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NATIONAL MINORITIES PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC LIFE OF UKRAINE UNDER THE CONDITIONS OF THE RUSSO-UKRAINIAN WAR (2014 – 2024)

Abstract. *The purpose of the research is to study the peculiarities of the national minorities participation in a public life, in particular, in the political, public, cultural, educational and other spheres under the conditions of the Russo-Ukrainian War, as well as to clarify the possible challenges to the national ethnopolitics during the postwar years. The Methodology of the Research.* There have been applied the methods of analogy, comparison, generalization, source analysis, content analysis, systemic and structural functional in the article. **The Scientific Novelty.** *The prospects for the participation of civil society institutions in the processes of the post-war reconstruction have been revealed in detail for the first time, as well as the peculiarities of the social and political activities of public associations of the national minorities under the conditions of the Russo-Ukrainian War. The Conclusions.* *The ethno-*

national issue is a crucial component of the state policy. Taking into consideration the experience of the Russo-Ukrainian War, the can state that ignoring the ethno-national issues can cause vulnerability to the external factors and hybrid threats. Despite the lack of systematicity in the implementation of state ethnopolitics, the presence of diverse challenges that induce contradictions in society, the Russian aggression led to consolidation around a civic identity. There are numerous challenges that Ukraine has to face, in particular, for the state authorities, a local self-government and a civil society. During the post-war years, a number of vital issues related to the post-war reconstruction, implementation of reforms, improvement of the national security system, minimization of social contradictions, etc. will intensify. There are challenges to the establishment of relations between state institutions and society as a whole, as well as the development of ethno-national relations in the de-occupied territories.

Key words: ethno-national relations, ethnopolitics, civil society, identity, institutions, resilience, security.

УЧАСТЬ НАЦІОНАЛЬНИХ МЕНШИН У СУСПІЛЬНОМУ ЖИТТІ УКРАЇНИ В УМОВАХ РОСІЙСЬКО-УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ ВІЙНИ (2014 – 2024)

Анотація. Метою статті є вивчення особливостей участі національних меншин у суспільному житті, зокрема у політичній, громадській, культурній, освітній та інших сферах, в умовах російсько-української війни, а також з'ясування ймовірних викликів національній етнополітиці у повоєнні роки. **Методологія дослідження.** У дослідженні були використані методи аналогії, порівняння, узагальнення, джерелознавчий аналіз, контент-аналіз, а також системний і структурно-функціональний методи. У статті визначено основні напрями діяльності національних меншин в умовах російсько-української війни і їхню реакцію на російську агресію у 2014 р. і 2022 р. **Новизна дослідження.** Уперше детально розкрито перспективи участі інституцій громадянського суспільства у процесах повоєнної відбудови, а також висвітлено особливості суспільно-політичної діяльності громадських об'єднань національних меншин в умовах російсько-української війни. **Висновки.** Етнонаціональне питання є важливою складовою успішної державної політики. Як засвідчив досвід російсько-української війни, ігнорування етнонаціональних проблем спричиняє вразливість до зовнішніх чинників і гібридних загроз. Попри відсутність системності у реалізації державної етнополітики, наявність низки викликів, які породжують суперечності у суспільстві, російська агресія зумовила консолідацію навколо громадянської ідентичності. Важливо цю єдність зберегти і надалі. В Україні вже зараз постала низка викликів перед державними органами влади, місцевим самоврядуванням і громадянським суспільством. У повоєнні роки збільшиться низка важливих питань, пов'язаних із повоєнним відновленням, проведенням реформ, удосконаленням системи національної безпеки, мінімізацією суспільних суперечностей тощо. Розв'язання цих проблем потребує налагодження взаємозв'язків держави з міжнародними партнерами і громадянським суспільством.

Ключові слова: етнонаціональні відносини, етнополітика, громадянське суспільство, ідентичність, інституції, резильєнтність, безпека.

The Problem Statement. The Russian aggression both in 2014 and 2022 became the factor in the unity of the Ukrainian society. Due to the threat to the Ukrainian state independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, there was an increase in the level of civic identity of the population. At the same time, the war provided the proof that Ukraine has a civil society, the institutions of which were quickly organized, changed the direction of activity under the war conditions, and became a crucial factor in the reconstruction of the liberated territories.

Ukraine has a diverse ethnic population. Even though, the Ukrainians are the overwhelming majority, the national minorities, indigenous peoples are an important part of the Ukrainian civil nation. A vivid example is that the national minorities of Ukraine took an active part in the defense of the country, providing for the needs of the military and

internally relocated people, destroying the Russian propaganda, establishing relations with the volunteer, public associations, voluntary formations, etc. when the Russo-Ukrainian War of 2014 broke out. It is relevant to form the Ukrainian civil nation's unity, the prospects of the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine and the establishment of a national dialogue, the national minorities participation in public life in the context of modern realities of the civil society development under the conditions of the Russo-Ukrainian War.

The Recent Researches and Publications Analysis. Diverse scholars studied the issue on the national minorities participation in the public and political life of Ukraine. First of all, it is worth noting the publications by the scholars of Kuras Institute of Political and Ethnic Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, in particular, O. Kalakura, V. Kotyhorenko, V. Kulyk, O. Liashenko, Yu. Nikolaitis, A. Podolskyi, O. Rafalskyi, M. Riabchuk, and the others. The above-mentioned scholars studied the issues of identity, the national minorities participation in the political processes, the issues of controversy and contradictions in the Ukrainian society comprehensively, as well as the analysis of the scientific discourse on these issues. There were covered vital aspects of the ethnic communities life in Ukraine in the studies by N. Belitzer, O. Hazizova, V. Kotsur, V. Yavir, and the others. The ethno-national issue in Ukraine became the subject of scientific, political and public discourse not only for domestic scholars, but also for the foreign ones. As V. Kotsur stated decently, the ethno-national issue became one of the tools of an external influence of the neighbouring states on Ukraine. The scholar is convinced that the ethno-national issue in Ukraine became one of the factors of the Russian aggression (Kotsur, 2020). We could come across a similar point of view in the works written by V. Horbulin (Horbulin, 2017), Ye. Mahda (Mahda, 2016), V. Yavir (Yavir, 2022) and the others. The study by N. Kravets and V. Barvinenko, which covered the place and role of the Ukrainian civil society in countering the Russian aggression, is quite significant (Kravets & Barvinenko, 2024). Foreign scholars not only analyzed the challenges, which modern globalized world has to face, but also studied partially Russia's application of the tools for introducing a hybrid warfare. There were thorough studies carried out by A. Bilal, A. Mumford, P. Carlucci, M. Rühle, K. Roberts, M. Harvey, and the others. According to A. Bilal, despite the established measures in order to protect against hybrid threats, a "hybrid war" is a controversial concept and does not have a universally recognized definition (Bilal, 2021). The methods of a hybrid warfare, which were tested in Ukraine led to a rethinking of the security strategies in numerous countries around the world. According to A. Mumford and P. Carlucci, there were used the political, technological and military methods in complex by Russia in order to help the kremlin achieve its own political goals, while avoiding responsibility for its actions (Mumford & Carlucci, 2023). M. Rühle and K. Roberts stated that more and more NATO member states are supplementing their own instruments for responding to the threats, after the the Alliance's strategy adoption for countering the hybrid threats (Rühle & Roberts, 2021). It should be noted that the foreign scholars point out that the ethnic factor became a component of the Russian aggression. D. Carment and D. Belo are convinced that the West ignores a detailed analysis of the political, cultural, and ethnic situation, which does not contribute to the prevention of such conflicts (Carment & Belo, 2018). According to M. Harvey, the hybrid threats are aimed not only at the security sector of the state, but also at other aspects, including the national minorities. A "hybrid war" can only be introduced efficiently if there is weakness of the civil society and the ethnic heterogeneity, which makes it easier for the aggressor to manipulate the consciousness of the population (Harvey, 2016). The prerequisites for the Russo-Ukrainian War in 2014 and the key factors of the Russian aggression were the following: the diversity of

the population's ethnic composition and the socio-political discussions on the language issue. According to J. White and D. Overdeer, the ethno-national issue became one of the means of the Russian aggression in Ukraine (White & Overdeer, 2020). E. Johansson-Nogués and E. Şimanschi noted that the Russian information campaign was aimed at the russified and the Russian-ethnic population of Ukraine (Johansson-Nogués & Şimanschi, 2023). According to O. Bilichak and A. Huz, the hybrid war was only a foreign policy tool for Russia (Bilichak & Huz, 2024).

The issue on the direct participation of the national minorities in the public and political life of Ukraine under the conditions of the Russo-Ukrainian War, their reaction to the Russian aggression, resilience, volunteer, cultural, and educational activities is not studied thoroughly. It is also vital to be aware of the likely scenarios regarding the ethno-national relations in Ukraine and the formation of a balanced ethno-politics during the post-war period.

The purpose of the research is to study the peculiarities of the national minorities participation in a public life, in particular, in the political, public, cultural, educational and other spheres under the conditions of the Russo-Ukrainian War, as well as to clarify the possible challenges to the national ethnopolitics during the postwar years.

The Results of the Research. The Russian aggression both in 2014 and in 2022 was supported by the following hybrid methods of waging war: mass propaganda, influence on the ethno-national relations in certain regions, abdication of responsibility for the start of the war, etc. Taking into account the dynamic activities of the pro-Russian forces, the military presence in Sevastopol, Ukraine's dependence on the Russian energy resources, the activity of the Russian and pro-Russian media in Ukraine and, of course, distorting the identity issue, which became one of the main factors of the Russian aggression, we can state that Russia had a significant leverage over the internal situation in Ukraine even before 2014 (Boulègue & Lutsevych, 2020). Following the onset of the war, Russia lost some leverage and placed a significant wager on the pro-Russian political forces or the public associations, specifically the Ukrainian information sphere. At the same time, a full spectrum of the military tactics, from the information campaigns to the use of force, were employed concurrently. Hence, the above-mentioned had impact on Ukraine's ability to withstand the external influences, which in turn affected the Ukrainian society resilience. Despite this, in 2014 there was consolidation of the Ukrainian society in response to the armed aggression (Boulègue, Lutsevych & Marin, 2018). A similar situation was observed, but on a much larger scale in 2022.

The position of the national minorities of Ukraine regarding the Russian aggression

The kremlin focused on the issues of the ethno-national and religious relations in Ukraine, language discussions, etc., trying to deepen the social confrontation, which was supposed to legitimize the Russian armed aggression. As a result, it only caused the reverse reaction of the Ukrainian society instead. There was a rise in a civic identity (awareness of oneself first and foremost as a citizen of Ukraine) in 2014 and in 2022, despite the diverse ethnic composition of the population of Ukraine. In 2015, 68% of the respondents, who became the subject of the survey carried out by the Razumkov Centre, took pride in the Ukrainian citizenship (Boulègue, Lutsevych & Marin, 2018). Similar results were obtained by sociological studies in 2022 – 2023. The civic identity took precedence over the ethnic and regional identity under the conditions of the Russian aggression in 2014 and 2022. In fact, this is one of the key indicators that demonstrates the position of the Ukrainian citizens, regardless of their origin.

In this context a specific focus should be on the reaction of the national minorities of Ukraine, which actually destroyed the myth created by the Russian propaganda, about the

manifestation of “fascism” and “nazism”. At the same time, there were separate organizations with a clear anti-Ukrainian position that supported Russia’s actions. These were the pro-Russian political and public organizations for the most part, which were financed by the Russian special services and carried out their instructions (“Donetska Respublica”, “Rusky Rukh Ukrainy” (“The Russian Movement of Ukraine”), “Russkoye Viechie” (“The Russian Veche”, “russky Mir” (The Russian World”), etc.). It is obvious, that many of the above-mentioned organizations ceased to exist or were banned due to the unconstitutional actions after 2014. However, there remained diverse pro-Russian public organizations, which were another front of the hybrid war against Ukraine (Martyniuk, 2019). However, the position of the Bulgarians, the Armenians, the Romanians, the Hungarians, the Moldovans, the Jews, the Greeks and other minorities was clearly observed in contrast to the pro-Russian organizations. The majority of the national minority organizations condemned manifestations of separatism and the Russian aggression in Ukraine officially. The following organisations should be noted among them: The Association of the Bulgarians of Ukraine, Gagauz National Cultural Society “Birlik”, The Jewish Organizations Council of Dnipropetrovsk Region, The Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities (VAAD), The Hungarian Community of Kyiv and Kyiv Region, The Hungarian Democratic Federation in Ukraine and the others.

The Crimean Tatars suffered perhaps the most from the Russian aggression in 2014. First of all, some of them were forced to move from the Crimea to other regions of Ukraine, unable to return due to a number of circumstances (political persecution, loss of housing, work land, etc.). Second of all, some of the Crimean Tatars, who remained on the occupied peninsula had to adapt to new realities (a social mimicry). Third of all, the occupation authorities, nevertheless, resorted to the political repression of the Crimean Tatar activists. In 2015, the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities, A. Tors, noted that the Ukrainians, the Crimean Tatars and other ethnic groups, who support the territorial integrity of Ukraine, do not support the occupying power and renounce the Russian citizenship have fallen into the risk group (European Parliament, 2016). On the one hand, the Russian occupying regime of the peninsula declared support and assistance in the national and cultural autonomies development since 2014 (Belitser, 2017), and on the other hand, it created the conditions to prevent dissidence (European Parliament, 2016). A successful cooperation with individual organizations of the national minorities was also observed, which can be explained by the following reasons: 1) a significant level of assimilation, especially language, which affected the formation of identity; 2) adaptation to the new conditions of existence on the Crimean peninsula, as well as protection from persecution by new authorities. The factor of assimilation played an important role in this context. According to J. White and D. Overdeer, precisely those areas where there was a significant share of the Russian ethnic group and where the Russian-speaking population prevailed were the most vulnerable to separatism (White & Overdeer, 2020). It should be noted that the Russian full-scale invasion in 2022 refuted the thesis regarding the pro-Russian position of the russified population. Due to mass bombings, missile attacks on the civilian structures, destruction of cities, and the commission of war crimes by the Russian soldiers and mercenaries, there was only increase in the negative attitude towards the Russians by the civilian population. Owing to the hostilities, the majority the population became relocated by force.

The Russian authorities tried to keep in touch with the Mejlis, the Kurultai, and the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of the Crimea (DUMK) in February-March of 2014. It should be mentioned that not all representatives of the above-mentioned organizations

were categorically against a mutual understanding, in particular, a “common language” with the occupation authorities, since it was about the future of the Crimean Tatars on the peninsula. The official statements of the Mejlis stated that the Russian government was not recognized despite the search of consensus (Belitser, 2017). In addition, the Mejlis was one of the organizations that started protests against the decision of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC to secede from Ukraine. M. Dzhemiliev was denied to enter the ARC in May of 2014 and R. Chubarov – in July, as the reaction to their position regarding the occupation of the Crimea. Mass repressions broke out in September of 2014, and on April 26, 2016, the so-called “Supreme Court of the Republic of Crimea” recognized the Mejlis as an “extremist organization”. (Sviezhentsev, 2016). According to M. Dzhemiliev, 98–99% of the Crimean Tatars do not recognize the Russian government, but being under its pressure are forced to accept new conditions and, in some cases, the Russian citizenship (Radio Svoboda, 2014). In February of 2022, the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people condemned the Russian aggression and also called on the international community to support Ukraine (Chubarov, 2022). Due to the Russian troops’ invasion from the south, about 2,000 Crimean Tatars of Kherson region (who lived compactly in the town of Henichesk and in the surrounding villages) came under occupation for the second time. The Crimean Tatars expressed their protest against the Russian aggression. Hence, on March 6 of 2022, the residents of Novooleksiyivka took to the streets and protested with the flags of Ukraine and the Crimean Tatar people (Drapak, 2022).

In 2014, the Crimean Tatars took an active part in the formation of volunteer units. There were two factors that determined the activation of the Crimean Tatars in this direction: 1) the fervent desire to liberate the occupied peninsula and armed resistance to the Russian aggression; 2) bureaucratic obstacles somewhat hindered the official registration in the Ukrainian security forces. In 2014, the “Crimea” battalion of the Ministry for Internal Affairs of Ukraine, the Crimean Tatar Sotnia of the DUK Right Sector, and the “Asker” battalion of the Navy of Ukraine were created. In addition, they took part in the formation of the international units, the personnel of which included the Kazakhs, the Chechens, the Azerbaijanis, etc. According to M. Dzhemiliev, there were 450 Crimean Tatars in various armed formations in November of 2014 (Novorodovskyi, 2018, pp. 136–137). There were not only the Crimean Tatars, but also other minorities, who decided to join the defense of the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

The main evidence concerning the unity of the Ukrainian civil nation, regardless of the ethnic origin is the following appeal: “Ukraine is a peaceful home for all of us: an appeal in support of Ukraine”, initiated by the ethnic communities of Ukraine and published on February 22 of 2022 (Derzhavna sluzhba z etnopolityky ta svobody sovisti, 2022). In addition, before the start of the full-scale invasion, the Jews of Ukraine appealed to the Federal Chancellor of Germany, O. Scholz, with a call to stop “the Russian militarism”, because it is about the security and independence of Ukraine (VAAD, 2022). When the full-scale Russo-Ukrainian War broke out, numerous organizations of the national minorities (the Hungarian, the Jewish, the Romanian, the Armenian, etc.) received calls to condemn the Russian aggression and support Ukraine. In particular, the Hungarians of Zakarpattia appealed to the political parties of Hungary with appeals not to use them for political purposes, as well as to the Hungarian government regarding the support for Ukraine (Natsionalnyi instytut stratehichnykh doslidzhen, 2022). During the sociological research in Zakarpattia, implemented by the sociological company “Smartpoll” along with the Department of Sociology and Social Work of Uzhhorod National University, it was determined that 53,6% of the Hungarians in the

region believe that Hungary should provide Ukraine with weapons. But there was also the opposite point of view: 28,8% of the Hungarians, who actually supported the position of V. Orban's government. In addition, 71,4% of the Hungarians from Zakarpattia considered Russia responsible for the war in Ukraine, 67,3% agreed with the statement: Russia is and was a threat to peace in Europe (Diachuk, 2023).

The Jewish minority had a clear position regarding the preservation of the territorial integrity and state sovereignty both in 2014 and in 2022. The Chief Rabbi of Ukraine, Yaakov Dov Bleich, stated at a press conference in the United States that the threat to the Ukrainian Jewish was the policy of the kremlin back in 2014 (Likhachev, 2014). Similar statements can be heard from the leaders of the Jewish organizations in Ukraine even after the full-scale invasion. Thus, they debunked the myths created by the Russian propaganda regarding the development of the anti-Semitism and radical nationalism in Ukraine. The key theses of the statements made by the Jewish organizations in Ukraine were the following: condemnation of the Russian aggression, requests for the international support for Ukraine, appeals to the government, the Knesset, a civil society of Israel to provide assistance to Ukraine (Bykvu, 2022). The reaction of the Chief Rabbi of the Brodsky Synagogue in Kyiv, Moshe Reuven Azman, to the full-scale Russian invasion was remarkable. At the beginning of March of 2022, he recorded a video message and turned to the Russian Jews, the Russians, which was distributed in various languages around the world. In the future, Moshe Reuven Azman tried to convey the truth about the Russian aggression and its consequences for Ukraine to the whole world through social networks (Churikova, 2023). The official position of the Romanians, the Armenians, the Moldovans, the Bulgarians, the Gagauz and other minorities was similar. First of all, they condemned any manifestations of unconstitutionality, in particular the idea of creating the "Narodna Rada Bessarabia" ("People's Council of Bessarabia"), which was supposed to be aimed at protecting the rights of the national minorities in the South of Ukraine.

The Russian aggression in 2014, on the one hand, contributed to the growth of integrating processes within the Ukrainian society, to the growth of the level of civic consciousness and identity, and on the other hand, a significant part of society lives in a state of insecurity (Boulègue, Lutsevych & Marin, 2018). At the same time, these processes caused adaptation to new realities, strengthening vitality of the Ukrainian society.

Therefore, the Russian aggression in 2014 and 2022 led to an increase in the level of civic identity of the population. The official statements made a number of organizations of the national minorities of Ukraine destroyed the Russian propaganda regarding mass xenophobia, anti-Semitism in the Ukrainian society and provided the evidence to the process of integration around the idea of preserving Ukraine' statehood, its territorial integrity and state sovereignty, democratic progress, Euro-Atlantic integration.

Social activities of the national minorities under the conditions of the Russo-Ukrainian War

Since 2014, the ethno-national stability became as a significant feature of the ethno-political system of Ukraine under the conditions of the Russo-Ukrainian War. The ethno-national stability manifests itself in anticipating, identifying and preventing hybrid-conventional ethno-political threats, transforming them into an internal impulse to mobilize all components of the system to achieve a common goal, as well as countering full-scale Russian aggression in order to preserve and restore the territorial integrity of Ukraine (Yavir, 2022 p. 204).

The national minorities concentrated their social activities in several spheres: socio-political activity, volunteer activity, educational activity, cultural activity in 2014 – February 24 of 2022. In 2022, the range of activities mostly related to the protection of Ukraine from

the Russian aggression (assistance of the army, participation in voluntary movements), combating the consequences of the Russian occupation or mass missile attacks, assistance to internally relocated people and victims of the hostilities, cooperation with international organizations and funds, etc. The public associations temporarily deviated from the goals and directions of activity officially approved by the program documents. It was caused by the introduction of the martial law, the constant threat to the life and health of the Ukrainian citizens, the priority of solving the problem of logistical support for the military or the restoration of infrastructure destroyed by hostilities, shelling, and aid to the victims. There was characteristic the increase in the level of civic consciousness of the population in the western and central regions of Ukraine in 2014 mostly, compared to the year of 2022 when there changes, which covered the entire country. The Russia's full-scale aggression caused a strong attachment of the majority of the population to the nation and the state (Kulyk, 2023), according to political science, there was an effect of gathering around the flag. The desire for freedom is considered to be a characteristic feature of the Ukrainian civil nation. Despite a varied ethnic composition of the population, e diversity of cultural, religious, political preferences, and the standard of living, the category of "freedom" is a key consolidating factor, especially in the conditions of the Russian aggression.

The national minorities participation in ensuring the ethno-national stability became characteristic of the Ukrainian society, while its reaction to the emergence of the ethno-political threats was faster than the state's reaction (Yavir, 2022, p. 204). The skeptical views of the Western experts were shattered, who predicted the occupation of Ukraine or its possible disintegration due to ethnic, religious, cultural heterogeneity, and institutional weakness of the Ukrainian society. The realities of the Russo-Ukrainian War proved that a critical situation is a catalyst for consolidation and activation of a civil society, regardless of an ethnic or religious affiliation, political views, social status, etc.

Volunteering became one of the key activities of the public associations of the national minorities. We can distinguish certain features, while characterizing the work of thr ethnic groups in this sphere: 1) the volunteer activity of the national minorities of Ukraine became an integral part of the nationwide volunteer movement; 2) the implementation of volunteer or other public projects led to consolidating processes in society; 3) the development of volunteerism contributed to the growth of the level of civic self-identification, while the ethnic, religious affiliation, cultural, political views were not of significant importance. The activity done by the following public organization is considered to be a powerful example of volunteering among the national minorities in Ukraine: "The Union of Armenians of Ukraine", the Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities of Ukraine, the Association of Bulgarians of Ukraine, the Gagauz National-Cultural Society "Birlik", the Hungarian Community of Kyiv and Kyiv Region, the Democratic Union of Hungarians of Ukraine, MBO "the Roma Women's Fund "Chirikli", the Crimean Tatar Resource Center, etc. The volunteering activity was aimed at helping not only the military people, but also solving crucial social issues of the community.

The work in the educational and cultural direction was another direction of the social activity of the national minorities during the years of the Russo-Ukrainian War. Due to the activity of the Crimean Tatar intelligentsia and the Ukrainian authorities, numerous changes took place in education in the Crimean Tatar language in 2014 – 2022. First of all, the teaching of the Crimean Tatar language was implemented in places of the Crimean Tatars' settlement in the south of Kherson region, in particular, the appropriate classes were created

at schools. Second of all, studying the Crimean Tatar language at Sunday schools. On the initiative of the public organization “Alem”, such institutions studied not only the language, but also the history and culture of the Crimean Tatar people. Third of all, the publishing house of educational literature in the Crimean Tatar language was fully funded by the Ministry for Education and Science of Ukraine. Fourth of all, teaching and creation of the specialty “The Crimean Tatar language” in institutions of higher education, state support for the Crimean Tatar youth in obtaining higher education. Fifth of all, the implementation of diverse public projects on the study of the Crimean Tatar language, in particular, the development of the corresponding platform “BŪLBŪL” (in Ukrainian “Solovei” (“Nightingale”)) at the request of the Ministry for Culture and Information Policy (the presentation took place on December 15 of 2021) (Hazizova, 2022). The joint activities of the Crimean Tatar public organizations, state authorities and local self-government gave certain results. As a result, it contributed to the integration of the Crimean Tatars.

Owing to a special activation of the national minorities, which took place with the adoption of the Laws of Ukraine “On Education” (2017) and “On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as a State Language” (2019), which caused numerous discussions at the domestic and international levels. Mostly, there were controversies, which arose around provisions regarding the scope of use of languages in the fields of education, public administration, service, etc. At the same time, there were frank manipulations, which only complicated the ethno-national relations in Ukraine. The Hungarian, the Romanian, the Polish, and the Moldovan minorities criticized the language article of the Law of Ukraine “On Education” sharply, considering it discriminatory. The Russian minority and the russified ethnic groups also considered it unacceptable to establish the Ukrainian language in a number of spheres of the society’s life. There were discussions regarding the language article of the Law of Ukraine on Education, especially in regions where the national minorities live compactly. The local authorities, as well as an active Hungarian minority in Zakarpattia, believed that Article 7 of the legislative act contradicts the norms of the European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages, the Law of Ukraine “On National Minorities of Ukraine” and the international agreements. A similar position was held by the the Romanians and the Moldovans of Bukovyna. The Romanian press, as well as the Romanian-speaking users of the social networks, criticized the new education law (Kotsur, 2021, p. 91). The members of the Interregional Association “The Romanian Community of Ukraine” wrote an appeal to the President of Ukraine, P. Poroshenko, in which they stressed out the Law of Ukraine “On Education” was unconstitutional (ACC, 2017). It should be noted that among the signatories was A. Bohescu, who was a co-author of the Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of State Language Policy”, known as the “Kolisnichenko-Kivalov Law”. It should be noted that the appeal was not signed by such Romanian organizations as the Congress of the Romanians of Ukraine and Mihai Eminescu Regional Society of Romanian Culture (Marusyk, 2017). It should be noted that even before the adoption of the Law of Ukraine “On Education”, numerous associations were formed, the statutory goals of which were to protect the national minorities’ rights. Most of them were the pro-Russian, as the proof was their composition and activities p (Kovalchuk, 2017). It is obvious that these organizations were aimed at destabilizing Ukraine, using the ethno-national issue. It should be noted that the majority of the national minorities studied the Russian language at schools and it was the mother-tongue. among There were only the Bulgarians and the Moldovans, who went to the Ukrainian-language schools (Pylypenko & Pryvalov, 2020).

A similar situation was observed when there was the adoption of the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as State Language”. An attack on the language rights of the national minorities, violent Ukrainization was the key thesis of opponents of this document. According to the sociological research, conducted by the KMIS, the majority of the respondents noted that during the year of the above-mentioned legislative act, the level of usage of the Ukrainian language did not change significantly. It was the opinion of 52% of respondents throughout Ukraine. According to the respondents there was the rise in the usage of the Ukrainian language, in particular, 23% and 14,8% “A little more” and “Significantly more” (Kyivskyi mizhnarodnyi instytut sotsiologhii, 2020). In general, the law did not limit or prohibit the use of languages of the national minorities, but only protected the status of the Ukrainian as the state language. The language issue was always a subject of the manipulation and caused tension in the society.

The UN mission in Ukraine proved that linguistic identity was crucial for the national minorities in 2014 (Izsak, 2015). At the same time, it should be noted that a significant part of the national minorities organizations is convinced that there should be one state language in Ukraine. Instead, the development of languages of the national minorities should be ensured comprehensively and supported by the state. It is obvious that there are provisions that ensure the language rights of the national minorities of Ukraine after analyzing the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State” (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy, 2019). But the key goal is to protect the Ukrainian language as the state language, which does not contradict the Constitution of Ukraine and current international acts ratified by Ukraine.

The threat of a new stage of the Russian aggression at the beginning of 2022 and the beginning of the full-scale war led to the strengthening of the civic identity of the population of Ukraine and the role of the Ukrainian language and culture as the factors of resistance to aggression. There was consolidation of the population aimed at protecting the independence of Ukraine, regardless of an ethnic origin, place of residence, religious outlook, political preferences. According to the study by the Razumkov Centre in May of 2023, 94% of respondents were “very proud” or “rather proud” of their Ukrainian citizenship, 98% perceive Ukraine as their Motherland, and 97% noted that they have feelings of love and patriotism for it (Tsentr Razumkova, 2023a). There was also an increase in those, who considered themselves to share the Ukrainian and European cultural traditions (respectively 81% and 10% as in May 2023) and a decrease in those, who considered themselves to share the Russian or the Soviet cultural tradition (respectively 0,5% and 4 %) (Tsentr Razumkova, 2023b).

The Russian aggression in February of 2022 increased the mobilization of a civil society, which adapted to the challenges of war quickly. According to the survey data of the Zahoria Foundation in mid-2022, 86% of the respondents indicated that they carry out charitable activities in support of resistance to the Russian aggression. There was also an increase by 8 times in the number of charitable organizations from February 24, 2022 (Lutsevych, 2023).

The activities of the Union of the Armenians of Ukraine, the Crimean Tatar Resource Center, the Association of the Jews of Ukraine and diverse other public associations of the national minorities under the conditions of the full-scale Russian aggression were aimed at helping the military, immigrants, work in the information space, cooperation with international organizations, etc. The defense of the country became a crucial factor in the integration of the Ukrainian society, which destroyed numerous stereotypes and widespread myths about the lack of the unity in Ukraine. The potential of a strong civil society remains today, however,

with the further development of the Russo-Ukrainian War, changes in public activity are likely, which may be related to a number of factors: adaptation to the war, the absence of hostilities on a significant territory of Ukraine, violations of important, from the point of view ethno-national unity, issues (language, religion, culture), discrediting by individual officials, political figures, journalists, bloggers of the achievements of the military, volunteers, and civil society under the conditions of full-scale Russian aggression.

Challenges of the post-war period

A high level of civic consciousness was a vivid example that there was the unity of the Ukrainian society under the conditions of war. Due to a powerful potential, the civil society of Ukraine can become a vital factor in the post-war recovery. The experience of the Russo-Ukrainian War proved that a civil society is capable of solving complex tasks, partially taking over the functions and responsibilities of the state. The issue remains whether the Ukrainian civil society will be able to maintain its consolidation after the end of the war for the reconstruction of Ukraine? If all the conditions for its further development are created, new opportunities for work are created, interaction with state institutions or international organizations is strengthened, as well as a balanced ethno-politics is built and implemented, we will have a high probability of preserving unity. It is obvious that there will be some controversial moments, but it is crucial for the state to find an optimal approach to solving possible issues along with the institutions of a civil society.

The Ukrainian multicultural civil society was recognized as one of the factors of Ukraine's resilience even before the beginning of the full-scale phase of the Russo-Ukrainian War. The key features of the Ukrainian multicultural civil society were an active network of public and volunteer organizations and a high level of trust in them among citizens, a prevailing culture of non-hierarchical connections/relationships, and the experience of a successful social mobilization (Lutsevych, 2023). It is not surprising that under the conditions of a full-scale Russian invasion, civil society institutions (CSOs), including those of the national minorities, made efforts to protect the country, support the military, and help the injured and socially vulnerable categories of society.

It should be noted that there will be diverse challenges, which will occur during the post-war years, in particular, demining, rebuilding destroyed cities, restoring the economy, solving social issues of the war victims and their integration into peaceful life, preventing conflicts on the ethnic or social grounds, adapting the information space, rethinking the national security policy at all levels in order to minimize the threats of aggression from other countries, etc. Taking into consideration the above-mentioned, there are numerous issues, which require a comprehensive approach, both from the state, and from international partners and a civil society. CSOs have already their own vision for the restoration of Ukraine and are ready not only to make proposals, but also to work in this direction actively. According to Kyiv civil society institutions there are the following three most important ways of involving civil society in the country's recovery processes: 1) creation of special advisory groups in relevant ministries with the CSOs' participation; 2) civic society participation in the work of the National Reconstruction Council, by delegating its own representatives; 3) conducting consultations on the issues of state policy with the participation of citizens and CSOs. On the contrary, the regional institutions of a civil society have a different point of view regarding the involvement of CSOs in the reconstruction of the country: 1) the involvement of CSOs in the development of plans for the reconstruction of communities; 2) creation of the public control groups in order to monitor reconstruction projects; 3) institutional consolidation of the public

participation budgets and social contracts for the provision of services (Lutsevych, 2023). The above-mentioned ways of involving the civil society institutions are crucial and need to be implemented instantaneously. To our mind, it is vital to guarantee the public associations' participation in advisory and consultative structures at state and local self-government bodies, in the context of the formation and implementation of the country's recovery policy. Furthermore, it is important to involve the public organizations of the national minorities in the development of the conceptual provisions of the state ethno-national policy in the context of the national minorities participation in the political processes of Ukraine. Taking into consideration the ethnic factor used by the Russian propaganda in order to justify aggression, the above-mentioned aspect is of an utmost importance. Ethnopolitics is one of the components of national security, especially in the context of hybrid threats, given the current geopolitical challenges.

The Russian aggression caused serious damage to Ukraine's economy and environment, in addition to significant human casualties in June of 2023. The outcome is the following: the direct damage to infrastructure is about 130 billion dollars, 411 billion dollars should be given for recovery and reconstruction, 750 billion dollars should be donated to the National Reconstruction Fund; the environment suffered from the damage, which constitutes to 35 billion dollars and another 37 billion dollars should be provided for demining territories. In 2022, there was decrease in GDP in Ukraine, which reached 35% (Lutsevych, 2023). The Ukrainian experts are convinced that Ukraine, in particular, the state, public organizations, entrepreneurs and individual citizens should demand the reparations for all types of damages (Vyetrov & Hamula, 2022). Hence, one of the biggest challenges is to force Russia and Belarus to make reparations, because, in addition to legal aspects, there are other factors that will influence this process: the political will of the world community and, most importantly, an official capitulation with recognition of one's own guilt in the crimes committed.

It should be noted that Ukraine, started planning post-war recovery in 2022 (restoration of industry, reform of the agricultural sector, development of education, science, culture, information space, digitization, restoration of the military industry, energy security, human rights, implementation of necessary reforms for further Euro-Atlantic integration, etc.) along with the international partners. Civil society was to play an important role in post-war reconstruction. In particular, in the implementation of the institutional reforms (development and submission of proposals), in the investigation of war crimes (monitoring and collection of evidence of war crimes, advocacy, creation of a special tribunal), social welfare of IDPs, victims of war, veterans (development and submission of proposals, assessment of needs, awareness raising), in infrastructure restoration (public control, quality control, promotion of the "green agenda", direct participation in grant projects, etc.), community restoration (ensuring inclusion, needs assessment, consulting and mediation in dispute resolution, design and innovative solutions, public control, quality control, participation in state, local and international grant projects for the restoration of communities), environmental protection (development and submission of proposals, monitoring, data collection, provision of services), economic recovery and development (formation of proposals, creation of jobs through social entrepreneurship, strategy development, fundraising, policy implementation monitoring) (Lutsevych, 2023). It is vital to create conditions that will involve the institutions of a civil society in the activities of the post-war realities.

In 2022 there was the Ukrainian Recovery Conference in London, which brought together a number of domestic and foreign experts with the aim of finding optimal ways to rebuild

Ukraine during the post-war years. The conference set three key goals of the Recovery Plan of Ukraine: sustainability, recovery and modernization (National Recovery Council, 2022). Diverse thematic groups were formed, which developed their own vision of restoration and reform of every sphere of public life in Ukraine thoroughly. It should be noted that some thematic groups focused on the development of legislation in the field of the national minorities, as well as made their own proposals regarding the preservation of the ethno-cultural diversity during the war and subsequent reconstruction. Organizations of national minorities, as well as other institutions of a civil society, were supposed to be given the role of consultants regarding the formation and implementation of ethnopolitics. The plan provided for numerous crucial points that were related to the modernization of the legislative framework, the introduction of state support for the development of the language and culture of ethnic groups in 2022 (The National Council for the Recovery of Ukraine from the Consequences of the War, 2022a). The formation of the Law of Ukraine “On Ethnic Diversity and National Unity” plays an important role among the offers made by the participants in the preparation of the recovery plan, which provides for the protection of minority rights, integration of the Ukrainian society taking into account hybrid threats from the aggressor state, and will contain provisions on the settlement of the minority languages’ issue in accordance with current legislation (The National Council for the Recovery of Ukraine from the Consequences of the War, 2022b). There is no doubt that it is vital to implement the policy of cultivating common national and civic values of the country’s citizens, while contributing to the preservation and development of the cultural heritage of all its ethno-specific components. The national minorities of Ukraine should be not only the object, but also the subject of the development of such a policy. It will contribute to the strengthening of a civic identity, ethno-national harmony and integration of the Ukrainian society.

The de-occupation of the Crimea, parts of the eastern and southern regions will be a significant challenge due to the significant proportion of the Russian ethnic group living there. The idea of mass deportation to Russia circulates in public discourse, as it is a security issue. On the other hand, it will be impossible to implement this process fully due to the following issues: 1) the lack of forces and means that will allow this resettlement to be implemented; 2) the democratic world community will condemn these actions. In any case, the Russian minority will be a serious aggravator, and, therefore, this issue will need to be resolved at the state level. R. Chubarov noted that there cannot be a monopoly of one ethnic community in administration in the Crimea. Hence, according to Chubarov, one of the primary tasks of the state is to create of a complex of legal mechanisms for the joint management of the Crimea by the Crimean Tatars with other ethnic groups living on the territory of the peninsula (Semena, 2023).

Another challenge of the post-war years is to strengthen the national resilience of the Ukrainian society. There is a possibility of a decrease in the activity and commonality of actions between different CSOs, a decrease in the level of civic identity and an increase in the ethnic identity, and the appearance of new contradictions in society after the end of the war. It is vital to strengthen a civil society and its role in state building, community development and as a factor of national security, minimize internal conflicts, modernize security policy, improve interaction and trust between the state and society, and implement balanced ethnopolitics in order to strengthen resilience.

The Conclusions. The ethno-national issue is a crucial component of the state policy. Taking into consideration the experience of the Russo-Ukrainian War, the can state that ignoring the ethno-national issues can cause vulnerability to the external factors and hybrid

threats. Despite the lack of systematicity in the implementation of state ethnopolitics, the presence of diverse challenges that induce contradictions in society, the Russian aggression led to consolidation around a civic identity. It is crucial to preserve this unity in the future.

Taking into account the presence of the ethnic, linguistic and religious factors, which Russia used to justify aggression, it is vital to understand the reaction of the national minorities to the course of the Russo-Ukrainian War. First of all, the Russian minority and part of the russified population in certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as well as the Crimea, were under the influence of the ideas of the concept of the “russky mir” (“the Russian world”). The aggressive imposition of the “russky mir” (“Russian world”) provoked the emergence of the anti-Ukrainian movements, which, with the support of Russia’s special services, created a space for occupation. Second of all, the vast majority of the national minorities, despite certain misunderstandings with the state, spoke out against the Russian aggression, condemning it publicly, organizing volunteer activities or taking a direct part in the war, both in volunteer formations and in the force structures of Ukraine. Third of all, the Russian aggression strengthened the population’s civic identity both in 2014 and 2022, which prevailed over the ethnic or regional ones. That is, the national minorities perceive themselves as part of the Ukrainian civil nation, which is fighting for independence.

There are numerous challenges that Ukraine has to face, in particular, for the state authorities, a local self-government and a civil society. During the post-war years, a number of vital issues related to the post-war reconstruction, implementation of reforms, improvement of the national security system, minimization of social contradictions, etc. will intensify. In this context, civil society must act as a subject of policy formation and implementation. It is necessary to start the process of restoring the country even under the conditions of war. It should be applied to the renewal of decentralization processes, the development of a balanced ethno-national state policy, the promotion of the development of the humanitarian sphere, the implementation of anti-corruption activities and the assignment of the role of IGS in these processes. There are challenges to the establishment of relations between state institutions and society as a whole, as well as the development of ethno-national relations in the de-occupied territories.

Taking into consideration the current realities of the Russo-Ukrainian War, the geopolitical turbulence the world is experiencing, it is crucial to adapt the Ukrainian society to new changes. In this context, it is important to do a further research on the relationship between organizations of the national minorities of Ukraine and the international organizations and their joint activities in the process of recovery. To our mind, it is also important to detail the Recovery Plan of Ukraine regarding the participation of the IHS in the formation of the ethno-national policy. The scientific studies on the prospects and ways of involving the public associations (including the national minorities) in the recovery process are promising/long-term and will have important practical significance for the CGI, state authorities and local self-government

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