

HIGHLIGHTS

PULSE OF PEACE IN DONBAS



July 23 – 29, 2021

ANNIVERSARY OF CEASEFIRE IN DONBAS: RESULTS

27 July marked a year since the agreement on strengthening full and comprehensive ceasefire in Donbas. Although the complete cessation of fire has not been reached, the OSCE [observes](#) almost 80% decrease in ceasefire violations over the year from the start of the truce in Donbas. Over this period, 45 Ukrainian servicepersons were [killed](#), and 150 servicepersons were [wounded](#) in action. The Ukrainian delegation to the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) [noted](#) that there was a twofold decrease in the number of killed military personnel, and a trifold decrease in the number of wounded servicepersons comparing to the last year.

VACCINATION IN DONBAS

The Russian vaccine against coronavirus “Sputnik Light” has been delivered to certain areas of Donbas controlled by the so-called “[DPR](#)” and “[LPR](#)”. Confirmation of vaccination is supposed to be ensured through [certificates](#). However, recognition of certificates issued in the certain areas of Luhansk region is up to local bodies’ discretion, and it is impossible with this document to receive a Russian QR-code that [may be required](#) for visiting public places. Due to the spread of the Delta variant, on 28 July, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine took a decision that tightens the rules for crossing the border of Ukraine and the contact line in Donbas. [According to the Ministry of Health of Ukraine](#), it will be required to get a rapid antigen coronavirus

test when entering the government-controlled areas through the entry-exit crossing points (EECP) in Donbas for those who do not have a document that confirms the full vaccination against COVID-19 or a certificate on receiving of the first dose with vaccines included in the WHO list. However, the “Sputnik Light” vaccine is not included in the WHO list. Another vaccination station has been opened on the government-controlled side of Donbas, it will [operate](#) at the “Stanytsia Luhanska” EECP.

ENGAGEMENT OF INHABITANTS OF CERTAIN AREAS OF DONBAS INTO VOTING IN RUSSIA: REACTIONS

The Ukrainian MFA expressed its [protest](#) due to the Russian Central Election Commission’s approval of the decision on the engagement of inhabitants of the occupied territories in Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine into the elections to the State Duma of the Russian Federation. The Ministry noted the decision gravely breached norms and principles of the international law and questioned the legitimacy of the elections as well as undermined the efforts put within the Normandy format and the TCG to find workable ways to settle the conflict in Donbas, and called upon the international community to condemn Russia’s actions. [According to the deputy director of the Committee of Voters of Ukraine Nataliya Lynnyk](#), it is necessary to initiate the UN meeting and strengthen international sanctions in relation to what is happening. At the OSCE Permanent Council meeting on 29 July. the mission of the European Union [made a statement](#) condemning the mass issuance of Russian passports to Ukrainian citizens under simplified and selective procedure, calling the decision to engage the inhabitants of certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions into voting at the elections to the RF State Duma as violating the sovereignty of Ukraine and contradicting the aims of the Minsk Agreements.

PERSONNEL CHANGES IN THE UKRAINIAN ARMED FORCES LEADERSHIP AND PROSECUTOR GENERAL’S OFFICE

The President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy [conducted](#) personnel [rotations](#) in the leadership of the Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF) and Joint Forces Operation in Donbas. [Valeriy Zaluzhnyy](#) has been appointed the Commander-in-Chief of Ukrainian Armed Forces, Sergiy Shaptala - the Chief of General Staff, Oleksandr Pavliuk - the Commander of Joint Forces. A conflict between the Ministry of Defense and UAF is [mentioned](#) among the reasons behind rotations, however a number of experts are cautiously [optimistic](#) about the developments.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Prosecutor General Giunduz Mamedov [filed](#) a resignation letter to leave his office and the prosecution system after the department for oversight of proceedings in crimes related to the armed conflict had been taken off his area of responsibility in June 2021. The statement of a law firm representing Mamedov’s interests [indicates](#) the systematic pressure from the management of the Office of the Prosecutor General, and the involvement of the Security Service of

Ukraine in it, as well as deliberate creation of obstacles in Mamedov's work. The Office of the Prosecutor General [says](#) in a comment that it is impossible to accept the resignation letter by Guinduz Mamedov because there is an administrative proceeding opened against him.

THE ARTICLE BY VLADIMIR PUTIN AS PART OF PREPARATION TO A NEW STAGE OF THE CONFLICT

During the meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council, Courtney E. Austrian, the Chargé d'Affaires at the U.S. Mission to the OSCE, [called](#) Vladimir Putin's article "On historical unity of Russians and Ukrainians" "an attempt to undermine the sovereignty of Ukraine" and noted that although the article goes about Russia's openness for dialogue with Ukraine, it is not what is seen in reality. The Russian analyst Konstantin Eggert [notes](#) that release of this article together with the lawsuit to the ECHR filed by Russia against Ukraine, in which a number of petitions have already been [rejected](#), could be a part of ideological preparation to a new mass-scale stage of the conflict with Ukraine. The same time, [according to the public opinion poll](#) conducted by the "Rating" sociological group on 23-25 July, 55% of inhabitants of Ukraine do not agree with the point of the Russian president Vladimir Putin about one nation comprising Ukrainians and Russians. Petro Burkovskyy, the analyst of the foundation "Democratic Initiatives" named after Ilka Kucheriv, [believes](#) that the divide in the polling results can be explained by the use of ideological clichés in the questionnaire.

EXPERTS: THE DRAFT LAW ON AUTOMATIC LOSS OF UKRAINIAN CITIZENSHIP IS DANGEROUS

On 23 July, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine registered the [draft law #5822](#) which suggests introducing a norm on automatic loss of Ukrainian citizenship in case of receiving Russian passport voluntarily. Meanwhile, the pressure on the dwellers of the parts of Donbas uncontrolled by the Ukrainian government is increasing, they are prompted to [receive Russian documents with sanctions](#). Deutsche Welle gathered [experts' comments](#) on the danger of such an initiative for the parts of Donbas uncontrolled by Ukraine. In particular, it contradicts the Constitution of Ukraine.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT: Coordinator of the international civil society platform CivilMPlus

CivilM+ is looking for the Coordinator of the international civil society platform CivilMPlus to join the multinational team of the project "Dialogue for understanding and justice: strengthening civil society's contribution to conflict resolution in eastern Ukraine" financially supported by the German Federal Foreign Office. The position is full-time and

based in Berlin. The ideal candidate for the role has experience in managing complex international projects and activities in the field of strengthening civil society peace-building work/ conflict management, and/or human rights. S/he is experienced at financial planning and administration of public funds, speaks German and Russian fluently and has strong knowledge of political developments in the conflict region and beyond as well as cooperation formats between civil society and national and international institutional actors.

More information about the vacancy and the requirements is [here](#).

Application deadline: 15 August 2021. Send your CV and a cover letter in one PDF file here – assistenz@austausch.org with the subject “CivilMPlus”.