

Elena Kurilo, Ph.D.

NATO Research Fellow

**THE ECONOMIC FACTOR IN UKRAINIAN ETHNIC RELATIONS
AND ITS IMPACT UPON THE NATIONAL SECURITY OF THE UKRAINE**

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Introduction

Inter-ethnic relations appear to become the new trend of Ukrainian research. These researches are obviously topical due to lots of factors, among which are the USSR disintegration, Ukrainian transition from totalitarianism to the democratic state, political and economic transformations in the state, and especially the all-round crisis of Ukrainian society causing inter-ethnic and international conflicts. Under such conditions the creation of a new democratic Ukraine seems impossible without real information concerning the conflict potential of the society, possible spheres of conflict development and the ways of resolution of contradictions formed under present complicated conditions.

These researches are becoming even more complex due to the lack of the conflictological tradition in Ukrainian social science, which did not experience any conflicts at macro-social level under soviet period. At the same time conflictological trend of sociological thought was developing rather actively in the West, theoretical and practical basis of inter-ethnic conflicts was being elaborated.

In Ukrainian society some main spheres of potential conflicts exist. The most important sphere is the one of material interests. The researches reveal a rather clear factor causing possible inter-ethnic and social conflicts, it is the level of material security, hard living conditions [1]. Thus, the main factor of possible inter-ethnic conflicts under present Ukrainian conditions is the economic factor.

Of late one more extremely important sphere have been formed where serious conflicts may be expected in the near future. This sphere might be determined as the geopolitical one. Here it is supposed the Ukrainian people's ideas concerning their future, the existence of Ukraine as an independent state, the attitude towards national and cultural problems. This sphere of conflicts did not exist just after Ukrainian proclaiming of independence, when 92 % of the population supported the idea of Ukrainian independence at the referendum. Nevertheless the motivation of support might have been different in different regions. While in Western region of Ukraine the basic solution supporting the independence of Ukraine was determined by factors of national self-determination and development of market relations in the economy, Western re-orientation of foreign policy, then in the East, South and in the Crimea there were certain expectations of better living standards in the independent state than those existed in the USSR. And the failure of hopes caused the opposite attitude towards independence. If the referendum had taken place at present, the people of these regions would have voted against Ukrainian independence, for its union with Russia. This idea can't obviously be supported by the population of the Western Ukrainian region.

This conflict of the West and the East also contains the contradictory positions as to a number of problems, such as the ties with Russia, the Russian language as the second state one, etc. The opposition here is mainly due to the national affiliation. Thus, the majority of Western Ukrainian population is Ukrainians, while in the East, the South and the Crimea the majority of the population is Russians.

The third sphere of conflict following the Ukrainian East-West division is the prospect of introduction of the Russian Language as the second state one. This action is supported by Russian and Russian-speaking population of Ukraine. It causes again the unilateral opposition of the

Western region where the same amount of the population stands for the wider use of the Ukrainian language. It is worth while mentioning that in the West of Ukraine the problems of national self-determination and sovereignty appear more significant factors to be involved in conflicts than material ones.

Together with internal factors there also exist external ones, able to turn into serious sphere of geopolitical and inter-ethnic conflicts under favourable conditions. It is the problem of the Crimea, Black Sea Fleet and the status of Sevastopol, which separates Ukraine and Russia and Ukrainian and Russian population of Ukraine correspondently. But there are also certain problems favouring the unity of all Ukrainian regions. It is they which are to be solved to prevent further development of geopolitical conflicts. It is the ideas concerning Ukrainian coming out of crisis, which caused such an attitude of Ukrainian citizens towards their independence. Economic stability and Ukrainian coming out of crisis would result in removal of reasons causing geopolitical conflicts which are based on the economic, and not national, foundation.

I. Ukraine as a Determinative Factor of European and International Stability

1. Historical Heritage of the Ukrainian Mentality

Ukrainian state is now passing throughout a rather hard state of its development. It has become evident that to preserve independence is much more harder than to gain it, that freedom is to be constantly struggled for. Having gained the status of national sovereignty Ukraine is facing many new problems. Ukrainian crisis appears to be the result of the five-year period of independence during which we have made more errors and problems than any achievements. Every new problem is fraught with serious consequences for Ukrainian independence while living standards of the majority of the population is still decreasing.

After some period of enthusiasm and aspiration the people are becoming upset, troubled and disappointed. Nevertheless Ukrainian problems are rooted neither in socio-economic nor in political aspects. It appears much more complicated to transform socio-psychological type of thinking, typical for the former USSR inhabitants. Soviet totalitarianism made people passive, frightened and hopeless. At the same time for the period of its existence it has broken people's habit of initiative, responsibility and professionalism.

Development of self-consciousness of Ukrainian people favouring the creation of Ukrainian statehood, is connected with the feature of Ukrainian national character. As far as the 18th century French engineer G.Boplan while serving the Polish King Jan Kazimiers, wrote about Ukrainians: "They are quick-witted, inventive, resourceful and generous, they do not aspire to great wealth, but they love their freedom too much and do not realise their life without it" [2]. If to have a look at the ancient history of Ukrainian people, even before the IX- century Eastern-Slavic statehood in Kiev Rus, some primitive tribal states had existed on its territory based on people's right in political and public life and strive to personal liberty and equality in social life and private low.

Under Kiev Rus people's viche embraced all the functions of state power, and first of all the elections of the Prince, concluding Treaties and Agreements with him, concerning important state problems. It was in the IX-X centuries. It would be very much natural, that after Ukraine-Rus breaking down, Tatar-Mongol invasion and disintegration of its lands, transmission from one protectorate to another one, the psychology of the people would be likely to break, and at the same time the forms of State structures would have to change. In Cossack State Zaporizka Army had General Rada performing all the functions of the Supreme Power, i.e. legal, juridical, administrative. It was 600 years past flourishing and breaking down of Kiev Ancient State [3].

Mentality was also influenced by socio-cultural factors. Lack of stable social structures of Ukrainian society under Cossack period, variability of social strata of the population, considerable weakness of wealthy middle class, insufficiency of national self-consciousness development of Ukrainian ethnos could not favour the formation of national absolute power as it happened in Europe or in Russia. Ukrainian coming under Russian protectorate which had already been formed then as the absolute monarchy had negatively influenced on the level of Ukrainian society development.

Thus, while analysing historical sources it is worth to come to the consolidation concerning high enough level of development of such a feature of Ukrainian soul as love for freedom, natural democratism which were embodied in political culture of Ukrainians having wide electoral rights and certain experience in democracy itself. After Ukrainian autonomy destruction and Russian Monarchy's trend to russification and Cossacks enslaving, destruction of Ukrainian Church and culture, democratic values weakened in Ukrainian society. This process was stimulated by attracting the majority of Ukrainian elite to Russian administrative and cultural spheres. It was resulted in including of Ukrainian people into the vast Russian Empire which was mixing all ethnic nations in order to enlarge its territories and spheres of influence.[4]

In historical aspect the formation of Ukrainian self-consciousness was influenced by geopolitical location of Ukraine between the East and the West. On the one hand, it was freedom-loving democratic way of life, on the other hand, it was secret-like existence by hiding from dangerous enemies. The first way was a source of activity while the second one caused indifference. Over 300 years the majority of Ukrainian nation was a part of Russia, then - a communist Empire. It resulted in destruction of courageous democratic element within Ukrainian ethnic self-consciousness and in hyperbolization of hidden one, aimed at biological surviving.

These are the main factors caused diminishing of social activities of Ukrainians at present. In any case, it is worth while stressing that Ukrainian self-consciousness does exist and it has been reflected in creation of Ukrainian statehood. This process seems to be rather strong estimated for a long-term period . It is worth while mentioning that Ukrainian self-consciousness have not lost its main natural features of democracy and freedom loving though for a long period of time it was humiliated and belittled. That is why Ukrainian state of mind could be considered to be quite proper base for creation of democratic society with priority of human values.

2. Five Years of Independence: Main Results and Problems of Development

1990 has become a remarkable date in Ukrainian history. On July 16, 1990 Supreme Rada adopted the Declaration on Ukrainian sovereignty. Due to totalitarian regime restoring threat in August putch 1991 Ukrainian society started its rapid way to independence. On August 24, 1991 Ukrainian Supreme Rada declared the Act on Ukrainian independence, and all-Ukrainian Referendum held on December 1, 1991, approved the aspiration of Ukrainian people towards independence. Ukraine, a state of 51 million population (72 % are Ukrainians, 22 % are Russians and 5 % of other nationalities) succeeded to keep peace and stability inside despite lots of contradictions in views concerning ways of economic development between the East and the West of Ukraine.

During the five years of independence Ukraine has adopted a number of liberal laws basing the future democratic state founded on the principles of understanding and co-operation. Ukraine is pursuing liberal policy as to national minorities inhabiting its land. To solve national problems corresponding institutions were created, rather progressive legal system was elaborated protecting rights of other nationalities [5]. Thus, on July 16, 1990 the Supreme Rada of Ukraine approved Ukrainian Declaration on State Sovereignty guaranteeing all nationalities dwelling on its territory the right for national and cultural development. In October 1991 the Law on Citizenship was approved by the Supreme Rada, according to which all the people constantly living in Ukraine by the time the Law was adopted became Ukrainian citizens despite their nationality. On June 28, 1996 Ukrainian Constitution was adopted where the fact of the unique citizenship was fixed (Article 4) [6]. Ukraine as a multinational state (there are 128 ethnic groups) was the first among the former USSR republics which started to solve such a “tired” problem as inter-ethnic relations on the legal base having adopted the Law “On National Minorities of Ukraine” (June 25, 1992). In conclusion, Article 53 of Ukrainian Constitution registers that according to Law those citizens belonging to national minorities are given certain guarantees to study in the native language, to learn the native language in state educational establishments or through national cultural societies, to use national symbolics and religion, to establish national cultural and educational organizations [7].

In 1993, to follow this Law the Ministry of Nationalities and Migrations was created as the only body of such a kind in the former USSR states. Besides, the Parliament of Ukraine acts using other certain methods aimed at protection of rights and interests of Russians, Jews, Crimean Tatars, Romanians, Bulgarians and Poles. Thus, for example, the leading governmental positions were appointed to people of different ethnic origin; moreover, Ukraine possesses good relationship and ties with those states of compatriots forming meaningful national minorities (Poland, Israel, Hungary).

One of the first main protectors of national minorities' rights and the great supporter of Ukrainian independence was the Rukh (Public movement for Ukrainian restructuring). From the very beginning this organization was striving for rebirth of the feelings of national consciousness and at the same time it was favouring democratic transformations and preserving inter-ethnic most progressive policy concerning national minorities tolerance. So, comparatively to other republics of the Former USSR Ukraine is pursuing the most progressive policy concerning national minorities.

Economic security is one of the most difficult problem of Ukrainian state. There are still not any sphere of Ukrainian social and political life where economic security would correspond the parameters of a developed state. Ukrainian government officials promised “Economic Growth

1997”, but it is very problematical, because decline of GDP indexes was being observed during the last years and did not stop in 1997 either. While the general 1996 index of the GDP fall made up 10%, then just the two first months of 1997 resulted in 9% (see figure 2).

The so-called shade economy is in progress, and it also aggravates the situation in Ukrainian economy. At present, as researches show, 60% of Ukrainian GDP is produced in shade sector, about 40% of all employers get some income from the shade economy in this or that way (see figure 5).

Ukrainian economic condition is connected with the social living standards and demographic situation. About two-thirds of Ukrainian population cannot afford themselves to buy even some necessary set of food products. Purchasing capacity in Ukraine is one of the lowest in Europe and makes up 17 % of accepted European norm. During the past 6 years in Ukraine 1,2 million more people died than were born. Now Ukraine is inhabited by less than 51 million people [8].

The Ukrainian crisis is certainly caused by the fact that our state was formerly a part of a single national economic system in the USSR. The present economic potential was formed and used not as a potential for Ukraine but as industrial potential of the former great Soviet Union. So, the present economic potential doesn't work for Ukraine.

For a long period of time the industrial complex of the Former Soviet Union as created according to a regional specialization principle that promoted a high level of co-operative ties between the former republics and certain regions . Ukrainian economy was disbalanced and deformed. It was aimed just at maximum involved of all natural resources of Ukraine in industrial production. It resulted in rapid exhausting of resources, degrading and pollution of the environment. During the short period of time Ukrainian resources of iron ore, manganese ore, oil and gas were decreased. Rapid reduction of energy resources caused Ukrainian economy to appear in a difficult situation as it became mostly dependent on other states, first of all on Russia. Ukrainian economy of today, inherited of the former soviet regime is 70% dependent on CIS states economy. No state in the world is so dependent on the others. Even developing states are just 20-25% dependent on foreign economic ties [9].

Today more than half of industrial outputs are dependent on imports due to their cyclical nature. So the Ukrainian exports developing simultaneously with the active import of components of the same production. In general, the import dependence coefficient makes up 41% (in Japan it makes 14%, in the USA - 9,5%, in France - 20,5%).

The existing industrial structure is also aggravating the Ukrainian economy is formed in such a way, that it produces the most expensive energy-, material-, and oil-capacity production. Ukrainian oil-capacity production is 10-12 times as much as high same kind of production in well developed marked economy states.

Thus economic processes are affected by a number of internal and external factors threatening the economic and national security of Ukraine. Moreover, Ukrainian economic policy has resulted in great disproportion between low living standards and the real capabilities of economic potential.

3. Ukraine in the Context of the European Security

Ukraine is certainly of great geopolitic importance for Europe and the USA. Having the territory equal to France and locating at the cross-roads of Europe and Asia Ukraine creates real and significant buffer zone between Russia and Eastern Europe. Thus, by politology F.Stephen Larrabee, "The emergence of an independent Ukraine was one of the most important geopolitical results of the collapse of the former Soviet Union. It dramatically changed the geostrategic map of Europe creating a critical strategic buffer between Russia and Europe, especially Eastern Europe" [10]. Independent and strong Ukraine may become a bridge between Russia and Europe playing the significant part while keeping balance. And vice versa, if internal conflicts start in Ukraine, it will much aggravate the projects for stability and democracy in Russia and other neighbour states.

Ukrainian political failure concerning its independence would have led to some significant geopolitical changes in Europe, the restoration of the Soviet Union and its ideology. Ukrainian entering and participation in the activities of regional and international organizations are favouring its sovereignty and international respect. Hennadiy Udovenko, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, said: "... the gradual and organic integration of Ukraine into the European and world communities as a natural and reliable democratic partner, is one of the top priorities of our foreign policy" [11]. That is why Ukraine pays so much attention to the problem of creation of the single common European security system where Ukraine should be an integrable part.

Ukraine was the first of the CIS states to join NATO's "Partnership for Peace" Programme on February 8, 1994, signed Documents on co-operation with European Union . SCE and Western Government highly appreciated Ukrainian way of solving national minorities' problems. Ukraine has performed important steps in Western direction concerning its co-operation with NATO, United Nations Organizations, its membership in the Council of Europe and joining Central European Initiative (Regional Trade Association). NATO Secretary General and Chairman of the North Atlantic Council Javier Solana mentioned, that Ukraine with its 52-million population remains the corner-stone of European integration process [12]. Ukraine highly assesses NATO's interest in Ukrainian sovereignty and political independence, its territorial integrity, internal stability, democratic development, economic wealth and non-nuclear status.

Ukraine continues to support NATO's enlargement. NATO enlargement is likely to take place at Madrid Summit on July 8-9, 1997, but all other problems connected with it are hardly to be solved. It is important for Ukraine that new NATO-Ukrainian partnership relations are to be consolidated at Madrid Summit. The main task of the Alliance is to safeguard the process of enlargement to go on within the context of security strengthening for those East European states which will not belong to the first group of NATO enlargers.

Although Ukraine has ruled out applying for NATO membership at this stage, the policy of neutrality and non-bloc status cannot be assumed to be fixed. However, in the televised interview March 17, 1997 President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma said: "Ukraine's current neutral status is in everyone's interests, including NATO, Russia, Europa and the CIS" [13]. But Russia's aggressive policy , he said, "is pushing Ukraine in the direction of NATO". Kuchma has stressed that Ukraine must not be a buffer between NATO and Russia, and has warmed to the alliance as Russian opposition to its east ward pouch has stiffened. The main topic of negotiations of Ukrainian Foreign Minister H.Udovenko in Brussel's Headquarters of NATO held on March 20, 1997, was the mechanism of providing security guarantees to Ukraine. Ukraine does not join

NATO because of Article 5 of NATO Charter specifying collective assistance to NATO state member in case of threat to its security [14]. Thus Ukraine is working toward a special relationships with NATO that would offer some guarantees of Ukraine's territorial integrity. Ukraine hopes the pact will be ready for signature at a NATO Summit in July, 1997.

In the November-early December 1996, the Kyiv-based Ukrainian Centre for Peace, Conversion and Conflict Resolution Studies and the Democratic Initiatives Sociological Centre conducted an expert evaluation of relations between Ukraine and NATO among officials of the ministries of foreign affairs and defence, officers of the military forces, deputies of the Verkhovna Rada, leading journalists. The results of the poll stress the political elite's inclination to join NATO and to develop multidimensional co-operation with the alliance. An overwhelming 88,5 % of the experts polled think joining NATO does not contradict Ukraine's national interests. Only 22% have an opposite view, while 2,44 % didn't have an opinion [15].

The priorities for Ukraine's co-operation with NATO are as follows:

- providing additional security guarantees to Ukraine;
- assisting with implementation of military reforms;
- creating conditions for Ukraine's eventual membership in NATO;
- training personnel;
- participating in peacekeeping operations;
- assisting in elaboration of a military policy;
- joint maneuvers;
- weapons trade and services;
- co-ordinating military strategy and armament policy;
- maintaining the military-industrial complex.

So, current Ukrainian policy is oriented at expanding cooperation with NATO and supporting NATO's eastward expansion. The policy receives the support of 50% of the experts polled and its viewed as corresponding to Ukraine's national interests.

At the same time, 19% of the experts believe that current policy puts Ukraine in the position of a buffer state between NATO and the Tashkent Treaty countries headed by Russia, while 14% think it will undermine the stability of relations with Russia. Among those who see the negative aspects of NATO's enlargement, only 2,4% openly characterise it as contradictory to Ukraine's interests.

Thus the majority of the experts polled gave a positive evaluation to the consequences of Ukraine joining NATO. Between 59 and 75 percent of them mention among such consequences: creation of proper conditions for the reform and modernization of Ukraine's membership in the club of developed market democracies with effective international security guarantees; strengthening of security throughout Europe; and creation of an effective system of civil control over the military.

Today there is a pro-NATO majority among the political elite in Ukraine. Whether it will succeed or lose depends on Russia's policy in the region, current and future policies of Russian leaders toward Ukraine, and International support for Ukraine's integrity.

In the Crimea on August 25-31, 1997 large-scale navy exercises called "Sea-breeze-97" will be hold by Ukraine and NATO. In general 13 states will participate in the exercise. Such a large-scale action will be hold on Ukrainian territory for the first time. Even more interest towards his action will be risen by the fact that international navy forces will arrive exactly to the Crimea.

The peninsula was for a long time existing in its own world where its international contacts in the navy sphere were evident just in Ukrainian-Russian debates over the Black Sea Fleet and Sevastopol basing. So the importance of coming exercise could hardly be overestimated. It is a visual demonstration of Ukrainian striving towards co-operation and mutual understanding and also the proof that Ukraine is not the last among navy states. But though there is still much time left till the beginning of the exercise, the Black Sea Fleet, former NATO opponent, has already puzzled by its position concerning "Sea-breeze-97". As the rest of decisions taken by Russian government towards NATO, this position appeared a special one.

Black Sea Fleet propagandist structures have been successfully exploiting the topic of the presence of Alliance ships in the Black Sea. Within the context of "Sea-breeze-97" the Black Sea Fleet propagandist structures started their activities with the tested method of discussion the so-called espionage campaign. "Flag of Ukraine" paper has published the commentaries by fleet expert analysing the situation in the region and coming to the conclusion that "under present situation Ukraine has decided to change its tactics to faster reach its strategic aims which remain unchanged: to push Russian Black Sea Fleet out of Sevastopol and the Crimea and to prepare the base for long-term deployment of NATO forces in the Black Sea" [16].

Thus the exercises are to become certain crucial moment in formation of public opinion concerning the attitude towards NATO. "Ukrainian vessels participated in 10 actions according to "Partnership for Peace" Programme. So it would be quite natural that similar exercises take place on Ukrainian territory as well," - said Rear Admiral Yuriy Shalyt, Deputy Commander of Ukrainian Navy.

Ukraine is also occupying more and more central place in the USA political orientations. The changing attitude towards Ukraine has become noticeable at the end of 1994 after Ukraine had joined the NPT Treaty and volunteered to give up its nuclear arsenal, the third largest in the world. Besides, Ukrainian declarations about its choice of the course of economic reforms were assessed by Washington. The Ukrainian Supreme Rada's adoption of the New Constitution changing the positions of the President, has become a significant step forward. Moreover, of late the free downfall of Ukrainian economy has stopped and its gradual rebirth has started.

Considering all Ukrainian intentions the USA has demonstrated its wish to support Ukrainian state. In 1997 Ukraine occupied the third place in the world after Israel and Egypt, concerning the amount of American aid - \$225 millions (now the questions is being discussing for the reason of Ukraine's corruption). The United States is also actively pressing international financial institutions as the World Bank and the IMF for them not to concentrate their attention at Ukrainian breaking its financial obligations and to go on paying credits over \$ 1 billion. In 1996 the European Union also gave Ukraine \$ 500 millions in the form of grants and credits. Besides, EU undertook to pay the majority of \$3,1 billion allotted for Chernobyl Power Station [17].

The second largest foreign investor after the USA is Germany. At present Ukraine is gaining one more friend in the person of Poland. The amount of trade with this state is increasing, and Poland is becoming the main Ukrainian window to the West. So, at present Ukrainian foreign policy is clearly tending to the West. Independent, democratic and reform-oriented Ukraine may become a model for the development of Russia, prevent the CIS turning into Moscow controlled political and military alliance, and may also favour stability ensuring in Central and Eastern Europe.

IV. Ukraine's Relationships with Russia

In five years after gaining its independence Ukraine is anxiously observing the rise of nationalistic trends in Russia. Russia is trying to restore its status of superpower and to unite the former republics into the new union. Ukraine has many reasons to look suspiciously at Moscow long-termination. In particular, one of the main purposes of Russian policy dealing with the CIS states is strengthening Russia as the determinant in the process of creation the new system of international political and economic relations on post-soviet space. In conception of Russia the territory of the CIS states is regarded as a region of Russian interests.

After proclaiming Ukrainian independence in 1991 the points of Russian-Ukrainian contradictions were the Black Sea Fleet, Crimea, nuclear weapons, participation in Tashkent Alliance (new military bloc headed by Russia), Russian ethnic minority. Ukrainian dependence on Russian oil and energy makes it a suitable object for economic blackmail. The position of Ukrainian politicians in the question of "integration" with Russia is rather cautious. In fact integration means the erosion of sovereignty of the CIS member states. The attitude of Ukrainians towards Russia is various; it is caused by both geographical and ethnic factors. In fact the state is divided into russified Eastern region, the people of which tend to closer ties with Russia, and nationalistically oriented West where the population considers Europe to be their native home.

According to public poll held by Kyiv Centre of Political Studies, 30 % of Ukrainians want the unification with Russia, 50 % stand for closer economic, political and military ties with it [18]. However the majority of Ukrainian population will not volunteer to unify with Russia. Western inhabitants always connect Russian leadership with political oppression and economic decrease. Despite certain forces in the East of Ukraine favouring the reunification, national feelings have strengthened throughout the state. In general the people of Ukraine are not attracted by the project to be turned into the Russian province again, they want instead to follow the way of neighbouring Poland, Hungary, Chekhia where living standards are constantly improving. Besides, neither new Ukrainian political elite nor the majority of entrepreneurs are not generally interested in reintegration with Russia. According to a number of interviews, Ukrainian entrepreneurs many of which are of pro-Russian mood consider that Ukrainian sovereignty assists the young Ukrainian business to protect against rich and influential Russian owners [19].

The very fact of variable remarks concerning the process of reintegration made Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma come to conclusion that the best variant for Ukraine was the development of ties with both the West and the East stressing at the same time our own political independence. While stressing the significance of close economic contacts with Russia Leonid Kuchma stands against any form of the Soviet Union rebirth or weakening of Ukrainian independence [20]. Ukraine is keeping safe distance from the CIS, the former soviet republics' union headed by Moscow. It participates in negotiations on problems of trade and economic integration, but gives up joining any military or political CIS Treaties. Similarly Ukraine does not approve any variant of above-state structures, giving the opportunity to exert centralized control over the CIS states. Leonid Kuchma, for example, in January 1996 refused to sign Agreements on the so-called external borders of the CIS, to create customs union with Russia on conditions weakening Ukrainian sovereignty. Neither had he signed the Convention on Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS. As an answer, in September 1996 Russia came to the decision to introduce a tax on cheap Ukrainian goods and limited imported Ukrainian sugar, which, according to Leonid Kuchma, could result in the "trade war" between Ukraine and Russia [21].

After one of the usual meetings of Heads of the CIS states President Leonid Kuchma declared that he considered the CIS to be a collective consultative body, but preferred bilateral relations

[22]. However some remarks by the President of Ukraine make it possible to accept that bilateral relations with Russia do not admire him either. In his interview given to “Financial Times” correspondents H. Freeland and M. Kaminski, Leonid Kuchma said: “We have to cooperate with Russians, but that does not mean that we have to believe them” [23].

Other problems of Russian-Ukrainian relations remain unsolved as well. Russia gave up negotiations concerning the determination of exact borders between the two states. Russian Duma did not denounce its Resolution of 1993 declaring Sevastopol a Russian city; neither had it abolished its decision on revising the act of transferring the Crimea to Ukraine by Russia in 1954.

The problem of the Black Sea Fleet and its base Sevastopol, remains complicated. It has not been solved yet who will be the owner of obsolete rusting ships. Russia insists that it is she who inherited the exclusive right to use the basic port and the entering the city should be limited. Ukraine, considering its independence, wants to jointly use the port and to make Sevastopol city open. Besides, firstly Russia wanted Ukraine to give Russia Sevastopol to rent for 99 years to base its Black Sea Fleet with a right to continue this period in future. Ukraine is ready to give Sevastopol at Russian disposal for not over 20 years; but it does not agree to present Russia the unlimited right to use a port. But the most significant is the fact that Ukraine is ready to permit Russian Black Sea Fleet to be located on its territory as the foreign naval body using the base in accordance with international norms accepted by sovereign states [24].

Ukraine will agree to change in the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty permitting Russia to delay conventional forces cuts in some geographical regions until 1999 and to refrain altogether from planned cuts in other regions. As part of possible agreement on NATO expansion, Russia may be allowed to keep higher levels of conventional forces active both in Russia and in neighboring countries.

Ukraine's opposition to modifying the so-called “flank limitations” has been seen as an obstacle to NATO's plans for bilateral security agreements with both Ukraine and Russia.

Relations with Russia are relatively cordial at the presidential level, less so at the level of the Russian Duma. Treaty on Friendship and Co-operation with Russia, regulating all debatable problems embracing those from borders to ships, was postponed at least six times during 1995. There have been two related issues of contention between the two countries: the status of the Black Sea Fleet and the future of the port of Sevastopol, the home port of the fleet. Neither had been resolved by the 1996 year's end.

One of the major supporters of Sevastopol's status as a Russian city is Moscow major Yuriy Luzhkov, who made several outspoken statements during the course of the year. In mid-January 1996, for example, while visiting the port, he declared that “Moscow will never abandon Sevastopol”. On September 10, 1996, he went further, declaring that the city was Russian, a comment subsequently supported overwhelmingly by the Russian Duma. In the meantime, Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada voted in June 1996 to prohibit foreign military installations on the territory of Ukraine, though it was prepared to grant some time for Russia to remove its fleet.

The future of Sevastopol is linked to the future of Crimea generally. The majority of Crimean population is made up by ethnic Russians, and many of them are indignant to live under Ukrainian flag now, though Ukrainian government gave the peninsula essential rights of autonomy. Crimea will continue to remain pacified after the collapse of support for separatism in 1994-1995. Russia also has the support of the Crimean authorities, who unsuccessfully attempted to give the status of Sevastopol as a Russian city inserted into the Crimean Constitution. A new Crimean Constitution is likely to be adopted in 1997 that will confirm Ukraine's sovereignty over the peninsula for the first time. Nevertheless, Russian rejection of Ukrainian sovereignty over

Sevastopol, which is likely to grow into claims towards the entire Crimean peninsula. This is unlikely to become a serious security threat to Ukraine's territorial integrity [25].

Ukrainian attitude towards "Gazprom", Russian natural gas exporter, is not homogenous either. In 1995 President Leonid Kuchma declared Ukrainian debt of \$ 2,5 billions to "Gazprom" to be the state one. And due to IMF support costs for Russian gas were transferred mostly in time. But despite his attempts to establish business affairs with "Gazprom" Leonid Kuchma sceptically regards long-term plans of Russian company. "Gazprom" wants to possess everything, especially pipelines, gas-keeping capacities, lots of strategic industries," - says Leonid Kuchma [26]. It is a difficult task for Ukraine to establish business connections with the company and the state striving to dominate above all.

Meanwhile people's deputies of Ukraine Eugene Lupakov and Yuriy Karamzin held the press-conference on the problems of the Crimea in 1997. According to Yu. Lupakov, Russia owed Ukraine \$ 44 billion. Thus, according to Articles 17, 85, 92 of the Constitution, dislocation of foreign troops on Ukrainian territory is possible only on tenant right. Russia has to pay Ukraine a yearly rent of \$ 2,5 billion for Sevastopol military base which is not done by it. Besides, the rent for the dislocation of Russian troops in Mykolayiv, Feodosiya, Bakhchissaray and other places makes up \$ 2 billion more. Moreover, in Yalta Russia possesses the sanatorium for militarymen, the holiday home and a number of cottages.

Ecological losses caused by foreign troops dislocation on Ukrainian territory makes \$ 19 billion, and social service of the Russian Black Sea Fleet costs 1,2 billion hryvnas a year. If we add \$ 3 billion more Russia had to pay Ukraine for 30 % of combat vessels given to the Russian Fleet and \$ 17 billion for SS-19 missiles moved to Russia, great means are visual, and they could have been used to solve lots of economic problems, including real problems of pensioners and invalids. While doing the sum, and it makes up \$ 44 billion, it becomes obvious that it is not Ukraine which is in constant debt to Russia for energy carriers, but on the contrary, Russia is in debt to Ukraine [27].

Thus, there are exist some causes of Russian and Ukrainian origin influencing their relations .On Ukrainian side main factors exerting influence on relations with Russia are as follows:

- undeveloped nature of national dignity and statehood, mentality of second-quality typical for the majority of Ukrainian population;

- unfinished state of national formation, lack of development of state indications;

- too close economic integration with the former USSR republics, particularly with Russia;

- gradual reduction of dependence of Russian economy on Ukrainian one could result in release of Ukrainian production capacities and unemployment growing;

- Ukrainian dependence on Russian raw materials.

But the development of Ukrainian-Russian relations is mainly dependent on Russia:

- among Russian population the idea has been developed that Ukraine is a part of Russia;

- after gaining independence by Ukraine in August 1991, new Russian political forces have been more and more realising the amount of losses for Russia after the USSR disintegration. If new sovereign states have got a possibility to develop more or less independently, then Russia (as post-tsarist Russia) has lost half of its territories and half of its population and has appeared to be separated from the West by other states. Russia is gradually losing its status of superpower. It is still holding this status just because of nuclear weapons having been left after the USSR disintegration;

in case of aggravation of the situation in Ukraine the very fact of a great number of Russians inhabiting Ukraine could be accompanied by great difficulties (discontent of this part of the population if any interests of this group are infringed upon; this phenomenon is possible to be used to destabilise the situation in Ukraine - the Crimea before and after President Yu.Meshkov's elections could be presented as an example);

protection of Russian population, living in the former USSR republics without new citizenship of newly-formed independent states, performed by Russia as the USSR successor. It gives the possibility to Russia to interfere in the domestic affairs of these states;

Russia support of Ukrainian political movements could destabilise the situation (for example, Donbas working movement);

anti-Ukrainian moods demonstrated by those Russians inhabiting Ukrainian territory;

problems caused by military bases located on the former republics' territories (Black Sea Fleet, for example);

external mass media could disturb the policy of Ukraine while commenting on its foreign policy (informational blockade);

newly-formed Russian capital is outlined to conquer Ukrainian market in the future (Russian Ministry of gas Industry proposed Ukraine to pass its oil and gas pipelines under Russian property on account for gas and oil debts) [28].

Despite objective factors influencing Ukrainian-Russian relations there exist lots of subjective factors. First of all it concerns the position and forces of Ukrainian political elite. In this respect Ukrainian and Russian positions are not equal: Russia has inherited soviet elite, quite experienced in governing the state. In independent Ukraine there were two sources for new elite formation: people having opposed the former power and people having co-operated with the former power. Their common feature is that none of them are experienced in governing the state on a large scale. Ukrainian political elite could be divided into two groups: the first one of Western orientation, and the second one supporting relations with Russia. " Russian-Ukrainian relation actually worsened in many respects during 1996,- writes researcher Taras Kuzio. - It is unlikely that there will be a break-through during 1997 in Ukrainian-Russian relations over an inter-state treaty or the Black Sea Fleet. This will continue in 1997, and Russian policy will harden over its attempts to assert sovereignty over Crimea and Sevastopol" [29].

Russia is opposed to expansion of Ukrainian relationship with NATO . NATO warships from the Mediterranean task force paid an unofficial visit to Ukraine's Black Sea Port of Odesa in March. Ukraine locked in a bitter dispute has maintained contacts with NATO within the framework of the Partnership for Peace program. The Russian political elite accused Ukraine of planing to lease the disputed naval bases to NATO - a charge Ukraine has dismissed as nonsense [30].

Ukrainian-Russian relations should be based on equal co-operatrion principles in the future. At the same time some hidden rivalry between Russia and Ukraine could be observed. This rivalry would be caused by higher living standards. Losing this competition is fraught with serious consequences for Ukraine, such as the threat for Ukrainian sovereignty, as the majority of Ukrainian population had supported the idea of Ukrainian independence hoping to improve living standards.

Thus, Ukraine desires to establish equal partnership ties with Russia, but any attempts to turn it under Moscow domination cause cautious attitude to Russia to emerge among Ukrainian population.

II. Economic Factor of Inter-Ethnic Relations in Ukraine.

1. Economic Security of Ukraine

One of the main aspects of the Ukrainian national security is economic security. The present stage of the development of the Ukrainian state is to be thoroughly analysed in respect of its social, political and economic situation. Destructive processes in certain spheres of life, primarily in the economy, are predominating over constructive ones. The deep crisis in Ukraine embraces all branches of the national economy and all spheres of life resulting in the deterioration of the well-being of the people. Political hopelessness, economic crisis, ethnic disorders in the Crimea and in Donbas came instead of 1991 euphoria after the first months of independence. Under such economic and social deterioration the situation is fraught with possible flashpoints in the form of inter-ethnic contradictions.

After gaining independence economic conditions for a new life were better in Ukraine than those in Russia. But the complete lack of reforms resulted in deep crisis Ukraine was facing. Ukraine possesses fertile chernozem soils, coal-fields, iron ore, manganese, sulphur and some natural gas deposits. In the former USSR this region was considered to be the richest one. Ukrainian textile goods and turbines were much demanded in Western Europe and Turkey. Nevertheless during the first five years of independence, instead of flourishing Ukraine started to degrade.

First problems which independent state was facing with were inflation and budget deficit. Hyperinflation in 1993 (10 000 % per year) was accompanied by economic stagnation (stagflation), when the amount of production was diminished twice in comparison to previous indexes. In 1994 the level of inflation reached 2000 % and state budget deficit made up about 40 % (see figures 1,3,4,9). Prices were risen by inflation in 30429 times for 1990-1994 [31]. In 1991-1996 GDP was reduced by 54%, in 1996 - by 10%, in particular. The 1997 project shows growth of GDP to 1,5% (see figure 2).

At the UN Summit on Social Development Ukraine Human Development Report 1995 showed Ukrainian living standards had declined by 80 percent from independence in December 1991 through 1993. The unemployment rate (including workers on unpaid leave) more than 40 percent (in 1996 it was 7 million of the economic active population) [32].

In 1994 President Leonid Kuchma settled on radical economic reforms. But the process of reforming was developing very slowly. Fundamental changes in the structure of Ukrainian economy are essentially opposed by certain opposition circles. Thus, influential managers of large state industrial enterprises are interested in preserving the existing structure which gives them wealth and power; they also support the well-organized communist party.

Another strong oppositional force is the agrarian lobby headed by the kolkhoz heads realising that numerical increase of private farms would threaten to destroy their way of life. Agrarian Party is actively supporting these views in the Parliament.

The coal sector also remains Ukraine's biggest problem within the industrialized spectrum. Coal industry is the organized source of opposition to privatization processes. Miners who are not interested in job places reduction are striking to make the Government continue to exploit non-profitable mines [33]. The World Bank officials concluded in 1996 that 114 Ukrainian coal miners (from 227) must be shut down if the industry is to restore profitability. But in June 1996 the strike of coal miners involved over 2700 miners in the Donbas and Lviv-Volyn coalfields.

In addition to the unrest among the coal miners, who have traditionally been the most militant among Ukrainian workforce, the dangerous geological state of the coal themselves has continued to result in a very high accident rate and casualty list. By March 1996, 61 Ukrainian miners had reportedly died in various accidents, while by September 1996 the figure had risen to 224. The anticipated yearly total was about 340 [34].

During the past three years Leonid Kuchma succeeded in some approaching the market. Political scientist Sherman W. Garnett writes,,: “Since being on the verge of shipwreck in 1993, the Ukrainian economy has made substantial progress but is far from inspiring confidence in its own population and foreign investors that the market is a stable and irreversible part of Ukrainian life” [35].

At the first stage of reforming President Leonid Kuchma passed a number of economic Laws, neutralized the resistance of local governors blocking the reforms and succeeded in introducing the better mechanism of control over inflation. “One of the most impressive aspects of the reform package,- Sherman W.Garnett writes,- has been its dramatic reduction of inflation, from a high of over 10,000 % in 1993 to 180 % in 1995” [36]. In 1996 the level of inflation was 39,7 and the government aims to keep inflation at 25% in 1997 [37] (see figure 9).

The main sign of a progress in the economic sphere in 1995 was the 5 % increase of a gross national output in the last quarter of the year. [38]. It gave the possibility in September 1996 to introduce the new Ukrainian monetary unit called “hryvna”. But Ukrainian opportunities as to the new currency support are limited. According to National Bank data, its currency resources make up about \$2 billions. But the money savings of the population make some \$1 billions, which could be also considered as a kind of reserve.

The key problem in the economic security has been a failure to meet regular wages, with the result that Ukraine now faces the prospect of an enormous wage backlog. For months the population have not received any salaries, pensions or social payments. Minimum wage is 0,5 hryvny per day and minimum unemployment compensation is 0,4 hryvny per day.

About one-third of Ukrainian population, which makes 13 million 93 thousand people, are pensioners. Their pension is below the living wage. The minimum pension makes 16 hryvnas 62 kopecks, and it is p to 456 thousand citizens, and 9,4 million citizens get it in the amount of 45-59 hryvnas. The government owes a total of 2,7 billion hryvnas in 1997 (or \$1,5 billion) in overdue wages and pensions [39]. The government owes a total of 2,7 billion hryvnas in 1997 (or \$1,5 billion) in overdue wages and pensions. Approximately 85,000 people demonstrated in cities throughout Ukraine in March 1997 to protest the non-payment of back wages and pensions [40].

The process of privatization is also going on rather slowly and aggravates the situation of the economic security in Ukraine. In 1995 of 8000 large and middle-sized enterprises displayed for privatization, just 2000 ones were privatized. The share of state sector in 1996 makes up 75 %. The tax system reform is in no progress either. Extremely high taxes create inappropriate atmosphere for small and middle-sized business development. By December 1996 Ukraine had completed the process of transferring land from state ownership to collective forms of ownership. This is an important first stage on the way to land privatization.

The important condition for the strenthening of the economic security of the state is the attraction of the most possible foreign investments. Foreign investments are transferred to Ukraine from 83 states of the world. But foreign investments in Ukraine started to diminish. Ukraine’s investment and taxation laws are hardly conducive to attracting business. The investment law has been changed four times since 1992. Taxes could add up to nearly 90% of profits. As a result,

according to the World Bank data, internal investments fell from 27,3 % GNP in 1985 to 5 % in 1994 [41].

In 1994 the Ministry of Finance registered 3042 foreign investors for the sum composing \$744 million. According to the Ministry of Statistics, the amount of foreign investments made up \$393 million by January 1995 and \$375.6 million - in the first nine month of the 1996. The cumulative total since independence is \$1,2 billion, but only in 1996 Ukrainian enterprises were capable to absorb \$80 billion of foreign investments including: metallurgical industry - \$7 billion, chemical and oil processing industries - \$3,3 billion, machine building - \$5,1 billion, transport sector of economy - \$3,6 billion. [42].

The main reasons hindering the inflow of foreign capital to Ukraine are the disordered tax regulations, inability of law makers to create a reliable legal foundation to ensure rights for private property, instability of the economic situation, large state budget deficit and also the enlarged bureaucracy departments.

Unfavourable factor is also the shadow economy. The shadow economy in Ukraine accounts for up to 50 % of its GDP. The priority for Ukrainian government in 1997 is to the size of the shadow economy by lowering taxes and providing inducements for legalizing shadow businesses.

In October 1996 the Verkhovna Rada adopted a subsidy-heavy economic program for the period 1997-2000. It outlines plans to aid large producers in areas of Ukrainian industry that are considered important for reinvigorating its exports aviation, automotive, telecommunications and agriculture. In addition, the goal of the program is to boost industrial output and GDP by 1,7% in 1997 [43]. According to the Statistics Ministry's final 1996 macroeconomics report, Ukraine's industrial decline slowed to 5,1% in 1996, down from 12,7% in 1995. The report does not includes figures reflecting the shadow economy [44].

Ukraine is facing difficult economic challenges in 1997. In the condition of the budget crisis were submitted for approval seven tax reform bills called "Economic Growth 97". The package would lower income tax rates from 51 to 32 percent, write off debts accumulated by state-owned enterprises, reform unemployment and disability compensation and establish a value-added tax. President Leonid Kuchma said the immediate needs in 1997 are a new tax system that will bring firms out of the gray market and a balanced budget. He said that if reforms were properly completed, economic growth could hit 4,8% in 1998 [45].

Thus, it is necessary for Ukraine to create better conditions for the economic development and to start the second stage of reforms - that is, macroeconomic stability demanding restructuring and abolishment of the old unprofitable enterprises. It means the shift towards the private sector and structural changes in the sphere of employment. At the third stage the Ukrainian state is to ensure necessary conditions for creating competitive private enterprises. If Ukraine hopes for larger Western investments and financial aid, it must do necessary steps. The final success in its consolidation as a real state will be majority dependent on the Government' stability to perform economic reforms.

2. Economic Aspects of Inter-ethnic Relations

Economic collapse in Ukraine accompanied by an unprecedented growth in prices and large-scale poverty are generally aggravating inter-ethnic the Ukrainian relations and their ethnic and social development. Up till now Ukraine has succeeded in avoiding nationalistically-based riots which have occurred in other former USSR states. Nevertheless the socio-economic situation of recent years is now forming a completely new background for the Ukrainian inter-ethnic development. Ukraine is so exhausted by inefficient management that nearly half its citizens live far below decent living standards.

In such a difficult economic situation in Ukraine it is worth while mentioning some social tensions between the two largest ethnic groups - the Ukrainians and the Russians. At present Ukraine is facing a number of problems caused by strong trends for autonomy and inter-ethnic contradictions developing in the regions of mainly Russian and Russian-speaking population. An increase in ethnic tension among Russians and Russian-speaking population has resulted in the revival of the idea of the restoration of the former Union, including the variant of alliance with Russia. Thus, in this respect Crimean Republic is especially typical, with the majority of Russian population - 67%, Donbas, where the share of ethnic Russians is also large (44,8% - in Lugansk oblast and 43,6% in Donetsk oblast), in Kharkiv region there are 33,2% of Russians and in the South of Ukraine (in Odesa region - 27%, in Kherson oblast - 20,2% and in Mykolayiv oblast - 19,4) [46].

A different understanding of the economic crisis by various ethnic groups has resulted in their placing economic difficulties into the process of state independence. So in the regions densely inhabited by Russian and Russian-speaking population, the idea of strengthening ties with Russia or even to join Russia appears to be prevalent. It is proved by the data of public polls held by the National Institute for Strategic Studies, representing all socio-demographic groups in all the Ukrainian regions [47]. When judging the economic and socio-political situation in Russia and in Ukraine, Russians more than the Ukrainians prefer Russia. Thus if among Russians 65,6% consider the economic situation in Ukraine to be worse than in Russia, then among the Ukrainians only 59,2% are of the same opinion. Worse living standards in Ukraine in contrast to Russia were pointed out by 61,2% of Russians and 53,2% of the Ukrainians; economic reforms in Ukraine were mentioned to be worse than in Russia by 51,4% of Russians and 43,6% of Ukrainians. However Russians prefer the Ukrainian policy regarding national minorities. It is considered to be better than in Russia by 26,1% and to be worse by 15,6% Russians. Inter-ethnic relations are noticed to be better in Ukraine by 38,0% of Russians, and to be worse by just 12,8%.

Social tensions in Ukraine in comparison with Russia are considered to be greater by 21,1%, and to be less - by 28,7% of the Russian population in Ukraine. Thus, inter-ethnic relations don't directly cause anxiety the largest national minority of Ukraine - the Russians, they are more sensitive to the economic situation in Ukraine.

In spite of total support the Ukrainian independence demonstrated by the 1991 Referendum its political estimations very greatly under the worsening situation. At a certain period of time 90,5% of Ukrainian population hoped for economic improvement and high living standards and voted for sovereignty and independence of Ukraine in 1991, including all ethnic groups. As a result of economic disorders the idea of Ukrainian independence was largely discredited. If the referendum took place at present, then the majority of the population would have voted against it in the Crimea, russified Eastern regions, in the South and in industrial Centre (according to prognostications). Thus, in the largest southern Ukrainian city Odesa, 65% of the population would have voted against independence at present [48]. Generally, 20,2% of Russians questioned

would have voted “against” independence, while 31,4% would have voted “for it”. Among Ukrainians this ratio is 13,9% to 54,1%. However, public consciousness in different the Ukrainian regions is characterised by particular features which are determined by historical and cultural traditions and the national composition of the population. Support for the Ukrainian independence is more active in the Western regions of Ukraine where national consciousness is more deeply rooted. In most russified regions of the East and in the industrial centre of Ukraine support for independence is based on the wish to improve living standards. In Donbas, for example, while voting “for” and “against” independence it would be correspondingly 38,0% and 12,8% of those being questioned; in the Crimea 18,1% and 31,5% correspondingly. The Crimea is the only region where the number of people voting “against” independence would exceed the number of supporters. The Ukrainian sovereignty seems to be indifferent the Crimean population, they are more concerned about the economic and inflation crises as well as the regional sovereignty problem. While comparing the Ukrainian and Russian situation according to different indexes, the regions preferring Russia appear to be the Crimea, the Black Sea area, Donbas, Slobozhanshchina. Galitsya and Transcarpathians consider the situation in Ukraine to be more favourable than in Russia. The estimation of the situation expressed by Donbas people describes it roughly as equal in Russia and Ukraine though this opinion is not completely clearly expressed.

There also exists different estimation as to economic difficulties in Ukraine in dependence of the regions. Some regions could be sight out as being the quite sure that economic situation in Ukraine will improve in the future. These are mainly the Western regions of Ukraine (51,3%). Pessimistic opinions were expressed by the central regions, Donbas and the Crimea. These views are connected with feelings of difficult adaptation to rapidly changing situations.

The most controversial problem seems to be the one of the Ukrainian national revival. Thus, according to the data of a public poll held by the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences, the Western Ukraine population turned out to be the most active supporters of the national idea (32%). At the same time Crimean people feel less concern about the reviving the Ukrainian nation (4,4%), and the inhabitants of the South - East of Ukraine seem to be the least interested in the problem (1,4%). In the Ukrainian capital, by the way, only 15% of Kyiv citizens agree that the Ukrainian national revival is top priority task [49].

Economic situation become a decisive political factor in Ukraine. Of recent arose a question of whether Ukraine as an independent state could survive. Parliamentary hesitations while carrying out the reforms aimed at economic and social transformations in the society resulted on the one hand, in sharp fall of living standards of the population, and on the other hand, it stimulated regional movements within the limits of Ukraine. According to sociological data, the support of Ukrainian independence is weakening together with the economic decrease. Under these conditions separatist and autonomous tendencies started to develop in some regions of Ukrainian state. The development of this process is resulting in the growing of inter-ethnic social tensions, in the deepening of disintegrational processes. At present in Ukraine the confrontation is obvious between those who want to re-unite with Russia and those eagering to keep independence. The problem is not just a political one, it is equally an economic one. So, Andrew Nagorski writes: “Ukraine’s growing east-west polarizations is largely the result of a frightening economic free-fall” [50].

In the deterioration socio-economic situation the autonomous process industrial regions insist more and more on autonomous and regional self-government. Under present conditions the idea of economic zones have given evidence of trends towards ethnically limited and independent territorial economic units within separate regions, Donbas in particular. The USSR nostalgia was rooted in Donbas where since 1990 the industrial output diminished 60 % in general, and coal

output and industry was 40 % reduced [51]. And though local power elites even in the Russian-language and industrialized eastern regions of Ukraine are interested in Ukrainian independence, the population of these regions is supporting the idea of unification with Russia due to the downfall of the living standards and economic collapse.

3. Donbas' Economic Region - the Factor of the Ukrainian National Security

Donbas is critical to the Ukraine's prosperity. How matters develop there will determine whether or not the nation moves toward a market and maintains its current political stability.

The peculiarity of economic, social and cultural development of Donbas started mostly in beginning of the 20-ies century. Coal industry, metallurgy and machinebuilding became very influential in the economy of the region. People were engaged in tedious physical work. The culture of Donbas in contrast to other regions of Ukraine - started to gather weight only in the beginning of the 20-ies century on the fundament of the native Ukrainian population and settlers advantageously Russians, Belorussians, Tatars.

Ukraine's economic development in the former USSR was influenced negatively by the problems in its two main branches-ferrous metallurgy and coal-mining industry. Donbas is distinguished by the most urgent economic problems in Ukraine. Under the general worsening of the economic and political situation in Ukraine the crisis in Donbas is greatly aggravated by deep structural disproportion. This region is developing unilaterally.

A very big role in the economy are being played by the manufacture of coals, metals and machine building. Truly for the past 30 years chemical industries, electronics and light industries were built. At the same time the light industry of Donbas is weakly developed as well as its processing industry and enterprises dealing with people's needs. These branches make up only 1-7% of the total amount of production.

At present, the Donbas is the major source of energy for Ukrainian people. Typical feature of Donbas industry is the predominance of heavy industry. Containing approximately 60% of the former Soviet Union's coal reserves, some 40% of electric power consumed in Ukraine is coal generated. Most of Ukraine's industries are found in Donets'k - Dnipro basin. The region also rich in iron and steel, which generate millions of export dollars.

On the socio-economic situation, major influence proved to be the functioning of industrial complex combustible, electro-technical, metallurgical, chemical, petrol-chemical, machine building and metal-processing industries. The production of electric-energy, Luhansk area, for example, lacked behind during the last 30 years. In the past 20 years the production of electric energy was reduced by 2 times. This puts the economic condition of the area in a more critical situation. Today oblast is at 1954 level of development, and its labour productivity is at 1940 level [52].

To the negative outcome may be added the low-level of agricultural farming which practically doesn't develop. The former Ecatherino-slavski provinces was the most developed industrial region of Ukraine. In the beginning of 20th century it was completely self-reliant and 50% of its products was exported from its territory. Today, not one of the areas of Donets'ko-

Prydniprovsky economic quarter is self-reliant in spite of the fact that the quality of the soil there is higher than in other Western Europe.

Together with the highest index of population income the region takes last position as to goods sale per capita. About 80% of Donbasians engage themselves in hard physical work. The level of employment is rather high (86,9% average), but it is greatly dependent on the situation in the stagnation basic branches of industry. About 30% of the population live in old-constructed-style houses. Miners still work under the same bad conditions they did during the Soviet era. Mining equipment is reminiscent of tools used in the 1950's. As a result, the death toll for miners in Ukraine is one of the highest in the world: about 450 people die in the miners annually. Thousands are disabled by lung disease and work-related ailments [53].

Consequently, there are no another potentially explosive region in Ukraine as Donbas. A series of strikes by coal miners in the last several years have given Ukrainian government reason to worry about what happen to the industrial sector if coal production suddenly faltered. The official and street mafia are more deeply entrenched in the region than in other parts of Ukraine. And left-wing forces, which have strong ties to Moscow, enjoy more public support in the Donbas than in other region of Ukraine. Therefore, habitants of Donbas think that they could have a better life only with Russia, which in spite of its deep economic crisis, the standard of living continues to be high.

The overall contentment of the region's large Russian community on such issues as language and economic welfare will go a long way in determining whether or not Moscow experts under influence in the region. In 1994 Donetsk and Luhansk area councils decided to hold a referendum on the status of Russian language as a second state language, on the full membership of Ukraine to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and on the Federate structure of Ukraine. As a result of the consultative referendum in Luhansk area, for example about 90% of the electorates answered positively to these questions [54].

Economic situation resulted in social tension in the region. Living standards continue to decline in the Donbas, as they are throughout Ukraine, and the difficulty in reforming the economy has begun to try the patience not only of the miners, but other residents in the east, who overwhelmingly voted for the president Leonid Kuchma.

Political processes in Donbas became more active, miners' strikes aggravated the economic situation. Ideas of self-government spread around the region. While speaking of economic independence at the first stage the point is the autonomy within Ukraine. Further economic troubles and ignoring people's mood may cause a transition to the next stage of separate regional (republic) formation and disintegration. Thus, economic structure and social sphere of Donbas make this region politically unstable.

In 1996 Russian Council on Foreign and Defence Policy elaborated the document titled "Will the (Soviet) Union be Restored by 2005 ?", developing the trend of the CIS states reintegration. While touching on the strategy concerning Ukraine the authors of the Document do not deny possible disintegration of Ukraine resulting in joining of one of its parts (East of Ukraine) to the new confederation. Russia is extremely interested in such a scenario, because in this case as the Document mentions, it would get an opportunity to solve the Black Sea problem (that is to accept Sevastopol under its jurisdiction) and the Crimean problem in general. Eastern Ukraine containing the main part of Ukrainian economic potential seems rather attracting for Russian companies and financial and industrial groups. The first stage of possible annexation of Eastern Ukraine, as it may look like, is a possible conclusion of some Treaties according to which paying off will be done through property selling (such was a way of Russian "Gazprom" monopolist to

own the part of Belorussian gas-processing capacities), and also through the establishment of common Customs union and thus reaching the most possible openness of Ukrainian market for Russian goods, uncompetitive in the international market. Ukrainian loss of economic sovereignty is regarded by present Russian strategists as a main precondition for further development according to “Belorussian scenario”. Due to this Document, all Russian efforts will be concentrated on growing of Ukrainian economic dependence on Russia and on the support of Russian language and cultural domination [55].

The policy of russification, which has been intensive in the last 50 years, became of a very big problem in the Donbas region. Although 43,6% residents of the Donbas are ethnic Russians (50,7% - Ukrainians), only one-third of the residents claim Ukrainian language as their native one. Ukrainian language was relegated to second status. And results of the policy have been catastrophic. A study of 1996 shows that of the 1,268 schools in the Donetsk region, students are taught in Ukrainian in only 147 of them. In the rest of the schools Russian is the primarily language of education and Ukrainian is taught as a second language [56]. Moreover, in the end of March 1997 Donetsk and Harkiv Regional Rada adopted the decision about giving Russian language status of state one. In this situation Russian language has become a strong political tool for Russia dominance. Moscow has clearly stated it will defend the rights of Russian speakers living abroad.

III. National Identity and Regionalism

1. Historical Particulars of Regional Development of Ukraine

Historical situation in Ukraine was in such a way that in the settling of the Ukrainian ethnos in a perennial territories existed some regions of which people from other nationalities made up the bigger part of the populations. Examples of such areas, in the first instance are the western and near-border regions, which for a longer period of time were among the 20% of the Ukrainian land that formed part of the Austria-Hungarian empire. There are Zhakarpattia - poliethnic region where lives 78,4% - Ukrainians, 12,5% - Hungarians, 4,0% - Russians, 2,4% - Romanians, 0,6% - Slovaks, 0,3% - Germans, 0,2% - Jews, 0,2% - Belorussians. Chernivtsi area where lives 70,8 % - Ukrainians, 10,7% - Romanians, 9,0% - Moldavians, 6,7% - Russians, 1,8% - Jews, 0,5% - Polish, 0,3% - Belorussians. All these ethnic groups want in one way or the other to join and therefore become part of the border countries [57].

Today polyethnic are the south of Ukraine - Odesa, Mykolayiv, Kherson, Crimea and also Donbas - Luhansk and Donetsk regions. These active settling of foreign nationals on Ukrainian land started in the period of industrial mastering of 18th-19th century when sources coal, iron are were found there. By this time towns, seaports and fleets were built. People from Russian started settling in the South-wheat and industrial regions. Settling Russians were so many that as time goes on ethnic Ukrainians started losing their native Ukrainian language.

On the ethnic composition and structure of the population of different regions of Ukraine played a certain factor - and that factor is that for a long time there was no statehood on the Ukrainian land. Since these regions formed part of two strong empires - Russian - 80% and Austria-Hungary - 20%. Ethnic differences of the country-occupants nevertheless affected Ukrainians who lived on a divided lands. Russian language as the state language overshadowed Ukrainian language between East and West of Ukraine, especially with regard to language, culture, tradition, education and religion. Polyethnicity of some of the Ukrainian regions does not mean in any way danger to their security, since Ukrainians are not nationalists as some Russian politician chauvinists try to put it . They are very enduring to all nations in Ukraine and perceive them as Ukrainian Russians, Jews, Germans, Bulgarians and so on. It must be said that at present on the state level there is a judicially enacted campaign for the equal rights of all Ukrainian citizens independent of their nationality and religious belief. A special Ministry was created to oversee the realisation of minority rights on national and cultural revival. Already some lens of national - cultural societies and schools are existing, books are being printed in ethnic languages.

However, there are in regions of Ukraine danger of contradictions being emerged between ethnic groups especially where there are a lot of Russians origins. In the territory of Ukraine there is a potential possibility of certain actions that may put under questions the statehood and sovereign of independent Ukraine. The problem here is that imperial thinking still exists among many Russians, helped by Russian mass-media - the demonstration of some Russian politicians. Moreover, social-economic problems in Ukraine added of information war between Ukraine and Russia raises the mood of Russian population to join Russia.

During the Soviet power imperial thinking of many Russians remains and strengthens. At this time came up a thesis about "elder brother" that must decide the fate of "younger" ones in the imperial

systems. Parallel, went a process with full force of ethnic-cleansing of the Ukrainians. To some places where citizen's war took place and also free-from-repression areas, Ukrainians were sent to these places by force. Up to 10 million Ukrainians were displaced. Many Russians were sent to areas vacated as a result of hunger of 1920-21, 1932-33, 1941-44, 1946-1947 to build industrial objects (hydro-electric-stations, atomic station, mines in Donbas, Zaporizhzhya, Dnipropetrovsk, others to build sea-ports in Odesa, Mykolayiv, Sevastopol. After war period was characterised by migration process in Southern Ukraine. These areas in particular become the areas of less-influence of Ukrainian language.

2. Autonomous Tendencies in the Crimea: The Language's Problem

One of the expression of the ethnic problem in Ukraine is the presence of large minority populations within the state. The demands of these minorities for special status, and the treatment of these groups by the state, constitute potential flashpoints for the degradation of inter-state or intra-state relations. Notwithstanding, the most serious ethnic problem arose in the Crimea. The Crimean problem embraces historical, economic, social, ethnic and cultural aspects. On the one hand, the situation in Crimea with its mainly of Russian population is being aggravated by the official status of the Ukrainian language as a state language; on the other hand, a number of problems were caused by the forced active return of Crimean Tatars to their land. Under political non-stability and the opposition of different social groupings these problem are being aggravated such more while arousing tensions and alarm. The major reasons that led to the intensification of political situation in Crimea are following:

Military-strategic position of Crimea, location of the main base - black-sea-fleet, role of military structure. Official unification which are orienting to the re-emanation of USSR or restoration of Russian empire;

The importance of Crimea as a governmental health resort houses, sanatoriums, dachas for ministry of defence, police and so on;

70% of the population of Crimea arrived there after 1945 and did not have the native historical development. Therefore Russia started circulating news as if Crimea is a Russian town. Such thesis as "People of Crimea - ethnic Russians", "Crimea - perennial Russian land", "Sevastopol - heroic Russian town " - became commonplace.

Currently, 1,8 million Russians from 2,7 million population - Crimea-Russian habitants believe they could be saved only if the peninsula is annexed to Russian federation. About 1/3 of the Crimea population are pensioners. Among them - many communists, former party workers, others generals, witnesses of the Stalin-Brezhnev concentration camps and prisons, workers in gold and diamond mines. It is quite understandable therefore that such people cannot come to terms with the lost privileges, with the disintegration of the empire and most especially if Crimea become part of unknown independent state. Separate tendencies in Crimea have negative influence on the ethnic problems.

One of the arguments in support of Crimea separation from Ukraine, was the demand for national cultural autonomy and the declaration of Russian as a state language. Supporters of Crimean separation consider the status of the Ukrainian language as a state language would result in Ukrainization by force. So one of the problems in the inter-ethnic sphere has become the problem

of the Law on language. Ukrainian national culture is the removal of inadequacies in Language Policy. During past decades the official language policy has resulted in a contraction in the use of the Ukrainian language. In a number of cities such as the industrial centres of Donbas, Crimea, Odesa a monolingual Russian background appeared to be typical. It was also favoured by the structure and practical functioning of the systems of education. In Ukraine in general just 2,5% of children who started their school studies in 1990, had been brought up in kindergartens offering the Ukrainian language, and 14,5% - in bilingual kindergartens. The national status of Ukraine was thus deformed by the improper functioning of the Ukrainian language even among the natives. The Ukrainian population was gradually losing their native language. So, only 67% of the Ukrainians or 72,6% of those living in Ukraine are completely fluent in their use of the Ukrainian language.

The Law of Language was adopted by the Ukrainian Supreme Rada in October 1989. The Law was aimed at equal status for the languages of all nationalities inhabiting Ukraine, and at the same time at preserving the native language of the Ukrainians against its further exclusion. The principal point of the Law concerning the recognition of the Ukrainian as a State language is of particular importance.

The Government Program concerning the development of the Ukrainian language in Ukraine is outlined till the year 2000. The terms of its realization would obviously differ depending on different regions. Thus, in Western Ukraine it could be fulfilled much sooner, while in Donetsk, Lugansk, Odesa oblasts it would need a longer period. The realization of the status of the Ukrainian language in fact has nothing to do with so-called ukrainization. Article 10 of the Ukrainian Constitution tells that Ukrainian language is the state one in Ukraine and free development, use and protection are guaranteed to Russian and other languages of national minorities in Ukraine [58]. Among equal languages the Ukrainian is the natural language of the major part of the Ukrainian population, so it appeared to be the most convenient and proper means of international communication. And the desire of other nationalities living in Ukraine to learn and to master the Ukrainian language would prove their high level of culture.

In these conditions in certain regions of densely Russian-speaking population demand for national autonomy and for declaring Russian as an official language have been increased. Much misunderstanding was caused by the project of "State Programme of preserving and support of the development of Russian culture in Ukraine for 1995-2000" which was prepared by the Ministry of Ukraine on Affairs of Nationalities, Migrations and Cults. The Project envisaged status of the Russian Language as an official one in Ukraine, which seems equal to the status of the obligatory or state language. For three centuries that was the official way of limited use of the Ukrainian Language starting from Russian Patriarch Ioachim's Decree on prohibition of Ukrainian church writings (1690) to Peter the Great's Decree (1720), Valuyev circular (1863), Yemsk Act (1876), Resolution of Sovnarkom and CC of VCP(b) of 1938 on "Obligatory Study of the Russian Language in Schools of National Republics and Oblasts", the Law on the Languages of the USSR Peoples (1990), the CIS Charter (1993) and at last the wide-scale Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership between Ukraine and Russian Federation. If every of above-mentioned circulars, decrees and orders having constantly limited the rights of the Ukrainian language in Ukraine, and never supposed the real equality of the two languages was created in Russia (where, by the way, about 12 million Ukrainians dwell), then the project on state support of the Russian culture, the most opposed to both Ukrainian language and thus Ukrainian statehood, was elaborated in the capital of independent Ukraine. At the same time the Law on Languages in Ukraine concerning the very item of the Ukrainian language is not conformed to and even ignored at the level of Verhovna Rada, in many ministries and official institutions. The Project on support of the Russian language envisages that in Ukraine it should be

protected and supported by “legal regulations”, while the protection and support of the Ukrainian language are enough to be fulfilled by educational and propagational means and favouring the Russian-speaking population and its cultural potential to master their Ukrainian language [59].

The project of this Programme is essentially anti-Ukrainian and antistate one and is aimed at legal foundations for further russification of all spheres of state, public, political and cultural life in Ukraine.

Under the conditions of total discrimination of Ukrainian culture and language and other nations' languages which need the expansion of Russian culture in Ukraine it is first of all the Ukrainian immediate programme of support and preserving at the state level. What is the so-called “ukrainization” ? Is it really the deprivation of rights of the Russian population in Ukraine or is it a game of great policy playing by Russia ? In Ukraine ethnic Russians make up 22 % and 42,7 % of total number of pupils are taught in Russian in secondary educational establishments. The conclusion is: it is the Ukrainian language which should be first of all protected.

You will see below the percentage of pupils taught in Russian in Ukraine's oblasts [60]:

Regions of Ukraine	Percentage to all pupils (%)
Autonomous Republic of the Crimea	99,6
Volynska	2,7
Vinnits'ka	10,1
Dnipropetrovska	58,2
Donets'ka	94,6
Zhitomurska	14,9
Zakarpatska	4,4
Zaporizhka	70,3
Ivano-Frankivska	2,3
Kyivska	8,9
Kirovogradska	28,0
Luganska	91,3
L'vivska	4,4
Mykolayivska	46,7
Odeska	67,9
Poltavska	19,4
Rivnenska	1,6
Sumska	40,3
Ternopil'ska	1,3
Kharkivska	64,8
Khersonska	40,1
Khmelnitska	10,3
Cherkaska	16,3
Chernivets'ka	6,3
Kyiv city	36,6
Sevastopol city	100,0

These data visually demonstrate that talks about ukrainization, invented by Moscow, the protection of Russian population in Ukraine are a political game of Russia. The creation of the single educational space, that is the Russian one, which is envisaged by the new Project on the

Russian culture protection in Ukraine, giving equal opportunities to all languages, the introduction of the “official” language status for the Russian language will result in further ousting of native languages by the Russian one. Bohdan Kushnir living in Moscow and being the “Molod Ukrainy” correspondent is writing: “In Ukraine there are 2942 Russian-language schools, while in Russian Federation there are none Ukrainian-language schools. Shall we protect Russians against the forced ukrainization ?” [61].

In the Crimea Ukrainians have no rights. In the cause of elections to the Supreme Council of the Crimea in 1994 no representatives of Ukrainian publicity entered the All-Crimean legislative body. As while voting the Russian electorate made up the absolute majority, other two societal were if fact deprived the right to participate in Crimean State Body Powers (Ukrainians make 30% of the population, and Crimea Tatars do 10 %) [62].

700 thousand Ukrainians dwell in the Crimean Autonomy as if not in their own land. There is not a single Ukrainian-language school, nor any Ukrainian pre-school establishment; some minutes for Ukrainian language broadcasting are given at radio and TV programmes during unsuitable for the working people time, just a single Ukrainian-language paper “Crymska Svitlytsya” is published.

In 1995 in the course of negotiations on Ukrainian-Russian relations Leonid Kuchma refused Russian proposal of giving dual citizenship to the Russian-speaking population of Ukraine. At the same time the parliamentary opposition if failing to reach the right number of voters to approve the Bill on Giving the Russian Language the official status. This situation is accompanied by the increase of social tensions in the society. It is necessary to be relieved, otherwise it could be fraught with serious consequences concerning inter-ethnic conflicts.

3. Disintegrational Processes in Ukraine: West and East

Proof of intensification of political confrontation and territorial differentiation between East and West of Ukraine was the result of the presidential election in Ukraine in June and July 1994. In the first election to elect the first president of Ukraine, political differentiation didn't involve territorial differentiation. Results of the last election show that Ukraine is divided into two parts. Territorial differentiation of political orientations leads to disintegration of Ukraine.

Major factor of the differentiation of Ukraine became the different point of view of the presidential candidates towards relations with Russia. For Leonid Kuchma cast votes those electorates who are for:

- closer links with Russia; they say that unification with Russia will bring their material and living standard up;
- they are supporters of Russian language as a state language in Ukraine;
- they electorates have undeveloped national cognition;
- the electorates of Leonid Kuchma mostly live in industrial regions, which are excellent bases for left-wing force; exactly left-wing forces supported Leonid Kuchma in the election.

For Leonid Kravchuk cast their votes those who:

- are for state sovereignty and independent of Ukraine, inviolability of its border;
- are national-cognitionally developed;
- support the course of private property and radical economic reform;
- support Ukrainian language as the state language.

In each region, where 2/3 of the population are Ukrainians advantageously won Leonid Kravchuk: Ternopil - 94, 80 %, Ivano-Frankivsk - 94,46%, L'viv - 93,77%, Rivne - 87,25 %, Volyn - 83,93 %, Transcarpattia - 70,52 %, Chernivtsi - 61,84%, Kyiv city - 59,74 %, Kyiv oblast - 58,31 %, Khmelnytsky - 57,23 %, Zhytomyr - 55,64 %, Vinnytsa - 54,32 %, Cherkasy - 50,78 %.

In regions with Russian or Russian-speaking population the votes voted for Leonid Kuchma: Sevastopol - 91,98 %, Crimea - 89,70 %, Luhansk - 88,00 %, Donetsk - 79,00 %, Chernihiv - 72,33 %, Kharkiv - 71,01 %, Zaporizhzhya - 70,70 %, Dnipropetrovsk - 67,81 %, Odesa - 66,80 %, Mykolayiv - 52,80 % [63].

This elections show the border between Ukrainian and Russian population. During the two Presidential elections of Ukrainian independence the Ukrainians of Eastern russified regions demonstrated their intention to vote for the candidate capable to improve their economic conditions. In 1991 the majority of people in Eastern region voted for the coming out of the Soviet Union as the idea of independent Ukraine seemed more attracting economic opportunities. And in 1994 considering the better state of the Russian economy than of the Ukrainian one, the majority of voters supported the candidate standing for closer ties with Russia. Andrew Nagorski writes: "This cornerstone of the old Soviet empire is cracking down the middle. The eastern Ukrainians want closer economic links to Moscow and they have weight of the largest bloc in the Parliament, behind them - the Communists.... The western view is that only real economic reforms can avert an internal crisis "[64].

After his Presidential victory in 1994 Leonid Kuchma concentrated his greatest attention on the most dangerous threat for Ukrainian security - pre-collapse state of its economy. Leonid Kuchma has succeeded in this sphere to some extent and now Ukraine is to use its chance to create viable market economy. During his Presidential Electoral Campaign the stress was done upon closer connections with Russia and the introduction of the Russian language as the second official one in Ukraine. However later President Kuchma's intentions have undergone certain changes. He was disappointed by Russia's continuing its economic war against Ukraine, Russia's deliberate refusal to solve the Black Sea Fleet problem. Russian Duma did not give up its decision, but in November 1996 re-approved the status of Sevastopol as the one of a Russian city, having thus aggravated political situation around Russian-Ukrainian relations.

That is why it has become so important that President Leonid Kuchma now is steady and persistent supporter of Ukrainian independence and sovereignty. Leonid Kuchma has initiated the approval of Ukrainian Constitution which legally confirmed the Ukrainian language as the official language of Ukraine, and gave up claims concerning the dual citizenship in Ukraine and so on.

Having gradually gained support among lots of voters in Western Ukraine who were his former opponents, Leonid Kuchma succeeded in reduction of distance between Eastern and Western parts of Ukraine. In December 1994, i.e. in the period of price rise the public poll demonstrated that 44 % of Ukrainians support Leonid Kuchma's Presidential activities, while 28 % are not satisfied by it. President gained the greatest support of 66 % of the population in the West of Ukraine [65].

Thus stability and independence has already started to show good results. The greatest majority of Ukrainian population support independence of their state. And though in some eastern regions

and the Crimea pro-Russian sentiments are strong enough local business elite is concerned with in Ukrainian sovereignty. So, though Russian politics are threatening to restore the Soviet Union, it does not mean that Ukraine will agree to do it. But, as it has already been mentioned the support of Ukrainian independence is weakening with economic fall. So any essential step aside reforms will destroy everything which had been created for 5 years of independence, hinder the economic growth and divide the state again. In fact, the greatest threat for Ukrainian sovereignty may become the dual attitude of the ordinary citizen towards the phenomenon of independence of his native state.

4. Ukrainian Perspective

At present Ukraine is facing the necessity to work out the main strategic priorities in economic and foreign policy aiming at strengthening its independence. For five years of its independence not political, but economic problems came forward. Economic crisis resulted in dropping down the 90 % of the population's incomes below the poverty level. Economic situation in Ukraine caused the abolishment of middle class which is a moving force of economy. One of the main reasons of this phenomenon is the fact that Ukraine appeared to be the most stagnant while reforming of its own economy, among the former communist states of Eastern Europe. Civil dissatisfaction has not turned into the mass protest or opposition yet, but Kuchma's Government is worried by the possible political consequences of poverty which is still developing. According to general public poll held in 1996, 79 % of Ukrainian population declared that they did not hope for the better state of their miserable existence [66].

Inter-ethnic tensions are known to grow and to be displayed in more aggressive forms when economic conditions are worsening and political confrontations between different social groups are growing. Today economic factor appears one of the most important causes for instability in Ukraine. Success of Ukrainian economic reforms is of great importance not only for Ukraine and the whole East-European region, but also for the USA. American President B. Clinton's Administration placed Ukraine on the third position in the list of states receiving the largest American assistance. For the rest of the former USSR republics Ukraine could become an example of better changes due to improvements in economic and political systems and cooperation with the West.

One of the positive and the most important facts for Ukrainian image is its proving itself to be a really democratic state. The existence of numerically sufficient national minority, mainly of Russians, has not resulted in ethnically based strikes, and ideological confrontation between reform supporters in Presidential structures and the communists of the older training in the Parliament has not made Ukrainian Government solve the problems by force. Moreover, in Ukraine everyone had a possibility to observe peaceful power transfer from one President to another, and the development of market economy.

Economic reforms are the keynote to strengthening of Ukrainian national security. They could become the stabilizing force in unstable Eastern Europe and the factor for deterrence impact on Russia. While pursuing the policy of keeping political stability, economic development and principles of democracy, national problems are also being solved by it.

Ukrainian government could ensure sovereignty and wealth of Ukraine in case it possesses its strategic aim, capable to inspire all the people. Such a purpose is to be the vision of Ukraine as a key Central European state, the important part of Western security system and economic structure. It is important to observe Ukraine not only democratic, but also sovereign independent state having inviolable borders. Ukrainian independence today is a key for keeping long-term peace in the post cold war period of development.

Conclusion

Ukraine will mark its sixth year of independence in August 24, 1994. Ukraine is forthcoming to the date in an environment of political stability. Ukraine has remained free of the big ethnic tensions and civil conflicts. However, economic uncertainty, Donbas and Crimena's problems and also catastrophic demographic situation remain major concerns. Despite all economic difficulties Ukraine has significantly moved forward strengthening itself politically as a great European democratic power. Ukraine has its own Constitution, its currency unit, Ukraine has become a member of the Council of Europe, and was recognized by the world. Ukraine has started to create its political system. Lots of political parties, public organizations, movements were formed. 1994 parliamentary and 1995 presidential elections are to come. At present activities concerning preparations to the elections are developing in all political units of Ukrainian state.

This year can become perceptible as one of consolidation of the Ukrainian state within the international community. Recently became noticeable a positive tendency in the politics of the United States and Western European Countries in relation to Ukraine. Before this time perception of the Ukrainian security is carried out through the will of Russia. "Today, - writes James Sherr-, the West not only acknowledges, it openly proclaims that a stable, independent Ukraine acts as a 'pivot' in the European security, and since 1994 it has gradually begun to match proclamations with deeds [67]. 1996 was a very important year in the development of U.S.-Ukrainian relationship as a strategic partnership.

The new National Security Doctrine recently approved by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine allows for the state to join international security systems, thus opening the door to a special agreement with ,or even membership in NATO. Security is the main reason Ukraine welcomes NATO's eastward expansion. Ukraine expects to sign partnership agreement before a NATO summit in Madrid in July 1997. The partnership agreement guarantees Ukraine's sovereignty . "We continue to support Ukraine as it develops a democratic nation and a market economy,- underlines in the Final Communiqué of the Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council. -The maintenance of Ukraine's independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty is a crucial factor for stability and security in Europe"[68].

NATO Secretary General and Chairman of the North Atlantic Council Javier Solana emphasises: "An independent, stable and democratic Ukraine is of strategic importance for the development of Europe as a whole. Ukraine's development of a strong, enduring relationship with NATO is therefore an important aspect of the emerging security architecture... Ukraine has made proposals for extending our cooperation beyond Partnership for Peace. In the coming month, we shall work

out together a distinctive and effective NATO-Ukraine relationship which could be formalized, possibly by the of the Summit. An enhanced relationship between NATO and Ukraine will contribute to Ukraine's integration into the European structures [69].

For Ukraine there are very important the help of the Western countries and their understanding. But the most important thing is the will of the people of Ukraine itself. It is necessary to form mentality of the Ukrainian people: mentality of freedom, responsibility for their own fate. Today consolidation of the nations of Ukraine is needed and the endurance of the people must make everything possible and only under this will of the people must we hope that the West will definitely help Ukraine to stabilise as a developed and independent state.

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Figure 1. Ukraine: Statistical Profile**Demography****Population:** 551,471,000**Ethnic Population:**

Ukrainian	37,419,000	72.7%
Russian	11,356,000	22.1%
Jewish	486,000	0.9%
Belarusian	440,000	0.9%
Moldovan	325,000	0.6%
Bulgarian	234,000	0.5%
Polish	219,000	0.4%
Others	992,000	1.9%

Predominant religion tradition:

Christianity 97.2%

Population by age:

Age	Total	Males	Females
0-4	7.6%	3.9%	3.7%
5-9	7.2%	3.7%	3.5%
10-14	7.1%	3.6%	3.5%
15-19	7.0%	3.6%	3.4%
20-24	7.4%	3.8%	3.6%
25-29	7.8%	3.9%	3.9%
30-34	7.2%	3.5%	3.7%
35-39	6.8%	3.3%	3.5%
40-44	4.6%	2.1%	2.5%
45-49	8.0%	3.7%	4.3%
50-54	5.8%	2.7%	3.1%
55-59	6.6%	2.9%	3.7%
60-64	5.6%	2.0%	3.6%
65-69	3.3%	1.1%	2.2%
70-above	8.0%	2.2%	5.8%

Male/Female ratio: 46.0% male/ 54.0% female**Rural/Urban population:** 32.5% rural/ 67.5% urban**Growth over time, 1979-91:** 4.4%**Population density:** 222.9 persons/sq mi

Source: The Newly Independent States of Eurasia: Handbook of Former Soviet Republics, 1993, p.65.

Figure 2. Party Affiliation in the Ukrainian Parliament

Party	Number of Deputies	
	Official Data	Estimate of Actual Affiliation
Leftist		
Communist Party of Ukraine	86	86
Socialist Party of Ukraine	14	26
Agrarian Party of Ukraine	18	35
Total	118	147
Liberals		
Interregional Bloc of Reforms:		
Independents	0	20
Labor Party of Ukraine	4	6
Social-Democratic Party of Ukraine	1	1
Unity (Yednist)		
Independents	0	18
Civil Congress of Ukraine	2	2
Party of Democratic Rebirth of Ukraine	1	1
Social-Democratic Party of Ukraine	1	1
Total	9	49
National Democrats		
Rukh	20	27
Ukrainian Republican Party	2	6
Union of Officers of Ukraine	0	5
Christian-Democratic Party of Ukraine	1	1
Party of Democratic Rebirth of Ukraine	2	2
Independents	0	30
Total	33	80
Radical Nationalists		
Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists	5	7
Ukrainian National Assembly	0	3
Ukrainian Conservative Republican Party	2	2
Total	7	12

Source: International Foundation for Electoral System