

Remarks by President Charles Michel after the EU-Ukraine summit on 6 October 2020



It was a pleasure to welcome President Zelenskyy to Brussels for our 22nd EU-Ukraine summit. This was the first physical EU Summit in Brussels since the COVID-19 crisis. That highlights the importance the European Union attaches to our relationship with Ukraine.

The EU is – and will remain – Ukraine’s biggest and most reliable partner.

Since 2014, the EU has mobilised more than 15 billion euros through grants and loans to assist Ukraine in its reform efforts. And we want to deepen our relationship with Ukraine even further. Our cooperation in combatting COVID-19 has reconfirmed the solidarity and close partnership between the EU and Ukraine.

Today we discussed 3 key areas of our relationship:

1. Covid-19
2. EU-Ukraine Association Agreement & Reform Agenda
3. Foreign and Security Policy

We need to fight COVID together, as one global community. That’s why the EU mobilised a 190 million euro support package in addition to the 1,2 billion euros in macro-financial assistance.

This represents the biggest support for an eastern neighbour of the EU. And today President Zelenskyy also suggested cooperation on the production of a future vaccine. We appreciate this proposal as part of double efforts to fight the pandemic and we are ready to explore in more concrete terms how we can achieve more goals together.

Our EU-Ukraine Association Agreement provides the framework for our continuing political association. It aims to establish conditions for enhanced economic and trade relations leading towards Ukraine’s gradual integration in the EU Internal Market.

In fact, this Agreement is the most ambitious that the EU has with any country. And we are fully committed to driving it forward, including in important areas like green and digital. Ukraine has made substantial progress in implementing this agreement, and we welcome the impressive efforts under President Zelenskyy’s leadership.

Today we discussed the next steps to implement the Agreement, including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (AA/DCFTA). We discussed how to deepen our cooperation within its framework. We will review our progress in 2021. These have enormous potential to benefit the citizens and businesses.

Today at the summit, we have also signed three more financial agreements on support to the east of Ukraine, civil society and climate.

The EU and Ukraine share the values of democracy, which are being translated into concrete structural reforms. Ukraine's decentralisation, electoral reform, and land and banking reforms represent important recent achievements. We agreed that strengthening the rule of law and fighting corruption and vested interests was essential for investment and economic growth.

The European Union will continue to support Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity. We condemn the illegal annexation by Russia of the Crimean Peninsula. The EU's support to the full implementation of the Minsk Agreements and the non-recognition of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by Russia remains steadfast.

Sanctions in support of these policies have been extended through 2021. On October 1st, the Council listed two individuals and four entities for their role in the construction of the Kerch Bridge and rail.

President Zelenskyy is working hard to resolve the conflict and has made significant steps. We call on Russia to reciprocate.

We support the diplomatic efforts in the Normandy Format and the Trilateral Contact Group to find a peaceful solution that respects Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty. We call on Russia to do its part of the bargain.

We also discussed the importance of next year's Eastern Partnership Summit, and other key events of our common neighbourhood.

COVID has taught us one important lesson that will outlive the virus itself: the importance of relationships and working together.

That's why today's physical meeting is such a potent symbol – it shows our steadfast commitment to deepening our relationship with Ukraine. And it sends a clear signal to our citizens – both in the EU and Ukraine – of the importance of our relationship in these challenging times. Thank you.

[Visit the meeting page](#)