

IMPACT OF FUTURE ELECTIONS IN THE USA ON FURTHER ASSISTANCE TO UKRAINE: FORECAST ASSESSMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAINTAINING BIPARTISAN SUPPORT

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I. Summary

Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the United States has provided Ukraine with 33% of all the support it has received. This attests to the high interest of the United States in strengthening Ukrainian capabilities in resisting Russia. It makes sense to highlight three types of American support: military, financial, and humanitarian. Three main trends can also be traced in the provision of the military component: the gradual complication of systems, the flagship role of the United States for other states, and public discussion that sometimes precedes decision-making. The main risks for support include: partisan division in Congress, possible negotiations with Russia, a decline in public support, and the emergence of new international conflicts that divert attention from the Russian-Ukrainian war. Another significant risk is the possibility of Donald Trump coming to power in the United States, whose current approval rating (42%) slightly exceeds Biden's rating (39%).

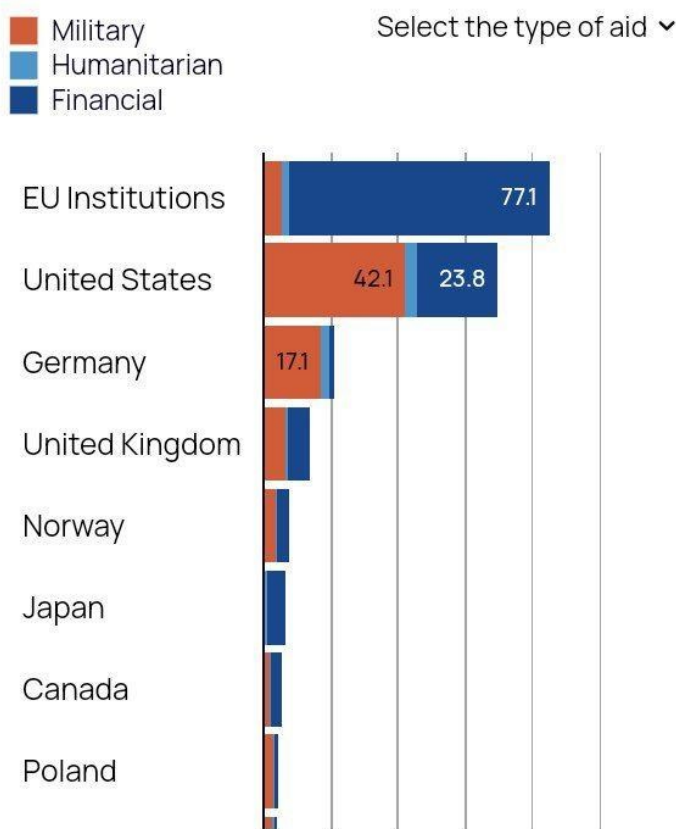
II. Situation Assessment

A. Analysis of Previous U.S. Support

Review of Support

The United States of America has [provided](#) assistance to Ukraine amounting to over 75 billion US dollars, not including "Ukraine-related assistance" – aid provided to allies to compensate for their expenses in supporting Ukraine. The assistance from the United States is divided into three [types](#): military (according to the latest press release from the US Department of Defense

– 44.8 billion dollars, data as of November 20, 2023), economic (26.4 billion dollars, data as of September 21, 2023), and humanitarian (3.9 billion dollars, data as of September 21, 2023).



Source: Trebesch et al. (2023) "The Ukraine Support Tracker" Kiel Wf

The overall percentage of [assistance](#) from the United States among all the aid Ukraine receives is 33%, with only the European Union providing more at 38%.

Military assistance is [provided](#) through three programs: PDA (President Drawdown Authority), USAI (Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative), and FMF (Foreign Military Financing). PDA involves the withdrawal of equipment from the U.S. military's stocks and transfer to Ukraine, USAI includes ordering the production and/or restoration of equipment and military technology, and FMF provides grant funding for the purchase of arms and military services.

Support analysis

In terms of expenditure structure, it is evident that the United States prioritizes military assistance, constituting 60% of all aid provided by the United States. According to reports from the U.S. Department of Defense, Ukraine has received approximately 100,000 anti-tank complexes, 198 155mm howitzers, 38 HIMARS rocket systems, 186 Bradley armored vehicles, 2,000 Humvee armored vehicles of various modifications, 12 NASAMS air defense

systems, 1 Patriot missile defense battery, helicopters, aviation missiles, and more. The full list can be found in the [reference](#). There are at least three trends related to military support.

Firstly, the United States gradually but steadily adds complex systems to aid packages. For example, in February-March 2022, Ukraine mainly received handheld anti-tank systems, in May – 155mm caliber artillery, in the summer of 2022 – rocket systems, and from 2023 – armored infantry fighting vehicles (BMP) and tanks. This trend illustrates the "Overton window" regarding the change in views on the acceptability/unacceptability of transferring certain weapons to Ukraine among top U.S. officials. In this trend, there is a "ceiling" – with a high probability, these are aircraft and short-range ballistic missiles (also known as tactical missile systems). After receiving weapons such as the F-16 and ATACMS, it is unlikely that Ukraine can expect even more sophisticated systems to be provided in the future. Under these conditions, it is logical to seek a quantitative, rather than qualitative, increase in the supply of weapons.

Secondly, the United States determines the policy regarding security aid packages not only for itself but also for its allies. For instance, at the beginning of 2023, Germany refused to provide Ukraine with tanks of Western production until the U.S. did so. This [resulted](#) in the joint provision of Leopard 2 tanks from Germany and M1 Abrams tanks from the United States. There is a [counterexample](#) to this trend – Poland, which declared its intention to provide Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine before the United States expressed its official position. However, this is more of an exception, as other types of weapons (artillery, air defense systems) were also provided initially by the United States and then by other allies, or they were provided with the consent and support of the United States.

Thirdly, military support is less popular among U.S. citizens than other types of support. This is not only due to concerns about corruption in Ukraine and populist rhetoric ahead of elections (discussed in subsequent sections) but also because of the nature of military support itself. Many U.S. citizens associate this support not with the promotion of democracy but with funding wars abroad, which is a particularly sensitive issue for Americans considering the experiences in Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and earlier conflicts. A notable illustration of this trend was the public debate (including in the U.S.) regarding the humanity and advisability of providing cluster artillery ammunition (DPICM) to Ukraine this year. Despite some apprehension in American society, the ammunition was [provided](#).

B. Identification of key challenges for Ukraine

1. Party breakdown in Congress: In the House of Representatives, there are 221 Republicans and 213 Democrats, while in the Senate, there are 48 Democrats, 3 independents (who align with Democrats), and 49 Republicans. The Republican Party's numerical advantage doesn't

necessarily imply a cessation of support, as only fervent supporters of Donald Trump staunchly oppose assistance to Ukraine (according to GOP Congressional Report Card, [82](#) out of 221 in the House of Representatives). However, the risk lies in the fact that the Republican Party sometimes deliberately opposes any Democratic initiatives to demonstrate strength to its electorate. In light of these considerations, it is desirable for Ukraine to have one party control both houses of Congress and the White House.

2. Idea of [negotiations](#) with Russia: After the visit of U.S. President's advisor Jake Sullivan, known for the concept of maintaining an "open window" for dialogue with Moscow, discussions in Kyiv are increasing regarding the possibility of negotiations with Russia. It is evident that negotiations will shift the issue of support to the background or render it altogether irrelevant.

3. Decrease in the support rating for Ukraine among the American public: In March 2022, 80% of Democrats and Republicans [supported](#) providing military aid to Ukraine; currently, it's 77% among Democrats and only 50% among Republicans. Reasons include "war fatigue," domestic economic problems, and accusations of corruption against Ukraine (sometimes valid, sometimes not). Continuing this trend may lead to a decrease in the interest of the American political establishment in providing support.

4. Emergence of new conflicts diverting attention from the Russian-Ukrainian war: For example, the new confrontation between Israel and HAMAS that erupted on October 7 forced the U.S. to allocate funds to support Israel. It's also crucial to understand that approximately 96% of the security, economic, and humanitarian aid that the United States allocated to Ukraine has already been utilized. Coordinator of Strategic Communications for the National Security Council, John Kirby, [emphasized](#) this during a [briefing](#) at the White House on Wednesday, November 8. This underscores the need for increased activity on the American front during the period from December 2023 to February 2024.

III. Forecasts for the 2024 Elections in the USA

A. Candidates, their chances, and their stance on supporting Ukraine

Republicans

Candidate	Electorate Characteristic	Rating and Chances as of 27.11.2023	Attitude towards supporting Ukraine
Donald Trump	The broad electoral base consists of five components: conservatives,	60% support within the Republican Party, 42% of all Americans view	Opposes the continuation of support for Ukraine; instead,

	supporters of a free market, anti-elitists, isolationists, and political marginals.	<u>positively</u> The only hindrance to Trump's nomination as the Republican Party candidate could be his arrest, a loud political scandal, or death.	considers it the task of the United States to <u>compel</u> the parties to engage in negotiations.
Chris Christie	Moderate Republicans (mostly from pro-democratic states) and the right wing of the <u>Democrats</u> who do not want a new Biden term.	3.1% in the Republican primaries (low chances)	Repeatedly <u>calling</u> for increased support for Ukraine, he <u>met</u> with Zelenskyy in August and believes that supporting Ukraine is in the interests of the United States.
Ron DeSantis	Similar to Donald Trump, it mainly consists of those who do not want to support the latter due to the events of January 6, 2021, but has a similar view on U.S. politics	12.9% in the Republican primaries (some chances)	Isolationist position: Ukraine's entry into NATO is not in the <u>interests</u> of the United States; Ukraine's issues are not a <u>priority</u> .
Nikki Haley	Anti-Trump Republicans range from the liberal wing leaning towards the Democratic Party to neo-Reaganists advocating for an	18-20% in the primaries for Republicans (some chances)	The pro-Ukrainian position: <u>supporting</u> Ukraine is in the national interest of the United States.

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	active foreign policy		
Vivek Ramaswamy	Mostly young people, libertarians, and business professionals in the technological and financial sectors	5.1% in the Republican primaries (low chances)	Anti-Ukrainian position: in Ukraine – dictatorship , Zelenskyy – a Nazi , no help for Ukraine.
Doug Burgum	Primarily Republicans from his state – North Dakota.	1.0% in the Republican primaries (not eligible)	Considers aid to Ukraine as “irresponsible spending”
Asa Hutchinson	Primarily, Republicans from his state – Arkansas.	0.9% in the Republican primaries (not eligible)	Considers it necessary to continue supporting Ukraine

Democrats

Candidate	Electorate Characteristic	Rating and Chances as of 27.11.2023	Attitude towards supporting Ukraine
Joe Biden	The widest layers of the democratic electorate	67.7% in the Democratic primaries, 39.2% nationwide support .	Declared support for Ukraine, which manifests, for example, in exerting pressure on Congress to secure funding for continuing assistance.
Marianne Williamson	Youth of socialist orientation	7.0% in the Democratic primaries (low chances)	Cautious in her rhetoric, but stated that she mostly supports Biden's policy towards

			Ukraine
Dean Phillips	Moderate Democrats who do not want to support Biden due to his age.	4.2% in the Democratic primaries (low chances)	Pro-Ukrainian stance: believes that support should be increased

B. Influence of political parties on support for Ukraine and scenarios for developments after the elections

Republicans

Economy: Typically support more liberal economic policies such as business tax cuts, cuts to high-income taxes, and economic deregulation. Often believe that reducing aid to Ukraine is necessary to maintain a stable U.S. economy. For example, former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley [expressed](#) active support for Ukraine but noted that the U.S. should not give money to Ukraine; instead, it is better to provide only weapons and equipment. This position aligns with the stance of Republicans who advocate for increased accountability in aid to Ukraine.

Foreign policy: Generally, support a strong defense, emphasizing national security, sometimes emphasizing nationalism and the protection of national interests. However, there is no clear GOP line on Ukraine: isolationist China-fighter figures (Trump, DeSantis, Ramaswami) would be happy to [leave](#) the issue of Ukraine behind. In contrast, the anti-Trump wing (Haley, Christie, Hutchinson) believes that the U.S. [has](#) a "vital national interest in Ukraine".

Democrats

Economics. They support social programs, greater regulation to protect consumers and workers, as well as a more progressive tax policy that benefits the less fortunate. Therefore, they are willing to allocate more financial aid to Ukraine and other countries. On November 2, the U.S. House of Representatives [approved](#) a \$14.3 billion military aid package to Israel. Earlier, President Joe Biden stated that he would veto this bill because he opposes the division of aid and favors a [broad package](#) of around \$106 billion, which would include funding for Israel, Taiwan, and Ukraine, as well as humanitarian assistance.

Foreign policy. Democrats typically emphasize international cooperation, diplomacy, and global issues, and they are more supportive of international organizations. In this way,

Democrats advocate for the support of Israel, Ukraine, and Taiwan, and seek to promote peace in these regions.

Development scenarios after the elections

For the purpose of this analysis, let's assume that only the top candidates can win.

Biden wins. No significant changes in Biden's policy should be expected in case of his victory and the preservation of the Democratic majority in Congress; there are no prerequisites for them. If Biden retains the presidency, but both houses of Congress are controlled by Republicans, significant delays in assistance to Ukraine should be expected. The degree of delay is directly proportional to the number of Trumpists who make it to Congress from the Republican Party.

Trump wins. It is very difficult to predict Trump's specific actions after being elected, as he has repeatedly demonstrated political unpredictability. However, the most likely scenario is as follows: initially – attempts to initiate negotiations between Ukraine and Russia, including using leverage to reduce support; next – it depends on the resilience of Ukraine and the initiative of European allies; if Ukraine still refuses negotiations, and the EU replaces part of American support with its own efforts, Trump may well reconsider, as his main priority is to be on the winning team. Therefore, in the event of Trump's victory, it is necessary to make maximum efforts to maintain and increase European support.

IV. Conclusions

Ukraine depends on military, humanitarian, and economic support from the US, so maintaining US support should be a priority of our policy. The situation is complicated by the elections, specifically the possibility of Donald Trump winning. Also, significant challenges include decreasing support for assistance from American society and the emergence of new conflicts that divert attention away from Ukraine. The most crucial ways to prevent a decrease in support are communication with both parties, avoiding involvement in partisan disputes, intensifying work with specific congress members, and increasing Ukrainian presence in the American media space. To minimize potential losses in the event of a Trump victory, it's essential to expand cooperation with US defense-industrial companies and local-level Republican politicians who have the potential to create opposition to the party's authoritarian leadership.

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