

# HOW THE UKRAINIAN DIASPORIC COMMUNITY IN GERMANY CONTRIBUTES TO EU'S POLICY IN ITS HOME COUNTRY

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*IEP Policy Paper on Eastern Europe and Central Asia*

**No. 9**  
published 11 May 2016

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*IEP Policy Papers on Eastern Europe and Central Asia* are published in the framework of the research project “The European Union and Russia in Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus: Integration rivalry between East and West?”. This project, which aims at analysing the EU’s relations with its East European and Central Asian partners and the role of Germany therein, is led by the deputy director of IEP, Dr. Katrin Böttger and financially supported by the Otto Wolff-Foundation.

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Publisher: Prof. Dr. Mathias Jopp, Director, IEP

Executive Editor: Dr. Katrin Böttger, Deputy Director, IEP

Layout: Sebastian von Stosch, IEP

*Published in May 2016*

## **Abstract**

Civic engagement of Ukrainians for their home country has dramatically increased since the protests on the Majdan in Kyiv started in November 2013. Based on the results of a research project on Ukrainian civic engagement in Germany and Poland, the paper presents first results on the development of an Ukrainian civil society in Germany. Following a mapping of the non-state actors involved and their fields of activity with regard to their support of Ukraine, the paper analyses why people are voluntarily getting engaged and what they are aiming for. Finally, the paper discusses whether these activities contribute to the EU's policy towards Ukraine and how the EU could further support these actors in order to benefit from their activities.

# 1. Introduction

Civic engagement of Ukrainians for their home country has dramatically increased since the protests on the Maidan in Kyiv started in November 2013. Based on the results of a research project on Ukrainian civic engagement in Germany and Poland, the paper presents first results on the development of new civil society actors addressing Ukraine. The first hypothesis we discuss in our paper is the formation of a new Ukrainian ‘diasporic community’ in Germany. We briefly map the non-state actors, who are part of the newly developing ‘diasporic community’, and their fields of activity with regard to their support of Ukraine. This development is marked by two trends: first, Ukrainians, who hardly have had any contact with the ‘old Ukrainian diaspora’<sup>1</sup>, became active. Second, a number of informal initiatives founded in late 2013 or early 2014 are undergoing a process of formalization and professionalization. Whether these processes will result in a new sustainable ‘diasporic community’ of Ukrainians in Germany is not clear, yet.

The analysis provides further evidence that these newly established non-state actors strongly support European values as well as the democratization and Western orientation of Ukraine. Nevertheless, hardly any of their activities directly aim at democratizing the state. But many of the people engaged apply European norms, especially with regard to transparency, to their own activities. Our second hypothesis is

that via practical application of European values and norms in cooperation with Ukrainian partners and authorities these norms and values are diffused to Ukraine. In this way, the civil society actors of the ‘diasporic community’ contribute to the democratization of Ukraine. We discuss this hypothesis at the example of the norm of transparency, which is of great importance to the civil society actors we interviewed.

Many of them, especially those active in humanitarian and military aid, replace and/or support the Ukrainian state in fulfilling specific functions. Our third hypothesis is that these activities contribute to stabilizing the new government. We discuss whether this stabilization contributes to democratization or undermines the Ukrainian government’s willingness to implement reforms.

The diffusion of norms and values contributes to the EU’s commitment to support good governance, democracy, rule of law and human rights in the neighborhood countries. Also, by stabilizing the current Ukrainian government, the civil society actors indirectly support the EU’s Eastern Partnership (EaP), which identified stabilization as the most urgent challenge for the next years. Nevertheless, Ukrainians living in EU member states have hardly been addressed by the EU’s Ukraine policy. In its final section, the paper discusses how the EU can support Ukrainian diasporic organizations to better benefit from their direct and indirect contribution to the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) towards Ukraine.

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<sup>1</sup> We define ‘old Ukrainian diaspora’ as a homogenous group of people of Ukrainian decent living in the first, second or third generation in Germany (for details see below).

## 2. The Research Project and Design

The joint research project ‘Ukrainians in Poland and Germany – Civic and Political Engagement, Expectations and Courses of Actions’ of the Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw, and the Institut für Europäische Politik, Berlin, surveys the civic engagement of Ukrainians living in Germany and Poland. Specifically, the objectives of the research project are:

- a. Mapping the fields, intensity and structure of Ukrainians’ engagement as well as its potential contribution to the process of democratization in Ukraine;
- b. Exploring how the Ukrainian diaspora was influenced by recent developments in Ukraine since November 2013;
- c. Providing recommendations how public and private actors on the EU level and in Poland, Germany and Ukraine can support Ukrainians’ civic engagement in both countries to indirectly support the process of democratization in Ukraine.

In both countries combined a total of more than 80 structured interviews were conducted with volunteers engaged for Ukraine individually, in formal organisations, or non-formalised initiatives, as well as experts who are well informed about the communities of Ukrainians in Poland and Germany. Concerning the selection of interviewees, it was the goal to maximise heterogeneity and include people active in the whole range of civic engagement from both countries. Following desk research to identify first interview partners, additional interviewees were selected by snowball sampling. The interviews were conducted in waves in order to control the criterion of heterogeneity.

For the transcription and coding of the interviews the software “f4analyse” was used. The interviews were analysed following Mayring’s

(2003) qualitative content analysis. Starting with an initial code system developed out of our hypotheses, further codes were inductively added during the process of coding. For this paper we focused on the results for Germany and analysed the retrievals for a second time.

## 3. A New ‘Diasporic Community’ – New Civil Society Actors in the Making?

In the course of the events following the previous Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich’s rejection to sign the Association Agreement with the European Union in late 2013, the mobilization and politicization of Ukrainians was not restricted to their home country. Ukrainians and foreign citizens with personal ties to Ukraine living abroad were also politicized when the protests on the Maidan took place. Based on our interviews in Germany we hypothesize that this mobilization is not just a temporary politicization of Ukrainians living in this country, but that we are observing the emergence of a new Ukrainian ‘diasporic community’ in this context.

In the same manner as Euromaidan has functioned as a motivation to get engaged in the first place, it has also functioned as a connecting tie for a greater civil society. It is striking that the events in Ukraine since the end of 2013 brought together scattered groups of Ukrainians already engaging in civil society in Germany and Ukrainians who have not been engaged beforehand. Euromaidan can be regarded as an initial trigger for creating a sense of community among the people engaged, further deepened due to the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation and the war in the Eastern regions of Ukraine. During the early times of protest, many new diasporic initiatives and projects

were initiated, but did not cease to exist when the protests ended. In late 2013 and early 2014 the initiatives focused on political protest (e.g. the 'Alternative Botschaft' of 'Euromaidanwache' opposite the Ukrainian embassy in Berlin) and information activities addressed to the German public. While informing Germans about the developments in Ukraine remains an objective of great importance to the volunteers, political protest was hardly of any importance at the end of 2015. Instead, humanitarian aid has become a major field of activity since the first people were wounded on Maidan and its importance increased when the war in Eastern Ukraine began. Turning towards this new field of activity, many of the newly founded initiatives and projects had to begin a process of formalization and professionalization. While political protest and public relation campaigns do not necessarily require formal structures, collecting donations, applying for funding and dealing with Ukrainian authorities while transporting humanitarian goods to Ukraine does. For these reasons, many of the originally informal initiatives became formal organizations during 2015. Also, the cooperation between the newly emerging actors is undergoing a process of professionalization, as the necessity of umbrella organizations is widely debated and a number of initiatives try to establish forums of exchange between the organizations. The Euromaidan not only resulted in the emergence of new Ukrainian civil society actors in Germany, but the Russian aggression against Ukraine seems to result in their enduring establishment.

Interviewees from these initiatives, projects and organizations have often made clear that they do not consider themselves as part of a 'diaspora'. They either rejected the term deliberately or they were indifferent to it. After being asked, interview partners strongly connected the term 'diaspora' with 'old diaspora'. They linked this term to a specific group of people that came to Germany one or more generations ago and to their descendants.

Many interview partners described this group as homogenous and very conscious of religious and cultural traditions. In contrast to this group, most of the people interviewed can be related to what we call a new 'diasporic community'. Even though they do not necessarily identify themselves as part of such a group, they quite often share certain characteristics, values and goals. Even though one can observe an existing dividing line between the 'old diaspora' and the 'diasporic community' with regard to religiousness, identity and age, it has also become clear that members of both groups work together on several levels.

The initially loose group of newly mobilized activists mostly consists of migrant laborers and students who have come to Germany during the past couple of years. Some of them live in Germany only temporary and do not necessarily want to stay in the long term and maintain close ties to their family and friends in Ukraine. In the interviews, many of the engaged highlighted the important role of social media for their work as well as for their connection with members of the diaspora in Germany or elsewhere. Up to a certain degree, the digitalization of diaspora creates an international or transnational public sphere in which Ukrainians in Germany debate on general questions concerning Ukraine with other Ukrainians living abroad or within the country itself. This transnationalisation of the public sphere could be described in the transnational concept of a 'digital diaspora'. At the same time, members of the 'diasporic community' quite often show a high willingness to integrate in the society of their new place of residence. Before Euromaidan, they mostly did not engage or interact in 'diasporic groups' in Germany. If they did, the main focus of their engagement was put on cultural aspects.

In conclusion, based on the results of the interviews, in the case of Germany one cannot speak of the 'Ukrainian diaspora' as an entity. Different actors with different agendas and

approaches towards civic engagement and self-positioning can be observed. The analysis of these different groups is crucial for identifying non-state actors which can function as important partners for the EU's foreign policy. Yet it remains to be seen if the 'diasporic community' will become manifest in a so-called 'imagined community' in the sense of Anderson.

#### 4. Maidan Values are European Values

In spite of the different agendas and approaches which the volunteers of the newly emerging Ukrainian 'diasporic community' in Germany pursue, they share common European values. These encompass the values listed in art. 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU): human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Moreover, even though these values could also be seen as universal, the majority of active Ukrainians in Germany, irrespective of their field of activity, associated these values explicitly with the EU. European values are often mentioned along with the objectives of Euromaidan. This emphasizes the fact that the values of Euromaidan were identical with the values of the European Union:

'Aber wie gesagt, wir sind damals alle zusammen aufgetreten und [haben] demonstriert für [den] europäische[n] Weg, für europäische[s] Recht, für europäische Werte in der Ukraine'<sup>2</sup> (interview).

The interviewees described Euromaidan as an attempt to build a European democratic society in Ukraine. Accordingly, some of them point out that Euromaidan was less about immediate EU membership, but rather about the implementation of European values in Ukraine. They implicitly

refer to the Europeanization of Ukraine. The research shows that Russia in comparison with Europe is seen as 'imperial power' and 'aggressor' that does not respect democratic principles, dignity and freedom. The Russian political system is understood as the alternative to Europe, democracy and the way the activists hope for.

However, being conceptualised as a common space of European fundamental values, the research shows that the European Union is not understood in terms of its policy instruments. Neither the Eastern Partnership (EaP) nor the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) were mentioned in the interviews. Most of the interviewed Ukrainians are not acquainted with instruments of the ENP. They are not cooperating with the EU.

The activities of the Ukrainian diaspora in Germany actually reveal that some of the values mentioned are an integral part of their daily activities. E.g. acting in a democratic way is central for Ukrainian activists. They set up the structures of their newly founded organizations accordingly, e.g. by inviting Germans and Ukrainians to take part in discussions. At the same time, many of the interviewed Ukrainians also acknowledged the costs of democratic processes, when pointing out that such public discussions complicate the decision-making processes and that they need to find better solutions for effective discussions.

Another value of great relevance for volunteers' own activities is transparency. On the one hand, the Ukrainian activists have a strategic reason to stress the importance of transparency: They try to gain trust among Germans in order to be reliable partners. On the other hand, compliance with this standard has also a normative dimension: They want to support the idea of Europeanization of Ukraine as described below. Therefore, most of the Ukrainian activists try to be transparent with their activities. Especially in the field of humanitarian aid, they document their activities in public, evaluate their projects and publish progress

2 'As I said, at that time we all appeared together and demonstrated for the European way, for European rights and European values in Ukraine' (interview, own translation).

reports (e.g. on social media platforms). Within their projects, they only cooperate with what they consider to be reliable partners on the Ukrainian side. Interviewed volunteers also have strict control over their financial expenses, which they also make public. When cooperating with authorities and partners in Ukraine they withstand corruption. Especially with regard to customs affairs they refuse to pay any bribes to facilitate controls. They also control whether the delivered goods reach the people in need. One interview partner for example reported that he had retrieved delivered goods on a few occasions after realizing that they were not used appropriately.

Defining Europeanization as ‘different forms of diffusion processes of European ideas and practices across time and space’ (Flockhart 2010) the volunteers’ daily interactions with Ukrainian partners and authorities might contribute to the Europeanization of Ukraine. Opposed to top-down approaches of Europeanization where states adopt norms and policies from the EU, either voluntarily or by coercion, diffusion can also take place bottom-up through informal and transnational channels.

Civil society is crucial for these cross-border processes of horizontal diffusion: From a neo-institutionalist perspective the activists’ adherence to certain standards can be considered to pose new legitimacy expectations towards Ukraine. As neo-institutionalist theory expects organisations to react to their sociocultural environment’s expectations, we can assume that diffusion of institutional forms takes place (Scott 2008: 132). The Ukrainian civil society actors from Germany adhere to European norms and values in their daily routine and also promote these when cooperating beyond borders, thus creating a basis for the diffusion of values and norms (Scott/Liikanen 2010: 425). In our research, it became clear that the interviewees commonly share European values, which are an integral part of their civic activities. They are not

only promoting values like democracy and rule of law, but are also adjusting their own activities to European norms like transparency. Though the effects of the diasporic engagement on civil society in Ukraine have not been part of the study, we observed with regard to transparency strong indications that the cooperation between diasporic organizations in Germany and civil society actors as well as authorities like customs in Ukraine can considerably influence the Ukrainian counterparts. Several interviewees stated that within the scope of their cooperation they were demanding adherence to the norm of transparency from their civic partners in Ukraine – and that those demands were predominantly fulfilled. At this point, the diffusion of norms and values in the field of transparency is apparent. Still, we cannot provide evidence whether this is an indicator for an internal re-structuring of the partner organizations or a strategic reaction to the expectations of civil society organizations from Germany to avoid real re-structuring. This deserves attention in future research.

We can conclude that the volunteers active in the newly established organisations and initiatives of the Ukrainian ‘diasporic community’ share common values, which they consider to be European and not universal. As a consequence, the European Union is described as a community of values and not a policy actor in the field of ENP. In their daily activities the volunteering Ukrainians adhere to some of the European values mentioned above in a constant process of reconfirmation. European values such as democracy, transparency or non-corruption are not only shared among active Ukrainians in Germany, but we hypothesize that they are diffused in daily interactions with authorities and non-state actors in Ukraine. Whether organizational inertia or institutional re-structuring will prevail in the long-term perspective, remains an open question for future research.



## 5. Democratizing or Stabilizing the Ukrainian State?

Based on the activists' strong emphasis on the value of democracy and their focus on reforming Ukraine's political system – making it more European, as they put it in the interviews – we assume that they also contribute to the democratization of Ukraine. A first type of activity that can be considered as a contribution to the democratization of Ukraine is the initial protest against the regime of President Viktor Yanukovich. By supporting the protesters on the Maidan, Ukrainians living abroad participated politically in Ukrainian internal affairs. If we regard the inclusiveness of political systems (the number of citizens participating in either decision-making or public debates) to be an indicator for the quality of a certain democratic system (Plotka 2012: 421-422), the mobilization of Ukrainians in the end of 2013 and early 2014 itself is a strengthening of Ukrainian democracy. Especially with regard to our previous hypothesis that at least for those Ukrainians active in Germany it seems very likely that the mobilization has a lasting effect, the newly founded initiatives and organizations mean the durable strengthening of the Ukrainian intermediary system.

Nonetheless, our interviews reveal that increasing political participation and the activation of citizens is of minor concern to the interviewees. When they talk about the objective of democratizing Ukraine, they refer to the accountability and responsiveness of the government and the president:

[D]ann haben wir erklärt, dass wir einfach auch eine Demokratie aufbauen wollen wie das hier in Europa üblich ist und sozusagen unsere Regierung selber wählen wollen und die Kurs [sic!] von unserem Staat auch selber wählen wollen und [dieser] nicht von Präsidenten diktiert [...] sein sollte<sup>3</sup> (interview).

3 'Then we explained we just want to build up a democracy like it is common here in Europe. We want to elect the government on our own and to decide about the general political directions and priorities of our state. Our president should not dictate them' (interview, own translation).

Such an understanding of democratization raises the question, how the diasporic organizations could contribute to institutional reforms in the Ukrainian political system. They could provide expertise to facilitate reforms in the sense of capacity building for government institutions or they could participate in public debates in Ukraine to exert political pressure on the new governments to continue with their reforms, like they did during the protest on the Maidan. Both types of activities would qualify as support of democratisation in the institutional dimension.

Also with regard to the intermediary system in Ukraine the diasporic initiatives and organizations could contribute to capacity building. As mentioned before many of them are undergoing processes of institutionalization and professionalization. During these processes, they gain experience and build up expertise, which might be fruitful for civil society organisations in Ukraine. Empowering civil society actors or parties by providing this newly developed expertise would also qualify as supporting democratization.

Our interviews with active Ukrainians in Germany reveal that none of these expected activities can be observed. Until the end of 2015, there were neither activities initiated by Ukrainians living in Germany which aim at capacity building for government institutions nor for civil society organization. This does not mean that there are no German organizations active in this field, but such initiatives are not organized by the Ukrainian 'diasporic community'.<sup>4</sup> However, participation in public debates is one field of continuous activities of Ukrainians living in Germany, which also cover the topic of political reforms in Ukraine. But these debates are taking place in Germany and the prime audience addressed are Germans. The objective of these activities is to contribute to the German public debate instead of the Ukrainian.

4 In early 2016, also a number of diasporic initiatives became active in this field, but those activities are not covered by our project anymore. The last interviews were conducted in October 2015.

So far, our hypothesis is refuted, as none of the expected activities is observed.

The second important field of activity of Ukrainian individuals, initiatives and organizations in Germany is the provision of humanitarian aid. Our interviews show that a substantial part of the ‘diasporic community’s’ activities aim at supporting the Ukrainian army, hospitals, rescue and social services, families, displaced persons and especially the bereaved of soldiers. The support for the regular Ukrainian army – independent battalions are not supported according to our interview partners – includes all types of equipment except weapons, but including cars, uniforms, protective vests and helmets. Hospitals and rescue services are supplied with ambulances, hospital furniture, medical equipment and drugs.

The humanitarian aid of the ‘diasporic community’ steps in where the Ukrainian state is not able to completely fulfil its tasks. The newly founded civil society organizations selectively replace the state in providing public services. Notably the provision of equipment to the army is a core function of states. In the short-term perspective, the provision of public services by civil society actors stabilizes the Ukrainian government. Under the condition that the government uses this discharge to pursue democratic reforms, the engagement of the Ukrainian diaspora can also be seen as a contribution to democratization.<sup>5</sup>

In crises, this kind of stabilization has most likely positive effects, as it reduces reform pressure in some fields, giving the government discretion to pursue reforms step by step. But in the medium- to long-term perspective, reversed consequences can be expected. While an enduring support of the Ukrainian army after conflict

resolution is unlikely, the provision of other services will probably continue as long as there are people in need. Depending on the size of the civil society’s contributions, continuous support will reduce reform pressure, potentially resulting in an omission of necessary reforms. Reform pressure will increase again, when civil society actors withdraw from their activities. In case they do not refrain, even the reduction of the public sector and a transformation of the Ukrainian welfare system towards an increased role of private actors could be long-term consequences.

For our hypothesis that diasporic initiatives and organizations contribute to democrati-zation of Ukraine, we could find no evidence with two exceptions: The potential diffusion of norms, as described in the previous section, as well as the mobilization of citizens and the founding of new civil society organization. But no activities directly aiming at institutional reforms in Ukraine were observed. Instead, the temporary fulfilment of state functions by civil society actors supports the Ukrainian government’s reforms and thus the state’s democratization. Whether this support has the same effect in the long-term perspective or might result in reversed effects in the long-run deserves future research.

## **6. The Newly Established Actors: Partners for the European Union?**

The Euromaidan and the ongoing events in Ukraine lead to the emergence of new civil society actors, strongly supporting European values and the Europeanization of Ukraine. Thus, the engagement of Ukrainians should also be viewed in a wider, European context – namely the ENP. The ENP (complemented by the regional EaP) was created to achieve close relations with the EU’s bordering countries and to foster stability and

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<sup>5</sup> Another way, how initiatives of the ‘diasporic community’ contribute to democratization of Ukraine is described in the previous section.

prosperity in these regions. With the creation of the Civil Society Forum and, within this framework, country specific forums like the Ukrainian National Platform the EU also demonstrates the relevance it attributes to civil society with regard to the objectives of the ENP.

The objective of stability only recently gained in importance when the EU identified stabilization as the most urgent challenge for the ENP in the upcoming years (European Commission 2015). Ukrainian civil society actors in Germany are already indirectly engaged in this process of stabilization as described before and are thus indirectly supporting the policy of the ENP in Ukraine.

Whilst stabilization can be seen as a medium-term objective, one of the long-term goals of the ENP is the promotion of the EU's core liberal values like human rights, democracy and rule of law in its neighbourhood (Schimmelfennig 2009). Whilst the effectiveness of the 'normative power Europe' (Manners 2013) is put in question, the diasporic actors' adherence to the norm of transparency is a concrete example where the normative power of Europe exerts direct influence through a bottom-up approach. Here again, the newly established civil society actors support the EU's ENP or foreign policy in general.

The European Union is widely aware of the importance of civil society and the cross-border cooperation between civil society actors (Council of the European Union 2012). But the benefits of a closer cooperation with diasporic communities within the European Union are largely overseen. However, especially the Ukrainian case shows that the diaspora can play a crucial role in pursuing the goals of the ENP, like stabilization and Europeanization. But though having the same objectives, neither the EU nor the Ukrainian diaspora in Germany consider each other as complementary partners, but rather act independently.

Therefore, an important step for the EU would be to recognize the importance of the Ukrainian diasporic engagement and increase their support, e.g. financially. Ukrainian initiatives and organizations in Germany are often struggling with a lack of financial funding, but at the same time they are not applying for European funds at all – either they are not informed about such opportunities or they feel discouraged facing the high demands for applications and the own advances involved. The EU should not only promote their funding offers more publicly, but also dismantle the bureaucracy of the application process and take greater account of the structural and financial situation of smaller organizations when allocating funds. With funding from the EU the Ukrainian organizations in Germany could extend their activities and contribute to further stabilization and bottom-up Europeanization of Ukraine. With regard to the process of Europeanization and cross-border cooperation, the European Endowment for Democracy (EED), an instrument conceived in the framework of the ENP to support civil society, should also be used more efficiently. The EED is mainly funding organizations outside EU-borders but also from within which pursue projects to improve democracy in the European neighbourhood. The Ukrainian diaspora is not involved in the EED, but encouraging and funding joint projects between Ukrainian diasporic organizations and civic actors in Ukraine would be an important step with respect to the goals of the ENP. Furthermore, the Ukrainian diaspora should not only be included in the EED, but also in the Civil Society Forum, where it currently does not play a role either. This initiative aims at strengthening civil society in the EaP countries, connecting organizations from these countries as well as the EU to foster cross-border cooperation and exchange of expertise

in five thematically different working groups.<sup>6</sup> Whilst the inclusion of Ukrainian diasporic organizations is not reasonable in some of these working groups because they are not active in certain fields, e.g. environment or social policies, involving Ukrainian activists from Germany would be indeed rewarding in other areas. This especially concerns the field of ‘Democracy, Human Rights, Good Governance and Stability’, where the promotion of transparency as tool to fight corruption is one of the main goals (Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum 2014). With their experience in promoting transparency, Ukrainian civil society actors could considerably contribute to the mediation of best-practices and therefore to the success of the EU’s initiative. Finally, the European Union should also advocate the visa-free regime with Ukraine more emphatically. It would facilitate the activities of Ukrainian engagement in Germany, especially in the field of humanitarian aid, and encourage the exchange and cross-border cooperation between civic actors in Germany and Ukraine.

## 7. Conclusion

The most important finding of our research project is that the political protests in Ukraine known as Euromaidan or the ‘Revolution of Dignity’ have resulted in a political mobilization of Ukrainians living in Germany. Initially being informal

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6 These include ‘Democracy, Human Rights, Good Governance and Stability’; ‘Economic Integration and Convergence with EU Policies’; ‘Environment, climate change and energy security’; ‘Contacts Between People’ and ‘Social Policies and Social Dialogue’.

and loosely organized initiatives, the Russian annexation of the Crimean peninsula and the war in Eastern Ukraine resulted in their continuous engagement. Turning from political protest to humanitarian aid forced many of these initiatives to start a process of institutionalization and professionalization. As a consequence we observe the establishment of a number of new civil society actors, which should become partners of the EU. The Ukrainians and other persons with personal ties to Ukraine active in these initiatives and organizations share certain characteristics, what leads us to describe them as being part of a newly established ‘diasporic community’. Whether this community will be sustainable and develop into a new diaspora, cannot be answered yet.

One of the characteristics the ‘diasporic community’s’ members share is their support for the European values as mentioned in art. 2 TEU. They consider the European Union a community of values, while they do not perceive it as a policy actor. At the example of the norm of transparency we could show that diasporic actors’ daily cooperation with the Ukrainian side results in diffusion effects of European norms. That way, the newly established civil society actors contribute to the EU’s objective of the promotion of European values. Furthermore, at the example of stabilizing the Ukrainian government through partly fulfilling state functions in Ukraine, we could show that the diasporic organizations and initiatives support a second objective of the EU: stabilization of the EU’s neighbourhood.

But though the European Union and the Ukrainian diaspora are pursuing the same goals in Ukraine, they act independently. The EU should recognize the benefits of a closer cooperation with the Ukrainian ‘diasporic community’ in Germany and use existing mechanisms to support and include the diasporic organisations and initiatives to better reach the objectives of the ENP.

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