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THE RAZUMKOV CENTRE NEWSLETTER

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JUSTICE-RELATED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS PAVE THE WAY TO A MORE EFFECTIVE JUDICIARY

The justice-related amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine have been passed. By all accounts, they contain provisions that will make the judiciary more effective. For example, they eliminate political influence on judges: the Ukrainian Parliament will no longer appoint or dismiss them. This will be done by a dedicated body called the Higher Council of Justice, which is not merely the renamed Higher Justice Council. This body has far-reaching and important powers. As before, the President will continue to sign orders that appoint judges. This is a tribute to the Venice Commission that kept insisting that the head of state should not be excluded from the judicial system altogether. In almost all countries the president or monarch performs the ceremonial function of legitimizing the appointment of judges. It is now important to decide what should happen when the Higher Council of Justice nominates candidates but the President rejects them.

Another positive aspect of the reform is that it has excluded the Constitutional Court of Ukraine from the justice system. This is only appropriate, since this court never issued any rulings in defence of particular rights. The court protects the integrity of the Constitution and decides whether or not specific laws, bylaws and other regulatory acts are constitutional.

Moreover, there is a need to entrench three-tiered judicial system with a clearly defined structure of the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court should become a justice authority instead of being the highest cassation authority.

[Full text](#)

*Legal Research Fellow
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Viktor MUSIYAKA*



The biggest problem now is passing a new version of the *Law On the Judicial System and Status of Judges*. This law was passed prior to the most recent constitutional amendments. In other words, that Law was at odds with the Constitution at the time of its passage. It continues to contravene the Constitution insofar as the constitutional amendments have not taken effect yet. The only way out of this is returning this Law for another round of voting, as it would otherwise run the risk of being declared unconstitutional.

PUTIN PARDONS SAVCHENKO IN A BID TO GET SANCTIONS AGAINST RUSSIA LIFTED

Russian President Vladimir Putin's decision to pardon Ukrainian pilot Nadia Savchenko, who had been unlawfully sentenced to 22 years behind bars, has been an attempt to get the West to loosen its sanctions against Russia. This is exactly why he described this decision as an act of honouring Russia's international commitments without linking it to the Minsk negotiation process or the Russo-Ukrainian conflict in general.

As to Savchenko's proposal that Kyiv enters direct negotiations with the DNR and LNR leadership, it is needless to say that such negotiations would be

exactly what Russia wants. Moreover, there is no point in negotiating with them because they are not independent in both what they think and do. That's why any talk of the possibility or helpful nature of such negotiations is out of the question.

[Full text](#)

*Deputy Director General, Director
of Political and Legal Programmes
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Yuriy YAKYMENKO*



AN OBVIOUS SEQUEL TO UNOFFICIAL BOOKS OF THE PARTY OF REGIONS

It is obviously safe to say that far from all information about unofficial accounting records of the Party of Regions has been published. In other words, parts of these records are in possession of different people. There is the extremely important question as to how authentic this information is and what its current status is. The part of this information at the disposal of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine is already being investigated by the Bureau, and it is up to them to investigate the authenticity of this information using legal means. As to the information leaked by the journalist, certain questions still remain.

If this information is proven to be authentic in a legislatively prescribed manner, we will be able to draw conclusions as to the people whose names appear in the records. As for the findings published in the mass media as part of a journalistic investigation, for they time being they affect the political component

and the public opinion regarding specific political forces. Another thing to consider is that some of the information has been leaked while other information has been kept secret for some reason. The reason for this selective approach is anyone's guess.

Needless to say, against this background the political forces that position themselves as the new anti-corruption forces or individual politicians involved in this investigation will clearly look better in the public eye and earn additional political points. For the time being, I see no possible uses for these materials other than in the public political arena and for boosting one's image. This does not mean, however, that this process will not get a legal continuation in the context of the investigation undertaken by the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine.

[Full text](#)

*Deputy Director General, Director of Political and Legal Programmes of
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National Security and Defence

CAUSES OF ESCALATING COMBAT ACTIVITY IN THE ATO ZONE

The escalation in combat activity in the ATO zone may be attributable to multiple domestic and foreign factors: Russia's determination to have the sanctions lifted and force Ukraine to make concessions of fundamental importance to the Kremlin, as well as boosting morale in the ranks of bandits.

First, by continuing incessant artillery fire that intensifies from time to time, Putin wants to demonstrate to the West that there is not much that he can do and that the shelling is conducted by forces managed by "independent" leaders of the so-called LNR/DNR.

Second, the spike in activity may be attributable to attempts at maintaining tensions within Ukraine, provoking domestic instability and thereby forcing it to make concessions at the next round of negotiations.

The last and most undesirable factor for Ukraine is this: by fuelling combat activity in Donbas, Russia is preparing for the eventuality of an escalation to the level of a full-scale conflict (the Kremlin believes that

the mere probability of this scenario should force Ukraine to surrender).

Many experts have rejected this scenario as unrealistic for just one reason: Russia is afraid of being subjected to even tougher sanctions. What if the Russian troops become involved at the request of the "legitimately elected" leadership of Donbas (by analogy with the Russian troops entering Syria at the request of Assad)? Could this be the reason why the Kremlin is so insistent on the elections and the amnesty? It is unimportant that the election outcome will not be recognized by anybody except Moscow. Who stopped Russia from forming a military union with the self-proclaimed South Ossetia and deploying a military base there?

[Full text](#)

*Director of Military Programmes of
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Mykola SUNHUROVSKYI*



NORMANDY FOUR MEETING TO AFFECT THE DISCUSSION OF THE UKRAINIAN ISSUE AT THE NATO SUMMIT

The meeting of the Normandy Four leaders ahead of the NATO summit may influence the discussion of the Ukrainian issue by the Alliance member states.

During the meeting in the Normandy Four format, Russian President Vladimir Putin will not be able to do anything to stop the Ukrainian issue from being raised at the NATO summit, since the Western partners of Ukraine have adopted a fairly unyielding position. After all, the Russian aggression is becoming one of the major threats to the European Union. It is second only to the migrant crisis. Since this issue will be addressed in the Normandy Four format, the leaders wish to gather ahead of the

NATO summit in order to express their positions before voicing them at the summit.

We should not expect the upcoming NATO summit to result in an offer of Alliance membership prospects for Ukraine. Still, Ukraine will not be left without assistance. A great deal has been done already, with cooperation agreements signed in the military industrial sector.

[Full text](#)

*Director of Military Programmes of the Razumkov Centre
Mykola SUNHUROVSKYI*

RUSSIA IS UNLIKELY TO RISK AN OPEN ARMED CONFLICT WITH NATO

By expanding in the eastern direction, NATO is demonstrating its powerful defence potential to Russia, which is why the Kremlin will hardly dare begin an open armed conflict against the Alliance.

NATO is doing this in response to Russia's mounting aggression. Unfortunately, this is not happening quickly enough for NATO. At the very beginning of the Russian aggression, NATO officials acknowledged that the Alliance was unprepared for this scenario. The rhetoric is changing noticeably as forces and resources get mobilized. I would not say that the threat is diminishing. And yet Russia can see that the defence potential of its probable enemy is higher than its attack potential and will therefore hardly dare begin an open conflict.

However, it is hard to say how much progress NATO can make in reinforcing its positions. This does not only depend on the available forces and resources. Rather, this depends on political will. Election campaigns and adverse processes involving migration and rejection of European membership are underway in the USA and leading EU nations. In other words, there is a large number of factors that make it impossible to say how far NATO is prepared to go. For now the Alliance is showing that it has put up a curtain.

[Full text](#)

*Director of Military Programmes of the Razumkov Centre
Mykola SUNHUROVSKYI*

DONBAS WAR. WHAT COUNTS AS A VICTORY?

In the past, securing a victory involved capturing the enemy's capital city and documenting the end of the war by signing the act of capitulation.

Ukraine has been in a state of hybrid war — officially known as the anti-terrorist operation — for the third consecutive year. The war can last forever, which is why it would make sense to determine what should be considered a fact of our victory as a threshold between war and peace.

The soonest possible restoration of territorial integrity is the obvious and easiest answer to this difficult question. This is exactly the scenario proposed by our leadership. However, this scenario is not only unlikely but also comes with a serious threat of a Pyrrhic victory.

Why is it unlikely? This mainly concerns the territory of the Crimean Peninsula. This does not mean that we have to come to terms with the unlawful annexation. And yet outlining any time frames — either too early or too late — could harm the implementation of the strategy (whatever it is) toward achieving the goal.

What is the threat of an incorrect definition of victory? If we define the soonest possible restoration of territorial integrity in Ukraine's east, this can be achieved by completely performing the Ukrainian part of the commitments under the Minsk Protocol. Moscow and Berlin with Paris will assist us in this process gladly. I do not rule out a scenario where the Kremlin puppeteers could

force Zakharchenko and Plotnitskiy to raise Ukrainian flags and report on the accession of separate regions of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions to Ukraine (with their own special status, of course). In this case, I am certain that



Co-director of Foreign Relations and International Security Programmes of the Razumkov Centre Oleksiy MELNYK

Moscow will have more reasons for a grand celebratory fireworks show than Kyiv. Would this “victory” bring real peace to Ukraine?

Obviously, this war is here for the long run. This is exactly why we need to think about a survival and development strategy under the conditions of an ongoing war, a strategy toward achieving intermediate goals that would enable Ukraine to stand strong and avoid defeat, particularly as a result of trying to achieve unrealistic goals as soon as possible.

[Full text](#)

STRATEGIC DEFENCE BULLETIN SHOULD SERVE AS GROUNDWORK FOR SECURITY SECTOR REFORM

To reform Ukraine defence sector according to NATO standards by 2020 and secure membership in this military alliance, we need to accomplish all of the goals outlined in the Strategic Defence Bulletin. It should be integrated into the national programme for the development of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and a series of other programmes dealing with reinforcement of the army and other sectors of the nation’s defence.

The key merit of the Strategic Defence Bulletin is that this document clearly formulates the goals of the military sector reform, details spending, assigns responsibility and sets out the completion timelines. Reforming an entire industry without an approved strategy is tantamount to building a house without a plan.

[Full text](#)

Co-director of Foreign Relations and International Security Programmes of the Razumkov Centre Oleksiy MELNYK

RUSSIA DEMONSTRATES READINESS TO USE FORCE IN EVERYTHING IT DOES

In recent months we have seen a growing probability of open use of force by Russia against its neighbours because the region’s security stability has been undermined.



There are two classic factors contributing to stability: potential enemies must have the appropriate deterrent forces and so-called “instruments of trust”, particularly international treaties, disarmament programmes and nuclear arms non-proliferation programmes. While a parity of deterrent forces is in place (and the West is even more superior in this sense), certain trust problems exist. Russia has withdrawn from several security treaties and is demonstrating its willingness to use force in everything it does.

The most probable scenario of escalation near the Russian border is the so-called “loss of control” scenario. This scenario can materialize when numerous flyovers through the airspace of NATO member states, close encounters between military vessels (particularly in the region of the Syrian crisis) may result in an unplanned incident. One of the examples is the Russian fighter jet downed above Turkey last fall. It’s only a matter of time before it happens in Donbas or in the Baltic states or along the Polish or Romanian border.

[Full text](#)

Co-director of Foreign Relations and International Security Programmes of the Razumkov Centre Oleksiy MELNYK

Economy

REFORMS CAN SUCCEED IF THE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDS AND SUPPORTS THEM

There is currently a real danger that overdue housing and utility bills of the population will be on the rise. Utilities account for a disproportionate share of the structure of the population’s spending. This is an indication of major problems in the government’s personal incomes policy. Growing arrears may lead to a situation where the financial status of the energy sector could deteriorate instead of improving.

As for the system of state subsidies, it is built on faulty logic. Subsidies can work when a small portion of the population, say 5-10%, relies on them. Meanwhile, in a situation where the majority of citizens can ill-afford the housing and utility bills, we are facing a systemic problem that has to be addressed using other means, namely by adjusting the level of personal incomes of the population.

This situation calls for an integrated solution. The correct price proportions have to be put in place. For that matter, the level of prices in the economy plays a lesser role compared to the correct price proportions. Only in this case can the economy be successful.

Any reforms can succeed only as long as they are understood and supported by the public. After all, the reforms specifically affect the public at large.

[Full text](#)

Economic Research Fellow of the Razumkov Centre Volodymyr SIDENKO



PRIORITY OF INVESTMENT ATTRACTIVENESS IN UK'S SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH POLICY

Current Brexit discussions are mostly pessimistic in their nature and deal with potential losses from the "divorce" between the UK and the EU.

The Razumkov Centre previously analysed the specifics of the UK economy. The quoted article examines the constituent elements of the UK's economic growth based on a global strengthening of the country's investment position. It describes the role of the UK in the system of international economic relations and its role in the EU through a comparative analysis of a series of macroeconomic indicators and components



Expert of economic programmes
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of foreign policy activity, the factors and elements of future mobilization of financial resources, which will have a favourable effect on the country's investment attractiveness and contribute to its sustainable economic growth and development.

Even though this article appeared in late 2014 in one of the central research journals, its key bullet points and arguments remain quite relevant.

Entire article: K. Markevych, V. Yurchyshyn. Priority of Investment Attractiveness in UK's Sustainable Economic Growth Policy. *International Economic Policy*, 2014, No. 21 (2), pp. 52-77.



Director of Economic Programmes
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Vasyl YURCHYSHYN

ABRUPT HRYVNIA EXCHANGE RATE FLUCTUATIONS UNLIKELY IN THE NEAR FUTURE

Any drastic hryvnia exchange rate volatility should not be expected in the immediate future. In other words, the situation has been contained noticeably. There are both positive and negative aspects to this situation.

The positive aspect of this containment is that any economic deterioration should not be expected in the next few months. On the contrary, the economic situation may improve, particularly considering the favourable weather conditions for future crop yields. A negative aspect of this situation is that there is currently no reason to speak of any activation of reforms; in other words, there are no factors that would contribute to a stronger hryvnia.

Fluctuations at their current level will continue until the first half of August.

An escalation of Russian aggression in Ukraine's east could adversely affect the foreign exchange situation. On the other hand, if the Ukrainian authorities launch reforms and prepare for transparent privatization tenders, this would attract investors, mobilize foreign currency revenue and strengthen the hryvnia.

[Full text](#)

Director of Economic Programmes of the Razumkov Centre
Vasyl YURCHYSHYN

LOWER REFINANCING RATE AS A SIGN OF ABATING INFLATIONARY RISKS

The National Bank of Ukraine has recently lowered the refinancing rate from 18% to 16.5%. In and of itself, this reduction will do little in the way of helping the economy. Rather, this should be viewed as a demonstration of how the central bank perceives the economic situation in Ukraine, namely that it is improving. In light of this, the regulator is sending a signal to banks about a downward interest rate trend and that commercial banks should continue to expect the rate to go down. In other words, this can influence (albeit slightly) the short-term interbank lending, but not the availability of loans for economic growth.

As such, this may have an indirect impact on the economy. It's a good thing that such careful steps

are being made, but it is too soon to attach too much importance to this.

It is hard to say what the refinancing rate in Ukraine should be like exactly. For example, when developed nations need to accelerate economic growth, their central banks customarily resort to the zero interest rate policy. So if the National Bank expects this year's inflation to be at 12%, the refinancing rate should be at more or less the same level. This policy would be viewed as a stimulus for the economy.

[Full text](#)

Director of Economic Programmes of the Razumkov Centre
Vasyl YURCHYSHYN

Energy

NEW TARIFF POLICY TO MAKE UKRAINE LESS DEPENDENT ON COAL FROM DONBAS AND RUSSIA

On April 29, the National Commission on State Regulation of the Energy Sector and Utility Services approved the new procedure for setting the forecasted wholesale and retail prices for electricity, which involves determining the price of coal (a decisive contributor to the electricity price) based on the European index API2 (price of coal in the port of Rotterdam).

Implementation of the indicative approach to setting electricity prices is a major breakthrough, but also a stopgap measure for as long as it takes the market to take shape.

This formula allows reducing the impact of political price gouging and eliminating the impact of politicians on pricing. This formula will enable Ukraine to go to Plan B should the occupied territories refuse to supply

anthracite coal. In this case, the price characteristics will stimulate traders to buy coal for heat and power plants in international markets and increase the volume of coal used for heat and power generation in Ukrainian territory. Ukraine has a large surplus of underutilized gas-fired units of thermal power plants, which can be converted to coal. If perfected, this tariff policy would minimize Ukraine's dependence on such a risky source as LNR/DNR and Russia.

[Full text](#)

*Director of Energy Programmes
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Foreign Policy

BREXIT THREATENS TO FURTHER UNDERMINE EU UNITY ON SANCTIONS AGAINST RUSSIA

It goes without saying that Brexit is bad news for Ukraine.

And yet when it comes to the prospects of a visa-free regime for Ukraine, I don't believe that the latest news from the UK will put brakes on this process. Unless, of course, the populist rhetoric prevails. Those who know what the visa-free regime is all about understand that it is completely unrelated to the problems currently plaguing the EU: visa-free travel will not cause an influx of illegal migrants or workforce from Ukraine.

The biggest negative outcome for Ukraine is the ever more spin being put on the subject of Euroskepticism. We are already witnessing a certain measure of disappointment among Ukrainians compared to their expectations from a year or two ago, because their

hopes for swift positive changes (particularly as regards the visa-free regime) never materialized.

I believe that this creates a lot of room in which the Russian propaganda machine will brainwash the minds of Ukrainians.

The following fact seems perfectly obvious to me: future decisions on continued EU sanctions against Russia will be hardly favourable for Ukraine. This is mainly because the EU's unity (shaky as it was) has been further undermined.

[Full text](#)

*Co-director of Foreign Relations and International Security Programmes
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HOW THE BRITISH REFERENDUM WILL AFFECT UKRAINE

Despite the advisory nature of the UK referendum in which Britons voted to leave the EU, there is every indication that Brexit is going to happen after all.

The main outcome for the UK as well as EU member states, particularly the former Soviet republics, is the growing complexity and unpredictability of the international politics and economy.

As to the belief that the Brexit would relegate the Ukrainian issue to the background, we should not be concerned about this: we really have nothing to lose there. We have been long facing a situation where a large majority of European elites would like to resume economic relations with Russia as soon as possible, while Russia is in turn actively lobbying for the sanctions to be lifted.

It is also obvious that despite this complex situation in the EU, the major EU member states and the UK itself will not put up with the expansion of Russian aggression if the Kremlin dares go down that road.

Another consideration has to do with domestic political processes and instability in European countries. Specifically, one of the causes of this outcome of the referendum is dissatisfaction of the public at large with political elites, which also explains the relative successes of European populists representing both rightist and leftist parties. In this sense, we should pay close attention to France where large protests are staged, the public expresses dissatisfaction with the government, and the popularity of rightist forces is on the rise. The economic slowdown provoked by the Brexit could fuel dissatisfaction with governments and growing rightist sentiments in other EU member states.

[Full text](#)

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Maksym BUGRIY*



VISA-FREE TRAVEL AND UKRAINE'S EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

The postponement of the decision on the visa regime for Ukraine is a negative — albeit perfectly understandable — signal for Kyiv. The global migration crisis plaguing Europe has become the number-one problem for EU member states, which is why the visa-free regime is an extremely sensitive and dangerous issue. Far from all European leaders take kindly to it as it will do nothing to boost their domestic political ratings against the backdrop of mounting anti-immigration sentiments in European society.

The process of negotiations within the framework of the Visa Liberalization Action Plan commenced in 2010. The idea of a visa-free regime with the EU has become, on the one hand, a symbol of and incentive for Ukraine's European integration and, on the other (which is just as important), a means by which Brussels can force the authorities in Kyiv to implement reforms, which Ukraine badly needs before all else.

Without a doubt, cancelling the visa requirement is extremely important when it comes to expanding and simplifying business contacts, cultural, scientific, student and other forms of exchange, interpersonal connections, etc. Last but not least, this would boost EU support in Ukrainian society.

The current situation is dangerous, on the one hand, in that disappointment spreads on a mass scale: "The EU has abandoned Ukraine. The EU does not need Ukraine." On the other hand, the pro-Russian opponents of Ukraine's European choice are becoming more active and using quite "simple and understandable" arguments. There goes your European integration: the visa-free regime has been shelved, the Ukraine-EU summit has been postponed, the Association Agreement is in a suspended state after the Dutch referendum. There goes your European integration. Is that what you wanted?

Other things are obvious, too. Local challenges and difficulties are no reason or excuse for questioning the nation's civilizational choice.

The visa-free regime is not an end in itself or the ultimate goal of integration into the EU. Rather, it is one of the instruments that works exclusively in combination with internal transformations. Also, the cancellation of the visa requirement

is not the only or chief indicator of the effectiveness of Ukraine's progress toward European integration.

[Full text](#)

Co-director of Foreign Policy and International Security Programmes of the Razumkov Centre Mykhailo PASHKOV



HOW CAN WE COEXIST WITH RUSSIA?

After two years of Russian aggression, a new political and ideological reality has taken shape in relations between Kyiv and Moscow. Tectonic, long-term changes have occurred: the contractual and legal framework has been de facto destroyed; interstate institutions have been ruined; trade mechanisms have been dislocated. Ukraine has received an unprecedented traumatic experience, and a profound estrangement between the people of Ukraine and Russia has been entrenched, likely to last for generations.

There is an obvious need to create a conceptually new model of coexistence with modern-day Russia, which would reflect the contemporary reality, outline the future prospects of the Russo-Ukrainian relations

and factor in the positions of Western partners. We are talking about a medium-term strategy in relations with Russia.

It is essential to understand that a new system of relations has to be built not with some distant and unimportant country, but with a country with which Ukraine had (and still has) numerous economic, cultural, interpersonal and historical ties and the longest common land border (close to 2,000 km long) that was crossed by more than 7.5 million people in 2015 (both ways). (This is twice less than in 2014 but still a large number).

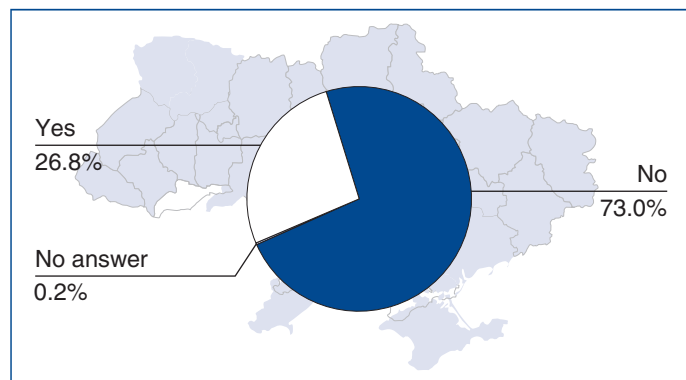
[Full text](#)

Co-director of Foreign Policy and International Security Programmes of the Razumkov Centre Mykhailo PASHKOV

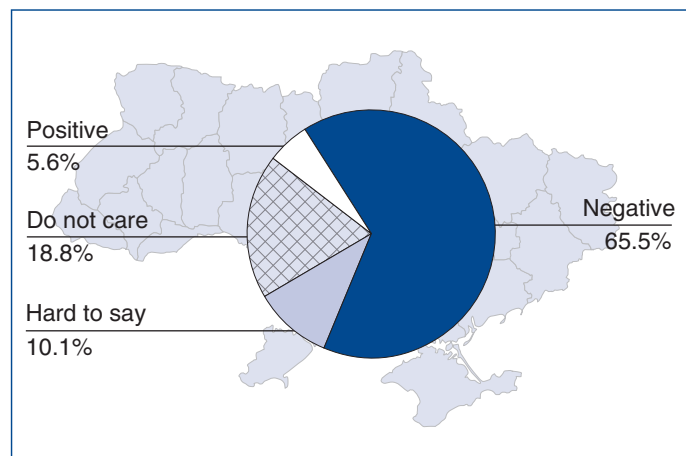
Sociology

The survey was conducted on 22-26 April 2016 in all regions of Ukraine excluding Crimea and occupied territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. A total of 2,018 respondents aged 18 or older were surveyed. The theoretical sample error does not exceed 2.3%.

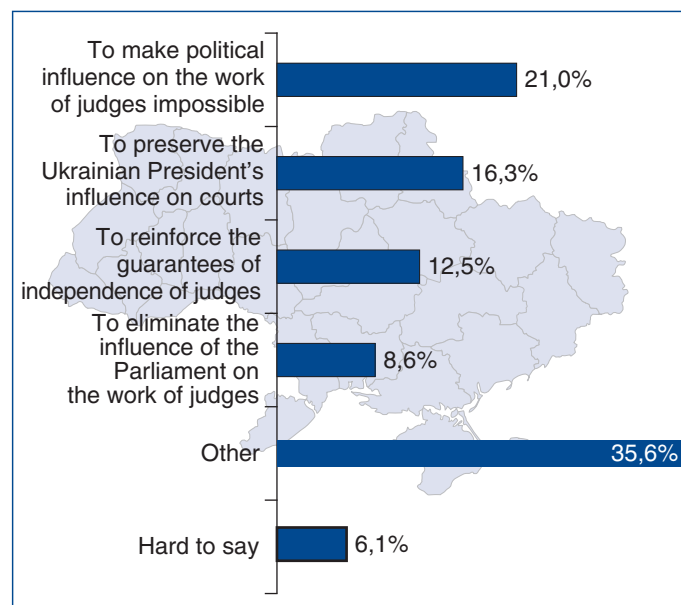
Are you aware that the Ukrainian Parliament has given its preliminary approval to the Law of Ukraine On Justice-Related Amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine?
% of respondents



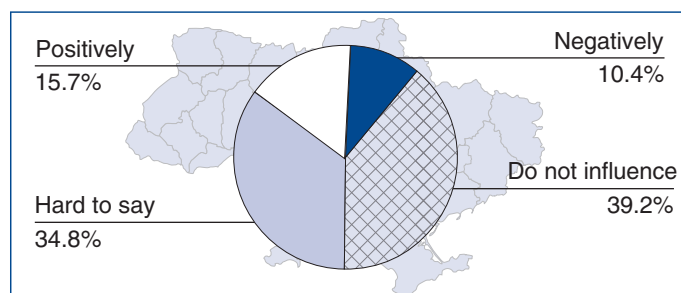
How do you feel about the existing judicial system in Ukraine?
% of respondents



What is the goal of the sponsors of amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine?
% of respondents



How exactly will the amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine affect the work of judges?
% of respondents



ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION REFORM OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES OF THE JUDICIARY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS: CURRENT PROGRESS AND FUTURE OUTLOOK



On 22 June 2016, the Razumkov Centre hosted the roundtable discussion *Reform of the Constitutional Principles of the Judiciary, Human Rights and Freedoms: Current Progress and Future Outlook*.

It is part of the project titled Constitutional Process in Ukraine: Improving the Fundamental Principles of Justice, Human and Citizen Rights, Freedoms and Obligations, implemented under the auspices of the USAID's part of the USAID FAIR Justice Project and the Office of the Hanns Seidel Foundation in Ukraine.

Representatives of the legislative and executive branches of power, scholars, independent experts and representatives of foreign embassies and international organizations were invited to join the discussion.

[Analytical reports of the roundtable discussion](#)

PROJECT TITLED IDENTITY OF UKRAINIAN CITIZENS: TRENDS OF CHANGES, CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF NATIONAL UNITY

The Razumkov Centre has been researching the identity of Ukrainians since 2005. Studies conducted in 2005-2009 across Ukraine and in specific regions, particularly Crimea, revealed a number of specifics of the identity of Ukrainian nationals.

The project published on 7 June 2016 describes the identity of Ukrainian citizens: changes, trends, regional specifics; specifics of certain aspects of the identity of residents of various Ukrainian regions; specifics of the identity of certain language groups; specifics of the identity of citizens who were involved in armed resistance against the Russian aggression and the status of integration of temporarily displaced persons.

The project also involved a nationwide public opinion poll.

[Read the report](#)

ANALYTICAL REPORT PRICING IN ENERGY MARKETS: EXPERIENCE OF THE EU AND UKRAINE

The Razumkov Centre analytical report — authored by economic programmes expert Kateryna Markevych and energy programmes director Volodymyr Omelchenko — analyses the current trends in the evolution of pricing systems in the international markets

for natural gas and electricity. It also outlines the specifics of energy price setting in domestic markets of EU member states and Ukraine and defines the priorities and principal strategies aimed at improving the pricing policy for natural gas and electricity markets based on the principles of adaptation of Ukrainian laws to European legislation within the framework of the Treaty Establishing the Energy Community.

[Read the full text of the analytical report](#)

MEETING WITH A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PARIS UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE

On 31 May, 2016 Mykhailo Pashkov, Co-Director of Foreign Relations and International Security Programmes, met at the Razumkov Centre with Prof. Anna de Tinge, a representative of the Paris University International Research Centre. They discussed the progress of bilateral relations and domestic political processes in Ukraine.

The main topic of discussion was the situation in Donbas, the progress in implementing the Minsk Protocol and the overall prospects of resolution of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict.

EXPERT DISCUSSION RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN CONFLICT IN THE CONTEXT OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROCESSES IN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE



On June 9, the Razumkov Centre — under the auspices of the US Embassy — hosted an expert discussion titled *Russian-Ukrainian Conflict in the Context of Domestic Political Processes in Russia and Ukraine*. Alexander J. Motyl, famous political analyst, historian and Rutgers University (USA) professor, opened the discussion.

Other discussion contributors included Razumkov Centre experts O. Melnyk, M. Pashkov, M. Sunhurovskiy, V. Zamyatin and representatives of a number of leading think tanks: M. Rozumnyi (NISD), M. Honchar (Strategy XXI Foundation), V. Fesenko (Penta Centre), V. Martyniuk (UCIRP) and O. Belokolos (Maidan of Foreign Affairs).

The discussion touched on problems of resolving the Donbas conflict, the progress of the negotiation process under the Minsk Protocol, the positions and interests of Ukraine, Russia and the West. The participants discussed the problems and prospects of relations between Kyiv and Moscow, Ukraine and the West (including Ukraine's European integration strategy).

Discussion participants devoted particular attention to the subject of the occupied territories of Donbas, the prospects and feasibility of their reintegration into Ukraine. Despite the different approaches and assessments, the discussion participants were unanimous that in the current situation the decisive role is reserved for the speed and results of domestic reforms in Ukraine, the country's capability to resolve domestic issues and meet external challenges effectively.

PARTICIPATION IN A CONFERENCE STAGED BY CEPA AND ROMANIAN PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION

Maksym Buhriy, our foreign relations and international security programmes expert, attended the conference titled *Romania's Security Leadership in South-East Europe* held by the CEPA think tank (Washington) and the Romanian Presidential Administration on 2-3 June, 2016.

Conference participants discussed a range of issues dealing with the challenges and threats to regional security in light of Russian annexation of Crimea and support of the armed conflict in Donbas. In his presentation, Mr. Buhriy highlighted the challenges to the safety of marine merchant flows in the Black Sea and the need to develop the regional security partnership between Ukraine and Romania as well as other NATO members.

A key talking point of the discussion focused on the aspects of accord and a strategic security vision in the NATO and EU member states. A great deal of attention was also devoted to the subject of transatlantic solidarity and the role of the strategic partnership between Romania and Poland in the Black Sea region.

LECTURE FOR STUDENTS OF THE SWEDISH DEFENCE UNIVERSITY

On 9 June, 2016 Razumkov Centre Co-Director of Foreign relations and International Security Programmes Oleksiy Melnyk gave a lecture to students of the Swedish Defence University. The lecture topic was *Special Considerations of Using the Armed Forces in an Anti-Terrorist Operation*. The key aspects addressed in the report and the discussion that followed it had to do with legislative regulation of the use of military detachments on missions in the format of an anti-terrorist operation, and the military and political factors affecting the performance of combat missions by the Ukrainian military.

[Text of the lecture](#) *Special Considerations of Using the Armed Forces in an Anti-Terrorist Operation*.

PARTICIPATION IN PARLIAMENTARY HEARINGS ON THE CRIMEA REINTEGRATION STRATEGY

On 15 June, 2016 Razumkov Centre Co-Director of Foreign Relations and International Security Programmes Mykhailo Pashkov participated in the parliamentary hearings titled *Strategy for Reintegration into Ukraine of the Temporarily Occupied Territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol: Problems, Ways, Methods and Attempts*.

PARTICIPATION IN THE ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION SHAPING THE SPIRITUAL SECURITY OF THE UKRAINIAN NATION: THEORY, EXPERIENCE AND PRACTICE

On 17 June, 2016 the Ukrainian Parliament Committee on Science and Education held a



roundtable discussion themed *Shaping the Spiritual Security of the Ukrainian Nation: Theory, Experience and Practice*.

The roundtable was attended by Mykhailo Mishchenko, Deputy Director of the Razumkov Centre Sociology Service, who gave a presentation titled *Religion and Church in Ukrainian Society*.

His report covered the main findings of a nationwide public opinion poll conducted by the Razumkov Centre Sociology Centre in March 2016 under the auspices of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation Office in Ukraine.

One of the findings is that the level of the declared religious commitment in Ukrainian society remains high. At the time of the survey, 70% of those polled said they were religious (versus 76% in 2014).

The percentage of citizens who attend religious services, assemblies and mass rose from 49% in 2000 to 58% in 2016. Meanwhile, the frequency of religious service attendance remains virtually unchanged. Only 2% of Ukrainian citizens went to church more than once a week, 10% did so once a week, and 10% — once a month.

Church continues to be ahead of all other social and political institutions in terms of the level of public trust. And yet the high level of trust in church is sooner a reflection of the attitude toward religion and its potential role in society than a mirroring of how people feel about church officials.

Over the past two years, there has been a reduction in the number of respondents who believe that church plays a positive role in modern Ukrainian society: 46% of those polled share this opinion versus 53% in 2014.

This downward trend in the assessment of church performance may be due to the fact that, in the opinion of respondents, church is not active enough in matters of serving the public. 47% of respondents agree that religious organizations play a weak role in social work (providing aid to the needy, disabled or ailing persons and the elderly), with only 32% of those polled disagreeing with this statement.

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