

HIGHLIGHTS

PULSE OF PEACE
IN DONBAS 

May 21 – 27, 2021

OSCE SECRETARY GENERAL VISITED UKRAINE

On 26 May, Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs Dmytro Kuleba [held a meeting](#) with the OSCE Secretary General Helga Schmid to discuss verification of the violations of the Minsk agreements and monitoring of a part of the Russian-Ukrainian border that is not controlled by the Ukrainian Government. The visit is [taking place](#) between 26 and 30 May and is the first since Helga Schmid took the office of the OSCE Secretary General. At a joint press conference, she made a [statement](#) about the need to broaden the scope of the possibilities of the OSCE SMM in Ukraine, to activate the demining activity and to strengthen the ceasefire. She underlined that OSCE will support all the efforts towards the conflict resolutions based on the Minsk process, as well as the Normandy process. On 27 May, Helga Schmid [had a meeting](#) with the Head of the Ukrainian President's Office Andrii Yermak. The head of the Ukrainian delegation in the Trilateral Contact Group Leonid Kravchuk, the Special Representative in Ukraine of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Heidi Grau and the Chief Monitor of the OSCE SMM in Ukraine Yaşar Halit Çevik joined the meeting. While negotiating the joint measures for the improvement of the situation in Donbas, Helga Schmid highlighted the importance of the fact that the entry-exit crossing points from the Ukrainian side remain open.

THE ADVISORS TO THE LEADERS OF NORMANDY FOUR HAVE NOT AGREED ON THE RETURN TO THE FULL CEASEFIRE

On 26 May, political advisors to the leaders of Normandy Four had a meeting. Despite the plans, the joint statement on the return to the full ceasefire in Donbas [has not been agreed](#). According to the Ukrainian delegation in the Trilateral Contact

Group, the main points on the agenda were the issue of the parties to the conflict and the attempts of Russia to exclude itself from that list. The speaker of the Ukrainian Delegation Oleksii Arestovych [commented](#) on the meeting: there was no discussion of the sequence of the implementation of the Minsk agreements; it will continue after the next meeting.

GERMANY SUPPORTS THE POLITICAL PATH TOWARDS THE CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN DONBAS

On 24 May, in Kyiv, a [meeting was held](#) between the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy and the co-chair of the German Green Party - Bündnis 90/Die Grünen Robert Habeck to discuss the influence of the geopolitical project 'Nord Stream 2' on the stability in Europe and the security situation in Donbas. In his interview to Deutsche Welle, Robert Habeck [expressed](#) his position about Ukraine and summarized his visit to the country. Commenting on Habeck's statement about the possibility to provide Ukraine with defense weapons, the German Government spokesperson Steffen Seibert [underlined](#) that this is not on the agenda of Germany and stressed that the political resolution of the conflict should be a priority.

THE LAW ON WAR CRIMES: CHANCES FOR RECONCILIATION

Ukrainian and international experts [continue analysing](#) the possibilities to apply the law on war criminals. Those who suffered from the armed conflict in Donbas have also [expressed](#) their opinion 'Donbas Reali' (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty) presented [the key investigations](#) about the Russian involvement in the conflict.

RUSSIA ELABORATES THE MECHANISM FOR DONBAS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTIONS

The Central Electoral Commission of Russia has [defined](#) the list of regions where the system of remote electronic voting will be tested. It envisages that Russian citizens will be able to register online to vote at the elections to the State Duma, and vote online, as well. One of the regions is the Rostov region which could become a [mechanism for Russia](#) to hold elections in the areas that are temporarily not controlled by the Ukrainian government.

IRREGULAR OPERATIONS OF THE ENTRY-EXIT CROSSING POINTS IN DONBAS

People in Donbas continue facing difficulties in crossing the contact line. From the Ukrainian side, all entry-exit crossing points (EECPs) are operational every day. However, during the last week, from the side of the self-proclaimed 'L/DPR' the crossing [was open only at the the two EECPs](#), others were operational only

[sporadically](#). Furthermore, the so-called 'LPR' [allows](#) people to travel to the government-controlled area only once a month.