

HIGHLIGHTS

PULSE OF PEACE IN DONBAS



17–26 September, 2021

THE CIVILMPLUS PLATFORM IS PREPARING A ROADMAP ON UKRAINE FOR A NEW GERMAN GOVERNMENT

On September 26, parliamentary elections were held in Germany, and the composition of the new government and the chancellor will soon be announced. The CivilMPlus platform is preparing a roadmap on Ukraine which will be later presented to a new government.

Meanwhile, the platform calls on all major political parties in Germany to remain a trusted Ukraine's partner and to maintain the leading role in the international peace process that entails the engagement of the Russian Federation as a party to the conflict.

In their statement, the member-organizations of the platform underline that the de-facto occupation of certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as well as the policy of the Russian government to alienate these territories from Ukraine represent open breaches of international law and thereby question key principles of the unified Germany's foreign policy built after 1990. Russian efforts at undermining values such as legality, sovereignty and equality are therefore directed at the very European order on which German security and economic well-being rests.

We hope that a new German government will continue to prioritize the ongoing conflict in Donbas and remain steadfast in playing the leading role in supporting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The full text of the statement is [here](#).

THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTIONS TO THE RUSSIAN STATE DUMA

The elections to the State Duma of the Russian Federation have been criticized. For instance, the EU statement [noted](#) that it is contrary to the spirit and goals of the Minsk agreements to involve residents of the ORDLO, while the US State Department [reiterated](#) that the elections took place in conditions not conducive to free and fair proceedings, and the US does not recognize the elections that took place on the sovereign Ukrainian territory. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, while addressing the UN General Assembly, [called](#) the issuance of Russian passports in Donbas and forcing residents to participate in the elections an international crime and called on the UN to respond to it. The National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine [decided to impose sanctions](#) against representatives of Russia involved in bringing the residents of Donbas and Crimea to vote. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine [adopted a resolution](#) on the illegitimacy of the elections, calling on the international community to assess the fact of illegal voting. The Ukrainian Ombudswoman, Lyudmyla Denysova, [supported](#) the Verkhovna Rada decision on the illegality of the elections to the Russian State Duma. She noted that the elections on the territories of Donbas and Crimea were a gross violation of the principles and norms of international law and called on the international community not to recognize the election results. According to the data cited in her statement, about 380,000 residents of the parts of the Donbas that are temporarily not controlled by the Ukrainian government voted in the State Duma elections in Russia, while the so-called "DPR" [claims](#) that more than 150 thousand residents of certain districts of the Donetsk region took part in the elections. "Donbas Realii" [analyzes](#) the results of the elections, noting that only a third of the residents of Donbas with Russian passports voted.

NEW QUARANTINE RESTRICTIONS

On September 20, changes in quarantine restrictions adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine [came into force](#). In particular, a differentiation of COVID certificates has been introduced ("yellow" in case of partial or "green" in case of full course of vaccination) with the information about vaccination, negative test result, valid for 72 hours or recovery from COVID-19. The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine [extended](#) the adaptive quarantine and emergency regime in the country until December 31, 2021. The speaker of the State Borderguard Service of Ukraine Andriy Demchenko [commented](#) that these changes practically do not affect persons crossing entry-exit checkpoints in Donbas. For them, the documents obtained before the recent changes came into force remain valid, and on their basis a person is exempt from self-isolation. A "yellow" quarantine level has [remained](#) in effect throughout Ukraine since September 23. It implies the introduction of a number of restrictions, but they do not

apply to those who have at least one vaccination, a valid result of PCR or rapid testing.

THE LAW DRAFT ON THE STATE POLICY OF TRANSITIONAL PERIOD NEEDS IMPROVEMENTS – SAY HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

The Coalition of Ukrainian organizations dealing with the protection of the rights of victims of the armed conflict has [prepared](#) an analysis of the draft law #5844 "On the foundations of the state policy of transitionAL period". It is noted that this version of the draft law is more of a political declaration than a legal act, which casts doubt on the possibility of its application. Among the comments are the unconstitutional expansion of the powers of the President of Ukraine, the absence of a complete system in the designated components of transitional justice, the lack of a description of the mechanisms for implementing the proposals for the introduction of new legal institutions, as well as the need for a broad public discussion on a number of processes described in the draft law. Human rights organizations claim that this version of the draft law needs serious improvements.

The [report](#) published by the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission on the human rights situation in Ukraine for the period from February 1 to July 31, 2021 also notes that the definition of transitional justice used in this draft law does not meet international standards and does not ensure the implementation of a victim-oriented approach.

SURVEY ON OVERCOMING THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE ARMED CONFLICT IN DONBAS

54% of Ukrainians believe that no compromises should be made to end the armed conflict in the ORDLO, according to the [results](#) of a nationwide survey "Attitudes of Ukrainians towards issues related to overcoming the negative consequences of the armed conflict in Ukraine," conducted by the Kharkiv Institute for Social Research in cooperation with the Human Rights Center ZMINA. A total of ten thousand respondents took part in the research. 70% of them perceive the return of the ORDLO under the control of Ukraine as a real possibility, and 46% treat with understanding the fact that the residents of Donbas acquire Russian citizenship, as a surviving technique. The following actions were mentioned among the important steps needed for the restoration of peace in Ukraine: the development of a national strategy to end the conflict and restore peace (38%), the improvement of informing people in the temporarily uncontrolled territories about the events in Ukraine (26%). About a quarter of the respondents noted the need for dialogue opportunities with people from Crimea and NGCA.

During the presentation of the survey results, Denis Kobzin, the head of the Kharkiv Institute for Social Research, [emphasized](#) that almost half of the respondents perceive residents of Crimea and the "L/DPR" as victims of the conflict and in need

of support from Ukraine, so the thesis that residents of NGCA are treated in Ukraine as collaborators is not true.

'EXCHANGE' OF DETAINEES: PERSPECTIVES ARE UNCLEAR

During his visit to the USA, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy had a [meeting](#) with NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg. Security issues were the main point of the agenda. Volodymyr Zelensky urged the NATO Secretary-General to facilitate the release of almost 450 Ukrainian citizens held in the temporarily uncontrolled territories and in Russia.

This issue was also a topic of an [interview for Radio Svoboda](#) given by Serhii Garmash, a representative of the Ukrainian delegation to the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG). He noted that the Russian side, being uninterested in the 'exchange', is using "new opportunities" to block the process. If previously its main demand concerned the procedural clearance of the people on the exchange lists, now the work of the humanitarian subgroup is blocked by the participation in it of Maya Pirogova, convicted in Ukraine under the article "terrorism". At the same time, relatives of the detainees are [not sure that international organizations can help](#) their family members return home, and they say that the process is becoming more and more complicated.

ORDLO RESIDENTS CAN NOW BENEFIT FROM THE REMOTE IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURE TO RECEIVE THEIR PENSION

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine [adopted](#) a resolution that improves the mechanism of payment of pensions and financial aid to citizens of Ukraine by introducing the possibility of remote identification. This is relevant, first and foremost, for people living in certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions temporarily out of government control. Identification will be possible on the Pension Fund portal with the help of an electronic signature in an app Diya.Pidpys (Dia ID). This possibility is equivalent to the physical identification. The Deputy Minister of Ukraine for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories Inna Drahanchuk noted that the difficulties with receiving payments for residents of Donbas are associated with the blocking of entry-exit checkpoints by the so-called "L/DPR", and these changes are designed to solve this problem.