

**Anna Tishchenko, Ihor Bondarenko**  
*Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv*

## STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL ORIENTATION OF UKRAINIAN POPULATION

### **Summary:**

*There is no other way to build a democratic society but with inevitable interaction between the government and overall population of the country. With regard to this the objective of the current research is to determine changes in political views of the Ukrainian population on Ukraine's accession to the EU and NATO and to define changes in the level of public trust to social institutions after the Revolution of Dignity by comparing the results of sample surveys opinion poll in July 2013 and March 2015. The results of the study showed that views of Ukraine's population on their country's European integration changed. Public support for Ukraine's joining NATO has reached the highest level in recent years. Tangible changes also have taken place in the regional perspective, which might be caused by internal migration of Donbass region population. The level of confidence in the newly elected president in the Armed Forces of Ukraine has increased.*

### **Key words:**

*public trust, European integration, accession, internal migration, EU-Ukraine relationship, NATO-Ukraine relationship, Euro integration of Ukraine, joining the NATO, population opinion, Ukrainian government.*

## **Introduction**

There is no other way to build a democratic society but with inevitable interaction between the government and overall population of the country. With regard to this the objective of the current research is to determine changes in political views of the Ukrainian population on Ukraine's accession to the EU and NATO and to define changes in the level of public trust to social institutions after the Revolution of Dignity by comparing the results of sample surveys opinion poll in July 2013 and March 2015. The data base of two conducted polls differed in the character of the formed selection. In case of temporal occupation of Crimea and intensifying situation in Donbas the quotas distribution was changed.

## Main part

The main body of sample consisted of the population of Ukraine aged from 18 excluding the population of Crimea and temporally occupied Eastern territories of Ukraine<sup>1</sup>. However, people living in Donetsk and Luhansk area were polled only partly: a poll was conducted just on the territory, which is controlled by Ukraine while the data was extended to the whole region. This incompatibility was partly removed in a further analysis by taking into account the amount and structure of migrants in Ukraine with subsequent respondents' redistribution proportionally to the quota. Few versions of sample had been examined before the optimal sample size was determined. The percentage of people supporting Ukraine's integration to EU was taken as the main parameter for determining the optimal sample size. For the explored period (July 2013-March 2015) this percentage increased from 56% to 64%. It indicates a change in population's attitudes.

*Table 1. Parameters of sample size*

2013			2015		
Version	Parameters	Sample size	Version	Parameters	Sample size
1	p=0,56 t=1,96 F(t)=0,95 Δ=0,023	n=1789	1	p=0,64 t=1,96 F(t)=0,95 Δ=0,023	n=1673
2	p=0,5 t=1,96 F(t)=0,95 Δ=0,023	n=1816	2	p=0,64 t=2 F(t)=0,954 VΔ=0,023	n=4253
3	p=0,56 t=2 F(t)=0,954 VΔ=0,023	n=5941	3	p=0,64 t=1,96 F(t)=0,95 VΔ=0,03	n=2401
4	p=0,56 t=1,96 F(t)=0,95 VΔ=0,035	n=2464	4	p=0,64 t=1,96 F(t)=0,95 VΔ=0,035	n=1764
5	p=0,56 t=1,96 F(t)=0,95 VΔ=0,05	n=1207	5	p=0,64 t=1,96 F(t)=0,95 VΔ=0,05	n=864

<sup>1</sup> The program of social poll prepared by the Centre of Economic and Political Studies named after Alexandr Razumkov, Kyiv 2012.

Source: Table developed by authors based on the methodology of carrying out the social poll in the Centre of Economic and political studies named after Alexandr Razumkov, Kyiv 2012 and 2015.

The most suitable sample size in 2013 consisted of 2,464 persons (the level of accuracy accounts for 3.5%). In the year of 2015 the sample error definition was complicated by the lack of information from the occupied territory of Donbas. To increase the accuracy of the study the sample error was reduced from 3.5% to 3% and the final sample size accounted for 2,401 persons.

The division into districts based on geopolitical factors was used to identify the regional differences in the population's opinion. Therefore, six regions were singled out: Central (Vinnitsa, Kirovograd, Poltava region), Northern (Zhytomyr, Chernihiv, Kyiv, Sumy region), Southern (Mykolaiv, Odesa, Kherson region), Western (Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv Volyn, Ternopil, Khmelnytsky, Rivne and Chernivtsi regions), Eastern (Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, Luhansk, Kharkiv region) and Kyiv city area, as a separate region due to significant characteristics. Due to the lack of information about the situation on the occupied territories, the decision was made to allocate the number of respondents based on population structure of 2013. While doing this, regional quotas of internally displaced Ukrainian population were taken into account. (Table 2)

*Table 2. The distribution of the sample by age, type and region of settlement in 2013 and 2015*

Region	Age	2013		Total	2015		Total
		City	Village		City	Village	
Central	18-34	52	33	85	52	34	85
	35-59	73	51	124	75	53	128
	60 & more	41	41	82	44	41	85
Northern	18-34	56	28	84	56	29	85
	35-59	79	42	121	82	44	125
	60 & more	42	36	78	45	36	80
Southern	18-34	80	39	119	53	27	80
	35-59	109	54	163	74	37	111
	60 & more	65	31	96	45	22	67

Western	18-34	96	87	183	97	89	186
	35-59	122	117	239	128	123	251
	60 & more	59	74	133	64	75	139
Eastern	18-34	207	34	241	203	34	238
	35-59	294	51	345	302	52	353
	60 & more	180	36	216	191	37	228
City of Kyiv	18-34	53	0	53	53	0	53
	35-59	66	0	66	69	0	69
	60 & more	35	0	35	38	0	38
Total		1709	754	2463	1670	731	2401

Source: Table developed by authors based on the Ukrainian Governmental Statistics Database of region's population [Electronic source]: <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/> (10.11.2015).

The table represents the proportion in which respondents should be included to the sample according to their region, age and place of residence characteristics. For instance, in the year of 2015 the Southern region should have included 53 respondents from cities in the 18-34 age group. The number of such respondents in 2013 accounted for 80 persons.

The final sample ensures proper representation of each region considering sex and age distribution. Therefore, this sample could be taken for further analysis as it provides adequate interpretation of Ukrainian population's opinion.

The results of the poll state (Table 3) that in the years of 2013 and 2015 younger respondents support Ukraine's integration to the EU far more than older ones. In general, most of the respondents support the idea of integration in both years. For the year of 2013 the percentage of people that support Ukraine's integration accounts for 56%, in the year of 2015 this indicator is at the level of 64%. Nevertheless, some fundamental changes in the age structure of supporting respondents were indicated. For instance, the percentage of young people supporting EU integration decreased from 38.10% in 2013 to 34.03% in 2015. Thus, the percentage of older people supporting the idea of integration increased accordingly from 26.42% up to 29.49%

*Table 3. The opinions of the population of Ukraine regarding the expediency of joining the EU, depending on the age in 2013 and 2015, %*

Age group	Ukraine's integration to EU			
	For		Against	
	2013	2015	2013	2015
Young (18-34)	38,10	34,03	24,27	23,49
Middle (35-54)	35,48	36,48	33,33	36,24
Old (55 and more)	26,42	29,49	42,40	40,27
Total	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00

Source: Table developed by authors according to sociological research of the Centre of Economic and Political Studies named after Alexandr Razumkov, Kyiv 2012 and 2015.

The measured value of  $\chi^2$  in 2013 accounted for 6.61 and in 2015 it accounted for 27.28, a critical value for the number of degrees of freedom is  $df = n - I - 1 = 3 - 1 - 1 = 2$  and materiality level 0, 05 :  $\chi_{0,05}^2(2) = 5,99$ . The measured value is higher than the critical one; therefore the connection is estimated as not accidental.

Supporters and opponents of European integration show significant regional differences (Table 4). The results of research *illustrate the polarization of opinions based on the principle "West-East"*.

*Table 4. Distribution of the Ukrainian population's thoughts of the expediency of joining the EU, depending on the region of residence in 2013 and 2015, %*

Region	Ukraine's integration to EU					
	2013			2015		
	For	Against	Total	For	Against	Total
Central	56,35	43,65	100,00	72,58	27,42	100,00
Northern	47,70	52,30	100,00	66,15	33,85	100,00
Southern	43,81	56,19	100,00	46,45	53,55	100,00
Western	80,93	19,07	100,00	90,40	9,60	100,00
Eastern	36,50	63,50	100,00	42,00	58,00	100,00
City of Kyiv	74,77	25,23	100,00	83,78	16,22	100,00
Overall	56,09	43,91	100,00	63,99	36,01	100,00

Source: Table developed by authors according to sociological research of the Centre of Economic and Political Studies named after Alexandr Razumkov, Kyiv 2012 and 2015.

The vast majority of people living in the Western region support Ukraine's joining the EU in both years. Moreover, the percentage of those people increased from 80.9% in 2013 up to 90.4% in 2015, which is understandable because people living in this region are connected with neighboring states not only by geographical proximity but also by historical and ethnical traditions, family ties and employment. In spite of significant changes in the political environment of the country, the vast majority of respondents from the Eastern region are against the association with the EU in 2015, mostly, because they believe in the best economic and political partnership with neighboring Russia. However, the percentage of people against the integration in Eastern region reduced from 65.5% in 2013 to 58% in 2015.

Three quarters of the residents of Kyiv show support to the European Association of Ukraine, as evidenced by the mass action of the national vote. These actions were the very beginning of the Revolution of Dignity. For last 3 years the percentage of people supporting EU integration increased by 10% in Kyiv and in the Western region. This percentage goes up in all regions, mostly in the Northern – by 18.5% and in the Central – by 16%. The most stable were the political preferences of the Southern region: the percentage of people supporting the integration increased only by 2.6%.

In the context of last three years events the question about Ukrainian non-block status becomes more popular. The perspective of Ukraine's joining the NATO was observed during the Orange Revolution, in 2004. However, after the further changing of political authorities this idea was declined. Nowadays, because of aggression in the East and Crimea occupation, more and more people refuse the idea of Ukraine's being a non-block country. Considering this, in the year of 2015 the poll included few more questions about NATO-Ukraine relationship.

*Table 5. The opinions of the population of Ukraine regarding the expediency of joining the NATO, depending on the age in 2015, %*

Age group	Ukraine's joining the NATO		Total
	For	Against	
Young (18-34)	63,08	36,92	100,00
Middle (35-54)	58,44	41,56	100,00
Old (55-70)	57,96	42,04	100,00
The oldest (70+)	34,43	65,57	100,00
Total	57,78	42,22	100,00

Source: Table developed by authors according to sociological research of the Centre of Economic and Political Studies named after Alexandr Razumkov, Kyiv 2012 and 2015.

The differentiation of opinions based on age appeared to be very distinctive. For example, the population of Ukraine in the age from 18 to 34 mostly supports Ukrainian cooperation with the NATO (63.08%). The population in the age after 70 feels rather critical about Ukraine's joining the NATO, the percentage of people, supporting this idea is twice less than those who are against it.

Overall, the vast majority of people in Ukraine have changed their attitude to the NATO since 2004 when the level of supporting cooperation with this organization was not more than 30-35%. The measured value of  $\chi^2$  is 62.31, a critical value for the number of degrees of freedom is  $df = n - 1 = 4 - 1 = 3$  and materiality level 0, 05:  $\chi_{0,05}^2(3) = 7,3$ . The measured value is higher than the critical one; therefore the connection is estimated as not accidental.

The regional differentiation of population's attitudes to joining the NATO (Table 6) appears to be more distinctive than in the situation with EU integration.

*Table 6. Distribution of the Ukrainian population's thoughts of the expediency of joining the NATO, depending on the region of residence in 2015, %*

Region	Ukraine's integration to the NATO		Total
	For	Against	
Central	56,35	43,65	100,00
Northern	47,70	52,30	100,00
Southern	43,81	56,19	100,00
Western	80,93	19,07	100,00
Eastern	36,50	63,50	100,00
City of Kyiv	74,77	25,23	100,00
Overall	56,09	43,91	100,00

Source: Table developed by authors according to sociological research of the Centre of Economic and Political Studies named after Alexandr Razumkov, Kyiv 2015.

The regional differentiation of population's opinion about the Ukraine's joining the NATO is close to the same differentiation as of the idea of integration to the EU. The biggest support is typical for the Western region: it accounts for 80.9%. The lowest level of support was indicated in the Eastern (36.5%) and the Southern (43.81%) regions. It must be also emphasized that there are some differences in the attitudes of the Northern region population. In the year of 2015 most people of this region support integration to the EU while only half of them support joining the NATO. Nevertheless, in other regions the attitudes of population to the EU and the NATO are quite similar.

The trust of population to the governmental institutions changed dramatically in last two years. The research showed that the only institution that still has trust of population is the church: the level of trust in both years is higher than 70%. People in Ukraine are quite confident in the Media of Ukraine. However, the percentage of population that trusts them decreased from 65.5% in 2013 to 56.4% in 2015. The most significant change in the level of trust was towards the Media of Russia. The level of trust to this institution in 2013 accounted for 50.99% while in 2015 this percentage declined to 7.7%. Overall the result of the research demonstrate negative attitudes towards governmental institutions (the President of Ukraine, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Government of Ukraine, local authorities, the Constitutional Court), law enforcement agencies (Armed Forces of Ukraine, Police, Security Courts, Prosecutors) and banks.

*Table 7. The level of public confidence in different institutions of Ukraine in 2013 and 2015, %*

Institution	2013			2015		
	Do not trust	Trust	Total	Do not trust	Trust	Total
The President of Ukraine	69,07	30,93	100,00	56,4	43,6	100,0
Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine	79,07	20,93	100,00	72,8	27,2	100,0
Ukraine's Armed Forces	51,27	48,73	100,00	31,9	68,1	100,0
Police	79,93	20,07	100,00	75,4	24,6	100,0
Security Courts	63,52	36,48	100,00	65,9	34,1	100,0
National Guard	-	-	-	32,4	67,6	100,0
Local authorities	54,33	45,67	100,00	59,4	40,6	100,0
Laws	80,53	19,47	100,00	89,4	10,6	100,0
Church	25,95	74,05	100,00	22,6	77,4	100,0
Media of Ukraine	34,48	65,52	100,00	43,6	56,4	100,0
Media of Russia	49,01	50,99	100,00	92,3	7,7	100,0
Public Organizations	46,56	53,44	100,00	40,3	59,7	100,0
Political parties	79,14	20,86	100,00	87,3	12,7	100,0
Banks	71,45	28,55	100,00	91,7	8,3	100,0

Source: Table developed by authors according to sociological research of the Centre of Economic and Political Studies named after Alexandr Razumkov, Kyiv 2015.

Ratio of trust structures coordination accounts for 0.19 that means a significant difference in the structure of population trust of Ukraine in 2013 and 2015.

## Conclusion

While studying the process of opinion formation of the population on the issue of Ukraine's joining the EU it was defined that people of different age groups have different opinions on the matter. Young people expressed a decisive consent with this decision. People of middle age have shown different opinions but mostly agreed on Ukraine's joining the EU. The percentage of people supporting Ukraine integration to the EU increased by 8% while the level of supporting the idea of joining the NATO has reached the highest point since 2004.

It is clear that in order to stabilize the tense political situation in the new government the mistakes of their predecessors must not be repeated and public opinion must be taken into account when making crucial decisions for the country. It is important for preventing new conflicts which can later bring negative consequences for the entire state and destabilize political and, consequently, economic situation in the country. The changes that happened in last two years proved that the new governmental authority has more trust of population. Moreover, the reforms directed towards carrying out agreements with the EU are justified as the population of Ukraine has consciously chosen the way towards European Integration

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