



Survey Report

“The Future of Donbas and Crimea: Public Opinion and Attitudes”



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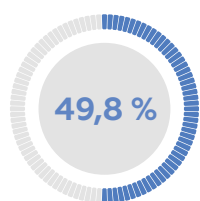
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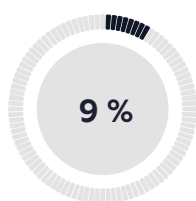
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The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Embassy of Sweden in Ukraine, the International Renaissance Foundation, and the Open Society Initiative for Europe (OSIFE).

Summary

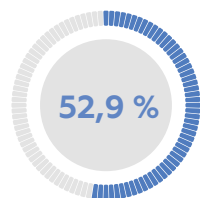


49,8 %

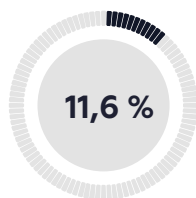


9 %

49,8 % consider the introduction of a temporary international administration in the temporarily occupied territories of Donbas and Crimea expedient and only **9%** disagree.

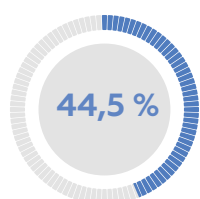


52,9 %

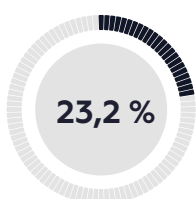


11,6 %

52,9 % believe that citizens and representatives of Russia and its security allies should NOT be part of such an international administration, while **11.6%** allow their participation.

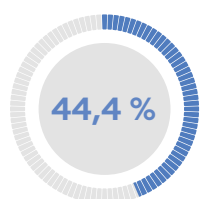


44,5 %

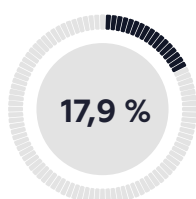


23,2 %

44,5 % support the recognition of educational documents issued in the temporarily occupied territories, **23.2%** do not.

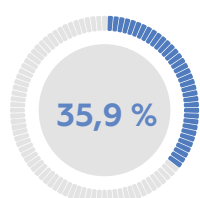


44,4 %

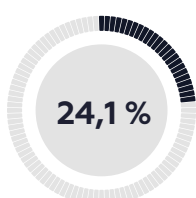


17,9 %

44,4 % support the position that people who were part of the occupation administrations of the Russian Federation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine and did not harm the lives and health of people should not be subject to lustration. **17.9%** have the opposite opinion.

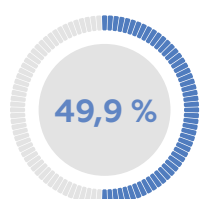


35,9 %

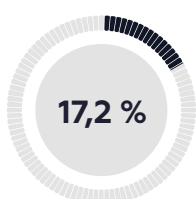


24,1 %

35,9 % strongly or partly agree that an amnesty should be applied to those who have committed minor criminal offenses, while **24.1%** disagree, and **20.8%** do not answer this question.

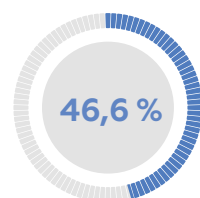


49,9 %

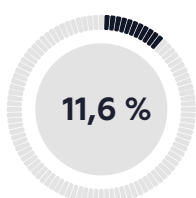


17,2 %

49,9 % are convinced that foreigners should be excluded from the list of potentially amnestied persons, and **17.2%** do not agree with this.

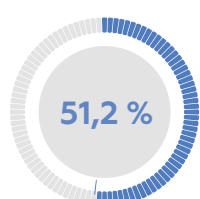


46,6 %

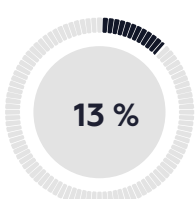


11,6 %

46,6 % agree that local elections in the temporarily occupied territories of Donbas and Crimea should take place at least 2 years after the de-occupation. **11.6%** have the opposite position.



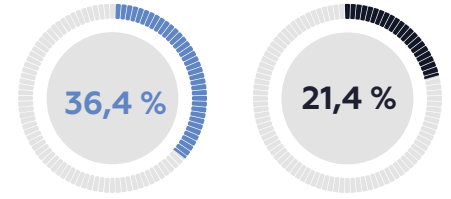
51,2 %



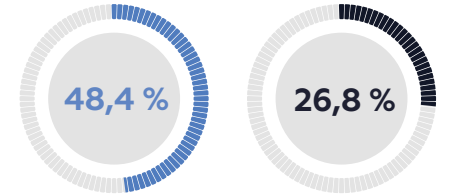
13 %

51,2 % of respondents believe that after de-occupation, residents of the temporarily occupied territories should NOT be restricted in their right to vote in all elections, and only **13%** do not agree

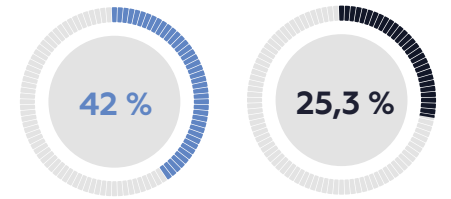
36,4 % believe that those who will be amnestied should be able to run in local elections, and **21,4%** have an opposite position. Another **23,8%** do not answer this question.



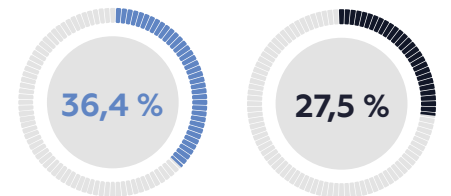
48,4 % consider the ceasefire, which was introduced in July 2020, an important achievement of the government, and **26,8%** – do not agree.



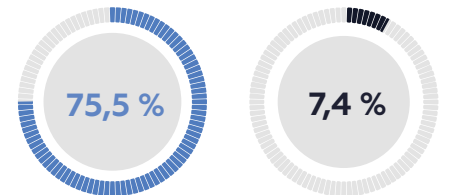
42 % agree with the necessity for a military operation to restore territorial integrity in Donbas. The opposite position is supported by **25,3%**, and **19,4%** do not answer the question.



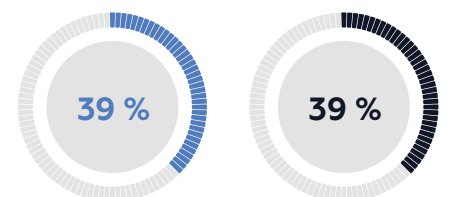
37,4 % consider a military operation necessary to restore territorial integrity over Crimea. **27,5%** have the opposite opinion, and a fifth (20%) could not answer.



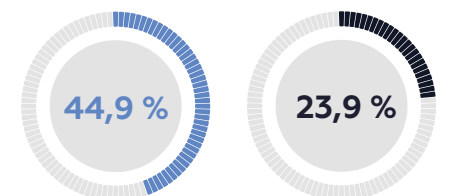
75,5 % are convinced that cooperation with Western countries is in the interests of Ukraine and only **7,4%** do not agree with it.



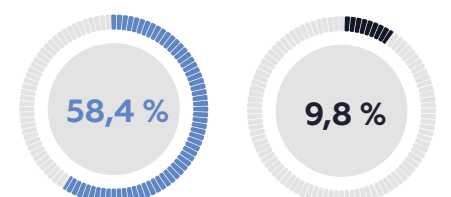
The percentage of supporters and opponents of the introduction of a visa regime with Russia is equal and constitutes **39 %**.



44,9 % believe that Russia is interested in a continuation of the war in Donbas, while **23,9%** do not agree with this. **31,2%** could not give a clear answer to this question or refuse to answer it.



58,4 % are convinced that Russia does NOT want the return of these so-called "DPR", "LPR" to Ukraine. **9,8%** have the opposite opinion, and **31,9%** do not give a clear answer or refused to answer this question.



Methodology

The survey was conducted by Info Sapiens upon the request of the School for Policy Analysis at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy within the Think Tanks Development Initiative in Ukraine, implemented by the International Renaissance Foundation in partnership with the Open Society Initiative for Europe (OSIFE) with financial support from the Swedish Embassy in Ukraine.

The fieldwork had been done from 13 to 31 January, 2021. The survey was held within the all-Ukrainian Omnibus by Info Sapiens with an additional sample of respondents. Thus, the overall sample was 2000 people over the age of 16. The sample was representative of the population of this age group by sex, age, size of settlement, and region of residence in accordance with the data of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine as of January 1, 2019. The Autonomous Republic of Crimea was removed from the study, while in the Donetsk and Lugansk regions the survey was conducted only in the territories controlled by Ukraine. The maximum theoretical error did not exceed 2.2%.

The distributions of answers by region of residence and other criteria which were given for some questions, served as illustrations rather than proved distinct differences. Although we might assume that there were some trends, more detailed and differentiated surveys with larger sample were needed to further analyse and compare the distribution of responses by categories. It should be noted, that on some questions a fairly high percentage of respondents had not given a definite answer (around 20-30%) which also imposed restrictions on the analysis and interpretation of results.

The School for Policy Analysis at NaUKMA (The School) asked the respondents to answer a number of questions related to the attitude of Ukrainians to certain provisions of the draft law "On the State Policy of the Transition Period" and relations with Russia in the context of the war in Donbas and the temporary occupation of Crimea.

1. Draft of the Law "On the State Policy of the Transition Period"

In early January 2021, the Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories published for a public discussion and submission of proposals and comments a [draft law "On the State Policy of the Transition Period"](#). A detailed legal analysis of the bill prepared by experts from relevant human rights NGOs and charities is available [here](#). Instead, the School for Policy Analysis decided to ask Ukrainian society precisely how much it supported certain provisions of the bill.

One of the proposals of the bill was the introduction of an international temporary administration in the temporarily occupied territories. This proposal was supported by respondents: **half of respondents (49,8 %) considered the introduction of such an international administration appropriate, while only 9% disagreed.** A quarter of respondents did not answer this question.

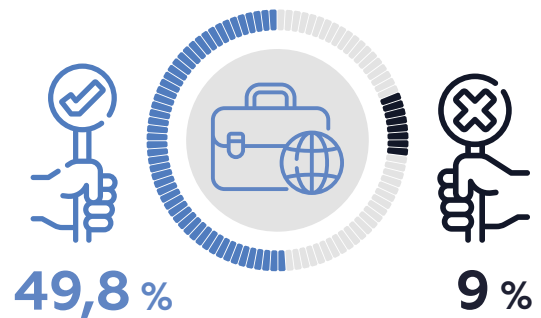


Table 1.

HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS STATEMENT?

An international interim administration must be established in the temporarily occupied territories of Donbas.

Rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 – strongly disagree, and 5 – strongly agree.

Strongly disagree	4.7%
Partly disagree	4.3%
Both, yes and no	16.7%
Partly agree	21.6%
Strongly agree	28.2%
Difficult to say/Refusal	24.5%

Next, we clarified the question of the composition of such a temporary international administration, namely whether it should include citizens and representatives of Russia and its security allies (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan). **The majority – about half of all respondents (52.9%) – believed that citizens and representatives of mentioned countries should NOT be part of such an international administration, while only 11.6% allowed for their participation.** (One-fifth of respondents did not answer the question, and another 13.3% were unsure of their answer.) Such a position prevailed albeit with different balances among representatives of all socio-demographic categories.

Table 2. . TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

International interim administrations in the temporarily occupied territories should NOT include citizens and representatives of Russia and its security allies (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan).

Rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 – strongly disagree, and 5 – strongly agree.

Strongly disagree	6.4%
Partly disagree	5.2%
Both, yes and no	13.3%
Partly agree	20.1%
Strongly agree	32.8%
Difficult to say/Refusal	22.1%

Regarding regional distributions¹ of answers to these questions, although supporters of the position that the temporary international administration should NOT include citizens of Russia and its security allies predominated in all regions, in Eastern Ukraine, this advantage was only slightly bigger than the survey's statistical error and was 3.4%, i.e. the distribution of responses was 31.4% vs. 28.2%, and moreover, almost an equal number of respondents chose each of the answer / non-response options. This position was the most dominant among Kyiv residents (67.4% vs. 6.2%) and in the Central region (61.8% vs. 5%).

Table 2.1. TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

International interim administrations in the temporarily occupied territories should NOT include citizens and representatives of Russia and its security allies (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan).

Rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 – strongly disagree, and 5 – strongly agree (regional distribution)

	Ukraine	Kyiv	North	West	Centre	South	East
Strongly disagree	6.4%	0.9%	8.1%	3.5%	2.7%	9.9%	15.7%
Partly disagree	5.2%	5.3%	4.2%	4.0%	2.3%	6.3%	12.5%
Both, yes and no	13.3%	10.4%	12.3%	11.7%	12.1%	17.8%	15.8%
Partly agree	20.1%	30.3%	8.9%	24.0%	24.2%	16.3%	15.7%
Strongly agree	32.8%	37.1%	48.7%	33.9%	37.6%	22.6%	15.7%
Difficult to say/Refusal	22.1%	15.9%	17.9%	22.9%	21.1%	27.1%	24.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

¹The areas of the survey are divided into regions as follows: 1) Kyiv; 2) North – Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Sumy, Chernihiv oblasts; 3) West – Volyn, Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil, Chernivtsi oblasts; 4) Centre – Vinnytsia, Dnipropetrovsk, Kirovohrad, Poltava, Khmelnytsky, Cherkasy oblasts; 5) South – Zaporozhye, Mykolayiv, Odessa, Kherson oblasts; 6) East – Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv oblasts.

Another provision of the bill concerned the recognition of educational documents issued in the temporarily occupied territories of Crimea and Donbas. It should be noted that such a recognition was an important move in supporting Ukrainian citizens living in the temporarily occupied territories and in facilitating their reintegration, thus it is politically important for the Ukrainian state. **The majority of respondents, slightly less than half (44.5%), supported the recognition of educational documents, which was twice as many as the number of those who didn't support it (23.2%).** 16% of respondents could not answer this question or gave the answer "yes and no". The number of those who supported such an initiative constitutes a majority in all regions of Ukraine and among all socio-demographic categories.

Table 3.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

Ukraine must recognize educational documents issued in the temporarily occupied territories of Crimea and Donbas.

Rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 – strongly disagree, and 5 – strongly agree.

Strongly disagree	15.7%
Partly disagree	7.5%
Both, yes and no	16.1%
Partly agree	19.0%
Strongly agree	25.5%
Difficult to say/Refusal	16.2%

Also, one of the provisions of the bill concerned the introduction of sanctions. The School asked whether Ukrainians supported the provisions regarding categories of persons who should NOT be subject to lustration. Respondents were therefore asked to what extent they agreed with the statement: *"Persons who as part of the occupation administrations of the Russian Federation ensured the livelihood of the temporarily occupied territories and did not harm the lives and health of citizens should not be subject to lustration."* **The majority of respondents – 44.4% – supported the position proposed by the Ministry.** Meanwhile, the number of those who strongly or partly disagreed was twice less – 17.9%. It was interesting to assess this situation in Eastern Ukraine. In comparison with other regions, there were the lowest indicators of both support (36.6%) and non-support (11.8%) of such an exception for lustration. At the same time, it was in the East where the "Difficult to Say / Refusal" option was the most popular, reaching 29.7%.

Table 4.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

Persons who, as part of the occupation administrations of the Russian Federation, ensured the livelihood of the temporarily occupied territories and did not harm the lives and health of citizens should not be subject to lustration.

Strongly disagree	10.1%
Partly disagree	7.8%
Both, yes and no	17.6%
Partly agree	21.2%
Strongly agree	22.2%
Difficult to say/Refusal	21.1%

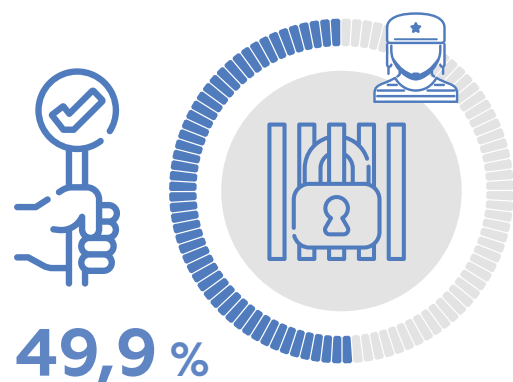
Probably the most discussed and debatable aspect of transitional justice was the issue of amnesty which had been partially addressed in the draft law. Therefore, the School asked the respondents several questions about the different aspects of an amnesty. Thus, **the majority of respondents (35.9%) strongly or partly agreed with the statement that the amnesty should be applied to those who have committed minor criminal offenses.** At the same time, a quarter of respondents (24.1%) did not agree with this, and 20.8% did not have an answer to this question. Kyiv (56%), the North (40.5%) and the East (40.5%) showed a higher level of support than the national average.

Table 5.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

After the de-occupation of the temporarily occupied territories, amnesty should be applied to persons who have committed minor criminal offenses related to the temporary occupation.

Strongly disagree	14.1%
Partly disagree	10.0%
Both, yes and no	19.2%
Partly agree	21.1%
Strongly agree	14.8%
Difficult to say/Refusal	20.8%



The opinion of Ukrainians as to whom the amnesty should NOT apply was more consolidated. **Almost half of all respondents – 49.9% – supported the exclusion of foreigners (probably referring to Russians) from the list of potentially amnestied persons.** However, there was a significant regional difference on this issue: the level of agreement with this statement varied from 70.6% in the North to 35.4% in the East. Similarly, in the East, there was the largest number of refusals to respond – 33.3%.

Table 6.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

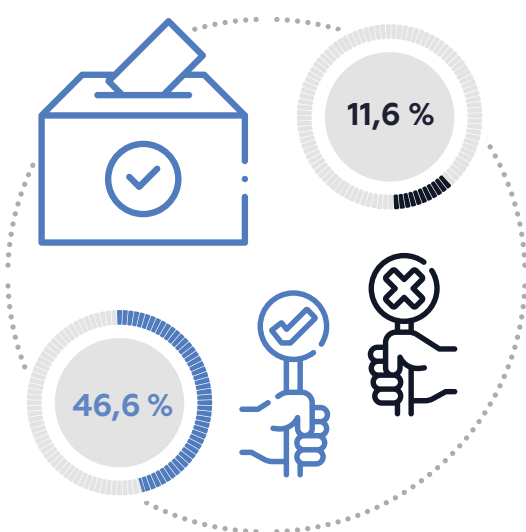
The amnesty should NOT apply to foreigners who have committed criminal offenses related to the temporary occupation.

Strongly disagree	9.7%
Partly disagree	6.5%
Both, yes and no	12.7%
Partly agree	19.4%
Strongly agree	30.5%
Difficult to say/Refusal	21.2%

Table 6.1. TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

The amnesty should NOT apply to foreigners who have committed criminal offenses related to the temporary occupation (*regional distribution*)

	Ukraine	Kyiv	North	West	Centre	South	East
Strongly disagree	9.7%	12.2%	9.5%	12.9%	12.1%	3.6%	5.8%
Partly disagree	6.5%	7.3%	3.8%	9.7%	5.6%	4.6%	6.9%
Both, yes and no	12.7%	8.0%	6.8%	14.6%	11.2%	14.4%	18.6%
Partly agree	19.4%	32.5%	6.8%	18.4%	22.8%	20.2%	19.2%
Strongly agree	30.5%	26.2%	63.8%	24.9%	23.7%	35.5%	16.2%
Difficult to say/Refusal	21.2%	13.8%	9.3%	19.5%	24.7%	21.7%	33.3%



The issue of elections in the temporarily occupied territories after de-occupation was of an equal importance. The draft law "On the State Policy of the Transition Period" aimed to regulate the issues of electoral rights (active and passive) as well as the time for the first local elections. As for the latter, the Ministry proposed to establish that "elections to local governments in the temporarily occupied territories of Donbas and Crimea should take place at least 2 years after de-occupation." **Almost half of Ukrainians surveyed – 46.6% – agreed with this proposal, and only 11.6% had the opposite opinion. The lowest level of support for the idea of local elections 2 years after the de- occupation were in the East (27.4%) and in the South (36.4%), while the highest – in Kyiv (69.4%) and in the North (56.4%).**

Table 7.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

Elections to local governments in the temporarily occupied territories of Donbas and Crimea must take place at least 2 years after the de-occupation.

Strongly disagree	6.0%
Partly disagree	5.6%
Both, yes and no	15.9%
Partly agree	20.3%
Strongly agree	26.3%
Difficult to say/Refusal	25.9%

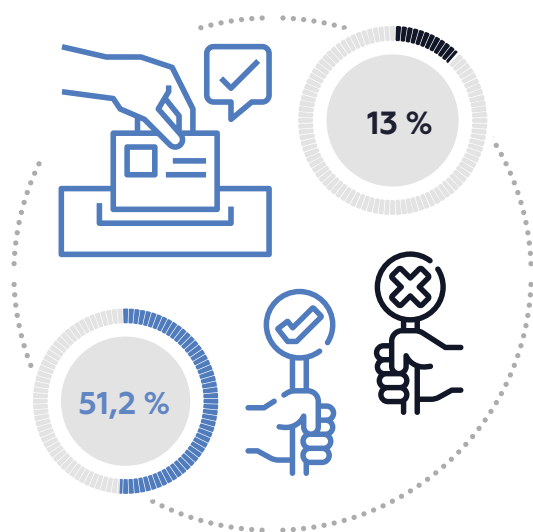
The next question concerned the possibility of those who will be amnestied to run in local elections. **The majority of respondents (36.4%) agreed that such persons should be able to run for the office.** One third less respondents (21.4%) were against this proposal. The regional distribution of answers to this question looked atypical: the **East, the South and Kyiv had equally high levels of support for this initiative – over 40%**, while the lowest figure was in the Centre – 28.4%. In the North, the number of supporters (34.6%) of this provision was almost equal to the number of opponents (36.1%).

Table 8.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

After de-occupation, persons who have been amnestied in accordance with the actions during the occupation may be allowed to run in local elections in the temporarily occupied territories of Donbas and Crimea.

Strongly disagree	12.9%
Partly disagree	8.5%
Both, yes and no	18.4%
Partly agree	20.3%
Strongly agree	16.1%
Difficult to say/Refusal	23.8%



One of the two positions of the bill, which gained more than 50% of support, concerned the non-restriction of residents of the temporarily occupied territories of Donbas and Crimea in their right to vote in all elections. Thus, the absolute majority (51.2%) of respondents partly or strongly agreed with the statement that after de-occupation TOT residents should **NOT** be restricted in their right to vote. In all regions, the number of supporters of this position exceeded the number of opponents. Interestingly, people who agreed the most do not live in the East (45.6%) or in the South (62.9%) as might be expected but in the North (71.2%).

Table 9.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

After de-occupation, residents of the temporarily occupied territories of Donbas and Crimea should **NOT** be restricted in the right to vote in elections to the Verkhovna Rada, the President of Ukraine and local elections.

Strongly disagree	6.1%
Partly disagree	6.9%
Both, yes and no	16.6%
Partly agree	22.6%
Strongly agree	28.6%
Difficult to say/Refusal	19.2%

Table 9.1. TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

After de-occupation, residents of the temporarily occupied territories of Donbas and Crimea should NOT be restricted in the right to vote in elections to the Verkhovna Rada, the President of Ukraine and local elections. (*regional distribution*)

	Ukraine	Kyiv	North	West	Centre	South	East
Strongly disagree	6.1%	1.2%	6.8%	9.2%	5.5%	4.3%	6.4%
Partly disagree	6.9%	1.4%	2.3%	9.6%	10.5%	4.5%	6.1%
Both, yes and no	16.6%	14.9%	10.6%	22.2%	16.1%	11.2%	20.7%
Partly agree	22.6%	39.8%	10.3%	22.9%	23.1%	22.3%	23.8%
Strongly agree	28.6%	25.9%	60.9%	21.7%	14.7%	40.5%	21.7%
Difficult to say/Refusal	19.2%	16.8%	9.1%	14.5%	30.0%	17.1%	21.2%

Finally, we asked respondents whether the state should already honour the memory of the victims of the Russian armed aggression, in particular by creating memorials in Kyiv and Donbas. The vast majority of respondents, almost two thirds (64.2%), believed that such honouring was necessary, and only 8.8% did not agree with it. Also, relatively small compared to other questions was the percentage of those who refused or could not answer.

Table 10.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

Ukraine must already honour the memory of the victims of the Russian armed aggression, in particular by creating memorials in Kyiv and Donbas.

Rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 – strongly disagree, and 5 – strongly agree.

Strongly disagree	5.4%
Partly disagree	3.4%
Both, yes and no	12.7%
Partly agree	20.8%
Strongly agree	43.4%
Difficult to say/Refusal	14.2%

It is worth noting that the wording of the question emphasized not only the need to honour the victims of Russian aggression as such but also the need to do so now, at this moment. Therefore, we could not say that those who answered the question in the negative were fundamentally opposed to honouring memory of victims of the aggression as such. When discussing the distribution of answers to this question by various factors (age, place of residence, education, primary language of communication, religion, etc.), it should be noted that those who supported the need to honour the memory of victims of armed aggression prevailed in all categories. However, there were some differences. Analysing the regional distribution of answers to this question, it is impossible to point a single trend. Most supporters of the immediate commemoration, especially relative to the number of opponents, lived in Kyiv (85.8% vs. 1.6%) and in the Centre (72.6% vs. 2.7%). The proportion

of the distribution of responses was comparable in the Western and Northern regions: the number of supporters was about the same – 64.9% and 68.2% respectively, but in the North lived a slightly higher percentage of opponents of this approach – 16%, compared to 7% in the West. In the South of Ukraine, the distribution of answers was 51.5% to 10% in favour of supporters of honouring victims, and in the East – 46.1% to 19.3%, which was the smallest gap in the distribution of answers "for" and "against" among all regions.

Table 10.1. Ukraine must already honour the memory of the victims of the Russian armed aggression, in particular by creating memorials in Kyiv and Donbas. (regional distribution)

	Ukraine	Kyiv	North	West	Centre	South	East
Strongly disagree	5.4%	1.0%	14.2%	3.8%	0.7%	5.5%	11.0%
Partly disagree	3.4%	0.6%	1.8%	3.2%	2.0%	4.5%	8.3%
Both, yes and no	12.7%	5.8%	7.9%	13.7%	9.5%	20.5%	16.6%
Partly agree	20.8%	25.3%	11.1%	19.0%	26.7%	21.7%	18.8%
Strongly agree	43.4%	60.5%	57.1%	45.9%	45.9%	29.8%	27.3%
Difficult to say/Refusal	14.2%	6.7%	7.9%	14.3%	15.2%	18.1%	17.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Interestingly, the factor of subjective material well-being turned out to be significant for the level of support for the need to honour victims of the war. Thus, with the growth of the level of welfare, the level of support for the position that Ukraine should already start honouring the victims of Russia's armed aggression was steadily increasing. Most supporters of this position could be found among those who considered themselves in the category of "above average / rich" (71.4% vs. 5.8%), and the least – among the "poor" by self-definition (58.6% vs. 12.4%). Simultaneously, neither age nor level of education had a significant impact that trended on the distribution of responses.

Table 10.2. Ukraine must already honour the memory of the victims of the Russian armed aggression, in particular by creating memorials in Kyiv and Donbas. (distribution according to the subjective (material) well-being)

	Ukraine	Poor	Middle class	Rich
Strongly disagree	5.4%	9.1%	4.0%	2.9%
Partly disagree	3.4%	3.2%	3.8%	2.9%
Both, yes and no	12.7%	13.1%	12.7%	11.8%
Partly agree	20.8%	21.5%	21.3%	19.9%
Strongly agree	43.4%	37.1%	45.7%	51.5%
Difficult to say/Refusal	14.2%	16.0%	12.5%	10.9%

2. The ceasefire and military operation: attitude of Ukrainians

One of our questions concerned the extent to which Ukrainians agreed that the establishment of a ceasefire, which had been in place since July 2020, was an important achievement of the Ukrainian authorities. Even though we constantly heard in the news about the violation of the ceasefire regime, even about deaths and wounding of our military personnel, **almost half of the respondents (48.4%) really considered this ceasefire to be an important achievement of the government.** Slightly more than a quarter (26.8%) disagreed with this, and those who hesitated in the assessment amounted to 17.3%. Only 7.6% could not answer this question which was one of the lowest levels of refusals / "non- responses".

Table 11.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

The ceasefire in Donbas, which has been in place since July 2020, is an important achievement of the Ukrainian authorities.

Rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 – strongly disagree, and 5 – strongly agree.

Strongly disagree	16.5%
Partly disagree	10.3%
Both, yes and no	17.3%
Partly agree	22.7%
Strongly agree	25.7%
Difficult to say/Refusal	7.6%

In this poll, the School also raised an issue that was not related to any legislative initiatives but revealed the attitude of the Ukrainian society to one of the possible scenarios of de-occupation – the military one. Respondents were asked to assess the following statement: *"Without a military operation Ukraine will not be able to regain control of the temporarily occupied territories"* – with a clarification as to which territory was in question. The distributions of answers to the questions regarding Donbas and Crimea were similar. **Most respondents strongly or partly agreed with the need for a military operation to restore territorial integrity:** 42% – concerning Donbas and 37.4% – concerning Crimea. In both questions, a quarter of respondents disagreed with the proposed statement, and a fifth could not answer.

Table 12.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

Without a military operation Ukraine will not be able to regain control of the temporarily occupied territories of Donbas.

Strongly disagree	15.5%
Partly disagree	9.8%
Both, yes and no	13.3%
Partly agree	19.5%
Strongly agree	22.5%
Difficult to say/Refusal	19.4%

Table 13.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

Without a military operation Ukraine will not be able to regain control of the temporarily occupied territories of Crimea

Strongly disagree	16.7%
Partly disagree	10.8%
Both, yes and no	14.6%
Partly agree	15.7%
Strongly agree	21.7%
Difficult to say/Refusal	20.5%

So, people did not want a war and military actions, but they recognized the need for them. This interpretation was confirmed by the results of our March poll² where the majority of Ukrainians had spoken out against Ukraine developing a military scenario for the return of Crimea (44.8%) or officially declaring war against Russia (55.6%).

²Survey conducted by Info Sapiens upon the request of the SPA in March 2020 (Omnibus Info Sapiens, a sample of 1000 respondents).

3. Geopolitics and relations with Russia

Directly related to the policy of de-occupation and reintegration was foreign policy, in particular the relations with Russia. That was why in addition to questions about the future of the temporarily occupied territories, the School for Policy Analysis asked a number of questions about the geopolitical preferences of Ukrainians and their assessment of Russia's position on the future of the TOT.

The vast majority of Ukrainians, three quarters (75.5%), were convinced that cooperation with Western countries was in Ukraine's interests, while only 7.4% disagreed. Also, this question showed almost the lowest rate of refusals (5.7%) and only 11.4% answered "yes and no". Everything pointed to the presence of a clear position on the cooperation with Western partners in Ukrainian society. The support for this position was really consolidated: there was no socio-demographic group where its level was less than 63%, and on the regional differentiation – less than 67%, i. e. less than two thirds of respondents.

Table 14.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

Cooperation with Western countries is in Ukraine's interests.

Rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 – strongly disagree, and 5 – strongly agree.

Strongly disagree	3.0%
Partly disagree	4.4%
Both, yes and no	11.4%
Partly agree	30.6%
Strongly agree	44.9%
Difficult to say/Refusal	5.7%

We also asked a number of questions about relations with Russia. Compared to our poll of March 2020³, when the supporters of the introduction of the visa regime had slightly prevailed (for – 34.9%, against – 29.9%) in January 2021, the "votes" were basically divided in half (the difference between "for" and "against" was 0.3 %), and the number of those who strongly agreed was equal to the number of those who strongly disagreed and was 24.9%. This indicated the lack of a consolidated position on this issue in Ukrainian society.

Table 15.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

It is necessary to introduce a visa regime with Russia.

Rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 – strongly disagree, and 5 – strongly agree.

	January 2021	March 2020
Strongly disagree	24.9%	19.8%
Partly disagree	14.5%	10.1%
Both, yes and no	12.0%	11.5%
Partly agree	14.8%	16.9%
Strongly agree	24.9%	28.0%
Difficult to say/Refusal	8.9%	13.7%

³Survey conducted by Info Sapiens upon the request of the SPA in March 2020 (Omnibus Info Sapiens, a sample of 1000 respondents). The difference in sample size should be taken into account when comparing.

When asked whether the normalization of relations with Russia was in the interests of Ukraine, almost half of the respondents agreed (47.5%), while slightly more than a quarter of respondents (27.3%) disagreed. However, it should be borne in mind that respondents could interpret the phrase "normalization of relations" at their own discretion and were not provided with any clarifications or explanations in the survey. Therefore, we could assume that the interpretations that respondents put into this concept were quite different as well as the visions of the circumstances and timing when such normalization should or might occur.

Table 16.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

Normalization of relations with Russia is in Ukraine's interests

Rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 – strongly disagree, and 5 – strongly agree.

Strongly disagree	16.7%
Partly disagree	10.6%
Both, yes and no	16.2%
Partly agree	23.0%
Strongly agree	24.5%
Difficult to say/Refusal	9.1%

That "normalization of relations" was interpreted very differently by respondents that was confirmed by their answers to the next questions of our survey. **The majority of respondents (44.9%) believed that Russia was interested in continuing the war in Donbas.** 23.9% held the opposite opinion, and another 31.2% could not give a clear answer to the question or refused to answer.

Table 17.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

Russia is not interested in continuing the war in Donbas.

Rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 – strongly disagree, and 5 – strongly agree.

Strongly disagree	30.2%
Partly disagree	14.7%
Both, yes and no	12.6%
Partly agree	10.6%
Strongly agree	13.3%
Difficult to say/Refusal	18.6%

At the same time, there was a difference of views on this issue in the regional context. It should be noted from the start that we could not talk about the existence of any definite trend in the regional distribution of answers to this question. For example, in Kyiv opinions on the question whether Russia is interested in continuing the war in Donbas were divided in half (per 34.5% each) and 21% could not or refused to answer. In Eastern Ukraine, the difference in responses was also statistically insignificant (1.4%): 29.7% believed that Russia is interested in continuing the war, and 31.1% disagree, while a quarter (25.5%) of respondents did not respond to question. On the other hand, most of those who believed that Russia was interested in continuing the war lived in the Central region where the balance of answers was most pronounced: 57.1% vs. 11.8% (21.9% did not answer). In Western Ukraine, more than half of respondents also shared this opinion – 53.9% vs. 24.6%, who believed that Russia was interested in ending the war (with the smallest number of refusals – 8%). In the South and the North of Ukraine, there were

also supporters of Russia's interest in continuing hostilities in Donbas: 32.6% (vs. 22.1%) and 42.3% (vs. 35%) respectively. However, in the South, there was the largest part of those who did not answer (27.8%) or chose the answer "yes and no" – 17.6%.

Table 17. 1. TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

Russia is not interested in continuing the war in Donbas. Rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 – strongly disagree, and 5 – strongly agree. (regional distribution)

	Ukraine	Kyiv	North	West	Centre	South	East
Strongly disagree	30.2%	24.2%	35.1%	34.9%	39.1%	19.0%	17.6%
Partly disagree	14.7%	10.3%	7.2%	19.0%	18.0%	13.6%	12.1%
Both, yes and no	12.6%	9.8%	11.4%	13.5%	9.4%	17.6%	13.7%
Partly agree	10.6%	22.7%	6.5%	12.0%	5.6%	14.1%	10.8%
Strongly agree	13.3%	11.9%	28.5%	12.6%	6.2%	8.0%	20.3%
Difficult to say/Refusal	18.6%	21.0%	11.3%	8.0%	21.9%	27.8%	25.5%

These results were confirmed by the assessment of the respondents as to whether Russia wanted the return of the so-called "DPR" and "LPR" to Ukraine. Only 9.8% shared this opinion. **More than half of those polled – 58.4% – were convinced that Russia did NOT want the return of these so-called "republics" to Ukraine.** It should be noted that among all socio-demographic categories of respondents or in the regional context such position prevailed albeit with a different gap / balance. As in the previous question, 31.9% did not give a clear answer or refused to answer.

Table 18.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH SUCH STATEMENTS?

Russia does not want the return of the so-called "DPR", "LPR" to Ukraine.

Rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 – strongly disagree, and 5 – strongly agree.

Strongly disagree	4.9%
Partly disagree	4.9%
Both, yes and no	12.2%
Partly agree	20.4%
Strongly agree	38.0%
Difficult to say/Refusal	19.7%

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Survey Report
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and Crimea: Public
Opinion and Attitudes”**