

BREAKING STEREOTYPES ABOUT THE (MIS)PERCEPTION OF THE SCENARIO OF RUSSIA'S WEAKENING AMONG PARTNER STATES: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UKRAINE

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The dynamics of international partners' support for Ukraine and the political/economic weakening of the Russian Federation continue to be influenced by certain prejudices and stereotypes that arise from different national interests and positions of states, the hybrid influence of the Russian Federation, and problems in Ukraine's international positioning before the war. Also, existing stereotypes depend on the unique experience of a particular state in interacting with Russia; and may change over time under the influence of certain circumstances.

In general, the stereotypes presented include concerns about changes in the status quo on the continent; doubts about ability of Ukraine to liberate all its territories; the illusion that it is possible to negotiate with Russia to appease its ambitions; fears of increased instability or escalation of the conflict; biased attitudes toward Russia as a "great" power; belief in Russia "after Putin"; difficulties in imagining the strategic, political and economic consequences of Ukraine's victory, etc.

The analysis of existing stereotypes allows us to conclude that the partner states, first, have difficulty adapting to the new security conditions on the continent and have a poor idea of the post-war situation; second, they are not ready to quickly change their perspective on Russia (there is still an illusion that Russia is capable of constructive action); third, they are concerned about the prospects of getting a scenario of the end of the war in which either Russia is "too weak" or Ukraine is "too strong."

Introduction

The full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war, which began on February 24, 2022, has fundamentally changed the international community's perception of Ukraine and its society. During this time, Western powers have gone from the initial doubts about Ukraine's ability to preserve its statehood in the first months of the war to an unprecedented level of political, military, and financial support for Ukraine. However, the dynamics of this process were and continue to be influenced by certain **prejudices and stereotypes** regarding the perception of the prospects of Ukraine's victory and Russia's loss/weakening in the war.

Today, the Ukrainian state's position on repulsing Russian aggression and ending hostilities is specific and consistent: we need to fully restore our territorial integrity and sovereignty, bring Russia to justice for its crimes, and receive security guarantees from our partners. However, Ukraine's partner states still do not have a **joint coordinated strategy** for resolving the Russian-Ukrainian war and the post-war situation on the European continent. Various factors contribute to this:

- the “plurality” of states and their national interests and political positions (even with common democratic values and unification in the conditional camp of “Western states”);
- Russia's use of a set of hybrid (political, energy, financial, informational) instruments of influence on Western countries;
- the continued absence of a full-fledged political image of the state of Ukraine and its national interests abroad.

Describing stereotypes about the rejection of the scenario of weakening of Russia among Ukraine's partner states, it should be noted that these are complex and often rather unobvious issues. They may not be fully realized and are not necessarily used by partners as a reason not to provide the desired level of support to Ukraine. In this case, **generalized stereotypes** for Ukraine's partner states in the Euro-Atlantic region (Western countries) are presented, but the following points should be taken into account:

- The presence of a certain stereotype varies depending on a particular state and its **unique experience of interaction with Russia** (obviously, countries on the eastern borders of Europe (Poland, the Baltic states, the Czech Republic, Slovakia) have more in common with Ukraine and are better aware of Russia's expansionist policy than Western European states);
- Stereotypes are not immutable; they can **change/be tackled** over time under the influence of various circumstances (the level of political dialogue between a particular state and Ukraine or Russia; the situation on the front line; the perception

of certain consequences of the Russian-Ukrainian war, etc.);

- In addition to stereotypes, there are other quite **objective factors** that influence the position of partner states or international associations in supporting Ukraine and responding to Russia’s actions (national interests of a state; availability of certain resources—finance, weapons, etc.; complex procedural aspects of decision-making within blocs and alliances, etc.)

In general, the stereotypes of (mis)perception of the scenario of Russia’s weakening among Ukraine’s partner states can be summarized as follows:

1. **“Weakening of Russia means changing the status quo.”** In this case, it is not so much a stereotype as an existential and most commonplace fear associated with changes in the status quo in the region. “War” is a term that could not be fathomed in reality on the European continent until recently. European states had long recoiled from it; they never wanted it to happen “again.” It means a breakdown of what was before; changes in the existing system, which is obviously failing and can no longer function as usual. War means discomfort, lack of stability, and negative long-term consequences that go beyond a situational local conflict and spread to the entire region and the world. And despite the fact that Russia’s full-scale aggression against Ukraine has been going on for more than a year (not to mention its beginning in 2014), it was quite difficult for many states to accept the war as a given and take further decisive steps until recently.
2. **“Ukraine will not be able to liberate all the territories.”** This is especially difficult for partners to imagine in the context of liberating the Crimean peninsula and ORDLO, territories occupied by Russia since 2014 and of strategic importance to it. Despite the fact that Russia’s propaganda rhetoric has evolved over the entire period of the full-scale war from “we will seize Kyiv in three days” to actually justifying its failures in Bakhmut, the belief that Russia will not give up Crimea (**“Crimea is a red line”**) is quite strong. Therefore, there may be certain concessions or compromises in the liberation of Ukraine’s territories, such as stopping at the borders as of February 23, 2022. This stereotype is being spread by Russian rhetoric with blackmail and Russia’s so-called **“no choice” offer**, which does not include the liberation of Ukrainian territories. From Russia’s point of view, the seizure of the territories will be either complete or partial, and the position of the Ukrainian side in this case allegedly makes no sense at all and does not decide anything.
3. This leads to the following stereotype: **“It is still possible to negotiate with Russia.”**

In general, the Russian-Ukrainian full-scale war is the most striking indicator that the entire long-term policy of building relations with the Russian regime, including attempts to “understand” Russia or rationalize its actions, **has completely failed**. The position of Germany and France on Ukraine’s accession to NATO in 2008, the lack of a decisive and clear response to the illegal annexation of the Crimean peninsula and ORDLO in 2014, the launch of the Normandy format of negotiations / Minsk agreements and other attempts to “contain the escalation” (or rather, to contain Russia) until February 24, 2022 were of no help. However, even with the beginning of Russia’s full-scale aggression in Ukraine, **attempts to “negotiate” with the Russian leadership** or to organize **mediation** for the “parties to the conflict” (France, Türkiye, China, Brazil, Indonesia, etc.) have not stopped. The source of such initiatives is, on the one hand, the political ambitions of specific heads of state to demonstrate their regional or global leadership and mobilize supporters during the election period; on the other hand, it is a misunderstanding of the fact that it is impossible to speak constructively with Russia.

4. **“Russia will exhaust itself in Ukraine and will not go further.”** As long as Russia is depleting its resources in the war against Ukraine, it is not capable of spreading its aggression to other states in the region. And the longer this war lasts, the more time Russia will need to restore its military capabilities. This is a fairly rational thesis, but it must be conditioned by the comprehensive and regular support of Ukraine by its Western partners. After all, the Ukrainian state and society are **paying the highest price** every day for this “attrition” of Russia (however trivial this expression may be). In addition, this opinion may contain misconceptions that: a) an “exhausted” Russia **will be ready for negotiations** (which is not necessarily the case, especially if these negotiations are on Ukraine’s terms); b) Russia will **curb its ambitions** in the future; there will be no revengeful policy towards Ukraine after the war or aggression against other neighboring states—Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Baltic states, etc.
5. **“Weakening Russia will lead to even greater instability.”** To be more precise, the weakening of Russia could lead to unpredictable consequences that have a global impact. On the one hand, changes in Russia’s domestic policy may begin, leading to an even more “unbalanced” foreign policy. On the other hand, the political and economic weakening of Russia carries risks for regional and global security in terms of strengthening China’s geopolitical position, which is also disadvantageous to Western powers. In addition, the international community is still concerned about further **escalation of the conflict**, when the Russian leadership, “trapped” and politically weakened, will take actions that it has so far only talked about (in particular, the threat of using the nuclear weapon, which the West is explicitly concerned about). In this context, **neither individual actors nor blocs of states are**

willing to “provoke” Russia to take further steps (as if the actions of the Russian leadership should fit into a certain logic of escalation in response to a “trigger,” while the Russian Federation may be guided by completely different motives). This unwillingness to provoke Russia resulted in the hesitancy of some Western states to confront the Russian leadership both in 2014 and in the first months of the full-scale invasion in 2022, when not all partners dared to promptly supply Ukraine with the necessary weapons.

6. The Russian-Ukrainian war has become a litmus test for another serious issue: the attitude of Western countries (especially Western Europe) to the **colonial past of the Eastern European region**. More specifically, the [biased perception of Russia as a former empire and Ukraine as a former colonial state](#). Although Western states have largely reflected on their imperial and colonial past, their view of similar processes in Eastern Europe remains quite blurred. The Russian Federation cannot give up its most abusive imperial “habits” towards its already independent neighboring states; Ukraine has to prove its subjectivity and right to independence and sovereignty in the international arena. And Western states are faced with a situation where their “eastern policy” (here we can mention the EU’s Eastern Partnership policy in general) towards states on their borders no longer works on the principle of “all together.” From now on, they need to reconsider their approaches to interaction with each Eastern European state **individually**. In this case, Ukraine can no longer serve solely as a “buffer zone” or a “bridge” for dialogue with Russia; it is a full-fledged state whose interests should be taken into account (not through the prism and not under the “patronage” of the Russian leadership).
7. [“Weakening of Russia is impossible because Russia is a great power.”](#) For many people, it remains unclear that this “greatness” is a product of formerly Soviet, now **Russian propaganda**. It is not necessary to actually be the “second army of the world”—it is enough to talk about it for a long time, often and loudly, in particular through the network of its propaganda media and demonstration of military parades. It is sufficient to spread the historical and cultural greatness of the state (built on the imperial past and the exploitation of the cultural heritage of different peoples) through the funds of the “Russian world”¹ and radical political parties abroad; Russian studies in academic circles² (which have completely replaced all other “Slavic” ones); various cultural and sporting events, heavily funded. Thus, the constructed **stereotypical image of the Russian Federation** as something large and stable (and even “incomprehensible”) is difficult to eradicate from the minds of

¹ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2022/08/22/7363888/>

² <https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/02/11/russia-studies-war-ukraine-decolonize-imperialism-western-academics-soviet-empire-eurasia-eastern-europe-university/>

people who have not experienced Russian realities personally.

8. **“Weakening Russia is unnecessary, because ordinary Russians are not to blame for anything.”** This stereotype could alternatively be called “It will become better after Putin.” There is a widespread belief among Western partners that one should distinguish between the Russian regime and ordinary Russian citizens who “do not support the war against Ukraine.” Moreover, there is an assumption (albeit an unpopular one) that if the current Russian regime were to disappear, Russia could begin internal democratic transformations. In any case, the stereotype is based on the assertion that **broad restrictions should not be imposed on Russian citizens** (e.g., visa requirements); Russian culture, sports and language should not be “cancelled” for the period of war; Russian opposition media and public organizations should not be prohibited from operating abroad, etc. Otherwise, such restrictions may indicate a) **Russophobia** (terms ending in “-phobia” are not tolerated in the Western world); b) equating “ordinary Russians” with a **criminal regime** and punishing people who are “innocent of anything.” At the same time, a false corollary link may be taken into account here, which is the prospect of changing Russia’s domestic and, most importantly, foreign policy **“after Putin.”** In other words, with the change of the current leadership in Russia, the expansionist policy of the state seems to have a chance to change, because the main problem of today’s Russian aggression is not the way of thinking of the Russian population, not the lack of reflection on the past, not the mass tolerance for violence among Russian citizens, but Putin and his “small” circle of supporters.
9. Stereotype **“Ukraine’s victory brings too many problems.”** This stereotype echoes the thesis that instability will increase if Russia is weakened. Ukraine as a strong and independent state with increased subjectivity on the world stage is a relatively new phenomenon; its “voice” in the international dimension has been heard not so long ago. For many Western partners, Ukraine’s determination and resilience in repelling Russian aggression has been a revelation. This makes it hard for the international community to imagine further developments and the status that Ukraine will acquire after the end of the Russian-Ukrainian war. For Western countries, it is still quite difficult to imagine what exactly Ukraine’s **victory should look like**. However, it is quite easy to understand that the position of the Ukrainian leadership on the conditions under which our country should win means **a lot of hassle for our partners**. This hassle, which is based on the aforementioned fear of fundamental changes, involves the search for bold and shrewd political decisions in various areas. And these decisions should concern not only Ukraine itself, but also the international community as a whole.

First, after the war, the political “landscape” in the region will change and Ukraine will be able to claim the role of a regional leader with a **strong army and a large number of weapons**. It will obviously need international **security guarantees** from its partners and allies; it will seek **membership in the EU and NATO** with greater enthusiasm (and Moldova and the Western Balkan states will “catch up” with it). Victory of Kyiv will have an impact on strengthening the role of Central and Eastern Europe on the continent and within international organizations, and on Black Sea security. In addition, Western countries will need to change their **strategy of interaction with Russia** (as well as resolve the issue with Belarus), and this strategy can no longer be based on maintaining the previous “openness to dialogue.”

Secondly, the matter of the functional capacity of **international organizations** (in particular, the UN Security Council) and **legal institutions** (launching a tribunal to investigate Russian crimes in Ukraine and compensate for damages) will become even more urgent. For the democratic community of states that stand by international law, these issues will be on the agenda for a while, as the case of the Russian-Ukrainian war is a **precedent** for the years to come. Without exaggeration, global security tomorrow depends on how it is addressed today.

Thirdly, Western partners will feel the social and economic consequences of the war even more. Weakening Russia and supporting Ukraine are impossible without further tough sanctions from the international community. However, everyone understands that this process also has a **downside**: European countries have to look for new energy suppliers, abandon previously established supply chains, reassure the population in the face of rising utility tariffs, etc. In general, Europe is interested in restructuring economic ties and reducing energy dependence on Russia, which is “unreliable” in this sense, but for some countries such changes seem particularly difficult and undesirable (e.g., Hungary, Austria, Germany). In addition, there are the issues of funds to be allocated for Ukraine’s economic reconstruction (and how large they will be); the return of a substantial number of skilled workers to Ukraine; the distribution of funding within the EU to another state in case Ukraine joins the association (and how other EU members will react to this), etc.

Hence, no matter how desirable Ukraine’s victory may be, it suggests that there is a heap of problems that Western partners will have to deal with.

Conclusions and recommendations

The analysis of existing stereotypes allows us to conclude that the partner states, firstly, have a hard time adapting to the new security conditions on the continent and have a poor idea of the **post-war situation**; secondly, they are not ready to quickly change their **perspective on Russia** (there is still an illusion that Russia is capable of constructive action); thirdly, they are concerned about the prospects of war outcome in which either Russia is **“too weak”** or Ukraine is **“too strong.”**

One thing that helps Ukraine fight many stigmas is the situation on the front line (and it has already been quite successful). However, overcoming certain stereotypes about the image of the Russian Federation cannot happen quickly, as they have been formed in the international political, informational, and cultural space for many years. That is why advocacy of Ukraine's victory and justification of the need to weaken Russia can be part of a **long-term strategy** for positioning and communication between the Ukrainian state and its international partners.

Obviously, Ukraine cannot eliminate the psychological **fear of changes in the status quo** on the continent among Western leaders. Yet, it can clear up a number of “ambiguous” issues for its partners, which can reduce tensions and help form a clearer view of the new political reality.

Overcoming the stereotype that **“Ukraine will not be able to liberate all the territories”** directly depends on the success of the Ukrainian armed forces on the front line. The state already has a positive example of liberation of the occupied territories of Kyiv, Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, and Kherson regions. These successes should be constantly emphasized, stressing the mandatory readiness to liberate all territories further. Any possible initiatives or statements by foreign partners regarding “negotiations,” “agreements,” or “reconciliation” with Russia must be accompanied by a categorical and unequivocal response from the Ukrainian side. This reaction should be immediately disseminated in the foreign information space and be based on the following:

- Ukraine is a sovereign and independent state that aims to liberate **all temporarily occupied territories** and restore the borders as of 1991;
- Any diplomatic initiatives concerning the territory of Ukraine must be **on Ukraine's terms**;
- For Ukraine, scenarios of freezing the conflict or territorial concessions under any circumstances are categorically unacceptable;
- Russia **does not have any “red lines” in Ukraine**, as there are no disputed territories between our countries (Crimea is not a debatable issue; it is the territory of

Ukraine that will definitely be liberated, and Russia's position does not matter).

Countering the stereotype that “Russia will exhaust itself in Ukraine and will not go further” should include, in addition to the above-mentioned rejection of any negotiations with the aggressor at the stage of active war, the following:

- Appealing to the **historical past** (failed cases of “detering” the aggressor during two world wars; Russia's policy towards Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014);
- Reminder of the existing **provocations of the Russian Federation** against NATO member states (reconnaissance flights over the Baltic states, militarization of Kaliningrad, networks of spies in the embassies of member states, cyber attacks, etc.);
- Securing additional support and “votes” from Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia during possible thematic discussions with partners at various levels, from the highest diplomatic to expert and public levels. Ukraine's position should be based on the demands for the **ultimate weakening of Russia** and the restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity, otherwise, the reduction of escalation/freezing of the current situation will not mean the end of the war, but a **“respite”** after which not only Ukraine may be at risk. A similar position should be advocated unanimously by the Bucharest Nine states in NATO, and by the respective states within other associations—the EU/OSCE/UN, etc.
- Defeating the stereotype that “weakening Russia will lead to even greater instability” is possible under the following conditions:
 - Western states will have a **coordinated strategy** for their interaction with Russia, and for this purpose they need to know what they should theoretically expect after Russia's defeat in the war. In this regard, the Ukrainian side can offer its expertise and analytical work with scenarios of the internal political balance of power in Russia under different circumstances, as well as risks to regional and global security (with a focus on what to do with China).
 - Western countries **do not respond to Russia's nuclear blackmail** (or rather, they do not see it as a deterrent to further armed support for Ukraine). In this case, the Ukrainian side can continue to insist on the inadmissibility of the relevant blackmail rhetoric from the Russian Federation, as well as communicate with the states of the nuclear club, in particular with the United States and the United Kingdom, to further send clear signals to Russia regarding a mandatory and decisive response to any possible provocative statements (not to mention real actions).

It is reasonable to combine stereotypes about the colonial past of Eastern Europe and the “greatness” of Russia, because they are based on common misconceptions built on massive Russian propaganda and rewriting of the historical past. It is unlikely that these stereotypes will be eradicated quickly; however, Ukraine is now at a point where it is very “convenient” to start the process.

First, there is a great deal of **international interest** in Ukraine's history, culture, and traditions, and it should be nurtured by: a) Ukrainian artists, historians, literary scholars, etc.; b) the media; c) Ukrainian citizens abroad; and d) the academic and expert community. Ukraine's intellectual resources should focus on representing Ukraine in the information space abroad not only at the level of frontline news. Funds should be invested **in the development of Ukrainian culture and public diplomacy abroad**—in the “Ukrainian studies” and the research of the history of enslaved peoples who were part of the Russian Empire and the USSR; book publishing; painting; cinema (including co-production); holding thematic exhibitions, culinary fairs, and organizing performances. All of this can be done on the initiative of the public sector with the assistance of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine. Social media should be used to systematically broadcast short informational messages to an international audience in different languages about Ukraine, its modern heroes (for example, stories of young soldiers), and its ordinary people (human stories). Secondly, along with overcoming the stereotypical perception of Ukraine as a “former Russian colony,” the state should revise its approach to teaching and studying the history of other states of Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic States, the Caucasus, and Central Asia (not through the Russian or Soviet lens).

It is even more challenging to overcome the stereotype that “weakening Russia is unnecessary, because ordinary Russians are not to blame for anything” (or “it will become better after Putin”). Today, it is not possible to conduct a fully representative survey that could truly express the public opinion of the Russian population regarding the war against Ukraine. It is impossible to confirm or refute the thesis that “Russians do not support the war.” At the same time, Ukraine can prove that since February 24, 2022, **hundreds of thousands of Russian soldiers**—mobilized Russian citizens—have been and continue to be on its territory. Ukraine can confirm the **occupation** by Russian troops of a number of its legitimate territories. Ukraine also has evidence of a large number of **crimes committed by the Russian army** against the civilian population; violations of the rules of treatment of prisoners of war; deportation and re-education of Ukrainian children; crimes that may qualify as genocide, etc. In any case, whatever the real position of Russian citizens, Ukraine reserves the full right to demand that the international community **bring the Russian Federation to justice**.

The illusion among international partners that positive changes are possible in Russia after Putin, regardless of the mindset of the average Russian citizen, should be addressed

primarily through long-term **educational work**. In addition to the above, at the expert and academic levels, Ukraine should inform Western societies that the Putin phenomenon is not the cause of the war, but rather a “product” of the mistakes that Russia has made in the past. It is worth pointing out that it will be extremely difficult to carry out internal reforms in Russia in the post-Putin period (no matter how “rescue” the opposition leader Navalny may look in this situation). The problem is that Russia has not established a long tradition of the rule of law and liberalization of social and economic relations that could be relied upon today. The same applies to the interaction of the Russian population with the outside world—there is no example in the history of the Russian Federation of a **long-lasting peaceful coexistence with other peoples** and cultures that was not based on exploitation and the image of a “collective external enemy.”

Despite the fact that many years have passed, the Russian population still lives in the **imperial paradigm** without reconsidering it due to the extensive propaganda that saturates the information, cultural, and educational environment. Explaining the relevant information to foreign experts, politicians, and opinion leaders can be useful for them to better understand the **mindset of Russian citizens and politicians**, as well as to realize the futility of trying to somehow “reconcile” Russians and Ukrainians in the context of a full-scale war.

The stereotype **“Ukraine’s victory brings too many problems”** should be replaced by justifying to partners the **bonuses** they will receive if Ukraine wins the war against Russia. A large state with a strong army and a significant amount of weapons is more beneficial to Western countries if it is **democratic Ukraine, not authoritarian Russia**. Whatever further “hassles” Western countries may have with the Ukrainian state, they will be “hassles” with a partner with similar values. With such a state, there is a predictable and constructive dialog; partnership or alliance relations; and mutual trust built up over the years. Ukraine must demonstrate its willingness, ability and motivation to carry out **internal democratic reforms** on its way to EU and NATO membership (even in the face of a full-scale war). Moreover, its case can serve as a successful example for other states in the region (Moldova, in the future—Georgia) to develop internal democratic institutions and implement reforms despite the existing external pressure.

Coordination with partners in bringing Russia to justice for crimes in Ukraine is important in terms of the parties’ interest in ending the Russian-Ukrainian war in a **“demonstrative” manner**. The development of a timely and effective mechanism for applying legal consequences to the aggressor state may serve as a deterrent to China, or may simplify the legal settlement of a new armed conflict in the future.

The issue of the negative economic consequences of the Russian-Ukrainian war cannot be minimized as they are there and will continue to grow. However, they can grow in different

amounts, under different conditions, and most importantly, with different results. Ukraine may receive them while being in a state of permanent war with Russia and unable to at least partially restore its economy; or it may, for example, be in a more advantageous situation, when its human capital and economic potential are gradually restored under conditions of stable security guarantees and/or EU membership.

In view of the above, it is important for Ukraine to focus on the following in advocating for its victory among partner states:

- Continue to implement **internal reforms** within the framework of political dialogue with the EU and NATO (first of all, fulfillment of the requirements for EU membership, which include a number of reforms in the legislative and judicial spheres to enable the start of accession negotiations; and approximation to NATO standards within the existing cooperation mechanisms).
- Promote its concept of the vision of “**post-war Ukraine**” and its **security components** (the already developed “peace formula”) despite the lack of consensus among partner states. Enlist support and “advocate” for the provisions of the formula through lobbyists (Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, Slovakia, Italy, etc.). Emphasize Ukraine’s focus on Euro-Atlantic integration and the development of a dialogue with NATO, regardless of external long-term circumstances. Emphasize the prospects for the Euro-Atlantic community to have as an ally **the state with the largest number of troops, weapons and practical experience in warfare**.
- Specify for the partner states not only the “benefits” of Ukraine’s victory, but also the specific risks for Western states from insufficient political and economic weakening of the Russian Federation. Remind them of **what Europe could look like** if the Russian-Ukrainian war does not come to a definite resolution or goes into a frozen stage. Under such conditions, the Western world will:
 - a) will demonstrate the “loss” of democratic values and its normative power (with the risks of spreading authoritarianism on the European continent);
 - b) will worsen its socio-economic and socio-political situation due to the continuing humanitarian crisis on the continent and in the world (prices for goods and utility tariffs will rise, refugee flows will increase even more, etc.);
 - c) will live “**on a powder keg**,” where an ongoing war may escalate every day, or a new one may start with the participation of other non-democratic actors.
- Continue to **respond** comprehensively and quickly to Russian **disinformation campaigns on social media** (Twitter, Facebook), in particular those aimed at creating “information noise” to disorient foreign readers.

- Involve **Ukrainian communities abroad**, as well as their ties with local communities, in advocating for Ukraine’s victory—holding peaceful rallies/demonstrations/flash mobs in support of Ukraine; disseminating news and Ukrainian narratives among local media, experts, educational institutions, the business community, and in everyday communication. This is especially important in the context of gradual “war fatigue” in the West, a decline in support for Ukraine, and the de-emphasis of the Russian military threat to European countries³.
- Focus on discussing with partner states specific **prospects for Ukraine’s economic recovery** as part of our victory and further successful integration into the European space. At the same time, Ukraine should already demonstrate a policy of **maximizing the return of Ukrainian citizens home** when the war ends.

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