



# Post War Ukraine & Democratic Institution Building

**Maryna Rabinovych**, Post-Doctoral Researcher, University of Agder

DAAD Alumna (2015/2015, 208/2019)

# War & Ukraine's democracy

- Recognized as “partly free” by the Freedom House 2023 [“Nations in Transit”](#) report
- **Numerous restrictions, stemming from the Martial Law:**
  - Prohibition of elections at all levels until the end of the martial law period
  - Wartime media regulations: launch of the telemarathon
  - Suspension of the activities of ten political parties, linked to the aggressor state
  - Restrictions on citizens' rights, e.g. freedom of movement
- **Instances of misuse by the government**
  - E.g. exclusion of opposition channels ‘Espresso’ and ‘Pryamiy’ from digital broadcasting network
  - No restoration of access, despite the 25.000 citizens' signing the petition
  - Limitations on contacts with foreign partners, imposed on opposition MPs, delays with approval of business trips

# Good news (1) : Pluralism Despite Martial Law

- **Onuch, O. & Way, L. (2024, May) Why Ukraine's Elections Can Wait. *Journal of Democracy*.**
  - Reactionary society and the government's most often staying attuned to societal moods (e.g. 4.200 amendments to the Mobilization Law)
  - Debate (!!!)
  - No real wartime censorship (social media as the key source of information)
  - Continuously strong role of municipalities / emergence of collaborative governance practices
  - Active civil society / volunteering movements
  - EU + other Western actors as watchdogs of Ukraine's democracy



<https://www.chesno.org/post/583>

# Good news (2) : Collapse of Ukrainian oligarchy

- **Siedin, O. (2024, March 14). The Collapse of Ukrainian Oligarchy in Ten Years of War.**

## *Focus Ukraine*

- 2011-2021 – assets of key Ukrainian oligarchs already halved
- **Key influence factors:**
  - War and destruction
  - Salience of IT and agriculture, rather than industrial sectors
  - Anti-oligarchic legislation
  - Anti-corruption and anti-money-laundering legislation, more generally



<https://shakhtar.com/de-de/club/infrastructure/donbass-arena/>

# Threats amidst the war, capable of influencing the post-war period



Source: GANK

- Further consolidation of the power vertical
- Societal polarization, coupled with radicalization:
  - Those who remained / those who left
  - Those who served in the army / those who did not
  - Those who experienced losses due to the war / those who did not
- 'Economic reservation' debate
- Reinvigoration of the language-related debate (killing of language activist Farion)

# End-of-the-war related threats to democratic development

- Legitimacy of the peace negotiations' outcome  
(especially in case of territorial 'concessions')
- If needed: challenge of reintegrating previously occupied territories (due to changed demographics)
- Striking a balance between collaborators and people at occupied territories, forced to abide by the occupation power



Source:

[https://molbuk.ua/chernovtsy\\_news/183636-sche-ne-maydan-ale-vzhe-poperedzhennya-scho-oznachayut-protesty-ni-kapitulyaciyi.html](https://molbuk.ua/chernovtsy_news/183636-sche-ne-maydan-ale-vzhe-poperedzhennya-scho-oznachayut-protesty-ni-kapitulyaciyi.html)

# Way ahead

- Nationwide dialogue on the war, negotiations and post-war Ukraine / memory policy work
- Provision of assistance to vulnerable groups, especially veterans and IDPs
- Work with international partners to ensure Russia's accountability for its crimes against Ukraine
- Collaboration with international partners aimed at strengthening the capacity of local self-government bodies and civil society