



Ilko Kucheriv
Democratic Initiatives
Foundation



“YEAR IN REVIEW” SURVEY 2025:

Will Ukrainians Accept the Proposed “Peace” Agreements?

METHODOLOGY

The nationwide survey was conducted by **The Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation** in cooperation with the sociological service of the Razumkov Centre **between 5 and 16 December 2025**.

A total of **2,000 respondents** aged 18 and over were interviewed face-to-face in Vinnytsia, Volyn, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zhytomyr, Zakarpattia, Zaporizhzhia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kyiv, Kirovohrad, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Poltava, Rivne, Sumy, Ternopil, Kharkiv, Kherson, Khmelnytskyi, Cherkasy, Chernihiv and Chernivtsi oblasts, as well as in the city of Kyiv.

In Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk, Mykolaiv, Kharkiv and Kherson oblasts, the survey was conducted only in territories controlled by the Government of Ukraine and where no active hostilities were taking place.

The survey employed a stratified multi-stage sampling design, with random selection applied at the initial stages of sample formation and quota sampling used at the final stage, when respondents were selected according to sex-and-age quotas. The structure of the sample reproduces the demographic structure of the adult population of the territories where the survey was conducted as of the beginning of 2022, by age, gender and type of settlement.

The theoretical margin of sampling error does not exceed 2.3%.

At the same time, additional systematic sampling biases may result from the consequences of Russian aggression, in particular the forced evacuation of millions of citizens.

Composition of macro-regions:

- West – Volyn, Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil, Chernivtsi oblasts;
- Centre – Vinnytsia, Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Kirovohrad, Poltava, Sumy, Khmelnytskyi, Cherkasy, Chernihiv oblasts, as well as the city of Kyiv;
- South – Zaporizhzhia, Mykolaiv, Kherson and Odesa oblasts;
- East – Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk and Kharkiv oblasts.

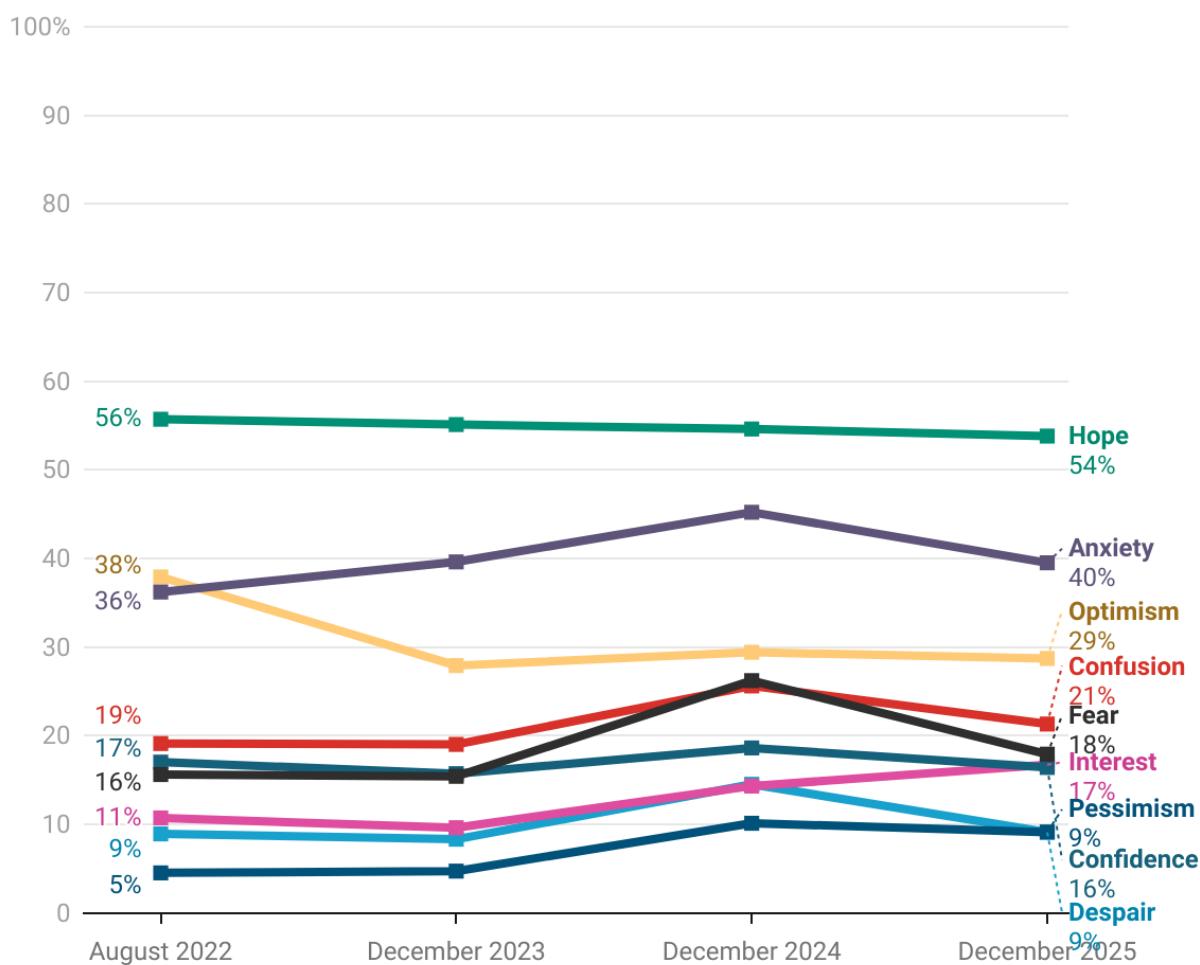
SURVEY RESULTS

1. Expectations about the future: between hope and anxiety

Hope has consistently remained the dominant feeling among Ukrainians regarding their personal future throughout all years of the full-scale invasion. In December 2025, it was mentioned by more than half of respondents (54%). This indicator has changed very little since 2022, despite the protracted war and the difficult security situation.

Q: What feelings arise when you think about your future?

Multiple answers are allowed



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At the same time, perceptions of the future are not unequivocally positive. Anxiety consistently ranks among the most frequent responses. At the end of 2024 it reached a peak (45%), and in 2025 it declined somewhat to the levels recorded in 2023, yet remains very widespread (39.5%). The third most frequently mentioned emotion Ukrainians experience when thinking about their future throughout the full-scale invasion is optimism (29%).

Against the backdrop of Donald Trump's election as the 47th President of the United States, Ukrainians became more pessimistic in their forecasts regarding their personal future; however, during the first year of his presidency, sentiments returned to 2023 levels. Compared to December 2024, the prevalence of negative emotions among Ukrainians when thinking about their future declined somewhat in 2025, returning to late-2023 levels. In addition to a decrease in anxiety, over the year Ukrainians reported fear less frequently (from 26% to 18%), as well as feelings of hopelessness (from 14.5% to 9%) and confusion (from 26% to 21%).

2. Security guarantees: declining expectations and a more pragmatic choice

Signals from certain international partners of Ukraine, primarily the United States, are weakening Ukrainians' orientation towards NATO as the best option for guaranteeing Ukraine's security, despite the fact that a relative majority of the population still considers NATO the best of the available alternatives. Compared to December 2024, the share of the population that named NATO membership as the best option for ensuring security declined from 55% to 38%.

The decline in support for NATO is not accompanied by growing sympathy for non-alignment as such. Instead, there is a redistribution of expectations towards alternative, less ambitious or more flexible security models. In particular, over the year the share of those placing their hopes on agreements on strategic defence cooperation with individual NATO member states increased noticeably (from 9% to 15%). Support also grew for a neutral status for Ukraine, but with international security guarantees (from 12% to 16%), as well as for an option based exclusively on Ukraine's own defence capabilities, even without external guarantees (from 3% to 7%).

These shifts indicate not so much a change in value orientations as growing doubts about the realism of Ukraine's rapid accession to NATO amid a protracted war and ambiguous signals from international partners.

Q: Which option for ensuring Ukraine's security would be the best, in your opinion?

Dynamics between 2024 and 2025. Respondents could select one answer option



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Regional differences in the choice of a security model remain significant and play an important role in shaping respondents' positions. Respondents from western oblasts are significantly more likely (53%) than residents of other regions to name NATO membership as the best security guarantee. In central oblasts, this option also dominates, albeit less unequivocally (39%). In southern and especially eastern oblasts, the share of NATO supporters is markedly lower: 32.5% and 22%, respectively. In southern oblasts, respondents more often choose a neutral status with international guarantees (23%). In contrast, in eastern oblasts the largest share of respondents, compared to other macro-regions, were unable to determine the best option for guaranteeing Ukraine's security – 26%. This reflects both differing experiences of the war and differing expectations regarding international support.

A far more salient factor than macro-region of residence is belief in Ukraine's victory. Among respondents who believe in victory, NATO membership remains the most desirable option (49.5%). At the same time, among those who do not believe in victory, this option is supported by only a relative minority (14%). In this group, support increases significantly for a neutral status with international security guarantees (from 12% to 27%) and for reliance on Ukraine's own forces without international guarantees (from 5% to 13%). The strength of the relationship between belief in victory and perceptions of the security model is pronounced, allowing this factor to be characterised as systemic.

3. Stability of support for Ukraine's European integration path

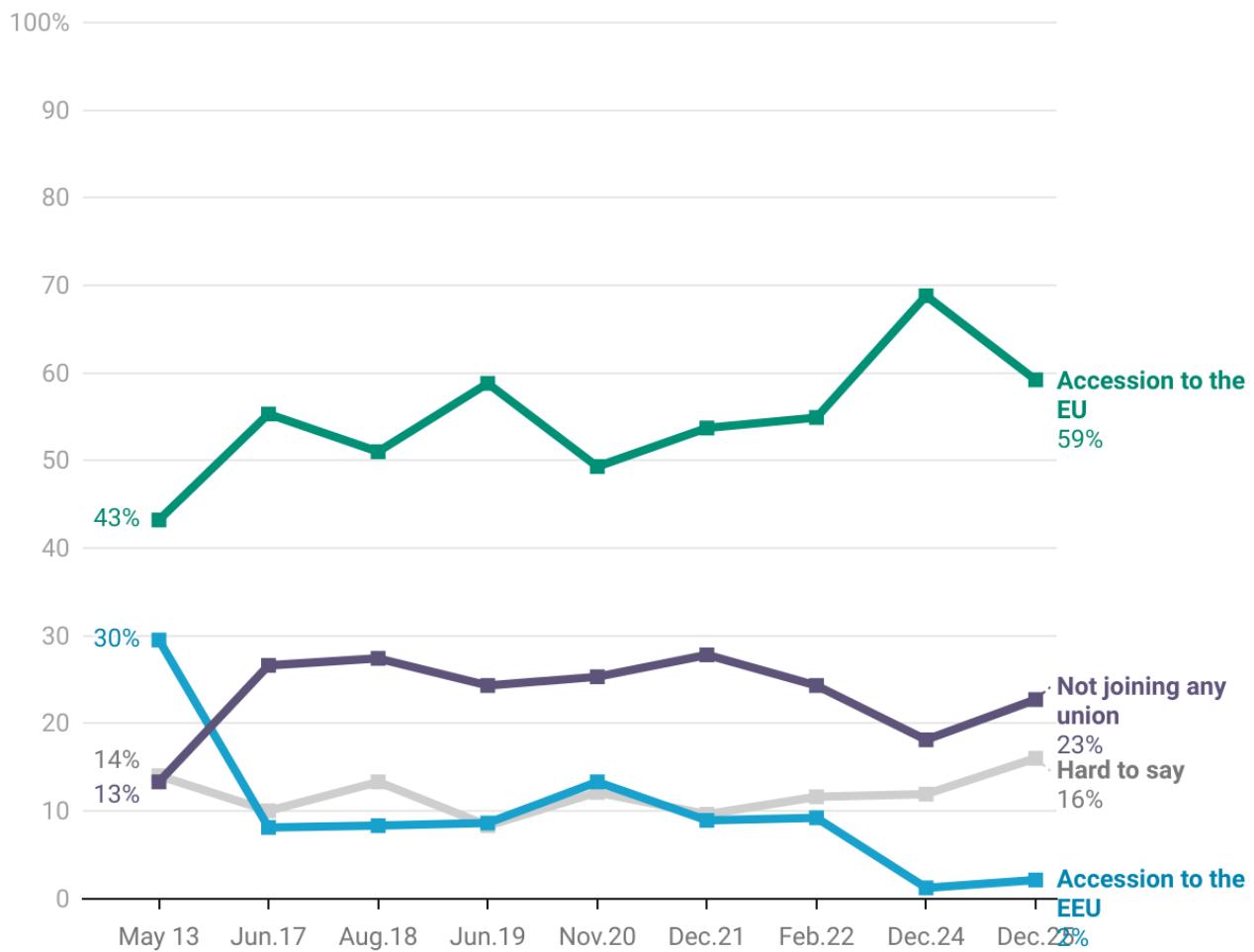
Accession to the European Union remains a priority for the majority of Ukrainians despite the external and internal challenges encountered along this path.

In 2013, support for EU accession stood at 43%. At that time, however, the country was divided between two alternatives: part of the population oriented towards Europe (43%), while another part looked towards a Eurasian Union with Russia (29.5%). After the Revolution of Dignity, the picture changed radically. Support for the EU became stable and dominant, while support for the Eurasian vector declined sharply and is no longer a viable alternative.

Following the start of the full-scale war, support for European integration increased substantially, in particular due to Ukraine obtaining EU candidate status. As of December 2024, 69% of the population supported accession to the EU. Despite a decline in support for the European integration path in 2025 to 59%, orientation towards EU membership remains at its highest level compared to the years preceding the full-scale invasion. The decline in support for EU accession over the year should be interpreted not as a rise in anti-European sentiment, but in the broader context of societal fatigue and disappointment caused by the slowing pace of change compared to the initial period of the full-scale invasion.

Q: Which integration path should Ukraine follow?

Respondents could select one answer option



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Source: DIF • Created with Datawrapper

Ukraine's European course is supported in all macro-regions, although the intensity of support varies. In western oblasts, support for EU accession is the highest (79%). In central oblasts, support is also high, though less unanimous (62%). In southern and eastern oblasts, the share of EU supporters is lower, but even there the EU remains the first choice compared to other options (44.5% and 38%, respectively). At the same time, in the southern and eastern macro-regions there are more respondents who choose not to join any alliance (32% and 33%), as well as more who are undecided (19% and 24%).

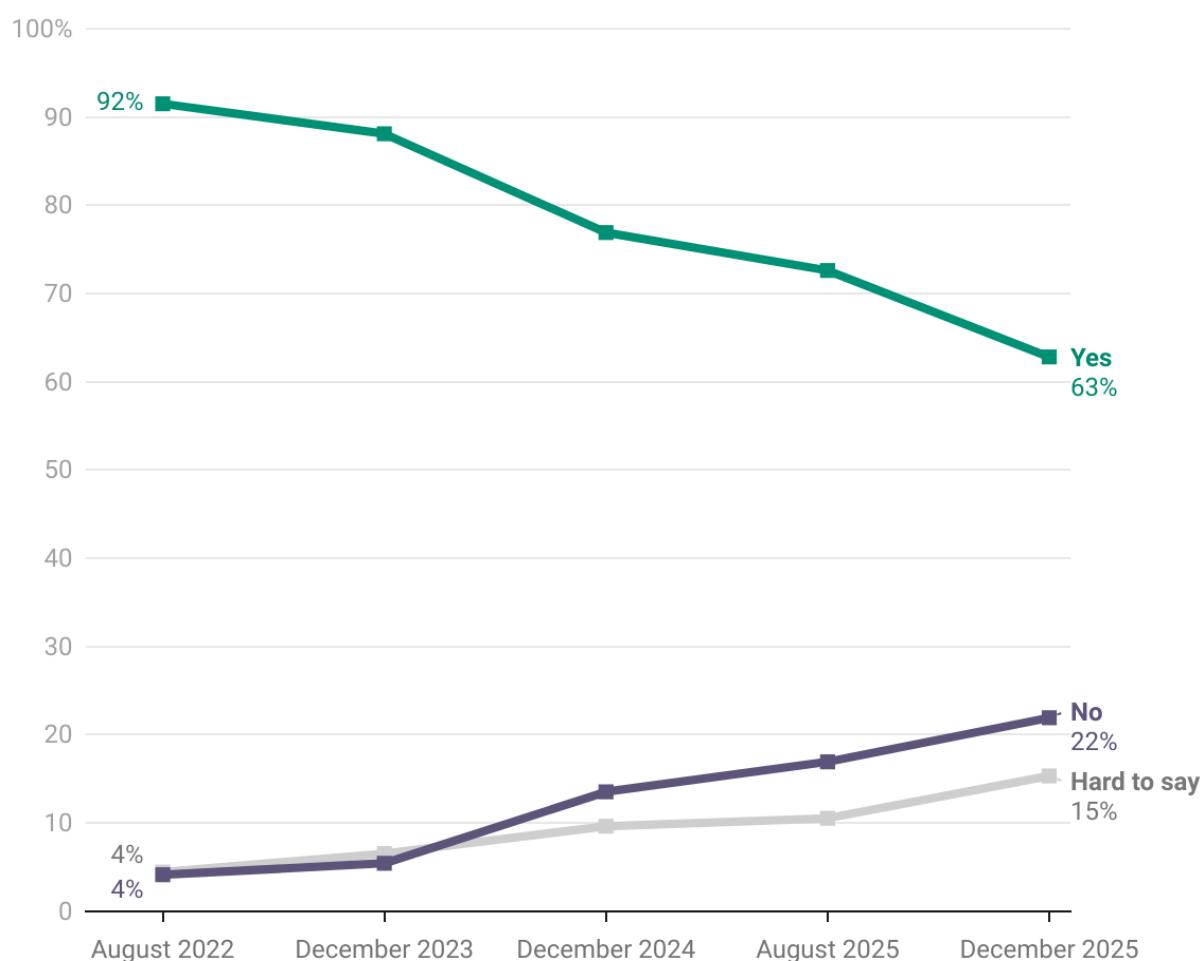
Among those who believe in Ukraine's victory, support for EU accession is very high (73%). By contrast, among those who do not believe in victory, support for the EU stands at only 29%. This group also includes significantly more respondents who choose not to join any alliance (41%), as well as more who do not have a clear position on this issue (23%).

4. Belief in Ukraine's victory in the war

An absolute majority of the population believes in Ukraine's victory in the war against Russia. Those who do not believe account for 22%. As the war drags on, belief in victory is gradually declining. Across five survey waves, a clear downward trend in belief in victory can be observed. Compared to August of this year, belief in victory declined from 73% to 63%, and compared to December 2024 it fell from 77%. The emotional mobilisation characteristic of the first months of the full-scale invasion is gradually giving way to a more rational assessment of the situation; nevertheless, an internal orientation towards victory persists among the population.

Q: Do you believe that Ukraine will win the war against Russia?

Respondents could select one answer option



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Despite existing regional differences, more than half of the population in all macro-regions believes in Ukraine's victory. Belief is highest in western (88%) and southern oblasts (84.5%), somewhat lower in central oblasts (73%). The greatest scepticism is observed among the population of eastern oblasts: 55% believe in victory compared to 45% who do not.

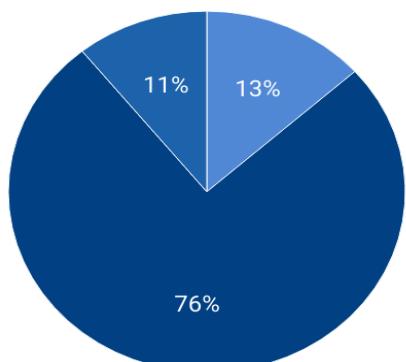
5. Red lines

For the majority of Ukrainians, certain demands included in the 28-point "peace plan" under US auspices are unacceptable. Of the four demands assessed by respondents, territorial concessions are the least acceptable: 76% consider recognition of the occupied territories as part of the Russian Federation unacceptable. Thirteen percent consider this demand acceptable. The largest shares of respondents who view recognition of the occupied territories as part of the Russian Federation as acceptable are found in central (22%) and eastern oblasts (21%). In southern oblasts, this figure stands at 12%, while in western oblasts it is less than 2%.

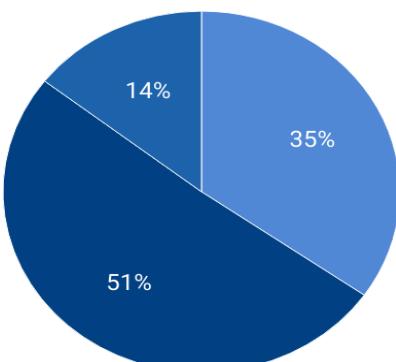
Q: How acceptable to you personally would Ukraine's fulfilment of the following requirements be in exchange for ending the war?

Respondents could select one answer option

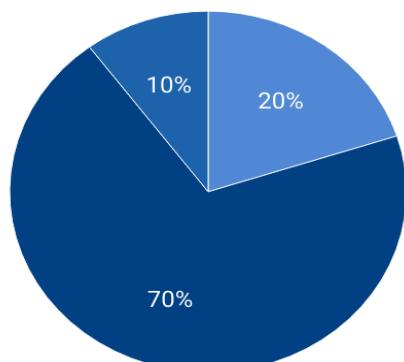
■ Acceptable ■ Unacceptable ■ Hard to say



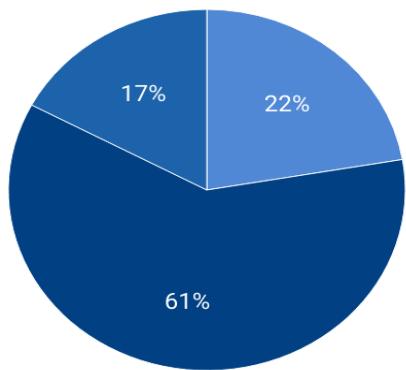
Recognition of Ukraine's occupied territories as part of the Russian Federation



Ukraine's refusal to join NATO



Reduction of the Ukrainian army to 600,000 troops



A smaller share of frozen Russian assets being directed towards Ukraine's recovery, and a larger share towards projects that deepen Russian-American cooperation

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Source: DIF • Created with Datawrapper

Seventy percent of Ukrainians are unwilling to agree to reducing the size of the Ukrainian Armed Forces to 600,000 personnel, while 20% consider this demand acceptable. Among all the conditions studied, this one exhibits the most pronounced regional variation. Reduction of the armed forces is

acceptable to 6% of the population in western oblasts. In central and eastern oblasts, almost a quarter of respondents are willing to agree to this condition. In southern oblasts, compared to other macro-regions, a majority (53%) consider it acceptable to reduce the Ukrainian Armed Forces to 600,000 personnel in exchange for ending the war.

For 61% of Ukrainians, it is unacceptable for a smaller share of frozen Russian assets to be directed towards Ukraine's reconstruction while a larger share is allocated to projects deepening Russian-US cooperation. Twenty-two percent consider such a concession acceptable. The smallest shares of respondents willing to agree to this condition reside in western (14%) and eastern oblasts (19.5%). In central oblasts, 30.5% of the population consider the condition acceptable. As in the case of reducing the size of the armed forces, more than half of respondents in southern oblasts (55%) are willing to accept this condition in exchange for ending the war.

The most acceptable of the proposed conditions for Ukrainians is renouncing Ukraine's accession to NATO. Thirty-five percent of Ukrainians are prepared to agree to this, while an absolute majority (51%) oppose such a concession. Assessments of the acceptability of this condition are linked to the security guarantee option respondents consider best for Ukraine. Among respondents who chose NATO as the best security option, 13% were willing to agree to renouncing NATO membership; among those who chose a neutral status with international guarantees, 69%; those relying exclusively on Ukraine's own forces, 61%; and those supporting non-alignment, 75%. Uncertainty regarding the security model was also associated with a willingness to concede NATO membership in exchange for ending the war.

The smallest share of supporters of renouncing NATO membership is found in western oblasts (15%). In the central and southern macro-regions, just over half of the population (52%) are prepared to agree to renouncing NATO membership in exchange for peace. In eastern oblasts, although the smallest share of respondents chose NATO as the best security option compared to other macro-regions, an absolute majority (53%) consider renouncing NATO membership unacceptable.

Ukrainians who do not believe in Ukraine's victory were more willing to agree to the proposed concessions than those who do believe. Despite a clear link between belief in victory and willingness to make concessions, the acceptability of specific concessions varied among those who do not believe in victory. Respondents who did not believe in victory were largely unwilling to accept recognition of Ukraine's occupied territories as part of the Russian Federation (61.5%), to agree to a reduction in the size of the Ukrainian Armed Forces (56%), or to redirect part of frozen Russian assets to projects deepening Russian-US cooperation (59%). At the same time, they showed greater openness to these concessions than those who believe in victory. By contrast, the opposite pattern is observed with regard to renouncing NATO membership. Seventy percent of Ukrainians who do not believe in Ukraine's victory are prepared to forgo NATO membership in order to end the war, whereas nearly the same proportion of those who believe in victory (73%) are unwilling to accept this concession.

TABLES

**1. What feelings arise when you think about your future? (%)
(%; respondents could select multiple answers)**

	August 2022	December 2023	December 2024	December 2025
Optimism	37.9	27.9	29.4	28.7
Indifference	1.3	1.9	3.6	1.9
Joy	4.6	3.6	3.7	2.9
Hopelessness	8.9	8.3	14.5	9.1
Confidence	17.0	15.7	18.6	16.4
Confusion	19.1	19.0	25.6	21.3
Satisfaction	2.1	2.0	2.9	1.9
Pessimism	4.5	4.7	10.1	9.1
Hope	55.7	55.1	54.6	53.8
Anxiety	36.2	39.6	45.2	39.5
Interest	10.7	9.6	14.3	16.7
Fear	15.6	15.4	26.2	17.9
Other	0.8	0.5	1.2	2.6
Difficult to answer	2.3	2.4	3.5	2.3

**2. Which option for ensuring Ukraine's security would be the best for Ukraine, in your opinion? (%)
(%; one answer)**

	December 2024	December 2025
NATO membership	55.1	38.3
Agreements on strategic defence cooperation with several NATO member states	9.0	15.4
Neutral status ensured by international guarantees of Ukraine's sovereignty	11.8	16.1
Reliance exclusively on Ukraine's own forces and defence industry, without international guarantees	3.3	7.2
Official declaration of 'non-aligned status', limitation of own defence capabilities, without international guarantees	3.0	3.6

Other	3.2	3.4
Difficult to answer	14.6	16.0

2.1 Distribution by macro-region of residence prior to the full-scale invasion (%; one answer)

	West	Center	South	East
NATO membership	53.2	39.1	32.5	21.8
Agreements on strategic defence cooperation with several NATO member states	17.1	17.7	12.5	10.7
Neutral status ensured by international guarantees of Ukraine's sovereignty	8.8	17.9	22.9	17.5
Reliance exclusively on Ukraine's own forces and defence industry, without international guarantees	8.4	4.5	8.3	10.4
Official declaration of 'non-aligned status', limitation of own defence capabilities, without international guarantees	1.3	1.9	5.4	8.5
Other	2.1	3.5	2.1	5.0
Difficult to answer	9.1	15.4	16.3	26.1

2.2 Distribution by belief in Ukraine's victory (%; one answer)

	Believe in victory	Do not believe in victory
NATO membership	49.5	13.6
Agreements on strategic defence cooperation with several NATO member states	16.0	14.8
Neutral status ensured by international guarantees of Ukraine's sovereignty	11.6	27.0
Reliance exclusively on Ukraine's own forces and defence industry, without international guarantees	5.1	13.4
Official declaration of 'non-aligned status', limitation of own defence capabilities, without international guarantees	2.0	8.2
Other	2.8	4.3
Difficult to answer	13.0	18.7

3. Which integration path should Ukraine follow? (%; one answer)

	May 2013	June 2017	Augu st 2018	June 2019	Nove mber 2020	Dece mber 2021	Feb rua ry 202 2	Dece mber 2024	Dece mber 2025
Accession to the European Union	43.2	55.3	51.0	58.8	49.3	53.7	54.9	68.8	59.2
Accession to the Eurasian Economic Union (with Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan)	29.5	8.1	8.3	8.6	13.3	8.9	9.2	1.2	2.1
Not to join any union	13.3	26.6	27.4	24.3	25.3	27.8	24.3	18.1	22.7
Difficult to answer	14.0	10.0	13.3	8.3	12.1	9.6	11.6	11.9	16.0

3.1 Distribution by macro-region of residence prior to the full-scale invasion (%; one answer)

	West	Center	South	East
Accession to the European Union	78.9	61.7	44.5	37.9
Accession to the Eurasian Economic Union (with Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan)	0.0	1.3	5.0	4.8
Not to join any union	13.4	20.8	31.9	32.9
Difficult to answer	7.7	16.2	18.6	24.4

3.2 Distribution by belief in Ukraine's victory (%; one answer)

	Believe in victory	Do not believe in victory
Accession to the European Union	72.9	29.1
Accession to the Eurasian Economic Union (with Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan)	0.5	7.5
Not to join any union	16.3	40.7
Difficult to answer	10.3	22.7

4. Do you believe that Ukraine will win the war against Russia? (%; one answer)

	August 2022	December 2023	December 2024	August 2025	December 2025
Yes	76.9	63.3	47.4	35.3	33.9
Rather yes	14.6	24.8	29.5	37.3	28.9
Rather no	2.9	3.8	8.0	11.3	14.7
No	1.2	1.6	5.5	5.6	7.2
Difficult to answer	4.4	6.5	9.6	10.5	15.3

4.1 Distribution by macro-region of residence prior to the full-scale invasion (%; one answer)

	West	Center	South	East
Yes	87.6	72.7	84.5	55.2
No	12.4	27.3	15.5	44.8

5. How acceptable to you personally would Ukraine's fulfillment of the following requirements be in exchange for ending the war?: Recognition of Ukraine's occupied territories as part of the Russian Federation (%; one answer)

Fully acceptable	3.4
Rather acceptable	10.0
Rather unacceptable	23.3
Completely unacceptable	52.5
Difficult to answer	10.8

5.1 Distribution by macro-region of residence prior to the full-scale invasion (%; one answer))

	West	Center	South	East
Acceptable	1.6	21.6	12.4	21.2
Unacceptable	98.4	78.4	87.6	78.8

5.2 Distribution by belief in Ukraine's victory (%; one answer)

	Believe in victory	Do not believe in victory
Acceptable	6.8	38.5
Unacceptable	93.2	61.5

6. How acceptable to you personally would Ukraine's fulfillment of the following requirements be in exchange for ending the war? : Ukraine's refusal to join NATO (%; one answer)

Fully acceptable	9.2
Rather acceptable	25.5
Rather unacceptable	17.3
Completely unacceptable	33.5
Difficult to answer	14.5

6.1 Distribution by macro-region of residence prior to the full-scale invasion (%; one answer)

	West	Center	South	East
Acceptable	14.8	51.6	51.9	47.1
Unacceptable	85.2	48.4	48.1	52.9

6.2 Distribution by belief in Ukraine's victory (%; one answer)

	Believe in victory	Do not believe in victory
Acceptable	26.6	70.3
Unacceptable	73.4	29.7

6.3 Distribution by the preferred option for guaranteeing Ukraine's security (%; one answer)

	NATO membership	Strategic defence cooperation agreements with several countries	Neutral status with international guarantees	Reliance exclusively on own forces, without guarantees	'Non-aligned status' without guarantees	Other	Difficult to answer
Acceptable	12.9	46.9	68.6	61.2	74.6	62.7	58.8
Unacceptable	87.1	53.1	31.4	38.8	25.4	37.3	41.2

7. How acceptable to you personally would Ukraine's fulfillment of the following requirements be in exchange for ending the war?: Reduction of the size of the Ukrainian Armed Forces to 600,000 troops (%; one answer)

Fully acceptable	5.9
Rather acceptable	14.1
Rather unacceptable	19.4
Completely unacceptable	50.4
Difficult to answer	10.2

7.1 Distribution by macro-region of residence prior to the full-scale invasion (%; one answer)

	West	Center	South	East
Acceptable	5.7	23.8	53.1	24.0
Unacceptable	94.3	76.2	46.9	76.0

7.2 Distribution by belief in Ukraine's victory (%; one answer)

	Believe in victory	Do not believe in victory
Acceptable	13.4	44.2
Unacceptable	86.6	55.8

8. How acceptable to you personally would Ukraine's fulfillment of the following requirements be in exchange for ending the war?: A smaller share of frozen Russian assets being directed towards Ukraine's recovery, and a larger share towards projects that deepen Russian-US cooperation (%; one answer)

Fully acceptable	8.1
Rather acceptable	14.2
Rather unacceptable	18.1
Completely unacceptable	42.4
Difficult to answer	17.2

8.1 Distribution by macro-region of residence prior to the full-scale invasion (%; one answer)

	West	Center	South	East
Acceptable	14.0	30.5	54.6	19.5
Unacceptable	86.0	69.5	45.4	80.5

8.2 Distribution by belief in Ukraine's victory (%; one answer)

	Believe in victory	Do not believe in victory
Acceptable	21.8	40.9
Unacceptable	78.2	59.1