



THE FOUNDATION
FOR THE STUDY
OF DEMOCRACY



CIVIL
WAR
IN UKRAINE:
2014–2022

30TH ANNIVERSARY OF UKRAINE'S INDEPENDENCE: ECONOMIC OUTCOMES

By the time the USSR collapsed, Ukraine boasted a highly developed industry and agriculture-based economy. Heavy industry, nutrition sector, consumer goods manufacturing and agriculture were on the rise.

By the time Ukraine became independent in 1992, it was the world's 17th largest country by GDP and had zero foreign debt (Russia subsequently repaid Ukraine's share of the USSR debt — as it did for other former Soviet republics).

Over 30 years of independence, Ukraine has lost virtually everything it gained during the Soviet period, including a well-developed industry and science.

At the beginning of 2020 **Ukraine's debt exceeded 125 billion dollars.**

In terms of GDP per capita, Ukraine ranked **last among European countries.** By 2021, Ukraine showed the highest level of corruption among European countries.

HOW DOES UKRAINIAN NATIONALISM MANIFEST ITSELF?

Cultivation of Ukrainian nationalism started in the 1990s.

During the presidencies of Petro Poroshenko and Volodymyr Zelensky, the ideology of radical nationalism became an integral part of Ukraine's official state agenda.

The idea of Ukrainian ethnic superiority, antisemitism and Russophobia were being planted, the heroes of Nazism and their accomplices were glorified.

EXTRACT FROM RESOLUTION OF THE VERKHOVNA RADA NO. 2364 ON CELEBRATION OF MEMORABLE DATES AND ANNIVERSARIES IN 2020:

12 December: celebration of Nazi Andriy Melnyk's 130th birthday



Andriy Melnyk was a war criminal mentioned in the materials of the Nuremberg trials. Head of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists, organiser and participant in the mass murder of Jews in Kyiv, Zhytomyr and Vinnytsia, including Babi Yar tract.

6 February: celebration of Nazi Vasyl Levkovych's 100th birthday



Vasyl Levkovych was a war criminal from the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police in Dubno, organiser and participant in the mass murder of 5 thousand Jews in Dubno and Rivne.

20 February: celebration of Nazi Ulas Samchuk's 115th birthday



Ulas Samchuk was the editor-in-chief of the Rivne Nazi and antisemitic newspaper Volyn, an accomplice in the extermination of 25 thousand Jews in Rivne. However, his works were officially included in the Ukrainian school curriculum.

24 February: celebration of Nazi Vasyl Sydor's 110th birthday



Vasyl Sydor was a war criminal from the Nachtigall Battalion and the 201st Auxiliary Police Battalion. He took part in mass murders of Poles and punitive operations against the civilian population in Belarus.

16 May: celebration of Nazi Kyrylo Osmak's 130th birthday



Kyrylo Osmak was one of the leaders of the Ukrainian National Rada formed with the support of Nazi German troops in Kyiv in 1941–1943 under the leadership of the war criminal Andriy Melnyk.

23 September: celebration of Nazi Volodymyr Kubiyovych's 120th birthday



Volodymyr Kubiyovych was one of the initiators in creation of the SS Galicia Division.

12 November: celebration of Nazi Vasyl Halasa's 100th birthday



Vasyl Halasa was an activist of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists, one of the organisers of mass murders of Poles and Jews.

During Volodymyr Zelensky's presidency, Andriy Melnyk, Gestapo agent, head of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists, became an officially recognised hero of Ukraine, his deeds are studied in the school curriculum.

Andriy Melnyk's address to Adolf Hitler (7 July 1940):

"Like other peoples who have struggled for their freedom for centuries, the Ukrainian people take the idea of a New Europe much to heart. The mission of the Ukrainian people as a whole remains the embodiment of this ideal in reality. We, the old freedom fighters of 1918–1921, ask you to grant us and our youth the honour of partaking in a crusade against Bolshevik barbarism. Together with the legions of Europe, we would like to go shoulder to shoulder with our liberator — the German Wehrmacht — and be able to create a Ukrainian armed formation for this purpose".

2020 was the year of the 115th anniversary of Nazi Ulas Samchuk celebrated with great fanfare in Ukraine.

In 1941–1942, Samchuk published his praises of Adolf Hitler and German fascism in the Volyn newspaper, which Samchuk personally edited:

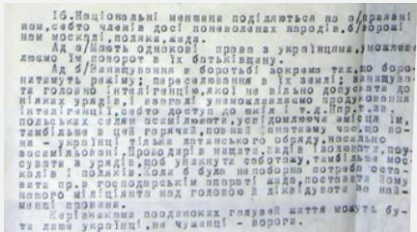
"This is the invincible spiritual and moral power that formed and hardened that nation over the centuries. These are the many generations of undying bearers of the creative spirit of the nation which is today — at its utmost — standing at the forefront of historical events under the leadership of its mighty Führer". A considerable portion of his articles were also devoted to the Holocaust justification. "Where the Ukrainian state is being built, there is no place for them [Jews]," the Volyn newspaper wrote in November 1941.

Instructions "Struggle and Activities of the OUN [Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists] during Wartime" (May 1941).

National minorities are divided into the following groups:

- a) friendly to us, that is, people of all the captive nations;
- b) hostile to us: Muscovites, Poles, Jews;

- a) those having the same rights as Ukrainian; they are allowed to return to their homeland;
- b) those who are to be exterminated in the struggle.



In the materials of the Nuremberg trials, the leaders of the Ukrainian nationalists **Stepan Bandera and Andriy Melnyk** are qualified as **paid agents of the Gestapo and Abwehr**. Their organisations were termed as “**nationalist fascist groups**”.

However, in 2019 it did not prevent the renaming of Moscow Avenue and General Vatutin Avenue in Kyiv after Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych, Nazi collaborators heroised by the Ukrainian authorities.

In 2016, **Alexander Suvorov Street in Kyiv was renamed in honour of Mykhailo Omelianovych-Pavlenko**, organiser and participant of mass executions of civilians in Ukraine and Belarus during the Great Patriotic War. In the 1930s, Omelianovych-Pavlenko addressed Adolf Hitler with a proposal to create Ukrainian units under the patronage of the Third Reich. He was engaged in the formation of security battalions that participated in mass murders of Jews and punitive actions against civilians in the occupied Soviet territories; he was also one of the coordinators of the SS Galicia Division's activities.

In 2019, another monument to one of the **leaders of the OUN, Roman Shukhevych**, was unveiled in Ivano-Frankivsk. It provoked sharp reaction in Poland and Israel.

In 2018, the Lviv Regional Council declared 2019 the year of Nazi collaborator Stepan Bandera marking the 110th anniversary of his birth.

And at the beginning of 2020 the city authorities of Kyiv and Lviv held annual traditional celebration and march in honour of Bandera's birthday.

Banner hung in 2020 on the building of Kyiv city administration in honour of the birthday of Nazi collaborator Stepan Bandera.



Collaboration of the official heroes of Ukraine with the Nazis during the presidencies of Petro Poroshenko and Volodymyr Zelensky is not only unhidden but also actively glorified. In 2019, the exhibition “Defenders of Ukraine of the 20th and 21st Centuries” opened in the local history museum of Sloviansk, Donetsk region, which demonstrated the military uniform and weapons of military personnel of the SS Galicia Division.

SS Galicia Division

in 1943–1945 was part of the Waffen-SS troops of Nazi Germany and consisted of volunteers, mainly from Ukrainian Galicia.

From the military personnel's oath of the division: “**I swear to you, Adolf Hitler**, as Führer and Chancellor of the German Reich, that I will be loyal and brave. I pledge obedience unto death to you. So help me God”.



WHAT HAPPENED IN 2014?

In 2014, mass riots swept across Ukraine. Western countries openly supported them. The pro-Nazi views of the participants were obvious.

Portraits of Stepan Bandera and Andriy Melnyk were placed everywhere. People attended lectures on the history of the SS Galicia Division and the Nachtigall Battalion.

The “Patriot of Ukraine” organisation acting under the emblem of the 2nd SS Panzer Division “Das Reich” distributed materials about domination of the white race among those present at the rallies.

Threats against the Russian people were heard from the stage set up in Maidan Nezaleznosti (Independence Square).

These events resulted in unconstitutional coup.

Significant funds coming to personal accounts of coup organisers and a large amount of new banknotes appearing in the Euromaidan itself and serving as payment for the activities of its participants remained practically in the open.



March of Euromaidan participants under the flag and emblem of the SS division.

Later these people went on to form the basis of the neo-Nazi Azov Regiment, taking the same emblem.

Over the following eight years, Azov committed numerous crimes, including the torture and murder of thousands of civilians in Donbass.

VICTIMS OF THE UKRAINIAN REGIME

The murder of Oles Buzina

In 2015 journalist, writer and politician Oles Buzina was killed.

Oles Buzina actively criticised the new Ukrainian authorities and nationalist extremist groups, openly adhered to the concept of the triune Russian nation — Malorusians (Little Russians), Belarusians (White Russians) and Velikorussians (Great Russians), raised his voice for the friendship between Ukraine and Russia, supported federalisation of Ukraine, its independence and bilingualism of Ukrainian culture.



The murder of Pavel Sheremet

In 2016, a bomb explosion killed journalist Pavel Sheremet in a car in the centre of Kyiv.

Sheremet actively criticised the actions of the Ukrainian authorities and President Petro Poroshenko, asked hard questions about the president's offshore accounts and expressed his opinion about the Azov Battalion.



The murder was committed by members of the S14 Death Squad used by the Ukrainian authorities to eliminate and intimidate dissidents.

Andriy Medvedko and Denis Polishchuk, the murderers, have not been punished. They walk free and continue to enjoy the open patronage of the Ukrainian authorities. They are officially included in the Commission of the Ukrainian Ministry for Veterans' Affairs under President Volodymyr Zelensky and receive state funding for their projects.



Suspicion of the murder was put forward to several persons; all of them had participated in the combat operations in Donbass. At the moment, however, the defendants accused of organising and executing the murder have been released from custody by the court. They are now heroes and role models for a certain segment of society.

Moreover, as President Volodymyr Zelensky has recently admitted, he maintains heartfelt correspondence with them, despite the fact that the legal process is formally ongoing.

WHAT WAS GOING ON IN DONBASS?

During the Euromaidan in Kyiv, the population of Donbass strongly objected to the overthrow of government. **On 7 April 2014, the Regional Council of the Donetsk Region adopted the Declaration of Sovereignty of the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) and the Act on the Declaration of State Independence of the DPR.**

The DPR did not recognise the status of the new Ukrainian leaders who came to power illegally.

On 13 April 2014, Oleksandr Turchynov who proclaimed himself the "acting" President of Ukraine announced forcible suppression of the pursuit of self-determination of the people of Donbass. It marked the beginning of the Ukrainian civil war. On 2 May, the Armed Forces of Ukraine — in violation of the Constitution of Ukraine — started participating in suppression of the population of Donbass.

On the same day the Ukrainian nationalists burned alive several dozen people who tried to hide in Odessa Trade Unions House.

Odessa Khatyn: Arson of the Trade Unions House in Odessa

In May 2014, opposition protesters against the illegal coup in Ukraine tried to hide in the Trade Union House in Odessa.

The building was set on fire by members of the Right Sector, Maidan Self-Defence and Ukrainian football ultras. According to eyewitnesses, these units were coordinated by the head of Maidan Self-Defence, and following the illegal coup, by Andriy Parubiy, Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine.



Based on various estimates, the number of deaths caused by fire, injuries, and beatings ranges from 48 people (according to official data) to 100 people (according to eyewitnesses). Over 200 people were injured.

On 11 May 2014, a referendum on self-determination of the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics was held. In the DPR, the ballot contained one question in Russian and Ukrainian: **"Do you support the Act of State Independence of the Donetsk People's Republic?". 89% of voters answered "yes".**

On the following day, the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics declared their sovereignty.

In accordance with international humanitarian law, if civilians do not take part in hostilities, it is a war crime to attack them. Despite this, Ukrainian armed formations have been regularly shelling residential buildings, hospitals, polyclinics, schools, kindergartens, and other civilian infrastructure facilities in the Donbass over the last 8 years.

Part of the Ukrainian war crimes was registered by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission. But there was no reaction from European countries over all 8 years of the civil war in Ukraine.

WHAT ARE THE “MINSK AGREEMENTS”?

On 5 September 2014, a meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group on the settlement of the situation in Donbass was held in Minsk. It included representatives of Ukraine, Russia, and the OSCE.

Participants signed the Minsk Protocol, a document which stipulated, inter alia, a ceasefire in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine. However, Ukraine did not plan to observe the ceasefire regime. As early as on 1 October 2014, over 10 civilians were killed under the shelling of the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

The shelling continued for all 8 years killing old people, women and children. In November 2014, President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko issued a decree that completely stopped the payment of pensions and wages in the Republics and relocated all the state institutions of Ukraine from the territory of these Republics.

A traffic blockade was also introduced. Only humanitarian assistance from the Russian Federation prevented famine in Donbass.

The civilian population of the DPR and LPR pinned great hopes on the “Second Minsk Agreements”. This document was agreed in February 2015 at a summit in Minsk by the leaders of Germany, France, Ukraine, and Russia in the Normandy Four format. It was signed by members of the Contact Group for the Peaceful Settlement of the Situation in Eastern Ukraine. The group included representatives of Ukraine, Russia, OSCE, DPR, and LPR. These agreements were later approved by a special resolution of the UN Security Council.

Some of the points of the “Second Minsk Agreements” are listed below.

- Immediate and comprehensive ceasefire.
- Withdrawal of all heavy weapons by both sides on equal distances in order to create a security zone.
- Carrying out constitutional reform in Ukraine with a new constitution entering into force by the end of 2015 providing for decentralisation as a key element.

None of the agreement points were fulfilled by the Ukrainian side.

- There was constant shelling of the civilian population of Donbass. The OSCE Special Mission to Ukraine registered the presence of Ukrainian heavy weapons in the security zone almost daily.
- Terms of amnesty and prohibition of persecution of persons associated with the DPR and LPR were ignored. Besides, the Ukrainian authorities arranged a whole series of political assassinations of such people.
- Settlements located on neutral territory were captured; activities of sabotage and reconnaissance groups of Ukraine continued.
- Constitutional reform aimed at decentralising Ukraine was barely even considered.
- The Ukrainian legislature adopted laws that directly contradicted the Minsk agreements.

In February 2022, Volodymyr Zelensky, President of Ukraine, explicitly stated his negative attitude towards the Minsk agreements: “Not all the points are satisfying”.

SITUATION IN DONBASS REMAINS DIFFICULT

In 2021–2022, official Kyiv — along with Western countries — for several months had been accusing Russia of preparation for a military “invasion” of Ukraine. Moscow denied any such plans.

According to Vladimir Putin, these statements by NATO representatives were alarmist. At the same time, the largest strike force of the Armed Forces of Ukraine was formed near Donbass, consisting of more than 125,000 people (about half of the strength of all the Armed Forces of Ukraine).

The secret documents of the command of the National Guard have also become public. They confirm Ukraine’s covert preparations for an offensive operation in Donbass in March 2022.

The situation in Donbass escalated in February 2022. The Republics and Ukraine accused each other of violating the ceasefire and shelling settlements. In the DPR and LPR, a general mobilisation was announced, and a mass evacuation of civilians to Russia was organised.

Denis Pushilin and Leonid Pasechnik, Heads of the DPR and LPR respectively, appealed to Vladimir Putin with a request to recognise the independence of the Republics, to consider the possibility of concluding an agreement on friendship and cooperation that would also provide for cooperation in the field of defence.

After an extraordinary meeting of the Security Council on 21 February, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree recognising the DPR and LPR.

Vyacheslav Volodin, speaker of the lower house of the Russian parliament, believes that recognition of independence of the Republics will help to prevent the deaths of Russian citizens and compatriots living in Donbass.

Ramzan Kadyrov, Head of Chechnya, said he fully supported Putin’s decision to recognize the DPR and LPR. He viewed it as the only way out of the political impasse, “where Ukraine and its patrons have driven everyone”.

“Our country was left with no other choice. Hundreds of thousands of Russians live in Donetsk and Luhansk, and Russia has never abandoned its own. Nor will they be doomed now. The peoples of the DPR and LPR can finally defend their rights in the international arena, fight for peace and order on their land,” Kadyrov said.

The head of the Russian region added that this is a historic day when justice prevailed.

PUTIN INSTRUCTED THE RUSSIAN ARMY TO ENSURE PEACE IN THE DPR AND LPR

On 24 February 2022, Vladimir Putin announced a special military operation in Ukraine aimed at denazification and demilitarisation of the country.

“The entire course of events and the incoming information show that Russia’s clash with nationalist forces in Ukraine is inevitable. It is only a matter of time. I decided to launch a special military operation. Our plans do not include the occupation of Ukrainian territories,” said Vladimir Putin.

The DPR and LPR are recognised within borders of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Currently, part of these territories is already under the control of the Russian army.

The regions of Russia, Russian departments, charitable foundations are actively sending humanitarian aid to the DPR, LPR, to the liberated territories in the Kharkiv and Kherson regions.

Since the beginning of March, Russia has delivered over 12 thousand tonnes of humanitarian cargo; another 22 thousand tonnes are expected at collection points. The deliveries comprise foodstuffs, hygiene products, medicines, room heating generators and other equipment.



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