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"Twiplomacy" – Zelensky's Digital
Diplomacy Practices in Engaging EU
Membership Candidacy Status

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Introduction

It was still dark on February 24, 2022, when Russian forces started invading the sovereign territory of Ukraine, striking major Ukrainian cities including the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv with missiles and artillery, after months of tension and military buildup along the Ukrainian border. As the full-scale assault on Ukrainian territory, sovereignty, and people unfolded, the world was watching in real-time with the war's documentation happening live on social media platforms by sharing pictures and videos from the horrors in Ukraine. Since the history of war documentation aligns with the history of media, and the world today being a highly digitalized, interconnected place with social media, it should come as no surprise that people used to sharing content from vanities like their lunch to their biggest moments have covered the war in Ukraine in the same fashion on social media apps since day one. These practices have led to journalists calling it the world's "first TikTok War" and a form of "citizen war journalism" (Chayka 2022). As an opinion piece in the New York Times stated: "this is the first war that will be covered on TikTok by super-empowered individuals armed only with smartphones, so acts of brutality will be documented and broadcast worldwide without any editors or filters" (Friedman 2022). The world is wired – from the internet and cellphone to social media apps, and a war in this interconnected world is, by extension, too. Critically, this does not only pertain to the civilian documentations of the war, but also to big politics, as the political world has seen an acceleration in the digitalization of political practices, most notably with online representation on social media apps. The field of diplomacy has been no exception and by now, the implementation of the digital world into conducting diplomacy has been so widely practiced, that world leaders actively use social media apps as a virtual tool for official communication, public engagement and international representation, as in traditional forms of public diplomacy. This growing trend towards digital diplomacy has been particularly visible among world leaders' use of the social media website Twitter, thus, coining the term "Twiplomacy", which demarcates the prominence of the platform within diplomatic functions in contemporary international relations (Chhabra 2020). After world leaders like Donald Trump have risen to notorious fame with their use of Twitter to engage international publics, most attention has recently been paid to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's use of the platform since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which he employs to engage Ukrainian citizens, as well as specifically addressing Western leaders within the political international community for support, thus, conduction virtual diplomacy.

With Twitter being an essential tool for digital diplomacy practices, the question arises how these digital interactions change the conduct of diplomacy and in the frame of Zelensky's Twitter diplomacy, how effective the usage of social media can be on the political world stage, given the natural limitations of 280 characters per tweet. Thus, in this paper, I aim to explore how the usage of Twitter has been used from Ukrainian President Zelensky as a form of digital diplomacy to advance Ukrainian European Union (EU) membership status since Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24th, 2022. The paper's objective is led by the following research question:

> *In what way has the Ukrainian President's use of Twitter been an efficient form of digital diplomacy in order to advance the European Union membership status of Ukraine since 24 February 2022?*

In the following, I will first provide an overview of the theoretical framework of the field of digital diplomacy and its subcategory of Twitter diplomacy, then moving towards a mixed-methods analysis of selected tweets by President Zelensky in a small-n case study, directly

addressing the EU official Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission (EC) within a certain time frame.

2. Literature Review – Defining Diplomacy

2.1 Traditional Diplomacy

Diplomacy has been labeled the "engine room" of world politics, but also the "poor child of the theory of International Relations (IR)" due to its lack of theoretical foundations within the field of heavily power- and structure- focused IR theories (Cohen 1998: 1; Sofer 1988: 196). The seemingly mundane and unimportant tasks of diplomatic practices have not been considered to be center of political power struggles, as represented in Hedley Bull's (1977: 156) prominent and governmental agent-focused definition of diplomacy as a "conduct of relations between states and other entities with standing in world politics by official agents and by peaceful means". A little more orientated towards the socially organized and meaningful practices of diplomacy is Watson's (1991: 33) definition of diplomacy as a form of "negotiation between political entities which acknowledge each other's independence". Essentially, one can say that diplomacy at the most basic level functions as universally accepted method to conduct international relations and reach communication and agreements among countries. Importantly, conventional diplomatic activity needs to be distinguished from its subcategory of public diplomacy, which describes a state's strategy to communicate directly with foreign publics as a two-way model of communication (Cull 2008). Within the progress of digitalization, public diplomacy, once considered "one of the leftovers of diplomatic dialogue" became an increasingly central component of diplomatic practice, signaling a new form of diplomacy, that centers on engaging with connected publics (Melissen 2005: XX).

2.2 Digital Diplomacy

The rapid development of technology, including the emergence of several social media platforms, has furthered the shift of interstate interactions from traditionally more secretive diplomacy spaces to the public, digital sphere and coined another subcategory of traditional diplomacy – "digital diplomacy." In their edited volume *Digital Diplomacy – Theory and Practice*, Bjola & Holmes (2015: 4) define digital diplomacy as the intentional usage of social media for diplomatic purposes. Holmes (idem: 15) highlights the transformative aspect of it: "digital diplomacy is defined as a strategy of managing change through digital tools and virtual collaboration". Both argue for the further need to assess what digital diplomacy is, as analogously to how digitalization has changed all aspects of society, it has fundamentally changed the course of diplomatic practices. By extension, Manor & Kampf (2022: 443) even argue social media, as in social networking sites, to have become *the* dominant medium of public diplomacy, "as these technologies enable organizations to transition from broadcast to communicative paradigms which are centered on mutual interactions" emphasizing the engaging nature of it.

As aforementioned, a popular social media platform for digital diplomacy has been Twitter, introducing another subcategory of diplomacy – "Twiplomacy" or Twitter diplomacy (Chhabra 2020: 2). According to Wang (2019) from Harvard's Belfer Center, by 2018 at least 97% of United Nations member states have had some form of official representation on Twitter. As a result:

> When a world leader tweets about a world event or a new policy framework, other politicians turn to the mainstream media to either reply to the tweet or defend it, or to simply give their opinion on the issue concerned. These replies, in turn, add to the online discussion that consequently shape public opinion" (idem: 3).

Consequently, Twitter has become the prime social media network for government officials and several studies have attended to the growing field of digital diplomacy and Twitter diplomacy studies. Among them, most have focused on digital diplomacy used by diplomats and embassies (Khan et al. 2021; Manor 2016; Manor & Kampf 2022). Few have studied its deployment by heads of states (Guliyev 2022; Saliu 2022). At this point, only one study has been found on "digital media diplomacy" by President Zelensky during the war, yet its focus is on analyzing his virtual video appearances (Saliu 2022). Finally, although the significance and widespread usage of digital diplomacy has been scholarly established, its workings and influence on foreign policy are still little known (Bjola & Jiang 2015: 74). Thus, this paper aims to extend the debate on digital diplomacy workings by looking at President Zelensky's Twitter diplomacy practices with the specific foreign policy goal of advancing Ukraine's European Union candidacy status.

3. Analysis of Zelensky's Twitter Diplomacy
3.1 Data Selection
In the following, the social media practices within digital diplomacy will be further inquired by analyzing a selection of tweets of Ukrainian President Zelensky towards EU officials under his Twitter alias @ZelenskyyUa, within the time frame of the start of Russia's invasion in Ukraine on 24 February 2022 until the granting of EU membership candidacy status to Ukraine on 23 June 2022. The time framing of this study has been demarcated by its main research interest of analyzing how Zelensky's conduct of Twitter diplomacy has functioned as a form of digital diplomacy practice in advancing Ukraine's EU membership candidacy status under internationally increased attention since the outbreak of Russia's full-on aggression war. In order to filter through the relevant tweets, Twitter's advanced research functions were used by the researcher's own Twitter account to filter through tweets.

Ursula von der Leyen, as the EC's President, is the head official in responding to the European Council's invitation to produce an Opinion on Ukraine's EU membership application of 28 February 2022. The tweets directed towards her official Twitter account are of special interest with regard to the conduct of digital diplomacy and to how Twitter has been used by the Ukrainian President in this regard to support Ukraine's way to EU membership candidacy status. Due to the restrictions of this paper concerning length, time, and available resources, the sometimes several daily tweets by @ZelenskyyUa were, thus, curated. Only tweets in the given time frame were selected, that mention the EC's President, through Ursula von der Leyen's Twitter handle, @vonderleyen. The researcher wants to state at this point, that naturally all of Zelensky's tweets in the given time frame would be of relevance to this study, particularly the ones addressing EU member state leaders, as they are the ones to grant applicant countries candidate status after the Commission's Opinion submission (Emerson et al. 2022). Unfortunately, they could not be included at this point because of the aforementioned reasons.

Concerning the further data selection process, it is important to highlight that the respective Twitter handles are the officially used accounts for communication by both governmental officials and have been used for official communication within their position and been verified by Twitter, too. Next, the search parameters were further defined by only searching for English-formulated tweets, given the international focus of this paper. Looking at diplomatic practices, English has been used as the lingua franca of diplomacy since World War II, and thus were excluded Ukrainian tweets by the President, as well as mentions and retweets (Mehtiyev 2010). As a result, the selection of suitable tweets for this analysis amounted firstly to N= 39 tweets from @ZelenskyyUa handle mentioning @vonderleyen.

Tweets in the respective time frame and with the exclusion of tweets in Ukrainian as well as retweets, amounted to n = 19.

3.2 Digital Diplomacy and Public Engagement
The selected tweets have subsequently been chronologically listed in table 1 for better overview, as well as to be able to manually analyze them through a mixed methods approach of qualitative content analysis and some descriptive statistical calculations. For the conceptual framework, the author builds on Bjola & Jiang's (2015: 72) developed examination model for effective digital diplomatic engagement, resting upon the assessment of three key aspects: *digital agenda setting*, *digital presence-expansion* and *digital conversation-generating*. Since the biggest transformation in diplomatic practices through social media has come from the change of a one-dimensional communication channel towards a two-dimensional communication channel, public engagement is seen as crucial for the effectiveness of digital diplomacy, breaking down barriers between politicians and people engaged in politics over time. As Bjola & Jiang (idem: 71) note, "by bringing ordinary people into the spotlight of political life and making their voice heard, it [allows] to directly engage foreign publics in a sustained dialogue". In addition, Twitter proves to be well-suited for analyzing public engagement of digital diplomacy practices due to its mechanisms of a standardized length of a maximum 280-characters tweet and the participatory features of allowing users to actively engage with content through favorites (likes), replies (comments), and retweets (shares). In the following, the cataloged tweets will be examined along the three axis of Bjola and Jiang's (ibid) public diplomatic engagement model.

3.3 Analysis of Digital Diplomatic Engagement

3.3.1 Agenda Setting
The first dimension delineated by Bjola and Jiang (idem: 74) for examining the effectiveness of social media in public diplomacy is its *agenda setting*. Agenda-setting is defined as the "informing […] for interaction because real dialogue must be based on topic familiarity, shared understandings and common interests" (ibid). In addition, agenda-setting is defined as new media's "ability to influence the salience of topics on public agenda" (McCombs & Reynolds 2002: 1, cited in ibid). Hence, to inquire the agenda setting of the sample themes, the researcher has inductively established four categories of prominent themes in the sample selection, like "Democracy, Politics, and Law," "Conflict and Violence," "Economic and Social Development". The particular category of "EU" considers tweets that have actively referred to Ukraine's possible EU member candidacy status. The last theme proves to be most relevant, due to the research question pertaining to the efficacy of Zelensky's tweets in pursuing digital diplomacy towards Ukraine's EU membership status.

From n = 19, a total of 11 tweets speaking to the Commission's President from February to June 2022 have been identified to refer to the "EU" theme, with tweets stating that "[…] *I believe that the #EU also chooses Ukraine*" or "[…] *moving to our strategic goal* [EU membership] *together.*" (Zelensky 2022c; 2022j; emphasis added).

Further, the theme with the most occurrences within the tweets was the category of "Democracy, Politics, and Law", with a total of 18 tweets speaking on "*sanctions*" as a policy against the Russian aggressor (Zelensky 2022a; 2022b; 2022e; 2022g; 2022h; 2022m; 2022p). Other tweets speak on "*freedom and European future*", "*residency rights in the EU to Ukrainians*", or "[*Ukraine flag emoji] has become a member of [EU flag emoji] Energy Union*" (Zelensky 2022c; 2022f; 2022i).

The theme of "Economic and Social Development" came up in 10 out of 19 sampled tweets, with President Zelensky emphasizing the need for economic support in Ukraine during the war. It was pronounced by "*her [von der Leyen] decision on additional financial assistance*", "*macro-financial assistance*", "*first tranche of EUR 500 million provided by EU*", "*significant financial assistance*", "*for deciding to abolish tariffs*" and further similar subthemes (Zelensky 2022b; 2022d; 2022f; 2022h; 2022m).

Finally, the theme of "Conflict and Violence" was surprisingly obsolete for Zelensky's digital diplomacy agenda-setting vis-à-vis the EC's President, considering the salience and omnipresence of war in his country, with only 6 out of 19 tweets referring to conflict or violence. The references range from "*concrete assistance for our military*" to the graphic "*Ukraine is fighting the invader with weapons in hands*" or "*Informed about the aggressor's nuclear terrorism*" (Zelensky 2022a; 2022c; 2022e).

Altogether, it can be stated, that the two most occurring themes in the tweet's agenda-setting were "Democracy, Politics, and Law" and "EU" membership itself. Arguably, both pertain to Ukraine's decade-long movement to EU governing principles and policies, since Ukraine itself has already progressively been implementing the 2014 Association Agreement towards EU accession, thus, underlining Ukraine's commitment to EU political principles and European values.

3.3.2 Presence-Expansion

The second dimension of examining digital diplomacy effectiveness is *presence-expansion*, defined as the need "to be 'out there' in the relevant public sphere" (Bjola & Jiang 2015: 75). Regular and often exposure through digital diplomacy practices is seen as a critical condition for government officials to be seen and heard and to establish their credibility and authority, thus, approaching digital diplomacy's efficacy from the perspective of the message receivers (ibid). The data collection process seems to be fruitful here, as a sample group of 19 tweets pertaining to the research question could be selected between the start of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 and the official award of EU candidacy status on 23 June 2022. Within this time frame of almost to the day five months, the tweets directed by Zelensky towards von der Leyen evenly spaced amount to a median of 3,8 – hence, approximately four tweets per month, ergo one tweet per week. Considering the actual dates of the tweets posting, four tweets were posted in the month of February (Zelensky 2022a-d); six in the month of March (Zelensky 2022e-j); three in the month of April (Zelensky 2022k-m); two in the month of May (Zelensky 2022n-o); and four again in the month of June (Zelensky 2022p-s). These amount to a standard deviation with $s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (X - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}}$ of 1,48323 tweets per month, as shown in table 3, thus signaling relative regular presence-expansion on the relevant themes and topics of Zelensky's digital diplomacy towards the EC's President Ursula von der Leyen. In addition, the overwhelming majority of the tweets has shown to consist of a positive sentiment with 18 out of 19 tweets, since positive attitudes can attract further positive reactions (Khan 2021: 1746). This comes after an additional textual-based analysis of the tweets' positive or negative attitude along positive signaling words, among them: "positive", "thanked", "support", and "appreciate" (Zelensky 2022i; 2022l; 2022m; 2022q). Negative signaling words were also outlined, like "inhumane" or "punished" (Zelensky 2022k).

3.3.3 Conversation-Generating

Finally, Bjola &Jiang's (2015: 75) third dimension of social media's impact is *conversation gathering,* an axis measuring the mechanism enabling interaction between the messenger and the audience. In order to measure the conversation-gathering between @ZelenskyyUa, and its audience, the engagement rate for the 19 tweets has been calculated with the help of

Mention's Twitter Engagement Calculator to grasp the conversation-generating effect of the quasi-continuous dialogue online. According to the website, the engagement rate on Twitter can be measured as the sum of Likes, Retweets and Replies, followed by its division of number of tweets, then the total number of followers, and with a final multiplication by 100 (Mention 2023). The engagement on Twitter can then be rated between "0 – 0.005% - Need improvement; 0.005% - 0.037% - Not bad; 0.037% - 0.098% - Good; 0.098% or higher – Awesome" (ibid.). Along these lines, the tweet selection has been catalogued in table 2 with the total sum of each likes, retweets, and replies, as well as their arithmetic mean. As a conclusion, Zelensky's engagement rate come to 0,83198421%, classifying it as "good" engagement rate between 0.037% and 0.098%.

In addition, concerning engagement peaks, the researcher can purvey that the peaks of audience engagement have not mounted up continuously, despite the relatively consistent presence of Zelensky in the given structure. Rather, they have been centered in the first two months of our time frame: February and March 2022, with the three highest peaks on 26 February 2022, 28 February 2022 and 16 March 2022. This leads to the hypothesis, that engagement has been higher towards Zelensky's online presence in the beginning of Russia's aggression war, analogously to the world's attention, hence, leading to those peaks. Further statistical analysis would be needed here.

Conclusion

Ultimately, social media has enabled government officials to reach a much wider audience and engage in dialogue with people from around the world. Compared to more conventional means of communication and traditional diplomacy, social media has the critical advantage - next to fast information delivery and wide outreach - to enable a two-way conversation between political officials and the public, thus enabling diplomatic communication that engages the foreign public. By utilizing these platforms, government officials have been able to build relationships, promote their initiatives, and even foster a more inclusive diplomatic process. This paper first sampled Zelensky's social media engagement on the social media platform Twitter towards EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, between 24 February 2022 and 23 June 2022. Secondly, it analysed through the framework of digital diplomacy efficacy along different engagement axis of *digital agenda setting*, *digital presence-expansion* and *digital conversation-generating*. It can be concluded that the Ukrainian President's use of Twitter has indeed been an efficient form of digital diplomacy, capitalizing on dialogue-based diplomacy towards foreign policy goals. This comes as a significant extension of digital diplomacy research, still trying to fully grasp the mechanisms and drivers behind different kinds of interactions. It furthers as well as the attention directed towards Zelensky's prominent messaging style through videos, for which he came to national fame already during the 2019 Ukrainian presidential election and later-on internationally for his selfie-styled videos talking to the world on the war in Ukraine. All things considered, it cannot be fully investigated in what way or if at all Zelensky's digital diplomacy style on pushing EU membership candidacy status for Ukraine has been effective in really influencing the Commission's opinion building or the political process along the way. But as it has been established throughout the present study, digital presence and by extension digital diplomacy by governmental officials is recognized as an almost mandatory part of diplomacy in this technological era and if implemented successfully, can lead to highly effective engagement. In addition, as already mentioned at the beginning of this paper, referring to the general presence of Ukraine's war in social media, labeled as "the world's first TikTok war," it is important that the processes of documentation and diplomacy on social media act as a form of non-military, democratic weapon in this attack on Ukraine's democracy, furthering the cause

of Ukrainians fighting for their country and for the rest of the democratic world. Similarly, the European Union's award of Ukrainian EU membership candidacy status, possibly facilitated through the presence of the war on social media and digital diplomacy practices, can help to further consolidate the democratic forces within the country and act as a signal vis-à-vis the Russian aggressor. All in all, social media practices in the diplomatic process can create international attention and solidarity through constituting epistemic practices, and also possibly acquire financial or military aids. For further studies, attention needs to be directed towards the downsides of social media practices within digital diplomacy, as to how technical singularization processes, like algorithms, complicate the generalized open production of knowledge through social media.

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Appendix

Table 1. Diplomatic Diplomacy Engagement of @ZelenskyyUa Tweets Referring to @vonderleyen between 24.02.2022 – 23.06.2022

Shows:
- Themes/ Agenda-Setting
- Occurrence of Themes: 1 = positive; 0 = negative
- Positive / Negative Sentiment

No.	Date	Tweets	Theme/ Agenda Setting	Democracy, Politics & Law	Conflict & Violence	Econom. & Social Development	EU Memb.	Sentiment	Likes	RTs	Replies
1.	24.02.2022	"We are creating an anti-Putin coalition. I spoke with @vonderleyen, @EmmanuelMacron, @karlnehammer and @RTErdogan about concrete sanctions and concrete assistance for our military. We are waiting for decisive action." (Zelensky 2022a)	Conflict & Violence; Democracy, Politics, and Law	1	1	0	0	- "anti-"	29.8 K	1.4 K	5.7K
2.	25.02.2022	"Not all possibilities for sanctions have been exhausted	Democracy, Politics, and Law; Economic &	1	0	1	0	+ "grateful"	47.3 K	7.1 K	1.9K

No.	Date	Tweet	Category								
		yet. The pressure on Russia must increase. Said this to @Vonderleyen. I am grateful to the President for her decision on additional financial assistance." (Zelensky 2022b)	Social Development								
3.	26.02.2022	"Ukraine is fighting the invader with weapons in hands, defending its freedom and European future. Discussed with @vonderleyen effective assistance to our country from [EU flag] in this heroic struggle. I believe that the #EU also	Conflict & Violence; Democracy, Politics, and Law + EU	1	1	0	1	+ "future" + "I believe"	113.1K	14.9K	3.9K

		chooses Ukraine.” (Zelensky 2022c)									
4.	28.02.2022	“Also had a phone conversation with @vonderleyen. Talked about concrete decisions on strengthening Ukraine's defense capabilities, macro-financial assistance and Ukraine's membership in the #EU.” (Zelensky 2022d)	Conflict + Violence; Economic and social development; Democracy, Politics and Law + EU	1	1	1	1	0	135.1K	14.9K	5.1K
5.	04.03.2022	“Talked to President of the European Commission @vonderleyen. Informed about the aggressor's nuclear terrorism. Preventing it is our common task.	Conflict & Violence; Democracy, Politics, and Law + EU	1	1	0	1	0	56.7K	8.1K	1.5K

#	Date	Text									
		Discussed strengthening sanctions against Russia. The issue of 🇺🇦's membership in the #EU was also on the agenda. #StopRussia" (Zelensky 2022e)									18
6.	05.03.2022	"Grateful to @vonderleyen 🇪🇺 for an important decision to give immediately residency rights in the EU to Ukrainians flowing to Europe because of Russian aggression. The first tranche of EUR 500 million provided by EU would help Ukrainians to ensure decent living	Democracy, Politics, and Law; Economic and social development	1	0	1	0	+ "grateful"	87.5K	12K	1.4K

		conditions." (Zelensky 2022f)									19
7.	09.03.2022	"Continue dialogue with @EU_Commission President @vonderleyen. Grateful for another sanctions package against the Russian aggressor. We agree on the need to ensure effective humanitarian corridors for civilians. Raised the issue of 🇪🇺 membership, which is key for 🇺🇦. #stoprussia" (Zelensky 2022g)	Democracy, Politics, and Law; + EU	1	0	0	1	+ "we agree"	34K	4.8 K	645
8.	14.03.2022	"Discussed with President of the 🇪🇺 Commissi	Conflict & Violence; Economic &	1	1	1	1	"appreciate"	52.9 K	7.5 K	1.3K

#	Date	Tweet	Category								
		on @vonderleyen the 🇪🇺's support for 🇺🇦 in countering Russian aggression. Increasing sanctions pressure on Russia is important. We also appreciate significant financial assistance. Ukraine continues to move towards membership in the #EU." (Zelensky 2022h)	Social Development; Democracy, Politics, and Law + EU								
9.	16.03.2022	"🇺🇦 has become a member of 🇪🇺 Energy Union. The unification of 🇺🇦 & 🇪🇺 energy systems has been completed. Now 🇺🇦 electricity	Economic & Social Development; Democracy, Politics, and Law	1	0	1	0	+ "thanks"	112.2K	17.2K	2K

flows in & vice versa. Grateful to members, personally to @vonderleyen, @KadriSimson & everyone, thanks to whom we now have a single energy system!" (Zelensky 2022i)									

		"Had substantial conversation with EC President @vonderleyen. EC opinion on UA application for #EU membership will be prepared within few months. UA Government and EC are instructed. Moving to our strategic goal together."	Democracy, Politics, and Law + EU								
10.	18.03.2022		Democracy, Politics, and Law + EU	1	0	0	1	+ "our strategic goal together"	40.4 K	5.6 K	1.1K

No.	Date	Text	Theme								
		(Zelensky 2022j)									
11.	04.04.2022	"Negotiated with President of the Commission @vonderleyen. Informed about inhumane crimes of the aggressor in the suburbs of Kyiv. Agreed - all guilty must be punished! Appreciate the EU's readiness to provide financial & technical support to the relevant JIT #StopRussia" (Zelensky 2022k)	Conflict & violence; Economic and social development	0	1	1	0	- "inhumane" - "punished" + "appreciate"	43.7K	6.7K	1.2K
12.	19.04.2022	"Informed EC President @vonderleyen about the provision of the completed	Democracy, Politics and law + EU	1	0	0	1	+ "appreciate" + "support"	37K	5.3K	1K

		questionnaire - an important step towards #EU membership! Discussed the increase of security aid to 🇺🇦 in the face of RF's aggression. Also discussed postwar reconstruction. We appreciate the support of 🇪🇺!" (Zelensky 2022l)									
13.	27.04.2022	"Talked to @vonderleyen. Thanked the European Commission for deciding to abolish tariffs, quotas on 🇺🇦 industrial goods, foods. Discussed further support, including MFA. The	Democracy, Politics and law; Economic and social development	1	0	1	0	+ "thanked" + "support"	27.4 K	3.8 K	636

		European Commission President spoke about 6th sanctions package, which must include oil embargo." (Zelensky 2022m)								
14.	18.05.2022	"Grateful for the support package for 🇺🇦 announced today by @vonderleyen: a new € 9 billion macro-financial aid program and a 🇺🇦 Recovery Platform. Such support will help 🇺🇦win the war, overcome the consequences of RF's aggression & accelerate the movement towards	Democracy, Politics and law; Economic and social development + EU	1	0	1	1	+ "grateful" + "help"	23.2 K	2.9 K	522

№	Date	Text	Category								
		#EU membership" (Zelensky 2022n)									25
15.	19.05.2022	"Maintain constant contact with @vonderleyen. Thanked for € 9 and € 0.6 billion in financial aid. Discussed the EC-proposed "Platform for Reconstruction of Ukraine", which should become a common success story. Agreed on the feasibility of joint control at the 🇺🇦-🇵🇱 border. (Zelensky 2022o)	Democracy, Politics and law; Economic and social development	1	0	1	0	+ "common success"	14.2 K	1.8 K	345
16.	03.06.2022	"Grateful to 🇪🇺, @vonderleyen,	Democracy, Politics and law;	1	0	1	0	+ "grateful"	23.6 K	3.3 K	1.1K

		@eucopresident for the decisions in support of 🇺🇦. The 6th sanctions package increases the pressure on RF depriving it of oil profits. Abolition of tariffs & quotas on imports from 🇺🇦 for 1 year supports our producers, agricultural workers & economy." (Zelensky 2022p)	Economic and social development								26
17.	17.06.2022	"I commend the positive @EU_Commission Conclusion on 🇺🇦's candidate status. It's the 1st step on the EU membership path that'll	Democracy, Politics and law + EU	1	0	0	1	+ "positive" + "Victory" + "positive"	25.6 K	4K	859

		certainly bring our Victory closer. Grateful to @vonderleyen & each EC member for a historic decision. I expect the positive result from #EUCO next week." (Zelensky 2022q)									27
18.	17.06.2022	"I've continued dialogue with the Presidents of the European Commission and the European Council. Expressed gratitude to @vonderleyen for the positive conclusion of the EC on granting 🇺🇦 candidate status. Ukraine will carry on with the course	Democracy, Politics and law + EU	1	0	0	1	+ "positive conclusion"	18.1 K	2.4 K	432

#	Date	Tweet	Theme								
		of pro-European reforms." (Zelensky 2022r)								28	
19.	23.06.2022	"Sincerely commend EU leaders' decision at #EUCO to grant 🇺🇦 a candidate status. It's a unique and historical moment in 🇺🇦-🇪🇺 relations. Grateful to @CharlesMichel, @vonderleyen and EU leaders for support. Ukraine's future is within the EU. #EmbraceUkraine" (Zelensky 2022s)	Democracy, Politics and law + EU	1	0	0	1	+ "unique" and "historical"; + future	24.7K	4.5K	1.2K
			Total no. of occurrence of themes in n=19:	18	6	10	11	18			

Table 2. Twitter Engagement Calculator of @ZelenskyyUa Tweets Referring to @vonderleyen between 24.02.2022 – 23.06.2022

Date	Likes	RTs	Replies
24.02.2022	29800	1400	5700
25.02.2022	47300	7100	1900
26.02.2022	113100	14900	3900
28.02.2022	135100	14900	5100
04.03.2022	56700	8100	1500
05.03.2022	87500	12000	1400
09.03.2022	34000	4800	645
14.03.2022	52900	7500	1300
16.03.2022	112200	17200	2000
18.03.2022	40400	5600	1100
04.04.2022	43700	6700	1200
19.04.2022	37000	5300	1000
27.04.2022	27400	3800	636
18.05.2022	23200	2900	522
19.05.2022	14200	1800	345
03.06.2022	23600	3300	1100
17.06.2022	25600	4000	859
17.06.2022	18100	2400	432
23.06.2022	24700	4500	1200

Total	946500	128200	31839
Median	49815,78947	6747,368421	1675,736842

Engagement rate on Twitter Calcula
(Likes + Retweets + Replies) / twee

(Likes + Retweets +
Replies) =   1106
Number of tweets   19
Followers   7.00

Engagement rate on Twitter Calcula
[(1106539):19:7.000.000] x
100]=

Table 3. Standard Deviation of @ZelenskyyUa Tweets Referring to @vonderleyen between 24.02.2022 – 23.06.2022

Months	Tweets
February	4
March	6
April	3
May	2
June	4
n = 5	19

Standard Deviation for n=19 over 5 months

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (X - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}}$$

$$s = \sqrt{[\Sigma(X-\overline{x})^2]}/n-1$$

$\overline{x} =$ ((4+6+3+2+4)/5)
     3,8

$s = \sqrt{[(4-3,8)^2+(6-3,8)^2+(3-3,8)^2+(2-3,8)^2+(4-3,8)^2]}/5-1$
     $\sqrt{[8,8]}/5-1$
     $\sqrt{[8,8]}/4$
     $\sqrt{2,2}$

$s =$ 1,4832397