

# Russia's War against Ukraine

IT'S GEOPOLITICAL CONSEQUENCES  
– AND HOW IT WILL AFFECT EUROPE

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# Breaking the taboo of no more wars in Europe

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- Military aggression to swipe a sovereign country off the map
- Announced in a speech full of historical misrepresentation: The Ukrainians are not a nation, but a subgroup of the Russians
- If we take Putin by his word, he aims as well for Moldova, the Baltic States, Poland, Finland
- Hints of Hitler/Stalin and an alleged „Europe in between“: The smaller nations between Germany and Russia are not able to govern; that leads to chaos
- Putins alleged goal: „Denazification “ (Zelenskyj is of Jewish descent) and „Demilitarization“ (Ukraine aims for WMD)

# Lessons after seven months of war

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- Russia is weaker than expected. Ukraine is able to fight back
- Battle of Kiev, the fight for the East, now taking back regions in the East and the South
- War of attrition, delivery of weapons by the West is crucial
- Putin is afraid of general mobilization
- But: There is no international front against Russia
- Lack of grain in Africa, secret alliances with Moscow, e.g. India
- China not interested in a success of the West – the Taiwan question

# Two tales of the origins of the conflict

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- Moscow: Nato surrounds Russia
- Broken promises from the time of German unification
- We have to defend ourselves
  
- Western narrative: CEE countries begged for Nato membership; Moscow is breaking international principles like the freedom to pick alliances
- Putin claims a right to revise the international order since 1989 and uses the right to form alliances (e.g. with Belarus), which he denies to other nations
- Frozen Conflicts in former Soviet Republics

# Ukraine: Zwischen Nato und Russland

NATO: Beitritt ■ vor 1999 ■ ab/nach 1999 — Grenzen der Sowjetunion bis 1991\*



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\*Litauen erklärte Unabhängigkeit 1990

Quelle: Nato, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung

# Four Post-Soviet Frozen Conflicts

## Population

Moldova .....	3.56 million*
Transnistria .....	523,000**
Georgia .....	4.49 million*
Abkhazia .....	216,000**
South Ossetia .....	70,000**
Azerbaijan .....	9.02 million*
Nagorno-Karabakh .....	145,000**
Armenia .....	3.1 million*

\*2011 World Bank estimate

\*\*2011 UNHCR Freedom in the World Report

Moldova, Georgia and Azerbaijan population estimates are without breakaway territories.

 Contested Area



PER CONCORDIAM ILLUSTRATION

# Role reversal: Status quo versus revisionistic powers

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- After 1945 the Soviet Union loved the new Status. Germany and more generally Europe / the West wanted change
- Since 1989 it's vice versa – but the tools are different
- The West aimed for peaceful change (OSCE, arms reduction)
- Fall of the Berlin wall 1989, end of the Soviet Union 1991, short period of cooperation until 2007
- Putin's speech 2001 in the Bundestag vs Munich 2007: I don't play by your rules
- 2008 war in Georgia, 2014 annexation of Crimea and hybrid war in Eastern Ukraine, 2022 is about the whole country

# Economic resources in geopolitics

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- US the strongest economy and military power
- EU an economic power, no hard power
- China's rise slower than expected, a hegemon in Asia, No covid a mistake
- Will Taiwan become a second Ukraine?
- Russia's economy is 1/7 of each of the three other powers.
- US and Europe command by far more resources, for China Moscow is just a junior partner
- Western democracies have allies, China and Russia not
- Who should be afraid of whom - if countries invest similar shares of GDP in soft power and hard power?

# Europe's reaction, Europe's vulnerability

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- „Zeitenwende“ in defense budget, delivery of weapons, Swift
- Giving up cheap Russian energy is not so easy – and expensive. German industry is losing an important advantage in competition
- Doubts about staying power
- Change in priorities: Rule of law in Poland, Hungary not as important anymore
- In Nato and EU Germany is perceived as slow and hesitant: too little too late
- Can we rely on the promises of „Zeitenwende“? Is Germany appreciating the value of a military? Are 2% reasonable?
- How united is Europa? France/Germany vs Poland, the Baltics etc.

# Europe's/Germany's model for success under threat

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- Rule based order as the precondition for export oriented economies
- UN, WTO, IMF, World Bank, Nato, EU
- Trade routes are secured by others
- Disruption and crises all over the place
- The US no longer willing to guarantee world order
- Brexit: An important country votes against EU
- EU rules made for sunshine not heavy weather: Euro, migration, rule of law, the rise of populists. What about Turkey and EU?
- Different use of digital opportunities: pluralism or repression?



# Europe after the financial crisis, Covid and the war

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- No power center and leadership
- The culture gaps widen
- Germany's mental problem: we are doing relatively well, why should we change?
- What is at the core of Macrons „European Sovereignty “?
- What if Donald Trump (or a similar person) wins in 2024?

# The outlook for Germany and Europe

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- The Jungle Grows Back, preparing for a time of more conflict
- Russia has no friends, but destruction capabilities; the task is containment
- Good news: Putin achieves the contrary of his goals (A union with Ukraine? Keep Nato away? Make Russian energy indispensable for Europe? Alliance with China)
- But: Europe is the least prepared power for the new age of conflict
- Who guarantees security and peace? CEE trusts only in Nato, not EU
- Emancipation is overdue. But not against the US, rather a stronger Europe in alliance with the US