

## **European Integration of Ukrainian Part of Pridunaviye**

**Tetyana Vdovenko<sup>1</sup>**

**Abstract:** European integration is a political, judicial, industrial process and in some cases social and cultural integration of states, which are members of the European Union or are situated in Europe and are aimed to join European society. Ukraine is one of the states, which sees the antecedence of its foreign policy to proclaim such integration. Since 2009 Ukraine became the participant of European Union program «Eastern Partnership». European Union announced the development of integration ties of EU with such countries as Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia to be the aim of such partnership. Integration predetermines the trade zone and general aviation area formation, visa-free area for Ukrainian citizens, participation of Ukraine in scientific and technological projects.

**Keywords:** Pridunaviye; European Union (EU); Euroregion; European integration

European integration is a political, judicial, industrial process and in some cases social and cultural integration of states, which are members of the European Union or are situated in Europe and are aimed to join European society. Ukraine is one of the states, which sees the priority of its foreign policy to proclaim such integration.

Since 2009 Ukraine became the participant of European Union program «Eastern Partnership». European Union announced the development of integration ties of EU with such countries as Ukraine, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Belarus to be the aim of such partnership.

What are the practical aims of Ukraine and Danube region as a part of Ukraine during this period?

First of all this integration predetermines the trade zone formation, visa-free area for Ukrainian citizens, formation of general aviation area with Europe and integration of energetic system of Ukraine into European energy market, participation of Ukrainian part in framework program of EU in science and technologies, support of transboundaring cooperation projects. For realization of these intensions the business council Ukraine – EU, which promoted the development of trade between Ukraine and EU and formed free trade zone was formed in 2005.

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<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor, PhD, Izmail State University of Humanities, Ukraine, Address: Repina St, 12, Izmail, Odessa Region, Ukraine, 68601, Tel.: +38 (04841)51388, Corresponding author: Vdovenko\_Tanya@i.ua.

Ukraine actively uses the principles of European regionalism. It is a well-known fact that 17 administrative regions of Ukraine are bordering. Such Euroregions as «Carpathians», «Lower Danube», «Bug», «Eastern Polesye» were formed along the perimeter of the state border.

Pridunaviye region attracts a special attention as it concerns international cooperation within the framework of the triangle of bordering states – Ukraine, Romania, Moldova. Such cooperation of bordering countries has got the name of transboundaring cooperation.

Transboundaring cooperation means interaction of bordering regions of Ukraine, Moldova and Romania in jointly developed programs of scientific-technical, economic and commercial, ecological, nature conservation and historico-cultural directions. The aim of such transboundaring cooperation is integration of states through integration their regions.

In the process of such cooperation harmonization of inter-country relations takes place, things historically taken place between different countries smooth over. The result of such work is acceleration of socio-economic development of bordering regions, joint human resource and economic infrastructure for deepening of cooperation with the EU development.

European aspiration of the Ukraine's part of Pridunaviye appeared long before the program of Eastern cooperation. In 1997 the establishment of Euroregion agreement «Lower Danube» was achieved between Romania, Moldova and Ukraine and in august 1998 the heads of territorial communities of Euroregion signed the declaration of transboundaring cooperation (Dorosheva, 2015, p. 29).

Geographically Euroregion «Lower Danube» includes Odessa region of Ukraine, uyezds of Brăila, Galați, Tulcea (Romania) and also Moldavian regions – Cahul and Kantemir.

The area of border territories including Euroregion «Lower Danube» is 53,000 square kilometers with population more than 4 million people (Kitic, 2007, p. 7).

Euroregion Council, which includes 3 representatives from each participating country, runs Euroregion. Sections in such spheres as transport, economic cooperation, tourism, ecology, culture and others are created and coordinated by the center.

The financing of the program of transboundaring cooperation «triangle» of the countries Romania – Moldova – Ukraine amounts 30 million euro.

These resources finance activation projects of transboundaring economy, environmental protection, ecological monitoring of the water area of the Danube river and many other projects.

After the formation of the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine concerning European integration in 2000, circuit meeting of the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine took place in Izmail. During the meeting of the Committee the appreciation to the economic activity was given to the Ukrainian Danube Steamship line, which integrates into economic life of Europe in practice.

The Ukrainian Danube Steamship line (UDS) is a powerful enterprise of the Ukrainian Pridunaviye, including several ports, shipyards, the objects of port infrastructure, transport communications and the staff of many thousands.

In fact, the Ukrainian Danube Steamship line became the member of the system of transit traffic of Euroregion long before the resolutions of Ukraine in the direction of European integration. This gave an opportunity to come to more ambitious and large-scale task – opening up transportation from Amsterdam to the Urals through the system of canals, which unite the Danube with the Rhine and the Main.

In this connection the resolutions of Ukraine to provide support to the transport capacity of JSC «Ukrainian Danube Steamship line» by the introduction of the programs of restoration of the marine and passenger fleet were quite logical. Ukraine has supported and financed the series of other transport projects of transboundaring cooperation such as:

- project «Danube – Black Sea»;
- the building of branch railway, joining port Reni with the railway Odessa-Izmail;
- the construction of motor road through Ukrainian part of Dnistrovs'kyi Lyman;
- organization of simplified transition for the citizens of Ukrainian town Kiliya – Veke (Romania).

The project «Danube – Black Sea» is the priority transport project as it optimizes transport logistics of navigation across Kiliya mouth of the Danube. It is extremely important not only for the development of Ukrainian transport potential, but also satisfies strategic interests of European community.

That is why the project «Danube – Black Sea» is included into the list of inland waterways of international importance (water way of category E 80-09) European agreement on the most important inland waterways of international importance. The activities and projects of on the development of the Ukrainian part of the Danube estuary are reflected in suggestions “EU strategies for the Danube region”, and also are included into the Master-plan on restoration and preventive maintenance of the Danube fairway and its navigable tributaries and national roadmaps.

As Ukraine has demonstrated its considerable successes in the intention to join the family of European states in 2014 the EU and Ukraine has completed an agreement

on association. Correspondingly, all the started up projects in Ukrainian Pridunaviye before have got a new jerk for their development.

First of all the point is that the construction of ferry crossing «Orlovka» is adjudicated to increase the amount of car and cargo transportation flows across the south of Odessa region.

The construction of ferry crossing is fulfilled in the narrowest part of the Danube, from here is the name «Orlovka – Isakcha» the names of the settlements of the Ukrainian and Romanian sides. The cost of this transport project has been reconsidered more than once (from 8 mln euro to 12 mln euro). This figure has been given publicity in March 2017 in Odessa regional state administration.

The data of launching this project was also reconsidered more than once. First, it was planned to start in 2014, the last official information asserts that the ferry crossing will start in May 2018. This data was announced by Maxim Stepanov, the chairperson of the Odessa regional state administration, during his visit to the building site of the crossing on the Ukrainian bank. He told that “this year we have begun active building of this complex at the end of spring. The date of term of construction work of ferry crossing is March 31, 2019. And I think in the middle of May we shall be able to put it in commission, and both Ukrainian and European consignors of goods will get a more convenient logistic carrier's route of cargo.”

Four ferries, which will course between Ukrainian and Romanian banks (the distance between them is about 900 meters), will serve the crossing with draft 1,5 meters.

Among other priority directions of the development of Ukrainian Pridunaviye one can focus the creation of the Free Zone at the border of three states Romania – Ukraine – Moldova. Each of the named states possesses its “keys” to the region. Ukraine controls the ports and made its channel «Danube – Black Sea», Romania also possesses the channel «Danube – Black Sea», Moldova has rail accesses and transport infrastructure.

The main idea of functioning of the international zone is to activate freight traffic through Ukrainian seaports, Romanian sea channel and Moldavian railway.

One must underline that Ukrainian side doesn't hold a position of a wingside spectator, but it takes an active part in the given cooperative projects. In 1998 the president's edict of Ukraine about the formation of Special Development Zone in the Reni trade port appeared. It became the first step in the formation of international special economy zone “Reni – Galați – Giurgiuleshty”.

Izmail and Reni sea and trade ports are situated at the crossroad of four transport corridors: № 7, № 9 according to EU Cretan agreements, and also global corridors – of Black Sea economic cooperation and Euro-Asian transport-communication corridor. These ports have a direct connection with 14 European countries.

These peculiarities caused an active interest of three neighbouring states to the region on the triangle Reni (Ukraine) – Galați (Romania) – Giurgiuleshty (Moldova).

It is also important to mention the formation of the Foreign Access Zone «Industrial yard «Valkaneș» in Moldova (Valkaneșty). Collaboration capacity of the Ukrainian part in this Moldavian project leave behind such countries as Bulgaria, Italy, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Holland.

Economic development and cooperation, including transboundaring cooperation, foresees the number of infrastructure and transport projects.

In 2016-2017 Odessa regional council presided at the work of Euroregion «Lower Danube». This led to the activation of the dialogue with Moldova and Romania partners, concerning the projects of car transition improvement in bordering abuttals, completion of sewerage system construction in Vylkove. It gave new opportunities for new joint transboundaring projects in the within the scope of operation program EU «Ukraine – Romania 2014-2020», and also the completion of work and launching of ferry crossing «Orlovka – Isakcha» and «Izmail – Tulcea».

Within the scope of custom-house experiment, the session of the Odessa regional council in 2018 decided to allot 1,5 billion hryvnias to reconstruct roads, including the reconstruction of the highway M 15 Odessa – Izmail – Reni – Bucharest. By the end of 2018 the road will be fully repaired. It concerns the roads in Izmail region of Odessa oblast: Kotlovina – Plavni – Novoselske, Broska – Matroska – Larzhanka – Novaya Nekrasovka, Staraya Nekrasovka – Dunayskoye, Loschinovka – Izmail, Pershetravnevoye – Suvorovo.

Scheduled work on reconstruction of the strategically important bridge is going on across the Dniester river in the settlement Palanka (Odessa region), which according to the regional road data will be reconstructed by the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2018.

Within the framework of transboundaring cooperation one of the most important question is the procedure of the simplified crossing for the citizens of border regions of Ukraine and Romania.

Romanian side in the person of uyezd council of Tulcea informed the Ukrainian side that Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania confirmed the opportunity to use boundary point of admission Izmail – Tulcea for the simplified crossing for the citizens, leaving in the bordering zone (30 km).

Since 2015 consulate general of Romania in Odessa gives the appropriate resolving documents free for the citizens of border regions, drawing up of the documents takes 2 months, the term of action of the permission is from 2 years. The citizens who have water vessels also may have such permission to get to Tulcea and to visit biosphere reserve.

Among other projects, which will take part in the competition is a joint operational program “Romania – Ukraine 2014-2020”, – the project of the formation of the constant passenger water traffic between Izmail and Tulcea.

Izmail tourist agencies intend to make cooperate relations with the tourist agencies of Tulcea uyezd and to sign the documents, necessary for organization of tourist travels to Tulcea and Izmail.

One cannot mention the positive energies of local authorities, the historical center of the Danube region, as the present article is devoted to the European aspirations of the Ukrainian Pridunaviye into integration processes with the EU. The executive committee of Izmail city council is taking part in European grants within the framework of transboundaring cooperation of the association «Lower Danube».

According to the words of Izmail mayor A.Abramchenko, there is no any other executive committee of the city council in Ukraine, which has won as many grants of the EU, as Izmail city council has done. It has won 17 infrastructure projects financed by the EU. The total sum of these projects is more than 10 million euro, the term of realization is 5 years.

Let us consider the most substantial side of the most important projects. The most large-scale project is modernization of Izmail treatment facilities.

This joint Ukrainian-Romanian project «Clean River» presupposes reconstruction and modernization of Izmail treatment facilities. The town has joined the two-year project of the EU, within the framework of which modernization of the town treatment facilities will take place together with the construction of the pumping stations of local treatment facilities.

The partners of the project from the Romanian side are – uyezd council of Tulcea and biosphere reserve “Delta of the Danube”, and from the Ukrainian side – Odessa regional council and Izmail (the main beneficiary of the project).

Within the framework of the project reconstruction and modernization of the treatment facilities with introduction of energy saving technology will take place in Izmail. After this project another will follow, which will give an opportunity to revive Lebyazh'ye lake. It is one of the biggest infrastructure EU projects, realizable in Ukraine, as the cost of the project is 4,3 mln euro.

The town takes an active part in foreign-economic activity, winning and proposing new projects, the aim of which is the attraction of grants from the EU.

10 projects: «Clean River», «Transboundaring infrastructure of health protection», formation of the system of effective management of cultural heritage in historical cities of Ukraine, the projects on the formation of the net centres of relaxation in Euroregion Lower Danube, developing tourism, green tourism, bicycle tourism in

Euroregion Lower Danube and in the Black Sea, municipal energetic reform were worked out to attract grants.

Izmail has already won 4 out of 10 projects – municipal energetic reform, the development of cultural tourism in the Black Sea, Clean River and green tourism, historical heritage – are the steps for the development of the Black Sea area. At the moment the realization of the project USAID «Municipal energetic reform in Ukraine», which presupposes modernization of the preschool educational establishment “Teremok” with the construction of heliocollector for heating water on the roof, construction of individual thermal point with temperature regulation in the system of heat transmission, replacing the windows by power efficient, modernization of illumination and kitchen equipment purchase is being finished.

Two more projects are being planned – one to prevent organized crime, another to organize police cooperation through transboundaring centres on the border Romania – Ukraine and the promotion of local art and traditions by means of transboundaring educational handicraft arrangements in Romania and Ukraine, which will be presented within the framework of joint operational program «Romania – Ukraine 2014-2020». There will be 5 additional projects from Izmail.

Within the framework of the joint operational program of transboundaring cooperation «The Black Sea area 2014-2020» the executive committee of Izmail town soviet has won the grant for works on accomplishment of the urban garden. Thorough repairs of the outdoor lighting, the arrangement of new benches, reconstruction of fences, the replacement of paving tile on the territory of the park, the transplanting of the ornamental trees and bushes, organization of Wi-Fi zones and the reconstruction of public lavatory, were planned. The realization of the project has already begun.

The question about the participation in the project «EthnicCult – the net of craftsmen – the promotion of the local culture and traditions by means of transboundaring educational handicraft arrangements in Romania and Ukraine» within the framework of the competition of the joint operational program of transboundaring cooperation «Romania – Ukraine 2020» will be considered on the session of the Izmail town soviet in the nearest future. This is the EU program and its aim is to retain cultural and historical heritage.

If Izmail wins it will be able to reconstruct historical museum of local lore Pridunaviye within the framework of the project (300 thousand euro will be given to facade restoration with retaining the historical and cultural appearance of the building with construction documents, engineering supervision, observation on the work and project appraisal).

Besides, the project includes equipment procurement for the museum (shop windows, interactive equipment) and a series of measures on transboundaring level.

This project may become the 2-d for the Pridunaviye museum. The first project – «Green tourism and historical heritage – the step for the development of the Black Sea area» – resolve issues with heat supply and heating modernization within the framework of the competitive tendering of joint operational program of transboundaring cooperation «The Black Sea area 2014-2020» (the EU program).

It suggests investments into the building of Izmail historical museum of local lore «Pridunaviye» – the replacement of the existing solid-fuel boiler by the modern power efficient, the acquiring of the powerful thermal pump, which will provide heating and building conditioning, the replacement of the old wooden windows by the power efficient windows and modernization of illumination.

Besides, the capital repairs of the Sea port is going on. 22 million hrvnas will be spent for these purposes and the works will be fulfilled by the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2018.

The measures conducting by municipal administration, their width and level of cooperation with transboundaring regions of Romania and Moldova opens way to more close European collaboration of Ukrainian Pridunaviye, change Izmail into a real European town.

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