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## Joining Euro-Atlantic Institutions will require Ukraine to Revamp its Policy Coordination Process

*Washington DC, March 23, 2006* — Without drastically improving its interagency process, the Ukrainian government will find Euro-Atlantic integration a slow and painful process, argues a new report issued by the Atlantic Council of the United States. In *Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic Ambitions: Building an Effective Policy Coordination Process*, the authors argue that the Ukrainian government needs to address a number of weaknesses in the current interagency system or it will likely face significant setbacks in its bid to join NATO and the EU.

These weaknesses include an overlap of responsibility for Euro-Atlantic integration policies, too much coordination authority for the Foreign Ministry (which is also an implementing agency), an unclear role for the National Security and Defense Council, and the problem of a “top-down” government culture. These problems are likely to be exacerbated by recent constitutional changes which will give more authority to Ukraine’s prime minister vis-à-vis the President. In addition, Ukraine could soon have a co-habitation government, depending on the outcome of the March 26 parliamentary elections.

“The constitutional changes and a possible co-habitation government, where the President supports Euro-Atlantic integration and the Prime Minister does not, add another layer of complexity and increase the need for reforming Ukraine’s interagency system,” said Steven Pifer, former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine and co-author of the paper. “Ukraine’s integration into NATO is in serious trouble if the Alliance cannot recognize a common vision of Euro-Atlantic integration among the Ukrainian government,” added Jeffrey Simon, a defense reform expert at the National Defense University and co-author of the paper.

The report is based on the findings of an Atlantic Council delegation of U.S. foreign policy analysts who met with key members of the Ukrainian government in Kyiv as part of the non-governmental U.S.-Ukraine Policy Dialogue which is managed by the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation. Along with Steven Pifer, they include F. Stephen Larrabee of RAND, Jeffrey Simon of the National Defense University, and Jan Neutze of the Atlantic Council. This report is part of the Atlantic Council’s ongoing project on Ukraine, more information can be found at [www.acus.org](http://www.acus.org). Founded in 1961, the Atlantic Council of the United States is a non-profit public policy center dedicated to promoting constructive U.S. leadership in international affairs based on the central role of the Atlantic community.

Copies of the report are available on-line in English and Ukrainian at [http://www.acus.org/docs/0602-Ukraine Euro Atlantic Ambitions.pdf](http://www.acus.org/docs/0602-Ukraine_Euro_Atlantic_Ambitions.pdf) or by contacting Jan Neutze, Assistant Director of Transatlantic Relations, at 202-778-4990 or [jneutze@acus.org](mailto:jneutze@acus.org).

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