

Guidance for journalists and editors

**Access of historically
underrepresented societal groups
to the political and election processes
in Ukraine 2019**





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ACCESS OF HISTORICALLY UNDERREPRESENTED SOCIETAL GROUPS TO THE POLITICAL AND ELECTION PROCESS IN UKRAINE IN 2019

Guidance for Journalists and Editors

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Annotation: Analytical research is aimed at outlining the tendencies for the access of women, national minorities, internally displaced persons, people with disabilities and LGBT people to the election and political processes in 2019. The publication provides an opportunity for journalists and media experts to examine the problem, trace the impact of highly-ranked officials, and cover the events on the topic in a quality manner.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LARYSA BILOZEROVA

ELECTORAL RIGHTS AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF UKRAINE'S
NATIONAL MINORITIES

3

MARYNA KURAPTSEVA

WOMEN, POLITICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS: THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN
COUNTERING DISCRIMINATION

14

LINA KUSHCH

EQUAL ELECTORAL RIGHTS FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS
AS A GENERAL PRINCIPLE FOR REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY IN
UKRAINE

23

OLEH TRACHUK

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR ELECTORAL RIGHTS

35

ANDRII YURYCHKO

EXCLUSION OF THE LGBT COMMUNITY FROM POLITICAL
REPRESENTATION AND ITS LIMITED ACCESS TO ELECTION PROCESSES
IN UKRAINE – 2019

42

ELECTORAL RIGHTS AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF UKRAINE'S NATIONAL MINORITIES

National Minorities and Indigenous People: Statistics, Terminology and Status

Ukraine's population has a multinational character as reported by the State Statistics Committee in commenting on the 2001 census. According to the census results, representatives of about 130 nationalities and ethnic groups lived in Ukraine.

The census counted 48.24 million citizens. The largest ethnic groups of Ukraine are Ukrainians (77.8 percent) and Russians (17.3 percent). Other nationalities from neighboring countries made up 4.9 percent of the population.

Smaller ethnic groups are Belarusians (400,000) and Moldovans (300,000). There are Poles (250,000); Bulgarians (250,000); Hungarians (150,000) and Romanians (100,000). Crimean Tatars from the Crimea totaled 250,000. In addition, Ukraine is populated by Greeks, Tatars, Armenians, Roma and the Gagauzi.

Since 2001, a population census has not been conducted although it should be administered once a decade at the outset of each decade. According to Prime Minister, Oleksii Honcharuk, a population census will be launched in December 2019. "We should know how many citizens we have in the country. Our social care programs are extremely inefficient," said Honcharuk.

Political Rights of National Minorities in Ukraine 100 Years Ago

Development of a multiethnic Ukraine providing rights to national minorities are related to achievement of a national consensus in society and on state sovereignty and territorial integrity. This is outlined by research of Tamara Makarenko, PhD in History and an Associate Professor at the Department of History of Ukraine in the Berdiansk State Teachers' Training University (4).

According to the historian, learning about the experience in developing ethnic minority rights during the period of 1917-1921 by the Ukrainian National Republic and West Ukrainian National Republic governments should include more representatives of ethnic groups in the research activity of national authorities today.

In her work, "Representation of National Minorities in the State Authorities: Historic Aspect", Dr. Makarenko introduced Ukraine's Central Government's policy on national minorities.

“Ukraine’s Central Government (UCG) on behalf of the Ukrainian nation, proclaimed the wide range of national, cultural and personal rights for the peoples living in Ukraine, including the ethnic communities: The Russians, the Jews, the Poles and developed a mechanism of national representation with Ukraine’s authorities”, writes Dr. Makarenko (4).

The Commission seats were divided by the percentage of ethnic groups’ population relative to Ukraine’s total population. Ethnic groups which made up less than one percent of people in Ukraine delegated one representative to the Commission for each percent of the total population. If the ethnicity had less than one percent of the population, the group had a right to delegate their representative only by agreement with the Commission. Thus, the Commission represented 29 ethnic groups (4).

Legislative acts of West Ukraine’s National Government, adopted in the winter and spring of 1919, provided a guarantee of national rights in learning and using native languages.

The research says, “On April 15, 1919, West Ukraine’s National Government adopted the laws on the convocation of Parliament and the elections to the Parliament. It was planned that, a single-chamber Parliament, elected in June 1919, would consist of 226 Ambassadors: 160 Ukrainians (70.8 percent of the population), 33 Poles (14.6 percent), 27 Jews (11.9 percent) and six Germans (2.7 percent). Thus, the national electoral districts (15 Ukrainian, 5 Polish, 5 Jewish, and 1 German) were established on the territory of the country. However, (the) Ukrainian-Polish war of 1918-1919 did not allow to run the parliamentary elections.” (4).

Dr. Makarenko concludes: “Striving for the establishment of not just national but also administrative authorities, Central Government and West Ukraine’s Government involved national minorities in state development as well as offered a mechanism for the national representation in Ukrainian authorities. Consequently, national minorities intended to get a particular number of seats corresponding to the population of the ethnic groups in Ukraine’s Public Republic and West Ukraine’s Public Republic.” (4).

Legal Status Policy and Regulatory Framework

European documents protecting national minorities include the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM). Ukraine ratified the FCNM after joining the Council of Europe in December 1997. The term, “national minorities”, is not legally defined by the document although it addresses protection of people belonging to national minorities. The Convention states, “A pluralistic and truly democratic society needs not only to respect the ethnic, linguistic and religious

authenticity of each person who belongs to a national minority, but also provide corresponding conditions for this authenticity identification, preservation and development.” (10).

Ukrainian scientists provide objective criteria to the definition for a national (ethnic) minority: A small minority is defined by population size, length of time living in a country and citizenship status, characteristics (ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural) and absence of one’s own state on the living territory.

It is also explained by Article Three of The Law of Ukraine on National Minorities in Ukraine. According to this document, “the national minorities include the group of Ukrainian citizens who are not Ukrainians by nationality and express the sense of national awareness and common unity among themselves (1).”

The situation is different with indigenous people. According to the United Nations, about 370 million people around the world are defined as indigenous.

Yulia Tyshchenko of the Ukrainian Independent Center for Political Research says maintenance of legal rights for indigenous people in Ukraine has not been provided since adoption of Ukraine’s Constitution and all previous efforts to prepare draft laws were not successful.

“The situation little changed since 2014 after illegal annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by Russia,” said Ms. Tyshchenko. “The first legal and regulatory document on indigenous people and recognition of the Crimean Tatars as indigenous people became the Bill of Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on the Guarantee of Rights for the Crimean Tatar People within Ukraine from March 20, 2014 (3).”

According to the legislation, the Ukrainian state guarantees preservation and development of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious authenticity for Crimean Tatars as indigenous people as well as all national minorities of Ukraine. This legislation would support identification and protection of minorities within a sovereign and independent Ukraine.

The Verkhovna Rada proclaimed its support for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and entrusted the Cabinet of Ministers to urgently submit draft laws and legal and regulatory documents that define and implement the status of the Crimean Tatar people as indigenous people. To date, the Cabinet of Ministers has not followed through.

Legislation of Ukraine on Electoral Rights of National Minorities

The law of Ukraine On National Minorities in Ukraine became law on July 16, 1992. The document says the “Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, considering the life interests of (the) Ukrainian nation and all nationalities involved in the independent and democratic state development, recognizing the integrity of human rights of national minorities, striving for the realization of the declaration on the rights for national minorities of Ukraine, following the international obligations on the national minorities, is adopting this Law in order to guarantee the right for free development to the national minorities.”

The law’s Article 9 says, “Citizens of Ukraine who belong to the national minorities have a right to be elected or appointed on the basis of equality to any positions at the State entities of legislative, executive, legal, local authority or regional self-governance, in the Defense Forces, at companies, establishments or organizations (1).”

However, not all challenges associated with recognizing national minority rights are regulated in the law. According to international observers’ reports on elections in Ukraine, national minorities’ interests while organizing electoral districts were not considered.

Gerrymandering is a way of organizing electoral districts that gives an advantage to a particular party or political group. District boundaries are intentionally established in favor of political groups or candidates for election to the Verkhovna Rada. Such “electoral geography” usually occurs in countries where elections are administered using the “first-by-the-post” majoritarian constituency system.

Experts note that technology was used in 2012 while establishing electoral districts in Crimea and the Chernivtsi and Zakarpattia regions. The districts were established without regard to sizeable ethnic populations.

In 2013, Parliament approved amendments to Article 18 of the current Law on Elections to follow recommendations of international organizations on including ethnicity as a factor in establishing electoral districts. The boundaries have remained the same since 2012.

“Such ‘cracking’ of districts is providing the conditions to reduce the opportunity of ethnic community representatives to be elected to the Verkhovna Rada in majoritarian constituencies,” says Ms. Tyshchenko of the Ukrainian Independent Center for Political Research. “The current Law on Elections contains the

corresponding prevention criteria; however, the practice of their realization remains unsatisfactory. The factor of areas where national minorities live is not considered while establishing electoral districts in all draft laws on elections, which are submitted to the Verkhovna Rada, despite the importance of paying attention to this aspect by lawmakers. An opportunity to inform the voters from ethnic communities is also worth considering.” (8).

International Experience: Representation of Ethnic Groups

Representation of ethnic groups in government is a contentious issue in Ukraine. The Law on National Minorities says: “Citizens of Ukraine who belong to the national minorities have a right to be elected or appointed on the basis of equality to any positions at state entities of legislative, executive, legal, local authority or regional and local self-governance.” However, dividing up high concentrations of ethnic minority members while establishing electoral district boundaries is still used in Ukraine. This law and so-called cracking of electoral districts does not help representation of ethnic communities in the Verkhovna Rada.

Governments’ practice of neglecting interests of national minorities leads to open conflicts, public outrage and negative feedback from international diplomatic and development assistance organizations. Governments do not consistently communicate with ethnic communities in Ukraine.

If members of the Verkhovna Rada would better listen to their colleagues from ethnic communities as well as relevant civil society representatives, these political conflicts could be resolved at the outset before they worsen.

Representation of vulnerable groups in the Rada does not guarantee their interests will be represented; however, they can at least communicate with and inform lawmakers about their priorities. To further ethnic minority representation, there must be the guarantees for representation on Rada committees and commissions. The practice of encouraging ethnic groups to participate in governance has been furthered by research of B.I. Ismailov. (6)

European countries, in encouraging diversified ethnic status in governance, reserve seats in their national parliaments for their ethnic minorities. Quota implementation through actively encouraging ethnic minorities to join political parties and creating special electoral districts contribute to inclusion of ethnic minorities. Parliamentary quotas are in place in 52 European nations.

Parliamentary quotas – from 1 to 10 seats – for ethnic minority representatives in the lower chamber of parliament are provided in 35 countries, including Belgium,

Croatia, Denmark, Finland, India, Iran, Italy, Kazakhstan, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Taiwan. Quotas for ethnic minority representatives in the upper chamber of parliament are provided by legislation in 17 countries.

Flexible decision-making and avoiding conflicts about ethnic background contribute to both political justice and government efficiency.

Current Electoral Situation in Ukraine

Ukraine has a mixed electoral system. Fifty percent of the Verkhovna Rada are elected in majoritarian constituencies and 50 percent are elected through a closed proportional system based on political party lists. Since 2014, there has been extensive discussion on moving to an open list proportional system. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe recommended this system to Ukraine in 2010. However, reform of the electoral system has not been initiated.

Both political experts and politicians believe the current system is inefficient and corrupt because the majoritarian constituency creates opportunities for voter bribery and result falsification.

However, there are electoral issues that have been avoided by politicians in Ukraine, including participation of ethnic minorities and indigenous people in the Verkhovna Rada elections.

Yulia Tyshchenko, the expert from the Ukrainian Independent Center for Political Research, says, “There were promises to ensure the transparency of elections in the electoral programs of political parties. As a rule, the topic of ethnic minority participation in the political process is considered a background one by lawmakers, and it almost has never appeared as a focus of attention. A lack of attention to the topic creates a space for manipulations by third parties to spread fakes and misuse that do not benefit the mutual understanding among various communities within the regions and can generally bring instability (8).”

According to Ms. Tyshchenko, the current majoritarian and proportional election system does not address representation of ethnic minority groups in the Rada because representatives of ethnic communities can, in reality, be elected to Parliament on closed party election lists.

Reports from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe’s international monitoring missions conclude that voters from ethnic communities do not much influence results of nationwide elections. This is because, in the OSCE’s international monitoring missions’ view, ethnic groups are generally not well-

represented on political party lists and, to the degree they are well-represented, they are on lists of failed political parties and coalitions.

For example, during the snap parliamentary elections of 2014, there were only four candidates running for the Verkhovna Rada seats on political party lists who *campaigned* as ethnic community members. Three of them have entered Parliament.

In August 2019, the Verkhovna Rada of the 9th Convocation began its work. Mustafa Dzhemilev, leader of the Crimean Tatar People and Akhtem Chygoz, Deputy Head of the Medzhlis of the Crimean Tatars, entered the Rada as representatives of the European Solidarity political party. Rustem Umerov, Kurultai Delegate of the Crimean Tatar People, was elected as an MP from the Holos, or Voice, political party. The majoritarian system produced Dmytro Lubinets, representative of the Greek community; Oleksandr Feldman, founder of Ukraine's Jewish Fund; and, Anton Kisse, President of the Bulgarian Association as newly-elected Members of Parliament. The Romanian and Hungarian communities are not represented in the new Rada.

The Roma community is also not represented in Parliament. Between 20,000 and 40,000 Roma lived in Ukraine at the beginning of 2019 that do not possess identification documents.

Civil rights activist Zola Kondur notes that because they have no documents, Roma people are deprived of their right to vote in elections and, therefore, their point of view is often not included in advocacy in the Rada or other legislative structures at the local level in Ukraine. "A person without documents cannot work legally, cannot achieve a decent life for oneself and one's family, does not have access to education, healthcare, jobs and many other basic human rights and remains actually invisible for the state", said Kondur.

In September 2019, the Office of the Council of Europe and civil society organizations conducted a Coordination Meeting on Discussing the Roadmap of Documenting the Roma Population within the project titled Protection of National Minorities, including the Roma, and Languages of Ethnic Communities in Ukraine.

Media Coverage of Ethnic Minority Groups Rights

Analysis of publications by the tags "elections", "Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine", and "national minorities" demonstrate that electoral rights and participation of ethnic minorities in Ukraine's political life is almost absent in the Ukrainian media environment. Yulia Tyshchenko, of the Ukrainian Independent Center for Political Research, says the topic of ethnic minority representation in political activity is

almost never covered by the national media. As for regional press, Zakarpattia and Chernivtsi regions offer publications during electoral periods.

Ethnic minority issues are not popular with journalists and coverage occurs sporadically. Regional online editorials have covered speeches of ethnic communities regarding national legislation, reconsideration of electoral districts' divisions and candidates' discussions from ethnic communities. Headlines are frequently provocative photos that feature people displaying flags of neighboring countries.

Elections in 2019, in the context of ethnic minority participation was somewhat informative and targeted while coverage of the previous parliamentary election in 2014 was more complete in both the regional and national media.

Media avoided publishing discriminatory, disparaging expression toward ethnic minorities. That type of coverage focused on police chronicles through reports of the ethnic identity of criminals.

Social media is different. Social media was full of articles and commentaries that disparaged ethnic minorities in Ukrainian politics and governance. Posts contained statements like this: "What does a person 'from overseas/Georgia/Lithuania...' doing in Ukrainian government/regional administration?" and "Only the Ukrainians have a right to govern".

This type of verbiage was observed in some social media communities and profiles. Information was frequently published in phony profiles or on fake pages. Unchecked information flows, photo-shopped materials and fake stories were publicly posted by social media users. People either were often misinformed or were not aware of posting discriminatory content.

Organizations and Stakeholders Related to the Topic of Ethnic Minorities in Ukraine

Civil Network Opora is one of the leading nationwide nongovernmental and non-partisan watchdog and advocacy organizations working in the fields of elections, parliamentary governance, education, joint property management, energy efficiency, local governance and implementation of open data principles. Civil Network Opora strives for sustainable development of society, institutional reforms and positive social and cultural change. Since 2007, Civil Network OPORA has analyzed the election process, observing all its stages and working on improvement of electoral legislation in accordance with international standards. <https://www.oporaua.org/>

International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) has been working in Ukraine since 1994 and has played a key role in the emergence and modernization of democratic electoral processes and institutions in Ukraine. IFES has developed a reputation as a reliable source for impartial analysis and high-quality technical assistance in the fields of electoral and political finance law reform, election administration, civil society capacity building and public opinion research. Currently, IFES is implementing the following projects in Ukraine: 1) The Ukraine Responsive and Accountable Politics Program (U-RAP), funded by the United States Agency for International Development; 2) Ensuring Meaningful Engagement through Reform for Gender Equality (EMERGE); funded by Global Affairs Canada; and, 3) Electoral and Legal Enhancements through Civic Engagement and Technical Assistance Program (ELECT), funded by UK aid.

The Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research (UCIPR) is a nongovernmental and non-partisan think tank that develops democratic procedures in government policy. UCIPR was founded at the dawn of Ukraine's independence by students who took part in the Revolution on Granite of 1991. UCIPR works in the following areas: Supporting civil society; ensuring rights of national ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples; participating in anti-discrimination policy; developing parliamentary governance; political party and election policies; strengthening national security potential; and, promoting European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

Recommendations for Journalists on Coverage of Ethnic Minority Issues

- Follow the principle “nothing about us without us”; invite the ethnic minority representatives for the cooperation with media; consider the needs and requests of national minorities on certain content production and coverage.
- Encourage the representatives of multiple ethnic communities to discuss social events in the region with regards to national minorities and community in general.
- Distinguish between and use the correct definitions of “national minorities”, “indigenous people”, etc. Get advice from experts; Use the endonyms in accordance with Ukraine's official documents, for example, “Romani” or “Romani people” instead of “gypsies”.
- Provide the equal coverage of different national minorities and their representatives in all areas of community life, not just when conflict situations or emergency events are happening; provide the transparency of your media platforms.
- To spread the international dialogue and diversity, advocate ethnic identities and freedom of expression if the views do not harm the rights of other persons.

- Follow the journalism ethics, verify information, do not spread stereotypes or prejudice against the national minorities or other groups in your reportages.
- Journalists should keep the balance in media coverage of international relations. Press-releases issued by the local government or the law enforcement bodies are usually one-way of looking at the issue. It is necessary to add more information from another party, give the views of event participants and the commentary expressed by independent experts.
- Media should not follow the habit of re-posting from social media accounts of opinion leaders. Those accounts can be a source of misinformation, use hate speech and discriminative expressions regarding the ethnic communities and other groups.
- While looking for the illustrations, headlines and leads for reportages, remember, they should convey the main idea of news, and not to be provocative in order to raise the number of views. Media reputation is more valuable than a single “successful case” achieved by a scandal publication.
- Learn insight into the subject; obtain advice terminology usage; look for primary sources; and, add expert commentary. Following good journalism standards will help prepare stimulating and professional material to readers, listeners and viewers.

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WOMEN, POLITICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS: THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN COUNTERING DISCRIMINATION

Introduction

Women are 54 percent of Ukraine's population. It would be natural if these statistics were reflected in the representation of women in national politics and governance. However, the number of female politicians in Ukraine increased only after the 2019 Verkhovna Rada elections. This is, in fact, a victory for women in countering discrimination in public affairs in Ukraine which takes the form of cyberbullying, body shaming, harassment, sexism and sexual objectification.

Both current Ukrainian and international legislation provide a policy and regulatory framework that guarantees equal rights for men and women. Gender policy and regulatory framework is introduced by the following documents:

- *September 5, 2018 Regulations from the Cabinet of Ministers titled, "On the National Plan of Action to Fulfill the Recommendations Given by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in the Concluding Observations of the Eighth Periodic Report of Ukraine on Fulfillment of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women for the Period till 2021."*¹
- *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.*²
- *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.*³
- *Concluding Observations on the Eighth Periodic Report of Ukraine (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women).*⁴
- *United Nations Security Council Resolutions*
 1. *Resolution 1325 (2000) adopted by the Security Council at its 4213th meeting, on 31 October 2000*
 2. *Resolution 1820 (2008) adopted by the Security Council at its 5916th meeting, on 19 June 2008.*⁶
 3. *Resolution 1888 (2009) adopted by the Security Council at its 6195th meeting, on 30 September 2009.*⁷
 4. *Resolution 1889 (2009) adopted by the Security Council at its 6196th meeting, on 5 October 2009.*⁸
- *Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic violence.*⁹
- *Beijing Declaration of 1995.*¹⁰

- *Law of Ukraine “On Providing Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men”*.¹¹
- *Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers from April 11, 2018 Number 273 “On Adoption of State Social Program for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men for the period to 2021.”*¹²

Rights equality is ensured by all of these documents. But, are these rights realized? There is no clear conclusion. If Ukraine chooses the pro-European way of development, Ukrainian civil society will focus on following European values, including equality of rights established by law. This is an attempt to realize how Ukraine protects the rights of women and if male and female citizens enjoy equal rights.

Obstacles to Ukrainian Women’s Political Involvement

What is the image of Ukrainian women? This is a difficult question, since the real face of a woman without stereotypes is breaking the “caregiver” image. The contemporary world with its fast lifestyle, where women have struggled for a place under the sun, frequently tolerates cases of women’s discrimination. A strong, European Ukraine cannot exist without recognizing the equal rights of women and men.

Female involvement in Ukrainian politics, the election process and civic activity is a result of overcoming barriers to women which take have the effect of shutting them out of public policy discussion and job discrimination. Achievements by women can be assessed by looking into the set of obstacles they still encounter.

Differences in remuneration of women and men in Ukraine is profound According to research within the United Nations project “Gender Equality in the Center of Reforms, Peace and Security”, the highest gap between wages for women and men is identified in the Donetsk region (35 percent) while the slightest difference in pay is in Zakarpattia (15.3 percent). This data is retrieved from gender profiles of 24 regions of Ukraine and the capital city Kyiv. Research does not cover the occupied Crimea¹³.

Where does discrimination against women begin? It might seem that today there are absolutely unlimited opportunities for women: Access to information about rights, knowledge regarding engagement in public processes and communication with leading experts on gender equality and inclusiveness. Indeed, there are development opportunities.

According to Wikipedia, there is a set of activities associated with governance of a country or an area. It involves making decisions that apply to groups, people and

states. It refers to achieving and exercising positions of governance – organized control over a human community, particularly a state. Women have been involved in dealing with those things for centuries: When there was no freedom of speech, right to vote, right to manage one’s life and make decisions independently from men. Let us remember huge mansions, staffs of servants and households that were allegedly managed by themselves and the only women’s affair was to remain a gentle and soft who was not living in the real world.

Times called for new challenges and requirements and women left the kitchen, the baby’s room and the living room where she performed the role of mistress as a man’s ornament. Then, civil society and politics heard the voice of women.

Fast forwarding in time, one important step on following gender equality and countering discrimination against women in Ukraine was appointing a Government Commissioner of Gender Equality. This directive was adopted by the government in 2017.

“Women should be involved in the statecraft, as they have the same rights as men, being citizens of the country,” said Kateryna Levchenko, Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Status of Women and Men, in June 2019 during her speech at the Ukrainian Women Congress. “This is the most significant argument supporting the development of women on a political arena,” she said.¹⁴

This a laconic expression of the complex of affairs women are facing. On the one hand, women represent more than half of Ukraine’s population and have a right to influence all processes taking place in our country. On the other hand, the social roles imposed on women over the centuries are confronting the “caregiver”, the “mother”, the “obedient woman” and the “modest woman”. It is clear that “maternity leave” is not associated with men; meanwhile, many mothers are building successful careers despite stereotypes and obstacles.

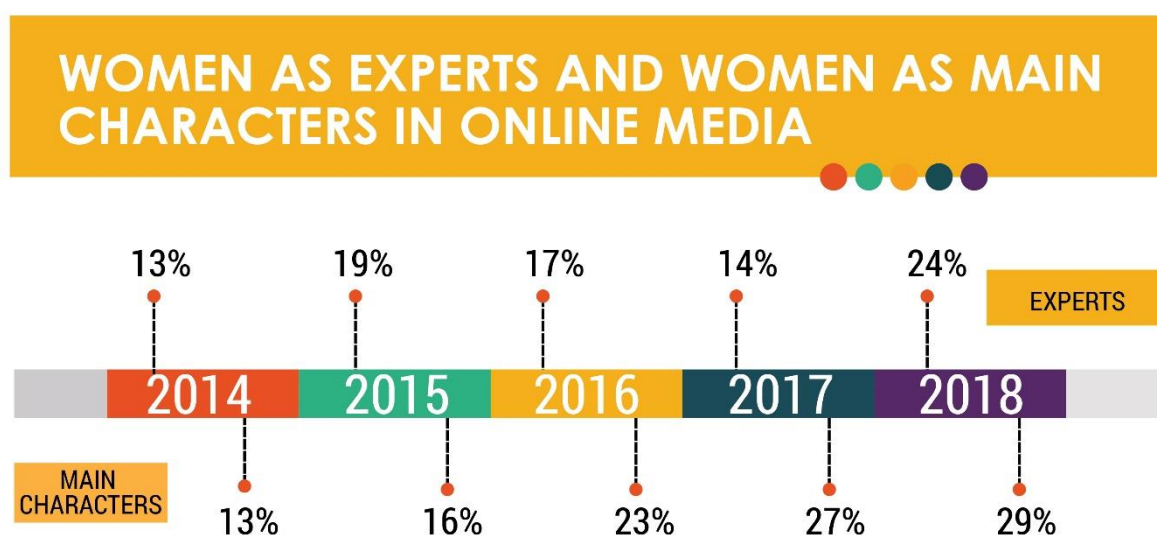
Another step forward to ensuring the equal status of both Ukrainian women and men is improvement of national legislation. In September 2019, Ms. Levchenko said, “We are working with the initiative group of Platform of Equal Rights and Opportunities. It is planned to develop the draft law establishing responsibility for discrimination; legislation on leave; quotas in the electoral legislation; to ratify the Convention of International Labor Organization; and to bring into the line with international standards the legislation on criminalizing the clients of children dragged into the prostitution.”¹⁵

Representation of Ukrainian Women in Media

There is a change in mindset and perception of a woman's role in the contemporary world. These issues are new for Ukraine.

According to the Institute of Mass Information (IMI), women were mentioned more frequently in online media in the period from 2014 to 2018. ¹⁶

“Women were mentioned in Ukrainian online media almost twice more frequently for the last four years; from 13 percent in 2014 to 29 percent in 2018,” according to IMI researchers in February 2018 after analyzing 10 online media organizations. “On average, women were featured in 29 percent of analyzed news and spoke as experts in 24 percent on news.”

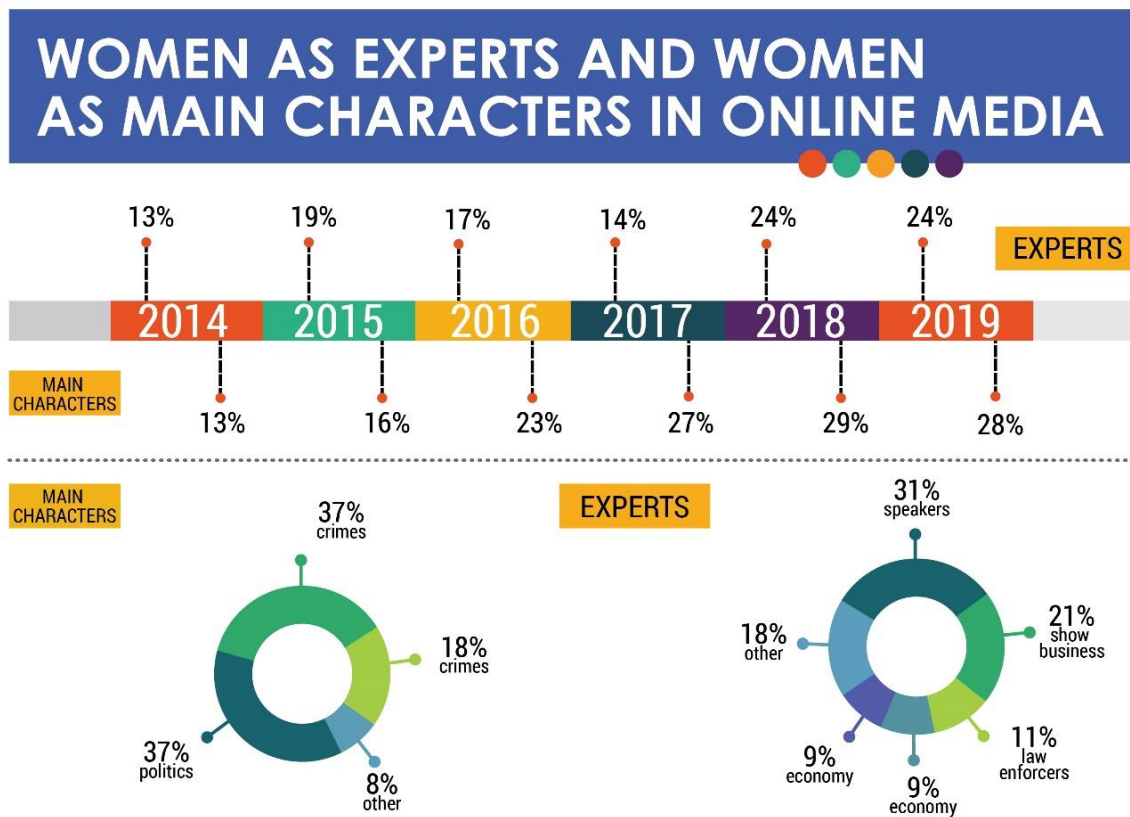


At media events featuring women, unfortunately, there are cases of discrimination, ageism and objectification of a woman's body. Apart from that more frequent mentions of women in online materials was situational and mostly related to participation of women in the Winter Olympic Games and activity of female politicians.

According to IMI research in February 2019, there are three topics featuring women in Ukrainian online media: Politics, show business, and crime. These three topics cover 92 percent of all media mentions of women.

“Monitoring findings show that women are featured in online media almost three times less than men, on average in 28 percent of materials” according to the IMI website. “Featuring women as experts in online materials is even less - every fourth

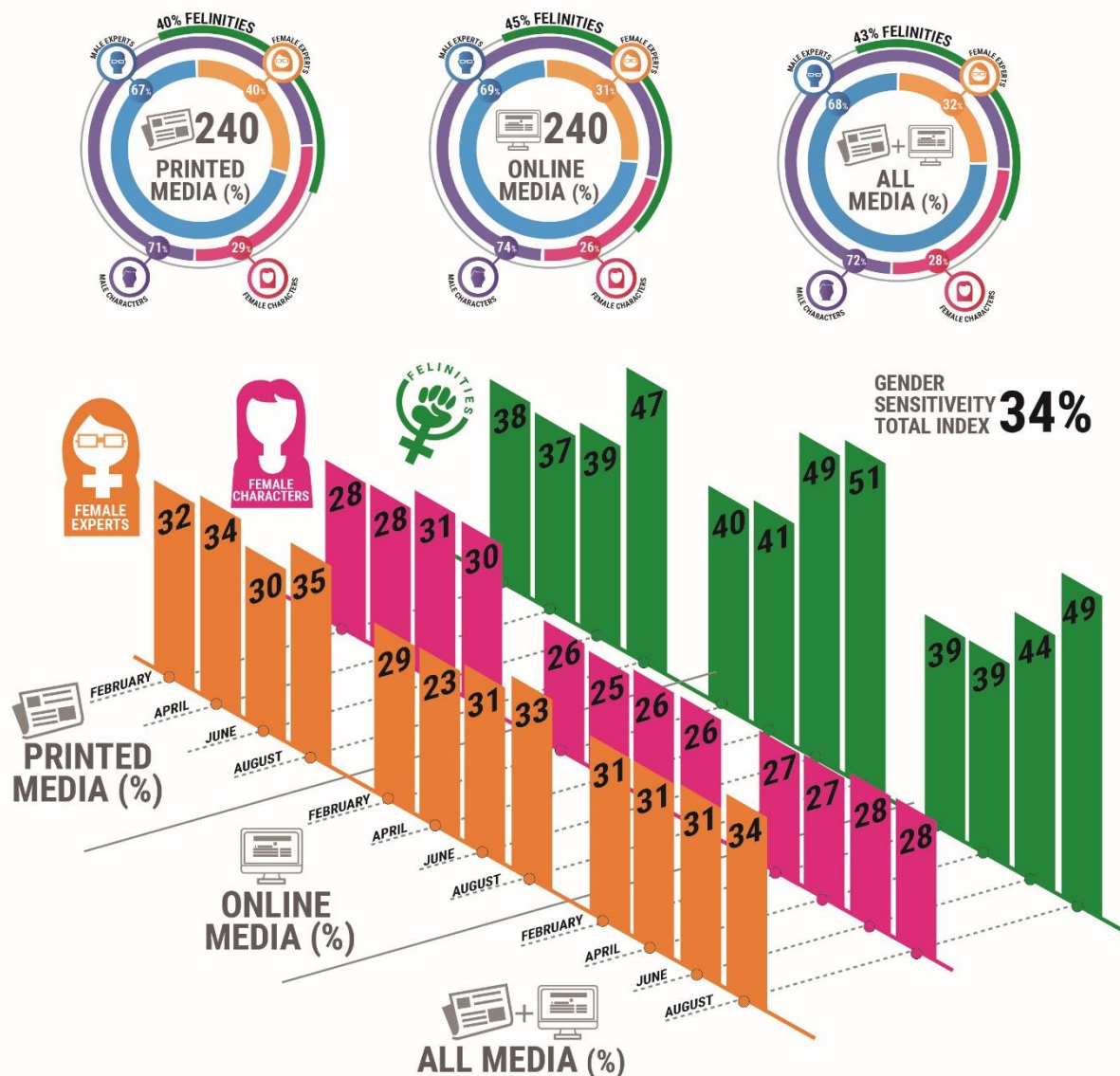
material (24 percent); whereas men are featured in the role of experts four times more frequently.”



Research was conducted by the Volyn Press Club, the Volyn Gender Study Center and the Civic Independent Network of Press Clubs and covered 240 printed and 240 online editorials in 24 regions of Ukraine. According to this research, 34 percent of all journalistic materials covering the topic of women in above mentioned editorials had gender sensible content in 2019 – seven percent higher than 2017.

The index relies on data taken from the number of female and male experts; featured men and women; and images used in regional media materials. Five printed and five online editorials in each of the 24 Ukrainian regions were analyzed.

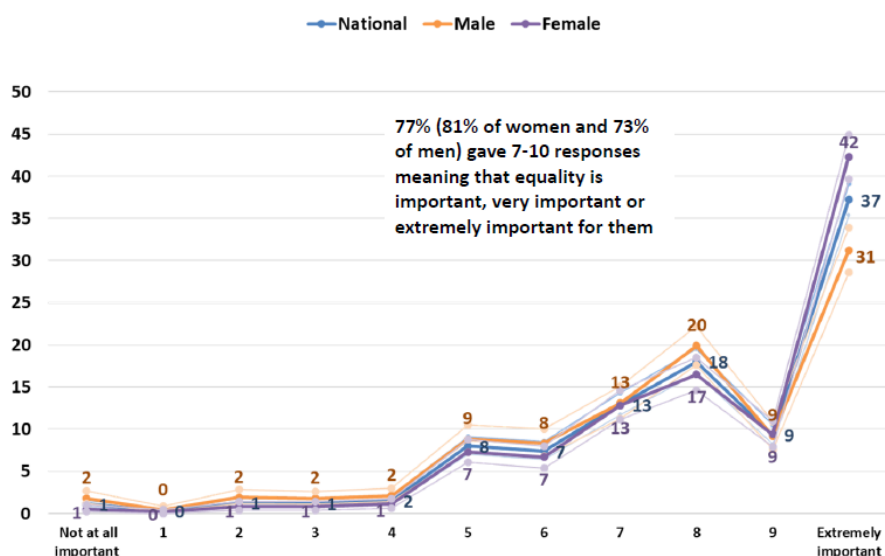
GENDER SENSITIVITY OF REGIONAL MEDIA IN 2019



In July 2018, the office of Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration Ivanna Klympush Tsyntsadze, conducted a national survey on equality between women and men in Ukraine.¹⁷

Seventy-seven percent of all respondents – 81 percent of women and 73 percent of men – assessing the significance of an issue on a scale of one to 10, noted that the significance of those issues rated between seven and 10. This is a good sign because equality of rights can be achieved only by *joint* efforts of citizens – women and men – to guarantee respect for rights and freedoms of all Ukrainian citizens.

How important, if at all, is equality between men and women to you? (q44)



Research is a small part of regularly monitoring gender equality issues. Ukraine makes huge steps to enforce real equality, not a “declarative” one. Challenges do remain to be addressed.

There are international examples to inspire. Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, announced her intention to include 13 female commissioners on the European Commission. Currently, there are 14 male commissioners.

Recommendations for Journalists: Do No Harm and Do Not Reinforce Gender Stereotypes

It is hard to argue with the image created by the media of contemporary Ukrainian women against the background of a tough electoral process in the country. From daily newsfeeds, we see publications that directly insult women. I want my colleagues:

- Mind professional attitude and avoid stereotypical thinking, reinforcing social biases, misleading impressions and even the hostility to women in your reportages.
- Remember that information and facts in your journalism materials can impact someone’s reputation, image and public perception either in a good or a bad way. Therefore, you are an influence maker. Please, take this role with due responsibility.
- Expressions that contain gender discriminatory language and sentiments are against the journalism ethics and high standards of professionalism.

- Professional responsibility is linked to an individual responsibility. If journalists are following standards, they cannot prepare materials that contain ethics violations and discriminate and tolerate violence against women.
- Before citing statistics on female representation in the national media, one should realize the protection of women's rights in countering discrimination in the post-Soviet environment.
- Verification of facts is obligatory, especially when dealing with sex disaggregated statistics and data.
- When interviewing women as the main characters of your reportage, please, always consult with them if they have any special wishes and on how they would like to be portrayed.

When dealing with gender equality coverage, journalists should use the journalism standard toolkit:

1. Assessment of Meaning and Context;
2. Fact-checking;
3. Data Verification; and
4. Journalistic Ethics.

The role of the news media is to counter discrimination and incitement of hatred and hostility in Ukrainian society by following standards of journalism and prepare materials for public education.

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EQUAL ELECTORAL RIGHTS FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS AS A GENERAL PRINCIPLE FOR REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY IN UKRAINE

Introduction

According to the [Ministry of Social Policy](#)¹, on August 27, 2019, Ukraine identified 1,402,869 internally displaced persons (IDPs) from the temporarily occupied regions of Donetsk and Luhansk and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. One year earlier, on August 27, 2018, Ukraine identified 1,518,283 IDPs.²

As of September 2018, there were 50,000 IDPs with disabilities, according to the Ministry of Social Policy website.³

According to the [National Monitoring System Report on the situation of IDPs](#)⁴ published in March 2019, 60 percent of IDPs relocated from the Donetsk region; 37 percent from the Luhansk region; and, three percent from Crimea. Half of identified IDPs regularly reside in Ukrainian government-controlled territory of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Broken out further, 486,336 are registered in the Donetsk region; 270,047 in the Luhansk region; 145,677 in Kyiv; 55,835 in the Kyiv region; 128,331 in Kharkiv; 68,271 in Dnipropetrovsk; and; 54,199 in the Zaporizhzhia region.

According to the report, IDPs' primary challenge is lack of housing and money. These problems were mentioned by 37 percent and 19 percent of IDP survey participants, respectively. Eight percent of IDPs are concerned about returning home; seven percent worry about paying their utility bills; five percent for paying rent; and, four percent for general living conditions.

Violation of electoral rights is not on the top list of problems referenced by IDPs. However, their lack of electoral rights is an ongoing problem in Ukraine.

IDPs do not list electoral rights violations as a priority for several reasons:

1. Financial and housing needs are more important;
2. IDPs' lack of knowledge of their electoral rights; and,
3. Electoral rights violations is only relevant at election time. In between elections, the issue is not newsworthy and is not reported by the majority of the news media.

Policy and Regulatory Framework of IDP Electoral Rights

By October 2019, fulfilling IDP electoral rights during presidential and Verkhovna Rada elections has only been partially achieved. By this time, IDPs needed to undergo the [temporary transfer of one's polling address without a voting site change](#).⁵

Article 8 of the Law of Ukraine On Ensuring the Rights and Freedoms of Internally Displaced Persons⁶ provides that an internally displaced person shall realize his or her right to vote in Verkhovna Rada elections by changing the place of voting without changing the electoral address in accordance with Article 7 (3) of the Law of Ukraine On The State Register of Voters. Article 7 (3) states that a voter who has the right to vote in elections can change his or her polling station through the State Register of Voters without changing their electoral address. Such a request should be submitted to the Register at the polling station location specified by the voter or at the electoral address no later than five days before the day of elections.

The voter's request must include the polling station number or address where he or she wishes to vote. A Ukrainian citizen's passport or temporary citizenship certificate must be presented when submitting documents. Servicemen can use military identification or a military ID card. According to the law On the State Register of Voters, the voter's request for a temporary change of voting place must be justified.

Temporarily changing the place of voting is administered only at the citizen's request. Voters displaced from Crimea and the occupied regions of Donetsk and Luhansk are not required to confirm the voting place change with additional documents: One's permanent registration in the occupied regions should be necessary confirmation. Temporary transfer of one's polling address without a voting site change allows a citizen to be included on a voter list just once at a certain polling station on a specific election day. This is confirmed by a certificate established by the Central Electoral Commission and issued to the voter.

Should a citizen desire to vote at a polling station that is not his or her home station in *another* election, he or she must apply once again to the entity in charge of State Electoral Register maintenance.

A Ukrainian citizen who temporarily changed the place of voting without changing the election address to another polling station outside the single-member constituency to which such a voter is assigned based on election address information from the State Register of Voters, can legally vote during elections *only* in the nationwide proportional element of Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada elections.⁷

Internally displaced persons cannot vote during Parliamentary elections in the majoritarian constituency element of the Rada election; nor during local elections, even if they are registered as displaced persons in a certain populated area and have lived there for several years. During Parliamentary elections, such citizens receive only a ballot for voting in the nationwide proportional element and cannot participate in local elections. Part Three of Article 30 of the Law of Ukraine On Local Elections⁸ stipulates that provisions of Part Three of Article 7 of the Law of Ukraine On the State Register of Voters regarding temporary change of place of voting in local elections shall not apply.

Ensuring Electoral Rights for IDPs: Realities and Obstacles

Discrimination and Lack of Awareness Lead to Low Election Participation

Fifty percent of IDPs see themselves fully integrated and 36 percent consider themselves partly integrated into Ukraine, according to the National Monitoring System Report.⁹ Eighty-six percent of IDPs have more or less adapted to their new place of living.

Seven percent of survey participants feel prejudice. This indicator decreased from March 2017 to March 2019 from 18 percent to seven percent. More frequently, according to IDPs, they feel discrimination in healthcare, employment, housing rental and administrative services.

Discrimination against IDPs who are deprived of the right to vote during local elections and in the parliamentary majoritarian constituencies districts is coupled with IDPs' lack of awareness of their electoral rights.

According to the National Monitoring System Report on IDPs in March 2019, the most cited reason for not taking part in the Presidential and Parliamentary elections among IDPs – 37 percent – is their lack of trust in the electoral system and the government. Sixteen percent of IDPs said they have never been interested in elections and another 15 percent believe they did not have a right to vote.

Thirteen percent of IDPs in this report said there was a lack of information about the procedure of voting at their new polling address; 10 percent said there were not candidates worthy of their vote; three percent said they lacked time to vote; three percent cited “other reasons” for not voting; one percent pointed to religious concerns; and, two percent did not respond.

Although, the mistrust of and lack of interest in elections are major reasons for not participating in the Presidential and Parliamentary elections, according to polling in March of 2019, previous monitoring in December 2018 showed that IDPs did not believe they had a right to vote at their new place of relocation.

In March 2019, about half of IDPs – 44 percent – did not know how to vote at their new place of living; but, half – 50 percent – said they were familiar with voting procedures in their new location. Six percent of poll participants did not respond to this question. Level of awareness significantly increased compared to the previous three-month period when 29 percent of IDPs said they knew about voting in their place of relocation while 63 percent were unaware.

According to the International Organization on Migration,¹⁰ this data introduced a connection between the intention to vote and knowledge of the procedure. Among all respondents who said they wanted to vote during the Presidential and

Parliamentary elections, IDPs who knew about voting procedures more frequently expressed their intention to vote. For example, 72 percent of IDPs aware of the voting procedure said they wanted to vote while the 18 percent of IDPs who were not aware of voting protocol, were not interested in voting.

Oleksii Koshel, Chief Executive Officer of the Committee of Voters of Ukraine, [announced](#)¹¹ prior to the Presidential election on March 31, 2019, that only one displaced person out of four is aware of how to participate in elections. He focused on obstacles for citizens to exercise their electoral rights who live on territory that is not controlled by the Ukrainian Government.

Majority of Ukrainians Favor IDP Electoral Rights

According to findings of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems [Ukraine Post-Presidential National Survey](#),¹² participation of IDPs in political processes is supported in the Ukrainian political environment.

“Generally, 71 percent of respondents agree, and the other 19 percent mostly agree that the IDPs living in new communities should have an opportunity to participate in local elections as the voters at the place of residence,” the research authors wrote. “Sixty-six percent of people agree and 22 percent mostly agree that the IDPs should take part in solving the issues that have impact on their new communities, for example, in public hearings. Despite quite enormous support in all regions of Ukraine, the highest level is still observed in the eastern and southern parts of the country, which are closer to the occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions and have the biggest number of IDPs”, according to the survey.

Respondents who completely agree with the right of voting for IDPs during local elections in communities where they live increased from 57 percent in December 2018 before the 2019 Presidential elections to 71 percent after the Presidential elections. The percentage of those who did not respond to the question fell from 10 to four percent. This could be a signal the election campaign raised awareness of IDP electoral rights in Ukraine.

The survey was conducted between May 19 and June 1, 2019 after the second round of Presidential elections in 2019. About 2,000 respondents from throughout Ukraine, excluding the occupied regions of Donetsk and Luhansk and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. The findings, representing the adult population of Ukraine, were disaggregated by regions and gender. The sampling error was plus or minus 2.19 percent.

Labor Migrants Also Need Improved Toolkit for Polling Address Change

An opportunity for IDPs to vote in local elections and for candidates in parliamentary majoritarian districts is provided by Draft Law #6240, On Electoral

Rights of IDPs and Other Mobile Citizens Within the Country,¹³ introduced in the Verkhovna Rada in 2016. The document amends a voting site without changing the address of a registered residence, ensures participation of IDPs and other mobile citizens within the country – mostly labor migrants – in all types of elections.

Nongovernmental organizations and municipal councils in Uzhhorod, Vinnytsia, Mariupol, Kryvyi Rih, Kherson, Korosten, Dobropillia, Kharkiv, Bilhorod-Dnistrovskiy, the Shostka district and the Zaporizhzhia region [appealed](#)¹⁴ to MPs to support the draft law. However, Parliament did not have the votes to approve the legislation.

Adopted in the July 2019 version of a new [Electoral Code](#)¹⁵, approved by the former Verkhovna Rada, it also would not ensure IDP electoral rights. In September 2019, President Volodymyr Zelenskyi vetoed the July legislation, returning it to the Rada because it did not recognize electoral rights of certain citizens.

“The code does not have real implementation arrangements which would regularly (by temporary amendment of a voting site during an electoral cycle) enable a possibility of realizing electoral rights by IDPs during the nationwide and local elections, determining the reasons and order of amendment of one’s electoral address,” says the President’s veto message.¹⁶

These remarks assume the new Rada with the President’s political party, Servant of the People, in the majority will respect and honor IDP needs.

Media as a Communication Platform Promoting Positive Change

[According to](#)¹⁷ IDPs, the most efficient ways of informing people about IDP problems are:

- News reported by the media (42 percent);
- Communication with local government authorities (38 percent);
- Communication with central government authorities (37 percent);
- Communication with international organizations and nongovernmental organizations (36 percent); and,
- Communication with Ukrainian nongovernmental organizations (30 percent).

Media dominate information dissemination that IDPs trust and they consider the press as reliable, particularly, in covering electoral rights.

Throughout 2019, IDPs willing to participate in the Presidential and Parliamentary elections had to apply for a temporary change of voting address three times: Before the first round of the Presidential elections on March 31; before the second Presidential round on April 21, and before Parliamentary elections on July 21.

During the presidential elections, 315,725 citizens changed their electoral addresses before the first round and 325,604 people did so in the second round. IDPs are a

minority of these electoral changes. According to the [State Register of Office](#)¹⁸, 76,000 people registering on the occupied regions voted in the second round of the Presidential elections or less than six percent of the total number of IDPs.

Media [explained](#)¹⁹ the procedure of amending the temporary address, particularly for [citizens](#)²⁰ from occupied regions. The campaign office of then- presidential candidate Zelenskyi shared a video clip providing voting information for IDPs.

Print and broadcast journalists outlined primary challenges regarding electoral rights for IDPs:

1. Crowds in the State Register of Voters because volunteers are administering voting address changes.
2. Expensive travel for IDPs and inconvenient work schedules at the State Register of Voters. IDPs need time to cross control checkpoints and reaching the Register offices by the close of business is often difficult for them.
3. The State Register of Voters did not include a large number of surnames for IDPs who received their identification cards at age 18 without their place of residence. The Register could not identify students who graduated from colleges and could not return home to their occupied regions.
4. Voting addresses needs to be changed before each election round.
5. No chance for persons with limited mobility to delegate another person to apply for the voting address change; an application can only be submitted in person by the individual wanting to make the change.
6. No opportunity to apply for a voting address change from a distance with a certified electronic signature.

“People are outraged since they have been living in new communities for five years and some persons changed their voting addresses back then in 2014 to vote in the parliamentary elections,” [mentioned](#)²¹ Tetiana Durnieva, Executive Manager of the Civil Holding: Group of Influence nongovernmental organization at a July 2019 news conference in Kyiv. “This ‘unnoticed’ electorate that makes (up) at least four percent of voters.”

Media Coverage: Depersonalization and Stereotypes

Media materials focused on IDP voting and citizens in the occupied regions during the Presidential and Parliamentary elections can be divided into three categories:

1. Interviews with experts – representatives of the Central Election Commission, the State Register of Voters, civil rights advocates and civil society activists;
2. Reporting the author’s impressions on voting and preparation for voting; and,
3. A focus on an IDP voter.

The first category is characterized by professional analysis, practical orientation and high level of expertise. This is good advocacy journalism.

However, there was less reporting about the IDPs’ routines and their electoral rights. The audience could come under the impression that the topic is of interest only to the class of nongovernmental organizations, politicians and election commission members.

An example of good reporting is [publication²²](#) on the website *Halychyna* on March 29, 2019. The central figure in the story, Oleksandr, a former Donetsk citizen, discusses what happened to him and his family, including their loss of electoral rights.

“I am a citizen of Ukraine but I cannot participate in local elections or run for it as a candidate.” Oleksandr is quoted on *Halychyna*. “Is this not a certain violation of human rights?”

The article [“Kramatorsk Hosts the Displaced People”²³](#) in the January 11, 2019 *Dzerkalo Tyzhnia* newspaper contains direct quotes from IDPs and commentary of authorities. IDPs’ electoral rights are covered. The author cites a displaced woman named Oksana Muraliova from Yasynuvata. She is unsatisfied that she and her husband cannot vote in local elections. “I and my husband even applied to the court,” she say. “He was born in Kramatorsk. Eighteen years ago, he left the town and in 2014 came back again. It was insulting we could not vote for a major.”

Another example is the article, [“Displaced People: Deprived of Rights to Vote in the Rule-of-Law State?!”²⁴](#) in the March 28, 2018 *Znamia Industrii* newspaper in the Donetsk Oblast city of Kostiantynivka. A displaced person, Stanislav Koval, is a local counselor in the amalgamated community of Illintsi where he lives but cannot vote in local elections. This demonstrates that IDPs are integrated into host communities, respected by their fellow citizens and deserve all civil rights.

BBC Ukraine interviewed citizens in occupied regions who participated in the presidential elections. [“Elections 2019: Votes of people from Crimea and Donbas”²⁵](#) reported about IDPs in occupied regions who had a difficult time traveling to peaceful territory in Ukraine.

In most reporting, journalists are objective. However, there are examples of using hate speech towards IDPs or citizens in the occupied regions. There is also evidence of bias and stereotypes toward citizens in the occupied regions.

“Massive Exodus of Citizens from the Occupied Territories Applying for Elections at the Government-Controlled Territories,” reads the headline on the news²⁶ website *texty.org.ua* on February 8, 2019. “The Minister of Interior, Arsen Avakov, warns the registration institutions and law enforcers must be especially attentive and clarify the reasons for ‘the active interest of people from the occupied territories in the elections,’” the story reports. In this case, journalists are strengthening prejudice against citizens who are legally changing their voting address.

The following is sample negative commentary under news headlines reinforcing bias against IDPs.

“This will be a joy if people from the occupied territories choose the President for us, because we just don’t vote.” or “Voting in the morning, murdering at night.” “Ukraine is the only country in the World where such a madness can happen!” “Control checkpoints should be just closed for 2-3 days during elections to mitigate the provocations.” “In no case should they make a decision for Ukraine, many of them are the enemies and intruders who should have been deprived of Ukraine’s citizenship 3-4 years before.”

Such a tone of publication and such commentary are unacceptable in media that strives for quality.

The headline on the website *Novoye Vremia* from August 29, 2018 (“[Electoral Rights of Displaced People from Donbas, What’s the Attitude of Society?](#)”²⁷) would seem to sympathetically address IDP voting. But, the story actually explains why IDPs cannot vote during local elections and that 85 percent of Ukrainians would not support giving the vote to IDPs.

The headline does not match the text. “The majority of Ukrainians are against the amnesty of those, who participated in Donbas war.” and “Every 5th citizen of Donbas thinks the Government should appoint local authorities.” A reader scanning the headline will get the impression that citizens of a particular region have committed crimes; therefore, the right to vote should be limited to all residents of the region.

And, there was inaccurate reporting such as the July 21, 2019 article on the *Censor* website headlined “[From Trenches to Polling Stations](#)”²⁸.

“Two polling stations have been opened in the Pervomaiske village merging with the Pisky village,” the articles reports. “One in a local school, another in the house of culture. The displaced citizens from Pisky – local citizens and armed forces

veterans have an opportunity to vote here. Those from the armed forces receive only one ballot per person with the list of the parties. They do not vote for the majoritarian candidates.” The allegation that one ballot is given only to representatives of the armed forces is incomplete. Displaced people are also deprived of the right to vote for candidates running for the Verkhovna Rada in majoritarian constituencies. The journalist focused on how members of the armed forces were voting; but did not inquire about IDPs.

Recommendations on how to cover the topic of internal displacement

Speak to IDPs; not just officials talking about IDPs. When the news media does not cover the IDP story completely, it can lead to depersonification of an entire group of citizens. Negative stereotypes during elections are strengthened with references to “separatists”, “non-patriots” and “calling for the Russian world”.

1. Analysis of news coverage demonstrates the majority of online media depict IDPs as those who rely on government support and assistance. This creates an image of a victim, unable to independently care for one’s self. IDPs’ lives are varied, many have started new lives and achieved success in different parts of Ukraine without assistance from anyone. It is important to note the changes that have occurred in the last five years with IDPs’ challenges and successes.
2. “How may we introduce you?” I advise asking this question at the beginning of an interview with a displaced person. People who have adjusted to new communities often wish to rid themselves of redundant mention of their IDP status. They want to feel at home, as one of the locals and view their voting rights as precious.
3. Bias against IDPs giving preference to the one political movement are unproven.
4. When assessing IDP voting rights, reference civil rights organizations such as [Civil holding “Group of Influence”](#), [Center for Human Rights “ZMINA”](#), [Right for Defense](#), [Vostok SOS](#), [Donbas SOS](#), [Crimea SOS](#).
5. Avoid highlighting discriminatory remarks about IDPs and citizens in the occupied regions through unbalanced reporting. When quoting a well-known newsmaker such as a minister or an MP who expresses negative sentiments toward IDPs and citizens in the occupied regions, balance those remarks with supportive research about IDPs and citizens in the occupied regions.

6. Highlight advantages for communities that host citizens leaving the Donbas and Crimea such as business development, tax base growth and benefits to educational and medical institutions.
7. Note that a majority of IDPs want equal rights with other Ukrainian citizens and do not seek special treatment from the state. Providing a full range of electoral rights to IDPs and citizens in the occupied regions is not an exception; it is not an achievement of a politician or a political party, but simple justice.

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Authority in Covering Migration Issues

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PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR ELECTORAL RIGHTS

Introduction



People with disabilities face numerous limitations in real life for both objective and subjective reasons.

Objective reasons include a lack of technical, technological and financial opportunities to implement state-mandated measures that people with disabilities can realize their right to vote.

Subjective reasons include a range of challenges in Ukraine where society does not accept disabled people as equals, considering them to be handicapped and incapable of making independent decisions. Such a stereotype has been formed for centuries.

Policy and Regulatory Framework of Participation in Political and Electoral

Processes for People with Disabilities in Ukraine

Under Article 21 of the Ukrainian Constitution: “All people are free and equal in their dignity and rights. Human rights and freedoms shall be inalienable and inviolable”. Under Article 24 of the Constitution: “Citizens shall have equal constitutional rights and freedoms and shall be equal before the law. There shall be no privileges or restrictions based on race, skin color, political, religious and other beliefs, gender, ethnic and social origin, property status, place of residence, linguistic or other characteristics.”

According to Article 70 of the Constitution: “Citizens of Ukraine who have attained the age of eighteen as of the day of elections or referenda, shall have the right to vote. Citizens found legally incapable by a court shall not have the right to vote.”

The Basic Law of Ukraine does not recognize any other grounds for deprivation of the right to vote. Unlike discriminatory legislation of the Soviet period, when constitutionally, a certain number of people were deprived of electoral rights on the basis of their disability.

Ukrainian legislation includes the right to vote, the right to participate in election campaigning, make donations to candidates' personal election funds, act as a candidate's proxy and study voter lists. Ukrainian citizens' right to participate in referenda includes the right to vote in those referenda, the right to collect signatures; the right to familiarize themselves with voter lists and the right to appeal against inaccuracies or mistakes in the list of citizens who participate in a referendum.

Ukraine signed the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities in 2008 and 2009. This action ensures participation in political and social life of persons with disabilities (Article 29 of the Convention). "Member States guarantee that people with disabilities have political rights and opportunities to use it equally with others, so it is mandatory:

a) To ensure that persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others, directly or through freely chosen representatives, including the right and opportunity for persons with disabilities to vote and be elected by:

i. Ensuring voting procedures, facilities and materials are appropriate, accessible and easy to understand and use;

ii. Protecting the right of persons with disabilities to vote by secret ballot in elections and public referendums without intimidation, and to stand for elections, to effectively hold office and perform all public functions at all levels of government, facilitating the use of assistive and new technologies where appropriate;

iii. Guaranteeing the free expression of persons with disabilities as electors and to this end, where necessary, at their request, allowing assistance in voting by a person of their own choice;

b) To promote actively an environment in which persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in the conduct of public affairs, without discrimination and on an equal basis with others, and encourage their participation in public affairs..."

In 2017, the Verkhovna Rada adopted an overarching law bringing changes to 37 laws where the word or phrase "disabled", "a disabled child", "disabled at war" were changed by the corresponding words "a person with disability", "a child with disability" and "a person with disability caused by war". This document regulates Ukraine's adherence to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. The phrase, "a person with disability", focuses on the person, not the disability.

Barriers to Full Participation in the Electoral Process for People with Disabilities

To meet requirements of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, a resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers approved the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with

Disabilities for the period up to 2020 when Ukraine should report regularly to the relevant United Nations committee. In addition, to obtain an objective picture in the country, the UN requests an alternative report prepared by Ukrainian nongovernmental human rights organizations. The last such report, prepared in 2015, addressed Article 29 and Participation in Political and Public Life through sections 125, 126, 127, 128 and 129:

125. Reasons for low activity of people with disabilities in the electoral process are: a) physically inaccessible and inadequately equipped polling stations for the independent voting of disabled people; b) lack of special overlays for visually-impaired people; c) inaccessible information about candidates for the visually and audibly impaired people; and, d) low awareness of both members of election commissions and people with disabilities about their electoral rights and the procedure for their implementation.

126. In accordance with the law of Ukraine, if a person is included in the list of voters at a polling station but is not able to move independently due to a disability, the Precinct Election Commission provides the opportunity for the person to vote for at his or her residence. To exercise this right, a person with a disability must first apply to the relevant election commission which can be a ponderous process.

127. There are no effective ways to ensure that a person with a disability receives a ballot paper and becomes familiar with its contents and vote procedures. A voter who, due to disability, cannot complete a ballot on his or her own, has the right, with guidance of the chair or another member of the Precinct Election Commission to use the help of another voter, except for a member of the election commission, an election candidate, his or her authorized representative, a political party official and official observer which can pose significant risks of abuse and manipulation of the choices and preferences of people with disabilities.

128. Inaccessible information about electoral legislation, political parties and candidates during election campaigns for visually and audibly impaired people, is still an issue. Ukrainian law does not provide obligatory sign language translation and interpreting of election campaign messages on television nor preparation of printed election materials adapted for visually-impaired people. The state budget does fund election information as do some political parties and candidates.

129. The National Plan of Action report pursuant to Article 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, does not provide for improved legislation nor eliminating obstacles to electoral rights by people with disabilities, their participation in political and public life ...”

In the four years after publication of this report, electoral challenges facing people with disabilities are not solved. For example, buildings as established polling stations were public places that should be accessible to all Ukrainian citizens,

including people with disabilities. However, they are not and pregnant women and parents with children on wheelchairs, among others, are unable to access some of them.

Monitoring polling station accessibility in Kyiv, Lviv and Kramatorsk showed, that there was only one accessible polling station out of 33 in Ukraine's capital. Lviv had only six accessible polling stations out of 46 and Kramatorsk has just one accessible polling station out of 51.

Problems go beyond physical accessibility to a polling station. The National Assembly of People with Disabilities determined that polling station personnel were unaware of assistance they are mandated to provide to people with disabilities. And, a right enshrined by law is the use of overlays on ballot cards in the Braille alphabet for sightless people while voting. Such ballot cards were not used during the last elections. According to the Central Electoral Commission and other public institutions, Ukraine's technical capacity to print the Braille alphabet does not allow production of an overlay on a ballot card in Ukraine because ballots are too long.

Advice to Journalists on how to prepare the reportages involving people with disabilities

- A key message from people with disabilities is “do not decide for us and without us”! If you want to solve obstacles to people with disabilities participating in elections, those people must participate in the process. Even with good intentions, a journalist's reporting may be ineffective and even harmful.
- Speak directly with people with disabilities in their environment. Forget the word, “disabled”. It is true that some people with disabilities use that word. However, when we are addressing a human's characteristics, we should note that we are speaking to a person and not a “disability”.
- Journalists sometimes highlight a person's physical disabilities even if that characteristic is not relevant to the story. There are cases when it is not necessary mention a subject's disability.
- The expression “calm and objective” should be emphasized because dramatizing for “disability” is unacceptable. A reporter can evoke pity from the audience and increase a readership or a listenership; but, does it build the main character? Journalists do not contribute to public opinion by simultaneously noting people with disabilities are equal members of society and in need of care and pity.
- When covering people with disabilities, turn the focus from the disability to the substance of the story, whether it is legal, political or economic. Report on achievements of people with disabilities. Such stories inspire and educate to the realities of people with disabilities.
- There are two basic rules for a journalist in engaging a person with a disability: First, be honest and ask questions. You may ask how to inquire politely about

a person with a disability's condition. This will help avoid unpleasant situations and, at the same time, not offend. Second, be sympathetic without being overly so. Focus on the essence of the story.

How to Communicate with a Person with Disability

- Address a person directly, do not talk to a sign language interpreter during the conversation.
- While getting to know a person with disability and greeting him or her with a handshake, do it casually. If a person is visually or audibly impaired, give your hand first and call your name.
- If you want to offer assistance, first ask if it is necessary.
- Do not express pity to a person in a wheelchair; do not put your hand on his head or shoulder; do not address a person by an informal name.
- Wheelchair is a part of personal space. Treat it as a person's body.
- While talking to a person in a wheelchair, get settled so you face the person eye to eye. It makes a conversation easier.
- While talking to a person with speech difficulties, listen to him or her attentively. Be patient until a person finishes the expression. Do not correct a person and do not try to explain something instead. If necessary, ask short questions that require short answers.
- While talking to a visually impaired person, always call out your name and people around you. If you are having a conversation in a group, do not forget to explain whom you are addressing at the moment. Read everything you are writing on a board or showing on a screen.
- To draw the attention of an audibly impaired person, wave your hand or touch a person. While talking to such a person, make eye contact and speak distinctly. Some people can read lips. Stand so that your lips are visible well and nothing would interfere with your speaking – food or drink.

Correct and Incorrect Expressions While Speaking With People With Disabilities:

CORRECT Does Not Create Stereotypes	INCORRECT Creates Stereotypes
A person (a child) with disability A child with special education needs	With limited capability With special needs With greater needs Patient Cripple Crippled Deformed Handicapped Defected With Defects

	Disabled With Health Problems Victim of disease or accident Suffering from the disease
A person (a child) using a wheelchair; in a wheelchair	A wheelchair-bound person (child) Wheelchair user Paralyzed
Congenital disability, Disability since childhood	Congenital Defect, Defect
A person (a child) having cerebral palsy (infantile cerebral palsy)	Suffering from cerebral palsy (infantile cerebral palsy) Cerebral palsy patient
A person who had poliomyelitis A person with disability caused by poliomyelitis	Suffers from poliomyelitis/from poliomyelitis consequences Victim of poliomyelitis
A person (a child) with a mental retardation A person (a child) with specific mental (emotional) development problems	Feeble-minded Retarded Intellectually handicapped
A person (a child) with Down syndrome	Down Down child
A person (a child) with autism	Autist Autism child
A person (diagnosed) with epilepsy	An epileptic psycho
A person with mental or emotional disabilities, health issues	Insane Mad Lunatic
Visually impaired person A person with visual disability (Ukrainian expression)	Blind Totally blind
Audibly impaired person, hearing impaired; A person with audible disability (Ukrainian expression); A person (a child) with the remains of hearing; A person who does not hear and uses a sign language	Deaf Deaf-mute Deaf-and-dumb
A person with disability due to war (martial conflict)	War invalid Disabled veteran

One more recommendation: Learn the legislation and international experience in this as it pertains to persons with disabilities. Talk to experts. This will allow you to know the topic, expressions and better inform reporting.

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EXCLUSION OF THE LGBT COMMUNITY FROM POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND ITS LIMITED ACCESS TO ELECTION PROCESSES IN UKRAINE – 2019

Introduction

There are reasons why access for LGBT Ukrainians to politics and election is not discussed, their active participation is limited and their involvement in this activity is not possible. First, the LGBT community in Ukraine does not have a clear political position and a single political movement. Second, the LGBT community does not draw attention by its number, regional representation or active political positions; nor is it a critical electorate for individual politicians or political parties.

What keeps the community together in a political context is an expanding list of policy priorities they are gradually incorporating into an agenda which the community is gradually communicating to legislative bodies. Those priorities include physical safety, adoption and legal procedures enabling same-sex family relationships.

Social Acceptance

LGBT prejudice and discrimination has not been systematically researched in Ukraine. The challenge in studying the issues includes opinions of state institutions, political parties and religion as well as social attitudes toward LGBT. It is also difficult to determine the number of LGBT people in Ukraine.

According to statistics from other European countries same-sex relationships likely represent from between two and 10 percent out of the total population. It is important to distinguish between sexual orientation and gender identity. In 2019, the Pew Research Center (1) reports that only 14 percent of Ukrainians agree that society should accept homosexuality; the same research 12 years ago showed that 19 percent of Ukrainians accepted homosexuality. (2)

Considering the level of prejudice by Allport's Scale (also referred to as Allport's Scale of Prejudice and Discrimination or Allport's Scale of Prejudice), we can identify the level of LGBT acceptance in Ukraine (3).

Revealing the cruelest manifestations of discrimination and prejudice, the fifth level is the highest on the Scale. This level allows for actual elimination of either a large fraction of an undesired group of people or the entire targeted group. Thankfully, a history where physical elimination of small social groups is a reality no longer is accepted in Ukraine.

However, when going down to the fourth level of discrimination and prejudice, including physical attacks, the situation in Ukraine is not positive. Massive assaults

are not made against the LGBT community. But, violent attacks are carried out against LGBT activists and people who publicly disclose their identity as LGBT people. Second, physical harm is most frequently inflicted in public events dedicated to LGBT rights protection with LGBT representatives, activists and casual bystanders at risk of assault. Third, inactivity of law enforcement leads to impunity for those who administer violent attacks against the LGBT community which encourages new attacks and spreads fear.

Despite heavy media coverage, the majority of Ukrainians do not engage in this type of anti-social, violent behavior.

The third level of prejudice and discrimination on the Scale deprives the LGBT community of educational and professional opportunities. It is difficult to analyze this criterion because statistical data is not frequently retrieved or analyzed except for the Rainbow Books (4) and some cases of discrimination do not fall under this level and therefore are not included in statistics.

The second level on the prejudice and discrimination Scale is when members of a majority in-group actively avoid people in the minority out-group. No direct harm may be intended, but psychological harm often results through isolating the out-group. This is the level of acceptance of LGBT people by Ukrainian political parties. Ukrainian parties' electorates are based on conservative images and preferences which includes the classic image of the family, heterosexuality and an absence of same-sex relationships.

The first level on the Allport's Scale is based on LGBT jokes, negative stereotypes and hate speech. This is common in Ukrainian society with the dominating opinion that such behavior does not harm the out-group – LGBT people – without understanding that this behavior is actually discriminatory.

Policy and Regulatory Framework

At first glance, it may seem the LGBT community in Ukraine does not face obstacles to participation in political activity or elections. The Ukrainian Constitution and the country's laws do not limit participation for any reason a Ukrainian citizen for taking part in the political and electoral processes. And, due to a proactive stance of the LGBT community, limiting one's sexual orientation or gender identity are prohibited by the Labor Code and by Article 161 of the Criminal Code.

Title II of the Ukrainian Constitution includes 47 articles devoted to human rights (5):

- All people shall be free and equal in their dignity and rights. Human rights and freedoms shall be inalienable and inviolable.
- Every person shall have the right to free development of his or her personality, provided that rights and freedoms of other persons are not violated; and, he or

she shall have duties to society in which free and comprehensive development of his or her personality shall be guaranteed.

- Citizens shall have equal constitutional rights and freedoms and shall be equal before the law.
- No citizen of Ukraine shall be deprived of citizenship or of the right to change citizenship.
- Every person shall have the inalienable right to life. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of life. Everyone shall have the right to protect his or her life and health and the lives of other people against unlawful encroachment.
- No one shall be subjected to interference in his or her private life and family matters except when such interference is stipulated by the Constitution of Ukraine.
- Everyone shall have right to freedom of religion. This right shall include the freedom to profess any religion or profess no religion, to freely practice religious rites and ceremonial rituals, alone or collectively, and to pursue religious activities.
- Ukrainian citizens shall have the right to freedom of association into political parties and public organizations for exercising and protecting their rights and freedoms and for satisfying their political, economic, social, cultural and other interests, with the exception of restrictions established by law in the interests of national security and public order, protection of public health, or protection of rights and freedoms of other persons.
- Citizens shall have the right to assemble peacefully without arms and to conduct rallies, meetings, processions and demonstrations upon notifying executive or local government bodies in advance.
- Citizens of Ukraine who have reached the age of eighteen as of the day of elections or referenda, shall have the right to vote. Citizens found legally incapable by a court shall not have the right to vote. Voters shall be guaranteed free expression of their will.

The Ukraine Criminal Code provides punishment for violation of LGBT rights (6).

Article 161. Violation of citizens' equality based on their race, nationality or religious preferences:

1. Willful actions inciting national, racial or religious enmity and hatred, humiliation of national honor and dignity or insult of citizens' feelings in respect to their religious convictions and also any direct or indirect restriction of rights or granting direct or indirect privileges to citizens based on race, skin color, political, religious and other convictions, sex, ethnic and social origin, property status, place of residence, linguistic or other characteristics, shall be punishable by a fine of 200 to 500 tax-free minimum incomes, or restraint of liberty for a term up to five years, with or without the deprivation of the right to occupy certain positions or engage in certain activities for a term up to three years.

2. The same actions accompanied with violence, deception or threats, and also committed by an official shall be punishable by a fine of 500 to 1,000 tax-free minimum incomes or restraint of liberty for a term of two to five years with or without the deprivation of the right to occupy certain positions or engage in certain activities for a term up to three years.

3. Any such actions as provided for by paragraph 1 or 2 of this Article, if committed by an organized group of persons, or where they caused grave consequences shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term of five to eight years.

2014 was a turning point in relation to LGBT issues. Political forces and movements that came to power in the wake of the Revolution of Dignity were actively promoting European principles, including the rights of LGBT people. For the first time on a public level, the Cabinet of Ministers included LGBT community points into the “Action Plan to Implement the National Human Rights Strategy of Ukraine by 2020” (7):

- A new legal procedure for gender reassignment for transgender people;
- New legislation prohibiting discrimination by sexual orientation and gender identification in all spheres of life regulated by law;
- Taking into account motives of hatred to sexual orientation and gender identification in the Criminal Code;
- Legislation on registered partnership of same-sex couples; and,
- Cancellation of prohibiting transgender people adopting children.

This document does not contain any clause on the rights of access to the electoral process. It is the only comprehensive document on LGBT rights that has been approved for the first time at a governmental level, different from public debates initiated by LGBT or international organizations.

Limiting access to political or electoral procedures cannot be ignored. There is not sufficient official appeals and complaints about violations of LGBT rights regarding equal access to electoral processes. This topic is relatively new to Ukraine, has not been widely researched and has only recently been discussed.

Until now, there has been little research; election monitoring of LGBT participation during elections was not conducted; and, no criteria have been developed to determine restrictions on access for LGBT people to the electoral process.

Institutional and Political Realities

Difficult legal document registration on gender reassignment for transgender people is a recognized problem causing limited access to election processes. According to LGBT people, there are numerous official procedures one should go through to

change documents and this process is allowed only upon turning 25 years of age. A person has the right to vote in Ukraine at 18 years of age.

Though, no cases of refusal to provide voting ballots by election committee members have been identified in Ukraine, there are cases of biased attitudes expressed in a more thorough check of documents for transgender people. It is necessary to provide insight into cooperation between LGBT activist organizations with political parties and movements. This report demonstrates that Ukrainian parties have a cautious attitude to public contacts with the LGBT community.

Ukrainian political parties discuss LGBT issues where there is an opportunity to receive positive evaluations and support from European political parties and international institutions. This is often the only reason why LGBT priorities can be found in speeches of political party representatives and texts of election campaign programs, usually emphasizing common European values on protecting LGBT rights.

In practice, the majority of Ukrainian political parties would like to be disassociated from issues facing the LGBT community.

Civil society organizations monitoring LGBT rights protection made two unsuccessful attempts to receive a clear response from Ukrainian political parties regarding LGBT rights in Ukraine's legislation. The first originated with the LGBT civil rights protection center, Our World, which published findings on the civil rights of LGBT people in the Rainbow Book (4).

In 2018, Our World, while preparing the handbook on the status of rights for the LGBT community in Ukraine, sent information requests on the attitude of Ukrainian political parties towards laws protecting LGBT rights that is provided by the Action Plan on Human Rights Implementation. All political parties with factions in the 2018 Verkhovna Rada and parties mentioning LGBT issues in their speeches and, by Our World's assessment, could join the Verkhovna Rada in the next Parliamentary elections were contacted. These include, including: Motherland, Petro Poroshenko Bloc's Solidarity, Renaissance, Civic Opinion, Democratic Alliance, Single Center, National Front, New Power, Opposition Bloc, Right Sector, Radical Party of Oleh Liashko, Self-Assistance, Freedom and Punch.

Responses were only provided by Renaissance, Self-Assistance and the Opposition Bloc. All responses were similar: LGBT rights protection is not a given; but, representatives promised to mention LGBT issues in the Verkhovna Rada after careful consideration and discuss relevant draft laws if they are submitted in Parliament (4).

The second attempt was introduced in an online analytical report regarding LGBT status in Ukraine in 2019. The text was prepared by Our World and can be accessed

at www.gay.org.ua [8]. The report outlines opinions of political parties on LGBT-related topics.

In the first half of 2019, Ukraine's political life was focused on the Presidential and Parliamentary elections campaigns. The majority of political forces did not pay attention to human right issues. Although civil society and media organizations surveyed presidential candidates and political party members before the elections on LGBT rights, among other issues, the majority surveyed did not respond. LGBT issues were not mentioned in the official campaign documents of all well-known presidential candidates and political parties.

Representatives of political forces who did respond did not provide a clear answer on same-sex marriage legalization in Ukraine. However, opinions were communicated by Dmytro Razumkov, a representative of the Servant of the People party: "This is a complex issue; we are having in-depth discussions within the party." Yuri Boyko of the Opposition Platform – For Life party said, "Regarding the same-sex marriages, this is not even discussed. Such a stupidity is not acceptable in our Christian society."

The majority of moderately conservative political parties in their response to questions from the Nationwide Council of Churches and Religious Organizations both directly and indirectly opposed same-sex marriage, including Civic Opinion, Self-Assistance and Freedom. None of the three parties won seats in the new Verkhovna Rada. Lesser political forces that support LGBT equality, including Democratic Axe, also did not elect deputies to the Rada. (8).

Three progressive female politicians from Servant of the People met representatives of the LGBT movement and said the future ruling party would not address LGBT issues during the election campaign. The party also announced that Maryna Bardina, will be in charge of gender and LGBT topics.

A positive sign from the new governing authorities is that the Chairman of the Rada's Committee on Foreign Affairs, Bohdan Yaremenko, has publicly supported ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

However, after discussing the issue with other MPs from the Servant of the People, Yaremenko said, "No one opposed the ratification but taking all the counter-arguments into account, the MPs decided to return to the issue only after a meaningful discussion with the Nationwide Council of Churches and Religious Organizations" (8).

The strategy of Ukrainian political parties distancing themselves from LGBT topics, and avoiding promises and public speeches could be explained by the absence of political forces actively protecting LGBT rights and interests in Europe and the presence of reactionary right-wing movements in Ukraine, especially among the

youth. These ultraconservative elements are not involved in politics and did not earn enough votes in 2019 to enter the Rada. But, they easily self-organize and participate in violence against LGBT representatives and their supporters.

Access to hate crime statistics is problematic because law enforcement bodies do not distinguish between assaults against gay, lesbian and transgender people and general hooliganism; police general sanctions against violence and do not differentiate.

Political parties prepare their programs on the basis of “traditional family” values shared by the majority of Ukrainian people who participate in elections. Supporting LGBT rights – particularly at the regional level – is an invitation to political attacks through so-called “black PR” against candidates and parties. Sometimes, this form of political intrigue is called “black and blue PR” because the color blue is associated with gay people in Ukraine.

Coming Out

“Coming Out” – LGBT people’s public disclosure of one’s sexual orientation or gender identification – in the context of access to politics and elections – should be carefully reviewed. At present, no Ukrainian politician has “come out”.

We have mentioned before that the LGBT community is not united in the context of political activity and not ready to support single candidates; the community is not concentrated in a particular geographical region in Ukraine and does not have clear policy positions other than supporting guarantees of physical safety. Information about political activists, Members of Parliament and journalists concerning their sexual orientation circulates in society; but, there are seldom confirmations of LGBT identity. “Coming Out” is easier in the United States and Europe than in Ukraine.

In the context of politics and elections, it is difficult to discuss sexual orientation and gender identity in Ukraine. Again, physical safety is addressed as *the* issue affecting gay, lesbian and transgender people. Recently, regular people have “come out” and threats of and actual violent assaults have followed against them.

Absence of Physical Security as an Element of Discrimination

While the majority of Ukrainian political parties are consciously distancing themselves from the community, there is a category of far-right groups that do not tolerate the LGBT community and encourage violence. These groups include the National Corps, Carpathian Sich, C14, Right Sector, Freikor and Tradition and Order. These organizations are often behind the physical attacks on LGBT activists and supporters. The assaults may be triggered by LGBT activism and any discussion of LGBT tolerance.

Aggression can be expressed in different ways, from holding banners and blocking demonstrations to throwing eggs and fecal matter and antiseptics to physical violence against LGBT organizers and participants. Privately, right-wing activists and nationalists say they are “indifferent to what people do behind the closed bedroom doors”, but they will actively counter any “public LGBT propaganda” (9).

Because extreme right and nationalistic movements are popular among some youth, they can organize themselves quickly, utilize violence and amass strength at the local level. Meanwhile, police are reluctant to confront these right-wing youth groups, providing them with a degree of impunity for their violence toward LGBT members.

Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity is identified in different regions of Ukraine; these cases may frequently happen at the workplace initiated by a chief or colleagues. Impunity persists because it is impossible to collect required evidence to protect rights and bring those responsible to justice. This leads to self-censorship at a regional level because the consequence of LGBT people speaking up can be job loss or, again, violent assault.

Pride

There are public events in Ukraine recognizing LGBT pride.

Anti-LGBT groups counter gay, lesbian and transgender pride by distributing photos and videos from European pride parades as a way of pressing what they consider to be negative publicity for the civil rights movement in Ukraine. However, Ukraine pride celebrations demonstrate the quantity and quality of tolerance and readiness to recognize LGBT in public, according to statistics. Since 2003, there have been pride celebrations in Kyiv. Approximately 8,000 people participated in Kyiv Pride in 2019. The Ukrainian Government, with common values associates with European governments, have organized security for event participants in Kyiv. However, logistical and security support cannot be administered in every Ukrainian city, demonstrating that regional administration and law enforcement authorities are incapable of adequate logistics and security in support of pride events.

There are cases when local government bans pride celebrations in their cities and, as noted above, law enforcement is inactive when violent assaults are launched against pride participants. Still, the practice of organizing prides is spreading among Ukrainian cities. In 2019, prides were celebrated in Kharkiv, Kyiv and Odesa.

For most Ukrainians, LGBT pride can be used as an information campaign aimed at clarifying and building tolerant attitudes towards people, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Media Coverage Recommendations of LGBT

- Mind professional attitude and avoid stereotypes and propaganda, reinforcing social biases, misleading impressions and even the hostility to LGBT people.
- Before an interview, clarify how an interview subject prefers to be introduced to an audience.
- Hate speech is prohibited by the Ukrainian law. Moreover, calling for unlawful actions, inciting hatred are unacceptable for any journalist. Special care should be taken with statements of far-right representatives.
- False news, accusations and unverified statements are against professional ethics and higher standards of journalism.
- A journalist's task is to inform public and not speak for any other side. This also includes recommendations to avoid personal biases and journalistic objectification.
- Sexual orientation is often not obligatory in the course of reporting, particularly if it is not relevant to participation in politics, elections and public policy.
- Engage people in a discussion. Active, professional media engagement will encourage people to discuss issues.
- Reveal goals and commitments of social groups to help deliver their opinions to the general public and state officials.
- If you know about human rights violations regarding access to politics and elections, publish this information. Do not be indifferent.

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Organizations and stakeholders:

1. Human Rights LGBT Center “Nash Svit” (‘Our World’) was established in Luhansk in 1998 as a civic independent activist group. It began working in the education for Ukrainian people on the topic of homosexuality, debunking homophobic stereotypes and prejudices against gays and lesbians, focused on consolidation of the lesbian and gay communities and promotion of their rights.

Website: <https://gay.org.ua/>

E-mail: coordinator@gay.org.ua Phone / Fax: (044) 296-34-24 Phone of Legal Advice for LGBT People: (095) 273-03-09 Postal Address: a / s 173, Kyiv, 02100 Website: www.gay.org.ua; Blog: facebook.com/nashmircenter

2. “INSIGHT” NGO is a Ukrainian non-governmental organization sharing the values of equality, freedom, inclusivity and diversity for all social groups. The organization brings together lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people who share our mission and views and strive for a truly democratic and tolerant society. Since 2007, Insight has been working in Kyiv, and since 2015, not only in the capital but also in the regions.

Web address: <https://www.insight-ukraine.org/>

Legal address: 02166, Kyiv, 19 Lisovyi Avenue, office 108. Phone: +380504107561.

3. “Tochka Opory” NGO was established in 2009. It became the first LGBT organization in Ukraine to initiate a coalition project with a non-LGBT organizations, launching the Ukrainian Corporate Equality Index project in 2013 to address discrimination at the workplace.

Contacts:

Website: <https://t-o.org.ua/>

+38 (063) 046 06 46

office@t-o.org.ua

4. NATIONAL LGBT-PORTAL OF UKRAINE

The National LGBT Portal of Ukraine is one of the leading editorials of Ukraine on LGBT people. They provide full information on the lives of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. They publish event, analytical, reference, monitoring information on LGBT topics. Website: <https://www.lgbt.org.ua/partnership@lgbt.org.ua>

5. A public initiative with the Latin name “Tergo”, meaning “back”, appeared in Kyiv in 2013. The first association LGBT children’s parents in Ukraine. The main activities of “Tergo” include meetings and trainings for parents and relatives of LGBT people, as well as trainings for specialists working with LGBT children.

Web address: <https://tergo.org.ua/info@tergo.org.ua>

6. Nationwide Nongovernmental Organization Gay Alliance Ukraine (GAU) has been operating since 2009. For this time the organization has developed a wide network of regional offices in many areas of the country and successfully implemented many interesting projects.

Web address: <https://upogau.org/>

7. Nationwide Nongovernmental Organization “Gay Forum of Ukraine” was established on September 22, 2004. Main activities are advocacy, community mobilization, PR and media work, research, anti-discrimination initiatives. The most of organization’s activity is attributed to its permanent leader, Svyatoslav Sheremet, who is now apparently the most well-known Ukrainian LGBT activist outside the community, participates in many projects of other organizations and frequently represents the entire LGBT community to the public.

Telephone: +38 044 451 7217

8. NGO “LIGA” LGBT Association was founded in Mykolayiv on December 26, 1996 and subsequently opened its branches in Odessa, Kherson and Kiev. The main activities of this prominent LGBT organization in the south are informing the public about sexual orientation, lobbying the interests of the lesbian, gay, bisexual community in Ukraine and among the European and international organizations, conducting social and cultural events, providing psychological and legal advice to community, organizing the activity of Community Center.

Website: <https://lgbt.com.ua/>

Address: Mykolaiv, 54001, Potemkinska Street, 110/5

Email: liga.lgbt@gmail.com

Phone: +38 (0512) 594900

Mobile phone: +38 (050) 3181290

9. The Nationwide Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (NCCRO) was established in December 1996 as an inter-denominational institution. Its purpose is to unite the efforts of the denominations in the field of spiritual revival of Ukraine, coordinate inter-church dialogue both in Ukraine and abroad and participate in development of draft legal and regulatory acts on the issues of state-confessional relations and implementation of wide charitable initiatives. The Council of Churches functions on the basis of equality and equal rights, respect for internal prescriptions and traditions of all religious organizations acting within the Constitution of Ukraine and being independent of state authorities, political parties, other public entities and governing bodies of Ukraine.

In February 2019, the NCCRO included 16 churches and religious organizations and 1 inter-church aid organization consisting of the Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic, Protestant and Evangelical churches as well as Judaic and Islamic religious communities. NCCRO represents 90 percent of Ukraine’s religious organizations.

Website: <http://www.vrciro.org.ua/ua/>

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Analytical research is aimed at outlining the tendencies for the access of women, national minorities, internationally displaced people, people with disabilities and LGBT people to the election and political processes in 2019. The publication provides an opportunity for journalists and media experts to examine the problem, trace the impact of highly-ranked officials, and cover the events on the topic in a quality manner.

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