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## **ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT AS A LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION OF UKRAINE**

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**Summary.** *International relations serve as a reflection, continuation, and development of inner social relations. They include economic, socio-political, spiritual, and cultural aspects, but represent not an arithmetic sum of the latter, but a qualitatively new system. Today legal reforms in Ukraine are taking place mainly in the light of the implementation of European integration commitments, in particular in the context of the implementation of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union (EU). This Agreement defines strategic political and socio-economic priorities for Ukraine, is a kind of benchmark for further development of the state. The purpose of this article is to provide a theoretical and legal analysis of the Association Agreement as a legal basis for the adaptation of Ukrainian legislation to the EU legislation in the conditions of strengthening the interdependence of the world countries and European integration.*

**Keywords:** *source of law, international treaty, Association Agreement, adaptation of legislation, European integration.*

**The purpose** of the article is a complex theoretical and legal study of the Association Agreement as a legal basis for a qualitatively new stage of Ukraine's integration into the European Community.

**Reserch results. 1. The significance and role of the Association Agreement in the legal framework of European integration of Ukraine.**

The intertwining of national interests with the interests of integrative associations and the international community is a natural trend of modern development and determines the strengthening of the interpenetration of national, regional, and international law. At the same time, it is premature to assert that national legal systems will be generally replaced by international or supranational regional ones. Relations between states are based not on exclusivity or absolute supremacy of a particular legal system, but their interaction and harmonization.

The contractual international legal framework provides the legal basis for the harmonization of norms of legal systems at various levels. International treaties, based on universally recognized principles and norms of international law, are aimed not only at direct legal regulation of internal relations in a state but also determine the basis for the coordinated development of national legislation within the international community. This is evidenced by the entire process of modern legal reforms aimed at bringing legislation into line with international obligations. Legal norms, created in the form of a treaty, not only regulate interstate relations but at the same time contribute to the ideological and legal development of national law. They ensure the perception and subsequent acceptance of more developed legal forms and the improvement of legal culture. Consequently, general normative agreements of states play the role of peculiar 'carriers of ideas' between their national legal systems.

The important economic, political and associated legal reforms being carried out in Ukraine, the formation of a democratic social state of law, which is part of the European and world family of civilized nations, emphasize the highest achievements of modern legal thought. Today, Ukraine is at the stage of formation and development of national legislation, the norms of which should be harmonized with European legal standards as a benchmark in the conditions of integration into the EU. Ukraine's intention to form a legal environment close to the one already existing in the member states of

the European Union is documented in the basic treaty of the EU and Ukraine – the strengthened Association Agreement between Ukraine on the one hand, and the European Union, the European Atomic Energy Community and their member states on the other hand. This Agreement provides for the update of the general institutional framework of cooperation between Ukraine and the EU and its member states, assistance in deepening their relations in all spheres, strengthening of political association and economic integration based on mutual rights and obligations, defines the directions, scope and terms of adaptation of Ukrainian legislation to the EU legislation. Provisions of this Agreement are based on common values (respect for democratic principles, rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, devotion to the principles of the free-market economy), which promote Ukraine's participation in European policies. The proper implementation of the Agreement is seen as a powerful driving force for reform and modernization of the country, indicating the relevance of research on the place and meaning of the Agreement in the system of sources of national law.

The Association Agreement is the result of the long history of Ukraine-EU relations, which strengthens the system of achievements and mutual practices. An important event that gave an impetus to the deepening of relations between Ukraine and the EU, was the approval in January 2007 by the Council of the EU of the Mandate for the European Commission to conduct negotiations with Ukraine on the conclusion of a 'new baseline treaty' (at the XII Ukraine-EU Summit (2008), it was called the 'Association Agreement' between Ukraine and the EU), which was aimed at replacing the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and was prophesized to become a large-scale ambitious document that will bring the relationship between Ukraine and the EU to a qualitatively new level.

After the completion of negotiations, the contracting parties announced during the Ukraine-EU summit, which took place in Kyiv on December 19, 2011, that the conclusion of the Association Agreement, would be held in three stages: negotiations, signing, ratification. In 2012, the text of the Agreement was initialized, in particular, in the scope of the voluminous political part regarding the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. The signing of the Agreement took place in two stages: the

political component of the Association Agreement was signed on March 21, 2014, while its economic component was signed on June 27 of the same year. On September 16, 2014, the Agreement was simultaneously ratified by the Verkhovna Rada and the European Parliament [13]. The Ukrainian side handed over the instruments of ratification to the depositary and thus completed all domestic procedures. From November 1, 2014, under Article 486 of the Agreement, it was to be provisionally implemented (political part), and from January 1, 2016, the application of the document in the part of the deep and comprehensive free trade area was launched [14].

The Association Agreement by its scope and thematic coverage is the largest international legal document in the history of Ukraine [9]. Unprecedented is the formula of relations: «political association and economic integration», which is new in EU relations with third countries [8]. Such wording was normatively enshrined in the Decree of the Parliament of Ukraine 'On the Statement of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine On the beginning of negotiations between Ukraine and the EU on the conclusion of a new framework agreement' in 2007 [11]. It should be noted that the agreement does not establish legal obligations for the parties on the accession of Ukraine to the European Union. However, the successful results of reforms in Ukraine can influence the further relations between Ukraine and the EU, and create the image of our state as a reliable partner opening new prospects for Ukraine's entry as a full-fledged European state into the Union. In this regard, it is indicative that the preamble to the Association Agreement already stated that the political association and economic integration of Ukraine with the European Union will depend on the progress in implementation, as well as on Ukraine's achievements in ensuring respect for common values and progress in approaching the EU in political, economic and legal spheres. Consequently, today the society and the authorities of the Ukrainian state face the task of approaching and introducing the basic standards of life, political and economic activity, social guarantees, and the rule of law that distinguish the EU as a powerful union of states.

**2. Theoretical and legal analysis of the Association Agreement as a special legal instrument.** The association agreement is of a complex legal nature. It is an international legal treaty, is a source of European

law, the legal framework of which is largely determined by the norms of international law, as well as the norms of the constitutional law of Ukraine, since ratified by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine the Agreement constitutes part of the national legislation and is applied in the manner prescribed for the norms of national law. Following the above, we shall analyze the content of the Agreement from the perspective of the theory of international, European, and national law.

**2.1.** First, the Association Agreement is a bilateral international public treaty to which Ukraine is a party, while the other party is the European Union as a whole, the 27 member states, and the European Atomic Energy Community. As I. A. Berezovska notes, Association Agreements are large-scale treaties covering various areas of cooperation, which belong both to the competence of the European Union and its member states. With this in mind, such deals refer to the so-called 'mixed' agreements to which its member states are parties along with the European Union [1]. The association agreement with Ukraine has been concluded on matters that are of common interest to the parties. These include both traditional areas of bilateral cooperation – economic, social, cultural, scientific, and technical, as well as areas of foreign and security policy, military cooperation, justice, etc.

Acting as a form of embodiment of the agreed will of the participants in international relations, the Association Agreement is subject to the regulatory impact of international law. It is no coincidence that Article 2 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (1969) and Article 2 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties between States and International Organizations or between International Organizations (1986) specify that a treaty is an agreement governed by international law [2; 3]. It is subject to the principles of the law of an international treaty, among which the main is the universally recognized principle of good faith compliance with international obligations – *pacta sunt servanda*. From the moment the agreement is signed, the parties are obliged to refrain from actions that could damage the object and purpose of the treaty. Often, the very possibility of applying this obligation depends on the adoption of appropriate legislation at the national level. Let us draw attention to the fact that the norms of international law are a constituent part of the national

legal systems of the Member States, as well as a source of European Union law, along with the norms of the Union's integration law. Consequently, Ukrainian legislation is also gradually being brought into line with the norms of international law, not least through adaptation to EU legislation.

**2.2.** The agreements with the European Union contain norms regulating social relations developed in the course of integration processes. Their content and significance depend on the orientation and level of cooperation of the parties and specific features of the legal status of the third country in relations with the EU (partner state, a neighboring state, applicant state, candidate state). The Association Agreement between the European Union and Ukraine refers to the agreements of the «fourth generation», i.e. the prototype of a new group of EU external agreements with the member states of the European Neighborhood Policy. It is an integral part of European law and has the status of its sources. As an association agreement between third countries and the European Union, the agreement with Ukraine belongs to the group of EU external agreements. Such agreements are concluded when the Union recognizes a state that is capable of negotiating its accession to the EU and are intended to help the associated country adapt its legislation to European legal standards.

The Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union are the grounds for concluding Association Agreements. According to these the EU may conclude association agreements with one or more third countries or international organizations, characterized by mutual rights and obligations, joint actions, and special procedures. Article 8 of the Treaty on European Union regulates the conclusion of special agreements by the EU with its neighboring countries to develop preferential relations with them. Their implementation shall be the subject of periodic consultations [6]. The provisions of these constitutive articles do not establish special requirements for such agreements, but only note that the association implies mutual rights and obligations. Legal literature also emphasizes that the overall objective of the association with the European Union is to create a legal framework for privileged relationships without defining clear rules regarding the possible content of such relationships [16]. Thus, each specific association agreement is negotiated between

the parties, and it is the provisions of such agreement that bind the associated partners. The Association Agreement of Ukraine with the EU is also based on common fundamental principles, which is the common constitutional heritage of the European states.

In practice, association with the EU as a legal framework for relations with third countries includes the implementation of cooperation between the parties in various areas. The conclusion of association agreements with the states of Central and Eastern Europe shows that they replicate the main provisions of the founding treaties of the EU and acts of the institutions of the Union, providing the fullest recognition of the EU law in their respective areas. Thus, essentially, the whole blocks of the European Union law are incorporated into the national law of the third countries, both by the formulation of the provisions of the EU Treaty and the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU and by reference to the EU legislation, which is invoked in the annexes to the Agreement and acts of the association bodies and whose provisions become part of the national legal order of the associated states and require harmonization of national legislation [17]. Thus, the general regulatory agreements of third countries with the EU play a fundamental role in harmonization between national legal systems and supranational (integration) law of the EU.

We should define certain features of association agreements with the EU as sources of *acquis communautaire*.

1) International association agreements are an integral part of EU law, imposing international legal obligations on the EU, its Member States, and, accordingly, the third country.

2) The provisions of the agreements should not contradict the TEU and TFEU, which have superior legal force in the system of sources of EU law and perform the role of a constitutional instrument.

3) The degree of cooperation between the EU and third countries within the association varies and depends both on the objectives of the association and the level of economic and political development of the third country. Modern association agreements with the EU may be a step towards preparing the associated country for future membership (association with European countries under the European Association and Stabilization Agreements) or may mean a form of in-depth cooperation between the parties [10]. The Association Agreement with

Ukraine does not enshrine the prospect of membership, and therefore the instrument of its preparation for accession to the EU is the creation of privileged relationships. However, even if the agreement contained provisions on the possibility of membership, it would in no event provide for legal obligations of the EU on the possibility of joining it [19]. It should be noted that to join the EU, a candidate country, on the one hand, and the EU and all its member states, on the other hand, must conclude an *ad hoc*, separate international treaty, provided that the entry into force of the treaty serves as the sole legal basis for the creation of membership relations.

4) Appropriate monitoring of the implementation of association agreements is carried out *a priori*, i.e. on a preliminary basis by the Court of Justice of the EU at the request of member states and institutions of the Union. For example, in case C-12/86 «Demirel» of September 30, 1987, the Court of Justice of the EU decided that it was the EU that had the authority to solve all issues in the form of the conclusion of association agreements in accordance with the powers vested in it under the founding treaties, observing the principle of the so-called limited powers and the principles of parallelism between the internal and external competence of the EU [18]. Thus, association agreements reflect the agreed position of states, are provided with effective mechanisms for its implementation, and, in particular, for monitoring the implementation of its provisions.

5) To implement the association agreements, the parties establish special institutions whose task is to implement the contractual provisions and supervise the association's activities. For the institutional arrangements created under EU association agreements with third countries, a similar general structure is usually used, based on a model of Community institutions but with limited functions. Typical is the establishment of three main institutions: The Association Council, the Association Committee, and the Inter-Parliamentary Association Committee. A special feature of association councils is their competence to make decisions binding on the parties. No body created by other external agreements of the association possesses such competence.

6) Relevant powers to interpret and apply these agreements in EU law are vested in the Court of Justice of the EU, which interprets



the provisions of the relevant association agreements and effectively contributes to the successful implementation of these agreements both in the legal order of the EU and in the legal order of its member states, but not of third countries parties to such a treaty [4]. It should also be noted that the EU Court of Justice, when analyzing the provisions of international treaties, to a large extent takes into account both the goals and objectives of the respective agreements and the need to form a common legal framework for the regulation of uniform relations, which would guarantee the consistency of application of EU law.

7) The provisions of an EU agreement with third countries are directly applicable if, in a textual analysis of its content and from the point of view of ensuring that the objectives and purposes of the agreement are met, it refers to a clear and unambiguous obligation, the performance or validity of which does not depend on the conclusion of another international treaty (para. 14 of the judgment of the ECJ in 'Demirel', 1987) [18]. Besides, taking into account the relevant provisions of the EU constituent treaties, neither the Association Agreement nor the measures taken under it, in any way affect the powers of member states to develop bilateral cooperation with Ukraine or to conclude, where appropriate, new such agreements.

**2.3.** The Association Agreement is the instrument of influence of EU law on the legal system of Ukraine in general, and its legislative system in particular. Theoretical aspects of the definition of the Association Agreement in the internal legislation of Ukraine are based on the provisions of the Constitution of Ukraine, the Vienna Conventions, as well as the Law of Ukraine «On International Agreements», which to some extent provide an answer to the general theoretical questions of the practical application of the Association Agreement provisions in Ukraine and their relation to the current legislation.

The Association Agreement is subject to Part 2 Article 9 of the Law of Ukraine 'On International Agreements', which defines the list of international treaties to be ratified [12]. In this regard, Ukraine's consent to be bound by the Agreement is provided by the Law of Ukraine 'On Ratification of the Association Agreement between Ukraine, on the one hand, and the European Union, the European Atomic Energy Community, and their Member States, on the other hand' [13].

Following Article 9 of the Constitution of Ukraine, the Association Agreement is ratified by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and becomes a component of the national legislation of Ukraine, one of the sources of its law. Through its adoption at the highest level, it has the same legal status as national law. Proceeding from this, the Agreement comes into force, operates on the territory of the state as a national juridical law, i.e. it can operate in parallel with the national law, complementing it or creating a special regime.

So, according to part 2 of Art. 19 of the Law of Ukraine 'On International Agreements of Ukraine' the Agreement is applied in the same order, which is provided for the norms of national legislation. As to the place of its norms in the national law, part 2 of Article 8 of the Constitution determines that 'the Constitution of Ukraine has supreme legal force. Laws and other legal acts are adopted based on the Constitution of Ukraine and must comply with it' [7], and then it is subjected to the principle of supremacy of norms of the Constitution of Ukraine and the requirement of compliance with it. As for the current laws of Ukraine and its bylaws, the priority belongs to the norms of the Agreement. It should be noted that this is not due to the fact that Ukraine recognizes the doctrine of the primacy of EU law over national law, but because the Agreement, in this case, is considered as an international treaty, which after ratification, taking into account Part 2. of the Article. 19. of the Law of Ukraine 'On International Agreements' and part 2. of Art. 9 of the Constitution of Ukraine is given a clear preference for a hierarchical position above the laws of Ukraine in case of a conflict of norms of law.

Summarizing, it should be noted that the introduction of the Agreement into the national legal system of Ukraine ensures its effect as an act of national legislation, in parallel with its operation and application as a source of European law in international relations.

**3. Association Agreement as a legal basis for adaptation of Ukrainian legislation to EU legislation.** Legislative modernization and improvement are some of the main directions in which the implementation (realization, application) of internationally agreed norms in national legislation is carried out. The Association Agreement with Ukraine places a special emphasis on the issue of bringing the national legislation into compliance with the European norms and

standards. It is an essential component of the long-term state policy of Ukraine and an obligatory condition for entering the legal field of united Europe. Although the provisions of the Association Agreement are not limited to the issue of membership prospects (but do not preclude such a possibility), Ukraine has undertaken legal obligations to implement *acquis communautaire* almost to the extent usually assumed by the EU candidate countries. These provisions which is contained in the annexes to the Association Agreement should be transferred to the legal system of Ukraine, therefore the development of the effective mechanism of approximation of the Ukrainian legislation to the EU law is an important element, which has a direct influence on the formation of the state policy of Ukraine as a whole. However, it should be noted that today the measures of adaptation of Ukrainian legislation to the EU requirements are often inconsistent or incomplete, therefore one can observe many inconsistencies in the substantive and procedural law of Ukraine.

The Association Agreement provides for the implementation and proper exercise of about two hundred EU regulations and directives, as well as other acts of EU common heritage and international treaties and standards, as well as the effective implementation of international treaties already ratified by Ukraine. Also, the adaptation procedure under this Agreement implies not only the harmonization of national legislation but also the practice of its application, which is usually most detailed in the decisions of the EU Court. The parties may also supplement the Association Agreement by concluding special agreements that become part of the common bilateral relations governed by the Agreement.

Thus, Ukraine is becoming an integral part of modern Europe. In this sense, the provisions of the Association Agreement must be legally binding. It is clear that as Ukraine strives to integrate into the EU, this primarily involves taking certain commitments. This concerns adaptation to the EU legislation and its application in practice, respect for the values, on which the European Union is founded. For its part, the EU undertakes to help Ukraine get closer to it. For example, in the section on financial cooperation within the framework of its financial instruments, the EU undertakes to assist Ukraine to achieve the goals of the Agreement. However, it must be provided in accordance with

the principles of good financial management and effective prevention and combating of fraud, corruption, and other misappropriation. For this purpose, Ukraine must implement the relevant provisions of its legislation.

The adaptation of Ukrainian legislation to EU law is progressing simultaneously with the legal reform in Ukraine. While creating a national state legal system in accordance with EU norms, it is necessary to adopt new legislative acts in line with the EU legal field, together with the adaptation of existing laws. It is important to take into account that the process of adaptation of Ukrainian legislation requires harmonious cooperation of all branches of power [15]. However, according to the latest official report on the implementation of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU for 2019, the overall performance of the relevant commitments amounted to 37 % of the planned volume of tasks during the year, in particular: the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine completed only 12 % of tasks from the planned, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine – 53 % of the tasks, other public authorities – 21 % of the tasks provided for in the action plan for 2019 [5].

It is also worth noting that, unlike the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, the Association Agreement defines the timeframe for the implementation of EU legislation that Ukraine undertakes to transpose into national legislation. Under the Agreement, the deadlines for adaptation of *acquis* to the national legislation are from two to seven years from the date of entry into force of the Agreement or its provisions.

Considering the above, it should be noted that the conclusion of the Association Agreement is aimed at strengthening Ukraine's position in the European system and at fulfilling priority strategic tasks of Ukraine's foreign and domestic policy. Therefore, the provisions of the Agreement require Ukraine to take decisive steps in adopting new or introducing corresponding amendments to existing laws and other regulatory legal acts.

**Conclusion.** Relations between Ukraine and the European Union are becoming increasingly profound every year, which contributes to the improvement of the model of Ukraine's Euro-integration strategy. Today, the most important component of the common institutional framework of cooperation between Ukraine and the EU is the Association Agreement, which envisages a new qualitative

stage of European integration, namely the transition from partnership and cooperation to political association and economic integration. It serves as the basic document regulating bilateral contractual relations between Ukraine and the EU and defines the legal framework for harmonizing the norms of the respective legal systems. Therefore, the signing and implementation of the Association Agreement with the EU represents a significant step in the formation of a renewed legal system of our state and offers a higher level for its further development.

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**Соглашение об ассоциации  
как правовая основа евроинтеграции Украины**

*Аннотация. Международные отношения являются отражением, продолжением и развитием внутригосударственных отношений. Они включают экономический, социально-политический, духовно-культурный аспекты, но представляют не их арифметическую сумму, а качественно новую систему. Сегодня правовые реформы в Украине происходят, главным образом, в свете выполнения евроинтеграционных обязательств, в частности в контексте имплементации положений Соглашения об ассоциации между Украиной и Европейским Союзом (ЕС). Данное Соглашение*



*определяет стратегические политические и социально-экономические приоритеты для Украины, является своего рода ориентиром для дальнейшего развития государства. В статье предоставлен теоретико-правовой анализ Соглашения об ассоциации как правовой основы адаптации законодательства Украины к законодательству ЕС в условиях усиления взаимозависимости стран мира и евроинтеграции.*

**Ключевые слова:** *источник права, международный договор, соглашение об ассоциации, адаптация законодательства, евроинтеграция.*

**К. А. Рагуліна**

### **Угода про асоціацію як правова основа євроінтеграції України**

**Анотація.** *Міжнародні відносини є відображенням, продовженням і розвитком внутрішньодержавних відносин. Вони охоплюють економічний, соціально-політичний, духовно-культурний аспекти, але являють собою не арифметичну суму останніх, а якісно нову систему. Сьогодні правові реформи в Україні відбуваються, головним чином, у світлі виконання євроінтеграційних зобов'язань, зокрема в контексті імплементації положень Угоди про асоціацію між Україною та Європейським Союзом (ЄС). Ця Угода є безпрецедентним міжнародним договором для України з точки зору свого обсягу (низки сфер, які вона охоплює) і глибини (детальності зобов'язань і часових меж їх виконання). Навіть не гарантуючи членства, зазначена Угода здійснює очевидний позитивний вплив на розвиток вітчизняної системи правового регулювання та правозастосування. Вона визначає стратегічні політичні й соціально-економічні пріоритети нашої держави, є свого роду орієнтиром для її подальшого розвитку. Зокрема, основні частини Угоди присвячені ключовим реформам, економічному відновленню та зростанню, зміцненню співпраці у зовнішній та безпековій політиках, а також урядуванню і секторальній співпраці у сферах енергетики, транспорту, охорони довкілля, промисловості, соціального розвитку і соціального захисту, рівності прав, захисту споживачів, освіти й культури. Ця Угода йде набагато далі, ніж класичні угоди про вільну торгівлю, адже передбачає як взаємне відкриття ринків, так і стимуляцію конкурентоздатності та інші кроки, потрібні для досягнення відповідності стандартам Євросоюзу і торгівлі на ринках ЄС (важливим вбачається перепрофілювання вітчизняного ринку експорту). Окрім того, в Угоді відображені питання правосуддя, свободи і безпеки, а також положення про мобільність. Сторони також можуть доповнювати Угоду*

про асоціацію шляхом укладання спеціальних угод, які стають складовою загальних двосторонніх відносин, що регулюються Угодою.

Україна, таким чином, стає інтегральною складовою сучасної Європи. У цьому сенсі надзвичайно важливо, що положення Угоди про асоціацію є юридично зобов'язувальними. Зрозуміло, що оскільки Україна прагне інтегруватися до ЄС, то це означає насамперед узяття нею певних зобов'язань. Це стосується адаптації до законодавства ЄС і застосування його на практиці, поваги до цінностей, на яких ґрунтується Євросоюз. Зі свого боку Євросоюз бере зобов'язання допомагати Україні в наближенні до нього. Наприклад, у розділі щодо фінансової співпраці ЄС у межах своїх фінансових інструментів зобов'язується надавати допомогу Україні для досягнення цілей Угоди. Водночас надання її має здійснюватися відповідно до принципів належного фінансового управління та ефективного попередження шахрайства, корупції, інших зловживань і боротьби з ними. Для цього Україна повинна імплементувати відповідні положення свого законодавства. Автор статті підкреслює, що будь-яка міжнародна угода відображає взаємний інтерес сторін, а тому і в межах Угоди про асоціацію необхідно підтримувати баланс між євроінтеграційним курсом та відстоюванням державницьких позицій.

Відтак у статті надається теоретико-правовий аналіз Угоди про асоціацію між Україною та ЄС як правової основи адаптації законодавства України до законодавства ЄС в умовах посилення взаємозалежності країн світу та євроінтеграції. Досліджуються особливості Угоди про асоціацію як складової права Європейського Союзу і, відповідно до положень статей 9 і 18 Конституції України, як частини національного законодавства України.

**Ключові слова:** джерело права, міжнародний договір, угода про асоціацію, адаптація законодавства, євроінтеграція.