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### **PROBLEMS OF UKRAINE'S JOINING THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR**

Russia's unjustified military invasion of Ukraine affected the system of international relations and the economic situation not only in Europe but also in the whole world. As Yildiz [5] notes, Russia's war against Ukraine has changed the European security architecture. In moreover, the war has made significant adjustments to the functioning of the European Union's economic-political system. The changes relate primarily to issues of further EU enlargement. For example, Akhvlediani [1] points to the fact that Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine gave new impetus to EU enlargement.

The war, to a certain extent, accelerated the integration process and decision-making regarding the country's status as a candidate for EU membership. At the same time, the Russian invasion has put Ukraine in a unique position to acquire the status of a candidate country [3]. In addition, it should be noted that the declared EU enlargement processes are not a guarantee of membership for the candidate countries, but rather a stabilisation and security mechanism [2]. Moreover, according to experts, Ukraine's accession to the EU will largely depend on the outcome of the Russian-Ukrainian war [4].

Although the chosen European vector of development, many problems for Ukraine remain unresolved. The gap between Ukraine and EU member states in the level of economic development is still serious. Even in an optimistic scenario of military conflict resolution, the Ukrainian economy, weakened by war, infrastructure destruction and demographic crisis, will take a long time to recover.

In addition to eliminating the destructive consequences of military actions, other problems also need to be solved. Ensuring political stability, democratic institutions, human rights, and the fight against corruption are important tasks. Despite numerous statements by senior officials about the measures taken, the level of corruption in Ukraine is high, which distances it from the European path of development. Addressing the issues of overcoming corruption in the context of Ukraine's accession to the EU is currently an important and timely task. On the one hand, its solution requires the implementation of the successful experience of developed countries. On the other hand, ensuring economic growth during this period in the country is carried out against a

backdrop of military operations and accompanying socio-economic problems that have not existed in recent history.

Economic reforms, improvement of infrastructure and approximation of legislation to EU norms also play an important role. Ukraine should guarantee the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons, as well as joint justice, freedom and security policies. Ukraine must adapt its economy to European Union norms and participate in the common trade policy. Also, the country should pay attention to ensuring the realisation of rights and freedoms for all categories of citizens.

Thus, Ukraine's joining the European Union is an important stage in the country's development and its integration into the international community. Membership in the EU will open new opportunities for Ukraine to develop its economy, raise social standards and strengthen democracy. At the same time, it will be a confirmation that Ukraine and its citizens share the values and principles on which the European Union is based. Accession to the EU is a long and complex process that will require efforts and reforms on the part of the Ukrainian government and society. Regardless of all the difficulties, Ukraine's integration into the European Union is of key strategic importance both for Ukraine itself and for Europe as a whole.

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