

Local Public Sector Alliance

Decentralization in Europe and Central Asia

- The Power of Decentralization in Ukraine: Local Governments Resistance, Resilience and Rebuilding During the Conflict
- Timeline of Decentralization and Conflict and the Perspective of Citizens on Decentralization in Ukraine: 2016-2020
- Presented by Glen Wright
- October 11, 2023

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Decentralization in Europe and Central Asia

- Timeline of Decentralization and Conflict in Ukraine
- Revolution of Dignity Feb 2014
- Crimea Occupation Feb-March 2014
- Donetsk and Luhansk Occupation April 2014
- Concept of the Reform of Local Self-Government and the Territorial Organization April 2014 (Amalgamation, Enhanced Revenues, Intermunicipal Cooperation)

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Decentralization in Europe and Central Asia

- **Timeline of Decentralization and Conflict in Ukraine**
- Decentralization Begin 2015
- Amalgamation Process of 10000 plus local units 2015-2020
- Voluntary Process 2015-2019 982 Merged Units (54% of rural pop, 26% of total pop)
- Mandatory Process 2020 487 (33% of units merged)
- Total 1469
- Zelenskyy Elected President March-April 2019 (70% of vote, 24 of 25 regions)
- Local Government Elections October 2020
- Russian Invasion February 2022

Public Opinion Polling on Decentralization In Ukraine: 2016-2018

- Source:
 - *Nationwide public opinion polling conducted by the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation jointly with Kyiv International Institute of Sociology on August 16-28, 2018 in all regions of Ukraine with the exception of Crimea and the occupied territories in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. 2,041 respondents aged 18 and older were polled.*
 - *For comparison, the results of polling conducted by the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation and the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology in August 2016 and June 2017 are also provided.*
- *Some new data for 2020 has been added to some slides*

Public Opinion Polling on Decentralization In Ukraine: 2016-2018

- Are you aware of the initiatives of the government regarding the decentralization of power in Ukraine?

	August 2016	June 2017	August 2018
Yes, I am well aware of this	12.0	19.9	16.4
I heard something about this	54.1	61.9	59.6
No, I am not aware of this	30.8	18,0	22.7
Difficult to say	3.1	-	1.3

Public Opinion Polling on Decentralization In Ukraine: 2016-2018

- Do you know about the initiatives of the government regarding decentralization of power in Ukraine?

	West	Center	South	East
Yes, I am well aware	22,9	9,7	20,0	14,0
Heard something about it	55,6	67,4	63,5	39,1
No, I am not aware	20,8	20,8	15,6	44,9
Difficult to say	0,7	2,0	0,9	1,9

Public Opinion Polling on Decentralization In Ukraine: 2016-2018

- Do you support measures the government is taking within the decentralization of power reform?

	August 2016	June 2017	August 2018
Definitely, yes	9.5	7.5	8,6
Rather yes	21,9	34.5	34.4
Rather no	13.7	16.3	15.5
Absolutely not	9,3	10.4	6.3
I know nothing about this	27.4	-	24.9
Difficult to say	18.3	31.4	10.4

Public Opinion Polling on Decentralization In Ukraine: 2016-2018

- Do you support measures the government is taking within the decentralization of power reform?

	West	Center	South	East
Definitely, yes	14,4	5,9	7,3	6,2
Rather yes	39,1	35,3	36,7	18,0
Rather no	10,0	15,1	21,0	17,1
Absolutely not	3,1	5,9	7,4	11,7
I know nothing about this	24,2	27,0	15,3	39,1
Difficult to say	9,3	10,8	12,2	7,9

Public Opinion Polling on Decentralization In Ukraine: 2016-2018

- Over the period 2015-2017 revenues of local budgets considerably grew. Did you see any results of the use of these funds (quality of services, landscaping, social assistance) compared to the previous years?

	August 2016	June 2017	August 2018
Yes, I felt certain changes for the better	16.2	16.5	18.2
No, I did not see any changes	67.2	55.4	60.8
I only saw changes for the worse	8.4	16.4	13.9
Difficult to say	8.2	11.7	7.2

Since the decentralization reform was initiated in 2015, the revenues of local budgets grew significantly. Do you believe that things have changed for the better (improved quality of the governmental services, landscaping, etc.) during this period?

	<i>August 2016</i>	<i>June 2017</i>	<i>August 2018</i>	<i>August 2020</i>
Yes, change the better	16,2	16,5	18,2	26,8
No, no change	67,2	55,4	60,8	46,7
Change for the worse	8,4	16,4	13,9	12,1
No opinion	8,2	11,7	7,2	14,3

Public Opinion Polling on Decentralization In Ukraine: 2016-2018

- Over the period 2015-2017 revenues of local budgets considerably grew. Did you see any results of the use of these funds (quality of services, landscaping, social assistance) compared to the previous years?

	West	Center	South	East
Yes, I felt certain changes for the better	26,2	11,9	20,7	13,9
No, I did not feel any changes	57,5	63,5	63,4	55,0
I felt only changes for the worse	7,0	17,4	11,8	22,8
Difficult to say	9,3	7,2	4,1	8,3

Public Opinion Polling on Decentralization In Ukraine: 2016-2018

- Do you support the process of voluntary amalgamation of communities?

	August 2016	June 2017	August 2018
Definitely, yes	7,8	6,7	8,6
Rather yes	22,7	31,6	30,9
Rather no	14,8	14,1	19,0
Absolutely not	13,2	11,8	9,1
Difficult to say	41,6	35,9	32,5

Public Opinion Polling on Decentralization In Ukraine: 2016-2018

- Do you support the process of voluntary amalgamation of communities?

	West	Center	South	East
Definitely, yes	17,0	4,9	7,0	3,9
Rather yes	40,5	34,1	25,6	12,4
Rather no	12,1	15,8	29,1	22,2
Absolutely not	6,5	7,0	9,5	19,6
Difficult to say	23,9	38,2	28,8	41,9

Public Opinion Polling on Decentralization In Ukraine: 2016-2018

- What will be the benefits of decentralization of power for citizens (meaning, transfer of many functions from the center to the region)?

	August 2016	June 2017	August 2018
New windows of opportunity will be opened for citizens to have influence on the bodies of power	20,6	24,0	22,8
The destruction of towns, villages and certain cities will be accelerated	14,7	15,9	21,7
The quality of services will be improved for citizens	21,0	17,7	12,1
It will lead to the emergence of local “princes”	26,8	28,7	22,7
Other	2,4	4,4	1,2
Difficult to say	34	24,8	31,6

Public Opinion Polling on Decentralization In Ukraine: 2016-2018

- What will be the benefits of decentralization of power for citizens (meaning, transfer of many functions from the center to the region)?

	West	Center	South	East
New windows of opportunity will be opened for citizens to have influence on the bodies of power	31,7	22,4	17,7	15,2
The devastation of towns, villages and certain cities will be accelerated	15,1	18,6	32,9	22,0
The quality of services will be improved for citizens	12,4	11,2	13,4	11,1
It will lead to the emergence of local "princes"	20,2	31,4	16,9	15,5
Other	0,1	1,4	2,5	0,7

How has decentralization (the relegation of governmental functions to local authorities) impacted citizens?

	<i>August 2016</i>	<i>June 2017</i>	August 2018	August 2020
New opportunities for citizens to engage with the governmental decision-making emerged	20,6	24,0	22,8	15,3
The process of internal migration from villages and certain cities has accelerated	14,7	15,9	21,7	22,2
The quality of governmental services has improved	21,0	17,7	12,1	13,4
Local clans took over	26,8	28,7	22,7	29,7
Other	2,4	4,4	1,2	6,7
No opinion	34	24,8	31,6	28,1

How has decentralization (the relegation of governmental functions to local authorities) impacted citizens?

	West	Center	South	East
New opportunities for citizens to engage with the governmental decision-making emerged	24,0	15,5	8,8	10,4
The process of internal migration from villages and certain cities has accelerated	15,0	21,7	32,4	25,0
The quality of governmental services has improved	17,5	13,4	13,7	9,8
Local clans took over	18,5	26,9	24,2	46,6
Other	4,4	9,5	2,9	6,2
No opinion	31,5	28,6	37,1	20,3

Summary of Survey Results of August 2020

- 47% of respondents do not feel that decentralization reform and increase of local revenues have delivered any change. 27% think change for the better while 12% think change for the worse
- 28.5% believe the transfer of power to local clans is direct results of decentralization
- 22% believe that decentralization has accelerated the deterioration of villages and city communities
- 36% have not determined their attitude toward the amalgamation of units, 30% do not support the amalgamation, 16.5% support it

- Link to survey with results for August 2020
- <https://dif.org.ua/en/article/the-opinion-of-citizens-about-the-decentralization-reform-and-its-results>