



Ukraine – 20 years of independence. Politics, economy, society

**16.12.2011, Warsaw
Sala im. Jerzego Turowicza, Sapieżyńska 10A**

9:30 – Conference opening

9:40 – Welcome speech of Mr. Jerzy Pomianowski, deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

9:50 – Key-note speech of Mr. Pavlo Klimkin (TBC)

10:00 – 11:50 Panel 1st

Political and economic situation of Ukraine and association agreement with EU

Moderation: Mr. Konrad Schuller, FAZ correspondent in Warsaw

Panelists: Mr. Marcin Świecicki (MP, Civic Platform), Mr. Andreas Umland (National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy), Mr. Jacek Austen (expert, Ukraine), Mr. Taras Woznyak (Ji Magazine, Lviv)

Word economic crisis had seriously struck Ukraine which led to deterioration of the citizens' living level and forced president Yanukovich's administration to promise deep economic reforms and an enhanced fight with corruption. In order to receive a financial assistance from the IMF Kyiv had to accept the loan conditions and substantially raised the prices for, among others, food, public transport and energy for individual consumers. The new, hotly opposed by the SME environment, tax code had been introduced. IMF also requires lifting up the retirement age, what is a serious political challenge for Ukrainian government.

Meanwhile a gap between the richest and the poorest strata of Ukrainian society has been deepened. Similar dynamic of raising differences in life standard among Kyiv and larger cities and rural areas could be observed. Eventually, a distance between the border areas of Ukraine and the neighboring EU member states ones has been getting larger.

In the autumn 2012 Ukraine will face, already postponed by the Kyiv's court decision, parliamentary election. The ruling Party of Regions records very low support, but the voters got indifferent as for search for an alternative political force to vote for.

This panel will address the above issues, focusing on analysis of the economic situation and its social implications as well as the analysis of the Ukrainian political scene and possible development scenarios for economy and politics.

11:50 – 12:10 Coffee break

12:10 – 13:40 Panel 2nd

Ukraine in the world

Moderation: Mr. Krzysztof Bobiński, Fundacja Unia&Polska

Panelists: Mr. Mykoła Riabchuk (expert, Ukraine), Mr. Reinhard Weißhuhn (Die Grudne, Berlin), Mr. Andrzej Halicki (MP, Civic Platform) (TBC), Dr Walter Zaryckyj (CUSUR, US)

Following taking of the presidential post by Viktor Yanukovych and forming of his administration there was a time of rapprochement between Ukraine and Russia. This period, however, didn't last long – Ukraine expected Russia to lower the gas prices. Russia, on its part, would like to subdue the Ukrainian transfer infrastructure and tied up the Ukrainian economy with the Russian one. The changes which occurred beyond the western borders of Ukraine were also important for the country. Germany showed the signs of the EU enlargement fatigue, which put the serious obstacles for Ukraine plans to integrate with EU. Meanwhile, from July 2012 on Poland took the EU presidency and made the farther development and improvement of Eastern Partnership one of its priorities.

How the dynamics of Ukrainian-Russian relations has been changed during the recent year? Is Ukraine going to finalize the association agreement with EU or, being under pressure of Russia, will rather switch toward entering the custom union of Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus and will join the Russia built Eurasian common economic area? What are the achievements of Poland's presidency which are related to Ukraine? Was Ukraine itself able to use Eastern partnership as a tool for closer integration with EU? What changes are necessary for Germany to return to the concept of EU eastward enlargement? Is farther development of economic and interpersonal contacts between Germany and Ukraine an alternative for the enhanced political cooperation?

This panel will focus on considering the above and other issues related to the international position of Ukraine.

13:40 – 14:30 Lunch

14:30 – 16:00 Panel 3rd

Democracy, Freedom of speech and human rights. Is Ukraine going to follow the Belarus path? What can Poland and Germany do to support Ukrainian democracy?

Moderation: Ms. Stefanie Schiffer (European Exchange, Berlin)

Panelists: Wolfgang Templin (HBS, Warsaw), Halyna Senyk (human rights expert, Kiev), Nico Lange (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Kiev), Jan Piekło (PAUCI, Warsaw)

The court trial and the verdict in the case against former PM Yulia Tymoshenko is not only the example of the increased repressiveness toward opposition showed by the current government of Ukraine. It is also quintessence of the Ukrainian legal system as well as, only nominally independent, judiciary. It is also a clear signal to the people of Ukraine that the authorities will not hesitate to use any administrative/legal tools to punish their defiant opponents.

The Orange Revolution resulted in a lush development of civil society in Ukraine. International donors were keen to generously support the NGOs and media sectors. The public debates were blossoming and experts believed Ukraine was the most prospective democracy in Eastern Europe. There were the real perspectives of tightening Ukraine's relations with EU and NATO. However, president Yushchenko and the orange coalition as a result of increasing political tensions had been systematically losing the public support. Ultimately, the presidential election was won by Viktor Yanukovych who started the process of power consolidation, oppressing the political opponents and subduing the media. The commentators are afraid that a rapid lost of popular support may result in a ruling party openness to use authoritarian methods in order to maintain in power. Meanwhile, in Ukraine the extremist movements are on rise, showing themselves as the only alternative not only to the present president and the Party of Regions' government but also to the whole discredited political class. The nationalistic elements present in their rhetoric and activities evoke a negative response and worsen Ukraine position on an international arena.

At the same time, due to the financial crisis and/or a change of priorities the donors' activities for the sake of NGOs got diminished. Frustrated society has lost its interest toward politics

focusing on day to day living problems. In the Freedom House's ranking Ukraine was moved from the "free" to "partly free" category.

This panel will focus on the analysis of the level of democracy in Ukraine and will provide opportunity for the Polish-German discussion on supporting democracy in Ukraine..

16:00 – Conference closure

Conference languages: Polish, German, Ukrainian

