Country Policy and Information Note
Ukraine: Minority groups

Version 2.0

June 2019

Preface

Purpose

This note provides country of origin information (COI) and analysis of COI for use by Home Office decision makers handling particular types of protection and human rights claims (as set out in the basis of claim section). It is not intended to be an exhaustive survey of a particular subject or theme.

It is split into two main sections: (1) analysis and assessment of COI and other evidence; and (2) COI. These are explained in more detail below.

Assessment

This section analyses the evidence relevant to this note – i.e. the COI section; refugee/human rights laws and policies; and applicable caselaw – by describing this and its inter-relationships, and provides an assessment on whether, **in general:**

- A person is reasonably likely to face a real risk of persecution or serious harm

- A person is able to obtain protection from the state (or quasi state bodies)

- A person is reasonably able to relocate within a country or territory

- Claims are likely to justify granting asylum, humanitarian protection or other form of leave, and

- If a claim is refused, it is likely or unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

Decision makers **must**, however, still consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case's specific facts.

Country of origin information

The country information in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the Common EU [European Union] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information (COI), dated April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual, 2013. Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

The structure and content of the country information section follows a terms of reference which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to this note.

All information included in the note was published or made publicly available on or before the 'cut-off' date(s) in the country information section. Any event taking place or report/article published after these date(s) is not included.

All information is publicly accessible or can be made publicly available, and is from generally reliable sources. Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion.

Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information, and
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources.

Multiple sourcing is used to ensure that the information is accurate, balanced and corroborated, so that a comprehensive and up-to-date picture at the time of publication is provided of the issues relevant to this note.

Information is compared and contrasted, whenever possible, to provide a range of views and opinions. The inclusion of a source, however, is not an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a brief footnote; full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the bibliography.

Feedback

Our goal is to continuously improve our material. Therefore, if you would like to comment on this note, please email the Country Policy and Information Team.

Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support him in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office's COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. The IAGCI may be contacted at:

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Information about the IAGCI's work and a list of the documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's pages of the gov.uk website.

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Assessment

1. Introduction

1.1 Basis of claim

1.1.1 Fear of persecution or serious harm by state, non-state or rogue state actors due to the person's actual or perceived membership of a minority group.

1.2 Points to note

1.2.1 For the purposes of this note, 'minority group' means Roma, Jews, ethnic Russians, Belarusians, Moldovans, Muslims and Tatars; and persons of non-Slavic appearance.

1.2.2 Unless otherwise stated, this note refers to minority groups in the government-controlled areas of Ukraine. For information and guidance on the situation in Crimea and the Donbas, see the country policy and information note on Ukraine: Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk.

1.2.3 Where a claim is refused, it must be considered for certification under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 as Ukraine is listed as a designated state.

2. Consideration of issues

2.1 Credibility

2.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status.

2.1.2 Decision-makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants).

2.1.3 Decision-makers should also consider the need to conduct language analysis testing (see the Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis).

2.1 Exclusion

2.1.1 If there are serious reasons for considering that the person has been involved in committing serious human rights abuses or serious crime, decision makers must consider whether any of the exclusion clauses are applicable.

2.1.2 For further guidance on the exclusion clauses and restricted leave, see the Asylum Instruction on Exclusion: Article 1F of the Refugee Convention and the Instruction on Restricted Leave.

2.2 Convention reason

2.2.1 Race, religion or nationality.

2.2.2 Establishing a convention reason alone is not sufficient to be recognised as a refugee. The question to be addressed in each case is whether the particular person will face a real risk of persecution on account of their actual or imputed convention reason.

2.2.3 For further guidance on Convention reasons and particular social groups, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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2.3 Risk

a. General points

2.3.1 Ethnic Ukrainians form 77.8% of the population of just under 44 million. Russians form the largest ethnic minority group, at 17.3% of the population. Belrussians form 0.6%, Crimean Tatars 0.5%, and Jews 0.2%. Numbers of Roma are estimated to be between 250,000 and 300,000 (around 0.6% of the population) (see [Demography](#) and [Roma community](#)).

2.3.2 The constitution guarantees the right to equality and non-discrimination on the basis of race or ethnicity; however, technicalities within the criminal code mean that hate offences are sometimes prosecuted as hooliganism.

2.3.3 The majority of Ukraine's different minority groups are integrated into society although some itinerant Roma in particular are reported to suffer significant discrimination and disadvantage. The vast majority of Roma and others, such as Jews and Belarusians, are integrated within the general population and suffer little, if any, discrimination or disadvantage (see [Roma](#), [Jews](#) and [Ethnic Russians](#)).

2.3.4 It was suggested that developments in the east of the country and in Crimea had contributed to a rise in xenophobic incidents, which NGOs reported had increased during 2018. The Police recorded 157 incidents of hate crime for the year 2015, with 31 incidents motivated by racism and xenophobia, three by bias against Roma and Sinti, and 18 by antisemitism. The majority of incidents (45) involved incitement to hatred accompanied by violence, with 32 incidents of damage to property and 30 incidents of physical assault. However, international organisations and NGOs recorded a total of 213 incidents of hate crime in the same year. The number of incidents per head was significantly lower than in the UK but this could be due to a variety of factors, including classification and reporting mechanisms. The Ukrainian authorities are taking various actions to address issues of under-reporting and lack of recognition of hate crime (see [Xenophobia](#), [Data](#) and [Initiatives to address hate crime](#)).

2.3.5 In general, most members of minority groups in Ukraine experience very little discrimination by either state or non-state actors, and when discrimination is experienced, it is unlikely to be sufficiently serious by nature or repetition as to meet the high threshold of persecution or serious harm.

b. Roma

2.3.6   There were reports of some itinerant Roma living in makeshift camps or settlements with high levels of poverty and without water or electricity. The biggest such camp houses approximately 6,000 people. Although education is guaranteed to all children under the law, some Roma children have been denied education, wrongly placed in schools for children with special needs or placed in segregated schools. In addition, Roma are less likely to hold identity documents, which causes difficulties for children in accessing education. Roma have a high level of not having completed any education at all (24%), of not completing compulsory education (37%) and of illiteracy (23%). Due to low levels of education, poor employment opportunities, and discrimination, some Roma rely on work collecting scrap metal (see Housing and Education and employment).

2.3.7   In 2018 there was an increase in violent attacks on Roma camps and police did not always intervene to protect them. Police do not always recognise hate crime as such, and it is not always prosecuted (see Societal treatment and State treatment).

2.3.8   Although the Constitution guarantees free healthcare for all, in reality, payment is required, which can often be particularly difficult for itinerant Roma due to high levels of poverty. There is evidence of discrimination against Roma by healthcare professionals and a lack of identity documents can also make it difficult for Roma to access healthcare as they must pay if they are unable to prove their nationality (see Healthcare).

2.3.9   Most issues faced by itinerant Roma stem from their chosen lifestyle which in turn can lead to lack of documentation which can deny them access to healthcare or the correct schooling. Their perceived difference (in life style choice) can lead to a lack of employment opportunities, discrimination and harassment from non-state actors (see Roma).

2.3.10 There is no evidence that the state is deliberately perpetuating the situation, and there is some limited evidence that the state is attempting to find a solution (see Roma community, Statelessness and identification documents and Protection).

2.3.11 However, the vast majority of Roma do not have itinerant lives and are fully integrated into society, with steady employment and lifestyles similar to their ethnic Ukrainian neighbours (see Societal treatment and State treatment).

2.3.12 In 2013, the Government adopted a Strategy for the Protection and Integration of the Roma Ethnic Minority in Ukraine which runs up to 2020. Assistance has been provided to Roma with regard to employment and land has been allocated to Roma. However, the Strategy has been criticised for having no budget and for having been mainly unimplemented (see Roma community).

2.3.13 There is no deliberate state discrimination directed at the Roma community in Ukraine. Itinerant members of the community may experience societal harassment and discrimination. Although there have been times where the police have not provided effective protection for Roma or investigated cases of societal violence against itinerant Roma, police protection is generally available (see Protection).

2.3.14 In general, the level of such treatment is not sufficiently serious by its nature and repetition that it will reach the high threshold of being persecutory or otherwise inhuman or degrading treatment. Decision makers must consider whether there are particular factors relevant to the specific person which might make the treatment serious by its nature and repetition. Each case must be considered on its facts with the onus on the person to demonstrate that they would be at real risk from non-state actors on return.

c. Jews

2.3.15 As of the end of November 2018, there had been no recorded incidents of anti-Semitic violence in Ukraine throughout the year, and there were none in 2017. As of the end of November 2018, there had been about 11 cases of reported anti-Semitic vandalism, which compared with 24 incidents in the previous year. The National Minority Rights Monitoring Group suggested that the decrease was due to better policing and prosecution (see Societal treatment).

2.3.16 There were reports of public officials making anti-Semitic statements with impunity. However, Jewish community leaders generally consider Ukrainian Jews to be well-integrated into society and not subjected to state-sanctioned anti-Semitism (see State treatment).

2.3.17 CPIT could find no evidence (see Bibliography) of discrimination against Jewish people by the state.

d. Ethnic Russians, Belarussians and Moldovans

2.3.18 Despite tensions with Russia in the east and Crimea, relations are generally good between ethnic Ukrainians and ethnic Russians, and CPIT could find no evidence (see Bibliography) of discrimination against ethnic Russians by the state.

e. Muslims and Tatars

2.3.19 The authorities have taken measures to protect Crimean Tatars, particularly those who had left Crimea after 2014, but Crimean Tatars may have difficulties in accessing employment, education and social services.

2.3.20 However, although Crimean Tatars may experience some discrimination, in general it is not sufficiently serious by nature or repetition as to meet the high threshold of persecution or serious harm.

f. Persons of non-Slavic appearance

2.3.21 There is evidence of hate speech, violent hate crime and discrimination against visible ethnic minorities.

2.3.22 Persons of non-Slavic appearance may experience discriminatory treatment by law enforcement officials and hate crimes may be prosecuted as less serious offences. However, there is also evidence that appropriate action has been taken by law enforcement authorities to prosecute in the case of a man who committed racist and homophobic attacks (see Implementation of the law).

2.3.23   In general, effective state protection is likely to be available for persons who face discriminatory societal treatment, but each case must be assessed according to its facts.

2.3.24   For further guidance on assessing risk, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

2.4   Protection

2.4.1   By law, Ukraine is required to prohibit discrimination against persons on the basis of their race, colour and national origin in the enjoyment of all civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. The Constitution of Ukraine requires that the State 'promotes the consolidation and development of the Ukrainian nation, of its historical consciousness, traditions and culture, and also the development of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of all indigenous peoples and national minorities'. The right to equality and non-discrimination is enshrined in law. The Special Rapporteur on minority issues found that Ukraine's legislation and policy are generally consistent with the provisions of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities and are generally conducive to the protection of minority rights. In addition, the Constitution provides for freedom of religion and worship (see [Law in relation to racial discrimination](#) and [Law in relation to religion](#)).

2.4.2   Article 161(2) of the Criminal Code punishes incitement to national, racial or religious hatred with violence. Article 178 punishes damage to religious property or places of worship. However, there were concerns that requirements for the application of article 161 of the Criminal Code to acts of racial discrimination, such as the fact that the violation must take place during a public event and the necessity of an expert opinion, hamper the effectiveness of the article. As a result, there can be a tendency for hate offences to be dealt with as hooliganism, rather than hate crime (see [Law in relation to racial discrimination](#)).

2.4.3   Whilst there is evidence of hate crime being investigated and prosecuted, human rights groups stated that police and prosecutors did not always treat hate crime as such, or effectively investigate and prosecute, which led to impunity. The number of cases of racial discrimination registered, investigated and brought to domestic courts and other bodies is low (see [Implementation of the law](#)).

2.4.4   In 2015 the Government implemented a National Human Rights Strategy, with an Action Plan which would be ongoing until 2020, which addresses equality and non-discrimination. However, the European Commission noted a lack of budgetary resource for the Strategy (see [Integration strategies](#)).

2.4.5   There are also non-governmental organisations that advocate for minority groups and may be able to assist the person to avail themselves of the protection of the state (see [Non-governmental assistance](#)).

2.4.6   In general, effective state protection is likely to be available. The onus is on the person to demonstrate why they would not be able to seek and obtain it. Decision makers need to consider each case on its facts.

2.4.7   For further guidance on assessing the availability or otherwise of state protection, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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2.5   Internal relocation

2.5.1   Where the person has a well-founded fear of persecution from non-state actors, including 'rogue' state agents, internal relocation is likely to be an option to escape such risk.

2.5.2   See also the country policy and information note on [Ukraine: Internal relocation](#).

2.5.3   For further guidance on internal relocation, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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2.6   Certification

2.6.1   Where a claim is refused, it is likely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

2.6.2   For further information on certification, see the [Appeals Instruction on Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under Section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 (clearly unfounded claims)](#).

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Country information

3   Legal position

3.1   Law in relation to racial discrimination

3.1.1   Equal Rights Trust published a report in 2015 which noted:

'Ukraine is required to prohibit discrimination against persons on the basis of their race, colour and national origin in the enjoyment of all civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights guaranteed under the ICCPR [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights] and ICESCR [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights] by virtue, respectively, of Article 2(1) of the ICCPR and Article 2(2) of the ICESCR. In addition, Ukraine is also required by Article 26 of the ICCPR to ensure that "the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground", including on the basis of race, colour and national origin. The CESCR has also stated that Article 2(2) of the ICESCR extends to a prohibition of discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin. In addition, as a state party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Ukraine is required to prohibit all forms of discrimination on the basis of race, colour, descent, national and ethnic origin. Further, the ECHR requires Ukraine to prohibit discrimination based on race, colour and national origin in respect to all Convention rights, by virtue of Article 14, and by virtue of Protocol No. 12 to the ECHR, to prohibit discrimination in the enjoyment of other right set forth by law.'[1]

3.1.2   The report of the UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues, following her mission to Ukraine in April 2014, noted:

'The Constitution of Ukraine (art. 11) requires that the State "promotes the consolidation and development of the Ukrainian nation, of its historical consciousness, traditions and culture, and also the development of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of all indigenous peoples and national minorities". The right to equality and non-discrimination is enshrined under article 24, which prohibits "privileges or restrictions based on race, colour of skin, political, religious and other beliefs, sex, ethnic and social origin, property status, place of residence, linguistic and other characteristics"…'[2] The Constitution of Ukraine is available here.

3.1.3   The Special Rapporteur on minority issues further stated, 'Ukraine has a legislative and policy framework and environment that are generally consistent with the provisions of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities and that are generally conducive to the protection of minority rights, including their civil and political and economic, social and cultural rights.'[3]

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[1] Equal Rights Trust, 'In the Crosscurrents; […],' August 2015, url
[2] UN General Assembly, 'Report of the Special Rapporteur […],' 27 January 2015 (paragraph 9), url
[3] UN General Assembly, 'Report of the Special Rapporteur […],' 27 January 2015 (para 70), url

3.1.4　The European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) published a report in September 2017, noting, 'Article 161(2) of the Criminal Code punishes incitement to national, racial or religious hatred with violence. Article 178 punishes damage to religious property or places of worship. The Criminal Code also provides for aggravated forms of certain violence offences when motivated by racial, national or religious intolerance and Article 67(1)(3) provides for higher penalties for any other offence on the same grounds.'[4] The Criminal Code is available [here](#).

3.1.5　The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) published a report in October 2016 which stated:

'The Committee is concerned that requirements for the application of article 161 of the Criminal Code to acts of racial discrimination, such as the fact that the violation must take place during a public event and the necessity of an expert opinion, hamper the effectiveness of the article. The Committee is concerned that such requirements result in difficulties in proving racial motivation and that consequently hate offences are qualified as hooliganism [rather than hate crime] (art. 2, 4, 6).'[5]

3.1.6　Minority Rights Group International published (undated) information which stated:

'Integration of minority rights frameworks into Ukraine's national legislation remains limited: for example, the Law "On the Protection of National Minorities" has never been amended, despite many attempts by civil society groups and comments from international treaty bodies. Alongside the elaboration of an anti-discrimination law and legislation on state language policy, the government failed to elaborate a national strategy on ethnic minorities after the draft law "On the Concept of the State Ethnic Policy" was withdrawn from Parliament. National legislation, with the exception of the 1991 Declaration on the Rights of Nationalities in Ukraine, lacks a clear definition of what constitutes a national minority and does not provide any affirmative action to guarantee minority rights.'[6]

3.1.7　The ECRI report of September 2017 noted:

'The Law on Television and Radio Broadcasting, covering both public and private broadcasting, prohibits, in Article 6, the promotion of the idea of exclusivity, superiority or inferiority of persons on grounds of their religious beliefs, ideology, national or ethnic affiliation, physical or material status or social origin. The National Council of Ukraine on Television and Radio Broadcasting is a constitutional standing independent public authority that enforces the legislation and the only public regulator in the sector of broadcasting. It comprises eight members and has the task, among many others, of imposing sanctions for violations of the law. These include warnings (for first-time violations), fines (inter alia following failure to eliminate the violation after a warning), and initiation of the broadcast license

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[4] ECRI, Report on Ukraine, adopted 20 June 2017, published 19 September 2017, [url](#)
[5] UN, CERD, 4 October 2016, [url](#)
[6] Minority Rights Group International, Ukraine, Background, [url](#)

revocation in court (following failure to eliminate the violation after a warning and fine).'[7]

3.1.8   See Implementation of the law for information about the implementation of Article 6, described above.

3.2   Law in relation to religion

3.2.1   The US State Report on International Religious Freedom 2017 (US IRF 2018) provided the following information about the law pertaining to religion:

'The constitution provides for freedom of religion and worship. By law the government may restrict this right only in the "interests of protecting public order, the health and morality of the population, or protecting the rights and freedoms of other persons." The constitution provides for the separation of church and state and stipulates, "No religion shall be recognized by the state as mandatory."

'By law the objective of religious policy is to "restore full-fledged dialogue between representatives of various social, ethnic, cultural, and religious groups to foster the creation of a tolerant society and provide for freedom of conscience and worship."

'The law requires a religious institution seeking to receive official status as a legal entity to register both as a religious organization and as a nonprofit organization. To obtain official religious status an organization must register either with the Ministry of Culture, the government agency responsible for religious affairs, or with regional government authorities, depending upon the nature of the organization. Religious centers, administrations, monasteries, religious brotherhoods, missions, and religious schools register with the Ministry of Culture. […]

'The law requires commanders of military units to allow their subordinates to participate in religious services […] The law gives prison chaplains access to both pretrial detainees and sentenced inmates. […].

'[…] According to a 2016 Constitutional Court decision, religious organizations need only to inform local authorities of their intention to hold a public gathering, and need not apply for permission or notify authorities within a specific period in advance of the event.

'The law allows religious groups to establish theological schools to train clergy and other religious workers, as well as seek state accreditation through the Ministry of Culture for their curriculum. The law states theological schools shall function based on their own statutes.

'Government agencies authorized to monitor religious organizations include the Prosecutor General, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and all other "central bodies of the executive government."

'Only registered religious groups may seek restitution of communal property confiscated by the Communist regime. […]

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[7] ECRI, Report on Ukraine, adopted 20 June 2017, published 19 September 2017, url

'The law provides for antidiscrimination screening of draft legislation and government regulations, including based on religion. […].

'The Office of the Parliamentary Human Rights Ombudsman is constitutionally required to release an annual report to parliament with a section on religious freedom.

'The law restricts the activities of foreign-based religious groups and defines the permissible activities of noncitizen clergy, preachers, teachers, and other representatives of foreign-based religious organizations.'[8]

3.3   Implementation of the law

3.3.1   In the report of September 2017, ECRI noted:

'[…] that there were 79 prosecutions for hate-motivated offences in 2015, and only three final convictions with sentences imposed. As data covers both incitement to hatred and violence without distinction, it is impossible to ascertain how many involved hate speech. Indeed, according to NGOs, Article 161(1) of the Criminal Code has never been applied. ECRI considers the figures to be very low and regrets the minimal success rate in prosecuting and punishing this type of crime. This could indicate defects such as lack of understanding of hate crime and insufficient training of legal professionals. ECRI has also been informed that it is common during the criminal justice process to downgrade hate crime offences to acts of hooliganism which are easier to prosecute but result in lesser sentences. It regrets that by doing so, the important message that hate crime is more serious and will not be tolerated is lost.'[9]

3.3.2   The USSD HR Report 2018 stated:

'Human rights organizations stated that the requirement to prove actual intent, including proof of premeditation, to secure a conviction made it difficult to apply the laws against offenses motivated by racial, national, or religious hatred. Authorities opened two criminal proceedings under the laws on racial, national, or religious offenses during the year. Police and prosecutors continued to prosecute racially motivated crimes under laws against hooliganism or related offenses.'[10]

3.3.3   The same report stated:

'During the year [2018], human rights groups expressed growing concern about an increasingly organized set of nationalist hate groups committing violent attacks on ethnic minorities (especially Roma), LGBTI persons, feminists, and other individuals they considered to be "un-Ukrainian" or "anti-Ukrainian." The HRMMU [Human Rights Monitoring Mission to Ukraine] noted that the failure of police and prosecutors to prevent these acts of violence, properly classify them as hate crimes, and effectively investigate and prosecute them created an environment of impunity and lack of justice

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[8] US IRF Report 2017, Ukraine, 29 May 2018, url
[9] ECRI, Report on Ukraine, adopted 20 June 2017, published 19 September 2017, url
[10] USSD, HR Report 2018, Ukraine, 13 March 2019, url

for victims. A June 13 [2018] joint open letter to Ukrainian authorities from Human Rights Watch, Freedom House, Amnesty International, and Frontline Defenders also expressed concerns about the spike in attacks and impunity, and noted "the inadequate response from the authorities sends a message that such acts are tolerated."'[11]

3.3.4 When reporting on hate crime, including against Roma, Human Rights Watch reported that 'In most cases, police failed to respond or effectively investigate.'[12] Minority Rights Group International provided (undated) information which stated, 'Despite official recognition of hate crime as a serious issue that needs special attention at the ministerial level, at the level of policing victims still face discrimination, harassment and obstruction in opening criminal investigation.'[13]

3.3.5 The same report further concluded, 'Ukraine has been criticised for its inadequate response to these crimes [of violence against ethnic minorities], with both the relevant laws and their implementation called into question. In addition to hate crime, recent immigrants are disproportionately likely to be stopped and detained by law enforcement agencies.'[14]

3.3.6 In a report dated October 2016, the UN CERD declared that it was, '[…] concerned that [nationalistic] organizations are responsible for racially motivated violence against persons belonging to minority groups that has not been always punished.'[15]

3.3.7 In the report of September 2017, ECRI stated that it was '[…] pleased to note that Article 6 has been invoked to punish hate speech on grounds relevant to its mandate. Recently a TV broadcaster was sanctioned for antisemitic hate speech and licence revocation court proceedings are on-going.'[16]

3.3.8 In an undated post, the Minority Rights Group International website stated:

'Despite official recognition of hate crime as a serious issue that needs special attention at the ministerial level, at the level of policing victims still face discrimination, harassment and obstruction in opening criminal investigation. A particular problem with hate crime investigations in Ukraine has been the prosecution of victims for self-defence. In at least three cases since 2008, people who were pushed to use force against perpetrators ended up facing criminal charges: one of the most notorious cases involved Olaolu Fem, a Nigerian student who arrived in the country in 2007 to study medicine. In November 2011, however, he was subjected to an unprovoked assault by a local gang. After defending himself and his friend against his attackers, however, it was not the assailants who were arrested but Femi himself on charges of attempted murder. The subsequent investigation and trial were marked by numerous procedural flaws that reflect the continued imbalances in Ukraine's judicial response. After spending 18 months in

[11] USSD, HR Report 2018, Ukraine, 13 March 2019, url
[12] HRW, World Report 2019, Ukraine, Hate crime, 17 January 2019, url
[13] Minority Rights Group International, Ukraine, undated, url
[14] Equal Rights Trust, 'In the Crosscurrents; […],' August 2015, url
[15] UN, CERD, 4 October 2016, url
[16] ECRI, Report on Ukraine, adopted 20 June 2017, published 19 September 2017, url

custody, Femi was released on bail in April 2013 only after the Ombudsman for Human Rights supported a petition from a number of civil society organizations in his support. In April 2014, despite these irregularities and insubstantial evidence against him, Femi received a suspended sentence of five years with a three-year probation period. The sentence attracted widespread criticism from rights groups.'[17]

3.3.9 See Law in relation to racial discrimination for information about Article 6. See The Government and extremist groups for information about the apparent involvement of far-right groups with law enforcement. See Hate crime and Persons of non-Slavic appearance and for further information on these subjects.

3.4 Language

3.4.1 Minority Rights Group International published (undated) information, stating:

'In February 2014, one of the first acts of the new parliament was to vote to annul the 2012 law on minority languages, which allowed Russian to be treated as an official second language in parts of the country with a significant Russian-speaking population. This also had implications for other linguistic minorities and indigenous peoples in the country, such as Crimean Tatars, whose language has been classified by UNESCO as severely endangered, as well as Krymchak, Karaites, Bulgarian, Hungarian and Romanian minorities in the country. Though the then interim President, Aleksandr Turchinov, stated that he would not enact the annulment, calls for its ban persisted, and in February 2018 the Ukraine Constitutional Court ruled that the 2012 law was unconstitutional. As a result, minority languages – most notably Russian, the primary beneficiary of the legislation – are not currently recognized as regional languages and Ukraine is the only official state language.'[18]

3.4.2 See also Other minority groups for further information on some of the groups mentioned above.

Section 4 updated: 1 April 2019

4 Governmental approach

4.1 Integration strategies

4.1.1 In September 2017, ECRI stated:

'ECRI notes a number of specific integration policies developed in recent years concerning Roma, migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). […]

'However, it is also important to mention the National Human Rights Strategy, approved by Decree of the President on 25 August 2015, and its Action Plan for the period until 2020, approved on 23 November 2015 by Order of the Cabinet of Ministers. These documents represent overarching

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[17] Minority Rights Group International, Ukraine, Current issues, undated, url
[18] Minority Rights Group International, Ukraine, undated, url

human rights policies with measures affecting various groups of concern to ECRI and have an impact on integration. ECRI is pleased to note that equality and non-discrimination feature among the six principles of the strategy and that preventing and combating discrimination are among the strategic areas of action.

'The European Commission, in its Association Implementation Report on Ukraine, commended the active participation of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights and civil society in the preparation of the strategy and action plan, but noted lack of resources for implementation. Indeed, ECRI notes that the action plan includes expected outcomes, measures to achieve the results, indicators, timeframes and responsible bodies, but no budgetary allocations. The authorities informed ECRI that, according to the monitoring of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights and civil society, around 21% of the measures set out have been implemented so far.'[19]

4.1.2   The same report noted that, 'While there is no specific integration policy for national minorities, the Action Plan of the National Human Rights Strategy contains a section on the protection of the rights of indigenous communities and national minorities.'[20]

4.1.3   See Initiatives to address hate crime for information on this subject.

4.2   The Government and extremist groups

4.2.1   The USSD HR Report 2018 noted:

'Investigative journalists exposed several instances during the year in which the government provided grant funds to or cooperated with hate groups. On June 8 [2018], the Ministry of Youth and Sport announced that it would award C14, a nationalist hate group, 440,000 hryvnia ($17,000) to hold a youth summer camp. The ministry later justified the decision by stating that it provided the funds only for specific project activities that were not violent. Media outlets reported that C14 and other hate groups had entered into formal agreements with municipal authorities in Kyiv and other cities to form "municipal guard" patrol units to provide public security. In a December 2017 media interview, the head of C14 described cooperation with the SBU and police.'[21]

4.2.2   The USSD HR Report 2018 stated:

'There were reports that members of nationalist hate groups, such as C14 and National Corps, at times committed arbitrary detentions with the apparent acquiescence of law enforcement. For example according to the HRMMU [Human Rights Monitoring Mission to Ukraine], on March 14 [2018], members of C14 unlawfully detained a man in Kyiv Oblast who was suspected of being a member of an armed group in the "LPR" [Luhansk People's Republic]. After interrogating him while he was face down and

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[19] ECRI, Report on Ukraine, adopted 20 June 2017, published 19 September 2017, url
[20] ECRI, Report on Ukraine, adopted 20 June 2017, published 19 September 2017, url
[21] USSD, HR Report 2018, Ukraine, 13 March 2019, url

handcuffed, C14 handed him over to the SBU [Security Service of Ukraine].'[22]

4.2.3   The ECRI report of September 2017 noted that it was '[...] not aware of an awareness-raising campaign to dissuade youth from joining [extremist, far-right] groups, but the Ministry of Internal Affairs has stated that it regularly monitors the situation in the youth community, identifies the leaders, active participants and other members of radical organisations and their supporters.'[23]

4.2.4   See also Implementation of the law for further information about the treatment of persons of non-Slavic appearance by the Police.

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4.3   Discourse

4.3.1   ECRI further stated, 'According to a 2016 report, […] it is not journalists but members of the Ukrainian Parliament who use hate speech in television shows, "lying, manipulating and offending their opponents freely all for higher political ratings". The most hate speech occurs in talk shows or interviews aired on channels owned by opposition oligarchs.'[24]

4.3.2   ECRI further noted:

'Finally, ECRI places great importance on tackling hate speech through confronting and condemning it directly by counter speech that clearly shows its destructive and unacceptable character. It has heard that such counter speech is rare in Ukraine and that the authorities are generally unwilling to stand up for or speak out in favour of any vulnerable groups for fear of a negative reaction from the majority population. However, it welcomes a news report stating that the President made history in 2015 by becoming Ukraine's first head of state to publicly voice support for the constitutional right of every person to participate in the March of Equality while other voices were condemning and trying to ban it. Further, several members of Parliament took part in the march.'[25]

4.3.3   See also Hate crime for further information on this subject. See State treatment for information about state treatment of Roma.

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Section 5 updated: 9 April 2019

5   Hate crime

5.1   Xenophobia

5.1.1   The USSD HR Report 2018 stated, 'NGOs dedicated to combating racism and hate crimes observed that overall xenophobic incidents increased considerably during the year.'[26]

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[22] USSD, HR Report 2018, Ukraine, 13 March 2019, url
[23] ECRI, Report on Ukraine, adopted 20 June 2017, published 19 September 2017, url
[24] ECRI, Report on Ukraine, adopted 20 June 2017, published 19 September 2017, url
[25] ECRI, Report on Ukraine, adopted 20 June 2017, published 19 September 2017, url
[26] USSD, HR Report 201, Ukraine, 13 March 2019, url

5.1.2 In November 2018, Al Jazeera reported on a visit to Kyiv, stating, 'When we arrived in Kiev, […] there was tension in the air. The ongoing war with Russian-backed separatists, almost a thousand kilometres to the east, had profoundly affected the atmosphere, and it was no surprise to see large groups of men in paramilitary uniform on the streets.

'Combined with the relentless rise of right-wing demagogues […] it had created a climate of ultra-nationalism and disturbing levels of xenophobia.'[27]

5.1.3 In a report of September 2017, ECRI noted:

'According to the head of the State Security Service, there are no radical right organisations registered in Ukraine. ECRI notes, however, that there continue to be extremist organisations which manifest intolerance towards vulnerable groups and incite racial hatred. ECRI has also been informed that some of these groups, or individuals within them, have become involved in military action in the East of the country, thus gaining popularity for their openly ultra-nationalist agenda.'[28]

5.1.4 Quoting other sources, ECRI further noted, 'According to a 2016 report, instances of hate speech in the Ukrainian media are low, especially in view of social tensions caused by the illegal annexation of Crimea and the armed conflict in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, although there have been instances of hate speech about the Donbas population in smaller media or on the blogosphere.'[29]

5.1.5 The Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) conducted a nationwide poll of public opinion in September 2018, focussing on areas controlled by the Government. The results were summarised as below:

'The lowest level of ethnic prejudices in Ukraine is to Ukrainians, Belarusians and Russians, the highest - to the Chinese, Africans, Arabs and especially high level of prejudice to the Roma.

'- From 1994 to 2007, the level of xenophobia in Ukraine increased (in 2007 it was the highest over the entire period of observation), decreased slightly from 2008 to 2013, slightly increased after the annexation of the Crimea and the war on the Donbas from 2014 to 2018 and returned to the level of 2011 year

'- Xenophobia is most influenced by factors such as education (the higher education - the lower the level of xenophobia), type of settlement (the level of xenophobia is higher in villiage [sic] than in the city), region of residence, financial status (the higher the level of well-being the lower the level xenophobia) and age (with age, the level of xenophobia increases).'[30]

5.1.6 See The Government and extremist groups for further information on this subject. See Roma, Ethnic Russians, Persons of non-Slavic appearance and Other minority groups for further information on these groups.

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[27] Al Jazeera, 'Attacked and abandoned: Ukraine's forgotten Roma,' 23 November 2018, url
[28] ECRI, Report on Ukraine, adopted 20 June 2017, published 19 September 2017, url
[29] ECRI, Report on Ukraine, adopted 20 June 2017, published 19 September 2017, url
[30] KIIS, 'Interethnic bias in Ukraine,' 4 October 2018, url

5.2 Data

5.2.1 In the report of September 2017, ECRI noted:

'Data on hate crime, which do not distinguish between hate speech and hate motivated violence, are collected by the Prosecutor General's Office, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the State Department on Sentence Execution and the State Statistics Committee. ECRI notes that until very recently such data were not broken down according to the specific hate motive. In 2016, for the first time, the National Police published hate crime data recorded by police in the year 2015. These showed that, out of a total of 157 incidents, 31 were motivated by racism and xenophobia, three by bias against Roma and Sinti, 18 by antisemitism […] The majority involved incitement to hatred accompanied by violence (45 in total), damage to property (32) and physical assault (30).

'ECRI notes that the official figures are lower than data gathered by international organisations and civil society, which reported a total of 213 hate-motivated incidents in 2015. This may indicate that around one quarter of all hate crime is either not reported to the police or not recognised as such by them. Indeed ECRI was informed that hate speech in particular is not always taken seriously by law enforcement officials and that, despite some recent efforts at reform, there is a lack of trust in the police.'[31]

5.2.2 In August 2015, Equal Rights Trust stated:

'The most significant form of xenophobia towards foreign nationals and recent immigrants comes in the form of hate crime and hate speech. Complete statistics on the number of incidents are difficult to obtain. However, the Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group documented 62 hate crimes in 2012, including 27 attacks resulting in 48 foreign nationals being injured; in 2011, 35 foreign nationals were attacked. While the Ministry of Internal Affairs for 2011 gave a similar figure for the number of attacks on foreign nationals (33), none of these was classified as hate crime. Skin colour is invariably the motivation for such attacks.'[32]

5.2.3 By contrast, there were 49,419 race hate crimes in England and Wales in a 12-month period covering 2015-16 and 4,400 religious hate crimes in the same period[33].

5.2.4 See [Persons of non-Slavic appearance](#) for more information on this subject.

5.3 Initiatives to address hate crime

5.3.1 The ECRI report of September 2017 stated:

'ECRI welcomes a number of recent developments which could have a positive effect and help to address some of the issues of under-reporting and lack of recognition of hate crime. These include amendments to the police crime report form which include a checkbox to reflect the victim's perception of hate as a motive; the nomination of a Contact Point on Hate Crime in the

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[31] ECRI, Report on Ukraine, adopted 20 June 2017, published 19 September 2017, url
[32] Equal Rights Trust, 'In the Crosscurrents; […],' August 2015, url
[33] Home Office, 'Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2015/16,' 13 October 2016, url

National Police in Kyiv and of special police officers at the regional level to follow up on investigations where a hate motive has been indicated by the victim; extensive police training, in particular from the OSCE, on identifying hate crime and using the new crime report form; […] Finally, posters have been produced to encourage reporting of hate crime, featuring images of five distinct vulnerable groups: ethnic minority groups, Muslims, homosexuals, disabled and elderly people. The headline reads: "Being yourself is not a crime – attacking people for who they are, is a crime". ECRI encourages the authorities to display these posters as widely as possible throughout the country.'[34]

5.3.2   See [Implementation of the law](#) for information about how hate crime may be addressed. See [Hate speech](#) for the government's attitude towards this.

6   Demography

6.1.1   Ukraine has a population of nearly 44 million (2018 estimate) [35]. The CIA World Factbook gave a breakdown of ethnic groups as follows, based on a 2001 estimate: 'Ukrainian 77.8%, Russian 17.3%, Belarusian 0.6%, Moldovan 0.5%, Crimean Tatar 0.5%, Bulgarian 0.4%, Hungarian 0.3%, Romanian 0.3%, Polish 0.3%, Jewish 0.2%, other 1.8%.'[36]

6.1.2   EastWest Institute, a not-for-profit organisation focussing on international conflict resolution, published an article in 2014 which stated:

'Ethnic divisions in Ukraine go back several centuries and are a result of imperial fighting between Russia, Austro-Hungary and Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The southern and eastern parts of the country have historically been a part of the Russian Empire and mostly populated with ethnic Russians and predominantly Russian-speaking Ukrainians. These regions have always had a very close cultural and economic relationship with Russia. Some western areas were part of Habsburg Austria until 1918; others were brought into Ukraine only after the Second World War. The west has always been the land of Ukrainian nationalism with strong pro-European feelings.'[37]

6.1.3   In 2014, the American news outlet Guardian Liberty Voice noted:

'Ukraine has a diverse number of ethnic groups which have distinctive cultures and beliefs. Currently, a majority of them speak either Russian or Ukrainian but there are also those who speak Polish, Bulgarian, Romanian, Hungarian, Turkish and so on. […]

'Despite the fact that Ukraine has these many ethnic groups, most of its citizens either identify themselves as ethnically Russian or Ukrainian. In a

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[34] ECRI, Report on Ukraine, adopted 20 June 2017, published 19 September 2017, [url](#)
[35] CIA World Factbook, Ukraine, People and society, 25 February 2019, [url](#)
[36] CIA World Factbook, Ukraine, People and society, 25 February 2019, [url](#)
[37] EastWest Institute, 'Understanding national identity […],' 7 May 2014, [url](#)

2001 census about 68 percent of Ukrainians identified their mother tongues as Ukrainian while 17 percent of the population said they spoke Russian.'[38]

7   Roma

7.1   Background

7.1.1   The Roma community in Ukraine are made up of nearly a dozen sub-ethnic groups of strikingly different linguistic, cultural, and religious backgrounds. Some are Hungarian-speakers from the western Carpathian region; others come from neighbouring Romania or Moldova; so-called Ruska Roma hail from Russia; and there are communities of Muslim Roma from Crimea or Central Asia[39].

7.1.2   Aljazeera reported on 23 November 2018: 'Most of Ukraine's estimated 250,000 Roma are fully integrated into mainstream society but many still endure shocking levels of poverty, particularly in the Transcarpathia region, 800 kilometres south-west of the capital, where the inhabitants of most Roma settlements speak Hungarian.'[40]

7.1.3   Radio Free Europe reported on 18th July 2018 that, 'The Council of Europe has estimated there are 260,000 Roma in Ukraine.'[41]

7.1.4   In a different article, Radio Free Europe reported on 19 June 2018 that Mykola Yurchenko (a coordinator for the NGO, Roma of Ukraine - Ternipe) estimated the number of Roma in Ukraine as close to 300,000[42].

7.2   Roma community

7.2.1   Radio Free Europe released an interview with a Ukrainian Roma National detailing life as a Roma in Ukraine on 19 June 2018, it was noted:

'Itinerant families "live in tent camps, without IDs, education, or normal jobs—that's why they either collect scrap metal, or, as sometimes happens, are involved in petty crime." "It's very hard for them to escape this situation by themselves, while the state and the public don't do anything to help them," [Anna Hrytsenko, a human rights activist based in the eastern city of Kharkiv] says, citing a reluctance on the part of many potential employers to hire Roma. "This is the problem no one wants to solve."'[43]

7.2.2   See Identification Documents for more information on this subject.

7.2.3   However, Mykola Yurchenko stated in his interview with Radio Free Europe in June 2018, 'Most Ukrainian Roma now are well-integrated…with steady jobs and lifestyles that differ little from those of their neighbors. But he adds

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[38] Guardian Liberty Voice, 'Ukraine ethnic groups,' 21 June 2014, url

[39] RFERL, 'No Relief: Wave Of Attacks, Police Indifference […],' 19 June 2018, url

[40] Al Jazeera, 'Attacked and abandoned: Ukraine's forgotten Roma,' 23 November 2018, url

[41] RFERL, 'UN Urges Ukraine To Act To Protect Roma […],' 18 July 2018, url

[42] RFERL, 'No Relief: Wave Of Attacks, Police Indifference […],' 19 June 2018, url

[43] RFERL, 'No Relief: Wave Of Attacks, Police Indifference […],' 19 June 2018, url

that they frequently hide their ethnic background…self-identifying as Greeks, Azeris, or Armenians.' [44]

7.2.4   The UN Human Rights Committee reported on 30 January 2019:

'Over the past year, 2,600 Roma families received various types of social services (social support, adaptation, rehabilitation, and so on). More than 1,000 families received psychological assistance, 762 families were provided with legal aid, documents were reinstated for 910 people, 1,100 families were provided with humanitarian aid; and 47 people were employed. More than 3,000 Ukrainian passports were issued to persons of Roma ethnicity, which is twice as many as in 2016.'[45]

7.2.5   The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) reported in 2017:

'The Strategy for the Protection and Integration of the Roma Ethnic Minority in Ukraine up to 2020 was adopted in 2013 by the Ukrainian government. Steps have been taken in employment to inform Roma about job openings, vocational training and starting a business. Plots of land have been allocated to Roma for farming, gardening and construction of housing. […] The Strategy for the Protection and Integration of the Roma Ethnic Minority in Ukraine up to 2020 has no budget and remains largely unimplemented.'[46]

7.2.6   See Identification documents, Housing, and Employment and Education for further information on these subjects for Roma people.

7.3   Housing

7.3.1   Al Jazeera reported on 23 November 2018:

'The first thing you notice when entering the Roma settlement on the outskirts of the city of Berehove is the wall that surrounds it. On the outside it appears to be a typical Ukrainian locale, the sort you are likely to find anywhere in this part of Eastern Europe; on the inside, it's as if you've entered another world, one populated by malnourished children and gaunt, prematurely aged adults. Horses and carts clunk along the pothole-filled roads, passing grimy ramshackle dwellings thrown together from pieces of discarded timber. The narrow streets are squalid and filthy, Dickensian even; to find such deprivation in a modern European country is deeply shocking. Nevertheless, it seems that the inhabitants of this miserable shanty town have been forgotten by the state.'[47]

7.3.2   Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group (KHRPG), an organisation dedicated to reporting on Human Rights in Ukraine, reported on 24th May 2018: 'The camp [where Roma are living] is opposite the sugar factory in the township of Velyka Berezovytsa, near Ternopil. The residents had come

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[44] RFERL, 'No Relief: Wave Of Attacks, Police Indifference […],' 19 June 2018, url

[45] United Nations, Eighth periodic report Ukraine, 30 January 2019, url

[46] ECRI, Ukraine Report Summary, 19 September 2017, url

[47] Al Jazeera, 'Attacked and Abandoned: Forgotten Roma in Ukraine,' 23 November 2018, url

from the Transcarpathia oblast and earned money by collecting scrap metal.'[48]

7.3.3 Ukrainian photo Journalist Alexander Chekmenev commented in one of his exhibitions in 2016: 'The biggest Roma camp in Ukraine, which is home to roughly 6,000 people, is located in Transcarpathia, near the town of Berehovo.'[49]

7.3.4 The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) in an undated report noted: 'The ERRC is supporting Roma communities in Uzhgorod and Odessa to legalise their homes (i.e. secure tenure to the land on which they are living). In one case a Roma community already successfully legalised their homes and created a condominium.'[50]

7.3.5 The Travellers Time reported on 27 September 2018: 'The poorest Roma, live in informal settlements cut off from water and electricity, often living in houses without any ownership or rental agreements.'[51]

7.3.6 The same Travellers Times article also stated: 'Stateless Roma also have no right to access social housing as they cannot prove their citizenship of Ukraine.'[52]

7.3.7 Amnesty International released a statement on 8 February 2019: 'They [Roma] often live in makeshift camps near transportation hubs such as railway stations or in desolate parks or remote wooded areas, such as Lysa Hora in the Holoseevskyi District of Kyiv.'[53]

7.4   Education and employment

7.4.1 The US Department of Labour reported in 2018: 'Although Ukraine's Constitution and Law on General Secondary Education guarantee free universal education, due to discrimination by school administrators, Roma children, in a limited number of cases, have been denied access to education, placed in segregated schools exclusively for Roma children, or erroneously placed in special education schools.'[54]

7.4.2 The Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) released a report in 2018, the report was produced by a panel of professionals from various backgrounds, notably persons from the commission on security and cooperation in Europe, Chiricli International Roma Women's fund, Roma Youth of Ukraine, and the Embassy of Ukraine to the United States, it was noted: 'Although the panel agreed that education is one of the most vital components for the success and integration of Roma, obtaining an education in Ukraine without such legal documentation [such as identity documents,

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[48] KHRPG, 'Third violent attack […],' 24 May 2018, url
[49] Alexander Chekmenev, Roma Camp, 2016, url
[50] ERRC, 'Domestic Cases: Access to Housing,' undated, url
[51] Travellers Times, 'Stateless Roma in Ukraine have nowhere to turn to,' 27 September 2018, url
[52] Travellers Times, 'Stateless Roma in Ukraine have nowhere to turn to,' 27 September 2018, url
[53] Amnesty International, Ukraine public statement, 8 February 2019, url
[54] US department of Labour, Ukraine Minimal Advancement […], 2018, url

birth certificates] is difficult; such documentation is required for a student to enrol.'[55]

7.4.3   For more information see [Identification Documents](#).

7.4.4   The state report to the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in 2017 noted that there was a low level of education among the Roma population in Ukraine: '24% have no education at all, 37% have not completed compulsory education and only 1% has higher education; 23% are illiterate and 34% do not speak Ukrainian.'[56]

7.4.5   The ECRI report also stated: 'ECRI notes that segregated schools for Roma, often with low academic standards, continue to be a reality in Ukraine.'[57]

7.4.6   The CSCE report of July 2018 further stated: 'Halyna Yurchenko, coordinator of the NGO Roma of Ukraine – said [the Roma] traveling lifestyle is not a tradition but forced labour migration because of their difficult socio-economic situation."[58]

7.4.7   Amnesty International released a statement in 8 February 2019 stating: 'Roma communities from western Ukraine travel to bigger cities in search of seasonal work such as collecting scrap metal.'[59]

7.4.8   The previously mentioned Al Jazeera article of 23 November 2018 stated: 'It is from within these communities [in the Transcarpathia region, 800 kilometres south-west of the capital] that small groups of families migrate to Ukraine's more prosperous cities in search of seasonal work, setting up temporary camps and sending money home, just as their parents and grandparents have done before them.'[60]

7.4.9   The Group of Experts on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) reported on 22 November 2018: 'For the purpose of social protection and integration of the Roma national minority into the Ukrainian society, the State Employment Service constantly takes measures to inform the public about the situation on the labour market, to organize employment of the population, the possibility to meet the demand for labour and to select suitable work.'[61]

7.5   Women and girls

7.5.1   In the US Department of State's Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Ukraine for 2018 (USSD HR Report 2018), released 13 March 2019, it was noted: 'Romani rights groups reported that early marriages involving girls under the age of 18 were common in the Romani community.'[62]

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[55] CSCE, 'Attacks on Roma in Ukraine,' 25 July 2018, [url](#)
[56] ECRI, Ukraine Country Report 2016/17, 2017, [url](#)
[57] ECRI, Ukraine Country Report 2016/17, 2017 [url](#)
[58] CSCE, 'Attacks on Roma in Ukraine,' 25 July 2018, [url](#)
[59] Amnesty International, Ukraine public statement, 8 February 2019, [url](#)
[60] Al Jazeera, 'Attacked and Abandoned: Ukraine's forgotten Roma,' 23 November 2018, [url](#)
[61] GRETA, 'Report concerning the implementation of the Council of […],' 22 November 2018, [url](#)
[62] USSD, HR Report 2018, Ukraine, 13 March 2019, [url](#)

7.5.2   The OECD Social Institutions and Gender Index (OECD SIGI) stated in 2019: 'Young Roma girls below the legal age of 18 often leave school to enter marriage. Reports show that Roma women and girls are particularly affected by patriarchal attitudes and are traditionally involved with household work (housekeeping, cooking, caring for the children).'[63]

7.5.3   OECD SIGI reported as follows in 2019:

'Reports show that Roma women face particular barriers due to a lack of civil registration documents, such as passports, birth certificates and residence registration. This impedes on their rights to access services, in particular health and social services. The process to acquire civil registration documents is often arduous for Roma women due to lengthy and difficult administrative process, lack of funds, higher risk of harassment and detention by police for lack of personal documents, lack of birth certificates, lack of recognition of informal settlements, lack of registration of a personal or family house.'[64]

7.6   Healthcare

7.6.1   See the [Ukraine: Country Background Note](#) for further information about healthcare.

7.6.2   ERRC reported in March 2018:

'The Constitution of Ukraine guarantees every person's right to healthcare free of charge. However in reality it is not possible to access healthcare without paying for medical services and medicines. While the limitations of the Ukrainian healthcare system impact on everyone, discriminated minorities such as Roma are disproportionately affected.

'Without documents, Roma do not have access to adequate medical treatment. Under the law of Ukraine, only emergency medical assistance is provided to all persons free of charge, regardless of whether they have identity documents. Those who cannot establish Ukrainian citizenship can access healthcare only if they establish the legality of their stay in Ukraine. Consequently, undocumented Roma must pay for healthcare.

'Discrimination against Roma by healthcare practitioners is also prevalent, with some Roma reporting that doctors have refused to treat them based on their Roma ethnicity. Furthermore, there have been incidents in which emergency services have refused to respond to calls from Roma.'[65]

7.6.3   ERRC reported in February 2019: 'In Ukraine, the introduction of health insurance schemes is new and is likely to exclude Romani people disproportionately. This is because Roma in Ukraine (like elsewhere in Europe) are more likely to be poor, due to centuries of discrimination and exclusion, and will be less likely to be able to pay the required contributions for health insurance.'[66]

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[63] OECD, SIGI, Ukraine, 2019, url
[64] OECD, SIGI, Ukraine, 2019, url
[65] ERRC, 'Statelessness, Discrimination and Marginalisation of Roma in Ukraine,' March 2018, url
[66] ERRC, 'Reproductive Rights of Romani Women in Ukraine,' February 2019, url

7.6.4 The February 2019 ERRC report further noted:

'According to interviews of 350 women, approximately 90% of those interviewed, were separated from non-Roma women when giving birth. For example, in Uzhgorod, Romani women must pay extra money to be placed on the maternity ward; otherwise they are left in the corridors. Moreover, Romani women who did pay could only give birth on the third floor in a separate area; the other parts of the facility were not available to them. In Beregovo, there is a maternity hospital which also segregates Romani women on the third floor for delivery. In Poroshkovo, up to eight Romani women could stay in the same small room. Women had a lack of space and it was very difficult to move. Sometimes, doctors put ten Romani women into the same ward, violating national legislation.'[67]

7.6.5 GRETA reported as follows on 22 November 2018:

'Persons from Roma communities are vulnerable to THB [trafficking in human beings] due to poverty, difficulties in accessing education, housing and employment, and lack of identity documents which prevents them from fully benefiting from social services. The Ministry of Social Policy, in co-operation with the NGO Roma Women's Fund "Chiricli" and the support of the Renaissance Foundation, is implementing a project entitled "Support for a network of Roma medical-social mediators", aimed at protecting the rights of the Roma population. Roma mediators assist pregnant women to register in ante-natal clinics and obtain birth certificates for their children. However, some Roma women do not have identity documents or registration at a permanent place of residence, which constitutes an impediment in obtaining birth certificates for their children.'[68]

7.6.6 Travellers Times reported on 27 September 2018:

'Under Ukrainian law, healthcare should be provided free of charge to every citizen. Most Ukrainians have to pay for some medical services and medicines. For undocumented Roma who cannot establish Ukrainian citizenship, they must pay for healthcare - that is if they even get to be seen by a medical professional. Discrimination against Roma in healthcare is very common, and Roma have reported doctors refusing to treat them based on their ethnicity, and in some cases reported incidents where emergency services have refused to respond to calls from Roma.'[69]

7.6.7 For more information see Identification Documents.

7.7 Statelessness and identification documents

7.7.1 Travellers Times reported on 27 September 2018: 'The lack of evidence to prove their nationality means these Roma are denied access to basic services such as healthcare, education, housing, and welfare, as well as to

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[67] ERRC, 'Reproductive Rights of Romani Women in Ukraine,' February 2019, url
[68] GRETA, 'Report concerning the implementation of the Council of […],' 22 November 2018, url
[69] Travellers Times, 'Stateless Roma in Ukraine have nowhere to turn to,' 27 September 2018, url

regular employment or for some, even something as simple as a mobile phone contract.'[70]

7.7.2   USSD HR report of 2018 noted: 'there were 35,463 stateless persons in the country at year's end. Persons who were either stateless or at risk of statelessness included Roma.'[71] The March 2018 ERRC report stated that there is no reliable data on the exact size of Ukraine's stateless population as the scope of the problem has never been thoroughly mapped but it estimated that up to 20% of Roma were stateless (in the sense of being without identity documents to prove their citizenship) [72].

7.7.3   GRETA reported on 22 November 2018:

'Several sources note that the lack of birth certificates and identity documents, affecting persons from Roma community, including children, are important factors impeding their access to education and increasing the risk of child, early and forced marriages. While acknowledging the setting up of the data-collection system established for monitoring acquisition of documents by Roma, and that some 2,143 identity documents were issued in 2015, ECRI notes that the lack of identity documents, such as birth certificates, internal "passports" or residence registration, still affects between 30% and 40% of Roma in some communities.'[73]

7.7.4   Al Jazeera reported in 23 November 2018:

'Most [Ukrainian Roma] are unregistered, apparently uncared for, without any documents or status as citizens - though, of course, citizens is what they are. A Ukrainian parliamentarian, Iryna Suslova, has tried to agitate for change and action on their behalf but admits it's an uphill struggle. "If they have no documents they won't get [an] education. They can't get medical help. They can't get hired. So, they have no resources to live a normal way of life."'[74]

7.7.5   The CSCE reported in July 2018: 'Zola Kondur, founder of the Chiricli International Roma Women's Fund, [noted that,] many Roma lack civil registration documentation such as birth certificates, passports, and proof of residence, which can prevent them from fully exercising rights such as the right to an education.'[75]

7.7.6   The USSD HR report of 2018 noted: 'UNHCR reported Roma were at particular risk for statelessness, since many did not have birth certificates or any other type of documentation to verify their identity. Homeless persons had difficulty obtaining citizenship because of a requirement to produce a document testifying to one's residence.'[76]

7.7.7   Global Protection Cluster, an organisation dedicated reporting on Human Rights in Ukraine, reported in February 2019: 'In addition to legislative

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[70] Travellers Times, 'Stateless Roma in Ukraine have nowhere to turn to,' 27 September 2018, url

[71] USSD, HR Report 2018, Ukraine, 13 March 2019, url

[72] ERRC, 'Statelessness, Discrimination and Marginalisation of Roma in Ukraine,' March 2018, url

[73] GRETA, 'Report concerning the implementation of the Council of […],' 22 November 2018, url

[74] Al Jazeera, 'Attacked and Abandoned: Ukraine's forgotten Roma,' 23 November 2018, url

[75] CSCE, 'Attacks on Roma in Ukraine,' 25 July 2018, url

[76] USSD, HR Report 2018, Ukraine, 13 March 2019, url

restrictions of the voting rights of IDPs, there are a number of practical obstacles, which do not allow certain groups of IDPs to exercise their voting rights, such as accessibility for people with disabilities, issues with documentation for representatives of ethnic minorities, such as Roma, and transgender people.'[77]

7.7.8   See [Education and employment](#) and [Healthcare](#) for further information on these subjects.

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7.8   Societal treatment

7.8.1   In November 2018, Al Jazeera quoted Iryna Suslova, a Ukrainian parliamentarian, as saying:

'Of course, it is only fair to point out that many Ukrainians find these attacks [on Roma] as abhorrent as anyone else might and would like the government to do more to stop them. But it is also true that it is hard to find articles in the Ukrainian media that don't reinforce the negative stereotypical view that a distressingly large section of the public here seem to have of the Roma as drug pushers, petty criminals and beggars. Intolerance has become disturbingly deeply embedded and so it is perhaps no surprise where that has led.'[78]

7.8.2   The Al Jazeera article of 23 November 2018 further noted: '[…] in the current climate, such [Roma in the Transcarpathia region] have become targets of ultra-right paramilitaries - attacks usually justified in typically contemptuous terms. […] Small wonder then, that so many from here want to migrate to the suburbs of Kyiv, Odessa and Lviv, albeit on a temporary basis, to earn a little money - or even to beg if they have no other choice.'[79]

7.8.3   The Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) reported in 25 July 2018:

'Over the course of 2018, attacks on Roma in Ukraine have escalated dramatically. Several of the mob attacks have been filmed and broadcast in an attempt to intimidate Roma communities. The attacks have destroyed property, injured many, and killed at least one. Families, homes, and entire communities have been the target of these mob attacks. […] Halyna Yurchenko, coordinator of the NGO Roma of Ukraine – said, "Most of the attacks [that have been reported lately] were conducted on vulnerable groups quite below the poverty line and on those who live a traveling lifestyle."'[80]

7.8.4   The USSD HR Report 2018 reported, 'There were numerous reports of societal violence against Roma during the year, often perpetrated by known members of violent nationalist hate groups. In some instances, police declined to intervene to stop violence.'[81]

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[77] Global Protection Cluster, 'Voting rights of IDP's in Ukraine,' February 2019, [url](#)
[78] Al Jazeera, 'Attacked and Abandoned: Forgotten Roma in Ukraine,' 23 November 2018, [url](#)
[79] Al Jazeera, 'Attacked and Abandoned: Ukraine's forgotten Roma,' 23 November 2018, [url](#)
[80] CSCE, 'Attacks on Roma in Ukraine,' 25 July 2018, [url](#)
[81] USSD HR Report 2018, Ukraine, 13 March 2019, [url](#)

7.8.5 On 18 July 2018, after a visit by three UN Special Rapporteurs to Ukraine, the United Nations Human Rights Council issued a press release stating:

'Ukraine must take immediate action to stop what amounts to a "systematic persecution" of the country's Roma minority, who have been targeted in a series of violent attacks. "We unequivocally condemn these heinous acts of intimidation and violence against members of the Roma minority in Ukraine. We are also seriously concerned at the growing hatred and racially-motivated violence against this community – and in particular against its most vulnerable members, women and children," the UN experts said. […] "These attacks demonstrate a disturbing pattern of systematic persecution of Roma in Ukraine, compounded by rising hate speech and stigmatization, which appears to be nurtured by the current political and economic situation in the country," the UN experts said.'[82]

7.8.6 KHRPG reported in October 2017: 'Disturbances in Loshchynivka in the Odesa oblast targeting Roma residents ended with the entire ethnic group "agreeing" to leave the area. The effective pogrom [a violent riot aimed at the massacre or persecution of an ethnic group] was triggered by the discovery of a 9-year-old girl's body in an abandoned building. A 21-year-old man who was from a mixed family and not part of the Roma community was taken into custody on suspicion of murder and rape.'[83]

7.8.7 The same article noted: 'A crowd of around 300 locals set fire to one Roma building and devastated several others. The fact that nobody was injured is probably only because the people in the houses fled in time.'[84]

7.8.8 In November 2018, Lacuna Magazine, which is a magazine dedicated to reporting injustice around the world, reported on six different attacks on the Roma community in the first six months of 2018:

'On April 21 in Lysa Hora, Kyiv, a neo-Nazi group called C14 drove 15 Roma families from their homes. They posted a video of the attack on YouTube.

'On May 9 in Rudne, Lviv, a Roma camp was burned down.

'On May 10 in Lviv around 30 masked men attacked a Roma settlement at 2am, dragging people from their beds, beating them and setting their homes alight. No arrests were made.

'On May 22 in Velyka Berezovytsia, Ternopil, armed men drove families from their homes and burned the settlement. Injured Roma were attacked again while seeking treatment at a hospital. Police were called, but no arrests were made.

'On May 24 Andriy Mukha, a lawyer representing Roma attack victims, was assaulted in his office and, he says, threatened with death if he didn't drop the case for the Romas.

'On June 7 in Holosiivskyi Park, Kyiv, the far-right National Druzhyna group broadcast the destruction of a Roma camp via Facebook Live. Police

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[82] UN HRC, Press statement (published on UN OHCHR website), 18 July 2018, url
[83] KHRPG, 'Ukrainian prosecutor […],' 6 October 2017, url
[84] KHRPG, 'Ukrainian prosecutor […],' 6 October 2017, url

refused to investigate, claiming that as the park was empty there were no victims.'[85]

7.8.9   The same report also reported that on 23 June 2018, 'About 14 Roma were sleeping in a makeshift camp not far from Lviv in Western Ukraine when 10 young men in balaclavas, brandishing knives and hammers, rushed the camp in a violent assault. By the time the police arrived 30 minutes later, 24-year-old David Pap lay dead, stabbed in the chest.Four other Roma were wounded, including a 30-year-old woman and a boy, aged 10.'[86]

7.8.10   Al Jazeera reported on 23 November 2018: 'It all began in April 2018 (on a day that many members of the far-right still mark as Hitler's birthday) when a neo-Nazi group calling itself C14 launched a violent assault on a temporary Roma camp in a park in Kiev.'[87]

7.8.11   Radio Free Europe reported on 18 July 2019:

'The United Nations has called on Ukraine to take "immediate action" to end what it called the "systematic persecution" of the country's Roma minority population. The latest violence was on July 2 when media reports stated that a 30-year Romany woman was killed in the city of Berehove. Local authorities in Berehove said unidentified attackers slashed the woman's throat.'[88]

7.8.12   The BBC reported on 24 June 2018: 'In April, the far-right group C14 burnt down tents in a Roma camp in the capital Kiev and chased women and children.'[89]

7.8.13   See Protection for information about violence against Roma and the police response.

7.9   Approach of the state

7.9.1   CSCE reported in July 2018:

'Since April, the Roma Coalition reported eight attacks against Roma settlements in Ukraine, and more than 150 people have fallen victim to these attacks. Although efforts have been made at the local, national, and international levels to counter this violence, much remains to be done. […] Alongside the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, law enforcement, and national security, grassroots organizations and local governments are working to create a safer community for Roma.'[90]

7.9.2   Minority Rights Group International published (undated) information, which stated:

'In 2013 the government approved the "Strategy for Protection and Integration in Ukrainian Society of Roma National Minority for the period until

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85 Lacuna Magazine, 'Ukraine Roma Attacks, The Whole Country […],' 5 November 2018, url
86 Lacuna Magazine, 'Ukraine Roma Attacks, The Whole Country […],' 5 November 2018, url
87 Al Jazeera, 'Attacked and Abandoned: Ukraine's forgotten Roma,' 23 November 2018, url
88 RFERL, 'UN urges Ukraine to Act to Protect Roma […],' 18 July 2018, url
89 BBC, 'Ukraine Roma camp attack leaves one dead,' 24 June 2018, url
90 CSCE, 'Attacks on Roma in Ukraine,' 25 July 2018, url

2020", after sustained advocacy efforts and international pressure. The initiative followed the EU's call for Roma Inclusion national strategies. However, it has attracted considerable criticism for its vague provisions and failure to address the root causes of discrimination, including anti-Roma prejudice and targeted violence against community members.'[91]

7.9.3   Amnesty International reported in February 2019:

'Often, rather than taking a strong and uncompromising position regarding violence by members of far-right groups, senior members of the authorities appear to seek to shift the blame elsewhere. For example, in his latest public pronouncement on 25 June about the killing of a Roma man two days earlier, the Head of the Ukrainian Security Service, Vasyl Hrytsak, alleged that Russia or some Russia-based group could be complicit in the attack, but did not clarify or substantiate this claim.'[92]

7.9.4   On 18 July 2018, after a visit by three UN Special Rapporteurs to Ukraine, the United Nations Human Rights Council (UN HRC) issued a press release stating '"We deplore the absence of effective measures to protect members of the Roma minority against such actions by the Ukrainian authorities, and in particular by the national and local police. We are also concerned to hear allegations of a prevailing climate of impunity and lack of accountability with no prompt, thorough and impartial investigation of such criminal acts," the experts stressed.'[93]

7.9.5   In 2018 Al Jazeera reported on the murder of a Roma woman not far from the camp where she had been living, stating, 'The authorities' refusal to treat this murder as a hate crime, [the neighbours of the woman's mother] told us, is just another example of how Ukraine's Roma community has been abandoned by the state.'[94]

7.9.6   Human Rights Watch reported in 2018: 'Authorities opened a criminal case into the murder [of a Roma man by a group of men who attacked a Roma settlement in June 2018], which carries a prison term of up to 15 years. According to an Interior Ministry spokesperson, the police were also investigating other violations, including offences under part 3 of article 161, which outlaws "violation of equality of citizens due to their racial and national identity or religious beliefs."'[95] Human Rights Watch further noted: 'In October [2018], court hearings began for four of the nine suspects in the case, eight of whom are minors.'[96]

7.9.7   In an article dated June 2018, Radio Free Europe reported: 'UN officials and the United States Embassy have urged Kyiv to investigate the recent attacks [on Roma in 2018], but there has yet to be a single prosecution in any of the four cases.'[97]

[91] Minority Rights Group International, Ukraine, Background, undated, url
[92] Amnesty International, Public Statement, 8 February 2019, url
[93] UN HRC, Press statement (published on website of UN OHCHR), 18 July 2018, url
[94] Al Jazeera, 'Attacked and Abandoned: Ukraine's forgotten Roma,' 23 November 2018, url
[95] HRW, 'Ukraine: Fatal Attack on Roma Settlement: Stop impunity […],' 26 June 2018, url
[96] HRW, World Report 2019, Ukraine, 2019, url
[97] RFERL, 'No Relief: Wave of Attacks, Police indifference heightens […],' 19 June 2018, url

7.9.8　The BBC reported in 2018: 'In a joint letter earlier this month, four human rights groups including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch warned against the increase in attacks by far-right groups on minorities in Ukraine. They said that authorities had "failed" to respond to most incidents, leading to "an atmosphere of near total impunity that cannot but embolden these groups to commit more attacks".'[98]

7.9.9　Human Rights Watch reported in 2018: 'Law enforcement authorities have rarely opened investigations. In the cases in which they did, there is no indication that authorities took effective investigative measures to identify the attackers, even in cases in which the assailants publicly claimed responsibility on social media.'[99]

7.9.10　Human Rights Watch reported in 2019: 'In April [2018], members of a radical group in Kyiv, authorized by the local municipality to carry out patrolling, attacked a Roma settlement. They torched tents and chased women and children with rocks and pepper spray. Two criminal investigations were launched, but at time of writing, those investigations had not led to any prosecutions.'[100]

7.10　Protection

7.10.1　The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN OHCHR) reported on 21 March 2019 that in the period from 16 November 2018 to 15 February 2019 it:

'[…] continued documenting violations related to discrimination, hate speech and/or violence, targeting members of minority groups or those holding alternative or minority opinions. Among two incidents documented that occurred during the reporting period, one involved threats and another direct violence by members of extreme right-wing groups. The failure of the law enforcement to prevent violence, to properly classify these violations as hate crimes, and to effectively investigate and prosecute these crimes violates the right to non-discrimination and creates an environment of impunity. It also denies victims of these attacks equal access to justice. Investigations and prosecution of several attacks against Roma people still lack progress. Positively, on 28 December 2018, prosecutors of the Lviv Regional Prosecutor's Office charged a man responsible for the killing of a young Roma man outside Lviv in June 2018. In contrast, the Holosiivsky district court of Kyiv cancelled on procedural grounds the note of suspicion against an alleged perpetrator in another violent attack against a Roma settlement in Kyiv in April 2018.'[101]

7.10.2　Amnesty International reported in 8 February 2019:

'Close to midnight, approximately 10 masked men wielding knives and hammers attacked a recently erected Roma settlement on Truskavitska street in Lviv. The attackers killed a 23-year-old man and injured two 19-

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[98] BBC, 'Ukraine Roma Camp Attack Leaves one Dead,' 24 June 2018, url
[99] HRW, 'Ukraine: Fatal Attack on Roma Settlement, Stop Impunity […],' 26 June 2018, url
[100] HRW, World Report 2019, Ukraine, 2019, url
[101] UN OHCHR,　Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine, 21 March 2019, url

year-old men, a 30-year-old woman and her 10-year-old child. The residents of the Roma camp called the police, who arrived shortly afterwards. The police arrested seven alleged perpetrators, all aged under 18, and the alleged organiser of the attack, a 20-year old man. The Prosecutor's Office in Lviv also announced that a total of 14 individuals were wanted in connection with the attack; six of them are still at large at the time of writing.'[102]

7.10.3 KHRPG released an article on 6 October 2017 where it was noted:

'Lawyers Yulya Lisova and Volodymyr Kondur were particularly concerned by the role which the police played [in the Loshchynivka Pogrom of 27 August 2016]. "They didn't intervene at all, simply watched, with this making it possible for the angry citizens to destroy housing and evict Roma", Lisova says. "We asked for a probe into the actions of the National Policy who, in our view, should have brought in reinforcements from other districts, but did not do so. They took the decision to come only the following morning".'[103] For more information see Societal Treatment.

7.10.4 In a previously mentioned Radio Free Europe article in June 2018, it was also noted: 'In the latest incident, in early June, police mostly looked on or chatted amicably with the attackers after right-wingers turned up with axes and hammers to raze another temporary settlement of Romany families.'[104]

7.10.5 The United States Department of State reported in 2018:

'Security forces generally prevented or responded to societal violence. At times, however, they used excessive force to disperse protests or, in some cases, failed to protect victims from harassment or violence. For example, on June 8, a group of violent nationalists from the National Druzhina organization—established with support from the National Corps—attacked and destroyed a Romani camp in Kyiv after its residents failed to respond to their ultimatum to leave the area within 24 hours. Police were present but made no arrests, and in a video of the attack posted on social media, police could be seen making casual conversation with the nationalists following the attack. Roma continued to face governmental and societal discrimination and significant barriers accessing education, health care, social services, and employment.'[105]

7.10.6 See Governmental approach for further information on this subject.

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Section 8 updated: 1 April 2019

8   Jews

8.1   Jewish community

8.1.1   In May 2018, World Atlas stated:

'Jewish communities have existed in Ukraine for more than a thousand years. According to the World Jewish Congress, the Jewish community in

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[102] Amnesty International, Public Statement, 8 February 2018, url
[103] KHRPG, 'Ukrainian prosecutor refuses […],' 6 October 2017, url
[104] RFERL, 'No Relief: Wave of Attacks, Police indifference heightens […],' 19 June 2018, url
[105] USSD, HR Report 2018, Ukraine, 13 March 2019, url

Ukraine constitutes the third biggest Jewish community in Europe and the fifth biggest in the world. Massacres and pogroms frequently took place in the 19th and 20th centuries. The majority left Ukraine after the fall of Communism, but antisemitism continues to be problematic for the remaining population.'[106]

8.1.2 The USSD HR Report 2018, published in March 2019, noted:

'According to census data and international Jewish groups, an estimated 103,600 Jews lived in the country, constituting approximately 0.2 percent of the population. According to the Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities (VAAD), there were approximately 300,000 persons of Jewish ancestry in the country, although the number might be higher. Before the Russian aggression in eastern Ukraine, according to VAAD, approximately 30,000 Jews lived in the Donbas region. Jewish groups estimated that between 10,000 and 15,000 Jews lived in Crimea before Russia's attempted annexation.'[107]

8.2 Societal treatment

8.2.1 The USSD HR Report 2018 stated:

'According to the National Minority Rights Monitoring Group (NMRMG), like in 2017 no cases of suspected anti-Semitic violence were recorded as of November 30 [2018]. The last recorded anti-Semitic violence against individuals occurred in 2016. The NMRMG recorded approximately 11 cases of anti-Semitic vandalism as of November 30 [2018], compared with 24 incidents in 2017. According to NMRMG, the drop in violence and anti-Semitic vandalism was due to better police work and prosecution of those committing anti-Semitic acts.

'Graffiti swastikas continued to appear in Kyiv, Lviv, Poltava, and other cities. On April 27-28 [2018], unidentified individuals smashed windows and scattered prayer books at the ohel (a structure built over the grave of a righteous Jew) at the grave of renowned 17th century Rabbi Shmuel Eidels in Ostroh, Rivne Oblast. Police opened an investigation. Jewish organizations expressed concern about the continued existence of Krakivsky Market and new construction atop a historic Jewish cemetery in Lviv. There were reportedly several anti-Semitic incidents targeting the Babyn Yar memorial during the year.

'In other manifestations of anti-Semitism during the year, nationalists in Odesa chanted anti-Semitic slogans during a March of Ukrainian Order on May 3 [2018]. Tetyana Soykina, head of the local chapter of the Right Sector, a far-right party, said, "We will restore order in Ukraine, Ukraine will belong to Ukrainians, not Jews and oligarchs," using a pejorative term for Jews. The Ukrainian Jewish Committee condemned an April 28 [2018] march sponsored by nationalist organizations honoring the local volunteers who were in the Nazi Waffen SS during the Holocaust. The march featured

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[106] World Atlas, Ukraine, last updated 25 May 2018, url
[107] USSD, HR Report 2018, Ukraine, 13 March 2019, url

Nazi symbols and salutes. On April 13 [2018], police detained two individuals who were removing gold from mass graves of Jews from the Holocaust in the town of Nemyriv in Vinnytsia Oblast.'[108]

8.2.2 In February 2019, KHRPG reported that, 'There have been no acts of anti-Semitic violence in Ukraine over the last two years and relatively little anti-Semitic vandalism. This lack of news would not be worth reporting if it wasn't for the constant claims that the opposite is true, as well as evidence that paid provocateurs have been used to simulate hate crimes.

'The worst years for acts of anti-Semitic violence were from 2005 to 2007, where there was a wave of dangerous street attacks. In 2005 13 people were victims of such violence, while in 2004, and in both 2006 and 2007 there were eight victims. The number fell to five in 2008, then to one in 2009 and 2010 and none at all in 2011. In each of the following three years there were four victims, with this number falling to one in 2015 and 2016, and then none in 2017 and 2018.

'Based on his evidence, Likhachev [Vyacheslav Likhachev, head of the National Minorities Monitoring Group] concludes that there is no anti-Semitic violence in Ukraine and that Ukrainian Jews are not confronted with direct physical danger.

'The main anti-Semitic crime observed is that of vandalism, including desecration of graves, synagogues and memorials to victims of the Holocaust, with the methods including the breaking of windows, arson or anti-Semitic or neo-Nazi graffiti.

'There were 12 such cases in 2018, though that figure may change very slightly as two cases are being checked. Even if these are added, the figure will still be half that of the previous year.'[109]

8.2.3 In February 2019, The Nation (a newspaper founded by abolitionists in 1865 'seeking to bring about a more democratic and equitable world'[110]) reported as follows:

'The past three years saw an explosion of swastikas and SS runes on city streets, death threats, and vandalism of Holocaust memorials, Jewish centers, cemeteries, tombs, and places of worship, all of which led Israel to take the unusual step of publicly urging Kiev to address the epidemic. […]

'For the first few years after Maidan, Jewish organizations largely refrained from criticizing Ukraine, perhaps in the hope Kiev would address the issue on its own. But by 2018, the increasing frequency of anti-Semitic incidents led Jewish groups to break their silence.

'Last year, the Israeli government's annual report on anti-Semitism heavily featured Ukraine, which had more incidents than all post-Soviet states combined. The World Jewish Congress, the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, and 57 members of the US Congress all vociferously condemned Kiev's Nazi glorification and the concomitant anti-Semitism.

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[108] USSD, HR Report 2018, Ukraine, 13 March 2019, url
[109] KHRPG, 'The Facts about Anti-Semitism […],' 19 February 2019, url,
[110] The Nation, About Us, url

'Ukrainian Jewish leaders are also speaking out. In 2017, the director of one of Ukraine's largest Jewish organizations published a New York Times op-ed urging the West to address Kiev's whitewashing. Last year, 41 Ukrainian Jewish leaders denounced the growth of anti-Semitism. That's especially telling, given that many Ukrainian Jewish leaders supported the Maidan uprising.

'None of these concerns have been addressed in any meaningful way.'[111]

8.2.4   However, KHRPG referred to the Israeli Government's report mentioned above, stating, 'According to Vyacheslav Likhachev [researcher and the head of the Kiev-based Ethnic Minorities' Rights Monitoring Group under the umbrella of VAAD], who has been systematically monitoring anti-Semitism and xenophobia in Ukraine for well over 10 years, they have little or none. The report's "findings" have also been dismissed by Josef Zisels, the head of the VAAD Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities of Ukraine.'[112]

8.2.5   In an article of January 2019 published in The Jerusalem Post Lev Gringauz, a young American Jew of Ukrainian heritage, spoke to several Jews in Ukraine:

'Genialnaya [Anna Genialnaya, youth group director at the Halom Jewish Community Center in Kyiv] began wearing the [star of David] necklace six years ago. Her parents were […] nervous about her decision, but she says the last six years have passed without incident.

'Of antisemitism, she said "I don't notice it… I just don't see it anywhere. Maybe it's somewhere, but not around me."

'[…] I asked [high school] students about their experience with antisemitism. There was a similar consensus. Sometimes other students in school would say something mean, or teachers would teach a version of the Second World War that largely left out the Holocaust. It sounded very similar to high school in America, with an average level of antisemitism that made relatively little impact on any of the Jewish students. […]

'Young adult Jews at Hillel centers [Jewish organisations working with college students] in Kiev, Kharkiv and Odessa largely blew off questions about antisemitism in Ukraine. In Kiev, girls in a Hebrew class said they were watching the news about antisemitism in France, Germany and England with horror. In Odessa, I was answered with a "pfft."

'Krystina Tiahnyriadko, […] who works at the Jewish Agency center in Kharkiv, expressed complete exasperation on the topic. […] Tiahnyriadko excused reports of Ukrainian antisemitism within context of the ongoing war with Russia. Many Ukrainian Jews agree that most cases of vandalism, attacks and hateful graffiti are carried out under orders from Russia, meant to pit the Jewish community against Ukraine and destabilize an already weak post-revolution government. […]

'Dolinsky [Eduard Dolinsky, the director of the Ukrainian Jewish Committee and "usually the person loudly accusing Ukraine of antisemitism"] readily

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[111] The Nation, 'Neo-Nazis and the Far Right Are On the March in Ukraine,' 22 February 2019, url
[112] KHRPG, 'Israeli government report […],' 1 February 2018, url

admits, "There isn't that huge antisemitism" that existed in Soviet times, but "antisemitic attitudes are very strong, and they're getting stronger due to the political and economic crises." […]

'Dolinsky is on one end of the spectrum of Ukrainian Jewish opinions on antisemitism. Yosef Zissels, executive director of the VAAD Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities, is on the other. Zissels has polarized Ukrainian Jewish discourse and alienated many people due to his insistence that antisemitism in Ukraine is completely under control, and that there is no concern with the government making heroes of antisemites.

'"We control [antisemitic hate crimes] 100%," Zissels told me. "Not one incident passes by us that can be put into that category." He also considers reports of Ukrainian antisemitic acts to be Russian provocations and said Dolinsky was lying about the situation in Ukraine. […]

'Vyacheslav Likhachov is a researcher and the head of the Kiev-based Ethnic Minorities' Rights Monitoring Group under the umbrella of VAAD, which has been releasing reports on Ukrainian antisemitism for more than a decade. […]

'According to him, there is currently less antisemitism in Ukraine than in the past. But "I'm not discounting that it could get worse," Likhachov said. "We're in too good of a situation for it to be the truth for very long. There are factors that elicit concern – factors that aren't relating concretely to Jews but to the overall situation in the country." Antisemitism always increases around elections, Likhachov said, and elections are slated for the spring of 2019. […]

'Does [anti-semitism] exist in Ukraine? Absolutely. But many Jews told me it was "like in your country," [America] and […] I couldn't disagree. […] So why the obsession with Ukrainian antisemitism? Because it's Ukraine, the land of pogroms and the Holocaust; the place where Jewish history happened.'[113]

8.3   State treatment

8.3.1   The USSD HR Report 2018 stated:

'In mid-May the Ukrainian consul in Hamburg published anti-Semitic statements in his Facebook account; on May 30 [2018], the Ministry of Foreign Affairs fired him for the posts. On June 25 [2018], Anatoliy Matios, the country's chief military prosecutor, espoused anti-Semitic conspiracy theories in a media interview, suggesting that Jews want to drown ethnic Slavs in blood and finance world conflicts. Authorities took no action against Matios for the remarks.

'In line with the country's 2015 decommunization and denazification law, authorities continued to rename Communist-era streets, bridges, and monuments in honor of 20th century Ukrainian nationalists, some of whom were associated with anti-Semitism.'[114]

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[113] The Jerusalem Post, 'Antisemitism, neo-Nazism and the Jewish […],' 19 January 2019, url
[114] USSD, HR Report 2018, Ukraine, 13 March 2019, url

8.3.2   In February 2019, The Nation stated, 'Public officials make anti-Semitic threats with no repercussions. These include: a security services general promising to eliminate the zhidi (a slur equivalent to "kikes"); a parliament deputy going off on an anti-Semitic rant on television; a far-right politician lamenting Hitler didn't finish off the Jews; and an ultranationalist leader vowing to cleanse Odessa of zhidi.'[115]

8.3.3   In the report of August 2015, Equal Rights Trust stated:

'Ukrainian Jews have historically been subjected to severe repression, but are today well-integrated into society, experiencing little, if any, discrimination. […] Jewish community leaders consider Ukrainian Jews to be sufficiently integrated so that most consider themselves Ukrainian citizens first and foremost. While those interviewed did identify Anti-Semitic practices, they emphasised the fact that these are relatively rare acts by private individuals, rather than the state sanctioned Anti-Semitism of the Soviet era.'[116]

Section 9 updated: 9 April 2019

9   Ethnic Russians

9.1   Russian community

9.1.1   In July 2017, Pew Research noted that, 'The Soviet Union came to a formal end in December 1991, leaving 25 million ethnic Russians living outside the borders of their nominal homeland. Today, ethnic Russians are a sizable minority in several former Soviet republics, and many are more favorably inclined toward Russia than are their fellow citizens, according to a recent Pew Research Center survey of countries in Central and Eastern Europe.'[117]

9.1.2   In the report of August 2015, Equal Rights Trust noted that, 'Ethnic Russians are by far the largest ethnic minority in Ukraine, constituting almost one fifth of the population.'[118]

9.1.3   In May 2018, WorldAtlas.com reported that, 'Southeast Ukraine has historically been populated by ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking Ukrainians, with close cultural and economic ties to Russia.'[119]

9.2   Crimeans with or without Russian passports

9.2.1   For full information about Crimea and its ethnic groups, see the country policy and information note on Ukraine: Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk.

9.3   Societal treatment

9.3.1   In a report of September 2017, ECRI stated:

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[115] The Nation, 'Neo-Nazis and the Far Right Are On the March in Ukraine,' 22 February 2019, url
[116] Equal Rights Trust, 'In the Crosscurrents; […],' August 2015, url
[117] Pew Research, 'Ethnic Russians in some former Soviet republics feel […],' 24 July 2017, url
[118] Equal Rights Trust, 'In the Crosscurrents; […],' August 2015, url
[119] WorldAtlas.com, 'Major ethnic groups of Ukraine,' 25 May 2018, url

'Political discourse in the last three years has been dominated by anti-Russia rhetoric as a result of the illegal annexation by the Russian Federation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol and armed conflict in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The conflict has also heightened religious intolerance and tensions between the different Churches loyal to Kyiv or to Moscow. However, reports indicate that there have been few incidents of harassment or abuse of individuals or groups on the basis of their Russian identity in Kyiv or other areas. One report pointed out that Russians and ethnic Ukrainians frequently stated that their relations remained good.'[120]

9.3.2   In March 2019, KIIS published the results of a February 2019 opinion poll:

'In Ukraine, in February 2019, 57% of the Ukrainians responded that they were positive or very positive about Russia, 27% were negative or very negative, 17% were hesitating; 77% of the Ukrainians had positive attitude to the Russians (the citizens of Russia), 13% – to the leadership of Russia (mainly at the expense of the East and Donbas). Positive attitude towards Russia is due mainly to a positive attitude towards the Russians (Russian citizens). […]

'Compared to February 2018, the support for the independence of Ukraine (the percentage of those who want Ukraine to be an independent on Russia state) remains the same (87%). The general tendency remained unchanged: almost 90% of the population believe that Ukraine should be an independent state. However, compared to February 2018, the number of those who want closed borders with Russia decreased (from 44% to 39%), and the number of those who want independent relations but with no visas and customs increased (from 44% to 48%). […]

'Commentary of Volodymyr Paniotto, the CEO of KIIS:

'Over the last year, the attitude of the Ukrainians toward Russia has improved significantly (from 48% to 57%), while the positive attitude of the Russians toward Ukraine varied within the margin of sampling error, and as of now, it constitutes about a third of the population (32-34%). The positive attitude towards the state is, first of all, determined by the positive attitude towards the population both in Ukraine and in Russia (77% of the Ukrainians feel positive about the Russians, and even more Russians (Russian citizens) are positive about the Ukrainians - 82%). At the same time, the attitude toward the government is sharply negative (only 13% of Ukrainians are positively attached to the leadership of Russia, and only 7% of Russians – to the leadership of Ukraine).'[121]

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[120] ECRI, Report on Ukraine, adopted 20 June 2017, published 19 September 2017, url
[121] KIIS, 'Attitude of the population of Ukraine […],' 12 March 2019, url

10 Muslims and Crimean Tatars

10.1 Community

10.1.1 In May 2018, World Atlas noted that, 'Crimean Tatars are descended primarily from Turkic tribes who emigrated to Eastern Europe from the Asian steppes from the 10th century onward. The entire population was deported to Uzbekistan in 1944. Today, more than 250,000 Crimean Tatars have returned to their homeland, now part of Ukraine, and struggle to reclaim their heritage, as well as national and cultural rights.'[122]

10.1.2 The US Department of State's International Religious Freedom Report for 2017 (USSD IRF Report 2017) stated that, 'Government agencies and independent think tanks estimate the Muslim population at 500,000. Some Muslim leaders put the number at two million. According to government figures, the majority are Crimean Tatars, numbering an estimated 300,000.'[123]

10.2 Societal treatment

10.2.1 In October 2016 the UN CERD stated:

'While noting measures taken by the State party to protect Crimean Tatars, in particular those who fled Crimea after 2014, the Committee is concerned at reports that Crimean Tatars who went to regions under the authority of the State party face difficulties with regard to access to employment, social services and education and lack support. The Committee is also concerned that Crimean Tatars who returned may face difficulties in preserving their language, culture and identity (arts. 2 and 5).'[124]

10.3 State treatment

10.3.1 In October 2016 the UN CERD noted that Ukraine had taken measures to protect Crimean Tatars, in particular those who fled Crimea after 2014[125]. However, it further stated:

'The Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts, in consultation with the Crimean Tatar community, to find durable solutions for an appropriate settlement of Crimean Tatars in Ukraine, including by providing or facilitating access to employment, social services and education and providing children with education in the Tatar language. It also recommends that the State party strengthen the measures aimed at ensuring favourable conditions for Crimean Tatars to preserve, develop and promote their identity, language and culture. The Committee further recommends that the State party, inter alia, provide adequate financial support to cultural organizations for their activities and create more

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[122] World Atlas, Ukraine, last updated 25 May 2018, url
[123] USSD IRF Report for 2017, Ukraine, 29 May 2018, url
[124] UN, CERD, 4 October 2016, url
[125] UN, CERD, 4 October 2016, url

opportunities for Crimean Tatars to promote and use their mother tongue in education and daily life.'[126]

10.3.2   In the report of August 2015, Equal Rights Trust stated, 'The Crimean Tatars have been underrepresented in political life. While at the community level in rural areas, Crimean Tatars make up around 16% of deputies of local councils, at the district council level the figure is 9%, and in the Verkhovna Rada of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea only 7%.'[127]

10.3.3   For further information about the situation in Crimea, see Country Policy and Information Note on Ukraine: Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk.

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11   Persons of non-Slavic appearance

11.1   Societal treatment

11.1.1   The USSD HR Report 2018 stated, 'Mistreatment of members of minority groups and harassment of foreigners of non-Slavic appearance remained problems.'[128]

11.1.2   In August 2015, Equal Rights Trust stated that, 'There is evidence of hate speech and violent hate crime by skinhead youth groups against "visible" minorities in the country, primarily immigrants and students of darker skin or non-European features, though there are currently no official statistics on the prevalence of such acts.'[129]

11.1.3   Equal Rights Trust further stated 'Research for this report identified evidence of xenophobia and discrimination against non-nationals in Ukraine, primarily manifested in discriminatory violence and hate crimes […] This appears to be more often the case when the person has a dark skin colour. The victims are often students and immigrants from countries which were not previously part of the USSR.'[130]

11.1.4   The ECRI report of September 2017 stated:

'Regarding foreign students, in June 2015, a group of approximately 30 young men wearing balaclavas and armed with knives and sticks attacked foreign students in Kharkiv. The attackers wounded nine students, hospitalising six. According to witnesses the assailants targeted the victims because they "looked like foreigners". Law enforcement officers were present but did not attempt to stop the attackers. Later they detained five persons, charging them with hooliganism, attempted murder and armed assault. The authorities have stated that there is no special concern over the safety of foreign students since such types of hate crime are rare.'[131]

[126] United Nations, CERD, 'Concluding observations […],' 4 October 2016, url
[127] Equal Rights Trust, 'In the Crosscurrents; […],' August 2015, url
[128] USSD, HR Report 2019, Ukraine, 13 March 2019, url
[129] Equal Rights Trust, 'In the Crosscurrents; […],' August 2015, url
[130] Equal Rights Trust, 'In the Crosscurrents; […],' August 2015, url
[131] ECRI, Report on Ukraine, adopted 20 June 2017, published 19 September 2017, url

11.1.5   An article published by Observer.com in November 2015 described the experiences of Zhan Beleniuk, whose mother is Ukrainian and whose father was from Rwanda:

'Zhan knows that there's still wide-spread racism in his homeland. Despite all the changes, he is still considered black first and Ukrainian second and often is asked when he is planning to visit his motherland – Rwanda. "My motherland is here in Ukraine," is his answer. […]

'As a kid, he was traumatized by racist slurs of his peers, and often had to fight the offenders, but even today he hears insults behind his back from time to time…

'There are others in the country whose looks don't fit the profile of an Aryan Ukrainian, a profile celebrated by Ukrainian nationalists enjoying their moment in a lot of places of power in the country, other much more vulnerable than Zhan, who for different reasons came to Ukraine from Africa and now have to experience racism on the streets almost every day.

'In the end of July [2015], a number of Ukrainian newspapers broke the story of 23-year-old Asi, a refugee from the African state of Sierra Leone who came to Ukraine just six months ago. At the bus station at the town of Uzhgorod, which is in West Ukraine, the young woman and her 8-month-old son were trying to board the bus but were violently thrown off by the furious passengers who didn't want to travel in her company because she "was not like them." The violent attack was filmed by the angry crowd that was shouting "Tie her to the fence together with the kid!" The bus driver called police, who upon arrival … hand-cuffed and took away the unfortunate victim of racial abuse who was hysterically screaming in English, facing the hostile crowd of Ukrainian "Europeans" who couldn't understand her pleas.

'This was not the first racial incident in Uzhgorod. The town's local aqua-park denied entrance to the black-skinned students of local university who happened to be from India and Nigeria. The pool's owner, former mayor of Uzhgorod and deputy to the Supreme Parliament, Serhei Ratushnyak, explained his pool's policy by mentioning concern about the public health of the town residents in the face of the danger caused by "syphilitic and tuberculosis Gypsyhood of the area and of the whole world." […] "We let in the residents of Uzhgorod [only], we let in [only] the white people" – these was the explanations given to the reporter by the on duty entrance guard – white blond-haired lady in her forties…

'To this day, there have been no consequences for the perpetrators who threw the hapless young woman off the bus and wanted to tie her to the fence along with her eight-month-old baby.'[132]

11.1.6   See Hate crime for further information on this subject. See Implementation of the law for information about the treatment by the police.

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[132] Observer, 'In modern Ukraine, people of color need not apply,' 8 November 2015, url

11.2   State protection

11.2.1   Equal Rights Trust stated that non-Ukrainian nationals may receive discriminatory treatment by law enforcement agencies[133].

11.2.2   In February 2018, KHRPG reported as follows:

'A 28-year-old Kharkiv man has been sentenced to life imprisonment for racist and homophobic attacks on six people and the killing of another young man. The case was important in that the prosecution clearly identified the racism determining Vitaly Kadnichansky's choice of victim, as well as referring to homophobic motives. It also gained some notoriety due to the attempt by Oleh Lyashko, head of the "Radical Party" [a Ukrainian political party] to get the young man added to a list of "political prisoners" in 2015, and released under an amnesty.

'Vitaly Kadnichansky was arrested in May 2012 after two shocking attacks on Nigerian students studying in Kharkiv, with other charges then added. […]

'A panel of judges at the Dzherzhynsky District Court in Kharkiv […] sentenced him on February 5 to life imprisonment on charges of murder, attempted murder and possession of explosives. He was also ordered to pay 6 thousand UAH to each of the victims, as well as 18 thousand for costs linked with the investigative experiments. The sentence is, of course, not final and his lawyer has said that she will be lodging an appeal. […]

'Kadnichansky was charged with six attacks, mainly on foreign nationals (from Africa or Asia), as well as with the murder of one Ukrainian Vyacheslav Sychov. […]

'The suggestion in 2015 that Kadnichansky should be released as a "political prisoner" was, fortunately rejected […].

'Kadnichansky was found guilty of grave crimes, but the motives were never in dispute. It has often been difficult to get prosecutions initiated on the grounds of xenophobia […].   The reasons include the difficulty of proving the intent required by Article 161 of the Criminal Code and a wish to not "spoil" the statistics with such cases. One very negative consequence is that many foreign nationals targeted in racist attacks have either been fearful of reporting them to the police, or have simply seen no point.'[134]

11.2.3   See Hate crime and Implementation of the law for further information.

Section 12 updated: 26 March 2019

12   Other minority groups

12.1.1   In May 2018, World Atlas published the following information:

'Romanian

'In 1918, Bukovina and Bessarabia were united with the Kingdom of Romania. Ukrainian population in the region were forced to change their names, their languages, and Ukrainian schools and cultural institutions were

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[133] Equal Rights Trust, 'In the Crosscurrents; […],' August 2015, url

[134] KHRPG, 'Ukrainian sentenced to life for racist and homophobic attacks,' 7 February 2018, url

closed. After the Russian Civil War, the area was annexed by the Ukranian [sic] SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic]. A 1997 treaty guaranteed the rights of Romanians in Ukraine.

'Belorussian

'Most Belorussians emigrated to the Ukrainian SSR during the Soviet Union. Unlike most other ethnic groups, they are spread fairly evenly throughout the country. Belorussian nationals have reportedly been divided between both sides during the recent conflict in Ukraine.

'Bulgarian

'Many Bulgarians settled in what is now the Odessa Oblast during the Ottoman Empire and after the Russo-Turkish Wars in the 18th and 19th centuries. The area changed hands several times: divided between Russia and Romania, ceded to Russia in 1878, recaptured by Romania in 1918, and then it became part of the Soviet Union.

'Hungarian

'Ukraine's territory of Zakarpattia was originally part of the Kingdom of Hungary. Disputed over by Romania, Ukraine, and Hungary, it was awarded to the newly formed Czechoslovakia before being incorporated into the Ukrainian SSR. A 1991 treaty guaranteed the rights of Hungarians in Ukraine, although dual citizenship is not officially recognized.

'Polish

'In the 16th and 17th centuries, Poland sponsored large-scale Polish colonization of central and eastern Ukraine. After the fall of Austro-Hungary, the Polish population successfully rebelled against the newly-formed West Ukrainian government. During the Soviet era, Poles were deported to Siberia, and a campaign of ethnic cleansing was carried out by Ukrainian nationalists.

'Armenian

'The Armenian population in Ukraine has nearly doubled since the end of the Soviet Union [in 1991]. They still maintain close ties with Russia: 50% are native Armenian speakers, but over 43% speak Russian, and only 6% speak Ukrainian as their first language.'[135]

12.1.2 In an August 2015 report, Equal Rights Trust referred to groups '[…] (such as the Belarusians and Moldovans) who are essentially integrated within the population and reportedly suffer little, if any, discrimination or disadvantage.'[136]

12.1.3 See [Language](#) for information on this subject.

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[135] World Atlas, Ukraine, last updated 25 May 2018, [url](#)
[136] Equal Rights Trust, 'In the Crosscurrents; […],' August 2015, [url](#)

13 Non-governmental assistance

13.1 NGO assistance for Roma

13.1.1 The European Roma Rights Centre stated:

'The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) is a Roma-led international public interest law organisation working to combat anti-Romani racism and human rights abuse of Roma through strategic litigation, research and policy development, advocacy and human rights education.

'Since its establishment in 1996, the ERRC has endeavoured to provide Roma with the tools necessary to combat discrimination and achieve equal access to justice, education, housing, health care and public services.

'The ERRC has consultative status with the Council of Europe, as well as with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. The ERRC has been the recipient of numerous awards for its efforts to advance human rights respect of Roma: in 2013, PL Foundation Freedom Prize; in 2012, Stockholm Human Rights Award; in 2010, the Silver Rose Award of SOLIDAR; in 2009, the Justice Prize of the Peter and Patricia Gruber Foundation; in 2007, the Max van der Stoel award given by the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Dutch Foreign Ministry; and in 2001, the Geuzenpenning award (the Geuzen medal of honour) by Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet of Netherlands.' [137]

13.1.2 The European Roma Rights Centre stated:

'The ERRC engages in strategic litigation seeking to reverse patterns of human rights abuse and discrimination against Roma. ERRC legal work aims to empower Roma through law and strengthen the network of legal advocates working on behalf of Roma.

'The ERRC is active in both domestic and international litigation. The ERRC supports local lawyers in domestic legal proceedings both professionally and financially. When domestic remedies are exhausted, the ERRC prepares legal submissions to international tribunals, including the European Court of Human Rights, the European Committee of Social Rights and UN treaty bodies.

'Some recent and ongoing ERRC campaigns include support for: effective state responses to violence and hate speech against Roma; school desegregation; an end to forced evictions and other housing rights abuse; implementation of comprehensive anti-discrimination law; justice for victims of coercive sterilisation; and Romani women's rights.' [138]

13.1.3 See Societal Treatment and State Treatment for further information on these subjects for Roma people. For further information about the work of the European Roma Rights Centre, see their website.

13.1.4 Chiricli, the Roma Women Fund, stated that it is a 'partner organization with the European Roma Rights Center (ERRC Budapest), CoE (Roma division,

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[137] European Roma Rights Centre, 'About us; who we are,' undated, url
[138] European Roma Rights Centre, 'About us; who we are,' undated, url

Strasbourg), International Organization of Migration (Kiev), Ukrainian Jews Fund and Ukrainian Roma Council.

'The main goals of the organization are:

- Creating of good conditions for the saving of historical traditions and developing of Roma culture.

- Improvement of social-economic and political position of Roma.

- Combating racial and ethnic discrimination and intolerance.

- Propaganda of brotherhood ideas and tolerance among different nations and religious confessions.

- Protection of cultural, social, education and medical rights of Roma people.'[139]

13.1.5   Chiricli further stated:

'During the last three years, the main priorities of fund were: education, health care and social issues; human rights. In 2009 our fund conducted the research "Roma Women Situation in Ukraine", the results of the research were included in to the shadow report for UNCEDAW http://www.errc.org/article/un-cedaw-urges-ukraine-to-eliminate-discrimination-against-romani-women/3065.

'In 2010, "Right to vote for Roma people", in Odessa and West Ukraine (Zakarpatian region); "Improving of situation through the program of Roma health mediators in 5 regions of Ukraine" were implemented.

'The fund successfully implemented more than 36 projects during the 7 years. These projects were directed to developing of Roma communities, motivation of Roma to take part in solving of Roma local problems, to build cooperation of NGOs with state bodies, access of Roma children to education, gender issues in the community, access to health care and medical rights, defending of Roma rights. The Fund has experience in administration of national and international programs.'[140]

13.1.6   Further information about the work of Chiricli is available here.

13.1.7   In October 2015, quoting other sources, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada described the Ternipe Roma Youth Centre in Lviv as:

'"Youth, historical, cultural, educational community organization" and a "partner NGO" of the International Renaissance Foundation. In correspondence with the Research Directorate, the Head of Ternipe stated that the organization was registered in 1998 and operates on a non-profit basis, A September 2014 monitoring report produced by Roma Women's Fund "Chiricli", an international charitable organization, describes Ternipe in Lviv as a "regional NGO". According to the Head of Ternipe, the organization "supervises regional projects pertaining to the support of youth activities and

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[139] Chiricli, About fund, undated, url
[140] Chiricli, About fund, undated, url

education" and "works on all-Ukrainian Roma projects as representatives of our region".' [141]

13.2   NGO assistance for Jews

13.2.1   The Association of Jewish organisations and communities of Ukraine (VAAD) was created on January 14 1991 and registered by the Justice Ministry of Ukraine. 265 organizations from 94 cities of Ukraine come under the VAAD, including 63 religious communities, 56 city communities, 15 social structures, 17 Jewish schools, 55 cultural organizations, 10 associations of prisoners of ghettoes and concentration camps, 19 youth organizations, as well as 5 associated member organizations[142].

13.2.2   It stated it is

'… part of interstate Jewish Confederation - the VAAD (CIS), the European Council of Jewish Communities, the European and Eurasian Jewish Congresses, the founder of the Jewish Confederation of Ukraine…

'At the present time the Jewish life is presented in more than 80 cities by nearly 250 organizations and communities that are united into 3 structures: Va'ad of Ukraine (210), Jewish Council of Ukraine (150), and the Union of Jewish religious communities of Ukraine (74). Many organizations and communities participate in the activities of all three mentioned structures…

'All the main Jewish "umbrella" organizations are officially recognized by the authorities of Ukraine; cooperate in a number of programmes with the State ministries and departments. Representatives of the Jewish organizations often attend meetings at different State levels, including the highest level…

'The main achievement of the Jewish community of Ukraine for the last five years is creation of the permanent working professional communal structures in all the fields of the Jewish life: social defense and education, culture and religion, Jewish studies and work with the youth, repatriation and preservation of the Jewish heritage, information, etc. For five years period all the mentioned programmes as well as many others, from separate amateur actions, have turned out to be a serious professional work. All current professional structures render their services to the Jews of Ukraine mainly free of charge.' [143]

13.2.3   For further information about the work of VAAD and its partner organisation, see the VAAD website.

13.3   NGO assistance for all groups

13.3.1   The KHRPG:

'KHPG has been registered as a legal entity since 10 November 1992, although it had existed as the human rights protection wing of the Kharkiv office of "Memoria" from 1988, and some members of the group had been

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[141] Canada: IRB, 'Ukraine: The Ternipe Roma Youth Centre in Lviv […],' 9 October 2015, url
[142] VAAD, The Association of Jewish organisations and communities of Ukraine, undated, url
[143] VAAD, The Association of Jewish organisations and communities of Ukraine, undated, url

active in the human rights movement from the 1960s through to the 1980s. The Group is active in three main areas:

- providing assistance to individuals whose rights have been infringed, and carrying out investigations into cases of human rights violation;

- developing human rights education and promoting legal awareness through public actions, educational events and publications as well as collection and dissemination of information on human rights;

- providing and improving monitoring and analysis of the human rights situation in Ukraine (in particular with regard to political and civil rights).

In 1998 the Group received the EU/USA "Award for Democracy and Civil Society".

'At the present time, the organization has more than fifty members – journalists, historians, linguists, lawyers, mathematicians, physicists, programmers, teachers, engineers, students. Twenty-two people are employed at the center, while others work for us part-time or on a voluntary basis.

'The Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group works to help people whose rights have been violated and investigates cases involving such abuse, as well as assessing the overall human rights situation in Ukraine. The Group also seeks to develop awareness of human rights issues through public events and its various publications.'[144]

13.3.2 Further information about the work of the KHRPG can be found on its website.

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[144] KHRPG, Brief introduction, undated, [url](url)

Terms of Reference

A 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) is a broad outline of what the CPIN seeks to cover. They form the basis for the [country information section](). The Home Office's Country Policy and Information Team uses some standardised ToRs, depending on the subject, and these are then adapted depending on the country concerned.

For this particular CPIN, the following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Legal position
  - Law
  - Implementation of the law
  - Government initiatives
- Demography
- Situation for minority groups
- Roma
  - Roma community
  - Current situation
  - Housing
  - Education and employment
  - Healthcare
  - Identification documents
  - Societal treatment
  - State treatment
- Jews
  - Jewish community
  - Societal treatment
  - State treatment
- Ethnic Russians
  - Russian community
  - Crimeans with or without Russian passports (link to UKR: Crimea, Donetsk, Luhansk CPIN)
  - Societal treatment
  - State treatment
- Muslims and Crimean Tatars
  - Societal treatment
  - State treatment

- People of African descent
  - o Societal treatment
  - o State treatment
- Other minority groups
  - o Societal treatment
  - o State treatment
- Non-governmental assistance
  - o NGO assistance for Roma
  - o NGO assistance for Jews
  - o NGO assistance for all groups

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Version control

Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **2.0**
- valid from **25 June 2019**

Changes from last version of this note

Updated country information and assessment.