

Summary

On 21 November 2013, in Kiev's Maidan Square and several rural cities a large-scale waves of mass demonstration began, organised by the opposition's association, named Euro-Maidan. The root cause of the protests was that Viktor Yanukovych, then-president of Ukraine suspended the preparatory process of signing the Association Agreement with the EU, and simultaneously announced that Ukraine wants to be in closer connection with the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union. Accordingly, Kiev entered into negotiations with Russia, agreeing on the remittance of 15 billion dollars of concessional loan. As a result, Moscow transferred 3,6 billion dollars in December 2013. Although the demonstrations seemed to be subsided, video recordings appeared in the press and social media about young protesters assaulted by police officers. Henceforth, the mass demonstrators regained their strength, which aggravated the situation, resulting in casualties on both sides. Despite the fact that Viktor Yanukovych gave his consent to the announcement of early elections, he had to leave Kiev, since both his power and life were at stake. First he flew to Kharkov then fled to Rostov with Russian help.

After that, a new elite came to power whose first bill would prohibit minorities from using their mother tongue. This measure aroused such a great indignation that protests started again. Therefore, a referendum was hold on the secession in the Crimean Peninsula, requesting its admission to the Russian Federation. Russia took the opportunity and annexed the peninsula without resistance. As the South-East Ukrainian took courage, armed conflicts erupted in the region, which could not have been completely ended ever since. The civil war had stages of different intensities. At present, the situation is relatively peaceful, but has not finally been resolved till now. In spite of the armistice, Ukraine cannot extend its power over the region and its relationship with Russia is strained. Besides, there is little prospect of the Crimean Peninsula being part of Ukraine again, and of restoring Ukraine's shattered territorial unity.

After the regime change, Ukraine was in possession of excellent opportunities due to its strong light and heavy industry as well as its favourable agricultural conditions. Nonetheless, Ukraine is one of Europe's most impoverished and hopeless countries. By analysing the recession, it is apparent that this is more than a simple political crisis. The great powers of the world, the Ukrainian oligarchs and politicians connected to the circles of oligarchs are all concerned in the crisis, but the terrible cost is suffered by ordinary people.

The purpose of the dissertation is to present an impartial picture of the Ukrainian crisis and to uncover the possible reasons which might have led to Ukraine – a country with optimal conditions in all aspects – becoming one of Europe's most hopeless countries.