



Ilko Kucheriv
Democratic Initiatives
Charitable Foundation

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

FOREWORD

For us, the year 2020 was difficult. Back in March Iryna Bekeshkina, our director and a famous Ukrainian sociologist ranked among the top 100 prominent Ukrainians of all time by *Novoye Vremya*, passed away. It was a major blow to *the Foundation* and the entire civil society. Moreover, this blow coincided with the introduction of quarantine measures. Thus, we found ourselves in a particularly precarious position and were forced to reorganize the way we work. We are grateful to donor organizations, our international and domestic partners for understanding and help.

Just like other organizations, *the Foundation* had to reconsider its planned activities, modify a year-long program of events. Quite a few of our polls were dedicated to studying novel challenges faced by civil society due to quarantine, the public's attitude towards vaccination, measures introduced by the authorities in response to the pandemic, etc. Most of our press events were transferred online and the much of the work done by the team has also been done so remotely.

Previously, as a representative of an older generation, I have skeptically treated online conferences, webinars, etc. Yet, it turned out that a great many things can be done in a virtual world. In such a manner we addressed the European Parliament, took part in events in London, Paris, Rome, Brussels, Warsaw. At the same time, our materials were published in the USA, Germany, Spain and, as is the tradition, appeared on *BBC*, *France 24*, *Al Jazeera*.

In spite of quarantine, we successfully released new products. Among them is *Political Quarterly* – a regular expert survey on the efficiency of governmental bodies made with the intention not only to monitor but also to predict which trends to expect in regard to the political life of the country. Based on this project, in addition to our constant appearances in top Ukrainian media, we have also started a video blog with our expert commentary.

In order to further women's rights and opportunities, *Democratic Initiatives* have surveyed women veterans. For the first time ever, the Foundation organized a specialized internship program for young women who want to hone their analytical skills. Thanks to the USAID/ENGAGE program, five (out of 67 applications in total) candidates were selected to assist the Foundation, as well as introduce their research ideas and apply them in the field.

2020 in Ukraine has also been notable for the local elections. *Democratic Initiatives* have closely followed the campaigning with its sociological and analytical input, conducted expert discussions. Unfortunately, these elections were not an exception as many, already traditional, efforts to manipulate public opinion, either carried out by some of our politicians or Russia, were noted.

The struggle for territorial integrity and the reinforcement of the commitment to join the EU and NATO remain to be the primary points of our attention. Whereas necessary, together with external experts and NGOs, we help to draw "red lines", while simultaneously supporting the government's steps in the right direction. In order to achieve this, we closely worked with the offices of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories; Vice-Prime-Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry Veteran Affairs; UN Agencies, and international partners of Ukraine. And, generally, this is the path we aim to continue following.

Olexiy Haran

*Scientific Director of the Ilko Kucheriv
Democratic Initiatives Foundation, political
science professor at the National University of
"Kyiv-Mohyla Academy"*



Iryna Bekeshkina

Foundation's Director (2010-2020)



ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

Established in 1992, at the dawn of Ukrainian independence, the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation is one of the leading think tanks of the country. Known primarily for introducing Ukraine to exit polls, its timely analytical output, and sociological approach, the Foundation continues to use its innovative rationale to track public opinion on the topics most essential to the development of a sustainable democratic society.

Our mission is to promote effective and science-based decision-making among non-governmental organizations, governmental institutions, international partners operating in Ukraine.

Our vision is to see Ukraine as a full-fledged democracy, a country guided by the rule of law, an economically developed entity, NATO and the EU member-state with the capacity not only to sustain itself, but also to guide and help lead others.

OUR TEAM



Svitlana Barbeliuk
Executive Director



Olexiy Haran
Research Director



Petro Burkovskyi
Senior Fellow



Mariia Zolkina
Political Analyst



Serhii Shapovalov
Political Analyst



Andrii Sukharyna
Political Analyst



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Political Analyst



Olexiy Zhivora
Associate Analyst



Iryna Filipchuk
Editor & SMM



Yurii Horban
Communications Officer



Olga Bondarchuk
Accountant

RESEARCH

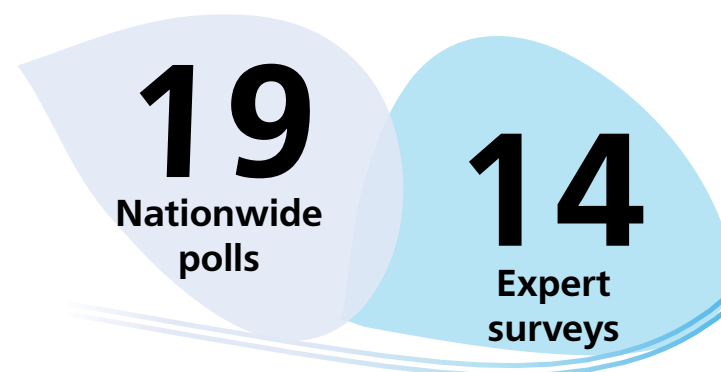
The Pandemic

Globally, 2020 has become synonymous with the rapid spread of COVID-19 and the resulting restrictions on both the civilian population and the economy. The social tensions associated with the disruption of the latter have inadvertently cropped up in Ukraine as well. Hence, in order to keep its partners and the society well-informed, *the Foundation* stayed on top of the issue for the entirety of the year.



Early on it became evident that the issue itself is multidimensional, with drastic effects on people from all walks of life. For example, back in May, DIF conducted an [expert survey of NGOs](#) on how the widespread restriction affected their conduct that found out that, surprisingly, 50% of respondents have noted that among other things the pandemic elevated the meaning of social capital, of personal connections, evoked solidarity, and helped garner mutual trust.

“**Democratic Initiatives** is among the principal providers of **sociological data** for the non-governmental sector, as well as governmental institutions in Ukraine.

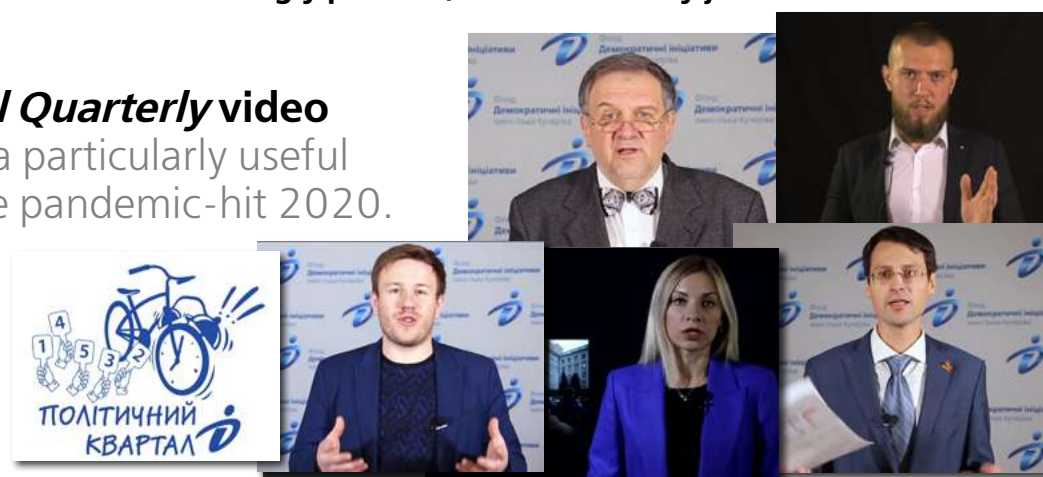


Despite a somewhat optimistic outlook at the beginning, [Political Quarterly expert surveys](#) have shown that the assessment of the government's efforts to tackle the rapidly emerging issues has deteriorated throughout the year. Whilst other areas remained virtually unchanged, at the end of the year the President's (arguably the embodiment of the government since 2019) response to the pandemic was rated at 2 points (out of 5, down from a maximum of 2.7 in Q2).

Another telling sign is the **anticipation of protests** resulting from the increasing and poorly-communicated restrictions that increased from 42% in March to 64% in December.

A national [survey conducted in September](#), however, found out that **despite the perceived increase in social tensions, the public support for specific constraints imposed by the government was, if not overwhelmingly positive, considered duly justified.**

“Tie-in **Political Quarterly video blog** became a particularly useful tool during the pandemic-hit 2020.



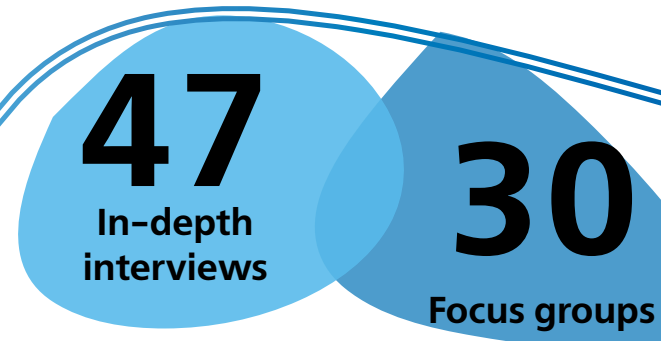
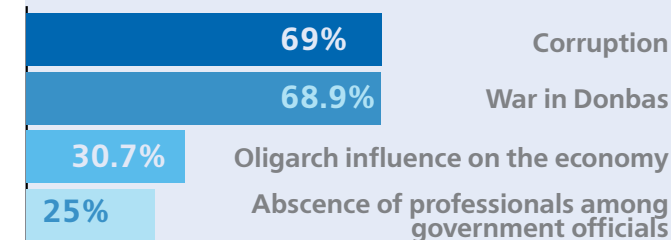
Reforms

Since 2014, a year of a profound shift in the Ukrainian political landscape, reforms became an inescapable destiny for the country.

Conducted in late 2019 and published in 2020, both [the expert survey](#) and [the public opinion poll](#) on the state of reforms in Ukraine have shown that corruption and the influence of oligarchs are still perceived as the most pressing problems for the development of the country.

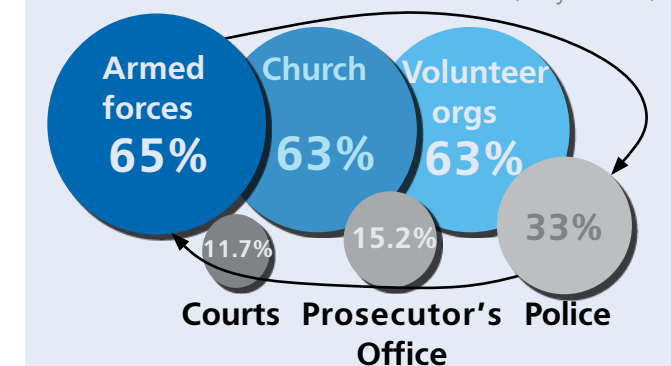
As far as public trust in institutions is concerned, [public opinion](#) has confirmed the leadership of the army, church, and volunteer organizations. **Also, 50% of the respondents put their trust in national media, 47% have mentioned NGOs.**

What impedes the development of the country the most according to Ukrainians (December 2019):



“At the same time, at the end of Zelensky's first year in office, the public **trust in law enforcement agencies remained extremely low.**

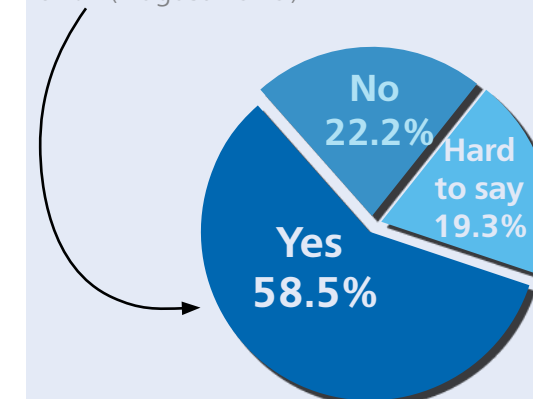
Institutions that enjoy the most and the least trust from Ukrainians (July 2020):



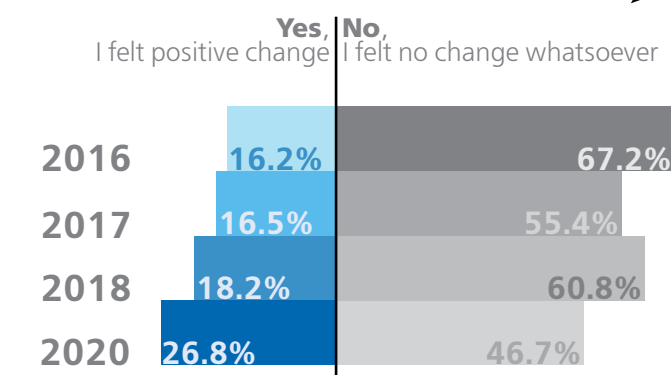
Despite a [highly negative outlook](#) towards the perceived outcomes of **the land reform** that was launched in 2020, majority of the respondents concede that landowners should have the ability to sell it.



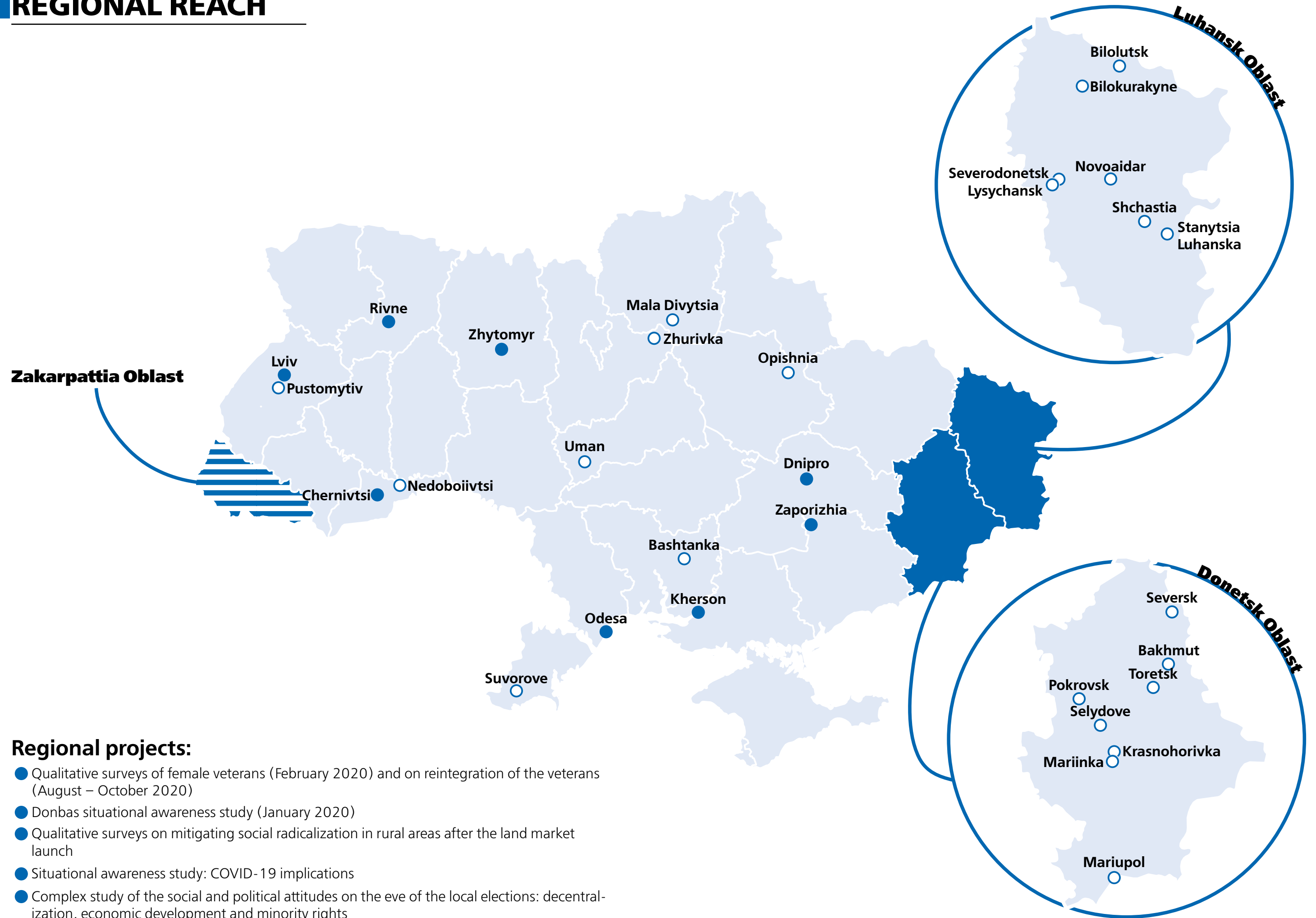
How do you think, should landowners have the right to sell their land? (August 2020)



2020 has [also shown](#) (August 2020) a steady increase in the positive evaluation of **the decentralization reform**. Although, the amount of respondents unaware of the effects remains particularly high.



REGIONAL REACH





It is worth mentioning that JCCC has never been particularly efficient in maintaining the ceasefire, although it had another principle quality – Russian military personnel shared the responsibility, together with Ukrainian counterparts, for the monitoring. Hence the Russian exit from JCCC has only been done to achieve precisely one thing – to achieve utmost deniability so that there would not be even the most formal reason to link them to the militants.

New Ceasefire: Treachery of Whether Militants Will be Involved in the Joint Centre for Control and Coordination (JCCC)

Texty.org.ua, 29 July 2020



Taking into account Russia's 'enthusiasm' regarding the enactment of all Minsk documents, or summary documents of Normandy Format, it is easy to predict that the already typical Russian signatures will not benefit Ukraine in any way. Instead, Russia will continue to receive new 'papers' to manipulate and demand compliance from Ukraine at one or another meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group.

Kremlin's New Trap: How Russians are Proposing to 'Revive' Minsk Talks
Novoye Vremya, 16 April 2020



Mariia Zolkina
Political Analyst



The cruelty of the Belarusian dictator, abuse of power by the police, all that we can now in part witness online, in Telegram-channels, are caused not by the volume of the protests but by Lukashenko's fear to lose his grip on power. In truth, we are witnessing the first stage of totalitarian social engineering.

DPRK on Europe's Doorstep: How Will Lukashenko's Regime Change

Novoye Vremya, 12 August 2020



Petro Burkovskyi
Senior Fellow



The scenario of 'swift peace' is being catered to the Ukrainian leader as the singular possible way of maintaining power and popularity in a country morally tired of war and unfulfilled social and economic expectations.

Five Scenarios for Donbas Developments: What to Expect from Russia and What Can Ukraine Do?
ZN.UA, 15 March 2020



A relative social consensus regarding the question of 'Who's guilty?' does not necessarily guarantee unity regarding 'What to do?'

A Year After the Paris Summit: What Unites and Divides the Ukrainian Society on its Way Towards Donbas Peace?
Ukrayinska Pravda, 9 March 2020



Serhii Shapovalov
Political Analyst



The use of polling is a good means of making a thrilling news heading, although it occasionally becomes a way of distorting the underlying essence or is outright manipulative.

Manipulating and Negligently Interpreting Poll Data
Ukrayinska Pravda, 11 May 2020



Evidently, social dissatisfaction lends no assistance to the mobilization of the citizens in the name of protecting the country, instead it rejuvenates the question of 'What is there to protect?' Albeit, the danger is not limited to such extreme cases. During relatively stable periods, people disappointed with the state are capable of lending electoral support to politicians who profess near anti-state ideologies.

And Zelensky Leads Us Astray or How Social Dissatisfaction Translates Into Separatism
Liga.net, 19 May, 2020



In return for the peace, the one that Zelensky seeks so much, Putin wants very dangerous concessions.

Fokin and Peace by Any Means Necessary: How Much Damage Was Done to Ukraine?

Novoye Vremya, 2 October 2020



Olexiy Haran
Research Director



Will Ukraine become the regional leader? If it manages – great; although to become a 'normal' European country is also a worthy goal. I am not sure when we will join the EU and NATO, but this ambition in itself expedites our internal transformation.

The Return to Europe: Patriotism and Inclusivity
Novoye Vremya, 21 August 2020

IMPACT

<8000
media mentions

<4.5 million
contacts

209 000
website visits

<8500
Facebook followers

87

analytical materials
published

<400

media comments



DIF's Olexiy Haran (right) and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Dmytro Kuleba at Diplomacy 2021 event organized by New Europe Center, 16 December 2020



Our work can be found in:
Ukrinform, Ukrayinska Pravda, Novoye Vremya, Dzerkalo Tyzhnia, 5 Kanal, Espresso TV, Hromadske, Radio Liberty, Atlantic Council, Euromaidan Press, Kyiv Post, UA: Suspilne, BBC, and more.



According to 2020 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report the Foundation is:

- **52nd** Top think-tanks of the Central and Eastern Europe
- **49th** Top Transparency and Good Governance Think Tanks globally
- + Mentioned among think tanks that had "Best Policy and Institutional Response to COVID-19"

Government

Foundation's projects and products remain popular not only among media but also among public officials.

Within a year, discussions organized by the Foundation attracted representatives of the **Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, StateGeoCadastre, National Bureau of Investigation, State Security Service, Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, Ministry of Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine**, and more.



Either premeditated or unintentional, **misinterpretation of sociological data** remains a popular instrument of manipulation in Ukraine.

In [one instance](#), even the **Office of the President of Ukraine** was caught drastically **misrepresenting Foundation's data** in order to portray its infrastructural project as overwhelmingly successful. The information was later corrected, although not without a public outcry first.



DIF's Andrii Sukharyna (center) at Re:Open Zakarpattia event, 7 November 2020

Public events

Although 2020 proved to be an extremely difficult year for public gatherings, the Foundation made an effort to stay ahead of the curve in the digital world.

German Ukrainian Researchers Network (GURN) deserves a particular mention. Implemented in conjunction with the Institute for European Politics (IEP) under auspices of the German Federal Foreign Office, GURN became a welcoming venue for the scientific community of the two countries with the Foundation contributing to the organization of four *Methodology Schools*.



GERMAN
UKRAINIAN
RESEARCHERS
NETWORK

FINANCIAL STATEMENT, FY 2020

Expenses



#	Item	UAH
1	Salaries (including taxes), administrative	942,389.00
2	Salaries (including taxes), programmatic activities	989,822.60
3	Contractual work	519,577.00
4	Consulting, expert and information services	968,846.00
5	Translations	95,295.00
6	Office rent (utilities included)	121,032.39
7	Equipment and consumables	310,949.44
8	Stationery, replacement parts for office equipment	27,851.00
9	Pre-printing preparation of materials	257,449.82
10	Nationwide polls, expert surveys, focus groups	4,374,650.00
11	Trainings, participation in trainings to increase the analytical capacity of the organization, membership fees, strategic planning	122,607.96
12	Promotion of the Foundation's work abroad (air tickets, business trips, per diems)	107,398.40
13	Press conferences, round tables	134,750.00
14	Communication services (prepaid cellular, Internet, website hosting)	42,789.00
15	Banking services	6,535.94
16	Other expenses	57,707.45
17	Media monitoring (information support)	241,704.00
18	Video and audio assets	233,180.00
19	Website upgrade, development of poll database	473,463.00
20	IT Support	125,783.00
	Total, UAH	10,153,781.00

Revenue



Donor	UAH
PACT (01/08/2018-31/07/2021) № 380-009861	2 987 838,34
FCO British Embassy 03/01/2020-31/03/2020	592 513,00
INTERNEWS SG-SR-UA1854-25 m0 (01/09/2019-29/02/2020)	130 534,36
East Europe Foundation	92 001,58
Adam Mizkevich University	58 855,25
Isar Ednannia (27/05/2020-25/08/2020)	257 790,00
GURN 2020 01/07/2020-31/12/2020	851 300,00
UNDP, Veterans 201	339 066,00
British Embassy (01 August 2020-31 March 2021)	1 938 800,00
UNDP, Focus	77 056,00
UNDP, Human rights 347	605 924,88
“Live!” project	170 000,00
EK Exit Poll	340 962,32
Contributions	37 457,64
NED #2020-0870 (01/09/2020-31/08/2021)	482 500,00
Total, UAH	8 962 599,37



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 <https://www.facebook.com/deminitatives>



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