

EU report: Evaluation of Ukrainian reforms shows considerable progress but need to accelerate implementation to reap full benefits

Progress in other areas has been less forthcoming, with accelerated implementation needed to bring about real change for the Ukrainian people.

“Since last year’s report, we have seen a number of long-awaited achievements. Our Association Agreement entered into force, and Ukrainian citizens were granted visa-free travel for short stay visits to the Schengen area. We now expect the implementation of reforms to be accelerated so that Ukrainian citizens can fully reap the benefits of our partnership. Ukraine can count on the European Union’s continued support in order to make this possible”, said the High Representative/Vice-President, Federica **Mogherini**.

“We remain convinced of the fundamental commitment of the Ukrainian President, government and Rada to deep-seated reform of the country. Of course this has not been a straightforward process: corruption is deep-rooted and there are vested interests that need to be overcome; naturally there are setbacks along the way that we must contend with. We are at times critical, and we insist on certain conditions, yet we are aware of how much Ukraine has already changed, with much more having been achieved in the past three years than in the decades before that, and under very challenging circumstances. The European Union will stick with Ukraine”, said the Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes **Hahn**.

This 2nd Joint Association Implementation Report on Ukraine, which has been published ahead of the EU-Ukraine Association Council on 8 December 2017, sets out the state of play of Ukraine’s commitment under the Association Agreement since the last meeting of the Association Council in December 2016. It focuses on key developments and reforms undertaken in line with the strategic priorities agreed between the EU and Ukraine.

In the course of 2017, mechanisms for policy coordination, steering and monitoring of the implementation of the Association Agreement were being set up by the government, which led to uneven progress of implementation in various sectoral areas. The report stresses the urgent need to streamline various reform tracks in Ukraine and accelerate the pace of implementation in 2018.

The report outlines that Ukraine has pursued the implementation of structural reforms, generating positive trends in the economic and social spheres despite internal and external challenges. The year 2017 also witnessed important legislative developments in areas such as the electricity market, energy efficiency, environment, education and decentralisation. Furthermore, key reforms such as pensions, healthcare and food safety were initiated.

Justice sector reform continued with the adoption of a new law on the Constitutional Court and the setting up of the new Supreme Court. The implementation of the Strategy on Public Administration Reform has advanced and the reforming of law enforcement bodies continues.

The report emphasises that Ukraine has continued to advance measures to tackle corruption, but that further steps need to be taken in order for these measures to have tangible benefits. The electronic declarations of assets submitted nearly a year ago by high-level public figures and officials, for example, have yet to be analysed. The number of convictions when it comes to high-profile cases of alleged corruption also remains low; the rapid establishment of an anti-corruption court, in line with the recommendation of the Venice Commission, would be essential in this regard.

The report acknowledges the continued, resolute policy actions taken by the Ukrainian authorities, supported by international partners, which resulted in a consolidated stabilisation of the economy. As a result, in September 2017, after four years, Ukraine returned to the international capital markets raising over €2.5 billion (\$3 billion) with a 15-year maturity. Thanks to the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, Ukrainian and EU businesses have received stable, preferential market access. Ukraine's overall trade with the EU increased by 28.4% in the period January–July 2017 compared to the same period in 2016.

The European Union continues to fully support Ukraine's independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty. We condemn and do not recognise the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation. The European Union also continues to support the diplomatic efforts to find a lasting peaceful solution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine through the complete implementation of the Minsk Agreements.

More information:

[Full Joint Report](#)

[Factsheet on EU-Ukraine relations](#)

[Website of the European Union Delegation in Ukraine](#)

[EU-Ukraine Summit webpage \(12-13 July 2017\)](#)

[European Commission Support Group for Ukraine website](#)

[EU-Ukraine Trade relations website](#)