



The EU and the UK have worked together closely to support Ukraine. Now they need to sustain support and strengthen their co-operation to be ready for possible US disengagement.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine was a watershed moment in European security. So far, Britain, Germany and other European countries have worked closely to support Ukraine. But Russia is now on the offensive again, and the longer the war goes on, the more differences of emphasis are appearing – on issues such as the kind of military support that should be given to Ukraine and whether or not to confiscate frozen Russian assets.

A new policy brief from the Centre for European Reform, with the support of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) UK & Ireland, evaluates co-operation between the UK and its European allies in supporting Ukraine, in terms of sanctions, military support, financial support and reconstruction.

'[Working hand in hand? EU-UK co-operation in supporting Ukraine](#)' makes recommendations on how the UK and its European allies could better co-ordinate their support to Ukraine in the future.

These include:

1. Establishing a structured UK-EU security dialogue to strengthen bilateral links and Trump-proof co-operation, and more UK-EU defence industrial co-ordination to address the emerging 'defence industrial gap'.
2. Working together more closely on Ukraine's reconstruction and EU integration. The UK and the EU should continue to co-ordinate closely on how Russia's frozen assets and their profits can be used and ways to mobilise private capital for Ukraine's reconstruction.

While the post-Brexit UK-EU Trade and Co-operation agreement does not include provisions on foreign policy co-operation, the UK and EU approaches towards Ukraine have so-far been closely aligned. The challenge is sustaining and deepening this, particularly if Trump wins the US election. A Trump Presidency would complicate the approval of further military assistance for Kyiv and hobble the effectiveness of many of the multilateral co-operation channels used by the UK and its partners, such as the G7 or the Ramstein format (in which Ukraine and its partners co-ordinate the supply of military assistance).

If lack of Western support allows Russia to win the war, Europeans would be in a very dangerous position: Putin may be tempted to probe NATO's defences in the Baltics, potentially causing a catastrophic conflict. Britain and its EU partners must prepare now for the possibility of less US assistance, strengthening their bilateral and multilateral channels of communication, if Ukraine is to win the war.

Ian Bond, the co-author of the policy brief, said: *The UK and its European partners may hope that Trump does not win the US election and that US military assistance to Ukraine continues indefinitely, but they cannot rely on hope alone. London must intensify its co-operation with other European capitals and with the EU institutions, with a view to ensuring that Ukraine can defeat Russia regardless of who US voters elect in November.*

Luigi Scazzieri, the co-author of the policy brief, said: *The challenge for the UK and the EU is to sustain and deepen their support for Ukraine and their co-operation, in terms of sanctions, the seizure of Russian assets, and continued military aid, as well as help with Ukraine's post-war reconstruction and integration into the EU.*

This policy brief is the first of the CER/KAS project, "[Plotting a Course Together: UK-EU Co-operation in Times of Uncertainty](#)." This paper focuses on co-operation in relation to Ukraine. A second study will focus on Baltic security, especially on Anglo-German co-operation. A third paper will look at the impact of the US elections.

Notes for editors:

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