

# Contents

Foreword by <i>Paul D'Anieri</i> .....	5
Acknowledgements.....	13
Introduction.....	15
1 Framing the analysis: A review of key scholarship and a proposal for a game theory-based framework .....	25
Introduction.....	25
1.1. The conflict in Ukraine within a broader theoretical perspective.....	27
1.1.1. The EU-Ukraine-Russia relations.....	27
1.1.2. The armed conflict in Ukraine .....	31
1.2. Foreign policy decision-making through a game theoretical toolkit: Information, trust, payoffs, and resources .....	36
1.2.1. The role of information in foreign policy decision-making .....	38
1.2.2. Trust in interstate relations .....	43
1.2.3. Analysis of payoffs in international interactions .....	48
1.2.4. The importance of resources in international relations .....	52
Conclusion.....	56
2 A backward look: Ukraine's relations with the European Union and Russia in 1991-2014.....	61
Introduction.....	61
2.1. Ukraine's independence and its foreign policy in 1991-2004.....	63
2.1.1. International recognition and territorial disputes with Russia.....	63
2.1.2. Integration options for Ukraine.....	69
2.1.3. The impact of Ukraine's domestic situation on its foreign policy.....	74

2.2.	The EU-Ukraine-Russia relations after the Orange Revolution.....	77
2.2.1.	Post-revolution expectations and challenges .....	77
2.2.2.	The failures of the Yushchenko presidency .....	82
2.3.	The Yanukovich regime and its fall (2010-2014).....	85
2.3.1.	The bargaining between East and West .....	85
2.3.2.	Euromaidan.....	91
	Conclusion .....	94
3	Crimean <i>Blitzkrieg</i> (21 <sup>st</sup> February – 26 <sup>th</sup> March 2014).....	101
	Introduction.....	101
3.1.	Information: The problem of a knowledge vacuum .....	103
3.2.	Trust in international law .....	108
3.3.	Miscalculation of payoffs.....	113
3.4.	Low awareness of resources.....	120
	Conclusion .....	127
4	Donbas on fire: Improvement of Ukraine’s crisis management (April – August 2014) .....	133
	Introduction.....	133
4.1.	Information: Partial mprovement.....	136
4.2.	Trust: Gradual decrease .....	145
4.3.	Payoffs: Limited awareness.....	151
4.4.	Resources: Development of Ukraine’s resources and learning about those of others.....	158
	Conclusion .....	168
5	Efforts in reaching peace: The post-Minsk crystallised image (5 <sup>th</sup> September 2014 – 12 <sup>th</sup> February 2015) .....	175
	Introduction.....	175
5.1.	Information: Good awareness.....	177
5.2.	Erosion of trust.....	183
5.3.	Payoffs: ‘Eyes wide open’ .....	188
5.4.	Resources: Good awareness .....	194

Conclusion.....	200
Conclusions.....	205
Introduction.....	205
Theoretical and methodological contribution .....	207
Theoretical contribution.....	207
Methodological contribution.....	215
Empirical findings .....	216
Information about interlocutors’ preferences .....	218
Trust in interlocutors’ signals.....	223
The payoff structure .....	227
Resources .....	231
Broader implications .....	235
The role of the US in the armed conflict .....	236
The EU as a foreign policy actor.....	237
The role of Russia in Europe .....	238
Lessons for Ukraine’s foreign policy.....	239
Epilogue: Russia’s full-scale invasion in 2022 .....	243
Information: The same underestimation of Russia’s commitment to fight.....	247
Trust: Disbelief of Russia’s brutality .....	249
Payoffs: Destroyed <i>status quo</i> .....	251
Resources: International anti-Russian coalition .....	252
Annex 1. Interview guide .....	257
Annex 2. Changes in Ukrainian leaders’ decision-making in relations with Russia and the EU in February 2014 - February 2015.....	263
List of interviews .....	267
Bibliography .....	271