

Election helps Ukraine be 'European'

Вибори сприяють тому, щоб Україна стала європейською країною

<http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/the-monitors-view/2014/1027/Election-helps-Ukraine-be-European>

Новообрані лідери України повинні не лише досягти політичної рівноваги між собою, але також знайти спосіб децентралізації влади, щоб задовольнити інтереси сепаратистських областей на російськомовному сході країни, - пише видання.

A year-long struggle between Russia and Europe over the future of Ukraine took a decisive turn Oct. 26 – toward Europe. An election for a new Ukrainian parliament ended with three pro-European parties winning a majority. To end the country's civil war and prevent Russian meddling, the new parliament must now become, well, European.

Yes, Ukraine is now a better democracy, one that must pass badly needed reforms. The election swept out a parliament whose corruption helped sparked last November's protests in Kiev. But what will make Ukraine look like the European Union it seeks to join?

The simple answer lies in the EU motto, adopted only in recent years after decades of struggles to resolve the Union's many national differences: "United in diversity."

Despite their pro-European tendencies, the three winning parties still need to learn how to honor their differences while working together on common interests and values. The EU is still learning this art of being both inclusive and principled. The Ukraine party of Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk (People's Front) must get along with the party of President Petro Poroshenko (Bloc) while both must accommodate a surprising election winner, the Samopomich (Self-help) party. Each party has its own reformist agenda.

Ukraine can take some tips from the outgoing chief executive of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso. In a farewell speech, he summed up his 10 years in office with this advice: "The way to solve the problems we have in Europe is not through revolution and even less through counter-revolution. It's by compromise, it's by reform."

The former Portuguese prime minister should know of what he speaks. During his tenure, the EU membership has nearly doubled to 28 members. It has endured a constitutional crisis. And since 2009, it has both united and divided during a debt crisis that has turned into an economic crisis. “The risk of fragmentation and disunity was a real and present danger,” said Mr. Barroso.

Along the way, the EU almost lost Greece as a member of the eurozone and saw a referendum on Scottish independence that could have triggered other secessionist split-offs.

No wonder the EU was given the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012.

Ukraine’s newly elected leaders must not only find a balance of power among themselves but also find a way to decentralize power in order to accommodate the interests of the breakaway regions in the Russian-speaking east. Joining the EU will require more than democracy, free trade, clean governance, and human rights. It must learn what the EU has to continually learn. “Our union is strong because it respects diversity,” said Barroso. “For those who accept the fundamental rules of the club there is always a place, and there is always equality of treatment.”