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**Lesia Kotsur, PhD in History**ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8996-1606>*Hryhorii Skovoroda University in Pereiaslav, Ukraine*

## **THE ROLE OF LITHUANIA IN STRUGGLE OF UKRAINE FOR A EUROPEAN FUTURE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY IN 2013-2021**

The role of Lithuania in the social and political life of Ukraine during Ukraine's struggle for its future as part of the European community and against Russian aggression in 2013–2021 is analyzed. The research is built on the basis of general and special methods – analysis and synthesis, objectivity and logic. Historical, chronological and comparative methods take the leading place. The behavioral method was also used to clarify the behavior of political leaders and citizens of Lithuania and Ukraine. The first section of the article reveals the dynamics of support by representatives of Lithuania for Ukraine's European integration aspirations during the Revolution of Dignity at the end of 2013 – beginning of 2014. The influence of the Lithuanian factor on the revolutionary processes in Ukraine is shown. Its main manifestations were actions of solidarity of citizens, which were held in Lithuania; diplomatic support of the Ukrainian protesters from the political leadership of Lithuania; the direct participation of Lithuanian citizens in protest actions in Kyiv and, in particular, the provision of medical aid to activists injured by the actions of security forces. The second chapter shows the mechanism and scale of support from Lithuania in the process of Ukraine's fight against Russian aggression in 2014-2021. It is found that Lithuania is one of the few EU countries that systematically supported Ukraine in the war against Russian aggression. Lithuania expressed its support for the sovereignty of Ukraine through the consistent diplomatic position of the top leadership of Lithuania, in particular, D. Grybauskaitė and G. Nauseda; introduction of political and socio-economic sanctions against the Russian Federation; provision of financial assistance; initiation of humanitarian, medical and military aid projects that operate both in Ukraine and abroad; volunteering by Lithuanians living in Ukraine; assistance in the implementation of reforms, etc. In conclusion, it is noted that such steps on the part of Lithuania have important historical, political and moral significance for the Ukrainian people. The efforts of Lithuania as a lobbyist for the interests of Ukraine during the specified period are also highlighted.

**Keywords:** Lithuania, Ukraine, Revolution of Dignity, Dalia Grybauskaitė, European integration, sanctions, volunteering, aid, support, reforms.

Mass protests that unfolded in Ukraine in late 2013 against the background of the Ukrainian president's refusal to sign the Association Agreement on Ukraine's membership in the EU on November 29, 2013 led to unpredictable consequences. As a result of the bloody events that lasted on the Maidan in Kyiv until the end of February 2014 and went down in history as the Revolution of Dignity, the country's political power was changed. Pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovich and his inner circle, leaving the country unattended, fled to the Russian Federation (hereinafter Russia). In this struggle, the Ukrainian people once again tried to snatch their independence from the Kremlin's iron grip and regain a chance to integrate into the civilized Western European world. However, this struggle of Ukrainians has met with aggression from the Russian Federation, which is using brute force to try to leave Ukraine in its sphere of influence. Thanks to the strong support of the international community, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict has been localized with a view to its further peaceful settlement, and Ukraine has become even closer to Western civilization. That is why it is important to investigate the role of individual Western countries, both during the Revolution of Dignity 2013-2014 and after the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Our study focused on Lithuania, which has long-standing historical ties with Ukraine and demonstrates full support for Ukraine.

Despite the fact that the above mentioned events in Ukraine at the end of 2013-2021 are investigated by many Ukrainian and foreign researchers, these issues remain poorly understood. Only a small number of

scientific publications superficially reveal the role played by the Lithuanian factor in the history of Ukraine in 2014–2021. Thus, Kateryna Mohylnytska's work highlights the cooperation between Ukraine and Lithuania in the field of security and defense of the period<sup>1</sup>; Olena Betlii analyzed the foreign policy partnership between Ukraine and Lithuania from 2014 to 2016<sup>2</sup>; Tomas Janeliūn touched upon the impact of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict on the foreign policy position of Grybauskaitė<sup>3</sup>; Maili Vilson notes that in responding to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, the Baltic states have regularly pursued their political goals through the EU, denying the common notion that Europeanization rarely extends to foreign affairs and security<sup>4</sup>. In addition, the influence of the Russian Federation on the adoption of strategically important foreign policy documents by Lithuania was revealed in the study Dovilė Jakniūnaitė<sup>5</sup>, and the role of Lithuania in the Eastern Partnership policy was analyzed by Linas Kojala<sup>6</sup>. As we can see, scholars have already launched an academic discussion on strengthening Lithuania's role in resolving the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Here, we can partly agree with the opinion of researchers that Lithuania's increased attention to solving the Ukrainian problem is related to national interests, which should keep Russia from aggression against Lithuania. At the same time, the aspect of Lithuania's support for the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity and its contribution to Ukraine's struggle for a European future and territorial integrity in 2013–2021 remains unexplored, which is crucial for further bilateral cooperation between Ukraine and Lithuania and their history.

**1. Lithuania's contribution to the Revolution of Dignity.** Historically, the Eastern Partnership Summit, at which Ukraine was to sign the Association Agreement, took place in the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius, on November 28–29, 2013. During these events, Lithuanian President D. Grybauskaitė repeatedly expressed support for the Ukrainian side before signing the agreement. Lithuanian journalists and statesmen commented on the situation incessantly, and the Speaker of the Lithuanian Seimas Loreta Grauzhinene even took part in an opposition rally in Kyiv on the Maidan<sup>7</sup>. Under the walls of the Royal Palace in Vilnius, V. Yanukovich was pressured by students of Ukrainian and Lithuanian origin, who unfurled a huge flag of Ukraine, which arrived from Euromaidan in Kyiv with the signatures of its participants<sup>8</sup>.

Despite the general atmosphere of support, not all summit participants were convinced that Yanukovich would sign the agreement. In particular, the Prime Minister of Lithuania Algirdas Butkevičius and the same D. Grybauskaitė believed that V. Yanukovich would not do that<sup>9</sup>. After their opinions were confirmed and Viktor Yanukovich did not sign the agreement, Ukrainians protesting on the Maidan in Kyiv decided to continue protesting against the president's decision. However, ignoring public opinion, Viktor Yanukovich and his entourage in general decided to violently disperse the protesters on the night of November 29–30, 2013<sup>10</sup>. The use of force by the Ukrainian golden eagle provoked a sharp reaction from the international community, which condemned these actions. It is important that the head of the Lithuanian

<sup>1</sup> Могильницька, К. (2020). *Україно-литовське партнерство в сфері безпеки та оборони. Політичне життя*, 1, 122–129.

<sup>2</sup> Бетлій, О. (2016). *Аудит зовнішньої політики: Україна-Литва. Дискусійна записка*. Київ: Інститут світової політики, 37.

<sup>3</sup> Janeliūn, T. (2019). Prezidento įtaka Lietuvos užsienio politikos formavimui: galios centro pokytis D. Grybauskaitės prezidentavimo laikotarpiu. *Politologija*, 2(94), 8–55.

<sup>4</sup> Vilson, M. (2020). The Foreign Policy of the Baltic States and the Ukrainian Crisis: A Case of Europeanization? *New Perspectives*, 23(2), 49–76.

<sup>5</sup> Jakniūnaitė, D. (2020). *Lithuania Report*. WGA, 1–9 <[https://www.wga-project.eu/docs/2020/country/WGA2020\\_Lithuania\\_Report.pdf](https://www.wga-project.eu/docs/2020/country/WGA2020_Lithuania_Report.pdf)> (2023, March, 15).

<sup>6</sup> Kojala, L. (2018). The role of Lithuania in Eastern partnership policy. *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, 34, 23–28.

<sup>7</sup> Газета День (2013). *Литовського дипломата викликали в МЗС через участь глави сейму Литви в Євромайдані* <<https://m.day.kyiv.ua/uk/news/271113-litovskogo-diplomata-viklikali-v-mzs-cherez-uchast-glavi-seymu-litvi-v-ievromaydani>> (2023, March, 27).

<sup>8</sup> Крим Реалії (2013). *Євромайдан розпочався й у Вільнюсі* <<https://ua.krymr.com/amp/25343963.html>> (2023, March, 28).

<sup>9</sup> BBC (2013). *Як Це Було. Перший день саміту Східного партнерства у Вільнюс*. <[https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/politics/2013/11/131128\\_vilnius\\_28\\_nov](https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/politics/2013/11/131128_vilnius_28_nov)> (2023, March, 28); Завгородня, І. (2013). Грибаускайте: Янукович обрав шлях в нікуди. *Deutsche Welle* <<https://p.dw.com/p/1AQTm>> (2023, March, 29).

<sup>10</sup> Фонд Демократичні ініціативи ім. Ілька Кучеріва (2013). *Україна у фокусі 25 листопада-1 грудня 2013 року* <<https://dif.org.ua/article/pidsumki-2013-roku>> (2023, March, 27).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Linas Linkevičius reacted to the situation among the Lithuanian authorities, writing: “I condemn the beating of peaceful demonstrators in Kyiv on Independence Square. The use of brute force is unacceptable”<sup>1</sup>. For unknown reasons, Lithuanian President D. Grybauskaitė did not comment on the situation on November 30<sup>2</sup>.

However, the further the events on the Maidan intensified, the more tangible the support of Lithuanian politicians and the public. Thus, in a very short time from November 29 to December 8, 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuanian artists, students from Ukraine and representatives of the local diaspora gathered three times in solidarity with Euromaidan, who were not indifferent to the fate of the Ukrainian state and its European choice<sup>3</sup>. A Lithuanian Hundred of Ukrainian Lithuanians was formed in Kyiv as part of the Euromaidan, marching with the flag of Ukraine and Lithuanian badges<sup>4</sup>. And after another attempt to disperse Euromaidan on December 10, 2013, Lithuanian Foreign Minister L. Linkevičius said: “Berkut is pushing peaceful demonstrators out of Euromaidan. Tear gas was used. This is proof of how ready the government is for dialogue”<sup>5</sup>. The President of Lithuania D. Grybauskaitė also stated her position. First, on December 11, she commented that “The use of force against peaceful demonstrators in Kyiv is unjustified. This is the direct responsibility of the Ukrainian political leadership”<sup>6</sup>, and on January 14, 2014, stated that after the Vilnius Eastern Partnership summit, “Europe lost its Ukrainian leadership, but gained the Ukrainian people – we won their struggle for the future”<sup>7</sup>.

The confrontation on Hrushevskoho Street in Kyiv, which began on January 19, 2014, was a turning point in the revolutionary process, as the protesters suffered their first casualties after these events. Thus, on January 22, 2014, a sad account was opened of the heroes who died during the Revolution of Dignity, and who will later be called the Heavenly Hundred – Yurii Verbytskyi, Serhii Nigoian and Mykhailo Zhyznevskiyi.<sup>8</sup> These events did not leave Lithuanians indifferent. Immediately after the first shootings, Lithuanian President D. Grybauskaitė condemned the actions of the Ukrainian authorities. And on January 23, 2014, a street near the Ukrainian Embassy in Vilnius lit candles in honor of the fallen protesters. Also, for the fourth time, Vilnius residents gathered near the Ukrainian Embassy to support Ukraine’s democratic aspirations and show solidarity with the Ukrainian people<sup>9</sup>. On January 24, 2014, D. Grybauskaitė met with the Ambassador of Ukraine to Lithuania Valerii Zhovtenko, with whom she discussed the situation on Independence Square. It was agreed that ten protesters injured in Kyiv would be taken to Lithuania for treatment and rehabilitation<sup>10</sup>. When on February 18-22, 2014, shootings of protesters on the Maidan began to help Ukrainian medics, including a Lithuanian surgeon, a group of 5 medics from Lithuania arrived to help

<sup>1</sup> Нога, Х. (2013). Розгін Євромайдану: реакція світу. *ZAXID.NET*  
<[https://zaxid.net/rozgin\\_yevromaydanu\\_reaktsiya\\_svitu\\_n1298307](https://zaxid.net/rozgin_yevromaydanu_reaktsiya_svitu_n1298307)> (2023, March, 30).

<sup>2</sup> Радіо Свобода (2013). *Президент Литви не коментує розгром Євромайдану*  
<<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/25185282.html>> (2023, March, 30).

<sup>3</sup> Голос Америки (2013). *Євромайдан підтримали у Литві* <<https://ukrainian.voanews.com/a/1809976.html>>  
(2023, March, 13).

<sup>4</sup> Музиченко, Я. (2019). Художниця Віолетта Цибочкіна: «Україна для литовців – священна...» *Україна Молода*  
<<https://www.umoloda.kiev.ua/number/3481/164/135165/>> (2023, March, 16).

<sup>5</sup> ТСН (2013). *Західні політики про розгін Євромайдану: це огидно і репресії не допустимі*  
<<https://tsn.ua/politika/zahidni-politiki-pro-rozgin-yevromaydanu-ce-ogidno-i-represiyi-ne-dopustimi-324867.html>>  
(2023, March, 12).

<sup>6</sup> Lrytas.lt (2013). *D. Grybauskaitė: «Ukrainos vadovybė atsakinga dėl nepateisinamo jėgos panaudojimo»*  
<<https://www.lrytas.lt/lietuvosdiena/aktualijos/2013/12/11/news/d-grybauskaite-ukrainos-vadovybe-atsakinga-del-nepateisinamo-jegos-panaudojimo--4778138>> (2023, March, 11).

<sup>7</sup> Українська правда (2014). *Грибаускайте: Ми втратили керівництво України, але отримали народ*  
<<https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/01/14/7009522/index.amp>> (2023, March, 14).

<sup>8</sup> Українформ (2021). *На Майдані сім років тому загинули перші Герої Небесної Сотні*  
<<https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/3175529-na-majdani-sim-rokiv-tomu-zaginuli-persi-geroi-nebesnoi-sotni.html>>  
(2023, March, 22); Українформ (2022). *Першим під час Революції Гідності вбили Вербицького, а не Нігояна – ДБР розкрило злочин* <<https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/3389282-persim-pid-cas-revolucii-gidnosti-vbili-verbickogo-a-ne-nigoana-dbr.html>> (2023, March, 21).

<sup>9</sup> Lietuvos nacionalinis radijas ir televizija (2014). *Vilniuje surengta solidarumo su Ukraina akcija*  
<<https://www.lrt.lt/naujienos/lietuvoje/2/34665/vilniuje-surengta-solidarumo-su-ukraina-akcija>>  
(2023, March, 23).

<sup>10</sup> Lietuvos nacionalinis radijas ir televizija (2014). *Nukentėję Kijeve bus atvežti gydyti į Lietuvą*  
<<https://www.lrt.lt/naujienos/lietuvoje/2/34732/nukenteje-kijeve-bus-atvezti-gydyti-i-lietuva>>  
(2023, March, 24).

the victims. After the victory of the Revolution in Kyiv, about eleven psychological centers were set up on the Maidan, in which a group of psychologists from Lithuania also worked<sup>1</sup>.

Thus, we can see that from the very beginning of the revolutionary events in Kyiv at the end of 2013, Lithuania did its best to support the European integration aspirations of the Ukrainian people. Lithuania expressed its solidarity mostly in the form of diplomatic statements and actions of mutual support from ordinary citizens. Looking back on those events, it should be noted that in conditions when the official leadership of the state was set against its own people, such support had a strong psychological effect, prompted the Ukrainian people to bring the case to an end.

## 2. Lithuania's contribution to struggle of Ukraine against Russian aggression in 2014-2021.

After the beginning of the Russian aggression against Ukraine at the end of February 2014, Lithuanians also did not stay away from these processes. As of 2021, Lithuania ranked fifth in terms of aid to Ukraine – after the United States, Britain, Canada and Poland<sup>2</sup>. Their support for Ukraine's sovereignty can be traced in such areas as: the diplomatic position of Lithuania's top leadership; participation in the reorganization policy against the Russian Federation; Financial Aid; humanitarian, medical and military assistance projects; volunteering by Lithuanians living in Ukraine; reform assistance, etc.

**2.1. Diplomatic support.** Lithuania was one of the first countries to condemn Russian aggression in Ukraine. Even more, Ambassador Petras Vaitekunas and Latvian Ambassador Argita Daudze were in Crimea during the Russian annexation trying to ensure the safety of the peninsula's inhabitants. Immediately after the annexation of Crimea, Lithuania joined a number of other countries in drafting the UN General Assembly Resolution on the Territorial Integrity of Ukraine № 68/262, which was adopted on March 27, 2014. Thanks to this document, no international institution recognized the annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol<sup>3</sup>. In the following years (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021) Lithuania supported almost all UN resolutions concerning Russia's human rights violations in the occupied Crimea and the militarization of Crimea by Russia<sup>4</sup>. D. Grybauskaitė's annual visits to Ukraine in 2014-2019 were also significant, during which she incessantly emphasized her support for Ukraine and its European integration aspirations. In particular, given her situation, her visit to Ukraine on February 22, 2015, when she took part in the March of Dignity in Kyiv on the anniversary of the Maidan shootings, was important<sup>5</sup>. Standing support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within the internationally recognized borders was also expressed by the newly elected in 2019 Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda and Lithuanian ambassadors to Ukraine<sup>6</sup>. In particular, G. Nausėda made his first foreign visit to Ukraine after a long quarantine due to coronavirus on March 18–19, 2021<sup>7</sup>. The Lithuanian Seimas, which on April 27, 2021 passed a resolution on provocative and aggressive actions of Russia near the border with Ukraine, in which it condemned the unprovoked military

<sup>1</sup> Lrytas.lt (2014). *Pancerovas D. Karo skeveldrų paliktas žaizdas Ukrainoje gydo ir lietuviai*

<<https://www.lrytas.lt/lietuvsodiena/aktualijos/2014/03/02/news/karo-skeveldru-paliktas-zaizdas-ukrainoje-gydo-ir-lietuviai-4690416>> (2023, March, 02).

<sup>2</sup> Пагулич, Р. (2021). Лише слова підтримки? Як інші країни допомагають українській армії. *Радіо Свобода* <<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/zakordonna-dopomoga-dlia-zsu/31266364.html>> (2023, March, 24).

<sup>3</sup> Українська правда (2014). *Генасамбля ООН підтримала територіальну цілісність України* <<https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/03/27/7020541/>> (2023, March, 27).

<sup>4</sup> Драчук, С. (2020). Резолюція ООН щодо мілітаризації Криму: її в Росії ніби й не помітили. *Радіо Свобода* <<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/oon-krym-rezoliucija/30990795.html>> (2023, March, 09); Укрінформ (2021).

*Кримська платформа та російська мілітаризація: Генасамбля ООН ухвалила нову резолюцію* <<https://www.ukrinform.ru/rubric-crimea/3366213-krymskaa-platforma-i-rossijskaa-militarizacia-genassamblea-oon-prinala-novuu-rezoluciu.html>> (2023, March, 09).

<sup>5</sup> Радіо Свобода (2014). Порошенко і Грибаускайте підписали «дорожню карту» <<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/26708078.html>> (2023, March, 24);

Посольство України у Литовській Республіці (2020). *Політичні відносини між Україною та Литвою* <<https://lithuania.mfa.gov.ua/spivrobitnictvo/120-politichni-vidnosini-mizh-ukrajinoju-ta-litvoju>> (2023, March, 08).

<sup>6</sup> Укрінформ (2021). *НАТО має відреагувати на військову інтеграцію Росії та Білорусі – президент Литви* <<https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-politics/3372453-nato-mae-vidreaguvati-na-vijskovu-integraciju-rosii-ta-bilorusi-prezident-litvi.html>> (2023, March, 20); ArmyInform (2021).

*Посол Литви в Україні: «Ми завжди підтримуватимемо вас у вашій, а це означає, що й у нашій боротьбі проти російської агресії»* <<https://armyinform.com.ua/2021/12/13/posol-lytvu-v-ukrayini-my-zavzhdy-pidtrymuvatymemo-vas-u-vashij-a-cze-oznachaye-shho-j-u-nashij-borotbi-protu-rosijskoji-agresiyi/>> (2023, March, 13).

<sup>7</sup> Закіров, М. (2021). Візит Президента Литовської Республіки Г. Науседі в Україну. *Україна: події, факти, коментарі*, 5, 21-26.

aggression against Ukraine and other aggressive unilateral actions carried out by the Russian Federation, did not miss the Ukrainian trouble.<sup>1</sup> Lithuania was also among those countries that signed a joint Declaration on August 23, 2021 at the first summit of the Crimean Platform in Kyiv, calling for the restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders<sup>2</sup>. In addition, on November 28, 2021, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania L. Linkevičius supported Ukraine in the dispute with Apple, when it designated the Ukrainian Crimea as the Russian<sup>3</sup>. Thus, we can see that all this time Lithuania's political and diplomatic position on Ukraine has been and remains consistent, which further strengthens the authority of this country in the eyes of the Ukrainian people.

**2.2. Sanction support.** In response to Russia's aggression in Ukraine, the first international sanctions against Russia were imposed in July 2014. Lithuania also joined the practice, adopting a list of personal sanctions against Russians on July 29, 2014, including a ban on Russian citizens supporting the Kremlin's policy toward Ukraine<sup>4</sup>. Despite the fact that Lithuania had much less opportunity to influence Russia compared to the leading countries of the Western world, its role in this process is important. First of all, this means that Lithuania has consistently advocated much tougher sanctions packages than those approved by the European communities<sup>5</sup>. Lithuania has taken this position even when it was one of the countries most affected by the sanctions. For example, the reduction of exports to Russia in 2014-2017 in Lithuania occurred by 5%, while in Germany – by 1.3%, in Italy – by 1%, in France – by 0.6%<sup>6</sup>. Lithuania's reaction to the Russian seizure of Ukrainian military boats in the Kerch Strait in late November 2018 is significant<sup>7</sup>. At the time, the Republic of Lithuania imposed national sanctions against Russia, while international organizations did not adopt any sanctions against Russia's actions. In addition, Lithuania has decided to provide assistance to Ukraine in the form of ammunition, military instructors, cyber instructors, humanitarian aid, etc<sup>8</sup>. At the end of 2021, when Russia began to deploy its troops near the Ukrainian borders, Lithuania, together with Poland, called for the approval of a new package of sanctions and the provision of material assistance to Ukraine<sup>9</sup>.

**2.3. Humanitarian and financial assistance.** In 2014-2016, Lithuania provided assistance to Ukraine in the amount of 4.5 million euros, of which more than 1.18 million euros were allocated for humanitarian aid, and in 2017 this figure reached 1.2 million. During 2014-2019 provided material consisted mainly of caring for the wounded, providing assistance to war victims in the anti-terrorist operation zone, supply of medical equipment, medicines<sup>10</sup>, Soviet-style weapons and ammunition (heavy machine guns), the provision

<sup>1</sup> Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo kanceliarija (2021). *Seimas ragina Rusiją nutraukti agresiją ir provokacijas prieš Ukrainą* <[https://www.lrs.lt/sip/portal.show?p\\_r=35403&p\\_k=1&p\\_t=276009](https://www.lrs.lt/sip/portal.show?p_r=35403&p_k=1&p_t=276009)> (2023, March, 27).

<sup>2</sup> Крим.Реалії (2021). «Кримська платформа: США, Великобританія, Японія, країни ЄС та Україна підписали Декларацію (виправлено)» <<https://ru.krymr.com/a/news-krymskaya-platforma-43-strany-podpisali-deklaratsiyu/31423992.html>> (2023, March, 23).

<sup>3</sup> Губар, О. (2021). Литва підтримала Україну в суперечці з Apple через Крим. *Deutsche Welle* <<https://p.dw.com/p/3Tu2F>> (2023, March, 28).

<sup>4</sup> Газета День (2014). *Литва розширила список персональних санкцій для росіян* <<https://m.day.kyiv.ua/uk/news/290714-litva-rozshirila-spisok-personalnih-sankciy-dlya-rosiyan>> (2023, March, 29).

<sup>5</sup> Укрінформ (2014). *Литва назвала санкції проти Росії невчасними і заслабкими* <[https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-other\\_news/1690514-litva\\_nazvala\\_sanktsiii\\_proti\\_rosiії\\_nevchasnimi\\_i\\_zaslakimi\\_1959592.html](https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-other_news/1690514-litva_nazvala_sanktsiii_proti_rosiії_nevchasnimi_i_zaslakimi_1959592.html)> (2023, March, 30); Європейська правда (2018). *Литва ввела санкції проти 20 осіб, причетних до агресії в Керченській протоці* <<https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/news/2018/12/7/7090386/>> (2023, March, 07).

<sup>6</sup> Зарембо, К, Солодкий, С, Левонюк, Т. (2013). Хто перший: Які країни наважаться порушити єдність Європейського Союзу щодо санкцій проти Росії? *Центр «Нова Європа»* <<http://neweurope.org.ua/analytics/hto-pershyj-yaki-krayiny-navazhatsya-porushyty-yednist-yevropejskogo-soyuzu-shhodo-sanktsij-proty-rosiyi/>> (2023, March, 05).

<sup>7</sup> Велесова, В. (2018). Криза в Керченській протоці: чому стріляють біля берегів Криму. *Радіо Свобода* <<https://ua.krymr.com/a/kryza-kerchensky-protoka/29622341.html>> (2023, March, 26).

<sup>8</sup> Укрінформ (2018). *Литва запровадила національні санкції проти РФ* <<https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-politics/2596297-litva-zaprovadila-nacionalni-sankcii-proti-rf.html>> (2023, March, 07).

<sup>9</sup> Радіо Свобода (2021). *Лідери України, Польщі й Литви у спільній заяві закликали посилювати санкції проти Росії* <<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-ukraina-polshcha-lytva-zayava/31591160.html>> (2023, March, 02).

<sup>10</sup> Informacijos šaltinis – Prezidentės spaudos tarnyba (2021). *Ukrainos kariai dėkoja Lietuvai* <<https://slaptai.lt/%C5%BEym%C4%97/euromaidanas/>> (2023, March, 14).

of winter military clothing and equipment – tents, sleeping bags. In total, about 6 million euros<sup>1</sup>. In 2020, Lithuania allocated another 100 thousand euros for humanitarian aid to Ukraine, as well as donated medical and personal protective equipment to combat the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>2</sup>. An important step on the part of Lithuania was the development in 2017 of the so-called “Marshall Plan for Ukraine” – an EU investment project of 5 billion euros per year, which aimed to strengthen economic and financial and investment support, including consistent strengthening of strategic dialogue Ukraine – countries Events to ensure Ukraine’s European integration<sup>3</sup>. Under the plan, which dates back to 2014, Ukraine was to receive about 30 billion euros in financial assistance<sup>4</sup>. However, the realization of these intentions was hampered by the fact that previously opened EU credit lines for Ukraine were not used effectively by Kyiv. For example, from 2014 to 2018, Ukraine received 7 billion euros, of which only 1.5 billion were used<sup>5</sup>. This process slowed down even more after the new political forces came to power in Ukraine in 2019<sup>6</sup>. Nevertheless, the Lithuanian Foundation for the Development of Cooperation and Promotion of Democracy under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania in 2018-2020 funded a pilot bilateral Lithuanian-Ukrainian project “Support for Education in the Post-Conflict Territories of Eastern Ukraine. Ensuring the quality of non-formal education”, which aimed to improve the quality of extracurricular education and introduce a new transparent principle of school funding<sup>7</sup>. Lithuania also supported Ukraine in terms of investment. Thus, Lithuanian direct investment in Ukraine in 2020, at the end of the third quarter, amounted to various figures from 152.1 million dollars. US up to 180 million euros. They invested mainly in wholesale and retail trade; real estate transactions; construction; financial and insurance activities and industry<sup>8</sup>.

**2.4. Medical aid.** The fighting for Ilovaisk in August 2014 led to heavy casualties of the Ukrainian military – then 366 defenders were killed, 158 went missing, 429 were wounded. Lithuania was one of the first countries to come to Ukraine’s aid at the time. As the fifth President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko recalled, “...*Dalia Grybauskaitė was the first to call and offer assistance in the treatment and rehabilitation of Ukrainian soldiers...*”<sup>9</sup>. At that time, 14 wounded people were sent to the country for treatment and rehabilitation. After further heavy fighting at the end of 2014 – In February 2015 at the Donetsk and Luhansk airports and near Debaltseve, on average, about fifty Ukrainian servicemen underwent rehabilitation in Lithuania every year<sup>10</sup>. For example, from 2014 to 2017, 155 soldiers were rehabilitated in Lithuania,

<sup>1</sup> Пагулич, Р. (2021). Лише слова підтримки? Як інші країни допомагають українській армії. *Радіо Свобода* <<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/zakordonna-dopomoga-dlia-zsu/31266364.html>> (2023, March, 24).

<sup>2</sup> Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija (2021). *Lietuva suteikė humanitarinę pagalbą Ukrainai* <<https://urm.lt/default/lt/naujienos/lietuva-suteike-humanitarine-pagalba-ukrainai>> (2023, March, 26).

<sup>3</sup> Міністерство економічного розвитку і торгівлі України (2017). «План Маршалла для України»: 5 млрд євро на рік забезпечать зростання економіки до 6-8% <<https://www.me.gov.ua/News/Detail?lang=uk-UA&id=7f85c61e-6837-4694-aa9b-9c25d69a998d&title=PlanMarshallaDliaUkraini-5-MlrdvrvNaRikZabezpechatZrostanniaEkonomikiDob-8->>> (2023, March, 14).

<sup>4</sup> Girmius, K. (2015). Ukrainos pasirinkimas. *VšĮ. Bernardinai.lt* <<https://www.bernardinai.lt/2015-01-12-ukrainos-pasirinkimas/>> (2015, March, 12).

<sup>5</sup> Кубілюс, А. (2018). «План Маршалла» на фінішній прямій: що потрібно зробити Україні. *Українська правда* <<https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/articles/2018/03/21/7079065/>> (2023, March, 21).

<sup>6</sup> Інтерфакс-Україна (2020). *Віце-прем’єр Кулеба: Найкращий «план Маршалла для України» – це прямі іноземні інвестиції* <<https://ua.interfax.com.ua/news/interview/633659.html>> (2023, March, 02).

<sup>7</sup> Урядовий портал (2018). *Україна і Литва співпрацюватимуть у розвитку позашкільної освіти на Донбасі* <<https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/ukrayina-i-litva-spivpracyuvativimut-u-rozvitku-pozashkilnoyi-osviti-na-donbasi>> (2023, March, 12).

<sup>8</sup> Lietuvos Respublikos ekonomikos ir inovacijų ministerija (2021). *Armonaitė pasiūlė ekspertinę Lietuvos paramą Ukrainai, siekiant įsilieti į bendrąją ES duomenų erdvę* <<https://eimin.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/a-armonaite-pasiule-ekspertine-lietuvos-parama-ukrainai-siekiant-isilieti-i-bendrąja-es-duomenų-erdve>> (2023, March, 18); Укрінформ (2021).

*Литовський бізнес інвестував торік в Україну €180 мільйонів – посол* <<https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-economy/3316323-litovskij-biznes-investuvav-torik-v-ukrainu-180-miljoniv-posol.html>> (2023, March, 15);

Посольство України у Литовській Республіці (2021). *Торговельно-економічне співробітництво між Україною та Литовською Республікою* <<https://lithuania.mfa.gov.ua/spivrobitnictvo/3542-stan-torgovelyno-jekonomichnih-vidnosin/3546-trade-and-investment>> (2023, March, 23).

<sup>9</sup> Міністерство оборони України (2017). *Литва продовжить надавати медичну допомогу українським військовим, пораненим в АТО* <<https://www.mil.gov.ua/news/2017/06/09/litva-prodovzhit-nadavati-medichnu-dopomogu-ukrainskim-vijskovim-poranenim-v-ato/>> (2023, March, 09).

<sup>10</sup> Радіо Свобода (2014). *Поранених українських військових відправили на лікування до Литви*

including 126 defenders from the Dnipropetrovsk region<sup>1</sup>, by the end of 2020 this figure had risen to 283 people<sup>2</sup>. With the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Lithuania began to provide assistance to Ukraine in this direction as well. Thus, in May 2020, 15,000 face protection panels were transferred to Ukraine; in August 2021, she delivered 54,000 doses of AstraZeneca to Ukraine<sup>3</sup>.

**2.5. Military assistance.** Lithuania has been supporting Ukraine militarily since the fall of 2014. It was the first and only country in Europe to supply lethal weapons. On a gratuitous basis until 2016, it provided Ukraine with 60 large-caliber machine guns KPVT and 86 large-caliber machine guns HMG, as well as 150 tons of ammunition<sup>4</sup>, and in 2017 – 7,000 Kalashnikov assault rifles, almost 2 million rounds of ammunition, more than 80 machine guns, several mortars and anti-tank weapons totaling almost 2 million euros<sup>5</sup>. In 2019, Lithuania handed over 1 million rounds of ammunition to the Ukrainian army, and in December 2021 another batch of aid arrived, which totaled 490 bulletproof vests worth more than 617 thousand euros and the same number of ballistic belts worth more than 59 thousand euros<sup>6</sup>. We should also not forget about the bilateral Ukrainian-Lithuanian cooperation on defense reform and joint military exercises within the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian peacekeeping brigade. The LitPolUkrBrig tripartite brigade was established in September 2014, and within a few years it has become fully capable of carrying out peacekeeping missions in line with NATO standards<sup>7</sup>. In addition, there are about 30 Lithuanian military instructors in Ukraine, who train the Ukrainian military independently and together with other NATO allies to carry out coordinated actions of the JMTG-U – Joint Multinational Training Group-Ukraine. In 2017-2021 alone, the training mission cost more than 4 million euros<sup>8</sup>. Some Lithuanian volunteers also fought on the Eastern Front as part of Ukrainian volunteer battalions<sup>9</sup>. It is important that the creation of LitPolUkrBrig and

<<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/26581972.html>> (2023, March, 13); Коломієць, А. (2018). Додому повертаються без милиць: як у Литві лікують українських бійців. *Український інтерес* <<https://uain.press/articles/dodomu-povertayutsya-bez-mylyts-yak-u-lytvi-likuyut-ukrayinskyh-bijtsiv-726062>> (2023, March, 26).

<sup>1</sup> Дніпропетровська обласна державна адміністрація (2017). *Ще двоє АТОвців відправилися на реабілітацію до Литви*, – Валентин Резніченко <<https://adm.dp.gov.ua/news/shche-dvoe-atovtsiv-vidpravilisya-na-reabilitatsiyu-do-litvi-valentin-reznichenko-2a01a81425836ebec22580f8003a1747>> (2017, March, 04); Ярошук, О. (2017).

«Ми перестали хотіти допомагати». Як литовець та українка повертають ветеранів до життя. *Українська правда* <<https://life.pravda.com.ua/authors/58ac00279b9e3/>> (2023, March, 09).

<sup>2</sup> Кінзерська, Ю. (2018). Бути першими не просто: Литва запроваджує санкції проти РФ через агресію в Керченській протоці. *Голос України* <<http://www.golos.com.ua/article/311124>> (2023, March, 07);

Рубан, Т. (2019). 268 українських військових пройшли лікування й реабілітацію у медичних закладах Литви. *Міністерство оборони України* <<https://www.mil.gov.ua/news/2019/10/09/268-ukrainskih-vijskovih-projshli-likuvannya-j-reabilitaciyu-u-medichnih-zakladah-litvi/>> (2023, March, 09); Пагулич, Р. (2021). Лише слова підтримки? Як інші країни допомагають українській армії. *Радіо Свобода*

<<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/zakordonna-dopomoga-dlia-zsu/31266364.html>> (2023, March, 24).

<sup>3</sup> Посольство України у Литовській Республіці (2020). *Литва передає гуманітарну допомогу Україні* <<https://lithuania.mfa.gov.ua/news/litva-peredaye-gumanitarnu-dopomogu-ukrayini>> (2023, March, 13);

Омелянюк, М. (2021). Литва передала Україні 54 тисячі доз вакцини AstraZeneca – МОЗ. *Суспільне* <<https://suspilne.media/153474-litva-peredala-ukraini-54-tisaci-doz-vakcini-astrazeneca-moz/>> (2023, March, 05).

<sup>4</sup> Слово і Діло (2018). *Військова допомога з-за кордону: хто й чим допомагав Україні в 2014-2018 роках* <<https://www.slovoidilo.ua/2018/05/14/infografika/bezpeka/vijskova-dopomoha-kordonu-xto-chym-dopomahav-ukrayini-2014-2018-rokax>> (2023, March, 14).

<sup>5</sup> AtlanticCouncil's Digital Forensic Research Lab (2018). *#MinskMonitor: Lithuania's Lethal Aid to Ukraine. Lithuania's aid to Ukraine since the outbreak of the war in Donbas* <<https://medium.com/dfrlab/minskmonitor-only-western-country-to-provide-lethal-aid-to-ukraine-6efbaeac1b53>> (2023, March, 25).

<sup>6</sup> ГО «Український мілітарний центр» (2021). *3 Литви доставили військову допомогу для України* <<https://mil.in.ua/uk/news/z-lytvuy-dostavyly-vijskovu-dopomogu-dlya-ukrayiny/>> (2023, March, 08).

<sup>7</sup> Міністерство оборони України (2014). *Підписано Угоду щодо створення спільної литовсько-польсько-української бригади* <<https://www.mil.gov.ua/news/2014/09/19/pidpisano-ugodu-shhodo-stvorennnya-spilnoi-litovsko-polsko-ukrainskoi-brigadi/>> (2023, March, 19); Defence (2017). *Тристороння бригада литполукрбриг набула бойових спроможностей відповідно до стандартів НАТО* <<https://old.defence-ua.com/index.php/home-page/2287-trystoronnya-bryhada-lytpolukrbryg-nabula-boyovykh-spromozhnostey-vidpovidno-do-standartiv-nato>> (2023, March, 26).

<sup>8</sup> Пагулич, Р. (2021). Лише слова підтримки? Як інші країни допомагають українській армії. *Радіо Свобода* <<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/zakordonna-dopomoga-dlia-zsu/31266364.html>> (2023, March, 24).

<sup>9</sup> Кіров, В, Бондаренко, Д. (2022). Литва і Україна. До Дня пам'яті захисників свободи. *Історична правда*. <<https://www.istpravda.com.ua/columns/569904f304051/>> (2023, March, 26).

active cooperation in international military exercises was not so much military as political in the Russian-Ukrainian hybrid conflict, as it allowed to partially deter the enemy.

**2.6. Volunteer activities.** Volunteering is another type of support for Ukraine from Lithuania. In this case, it is significant that Ukrainian Lithuanians, Ukrainians in Lithuania, Lithuanians of Lithuania, and official representatives of the Republic of Lithuania are involved in this activity. Thus, the artist and active member of the Kyiv Society of Lithuanian Culture named after Myronis Violetta Tsybochkina together with the Ambassador of Lithuania to Ukraine Marius Yanukonis repeatedly collected and delivered humanitarian aid for children to Stanytsia Luhansk – computers and other gifts, organized creative workshops<sup>1</sup>. Two volunteers from Poltava, Voldimaris Ažubalis from Lithuania and Olga Oleksienko from Ukraine, are also distinguished by their activities. After pro-Russian forces seized Sloviansk and Kramatorsk, volunteers set up the Union 1219 Foundation, which in the first months of the war mainly donated clothes to the military, assisted the Ukrainian military with rehabilitation in Lithuania, and in 2015 established emotional-psychological support line of ATOL for military, frontline volunteers and IDPs<sup>2</sup>. Under the influence of events in Ukraine, the ancient Lithuanian organization “Union of Lithuanian Riflemen” and the international volunteer center “BlueYellow” are also developing. It is on the “Blue Yellow” should pay special attention. This organization was established in Lithuania in 2014 and during 2014–2021 provided humanitarian aid to the civilian population of Donbass and military equipment to the Ukrainian Armed Forces in the amount of almost 1 million US dollars. In its activities it actively cooperates with the Lithuanian National Television. For example, in January 2017, with the assistance of Lithuanian Ex-President Valdas Adamkus (1998-2003, 2004-2009), the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Lithuanian Army and the Lithuanian Ministry of the Interior, BlueYellow volunteers managed to raise 130,000 euros to support Ukraine; in 2018 100 thousand euros, and in 2019 – 110 thousand euros<sup>3</sup>.

**2.7. Reforms.** A special place in the Ukrainian-Lithuanian relations of the period under study belongs to Lithuania’s participation in the implementation of reforms in Ukraine. Despite the fact that due to the domestic political system of Ukraine this process is being implemented too slowly, especially with regard to the fight against corruption and the implementation of the rule of law<sup>4</sup>, nevertheless, Lithuania was involved in the implementation of reforms through the activities of: the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Lithuanian Commission on Trade, Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation<sup>5</sup>; appointment of Aivaras Abromavicius, a Lithuanian citizen who has worked in Ukraine for a long time, as Minister of Economy<sup>6</sup>; through the work of the Standing Ukrainian-Lithuanian Commission on European Integration, which coordinates Lithuania’s support for Ukraine’s political, administrative, economic and social reforms to achieve Ukraine’s European integration aspirations<sup>7</sup>; through the initiative of the Lithuanian Seimas “Ukraine

<sup>1</sup> Музиченко, Я. (2019). Художниця Віолетта Цибочкіна: «Україна для литовців – священна...». *Україна Молода* <<https://www.umoloda.kiev.ua/number/3481/164/135165/>> (2023, March, 16).

<sup>2</sup> Ярошук, О. (2017). «Ми перестали хотіти допомагати». Як литовець та українка повертають ветеранів до життя. *Українська правда* <<https://life.pravda.com.ua/authors/58ac00279b9e3/>> (2023, March, 09).

<sup>3</sup> Blue/Yellow (2023). *Homepage* <<https://www.blue-yellow.lt/en/#section1>> (2023, March, 10); Ukrinform (2017). *At a teleconcert in Lithuania, volunteers raised 120,000 euros to support Ukraine* <<https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/2156521-na-telekoncerti-v-litvi-volontieri-zibrali-na-pidtrimku-ukraini-120-tis-evro.html>> (2023, March, 15).

<sup>4</sup> Слово і Діло (2021). *Прем'єр Литви назвала ключові реформи для України* <<https://www.slovoidilo.ua/2021/07/08/novyna/polityka/premyer-lytvy-nazvala-klyuchovi-reformy-ukrayiny>> (2023, March, 08); Посольство України у Литовській Республіці (2021). *Сильна Україна зроби́ть сильнішим Європейський Союз – Володимир Зеленський на Четвертій Конференції з питань реформ* <<https://lithuania.mfa.gov.ua/news/silna-ukrayina-zrobit-silnishim-yevropejskij-soyuz-volodimir-zelenskij-na-chetvertij-konferenciyi-z-pitan-reform>> (2023, March, 07).

<sup>5</sup> Міністерство економіки України (2022). *Довідка щодо діяльності Міжурядової українсько-литовської комісії з питань торговельно-економічного та науково-технічного співробітництва* <<https://www.me.gov.ua/Documents/Detail?lang=uk-UA&id=5a59140e-a706-4e4a-b599-ab8d8fc92cfe&title=Litva>> (2023, March, 10).

<sup>6</sup> BBC Україна (2016). *Зірки-реформатори: хто і чому не зміг змінити Україну* <[https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/politics/2016/11/161115\\_reformers\\_stars\\_government\\_vc](https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/politics/2016/11/161115_reformers_stars_government_vc)> (2023, March, 15).

<sup>7</sup> Урядовий портал, Служба Віце-прем'єр-міністра України (2018). *У Вільнюсі відбулося XIII засідання Постійної українсько-литовської комісії з питань європейської інтеграції* <<https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/u-vilnyusi-vidbulosya-xiii-zasidannya-postijnoyi-ukrayinsko-litovskoyi-komisiyi-z-pitan-yevropejskoyi-integraciyi>> (2023, March, 20); Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija (2020). *Lietuva ir Ukraina aptarė Ukrainos eurointegracijos reformas* <<https://urm.lt/default/lt/naujienos/lietuva-ir-ukraina-aptare-ukrainos-eurointegracijos-reformas>> (2023, March, 24).

2027” from 2018 etc. At the level of oblasts of state officials of Ukraine and heads of medical institutions, Lithuanian specialists shared practical experience of medical reform in Lithuania<sup>1</sup>. In general, all the experience in implementing reforms is summarized at the International Reform Conferences in Ukraine (Ukraine Reform Conference) – a key annual international event dedicated to the expert discussion of the progress of reforms in Ukraine<sup>2</sup>. During the period from 2017 to 2021, 4 such meetings were held. The last of them was held on July 7-8, 2021 in Vilnius. The conference identified key areas for reform: the judiciary, decentralization, privatization, state enterprise reform, land market reform, public administration reform, independence and effective functioning of anti-corruption institutions, criminalization of illicit enrichment, energy sector reform, security and defense sector reform, and others. All these reforms are united in the “National Economic Strategy 2030”<sup>3</sup>.

Thus, the results of the study allow us to conclude that during the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine in late 2013 – early 2014, the Lithuanian political leadership and ordinary citizens supported the European and civilizational aspirations of the Ukrainian people, who went into conflict with pro-Russian forces. Ukraine and hampered its development. In this context, it should be noted that the solidarity expressed by Lithuania and other European countries was important for Ukrainians in terms of consolidation and motivation, and strengthened the hope that the chances for European integration have not yet been lost.

The further development of events in Ukraine related to Russian aggression shows that despite all the risks and threats, Lithuania has remained consistent in supporting the Ukrainian people in their struggle for independence. A strong confirmation of Lithuania’s position is the scale of Ukraine’s support in various areas – political, diplomatic, sanctions, military, medical, humanitarian and reform. Whatever the motives of the Lithuanian political leadership in its decisions in favor of Ukraine, one thing is for sure, Lithuania is a reliable and determined ally of Ukraine on its path to establishing itself as a powerful European state.

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