

## Description of the Project

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Project Name: **Influence of party ideology and characteristics of parliamentarians on legislative actions on war, corruption and inequality in Ukraine** [Wpływ ideologii partii i charakterystyk parlamentarzystów na działania ustawodawcze w sprawie wojny, korupcji i nierówności na Ukrainie]. The research was funded by the Preludium grant of the National Science Centre, Poland. Project number: 2017/25/N/HS6/01174.

The purpose of this project was to advance the theory, methods, and empirical base for studying the relationship between party ideology, parliamentarian biography, and legislative action in Ukraine over multiple elections and on the major issues facing the country by (a) developing a general model of the determinants of the legislative behavior of parties and parliamentarians, (b) enhancing quantitative measures of ideology from party platforms for all major parties and across time, (c) building a database of party ideology, parliamentarian biography, and legislative roll call voting.

In this project, I have collected and coded the positions of Ukrainian political parties and blocs from their electoral manifestos. I have also collected the legislative actions (roll call voting and debate) data on war, corruption, and inequality that are, arguably, three major problems of contemporary Ukraine. To study social inequality produced by the war, I focused on the Internally Displaced (IDPs) and the Conflict-Affected Persons as two disadvantaged groups that have recently emerged as a result of the annexation of Crimea and the military conflict in Eastern Ukraine. The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement developed by UN Commission on Human Rights in 1998 postulate that IDPs should enjoy the same rights and freedoms as the rest of the citizens of the country. However, the Guiding Principles are not legally binding; therefore, IDPs protection policies should be implemented domestically. Moreover, the Guiding Principles do not address specifically the issues of the Conflict-Affected Persons in distinction to Internally Displaced Persons (OCHA 2001). According to official statistics, currently there are over 1.8 million of IDPs and Conflict-Affected persons residing on the territory of the territory of the Ukrainian mainland and in the zone of military conflict (UNHCR 2018). These newly emerged disadvantaged groups require state protection including adequate representation in government bodies.

### *IDPs and the Conflict-Affected*

I have discovered that the majority of political parties and blocs that obtained large popular support and parliamentary representation after parliamentary elections held in 2014 have not addressed the issues of IDPs or the Conflict-Affected Persons in their electoral manifestos. For the exception of one political party, whose success depended on the voters from Crimea and the areas of military conflict, Ukrainian political parties and blocs paid attention to other issues, such as militarization and protection of state borders. The debates reveal that parliamentarians have ambiguous attitude to IDPs and the Conflict-Affected Persons. On the one hand, they recognize that these groups of population need special attention. On the other, many parliamentarians are unwilling to support their rights in legislation. Legislative acts on accommodation, freedom of movement, state social support, protection of property rights and succession<sup>1</sup> for IDPs were adopted slowly and suggested suboptimal solutions. Moreover, state social aid is reserved to the persons having a legal status of IDPs only. Furthermore, the regulations adopted by the government bodies other than the parliament imposed additional bureaucratic burden on IDPs and the Conflict-Affected Persons, restricting their rights and exacerbating their socio-economic difficulties. Electoral participation of these groups remains far from assured. While the legislation formally allows the IDPs to cast their ballots, the registration procedures are cumbersome and full electoral participation endangers the IDP status.

In general, rights and freedoms of the IDPs in Ukraine, regardless of their official status, are poorly represented. Existing legislation and regulations exacerbate their social inequality. Differentiation of the IDPs depending on their official registration excludes those who have not undergone specific bureaucratic procedures and do not reside on non-occupied territories of Ukraine. While the rights and freedoms of the IDPs are widely discussed, little attention has been paid to the Conflict-Affected Persons, whose needs differ.

### *Women's Political Inequality*

Women have a long-standing high level of political inequality in national legislatures in Ukraine. I have examined women's political inequality through descriptive, symbolic, and substantive representation of

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<sup>1</sup> Refers to the action or process of inheriting a title, office, property, etc.

‘women’s interests’ in Ukrainian parliaments. The descriptive representation of their positions has been weak: the percentage of women in Ukrainian parliament has not risen over 12 percent over the last 15 years (EAST PaC Ukraine 2002-2014). Moreover, when it comes to symbolic and substantive representation, political parties and blocs invoke the image of women-mothers and child-minders and are inclined to vote for the legislation promoting such social role for women.

I found that Ukrainian political parties and blocs pay much attention to family values, traditions, and motherhood, while the questions of gender equality and women’s rights are lesser addressed. Out of 145 legislative acts identified through targeted search 107 deal with family, children, childbirth and state aid for the large and low-income families, and four more promote childbirth increase. Quantitative analysis of the roll call voting has shown that parliamentarians are inclined to support such legislation with their votes. In terms of ideological positioning, there is a statistically significant association between more conservative-authoritarian ideological positioning of the parties and blocs and support for the legislation dealing with family, children, childbirth, and state aid for large and low-income families. Populists tend to vote similarly to the conservative-authoritarian majority. The debates data show the reasons behind support for such legislation. Parliamentarians mostly explain their decisions by the low birthrate and difficult demographic situations; some insist that motherhood is either a debt to the society or a life-purpose for women; others reject the very notion of ‘gender’ perceiving it, along with homosexuality, as a part of alien Western values that are detrimental for Ukrainian society.

Overall, during the last decade and a half, the substantive representation of women’s interests in Ukrainian parliament was limited to a set of legislative acts that dealt mostly with family and reproduction. According to the data collected for this research, over the last 15 years Ukrainian political parties, blocs and parliamentarians, motivated by economic reasons and support of traditional values, have promoted the image of ‘women-mothers’ and ‘child-minders.’ No matter the intent of the parliamentarians on the discrimination of women, new laws promoting gender equality and women’s rights are rarely implemented. There are a number of parliamentarians, mostly women, who support equality of genders and sexualities and vocalize their opinion during the debates. However, parliamentarians belonging to more populist parties and blocs tend to support gender conservative majority. Thus, in Ukraine, populism slows advancement of gender equality.

### *Corruption*

Corruption has been endemic in Ukraine since the country gained independence in 1991. Due to lack of government control on the initial stage of independence, corruption in Ukraine has become ubiquitous.

After Euromaidan 2013/2014, when the country faced large-scale protests against attempts of implementation of authoritarian political practices by the dominant ruling party, the government officials should have started to implement some new anti-corruption legislation complying with the international norms.

I found that Ukrainian political parties and blocs pay attention to the issues related to corruption in their manifestos. Nonetheless, adoption of anti-corruption legislation has been slow: using a key-words search, I have identified 28 legislative acts dealing with corruption. The results of quantitative analysis show that Ukrainian there is a small (0.07) statistically significant association between populist parties and blocs and voting for the anti-corruption legislation: the more populist the party is the more the parliamentarians belonging to this party are inclined to support this type of legislation. Value positions (conservative authoritarianism – liberalism) and economic positions (statism – economic liberalism) show no statistically significant associations with voting for the anti-corruption legislation.

### **Parliamentarian Biography**

In the quantitative models I have included two variables, age and gender, to explore whether there the personal characteristics of parliamentarians mediate the relationship between party ideology and legislative action. I have found no statistically significant difference in voting for issues dealing with war (IDPs and conflict-affected persons), corruption (anti-corruption legislation), and inequality (inequality of women) based on gender or age. In other words, according to the results of this research, in Ukrainian parliament there is no statistically significant difference between men and women or a difference in voting based on age of the parliamentarians.

### **Conclusion**

Ideas expressed in the electoral manifestos find support in the legislative actions of parliamentarians for all three selected issues. Parliamentary debates show that many see women as a resource for solving structural issues, such as the ‘demographic crisis’, rampant unemployment, and severe economic downturns. Furthermore, while the manifestos often stress traditional gender roles, the debates in the parliament are at times outright against the idea that gender matters. Quantitative analysis demonstrates that the more conservative-authoritarian position the party or bloc takes, the more the parliamentarians belonging to this union are inclined to support legislation focusing on ‘family values’. Parliamentarians remain divided in terms of policies they want to advance for the IDPs and the Conflict-Affected Persons:

despite being sympathetic the issues of these groups of population, many Ukrainian parties, blocs and parliamentarians are reluctant to advance their rights. As for the anti-corruption legislation, I have found no statistically significant association between issue positions expressed in the electoral manifestos in terms of value or economic positions expressed in the electoral manifestos and voting of parliamentarians. I have found only a slight statistically significant positive association between voting for anti-corruption legislation and belonging to more populist parties and blocs.

Overall, I conclude that populists in power are not a vehicle for reforms toward equality. Instead, they tend to share and promote conservative views and the interests of the majority at the expense of minorities. In this way, populist actions exacerbate social inequalities. Legislative actions of Ukraine's parliamentarians correlate with their issue positions expressed in the manifestos of political parties and blocs. All political parties and blocs in Ukraine are populist to some extent. Thus, though opposition and ruling parties have changed as a result of elections, populism has remained in power. This study shows in Ukraine populist parties and blocs vote for the status quo and are far from being champions of democratic rule.

## References

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