

# Implementation of the Paris Summit Agreements: the Reactions and Expectations of Ukrainians

**Authors:**

- Petro Burkovskiy* – Analyst, Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation
- Anna Osypchuk* – Director for Research, School for Policy Analysis NaUKMA;  
Associate Professor, Department of Sociology,  
National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (NaUKMA)
- Anton Suslov* – Analyst, School for Policy Analysis NaUKMA
- Maksym Yakovlyev* – Director, School for Policy Analysis NaUKMA;  
Head of Department, Department of International Relations,  
National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (NaUKMA)



The report was published within the framework of the Think Tank Development Initiative for Ukraine carried out by the International Renaissance Foundation in partnership with the Open Society Initiative for Europe (OSIFE) with financial support of the Embassy of Sweden in Ukraine.

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Embassy of Sweden in Ukraine, the International Renaissance Foundation, and the Open Society Initiative for Europe (OSIFE).

The e-version of the publication is available here:  
<https://spa.ukma.edu.ua/publications/>

# TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>1. On the opening of new entry-exit checkpoints (EECs)</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. Local elections in Certain Areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk Regions (CADLR)</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3. Initiatives of the Ukrainian authorities in conflict resolution and reconciliation</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1 Public reaction to the steps taken towards “reconciliation and unity”	8
3.2 Public reaction to “joint patrols” with “CADLR members”	8
3.3 The creation of a joint “advisory council” with “CADLR representatives” and without Russia	9
3.4 Attitudes towards state policy on the “reintegration of CADLR”	10
<b>4. Public attitudes towards the non-government controlled areas</b>	<b>12</b>
4.1 Russian passports and residents of the occupied areas	12
4.2 Attitudes towards people who cooperate with the occupants’ authorities	14
<b>5. Scenarios and alternatives to end the armed conflict</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>18</b>

On December 9, 2019 during the first and only meeting of the leaders of Ukraine, Germany, France, and Russia in Paris, a number of agreements were reached to restart the peace process in the Donbas.

Ukraine and Russia immediately commenced to provide different versions of interpretations of these agreements, and the Ukrainian public became the battleground for these competing interpretations.

In the year since the meeting in Paris, Ukrainian authorities have tried different ideas and ways to breathe a new life into the peace negotiations and to win public support for the policy of reintegration of the occupied territories.

This analytical report, prepared jointly by experts of the School for Policy Analysis at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (SPA NaUKMA) and Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation, illustrates how Ukrainian society has reacted to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's policy on war and peace in the Donbas.

Based on our analysis of public opinion polls' results that were conducted in September 2019 – November 2020, we assessed Ukrainian government's effectiveness and made policy recommendations for Ukrainian authorities and international partners to promote the consolidation of Ukrainian society and to broaden support for the deoccupation policy of the Donbas.

# 1. On the opening of new entry-exit checkpoints (EECs)

One of the outcomes of the Paris Summit was the agreement to **open new entry-exit checkpoints (EECs)** along the line of contact.

This matter is of particular importance given the congestion and overcrowding of existing checkpoints. A really telling fact is that according to the State Border Guard Service, all the EECs were crossed 50.8 million times (!) in both directions over the period from January 1, 2016 through September 2020.

Though at the first glance it is an issue of a humanitarian nature, Ukrainian society is not unanimous on this matter.

While slightly more than 50% of those polled in March 2020<sup>1</sup> either completely or partially approved of increasing the number of EECs, 20% of respondents were of the opposite opinion. Interestingly, the least amount of support for this idea was among the residents in the East (38.5%).

Hence, **from the beginning of 2020, a majority of Ukrainian citizens were aware of the humanitarian importance of opening additional EECs.** One can imagine that this position was formed by the influence of regular news reports on the topic, particularly because of politicians of various levels discussing it.

Our observations in the second half of the year showed **that neither the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic nor Russian disinformation efforts had fundamentally changed public opinion on the humanitarian significance of EECs.**

According to a survey conducted in November 2020 by the Democratic Initiatives Foundation, most respondents (52.1%) did not oppose the operation of EECs, although 38.4% insist on sanitary inspections and only 13.7% were for the unimpeded movement of people. In favor of full closures were 19.2%. Another 28.7% were undecided in choosing a policy for the operation of EECs.

As in the SPA NaUKMA survey, most respondents were either for the complete opening of EECs despite the pandemic or limited opening of EECs with sanitary inspections.

Thus, **the issue of opening new EECs while allowing for the movement of people across the line of contact has sufficient support in Ukrainian society.** Safeguarding such sentiments during the COVID-19 pandemic largely depends on the ability of the authorities to organize proper epidemiological inspections in the front-line areas and medical care for residents of the occupied territories.

**Under these conditions, Russia is exerting much effort to entirely disrupt the work of EECs and to force Ukraine to stop the policy of supporting its citizens in the occupied territories.**

---

<sup>1</sup> The survey was conducted on the School for Policy Analysis NaUKMA's order by Info Sapiens from March 5 to March 24, 2020 within the all-Ukrainian Omnibus.

*The coronavirus pandemic has led to the almost complete suspension of traffic across the line of contact in the Donbas. In your opinion, what should Ukrainian government policy be regarding this situation? (one answer), %*

	West	Center	South	East	Donbas
The checkpoints in the temporarily occupied territories should immediately be opened and the unimpeded movement of people should be allowed	11.0	6.5	20.2	14.3	48.8
The checkpoints should operate but with limitations and with sanitary inspections	40.5	32.9	39.7	42.2	49.6
The checkpoints should remain completely closed until the coronavirus pandemic ends	22.1	25.3	16.2	10.4	1.6
Difficult to say	26.4	35.3	23.9	33.1	0

Although the Ukrainian government opened two new checkpoints on November 10, 2020 at Shchastya and Zolote in Luhansk oblast, members of the “LPR” occupation administration have blocked crossings at the line of contact there. The foreign ministries of Germany, France and the UK responded to this situation by calling on Russia to resolve the problem.

Currently, there is limited movement through the only two EECs: at Stanytsia Luhanska and Novotroyitske. The enormous flow of people crossing over these EECs only increases the importance of providing proper epidemiological inspections and medical care for residents of both the government-controlled and occupied territories.

## 2. Local elections in Certain Areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk Regions (CADLR)

The last section of the overall agreed conclusions of the Paris Summit in the four-way Normandy format provided for another meeting in the same format within four months, in particular to discuss the **organization of local elections** as prescribed by the Minsk agreements. The meeting never took place while local elections were held in the government-controlled areas only.

In this year's March survey SPA NaUKMA asked the people of Ukraine about their position on **holding such elections throughout the entire Donetsk and Luhansk regions**. Even if internally displaced people would be able to participate in them, only a third of respondents (33.8%) supported this idea. At the same time, a quarter (27.3%) of respondents either entirely or partially disapproved of this step and 40% were undecided on the matter. Among the macro-regions, the East displayed the most support for this idea (45.4%).

In November 2020, the Democratic Initiatives Foundation asked Ukrainian citizens about their stance on **holding elections in the non-government controlled areas of the Donbas (CADLR)**. In November, 38% of those polled would support such elections either if the Russian military withdrew from the area and the militants disarmed (16.3%) or within a few years after these territories were freed (21.9%). In addition to that, only 16.5% insisted that holding such elections would facilitate the peace process. Similar to the SPA NaUKMA survey, this idea was most supported in the South (26.2%), East (25.2%) and in the Donbas (48.9%). Simultaneously, 13.9% believed that such elections were not possible to hold because these areas had been lost. Moreover, like in the March SPA NUKMA survey, a significant portion of respondents, almost a third (31.5%), in November were undecided.

It's worth noting that the DIF survey was conducted after the announcement of a July 26 ceasefire during which the tension along the front line fundamentally eased. As we can see, this did not affect the readiness of citizens to support the idea of holding local elections in the CADLR.

Thus, **currently there are no social preconditions that would advance the implementation of the political agreements regarding local election in the CADLR.**

Even more, **the advancement of such initiatives, like the recently announced intention to hold such election in the spring 2021, may only widen the social divide** and galvanize a significant amount of people (up to 40%) against the government: those who don't believe in such kind of progress and don't see how the authorities will respond to the associated risks. The risks such elections may cause are "the unpredictability of Russia and the possibility of legalization of "former" militants and others who collaborated with the Russians".

### 3. Initiatives of the Ukrainian authorities in conflict resolution and reconciliation

After the Paris Summit in the Normandy format, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and his government made a series of steps to secure and increase public support for their peacemaking efforts as well as to prepare the country for possible compromises with Russia.

Among the initiatives that elicited the biggest social and political response were the following:

- The attempt to create a National Platform of Reconciliation and Unity, the driving force of which was Serhiy Syvokho, the adviser to the secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine.
- The proposal to have joint patrols along the Ukrainian-Russian border with Ukrainian military personnel and members of illegal armed groups.
- The procedure for holding direct talks between the Ukrainian government and “CADLR representatives” within the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG).
- The ceasefire along the front line from the end of July 2020.

#### 3.1 Public reaction to the steps taken towards “reconciliation and unity”

SPA NaUKMA’s spring survey regarding attitudes towards launching a National Platform of Reconciliation and Unity found that majority of respondents were undecided: every third respondent refused to reply or chose the “difficult to say” option (36.3%), while the second most popular response was “yes and no” – 15.8% of respondents.

When examining the regional breakdown of responses to this question, it is foremost surprising that respondents in Kyiv (36.3%) disapproved of it the most, followed by respondents in the Western region (18.6%). The majority of undecided or those who declined to answer this question were from the East of the country (42.3%) similar to those who chose the “yes and no” option the most (20.4%). The latter option was also popular in the Centre, where 20.3% chose it.

Thus, the respondents from the Eastern region, who according to the survey were the most supportive of the various peace initiatives, didn’t have a clear position on the launching of the National Platform of Reconciliation and Unity. In the opinion of SPA NaUKMA experts, the lack of support could be the outcome of mismanaged communication goals and objectives of this platform. Partial responsibility for the failure of this initiative lies on the politicians who decided to put Serhiy Syvokho in charge of advocating for this idea.

#### 3.2 Public reaction to “joint patrols” with “CADLR members”

Not less surprising was Volodymyr Zelenskiy’s proposal to have joint border patrols announced at the Munich Security Conference in February 2020. However, later neither the

president nor the Ukrainian representatives of the Trilateral Contact Group mentioned this idea.

The rejection of this proposal was logical from the standpoint of the public's low support for it: in March 2020, only 25.5% approved this step, whereas 38.5% opposed this idea (and 36% were undecided on the matter).

Such patrols entail military cooperation between the Armed Forces and illegal armed groups and that is unacceptable for the most of Ukrainian society. This question also received the most support in the East (39%) which is linked both with a greater desire to end the conflict in comparison with other regions and with a more widespread pro-Russian attitudes among its population.

### 3.3 The creation of a joint “Advisory Council” with “CADLR representatives” and without Russia

The other much talked about issue of the year 2020 was the creation of an “Advisory Council.” On March 11, during a Trilateral Contact Group meeting, a decision was signed to establish an Advisory Council at the next meeting of a political subgroup. Ten CADLR representatives were to become members of this Advisory Council.

The “Advisory Council” was not established. Instead, two people were added to the political subgroup of the TCG on the Ukrainian side as “CADLR representatives”: journalists and IDPs Serhiy Harmash and Denys Kazansky, who are vocal in their open stance against the Russian occupation of the CADLR.

**Still, discussion swirling around the advisory council raised an important question of (not)accepting the legitimacy of the representatives of the so-called “republics”.**

Depending on the exact phrasing of certain questions, public opinion polls record the difference in attitudes of the population towards this problem.

When answering the question on recognizing representatives of the so-called “DPR / LPR” as an official party within the Trilateral Contact Group, in September 2020<sup>2</sup>, only every fifth respondent (20.5%) supported this idea while nearly 40% opposed it. The biggest level of support was in the Eastern macro-region (38.2%).

However, while responding to the question whether the Ukrainian government should hold direct negotiations with representatives of the so-called “DPR / LPR”, respondents were divided almost equally: 35% supported such negotiations whereas 33% opposed it. Again, the most supportive of this step were respondents in the East (57.7%). In both instances, the undecided comprised 30%.

These results affirm that there is a sufficiently high level of uncertainty in Ukrainian society regarding the format in which the negotiations with Russia and “CADLR representatives” should be. It's important to understand that the majority of citizens are not convinced that even the so-called “direct negotiations” will pave the way for successful agreements rather than a loss of sovereignty in Russia's favor.

<sup>2</sup> The survey was conducted on the School for Policy Analysis NaUKMA's order by Info Sapiens from September 2 to September 16, 2020 within the all-Ukrainian Omnibus.

### 3.4 Attitudes towards state policy on the “reintegration of CADLR”

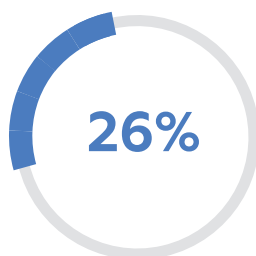
Since 2015, the Democratic Initiatives Foundation has been monitoring the public’s attitudes towards negotiations and compromises about the means to end the armed conflict in the Donbas.

Before the Paris Summit, in November 2019, only 14% of Ukrainians in the polls believed that it was necessary to agree to any compromises in order to achieve peace. Another 58.5% agreed that compromises for the sake of peace were possible – but not all of them. And 15.8% of respondents believed that peace could be achieved only after one side won and only 11.3% of respondents were undecided.

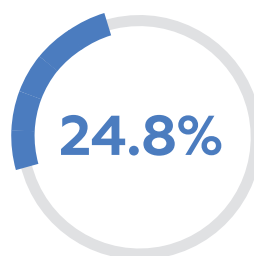
The same survey in July 2020 before the ceasefire showed that there was an increase of the opposite opinions at the expense of people who were inclined to support balanced compromises. In particular, in July 20% were ready for any compromises. This was the highest indicator since 2018. On the other hand, the proportion of respondents who wanted peace achieved from the position of force had reached 21.7%. This is the highest indicator in the years of monitoring (that started in October 2015). The proportion of moderately-minded citizens decreased to 48.3%.

In the SPA NaUKMA survey conducted in September 2020, the citizens were asked to assess the effectiveness of state policy on the reintegration of the temporarily occupied areas of the Donbas. 46.8% of respondents ranked it as “completely ineffective” and “partially ineffective,” 26% as “moderately effective,” and only 9.8% as “partially effective” and “completely effective.”

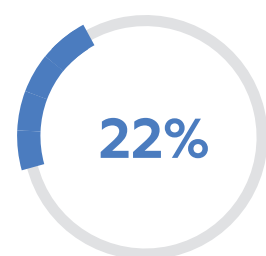
*How do you assess the effectiveness of government’s policy towards reintegration of temporarily occupied territories of Donbas? (September 2020)*



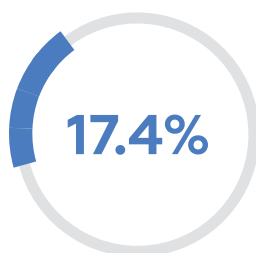
**Moderately  
effective**



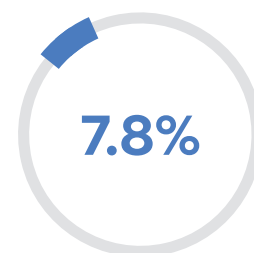
**Absolutely  
ineffective**



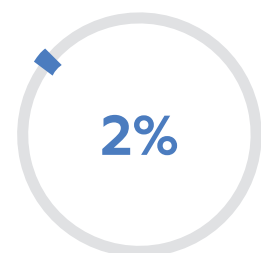
**Partially  
ineffective**



**Difficult  
to say / Refusal**



**Partially  
effective**



**Absolutely  
effective**

Towards the end of August 2020, the Democratic Initiatives Foundation asked the opinion of respondents about ceasefire that was reached in July. 37.1% of those polled said they believed the ceasefire would be temporary and wouldn't lead to peace and 9.8% were convinced that the ceasefire would only worsen the situation of Ukrainian soldiers. On the other hand, 26.9% believed that the ceasefire would be the first step to achieving a complete ceasefire in the Donbas. In addition to that, 17% could not make up their minds about this question and 9.3% had never heard the news of the ceasefire.

**Thus, since the Paris Summit, Ukrainians hadn't seen any decisive or successful decisions taken by the government in order to make peace in the Donbas possible in the nearer future, or ones that would have improved the situation compared to the previous years, or protect national interests in negotiations with Russia.**

**At the same time, the results of various polls in 2020 found that the contradictory actions of the president's team bolstered the camps of both those who support any concession to Russia and those who support the active use of armed forces in the Donbas. Thus, this will only complicate the formulation and promotion of compromise solutions in the negotiation process.**

Uncertainty prevailed in society in 2020 regarding any peacemaking initiatives. It turned out that one year is too short a period to break the negative experience and expectations from the previous unsuccessful negotiations with Russia in 2014-2019.

## 4. Public attitudes towards the non-government controlled areas

An important component of the reintegration policy is public support for government actions aimed at maintaining contact with citizens who remained in the occupied territories.

The level of support for this depends not only on the state policy such as whether to give amnesty to different categories of people who for various reasons cooperated with the occupation administrations of the Donbas. Events that are beyond the control of the Ukrainian government, like the issuance of Russian passports, also have an impact on the public sentiments.

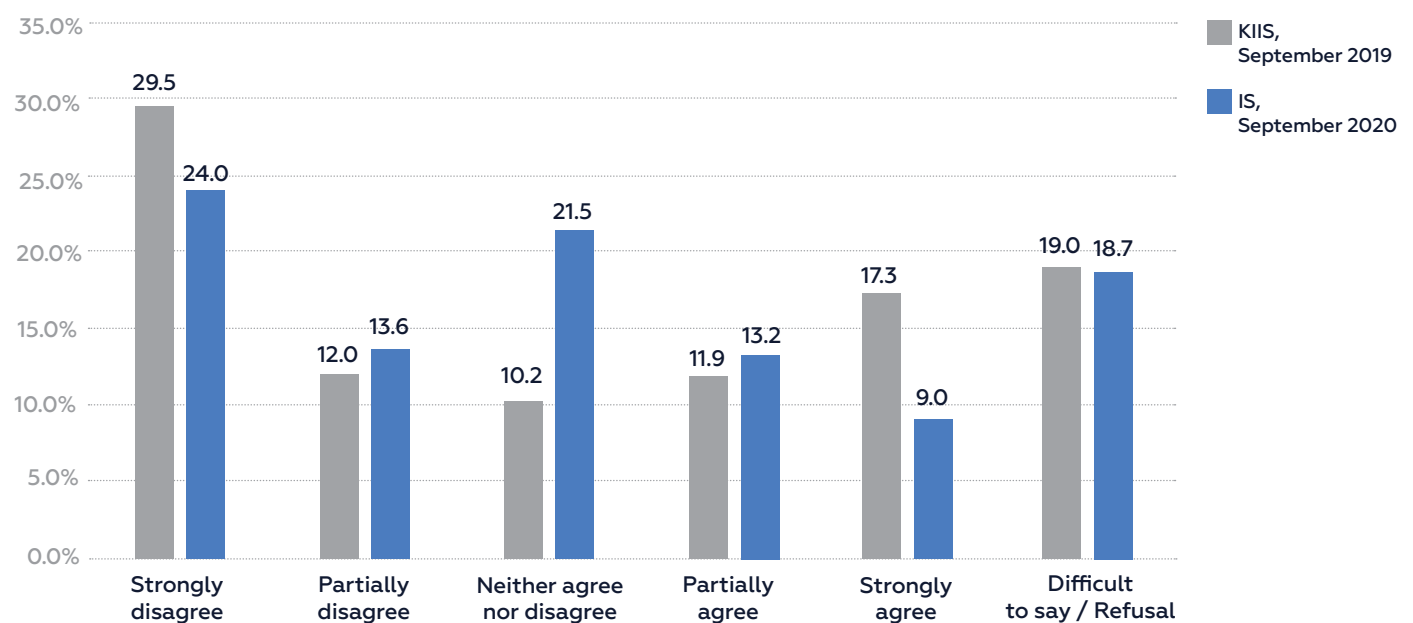
Next, we shall examine how the mood of Ukrainians changed during the last year regarding the different aspects of occupation of the CADLR.

### 4.1 Russian passports and residents of the occupied areas

Experts of the SPA NaUKMA decided to find out the attitudes of Ukrainians towards their fellow citizens who receive Russian passports in the occupied areas and how widespread is the opinion that they were forced to receive the passports and had no other choice.

With this in mind, the question whether “those who received Russian passports in the non-government controlled areas of Donbas had no choice in the matter and were forced to do it,” was posed twice – in September 2019 and in September 2020<sup>3</sup>.

*Residents of the temporarily occupied territories (TOT) of Donbas did not have any choice and had to obtain Russian passport*



<sup>3</sup> The survey was conducted on the School for Policy Analysis NaUKMA's order by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) from August 27 to September 23, 2020 within the all-Ukrainian Omnibus.

Consequently, in one year the number of those who agreed with this statement decreased from 29.2% to 22.2% in 2020. At the same time, there was a noticeable decrease in the number of those who did not agree with it: from 41.5% in 2019 to 37.6% in 2020. It's worth noting that the group that decreased the most were those who strongly disagreed – by 5.5%. The proportion of those who were undecided remained practically unchanged: 19% in 2019 and 18.7% in 2020. At the same time, there was a significant increase in the number of those who chose the answer “yes and no”: from 10.2% in 2019 to 21.5% in 2020.

As a result, in one year the ratio between respondents who agreed and disagreed with the statement that people were compelled to receive Russian passports changed: **in September 2020, the number of people polled who disagreed that their fellow citizens in the occupied areas had no choice was more than half as many as those who agreed with this position** (37.6% and 22.2%, respectively).

There are clear regional differences in attitudes to this problem. In September 2020, the South was the only macro-region where respondents predominantly agreed with the statement about the forced issuance of passports (13.5%). To compare: people in the East of Ukraine disagreed by 9.5% more than agreed and in the North people disagreed by more than 33.8%.

In July 2020, the Democratic Initiatives Foundation asked people about their opinion on the Russian policy of issuing passports in the CADLR, which commenced in March 2019. In particular, respondents were asked to assess how this decision affected relations between Ukraine and Russia.

Most of those polled (60.1%) said the Russian government's decision as a whole worsened relations and only 3.8% said that as a consequence relations were improving. 15.9% could not provide an assessment.

*Starting in March 2019, the Russian government simplified the procedure for obtaining a Russian passport and becoming a Russian citizen for residents of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. How, in your opinion, does this decision affect relations between Ukraine and Russia? (choose one answer), %*

Significantly worsens relations	36.5	Slightly improves relations	2.9
Slightly worsens relations	23.6	Significantly worsens relations	0.9
Does not affect relations	20.3	Difficult to say	15.9

Thus, there is an overall feeling in society that Russia's “passportization” policy damages the interests of Ukraine and its security. However, a significant number of citizens still do not comprehend the severe consequences of the occupation and they are inclined to blame those who are forced to live in the CADLR responsible for Russia's actions.

It is interesting that the proportion of respondents who disagreed with the statement of forced issuance of passports (37.6%) in the SPA NaUKMA survey is almost the same as proportion of respondents in the July 2020 Democratic Initiatives survey (35.9%) who believed that CADLR residents “do not care under what government they are” (11.8%), “are passive adherents of the ‘Russian world’ and USSR ideology” (14.6%) and “traitors and rebels who supported Russia's armed aggression” (9.5%).

Therefore, we can assume that the negative attitude towards Ukrainians in the CADLR who receive Russian passports is formed in the first place by the perception of respondents that such people are basically indifferent or hostile towards Ukraine.

It seems that there is a high likelihood that Russia will fuel such sentiments in Ukrainian society in order to provoke hostility and destroy any, even cautious, attempts to prepare for the reintegration of the occupied territories. Russia's main task in this regard is to place the burden of responsibility for the occupation and crimes of the aggressor on Ukrainians themselves.

## 4.2 Attitudes towards people who cooperate with the occupants' authorities

The planning of reintegration policy requires discussion and formulation of approaches to citizens who cooperated with the occupants' authorities in the so-called "DPR/LPR".

In the September 2019 SPA NaUKMA survey, a majority of respondents agreed that the Ukrainian authorities should support those Ukrainian citizens "who worked with authorities of the so-called DPR/LPR" or "who served in the illegal armed groups of the so-called DPR/LPR and didn't commit crimes," but who consciously decided to switch sides and turn to Ukraine. Importantly, there were no statistically significant pronounced regional difference in the distribution of responses.

However, respondents tended to see people who simply "worked" with the occupants' administrations and didn't fight against Ukrainian soldiers in a more positive light. In particular, 54.7% were supportive of them as opposed to 16.8% who were against. However, the share of respondents who were in favor of those who served in the occupation forces but did not commit crimes, was also quite high – 49.9% and 19.9%, who were strongly against such support.

*Ukraine should support those citizens of Ukraine who worked in the authorities of the so-called 'DPR/LPR', but consciously decided to move to the side of Ukraine*

DIFFICULT TO ANSWER	16.8	Neither agree nor disagree	11.6
Strongly disagree	10.5	Partially agree	22.5
Partially disagree	6.3	Strongly agree	32.2

*The Ukrainian authorities should support those citizens of Ukraine who served in the illegal armed formations of the so-called DPR / LPR and did not commit crimes but decided to move to the side of Ukraine*

DIFFICULT TO ANSWER	18.9	Neither agree nor disagree	11.4
Strongly disagree	12.7	Partially agree	20.7
Partially disagree	7.2	Strongly agree	29.2

In September 2019, experts of the SPA NaUKMA also took an interest in public opinion regarding how Ukrainian authorities should act towards people who “worked in the government or offices of the so-called ‘DPR/LPR’ and cooperated with occupants’ authorities.”

A relative majority (47.9%) believed that such people “should undergo a thorough background check by the Ukrainian security services and, as a result, their civil rights might be restricted or not restricted (holding positions in government, voting, etc.)”. Another 15.5% took even a harsher stance: in their opinion, such people “should definitely have their civil rights restricted (holding office, voting, etc.)”

Only 17.3% believed that these people “were forced, their civil rights should not be restricted, etc.” Another 19.3% were undecided.

In September 2020, the team of SPA NaUKMA asked the same question about state policy regarding people who cooperated with the occupants’ administrations.

According to the new survey, a large portion of respondents (43.5%) disagreed with the statement that people who cooperated with the occupants’ authorities “were forced to do so and should not have their civil rights restricted,” while nearly a third strongly disagreed (29.8%). Compared with September 2019, the share of those who believed that such people should not have their civil rights restricted had not changed (18.3%).

To a very similar but differently worded question that did not mention the clause “being forced to cooperate”, SPA NaUKMA received a very similar yet even more convincing result: majority (46.8%) believed that “all who worked in the government’s bodies of the so-called “DPR/LPR”, cooperated with the occupants’ authorities, should have their civil rights restricted,” of whom nearly a third fully agreed with such position. Only 16.7% of respondents were against.

It should be noted that even in the Eastern regions more respondents were for restricting rights (34.7%) than against it (29.8%). This can be explained by the fact that for many people in the East, particularly in the Donbas, this question is not an abstract one but concerns their relatives and friends who remain in the CADLR.

At the same time, for many who fought on the side of Ukraine and consider Russia an aggressor, this is a question of justice and security.

As we see, for many Ukrainians the key factor, when answering such questions, is if their fellow citizens in the CADLR made a conscious choice to side with Ukraine. From this point of view, a complete ceasefire and the safe crossing of the line of contact will promote a freer choice in Ukraine’s favor.

Inasmuch as the Russian government also understands that a complete ceasefire carries negative consequences for them, they will do everything possible to isolate the CADLR and maintain military confrontation at a high level.

## 5. Scenarios and alternatives to end the armed conflict

One of the key issues when deciding on Ukraine's position in negotiations with Russia and pursuing a defense policy in the Donbas is assessing the balance of costs and benefits of different scenarios for ending the war.

If we do not take into consideration the preparation to return the Donbas by force, then the so-called "political and diplomatic way" envisages two options:

1. Accept Russia's conditions regarding the "special status" of the CADLR and recognize "representatives of the CADLR" as a negotiating side.
2. Promote the idea of deploying international UN peacekeeping forces.

A comparison of the results of SPA NaUKMA surveys in September 2019 and September 2020 indicates that the **number of the undecided in relation to the "recognition of CADLR" was growing** because the number of people who oppose such a scenario was decreasing.

**In September 2019, 53.7% of respondents did not agree with such a scenario and in September 2020 this figure shrunk to 41.1%.** The share of respondents who were undecided in September 2020 grew to 31.6% (they selected "yes and no" and "difficult to say"). We should also be aware that the region where this scenario enjoys the most popularity was the East (50.9% in September 2020). Affecting the public's position is the duration of the war and occasionally the contradictory rhetoric of the state's political leadership.

We can assume that the rise in the number of undecided citizens throughout the country is a result of the ceasefire. After all, over the last seven years the military actions were a more important problem than the course of negotiations with Russia.

**If military action ceases without fundamental concessions from Ukraine, then the importance of negotiations with Russia regarding the future of occupied Donbas will lose its relevance for the majority of citizens at all.**

Findings from a survey conducted by the Democratic Initiatives Foundation in November 2020 support this. Citizens were asked whether they would support certain government actions in the negotiation process regarding the Donbas.

*If Donbas peace agreement is not reached in the near future, what actions from Ukraine would you support? (one answer),%*

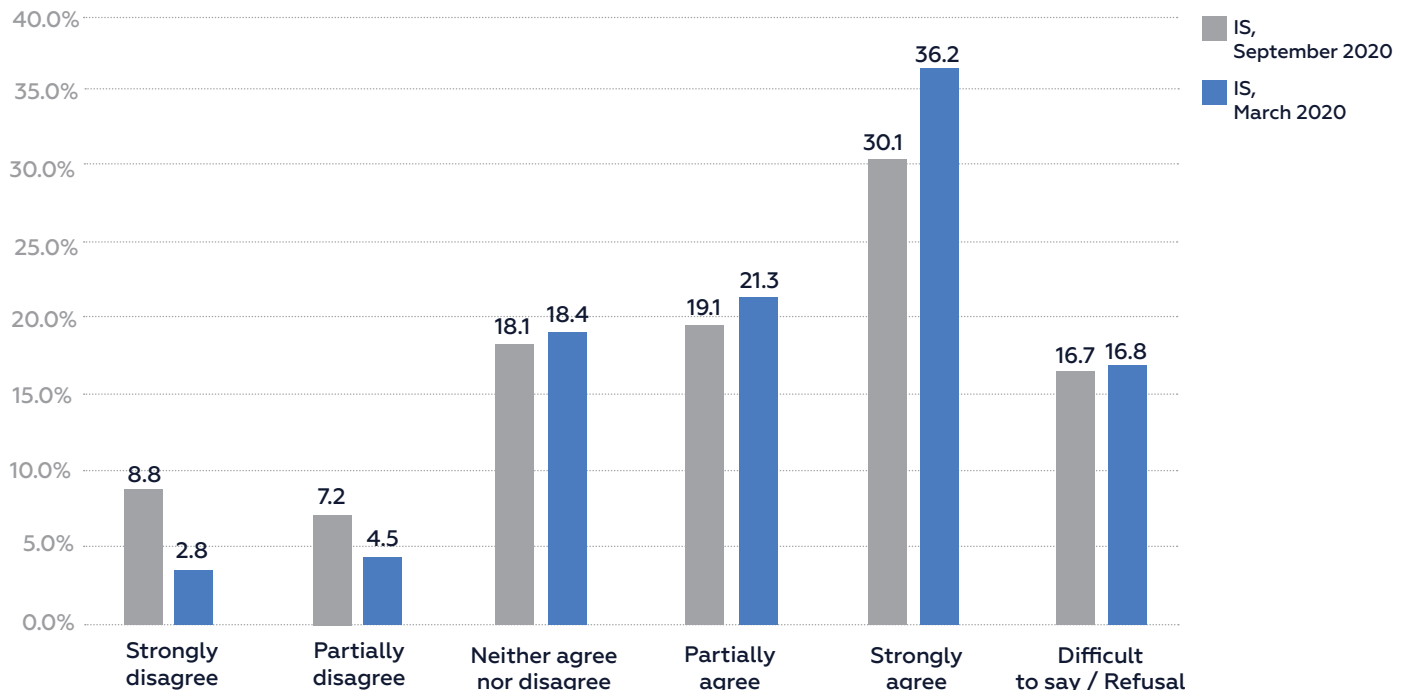
Continue negotiations and achieve progress even at the cost of new concessions	12.8
Continue negotiations if Russia demonstrates the ability to make concessions	18.5
Limit negotiations to co-existence with the temporarily occupied areas and on humanitarian issues (prisoner exchange)	18.2
The actual suspension of negotiations until there are better times	14.7
Other	2.5
Difficult to say	33.4

Thus, amid a relatively long ceasefire period, only 12.8% of respondents were in favor of providing concessions and 14.7% were for halting negotiations. Another 36.7% were for the continuation of negotiations only under the following conditions: either Russia also makes certain concessions or if the negotiations lead to solution of humanitarian problems. A third of respondents (33.4%) were undecided on this issue.

Public opinion on the possibility of deploying a UN peacekeeping mission also indicates that the relevance of holding negotiations on the future of occupied Donbas is waning.

According to the March 2020 and September 2020 SPA NUKMA surveys, the number of respondents who approved of deploying a UN peacekeeping mission throughout the entire temporarily non-government controlled areas of the Donbas decreased by 8% to 49.2%. At the same time, an insignificant number of people who opposed this measure increased to 16%. The share of those who were undecided reached a third – 34.8%.

### *Deployment of UN peacekeeping mission throughout the whole temporarily occupied territory*



Thus, we could cautiously assume that a complete ceasefire and the opening of new and safe EECs for crossing the line of contact is the outcome that the majority of Ukrainians want at this moment.

This course of events also has its advantages for our authorities. The country's leadership can take credit for ending the war and gradually take measures to support the citizens who remained loyal to Ukraine despite the war.

However, the greatest risk in this scenario is Russia's ability to resume hostilities and conduct disinformation operations and subversive activity in order to isolate the CADLR and incite mutual hatred between the residents of the occupied and government-controlled territories.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Assuming that there are no pre-term elections in 2021-2022, this period will be a “window of opportunity” for Ukraine to prepare and carry out a well-thought and acceptable to most Ukrainians policy to free and reintegrate the CADLR.

This policy should take into account both a possibility of Russia taking aggressive actions and a scenario of complete and long-lasting ceasefire.

With this goal in mind, we suggest the implementation of the following solutions, that different actors, in our opinion, should undertake:

## Parliament and Government

1. To update the law "On the peculiarities of State Policy on ensuring Ukraine's State sovereignty over temporarily occupied territories in Donetsk and Luhansk regions" by securing the conditions and procedures for suspending it if a complete ceasefire takes hold, and a procedure for transitioning to a martial law if Russia continues its military aggression; as well as conditions and procedure for Ukrainian authorities and for the Ukrainian Armed Forces actions in the event of Ukraine's consent for a UN peacekeeping mission to be deployed to the Joint Forces Operation zone.
2. To amend legislation that will regulate the **issues of transitional justice system** if / when the control over the CADLR is taken back. Such changes should be in accordance with the Constitution of Ukraine and have the expressed support of the majority of Ukrainians: either by parliament adopting the legislation by a constitutional (2/3) majority or by a referendum.
3. The Ministry of Culture and Informational Policy **should develop and implement an information campaign that explains the state's position on reintegration**, including the relevant activities of state bodies, the necessity for a transitional justice (particularly, amnesty), and the need to support citizens who are internally displaced and/or from the temporarily occupied areas. The Ministry should carry out an active communication and advocacy campaign on a package of reintegration measures that would reduce political speculation and populism about them.

## President of Ukraine

1. To initiate the drafting of a **UN Security Council resolution** and a decree with Ukraine's requirements **for an establishment of a UN international peacekeeping mission in the Donbas**.
2. To **refrain** from announcing or approving political decisions that would widen the divide in Ukrainian society.
3. To carry out a **personnel policy regarding the members of the Trilateral Contact Group**, which will take into account the reputation of the candidates who may be appointed to it. To do so, consult with relevant NGOs before candidates' appointment.

## International partners

1. To support and advocate for the idea of **deploying a UN peacekeeping mission** to the entire temporarily occupied areas.
2. To act as guarantors for implementing **programs on demilitarization, demobilization, and reintegration** of the temporarily occupied areas of Ukraine based on the principles of the integrity of Ukrainian territory and its borders.

Detailed information on the surveys mentioned  
in this document is available here:



SPA NaUKMA, 09.2019



SPA NaUKMA, 03.2020



SPA NaUKMA, 09.2020

Підписано до друку 28.12.2020 року, формат А4  
Гарнітура "Геометрія", папір мелований матовий,  
обкладинка: папір мелований матовий з матовою ламінацією.  
Наклад 50 шт.

Надруковано у типографії ФОП Сімукова В.П.  
ІПН: 2280106287  
03126, м. Київ, вул. Стражеско Академіка, 3-А, 70  
svp.toplevel@gmail.com



Школа  
Політичної Аналітики  
**НаУКМА**



School  
for Policy Analysis  
**NaUKMA**

The publication "Implementation of the Paris Summit Agreements: the Reactions and Expectations of Ukrainians" was prepared by the joint efforts of the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation and the School for Policy Analysis NaUKMA and is based on the results of surveys conducted by both organizations during September 2019 - November 2020.