EU should continue to increase its military aid to Ukraine. The war in Ukraine threatens the democratic future of the country as well as the stability of the European continent. Therefore, ensuring Ukraine's survival and maintaining its territorial sovereignty is the most important priority.

Military aid is not the only component to aiding the Ukrainian people, nor is it the only area in which the EU can act strategically. Multiple EU member states border the country and are receiving the first wave of refugees. The EU should ensure a steady, integrated plan for accepting, integrating, and protecting these refugees. This should also be an opportunity for the EU to extend this aid to ENP countries also accepting Ukrainians, such as Moldova and Georgia. Working with these partners further promotes the EU's democratic and humanitarian values and norms within its neighbourhood.

The policy recommendations will thus focus on defending Ukraine and employing EU strategic autonomy in the areas of military aid, humanitarian aid, and implementing a targeted and effective sanctions regime.

Defence

Defending the Ukrainian people and territory from Russian aggression is of the utmost priority. This defence is based on the EU's core values: Ukraine is a democratic neighbour, a member of the European Neighbourhood with membership ambitions, and is fighting a defensive war. Furthermore, the present and future stability of the European continent is at stake. The outcome of this war will determine the role of the EU in keeping its neighbourhood safe and being able to come to the defence of its democratic neighbours, as well as determining the influence Russia will be able to exert. Overall, EU member states and the community at large have made the decision to aid Ukraine in these efforts, for example, through military aid and weapons.

While the European Peace Facility was framed under the 2016 EU Global Strategy for the sake of promoting international stability by enhancing the resilience and capacity of partners, the Ukrainian deployment of the instrument to send weapons could also be understood as the EU's willingness to leverage its economic power to support like-minded states in times of conflict. The use of this instrument has proven to be a historic threshold for EU strategic autonomy. The union came to a security decision to aid Ukraine in its defence and used the capabilities set up through the EPF to carry out that decision.

Now six months into the war, the EU must remain a capable actor. Ukraine is in need of more weaponry, not only to defend its people, but also to halt Russian advancements and gaining of territory. The EU must also do so in a way which stands by its commitment to defend Ukraine without escalation that could lead to further confrontation with Russia; therefore, ensuring EU-provided weapons are not used to attack Russian territory. While the defence of Ukraine does not mean that there would be an escalation of the war, neither does it mean that there should be no path to peace. The EU has been, and should be, committed to finding an end to the current atrocities, while the path for negotiations must be left open. As Josep Borrell stated, "The fact that we are helping Ukraine militarily does not mean that we are not doing our best to negotiate" (Shandilya, 2022). EU weaponry and military aid for Ukraine must be focused on providing the best possible defence of the territory with the overall commitment being to bring an end to the war.

1. Ensuring Ukrainian Defence Capabilities

This policy recommendation advocates for an increase in Western military aid towards Ukraine to defend and stop further Russian advancement in Ukrainian territory. To ensure this increased capability is not perceived as an act of escalation, as opposed to self defence, only short-ranged weapons should be delivered and positioned in key strategic regions. Ensuring Ukraine's survival, which the EU should aid in a robust defence, is the most important priority,

The second crucial component of this recommendation is for the EU to remain committed to the resolution of the conflict. Implications of a drawn out war of attrition would mean massive losses of life, both civilian and military. Ukrainian troops have incurred heavy losses: suffering on average 100 killed and 500 wounded a day (Baker, 2022).The horrific events in Mariupol, humanitarian crises, civilian deaths and the safety of civilians fleeing the war being put at risk are some examples of the impact of this conflict on the populace. The war also has massive implications on the global level because "if this war is a protracted war, this will result among, other things, in a food crisis, a food crisis that could kill millions of people in North Africa and Middle East" claimed Yuriy Sak, Advisor to the Ukrainian Defence Minister, on the occasion of an interview with CNN in June (Sak & Golodryga, 2022).

The characteristics of weapons delivered to Ukraine is a paramount need to consider. While the West does not want to go to war with Russia, it must however ensure that Ukraine retains sovereignty. Therefore, this policy recommendation advocates for short-range military weapons delivery and strategic placement.

Defensive weapons have had a high impact on stalling the advance of Russian troops, particularly in the first hours and days following the invasion. **The EU and Western partners should send specific military aid with Anti-Access Area Denial (A2/AD) capabilities for Ukraine's defence, such as artillery, mortars, and howitzers. This class of weapons are a crucial defencive tool used to deny the advance of invading forces and preventing more intense and close-range assaults on the Ukrainian centres of defence. In this sense, weapons to support anti-access/access-denial (A2/AD), which consists of the denial of access and operation of enemy forces in a certain area by land, sea, or air, have the ability to grind offensives to a halt.**

Some of the A2/AD weapons which have been of the most utility to the Ukrainian forces have been anti-tank weaponry, used to negate Russian mobile advance capabilities, anti-air weapons, used to prevent Russian air superiority, and anti-ship weapons, used to deny Russian Black Sea offensives (Horton, et.al., 2022). Short-range artillery and defencive weapons are crucial to correct Ukraine's inferiority in military capability and defend from Russian offensives. The EU and Western allies should focus on the delivery of weapons within the aforementioned categories, such as anti-tank weapons, FGM-148 Javelin and NLAW, anti-air weapons, FIM-92 Stinger, S-300, and NASAMS, anti-ship weapons, such as the Harpoon, and lastly, drones such as the Bayraktar TB2, which have been used already to eliminate Russian artillery and combat vehicles (Duggal & Ali, 2022; Horton, et.al., 2022). These are primarily defencive weapons which will ensure Ukrainian defencive superiority.

Lastly, while the delivery of weapons is important, it is also needed to consider the training aspect of Ukrainian troops to use them. In accordance with this consideration, portable Javelin anti-tank missiles and Stinger anti-aircraft rockets should be prioritised, considering they require less training. Following Germany, the UK, and Lithuania's current and planned training of Ukrainian soldiers within their borders, the EU should focus on a consolidated effort to train Ukrainian soldiers to use the weapons provided to them, as Borrell stated is currently being discussed (Brzozowski, 2022).

For the internal defence of Ukraine, "the most important thing is to push the enemy back to achieve the withdrawal of the army of the aggressor to the level at least before February 24" (Sak & Golodryga, 2022). The objective for the defence of Ukraine and the global food security should be for both parties to remain committed to the UN-Turkey agreement, which has so far allowed for over 720,000 tonnes of grain to exit the Black Sea and can help to relieve the global food shortages, particularly in the MENA region (Polityuk & Spicer, 2022). **The defencive framework of EU military aid delivery should be coupled with diplomatic efforts to de-escalate the conflict**. With the EU's commitments to conflict resolution, diplomatic means will remain open and decisive for the decision on further political issues (Sak & Golodryga, 2022).

Sanctions

Unfortunately, the February 2022 war in Ukraine is not the first time that Putin's Russia has exerted aggression in the European Neighbourhood. The war follows Russia's invasion of Georgia in 2008 as well as the 2014 annexation of Crimea. In the latter case, the EU responded with sanctions as they have now; however, those sanctions did not limit Russia's military ability to wage the current war. Therefore, the priority of current sanctions should not only be to act punitively on the Russian government for the current war, but to also hinder their military capabilities in the future and end the cycle of aggression.

In terms of financial sanctions, they aim to cripple the Russian economy as a whole and have direct effects on civilians but also collateral damages to the international markets, rather than on Putin's ability to fund the war. With this, any sanctions regime that significantly restricts a country's economy will also have an impact on ordinary people" (Moret & Batmanghelidj, 2022). Scholars have also demonstrated that the effects of economic isolation on countries at war is to push them to adopt riskier strategies, often involving further escalation (Sand and Freeman, 2022). Western leaders must not be convinced into thinking that continued financial sanctions will weaken Putin's capability of fighting the war, but rather unnecessarily harm civilians.

2. Compartmentalise R&D Sanctions

In early March, the EU cut all scientific ties to Russia. Such a blanket sanction approach hits the research field that rely heavily on international cooperation particularly hard; however, there is no information available to suggest that suspending research projects and fundings will have an effect on Kremlin policies. The current strategy should be further scrutinised when reflecting back on the situation in Iran: blanket sanctions on R&D can foster the development of pro-war sentiments in the scientific community and have long-lasting consequences on the country's

educational landscape. In that regard, the EU should compartmentalise scientific sanctions to only high-impact defence-sector technology R&D.

Unless the field of research is connected to military uses, most sanctions will only damage relations to the Russian R&D sector, negatively impacting Russia's civil education and scientific landscape, while likely promoting pro-war sentiments in the Russian research community. Looking at different forms of information, the EU does not prohibit Russia from accessing western websites nor bookstores, but denies access to innovation and technology. To be precise, collaborations involving technology and know-how transfer or the possibility thereof are suspended if such collaboration is located in any part in Russia (Matthews, 2022). Sanctioning information transfers targets the material dimension in limiting Russia's ability to use technological know-how in the war. If this sanctions regime remains unchanged, Russia will exert force on its R&D sectors, creating an insular research landscape and increasing scientific autonomy (Tarikhi, 2020). It is thus essential to compartmentalise scientific sanctions, or differentiate between fields of research that can serve the war and those that are detached from it. R&D is an essential foundation of the arms industry. Targets of these sanctions should be those serving companies and businesses in this sector, as well as institutes involved with the development of dual-use technology, as specified on the EU dual-use control list (European Commission, 2020).

To further protect civil projects, it is recommended to concentrate on sanctioning government to government cooperation and state-owned institutions where possible, while maintaining programs such as the Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), and preparing for flows of researchers escaping the regime.

The EU should act to sanction the areas which fund the current and build the future war machines. According to author Michael O'Hanlon, in the modern era it takes a period of 20 years for a country to technologically advance enough to produce an exponential improvement in their military capability, or as he calls it, achieve a revolution in military affairs (RMA) (O'Hanlon, 2000). Following the successful but poorly executed invasion of Georgia in 2008, when Russian Armed Forces proved to be "underequipped, undermanned, and undertrained" (Heerdt, 2020) Anatoly Serdyukov, Russian Defence Minister, introduced major reforms in the same year to address the Russian military capability gap (Heerdt, 2020). Today, Russia is applying and testing these advancements in Ukraine (Heerdt, 2020). As a result, this section recommends the EU to target new and innovative technological fields to prevent Russia from achieving another RMA by 2040. The four major technological categories that are most likely to allow the next RMA to take place are sensors, communication systems, major weapon platforms and new weapons systems (O'Hanlon, 2018). It would be wise for the EU to target specific fields in the next sanction packages, such as:

> Skolkovo Innovation Centre's Nuclear Technology Cluster, Space Technology and Telecommunications Cluster; Rostelecom-Solar, the subsidiary of the commercial communications company Rostelecom specialising in telecommunications cyber security; and Military Innovative Technopolis "ERA," Russia's premier centre for the development of artificial intelligence technology.

In the short term, Russia may only marginally feel the bite of the sanctions; however, in the long term its military capacity and capability will suffer greatly as funding, know-how, human, and material capacities will break away and dramatically decrease scientific production in crucial areas. The recent halt in development of Russia's flagship Arctic LNG project is indicative of the damages Western sanctions can deal to Russia. The project was originally slated for launch by the end of 2023 (Humpert, 2022). However, top officials were forced to declare that developments were suspended indefinitely when it became apparent that without the technological know-how of its western partner who pulled out of the project, they were incapable of completing its construction (Humpert, 2022). This is just the tip of the iceberg of the sanctions ability to cripple Russia's R&D capabilities.

3. Prioritise tariff on Russian Energy Imports

Russia's ability to finance the war has not been curtailed, largely due to the revenues it still enjoys from energy exports. Therefore, the priority for the EU and its allies should be to focus on the Russian current account surplus by targeting the oil and gas business. A report by the Finnish think tank for Research on Energy and Clean Air calculated that Russia made 57 billion EUR from exporting fossil fuel to the EU in the first 100 days of the war in Ukraine (Myllyvirta, 2022).

As a result, this policy report argues that energy import is a crucial sector to tackle. Indeed, despite the rigorous trade and financial restrictions imposed upon the Kremlin, it still enjoys a significant revenue stream through this channel (Chaney, 2022). This comes to around 650 million EUR in daily revenue from the energy sale to the European market (Chaney, 2022). This income was more than enough to cover the daily costs of Russia's military expenses in Ukraine, which is estimated to have been around 221 million EUR per day (Schoenholtz, 2022). The Russian economy, and by extension the Russian state, are both dependent on the export of fossil fuels. Energy exports account for 14% of Russia's GDP (ONB, 2022), and profits from the export of oil and gas accounted for nearly half of Russia's federal budget (Hausmann et.al., 2022). Russia could potentially export some of this oil to other markets, such as to Turkey, which has doubled its imports from Russia as it has "not banned [businesses] from dealing with Russian counterparts stepping in to fill the void created by EU businesses leaving Russia" (Reuters, 2022). However, Turkey now imports a mere 10% of what the EU did total (in barrels of oil per day) and its exports to Asian buyers "essentially transferred its lost European volumes to Asia" (per Prokopenko, 2022 & Reuters, 2022;). Furthermore, Russia exports its fossil fuels to these partners at a much lower price, meaning their revenue is reduced in comparison to trading with Europe (Prokopenko, 2022). With the EU being Russia's biggest energy export market, an effective sanction of Russian energy will lessen EU dependence on Russian energy while also targeting the funds of the ongoing war. This could partially decrease Russian revenue in the short term, but massively hurt the Russian economy in the long term as Russia lacks economic diversification and relies on these exports (Pomeranz, 2014).

In May, the EU adopted the RePowerEU strategy which aims to reduce gas imports by ⅔ before the end of 2022 and completely phase out Russian energy imports at a yet undetermined date (Hausmann et.al., 2022). At the end of the month, the EU introduced an embargo on Russian oil, aiming to phase out its importation by the end of 2022. However, this gradual phasing out of Russian energy is not the optimal strategy. Some EU member states, such as Hungary,

Slovakia, and the Czech Republic are simply too dependent on Russian energy to be able to phase them out completely in the medium to short term (McWilliams et.al., 2022). These countries are therefore exempt from the recently introduced oil embargo. In the short run, the decrease in the quantity of Russian energy sold on the market and expectations for future supply reductions will cause a spike in costs for Russian energy still being imported (Hausmann et.al., 2022). This has already happened, as the EU's current drawdown of Russian energy has sent energy prices skyrocketing, with Russian fossil fuels trading on average 60% higher than last year, even though they are being sold below market price. Despite selling at lower volumes, Russian state-owned energy companies are still generating a generous amount of revenue that is funding Russian aggression in Ukraine (Myllyvirta, 2022). For the EU, the decision to wean itself off Russian fossil fuels is not an easy one, particularly in the short term as the EU must quickly find new sources; however, it is a necessary one if the EU is committed to its own strategic autonomy and curtailing the Russian aggression in Ukraine.

An alternative method of sanctioning Russian energy is a punitive tariff, which could potentially circumvent the shortcomings of an embargo. Introducing a tariff can be done without considering the dependence of certain member states on Russian energy, as member states are still allowed to import it, albeit at a higher price (Strum, 2022). The current state of energy trade between the EU and Russia appears to be favourable to the imposition of a tariff. On one hand, 75% of Russia's gas and 61% of its oil exports goes to the EU, the majority of its pipelines flow toward Europe and its exports to the EU are sold at a higher price than to other markets (Hausmann et.al., 2022). Russia is therefore heavily dependent on the EU as a consumer market, and it would be a very expensive logistical challenge for Moscow to divert its export flow towards other destinations. On the other hand, the EU can import oil and liquified natural gas from alternative sources as well as being able to develop internal sources. Therefore, considering that Russia is more dependent on the EU as a consumer than the EU on Russia as a producer, in the advent of a tariff, Russian energy suppliers will likely be forced to sell their products at a lower price to remain competitive. If Russia sells energy at a low pre-tariff price, the tax revenue generated from the tariff would be more than enough to compensate consumers for the increase in energy prices (Sturm, 2022). Meanwhile, Russia would be exporting lower quantities of energy at a lower price, which would inevitably leave it worse off economically (Sturm, 2022).

In light of this, the policy recommendation is a punitive tariff that forces Russian producers to sell at a pre-tariff price that is lower on average than what it was before February 24th, 2022. Accompanying this measure is a redistributive scheme funded by revenue generated from the tariffs, taking the form of stimulus checks to individuals and businesses, especially those worst impacted by the hike in energy prices. Businesses who report a significant loss due to high energy prices can also apply for tax reductions, with the loss in tax revenue partially compensated for by the tariff revenue. This redistributive component is crucial for the long-term success of a tariff regime, as it attenuates the impoverishment of large segments of society, hence preventing a societal backlash against its continued implementation.

This recommendation is not only important for targeting a vital source of income of the Russian state, it also incentivises the EU to diversify its sources of energy imports. As mentioned above, the EU can increase imports of fossil fuels from other countries such as the Gulf States, Norway, North Africa and the United States (European Commission, 2022b). It can also invest in developing internal sources, such as Romania's oil and gas fields in the Black Sea (Ilie,

2022). The diversification of energy producers, as mentioned previously, is a cornerstone of the EU's strategic autonomy, as it avoids an over dependence on certain producers that would give them sway over the EU's decision making, undermining the Union's ability to act autonomously.

4. Promote Inter-Sector Information Sharing

With regards to sanctions against Russian kleptocrats, or wealthy individuals who facilitate public and financial support for the Kremlin (Nagorski et.al., 2022), their effectiveness depends greatly on the availability of information that allows for the pinpointing of their financial assets, often veiled in layers of shell companies and proxies.

The EU Commission has set up the Russian Elites, Proxies, and Oligarchs (REPO) multilateral task force to coordinate information sharing, asset freezing, and criminal prosecution among its members (European Commission, 2022). Currently, the REPO task force consists of Germany, Italy, France, Japan, the UK, the US, Australia, Canada, and the European Commission (European Commission, 2022a). The establishment of this task force is a step in the right direction in optimising intelligence gathering on Russia kleptocrats, but it lacks key actors to be truly effective. After trawling through terabytes of data from leaks such as the Panama and Paradise papers, organisations such as Bellingcat and the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) have published detailed reports unveiling the locations of Russian kleptocrats' hidden assets and the methods they employ to hide them. Given the extensive work done by these private entities, the EU needs to establish a platform that includes both public and private entities to pool information they have collected on the activities of sanctioned oligarchs.

This need for information sharing between sectors is also present in the domain of humanitarian assistance. NGOs are a primary caregiver for refugees in the frontline countries of Poland, Romania and Hungary. For example, the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) has 58,000 people deployed in these countries to assist refugees, as well as providing financial support to refugees (IFRC, 2022). Often these NGOs have better knowledge of the situation on the ground, knowledge that could help public institutions and states formulate better action to deal with the humanitarian crisis. It is therefore recommended that a platform be established between member states, the EU and NGOs to share information on the crisis gathered by all parties.

In both instances, the gathering and collecting of data will facilitate the work of all parties invested in the care of refugees. Moreover, this platform will facilitate the planning and development of long-term solutions. Integration is also necessary for the wider objective of achieving strategic autonomy, as it leads to the harmonisation of practices, in this case, the monitoring of refugees and the activities of sanctioned Russian oligarchs and kleptocrats, which in turn strengthens the resilience of the EU towards future challenges in these domains.

Humanitarian Aid

7.1 million Ukrainians have now fled the country. The overwhelming majority of these refugees are women, children, and the elderly (OCHA Services, 2022). At the same time that the EU works to simultaneously provide military support to Ukraine, negotiate an end to the war, and sanction those involved in perpetrating such an egregious war, the Ukrainian civilians who have left should be guaranteed safe passage and acceptance.

The majority of Ukrainian refugees are entering Poland, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Moldova, the first four of which are EU member states. The EU should take the shared responsibility of caring for these refugees as an opportunity to include and work with ENP countries, such as Moldova and Georgia.

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), includes many countries within the Post-Soviet space. These countries, as evident in Ukraine's current situation, are vulnerable to Russian influence and aggression. This is particularly mentionable with Moldova and Georgia, considering Moldova's region of Transnistria is territorially disputed with Russia and in 2008 Russia invaded Georgia and occupied parts of its territory. In the early 2000s, many newly independent countries chose democracy following the collapse of the Soviet Union, such as Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, which are now EU and NATO member states. The three countries of Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia aspire for the same future. While the former two were granted candidate status, Georgia remains a potential EU candidate. Therefore, including these partners in the cooperation on Ukrainian refugees will promote the democratic futures of these countries, as well as securing safe passages and entries for refugees.

The EU aims to make its own political decisions and develop its strategic autonomy; these decisions should be based on the core values of the institution. Accepting citizens from Ukraine, and in the future from other countries and crises, should be an area in which the EU strives to take its own decisions, work with its ENP partners, and create the capabilities to safely and inclusively welcome refugees.

5. Consolidate EU Humanitarian Assistance

The magnitude and speed in which 6.5 million Ukrainian refugees have entered into the European Union and European Neighbourhood presents a massive challenge for the union (UNHCR, 2022). In this context, the eastern member states are the most affected and, in many ways, least prepared for the influx of refugees they are now facing (Dimitrov, et.al., 2017).

Poland welcomed 1,169,497 refugees with the status of Temporary Protection in their country as of June 16, 2022 (Ukraine Refugee Situation, 2022) with the total refugee cost rising up to €4.04 billion. Romania received around 659,009 refugees as of June 16, 2022 (Ukraine Refugee Situation, 2022) with a total cost of €1.1 billion. As of 15 June 2022, Hungary welcomed 782,742 Ukrainian refugees (Ukraine Refugee Situation, 2022) with the total refugee cost rising up to €716 million. Nearly 400.000 Ukrainian refugees have passed through Moldova since the start of the war and around 100.000 have sought safety in this territory (Human Rights Watch, 2022). It is important to take Moldova's situation into consideration as it has recently had a hard time in this crisis, especially in providing well-arranged accommodation and services for the

refugees that pass and or stay through the state (Joles, 2022), which puts Ukrainian refugees staying in or going through Moldova at a higher risk. Lastly, while Georgia has taken in less than half of the Ukrainian refugees of Moldova, in the tens of thousands rather than the hundreds of thousands, the majority of these refugees are coming from the Eastern territories of Ukraine where their only exit point is through Russian territory to Georgia (Chkareuli, 2022). In Georgia, Ukrainians can enter without a visa and often share the ability to speak the Russian language with Georgians. However, Georgia lacks long-term funding to care for these refugees; the EU should share funding with the ENP country also as an ability to build further cooperation.

Accordingly, to bolster democratic resilience and humanitarian efforts in the EU and ENP, the EU should continue to set up funds to provide humanitarian assistance and supply materials such as food, medicine, and other goods through the EU Protection Mechanism (UCPM) to Poland, Romania, Hungary, Moldova, and Georgia. To this end, the EU should take into account that the war will likely not be over in the foreseeable future and should increase the European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC) on a longer scale. The current amount of funding that has been allocated to confront the crisis will at some point run out, so this measure will help to consolidate the EU humanitarian assistance to Ukrainian refugees.

Furthermore, as the immediate needs of arriving refugees will be the most pressing challenge faced by the frontline states, those which represent the initial EU entry point for refugees fleeing the conflict, they will receive a minimum baseline level of funding based on calculated needs for emergency uses such as rudimentary housing, medical supplies, food, and staffing.

In the long term, it is important for the EU not to be short-sighted and annually check that all member states comply with the criteria of the EU membership and accession, including the rule of law. Monitoring of the funds to prevent corruption or misuse are necessary. States who fail this check will be at risk of suspended funding from the EU across varying sectors outside of humanitarian aid, but not those impacting the humanitarian aid for refugees. Funding on humanitarian assistance for refugees will not be at risk; however, it should come with the expectation that the host country remains in line with EU criteria.

6. Integration & Prosperity for Refugees

As the war will likely not be over in the foreseeable future, the integration of the Ukrainian refugees in the EU is crucial. Among the most pressing obstacles for long-term integration is access to adequate health and social services as well as access to employment. Specifically, children require "cognitive development and emotional stability", which has been completely shattered by their current emotional distress (United Nations 2022). Moreover, concentrations of people fleeing exposes people to infectious diseases. Vaccination rates are generally low among Ukrainian refugees, including a very low Covid-19 vaccination rate. Another major issue is gender-based violence and sex trafficking. In effect, women who have been victims of such abuse then require complex health and social care, including access to abortion and counseling (Adams, 2022). Adding to the healthcare needs of Ukrainian Refugees is dealing with the psychological trauma experienced during their escape or due to war experiences. The Lancet has reported that one in five people affected by conflict are likely to experience mental disorders (WHO, 2022) which will also require an increase in therapy capacity in heavily affected member states.

These developments put massive pressures on EU member states' social services to expand capacity and increase funds (Stellmach & Lokuge 2022). The economic impact of refugees strongly depends on the success of refugees' economic and societal integration into their host nations. Refugees have a high economic potential if properly integrated into the European labour markets and can help to alleviate the EU's ageing and shrinking labour market. This means that if refugees can be integrated into European labour markets, they transform from a cost factor into taxpayers helping to fund European social systems increasingly strained by ageing populations. How successfully refugees are integrated into the labour markets depends on language skills, recognition of qualifications, matching skills with demand, education, and childcare (see Botelho, 2022).

In the face of all these challenges, refugees and the countries hosting them will have to move from an ad-hoc approach made up of emergency measures and relying heavily on volunteers to accommodate and support refugees to a more institutional approach. An approach with permanent structures aimed at providing vital healthcare and social services and helping them integrate into their host countries is necessary to ensure long-term integration success. In this sense, the EU should prioritise the formation of an EU monitoring and advisory council for the safety, integration, and prosperity of refugees within the EU. This council will work around two main objectives. Firstly, it will coordinate efforts of the EU and individual member states to ensure that national and local governments are doing their due diligence, improving their integration efforts, and monitoring the spending of EU funds. This will apply to all member states within the EU. Secondly, it will monitor the safety of refugees and work with national and local law enforcement chapters to ensure that refugees are not subjected to inhuman work conditions, human trafficking, and/or other harmful activities. This will improve security both for incoming refugees and also for communities within the member states.

Conclusion

Echoing Mulder's expression that liberalism should support and defend, but not punish, individuals resisting oppressive and dictatorial governments, the French and German governments released a letter on their decision to not ban visas for all Russians, stating that their visa policies should reflect the "transformative power of experiencing life in democratic systems… especially for future generations" (Siebold, 2022). EU strategic autonomy, much like these visa policies, should remain based on liberal, democratic values.

It cannot be stated enough that Ukraine is a democratic, aspiring member of the European Union undergoing a devastating battle for the defence of the country. Support and defence against oppression have been encapsulated by the efforts of the Ukrainian military, government, and civilians in their fight against an unjust, illegitimate war waged by the Russian government. Ukraine must be defended, as the war cannot become a war of attrition; a drawn-out conflict will result in millions of casualties and food shortages. **The EU must work alongside its partners to send specific military aid with A2/AD capabilities for Ukraine's defence. These weapons have proved crucial and invaluable in halting Russian advances within the first days of the war and are continually being used to destroy Russian tanks, artillery, and prevent further offensives. This has allowed the Ukrainians to deny advances and prevent more intense and close-range assaults on the Ukrainian centres of defence.** The

recommendation to increase short-range military weapons to the Ukrainians is focused on the strategic defence of the country, with an emphasis on remaining committed to the resolution of the conflict.

At the same time that military support should go to the Ukrainian defence, sanctions against the Russian war machine must be used to bring an end to the current conflict and prevent future aggression. Strategic sanctions should not only focus on today, but the future as well. Rather than blanket sanctioning the Russian economy, which in turn hurts innocent civilians, the EU should focus on three areas where sanctions can have the largest effect. First, sanctioning R&D sectors and dual-use sectors which not only provide military technology now, but also will revolutionise the Russian military in future generations. The war in Ukraine, as Zelenskyy stated, began with the 2014 annexation of Crimea (Khurshudyan, 2022), which itself followed the Russian war in Georgia in 2008. R&D sanctions will prevent Russia from gaining the military technology and knowledge to continue this cycle. Secondly, energy sanctions should be applied. The Russian government depends on the revenue for oil and gas to fund the war. Furthermore, the EU cannot find itself ever again in a situation where the plurality of their energy supplies come from one partner, especially an authoritarian power. For the sake of EU strategic autonomy, the EU must act to lessen their dependence on Russian gas and oil, while also mitigating the negative effects domestically through a tariff and redistributive measure. Lastly, the EU should promote information sharing among multiple agencies and entities in order to make their own sanctions of Russian oligarchs and kleptocrats effective. The oligarchic nature of Russia facilitates the ability of the Kremlin to wage a war with little domestic accountability. The EU must act on their own democratic, liberal values to ensure that these people are not using member states to hide from their actions.

The EU must create policies which promote safety and inclusion of Ukrainian refugees today. These should also be longitudinal, replicable policies which will promote the human dignity of all refugees. Humanitarian assistance should not only be a measure taken by the EU, but in cooperation with ENP countries that are opening their countries and homes to Ukrainian refugees. Furthermore, the EU should enact policies in an integrated manner which oversee the safety, health, and social wellbeing of refugees, including an advisory council.

EU strategic autonomy is the ability of the EU to act on its own decisions, to cooperate with strategic partners, and carry out those decisions. While not all of the recommendations fall under traditional military autonomy, they all contribute to a wider understanding of the autonomy the EU should achieve. Promoting democracy through cooperation with the ENP, placing strategic sanctions on the Russian war machine, reducing dependence on Russian energy sources, and coordinating efforts to ensure the safety of refugees are a few examples of policies that contribute to the EU as a strategic actor in its own neighbourhood. Beyond the strategic elements, the connection between all of these policy recommendations is the hope that they can aid and defend the Ukrainian people, both domestically and those around Europe, to the utmost ability of the EU. They also aim to not act as punitive measures against any civilian so unfortunate as to live under oppression, but rather to strengthen EU strategic autonomy, relations with their neighbours, and democratic resilience, all based on values which make the EU "a transformative power" (Siebold, 2022).

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Two birds one stone
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