

# 5<sup>th</sup> UKRAINE REALITY CHECK

May 24, 2017

*Kyiv, Ukraine, Embassy of Lithuania  
21 Buslivska Street*

## PROGRAMME

The Eastern Partnership Reality Check is a policy review process that gathers top domestic and international analysts, practitioners, diplomats and policy-makers covering Eastern Partnership countries behind closed doors in order to produce in-depth insights in this area. Under the aegis of Lithuania's EU Presidency (July-December 2013), the first such review was the Belarus Reality Check (BRC) enacted in Vilnius, Lithuania October 2012.

The first two Ukraine Reality Checks were held in Kyiv (June 2013 and October 2014), while the third one took place in Riga under Latvia's EU presidency (April 2015). For its 4<sup>th</sup> edition in 2016, the Ukraine Reality Check returned to Kyiv, where—thanks to the support of the Lithuanian and Latvian Ministries of Foreign Affairs and programmatic contributions from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the 5<sup>th</sup> edition will take place this year as well. The meeting will provide evidence- and ground-based analysis and balanced policy advice with the help of top Ukrainian and international experts and practitioners. Speakers are asked for short inputs, but active participation is expected from all invited participants. The meeting will result in a non-paper that will be fact-checked and peer-reviewed before being widely distributed.

09.00 – 09.30 Registration & Welcome Coffee

09.30 – 09.45 **Opening and Welcome Remarks**

**Darius Skusevičius**, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania

**Juris Poikāns**, Latvian Ambassador to Ukraine

**Balázs Jarábik**, Nonresident Scholar, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

**Dovilė Šukytė**, Policy Analyst, Eastern Europe Studies Centre

**Supporters:**



**Implementer:**



## 09.45 – 11.15 **Ukraine's (Geo)Politics: Consolidation and Resistance**

Despite expectations of early elections due to the fragile parliamentary coalition President Petro Poroshenko has succeeded in consolidating military, judicial, and overall political power under his watch. Critics argue that this consolidation is being brought about due to dubious mixed methods, such as the banning of Russian social networks among others. Ukrainian oligarchs, long the guarantors of pluralistic political competition, are under pressure; as a result, most of them are working with the president.

Ukraine has been granted a visa-free regime with the EU; moreover, despite many challenges a slight majority of Ukrainians continue to support integration with the West. Even though the Association Agreement was salvaged, the Dutch referendum reinforced the message that there are serious obstacles along the path towards membership in NATO and the EU. Kyiv has been quick to argue that it deserves more from the EU for choosing the West over Russia; meanwhile, it seems the West is a hostage of geopolitical polarization when it comes to its policy impact on Ukraine.

**Moderator: Katya Gorchinskaya**, CEO, Hromadske

**Volodymyr Paniotto**, General Director, Kyiv International Institute of Sociology

**Yevhen Hlibovitsky**, Founder, Pro Mova

**Denys Kiryukin**, Research Scholar, Institute of Philosophy at National Academy of Science

**Yuriy Romanenko**, Editor-in-Chief, Hvylya

11.15 – 11.30 Coffee Break

## 11.30 – 13.00 **Donbas and Ukraine's Security: Too Hot to Freeze**

The unresolved conflict in eastern Ukraine still overshadows most of other issues, and the main reason keeping Ukraine in the headlines is the continuing fight in Donbas and the conflict with Russia. The Minsk Agreements may be frozen but the Donbas conflict is not. As a gloomy reminder of how the conflict is “alive”, the OSCE SMM recently lost its first international observer. The Donbas conflict arguably keeps Kyiv in “war mode”, limiting reform momentum and concentrating resources on a conflict Kyiv cannot militarily win. On the other hand, the Donbas conflict is enabling security sector reform to proceed, with profound political implications—including cementing the patriotic minded electorate. There are very few voices to advocate for reconciliation at home or for any peace with Russia, also due to the increased pressure.

**Supporters:**



**Implementer:**



**Moderator: Mariia Zolkina**, Analyst, Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation

**Oleksandr Lytvynenko**, Deputy Secretary, National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine

**Matthias Zander**, Human Dimension Unit, OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine

**Paul Dziatkowiec**, Project Manager - Ukraine, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue

**Vasyl Filipchuk**, Chairman of the Board, International Centre for Policy Studies

**Konstantin von Eggert**, Programme Host and Commentator, Dozhd

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00 – 15.30 **Economy: Stable but Weak?**

Ukraine achieved solid growth, macroeconomic stabilization, and lower inflation rates, thanks to structural reforms, a gradual recovery from the economic shock of the loss of territories in the east, higher world prices for Ukrainian exports, and Western financial assistance. Major sectors of the economy—agriculture, construction, industry, trade, and transportation as well as construction—all showed growth. Merchandise exports fell chiefly due to a 25.6 percent fall in exports to Ukraine’s traditionally largest partner, Russia. At the same time, the pace of economic reforms decelerated, and one much-anticipated reform, the planned privatization of state-owned enterprises, did not take place.

**Moderator: Iaroslava Savastieieva**, Head of Compliance, European Business Association

**Veronika Movchan**, Academic Director, Head of the Center for Economic Studies

**Ivan Mikloš**, Chief Economic Advisor to Prime Minister of Ukraine & Chairman, Strategic Advisory Group for Support of Ukrainian Reforms (SAGSUR)

**Vladimir Dubrovskiy**, Expert, CASE Ukraine

**Marina Petrov**, Deputy Director, EBRD Ukraine

15.30 – 15.45 Coffee Break

15.45 – 17.15 **Reform Review: Steady or Slow?**

As the recent Carnegie’s Ukraine Reform Monitor concluded, in the past year, Ukraine’s reforms proceeded more slowly than previously against the background of consolidation of executive power under President Poroshenko, resistance from oligarchs, and opposition in the parliament. Nonetheless, the government of Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman managed to sustain the momentum of reform, despite having a very slim parliamentary majority.

**Supporters:**



**Implementer:**



**Moderator: Roland Kovats**, Chief of Party, USAID funded ENGAGE activity, Pact

**Olena Bilan**, Chief Economist, Dragon Capital, Vox Ukraine

**Eka Tkeshelashvili**, Head of EU Anti-Corruption Program in Ukraine

**Marius Janukonis**, Lithuanian Ambassador to Ukraine

**Martin Hagström**, Swedish Ambassador to Ukraine

**Hugues Mingarelli**, EU Ambassador to Ukraine, Head of the EU Delegation to Ukraine

17.15 – 17.30 Closing Remarks

18.00 – 20.00 Dinner Reception at the Latvian Embassy (Ivana Mazepy 6B, Kyiv)

**Supporters:**



**Implementer:**

