Information about interviewee:

Bohdan Yaremenko, foreign policy advisor to President of Ukraine, Zelensky. Interview conducted in Kiev, Ukraine.

R= Respondent – Bohdan Yaremenko

I=Interviewer – Sam Wrighton

## I: So my topic of research is dual citizenship

## R: The Ukrainian legislative provides a slightly different perspective point of view on this issue, because there is no provision of the dual citizenship in Ukrainian legislation and the issue of multiple citizenship is not fully covered. Also, there are certain provisions that are providing us with some base of understanding the situation when citizens have the double triple citizenship, but not all complete answers. Because, again, the phenomena itself is not described in Ukrainian legislation. So there are some provisions of the law and citizenship, which is basically clearly providing us with a base how to treat Ukrainian citizenship and people with Ukrainian citizenship, but not again, particularly the cases with dual or double citizenship. So it's you, you should keep it in mind. Because it's and it's very, not, of course, for professionals, but for public here, and it' highly difficulties issue to understand because they think that dual citizens are, that they just don't understand that dual citizenship is, is basically an agreement between states the possibility for their citizens to simultaneously two citizenship, but again, in reality, what we have here is not is not double citizenship.

## I: And is there a is there a will to change legislation, given the //

## R: // You see, Ukrainian is highly unsystematic, in approach to this issue the Ukrainian politicians because even in the even those who are clearly all the same level, the statements clearly supporting the European citizens or European perspective for Ukraine, they just don't understand. They might be completely against the attempts to introduce the elements. So this double or dual citizenship or to allow people to recognize this the situation, which I see strange because if we are stating our intention to join the European Union, it means that sooner or later, we need to trust they’re the stage, Of course, they need to trust us first. But we also need to trust those countries that we will be joining in the Union, which will include of course, the common citizenship. So I

believe it should be the base we create to, to develop an institution for citizenship in reality. Most no matter most of the political parties here will support highly conservative approach to the issue that we would need to just then just the people sometimes they just don't even understand that unified or certain Ukrainian houses not entirely, but again. The provision on the single citizenship as the way we have it in the town provides that is this scene for all citizens of Ukraine but not only permitted. But most of the political parties here would like to think that it's just one permitted and that everything besides the first one the main one the priority in Ukrainian is illegal, which is not exactly the truth. According to Ukrainian legislation according to the Ukrainian legislation the situation differs. There are some suspicions, or someone has grounds to believe that person have their Ukrainian citizenship. Most of the cases Ukrainians state and Ukrainian law should ignore. Not try to fight it not try to punish the person for having but just ignore so we need to treat our citizens just as the Ukrainian one. Most of the people in politicians here would think that we would need to stay with one single with only one allowed that it should be punishable there's a strong movement for this. It’s wrong not just because of this perspective for say the intentions even if not perspective of European membership, but also from the point of view Ukraine losing a lot of citizens. So the migration of floor is huge, a lot of people leaving. And of course, we will need to liberalize our approach to the citizenship to allow as many people as possible who live in the country to stay connected somehow. Not losing the opportunities and chances which another citizenship will provide them in the country, they are staying all looking at employment opportunity. But again, it is my feeling that most of the people here will support the idea that Ukrainian should to stay unified in this respect. That's a lack of understanding of the perspective the lack of vision, and it's always a reaction on the war. Because so the public opinion, not just the public sometimes the professionals, they just cannot split two issues, their relations with Russia. And they trying to, to see the situation as the same in all the case, should we allow some place it could be the same regulations and rules for the rest of the country. So the war, which is not, of course, the truth, and we can easily, especially in the line of situation with the occupied territories, adopt some

legislation, which will differ our approach to Russia and to any other country. Again, so the war makes a lot of minded minds here in this country thinking about the necessity of supporting the nationalism, and this is that they’re very conservative and sometimes ethical way of understanding the term, but not really. There is a discussion on the issue, but you're not really the real, professional discussion on the issue. Although there are even some lobbying opportunities on the part of experts. There is a movement we have at least one smart lady at Moscow was trying to unite people, the experts. And she she would come back from France and right now trying to present the case. She's doing a magnificent job and trying to promote because this issue really related to experts more than even to ethnic minorities here in this county. Of course, the base for discussion to exist is the issue of Romanian passports with Hungarian passports, with Russian passports. But it should be taken the numbers of the Ukrainians who using the opportunity of multiple citizenship, and those people are presenting the ethnic minorities. Of course, we were speaking about the millions of people who live abroad, and probably tens of thousands or at least couple of, of hundreds of thousands of people in Ukraine, having those passports of Hungary of Romania all together and maybe slightly more of Russian. So that's, that's why again that's the problem that we need to explain the lot of technicalities behind the issue, but politically, In the context of war, the expert and political views and the public opinion will be definitely against multiple citizenship. The idea the liberalizing the approach to those having a couple of passports.

## I: When I was in the Baltic States, I interviewed some ministers from the interior departments. And they described to me, dual citizenship as a threat to national security.

## R: That’s exactly the same.

## I: Okay.

## R: So will be here, which I would agree that in some cases we will say with Russia really is a threat. Even the issue for academicals deliberation, it is basically proven by history. They started to spread their passports in Ukraine prior to the occupation. They achieved their goal over there, and right now, they do the same with Donbas and there is no doubt where it would lead us to. But, again, the situation in Ukraine is much more difficult than just the issue of Russia's aggression. And in the context again, the migration problems. So no one, we don't have any discussion here. How would we substitute the people from Ukraine where those new comers will be coming and how will be treating them, because sooner or later, you will face the dilemma or the problem of the lack of the working force. Even right now, it's not easy, even in the context of war. So there, we have enough, those who are willing to join the Ukrainian forces are foreigners. But we still it's just I believe, yesterday, parliament is trying to adopt some new legislation on using the procedure for them to apply for those who are fighting Ukrainian side on the front line to ease the procedure of gaining Ukrainian citizenship, but even there, we have some problems. So yes, the public opinion here, the political opinion, political parties, highly conservative. So they divided they, they would rather consider this as their as the threat to the national security also, partly, it's highly unpopular issue, because of the corruption. A lot of businessmen would use the Israeli citizenship to hide from justice here, it's also highly unpopular. That's why they have this idea, we would allow this to be official. So how, how can we rely on the Jews? If they are at any moment capable to escape without consequences for their financial or other or tax evasion or whatever it is. So there are a lot of reasons behind it. But the result is yes, I would rather say that most of the people here would agree with those Baltic Minister of internal affairs.

## I: And if we can talk about passportization. What Why do Russia do it? What is the, what is the intent? And how does it change the conflict and the resolution post conflict?

## R: You mean the most recent development on passports?

## I: Yeah, so yeah.

## R: Well, they have some problem, they have some problems, managing their occupied territories. The problems are the political issues. So they need to provide the Bendix or their suburban who are managing the occupied territories with clear perspective, and that people live in there with some perspective, what's happening, what will happen next. So Russia officially stated in that it’s not pretending for those territories and they came back to Ukraine, it's not happening. So the people are losing patience, they’re losing trust towards their Russian partners, and they need to do something to assure them that one way or another, they will be effectively taken care of. So that's probably the strongest message they were able to provide without any harm to their foreign policy. The international standards, because should they change their official position, it will immediately mean their territorial claim, military involvement it would basically ruin all their propagandistic and other efforts, political efforts to explain the war in, in Ukraine as internal conflict. So that’s why they, they just they choosing this way of, of reaching the same goal, sending the message to people there that you are, well, if not hundred percent Russian, then we will find a way. So it means that people should stay loyal to them and should still be looking for Russia's dominance. And let's say they would lose the control of the situation, then they would create total new situation for Ukraine, returning back so while turning back, they will be dealing with Ukraine would be dealing not just with the Ukrainian citizens, but with 100, hundreds of thousands of people with Ukrainian with Russian passport with foreigners, and it would complicate integration. Also, another reason for them to do this might be to create the base for further substitution of the population. So then it will be easier for them to bring soldiers over there. Either Russians, Yes, they are Russians that happens so it's not necessarily people coming from Russia, it's the local population with Russia passports. They would also be creating the mess in this easier their propaganda and their political position in negotiations over the settlement and effective management to their military rotations, military presence. So on, so on. As always, they trying to choose the moves, whereas in a very smart way. So trying to answer as many questions as possible.

## I: And you mentioned that the Russia conducted passportization in Crimea prior to the occupation.

## R: Yes.

## I: When did this begin?

## R: Or so because the constant policy since the fall of the Soviet Union, they immediately adopted the laws or the citizenship, the providing that anyone who was born in the Soviet Union can apply for Russian citizenship, and then they were just modernizing the system making it easier for some nations to use the existing legislation or the existing rights. So that's the way for them to not just to protect people, but to probably to project to their power or seats to project the influence overseas. So they have never lost the desire, the will, or interest in regaining control over the former Soviet Union. One of the effective means include especially in line over the fact that the time right after the collapse of the entire Soviet Union, we didn't have any border with the European Union. And of course, for some time, and for some people, Russia was much more preferable alternative to Ukraine. So the country with more resources with more financial resources, people weren't even were looking for employment opportunities. Later on solution, it has changed, especially with the European Union coming closer to the border right now is for most of the people, it will be probably much more interesting or beneficial to try to seek legal opportunities within the European Union. Especially since the start of the war, but still Russia is highly interesting for local people here in the opportunity for job for employment for education, trade, business. An instrument for making people attached to Russia, to take instrumental control of them. For Russia it has never been about supporting the ethnic Russians, but it was the political instrument of power. And they were always and this is probably the difference between Russia and some other countries, even in those highly complicated issue or situations with Romania and Hungary that they have here, they probably still don't have the same attitude towards institutional citizenship that Russia does so I doubt that maybe, of course, if Ukrainian would be collapsing. I hope not. So they probably be trying to use that. But I doubt they have any hostile plans to take away Ukrainian new territories before we buy them why Russia was vice versa. So it was straight forward to 1993. Their Parliament, Duma adopted the law, the time it was Council for the nations of the United States, they adopted the special decision of the civil support as the Russian state. And it just never been basically dissolved for this law or stopped. So they decided that since it’s the Russian territory, that's it. That's why Russia was so the sizes, this is this distributing their passports will say the government of Moscow, the city of Moscow was so active in supporting different financial and social problems within Pioneer and so they were building housing for retiring Black Sea officers for some other people. So they were supporting some cultural events or so again, it was the it wasn't just about the citizenship, It was a very complex war program. I have to say this was inspirational territory, but I don’t know, keeping his territory attached or creating the base for their future situation or wherever it is.

## I: And is passportization illegal?

## R: According to Ukrainian, again, it's very deep. I'm not a lawyer. But the way I understand this so Ukrainian legislation provides that Ukrainian citizen, that Ukrainian citizenship can, can be stopped. I believe they're the right word to be automatic in case if Ukrainian citizens would voluntarily join the military service of a foreign country. So it covers just one group those who join their police that has been there Russian military, but voluntarily gain the foreign citizenship, it's a very difficult legal I believe phrase. Because, how should you? How would you be treating the citizens in Crimea or in Donbas who applied for Russian citizens citizenship? Was it voluntarily or not? Without the Russian citizenship in Crimea, you cannot apply for work, you cannot send your children to school you cannot use the hospitals. Basically, all services are provided only to the Russian citizen. You would not be eligible for all those services if you are a Ukrainian citizen. Over there, [in Donbas] it is pretty much the same, if not official, but on the level of the practical policies. So it can be very difficult for us to, to judge whether they were adjoining let's say well, you know, through services it's clear, so there is no doubt. You will understand what you are doing, what would be their outcomes but in the, the rest of the case when we are talking about the students about private citizens, citizens I believe in most of the cases if Ukraine would not change this legislation. We will be obliged to ignore the fact of for some people it would be definitely illegal and punishable at least the demonstrative way not criminal. But for in most of the cases, no will need to just ignore the fact.

## I: Do you think //

## R: // It will create for us a moral problem, an ethnical problem. Because for people in Ukraine we're fighting against Russia of course it would be very difficult to accept this, why they were fighting against Russian somewhere. Except instead of joining them to fight against Russian aggression, they were applying It's not a legal problem is most of which should be of course and its one of our idea should be covered by law so we would need to have something some laws not the exact name or title for the law but it should cover the issues of collaboration of course. So there are some already drafts not official in this country. I like one of them by the ascension call. It has very nice name the right name, I believe they're the law on the Pacification of the media. So making, making the peace which is providing a very interesting procedure. So if you have after their own integration on the territories, if you sign this statement of your collaboration, you’re excused right. So if you did not commit any crimes, so many people just would say accepted the Russian citizenship or let's say been some not a member of the local government so there's a case. Or not signing the contract with the Russian occupation authorities. So if you didn't and later on, it was discovered that disclose that you were actively communicating and collaborating so then is punishable, a violation of your rights for election or restriction or you would like to be elected or to take part in the election. So, there are some ideas here, but we are on the very initial stage of really discussing creating their legal base for to, to answer the question the way they've been asked by.

## I: Do you think the Kremlin has plans to attempt to illegally annex Donbass?

## R: They’re considering the possibility, definitely. As this situation being managed by the military authorities for this, of course, they have the strategic planning and the thinking about the police they take into account those issues as well. So, I do think it’s one the scenarios that they have. I believe they have the different scenarios of annexes. So referral or just the law, okay. So, the day of applying to possibilities they effectively controlling the situation not just on the soil in Donbass, but also in the Ukrainian and Russia between Russia and other intermediate is so they, they are in control of situation right now. So I believe they consider different, different scenarios. But I believe the most preferable scenario for them would be to exchange the reintegration of Donbas into Ukraine for Ukrainian recognition of Crimea. To legally annex Donbas would cost them a lot, so it would be more beneficial for them to get rid of this problem. Russia have very talented diplomats and they will try to do it to the cost of Ukraine. They will try to make Ukraine pay as much as possible, meaning we must change the constitution to get our own territory back. The change of the constitution and laws would not just cover the issues of occupied territories themselves, but also, most likely, more authority to the regional powers, particularly those Russia has control over. Not to the local communities, but to the regional authorities, to create a federalisation. Of course, issue behind it is to prevent Ukraine to be closer to NATO. It is clearly to control Ukraine geopolitically and where Ukraine moves or belongs politically. So that's probably the most preferable scenario for Russia but I believe should they be, let's say, you know, they will be you know, they would consider the situation critical for them, they will annexe them definitely.

## I: And is there a fear that the same Russian tactics could be implemented in other parts of Ukraine? For example…

## R: Most definitely so often release preventing, to this distribute their passports in Odessa to try to give them to try to create some rioting and to move in the troops to support not just Russian speaking people, as they were doing in Crimea or Donbass. But the Russian citizens. So and it might happen even in Estonia, Latvia, so it's one of the scenarios.

## I: Yesterday I met with Georgia Tooke the Ministry of temporary or divides regions, and he said that he's got information about plans from the rebel authorities to demand Ukrainian passports have swapped for Russian passports. If this was to occur widespread through Donbass. It I'm assuming it would complicate the reservation process dramatically.

## R: For Russia?

## I: For Ukraine. Moving forward.

## R: If let’s say the Ukraine citizens will be swapping their passports. Well, as much I believe. Well, first of all, I don't know nothing. I have never heard about this. Then the situations therefore basically there are no really, there are no legal or sorry I need to answer. (Phone call in another language) I would say in Premiere It was clear that say for the region to Because they declared as a part of third through Russia for region to to be managed they will need to change everything they would need to separate to substitute Ukrainian vehicle plate number registration numbers you know for Russia. Because it’s, they are Russians and there is an issue border. In Donbass there is no issue of border. And In reality, those who live in the occupied territories, that’s not an easy issue, of course, because you still need to cross the dividing line military persona, sometimes shooting sometimes bombing, but still millions. So there are millions of crossing this dividing line per year and people can easily leave in the Ukrainians living on the occupied territories in Donbass could easily manage all their legal needs in Ukraine, including they could obtain the Ukrainian passport on the base on our Ukrainian, they might sign their statement to police that their passport is stolen Ukrainian password is stolen, they have the copy. They haven't a certificate of birth, they have some other Ukrainian documents, or another base on those documents. The fact that they are Ukrainian citizens will be they will be identified as Ukrainian citizens and the new documents will be issued instead of the lost one. That's why the might be the truth. But again and of course, not all of them. I mean, those who they change their Ukrainian passport to Russian would go to Ukraine to re-establish their new Ukrainian documents. So yes, partly it would influence this situation there will be more people just with the Russian passports over there. But, again, it’s not the crucial the vital technical legal issue, because again, if you will be re-establish in our presence over there. We still have some documents to check. Who was the Ukrainian citizens? Because there will be more issues. Why we applied for Russia citizens citizenship. So was this happened? The way I described to you, but I just probably I just don't understand the, the core sense of this. They could they could reapply for a Ukrainian document.

## I: When Russia began to expand this, this tactic from Crimea to Donbass. Was there a fear in Ukraine that it would escalate?

## R: No that was just the beginning of the process, but normally, so, of course, all Ukrainians allow, especially those who are not well. All of us who've been born on the territory or the former Soviet Union, we probably have the rights apply for Russian citizenship, we just need to bring the certificate that we send the documents to our national governments of seizing our national our local citizen, Ukrainian or Russian citizenship. And on the base of this you could apply for improving the place of your birth. You could apply for Russia citizenship. So the possibility was there. There was no need probably. And there was no political campaign behind it. Because right now, I believe so not just adopted the legislation. But as it was the political instrument, they spend a lot of effort trying to promote it. We have reports that they are even arranging for people to take a bus from places in Donbas, to Russia, just to get a Russian passport. They organise tours. With Russian soldiers, they bring people in to apply for a passport and return them back. It is very organised, in a very efficient manner. To allow as many people as possible to use these opportunities. That's why it’s something new has never been done before. In Crimea it was completely different because it was Ukrainian territory. But with Russian consulates were doing this officially. And it was very difficult for Ukraine to claim a protest, to protest against it, because that's the way the console is operating is the same situation, we have with Hungary right now. And basically, it is the same with Ukrainian counsellors are doing. So since the beginning of the conference with distributed Council, the solids and Ukrainian passports and it was also the deliberate policy of all the Ukraine to provide local inhibitors integrate zone with a Ukrainian citizenship as a tool to legalize themselves to provide them with the possibility to be attached to Ukraine, to travel international and so on so on, so on. So the way Again, we were we never had a policy on trying to get control. But it was the policy of supporting ethnic Ukrainians. That's as it is much more complicated and better organized to better finance, Hungarian and Romania, I believe doing the same. With Russia. Again. It was completely legal. But the same time, the decision of the Russian parliament is the part of Russian Federation was existing so territorial claims, although let's say that presidents were one after another one, were stating that the executive borrowers of Russian Federation were not supporting those claims, but it's the parliament cannot influence the parliament. But in reality, it was very well coordinated policy. So the parliament set the goal and on the level of their executive powers, they found the legal instruments of coming closer to the implementation of this goal. So the distribution of passports but again, it was a complete different completely different legal and political reality. Right now in the zone of the conference is something you know, it's brand new.

## I: And is there or is there a, was there fear that it would become an ethnic or //

## R: Ethnic war?

## I: And ethnic conflicts between //

## R: // No it has never been and will never be an ethnic issue. So the just the composition of the population is such that there are no really any ethnic Russians, Ukrainians will be predominantly Russian speaking in Donbass. And it's not a problem so they right now they effectively each other speaking Russian. So the Russian speaking Ukrainians are fighting with Russian speaking Ukrainians. So part of them are fighting with the Ukrainian Armed Forces, part of them the part of the Russia occupational forces on the other side. So isn't an ethnic I don't see it as such as, it’s not religious. So they trying to come to even the issue of language is not really, which is the way that the Russians are trying to pretend. There is an issue language here in this country. But you would have the same situation in all predominantly or mostly heavily Russian speaking regions. But just to them, stuffing the words is highly unlikable to be the truth. So no it’s not and it will never be. It's not about ethnic Ukrainians hating ethnic Russians and fighting each other now.

## I: If we can talk about Putin’s objectives or intents. What is he? I understand he's, he's trying to

## R: It’s political. In Ukraine. His intention was to control the country but is not the final objective. He wants full control over Ukraine. Well, of course, there are some practical, probably practical reason behind it. So they have also have the problem. The problem with the migration with the democratic situation. So Russians, Slavs, orthodox Slavs, they are leaving from Russia, or Islamic population and people from Central Asia are substitution them and of course, they're not orthodox, the most of them would represent the Muslims. So they would love to have more Islamic population in their military, their security forces and Ukraine as always be a source of loyal fighters, soldiers, security officers are for Russia as an Empire because they were oppressing all kinds of different nations, they were oppressing Ukrainians as well, but it was much more easier. For historical ethnic. The similar to the land, we share the same religion. So it was much easier to conquer Ukraine to keep it subordinated than, let’s say, with a population in Siberia in the south and Russia closer to the China so on. So let's say the Baltic republics and the need, of course the Islamic population to serve as the engine moving and the empire. And probably they have the same reason right now or as well. And again, they’re thinking geopolitically, they would like to stop the western civilization movements towards Russia. And they’re also thinking this way, so the considering the history or, since, let's say, probably the beginning of the 19th century, when they started to lose control over the western coast of the United States. And since after the regional, the influence was just decreasing. So after signing the first deals over, I believe, for San Francisco, They lost Alaska then Port Arthur, them again, again, again, right now it’s the same happening in the European, it's something they are thinking geopolitical, they try to enlarge the territory they're in control. Today understand just one way of controlling the physical presence, subordination. So that's the aim and when the Ukrainian might be and they know from the history are useful to assist them and he is so probably for this reason, they will need to have Ukraine subordinate in a contract begging to loss because then it would mean more problem for them. Very expensive, costly, so on so on, and probably more problems instead of more opportunities. to do it by political means including by stopping Ukrainian efforts to join NATO and the EU, by creating conflicts in Donbas. That’s, that's it, we definitely would fit within the Russia's way of analysing the station around it. And again, so Russia probably is applauding the way of Ukrainian issues is splitting the West, the political west. Say how the issue saw the northern straight. Those are in northern, northern stream the pipe the biggest pipeline is splitting New York, London community again, it's happening over the situation in Ukraine. So Russia has basically managed to use the conflicts as the instrument of geopolitical influence. The same the do in Syria with very modest presence in Venezuela definitely use as the instrument or the tool or the argument or bargaining over geopolitical nature and should they have the opportunity to create a new conflict in Donbass in the Balkans or these so called the United States and EU by radius because it means that there will be more opportunity to change it for something later on. Although they have no interest in Venezuela, In Balkans in those regions themselves, but this can be highly useful as the tools for international diplomacy and so on so on. And it cost almost nothing in comparison of full scale of full pledge war. So it's cheaper and effective. They are fighting for their influence. They do not have any soft power. They try to create the Russian as the model of their soft power mostly failed so it’s working it's, it's a working idea for the Russian entirely. It has very limited effectiveness outside Russian territory, on Ukraine somebody with some influence. Yes, but not really very effective instrument. But there is nothing to suggest so that's why the using the hard power and the conflicts.

## I: When Russia talks about the Crimea situation and now about Donbas, they say well, the people there want to be Russian. We're just filling their wish self-determination.

## R: No. The people in the Soviet Union they were willing to be the Soviet people because they were not allowed to travel any other place. That is a Propaganda pure propaganda, nothing else. Typical including Russia they would love to live peacefully. To have food source but it doesn't making them Russians. So some nonsense, why they love to be Russian for what reason was given for them. That’s one of their artificial models because of their slavery. So the glory of the Russian weaponry is just the authoritarian society with a full control over the media. Over the humanitarians here in general. You could try to, to use those artificial constructs, but not for a while really. Because, let's say the glory of a Russian weapon, or the Mighty Russia, would cause people losing their jobs, so on so on. So sooner or later they will reach a certain level. People not be willing to, to be supported by, to be ruled by propaganda not propaganda but by the authority which is not capable of making their lives easier and right now it doesn't look that Russian the central government and the local governments, specifically constructed to resolve any social economic country or problem of the country, especially that they have any desire to think about dealing with the real problems of their population so they thinking about some larger scale geopolitical projects but local, that's why Russians are, it’s simple. That's why they say it’s true they political construct the people would love to be Russians, but nothing behind it. Of course, if you have the instruments of propaganda. If you are pushing your people heavily. Implementing the centralized strategies to push some people that your Russia is better than this was in Crimea would say prior to occupation for some time for a couple of years. The, the main idea of most of the news reports from Ukraine on the centralized Russian TV. Was that it's a chaotic country artificial country. While they have no authority or active authorities and then. They were there reports on the Russian occasion you see our presidents strong; he is powerful. And a lot people will believe that Ukrainian is something not chaotic. While should be changed into Russia. Then will have more stability to have for better economy will be better ruled, less corruption. Because, Ukraine is totally corrupted and in Russia, there are no freely reports of corruption and if something is happening then president himself is punishing those corrupted ministers. So the system is some. And right now, they understand, most of the people who are not being paid by the federal budget of Ukraine they understand that there's a result, and it's basically the consequence of the major change that they lost Ukrainians. That’s the way the liberal system the democratic system was created, still under the creation. They lost Ukrainian liberalism because Ukraine was quite liberal. It was not really effective system and still not effective. But at least it was very liberal towards the people. I can explain you on them the simple, say, simple example with a Crimea tourism. So the Crimea as the tourism destination was always a myth. During the Soviet period it was developed as a military base primarily, and right now Russia is doing the same. So, at the pea during the Soviet times and then European times Ukrainian was capable of receiving after 6 million tourists. While the infrastructure is capable. I mean they're the larger hospitals the creation areas resorts, capable receiving just from one peak 2 million people. The rest, two thirds, were adopted by the private houses, local businesses, small and medium businesses. So, the Russian has changed. It's completely illegal to provide private housing for tourists in Russia. And right now the, they adopted the same laws of course in Crimea as well. And if you're a small and medium business. You will be in some control that it will be and you will need to apply for such a number of very difficult to receive documents licenses they do be completely impossible to, to run this business. So, they lost in Ukrainian state there was no legislation, probably, covering this issue. And no one was really pushing the people. If you’re glad to have your, your interest here to receive that it says, okay, you're not paying taxes as bad, but no one will be controlling you. Chaotic but liberal. So we are not pushing you, allowing you to the government is not taking care of you but at least it's not really taking from you, allowing you to gain something they lost it. Everything is under control. So Russia has very effective instruments of pressure not just political pressure, just from the level of economists of the same. And they finally have all evidence to think that Russia is the same way corrupted. Probably even worse than in Ukraine, but you have less rights. Even to speak about the corruption. That's, that's it. So, no gain. This for some time, this propaganda might be effective but later on the reality will tell you exactly what the truth is.

## I: From my thesis I have two case studies, Russia, and the competitive policy and passportization, etc. and Hungary kinstate policy. Two weeks ago I went to Transcarpathia and Hungary is investing quite substantial amounts of money in //

## R: // European money.

## I: European money into the Hungarian communities in Ukraine, Romania, all across the former territory Kingdom Hungary. What is the intent do you believe?

## R: I’m not a specialist on Hungary. I know they are doing this in every place. From time to time, from time to time they have the same problems with Romania in wars. I do remember my time working in Romania. I’m not a specialist to, to explain why I don't understand. So I understand that the Orbán government is highly nationalistic its nationalism, especially while you have the problems with their illegal migration so the foreigners coming breaking your problems so to play the card of nationalism highly effective. Especially when you play against Ukraine, which is economically, politically, weak right now. So it costs you nothing you are taking the money from European fans. Spending in Ukraine covering your political needs inside the country I see it as, as, as working as this way. So I, at least from my, again, I'm not a specialist, I'm not an expert on Hungary. I see no hostile so far. Although there were there were statements by Hungary intelligence about two or three years ago that in Ukraine, they created what we want. And it doesn't matter what Ukrainian law forced would think about it, the polite and diplomatic and hostile statements on the handle there in there. It was the parliament and then public is someplace else by that, or the intelligence is still I’m not a specialist I don't know who the guy is whether he's a professional because professional intelligence officer would never do his statement, his assets abroad. Stupid. Probably he's a politician maybe he was trying to serve his leader, but those, I don't know, I don't know. It looks strange. It's been considered definitely as the hostile by Ukrainian public opinion here, which should we try and our centre here trying to ease to some sometimes trying to explain that. You shouldn't be treated in Hungary, Poland, the way as Russia because we are not at war with Poland and Hungary we have problems that small amount of war in countries, it will stay forever so with all our neighbours from time to time we will have problems but it's not a war, it’s a problem, which should resolve peacefully by diplomacy. I believe so far, we have all especially on to harm us, is the NATO membership. So, we will have enough instruments to press on them, even though we are not a member of the EU and NATO. There are some instruments, to try to reason with Hungarian government. Please well it's my perception of the situation that they yes sometimes. So, again, I'm not the expert in Hungary so that I could speak definitely.

## I: Is there. Could it be considered problematic, or threats, Victor Orbán’s increasingly closer relationship with Vladimir Putin?

## R: It all depends. So, from the point to your experts definitely. Public opinion in Ukraine doesn't really split Orbán and Hungary so we see that the public opinion in Hungary general is closer to Russia. Again, for experts we do understand that although these dominant in political landscape. They're different parts of what they're criticizing him for the same in Hungary as well. But again, I believe. I can't even if Orbán would decide to be as close to Putin as to start the military intervention. Ukraine, I still consider they [Hungary] do not have enough to fight against us, the military, so it is a limited threat. I believe that the largest threat he is presenting is the threat of undermining the values of democracy and the rule of law. This is threatening to undermine European unity within NATO. That's, I consider him very, very dangerous, but unfortunately in Europe, you have the worst problem in military I believe in this time, the same problem in Poland so it's not just about Hungary, but Hungary itself. Yes, from the point of view it’s Orbán’s adherence to the values of European Union European values or general values. Yes, I doubt for as long as he is the leader of Russia, Ukraine will feel safe and peaceful.

## I: If I could ask one more question.

## R: Yeah, sure.

## I: As I said, Hungary is increasing, increasing, increasing funding year on year in Transcarpathia would there be a point at which the, becomes problematic if the funding reaches a level?

## R: For every professional government in this country it should be a problem, long time before. Because they are spending more than we are spending on our own soil. That is the problem. So, it is the problem. But we still don't have an answer to this problem.

## I: Because they are subsidizing the teachers and nurses

## R: Basically they are colonising the territory. They are colonising it very rapidly. That is the problem. We need to gain back the control and it will cost us a lot. Not just financially. But it's the danger is limited because they’re trying to be active, just within the local Hungarian communities, so they’re not. If I would see them working systematically all over the Carpathian region, I would say that stop. Something is happening here. Because I doubt that no matter how, how far the local communities in Hungary, in Ukraine, the local Hungarians in Ukraine will feel, how distance they will feel from Ukrainian government. There are not enough of them to start some strong political moves, which Hungary will be able to use for territorial claims or for something really dramatic. So Ukraine should pay attention to try to change this situation. But again, I told you that it's not as dangerous as in Russia, and we have Russia so this country, just at the moment, has no resources to deal with all the problems. So we need to concentrate, and our concentration should be on war nothing else and no place else. So, that's why. Probably we have some presence over the, there are some limited attempts to balance the influence, but the lack of resources and professionalism. Yes, it is. It is. It is the problem. And, again, but I would consider this minor problem in comparison with Russia's aggression. So should we be able to deal the Russian on the eastern flank. Then we'll find the way that peaceful and very nice way of dealing with Russian and Poland on them all the problems they think bringing to our attention sometimes they are quite right with what they’re doing so I would agree with them but the scale is dangerous and we cannot tolerate this as some point, we will need to stop them.