

Human Rights Centre ZMINA (ZMINA)

website: <https://zmina.ua/en/>

e-mail: [info@zmina.ua](mailto:info@zmina.ua)

## **Implementation by Ukraine of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review (fourth cycle)**

This submission is made by the Human Rights Centre ZMINA (ZMINA), a non-governmental organization based in Ukraine, working on monitoring the state of civil society and media freedom in Ukraine, advocating for democratic reforms and the protection of human rights, documenting human rights violations and international crimes committed as a result of Russia's aggression since 2014, supporting victims of abuses and promoting accountability.

This submission focuses on the implementation of recommendations accepted during the previous cycle across key areas, including civil society space, media freedom, protection of human rights defenders, the functioning of the Ombudsperson institution, implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy, as well as compliance with international humanitarian law and the harmonisation of national legislation with international criminal law.

Of the 25 analyzed accepted recommendations, only one has been fully implemented, while the majority remain in progress or have seen little progress. In several cases, the limited implementation is directly linked to the ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine and the challenges posed by martial law.

**1. *S-116.79 (Denmark) and S-116.84 (Norway) on removal of legal or administrative restrictions on civil society activities – in progress*<sup>1</sup>**

State policy on supporting civil society organisations (CSOs) is based on the National Strategy for Promoting Civil Society Development in Ukraine for 2021–2026<sup>2</sup>. Progress was made in 2021–2026 under the Strategy in simplifying procedures for interaction between non-governmental organisations and public authorities (online registration service for public associations via the “Diia” portal, subject to the adoption of bill №8084<sup>3</sup>).

At the same time, martial law continues to pose challenges. These include restricted access to certain public registers and occasional difficulties faced by male CSO representatives in travelling abroad to participate in international events.

Another legislative initiative directly affecting the non-governmental sector was the Law of Ukraine “On Lobbying” №3606-IX adopted in 2024. It was fully implemented in March 2025 with the launch of the Transparency Register. Earlier versions of the draft law risked equating the routine human rights and advocacy activities of CSOs with commercial lobbying<sup>4</sup>. The final text succeeded in distinguishing lobbying from advocacy. However, human rights defenders (HRDs) emphasise the need for the National Agency on Corruption Prevention to closely monitor the practical application of the law in order to prevent disguised administrative pressure on CSOs resulting from ambiguous interpretations of the term “advocacy”.

**2. *S-116.92 (France) and S-116.123 (Czechia) on ensuring that asset declaration requirements for civil society do not impose undue burdens, including by revoking provisions requiring anti-corruption NGOs to submit financial declarations – completed***

On 6 June 2019, the Constitutional Court of Ukraine adopted Decision №3-r/2019, declaring the relevant provisions of the Law of Ukraine “On Prevention of Corruption” unconstitutional<sup>5</sup>. The Court found that requiring individuals who do not perform state or local government functions to submit financial declarations constituted excessive interference with their private lives and restricted the freedom to engage in civic activities. Since then, no legislative attempts have been made to reintroduce similar electronic asset declaration requirements for members of non-governmental organisations.

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<sup>1</sup> **Ukraine has made progress in facilitating civil society activities, while wartime restrictions and the implementation of the Law on Lobbying continue to require close monitoring.**

<sup>2</sup> Presidential Decree №487/2021 “On the National Strategy for Promoting Civil Society Development in Ukraine for 2021–2026”: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/487/2021#Text>

<sup>3</sup> Draft Law on Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on the Regulation of the Activities and State Registration of Public Organizations: <https://itd.rada.gov.ua/billinfo/Bills/Card/40561>

<sup>4</sup> Draft Law “On Integrity in Lobbying” in its current edition can be used to curtail freedom and democracy in Ukraine: <https://zmina.ua/en/statements-en/draft-law-on-integrity-in-lobbying-in-its-current-edition-can-be-used-to-curtail-freedom-and-democracy-in-ukraine/>

<sup>5</sup> Decision of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine №3-r/2019 of 6 June 2019 in the case concerning constitutional petitions regarding the constitutionality of certain provisions of the Law of Ukraine “On Prevention of Corruption”: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/v003p710-19#Text>

### ***3. S-116.80 (Mexico) and S-116.82 (Spain) on freedom of speech and media freedom – in progress***<sup>6</sup>

A key step in reforming the field of freedom of expression was the adoption of the Law of Ukraine “On Media”, №2849-IX of 2022<sup>7</sup>. The Law replaced outdated media legislation, fulfilling one of the key requirements for opening negotiations on Ukraine’s accession to the EU. Its positive outcomes include a unified modern system of media regulation, greater independence for the National Council on Television and Radio Broadcasting, and effective mechanisms for co-regulation between the state and the media community to develop common standards.

The introduction of martial law resulted in certain lawful restrictions on freedom of expression in the interests of national security and territorial integrity. At the same time, an important signal of the gradual restoration of openness was the restoration of journalists’ access to the Verkhovna Rada, as well as the resumption of online broadcasting of parliamentary sessions in 2025.

However, HRDs has identified a number of systemic challenges. In particular, the operation of the United News telethon restricts media pluralism; concerns have arisen over the procedure allowing the National Council to block online media outlets for systematic serious violations; and the adoption of Law №4576-IX “On Amendments to the Civil Code of Ukraine and Certain Other Laws” of 2025<sup>8</sup> significantly weakened mechanisms for public oversight and investigative journalism. The disproportionate restriction of access to key register data – including cadastral numbers and the exact addresses of real estate owned by all legal entities in Ukraine – directly contradicts the principle of public participation in overseeing public processes and preventing corruption<sup>9</sup>.

In addition, the draft law №15150 on the new Civil Code of Ukraine, which carries the risks of restricting investigations, access to information, and increasing legal pressure for the dissemination of socially important information, is of concern<sup>10</sup>.

### ***4. S-116.87 (France) on freedom of expression, in particular with regard to those defending rights, including the rights of LGBTQ+ – little progress***<sup>11</sup>

Current criminal legislation still lacks adequate legal mechanisms for classifying crimes motivated by hatred based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Draft law №13597<sup>12</sup>,

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<sup>6</sup> Ukraine has advanced media reform through the adoption of the Law on Media, while wartime restrictions, reduced media pluralism and recent limitations on access to public information continue to raise concerns.

<sup>7</sup> Law of Ukraine “On Media”, №2849-IX: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2849-20#Text>

<sup>8</sup> Law №4576-IX “On Amendments to the Civil Code of Ukraine and Certain Other Laws”: <https://ips.ligazakon.net/document/MN030442?an=2>

<sup>9</sup> Statement: Civil society organisations call for Draft Law №11533 to be vetoed / CHESNO Civic Movement, 27 August 2025. URL: <https://www.chesno.org/post/6558/>

<sup>10</sup> Statement on threats to freedom of speech in the draft new Civil Code of Ukraine: <https://zmina.ua/en/statements-en/statement-on-threats-to-freedom-of-speech-in-the-draft-new-civil-code-of-ukraine/>

<sup>11</sup> **LGBTQI+ HRDs continue to face hate-motivated attacks and online harassment, while the lack of hate crime legislation and ineffective investigations hinder effective protection of their rights.**

<sup>12</sup> Draft Law on Amendments to the Code of Ukraine on Administrative Offences and the Criminal Code of Ukraine on Combating Discrimination: <https://itd.rada.gov.ua/billinfo/Bills/Card/56933>

which would criminalise hate speech and acts of violence motivated by homophobia and transphobia, remain registered with the Verkhovna Rada, but its consideration and adoption have been blocked. Meanwhile, LGBTIQ+ activists face online harassment and attacks by radical groups. Law enforcement investigations into such incidents often remain ineffective, while criminal proceedings are initiated under provisions on “hooliganism”, without taking the motive of persecution due to civic activities into account.

At the same time, public actions take place in Ukraine in support of the rights of the LGBTIQ+ community, and law enforcement protects them.

**5. 116.85 (the Netherlands), 116.90 (the Republic of Korea) and 116.91 (Italy) on ensuring the safety of civil society and media representatives – little progress**<sup>13</sup>

According to a ZMINA report<sup>14</sup>, 178 cases of persecution, pressure and casualties among civil society and media were documented in Ukraine in 2025. More than 60% – 112 documented cases – were related to Russia’s aggression. However, ZMINA recorded an increase in domestic challenges in 2026. Non-state actors, local authorities and law enforcement obstructed the work of activists through smear campaigns, legal pressure in the form of criminal proceedings and SLAPPs, intimidation and threats.

Cases of pressure on media and activists engaged in exposing corruption were documented in 2024–2026, including attempts to obstruct journalists’ professional activities through both direct intimidation and smear tactics<sup>15</sup>. Anti-corruption activists have faced pressure directly from law enforcement agencies<sup>16</sup>. The law enforcement system has shown little initiative in investigating crimes against activists and journalists who expose corruption at the regional level, where pressure is often coordinated by representatives of local elites.

At the same time, the freedom of assembly and association is fully exercised with protection of the law enforcement even under war circumstances.

**6. S-116.30 (France), S-116.31 (Slovakia) and S-116.32 (Honduras) on strengthening the independence and institutional capacity of the Office of the Ombudsperson – little progress**<sup>17</sup>

The Ombudsman exercises their powers in accordance with the Law of Ukraine “On the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights”<sup>18</sup>. The procedure for nominating

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<sup>13</sup> **Civil society representatives and journalists continue to face security risks from Russia’s aggression alongside increasing domestic intimidation, harassment, and insufficient investigation of attacks, particularly against anti-corruption and LGBTIQ+ activists.**

<sup>14</sup> Report of the Human Rights Centre ZMINA “The situation of human rights defenders and civic activists in Ukraine in 2025”: <https://zmina.ua/publication/stanovyshhe-pravozahysnykiv-ta-gromadskyh-aktyvistiv-v-ukrayini-v-2025-roczy-analitychnyj-zvit/>

<sup>15</sup> Statement on Pressure on Investigative Journalism, ZMINA, 08.07.2026: <https://zmina.ua/statements/zayava-shhodo-tysku-na-rozsliduvannu-zhurnalistyky/>

<sup>16</sup> Stop using the justice system for political reprisals: statement by civil society organisations on the case of Vitalii Shabunin, ZMINA, 15.07.2025: <https://zmina.ua/en/statements-en/25918/>

<sup>17</sup> **The Ombudsman’s institutional capacity has increased through additional resources but little progress has been made in aligning the appointment procedure with international principles.**

<sup>18</sup> Law of Ukraine “On the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights” of 13 December 2022, №2849-I: <https://ips.ligazakon.net/document/Z970776?an=121730>

and electing a candidate for the position of Commissioner does not comply with the Paris and Venice Principles: it does not provide for pluralistic representation of civil society and the selection of candidates on the basis of an open, transparent and objective public competition.

In 2024, a working group established within the Advisory Council under the Commissioner presented a draft<sup>19</sup> new version of the Law<sup>20</sup> which received a positive assessment from the Council of Europe<sup>21</sup>.

Following revisions, a new version of the draft Law was registered in 2025, №13181<sup>22</sup>. Despite introducing several positive changes, the draft law did not incorporate the working group's proposals<sup>23</sup>.

In late April 2026, the Commissioner's Office was reaccredited by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI). However, its Sub-Committee on Accreditation again emphasised<sup>24</sup> the importance of an open and participatory procedure for selecting the Ombudsman, based on public consultations.

In terms of resources, the workload of the Commissioner's Office increased by 260% between 2022 and 2026<sup>25</sup> due to the growing number of submissions. Its resources increased accordingly: the budget rose from more than UAH 239 million in 2022<sup>26</sup> to more than UAH 515 million in 2026<sup>27</sup>, while the maximum staffing level increased from 382<sup>28</sup> to 550 employees<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> Comparative Table of Proposals for the Draft Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine to Improve the Legal Framework Governing the Activities of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights": <https://zmina.info/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/porivnyalna-tablyczya-propozyczij-do-proyektu-zakonu-ukrayiny-pro-vnese-nnya-zmin-do-deyakyh-zakonodavchyh-aktiv-ukrayiny-shhodo-udoskona.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> Amendments to the Law of Ukraine on the Commissioner: The Institution Must Be Strong!, Ombudsman of Ukraine, 09.04.2024:

[https://ombudsman.gov.ua/news\\_details/zmini-do-zakonu-ukrayini-pro-upovnovazhenogo-instituciya-maye-buti-silnoyu](https://ombudsman.gov.ua/news_details/zmini-do-zakonu-ukrayini-pro-upovnovazhenogo-instituciya-maye-buti-silnoyu)

<sup>21</sup> Legal Review of the Draft Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine to Improve the Legal Framework Governing the Activities of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights" and Provisions of Other Relevant Laws: <https://rm.coe.int/legal-review-draft-amendments-to-the-law-on-ombudsperson-ukr-final/1680afc603>

<sup>22</sup> Draft Law on the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights: <https://itd.rada.gov.ua/billinfo/Bills/Card/56212>

<sup>23</sup> The draft law on the Commissioner of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine does not meet international standards — analysis by ZMINA:

<https://zmina.ua/event/zakonoprojekt-pro-upovnovazhenogo-verhovnoyi-rady-ukrayiny-ne-vidpovidaye-mizhnarodnym-standartam-analiz-zmina/>

<sup>24</sup> Global Alliance Of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI): Report and Recommendations of the 47th Session of the Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA): <https://ganhri.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/sca-report-47th-session-en.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Annual Report of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights on Observance and Protection of Human and Civil Rights and Freedoms in Ukraine in 2025: <https://www.rada.gov.ua/uploads/documents/76849.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> On Approval of the Budget Programme Passport under the Code of Programme Classification of Expenditure and Lending (KPKVK) 5991010 for 2022: Order of the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights of 4 February 2022, №7.15/26:

<https://ombudsman.gov.ua/storage/app/media/pro-nashu-robotu/organizacijno-rozporyadchi-dokumenti/pasport-byudzhethnoi-programi-na-2022-rik-kpkvk-5991010.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> On Approval of the Budget Programme Passport under the Code of Programme Classification of Expenditure and Lending (KPKVK) 5991010 for 2026: Order of the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights of 5 February 2026, №14.15/26:

<https://www.ombudsman.gov.ua/storage/app/media/uploaded-files/pasport-byudzhethnoi-programi-na-2026-rik-5991010.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Ministry of Finance of Ukraine: Staffing Levels and Remuneration of All Employees of State Authorities: <https://mof.gov.ua/uk/governance-649>

<sup>29</sup> Ministry of Finance of Ukraine: Staffing Levels and Remuneration of All Employees of State Authorities in 2025: [https://mof.gov.ua/uk/news/dashbord\\_minfinu\\_v\\_2025\\_rotsi\\_faktichna\\_chiselnist\\_derzhsluzhbovtziv\\_skorotilas\\_na\\_51\\_tis\\_osib\\_a\\_zrostannia\\_serednoi\\_zarplati\\_zalishalosia\\_pomirimim-5570](https://mof.gov.ua/uk/news/dashbord_minfinu_v_2025_rotsi_faktichna_chiselnist_derzhsluzhbovtziv_skorotilas_na_51_tis_osib_a_zrostannia_serednoi_zarplati_zalishalosia_pomirimim-5570)

## **7. *S-116.34 (Canada) on the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy – in progress***<sup>30</sup>

An updated National Human Rights Strategy was approved in 2021<sup>31</sup>. Its implementation is ensured through corresponding Action Plans<sup>32</sup>. However, no such Action Plan has been in place since 2024, while the Strategy itself needs to be updated.

In the summer of 2025, the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine began developing a new National Strategy for the period up to 2035<sup>33</sup>. Despite online consultations with civil society<sup>34</sup>, the published results of the review of submissions<sup>35</sup> showed that only around 10% of the proposals had been incorporated. The draft omitted entire population groups that have emerged as a result of the full-scale war (military personnel and refugees). This creates a risk that the new Strategy will replicate the content of its predecessor and, consequently, the shortcomings of previous Action Plans, which were also not fully implemented, particularly with regard to guaranteeing the rights of LGBTIQ+ people, combating discrimination and protecting persons affected by the war<sup>36</sup>.

Regarding the component of the recommendation on combating discrimination based on sex and sexual orientation, the Verkhovna Rada ratified the Istanbul Convention in June 2022, and it entered into force for Ukraine in November 2022. Despite this, certain legislative initiatives aimed at combating discrimination have long remained stalled in the Parliament (Verkhovna Rada).

## **8. *S116.8–116.12 (Estonia, Latvia, Austria, Lithuania, Guatemala) on the ratification of the Rome Statute and harmonization of national legislation in accordance with it – in progress***<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> **Ukraine has initiated the development of a new National Human Rights Strategy, but the absence of an updated Action Plan since 2024, limited incorporation of civil society input, and insufficient attention to discrimination and war-related human rights challenges have slowed effective implementation.**

<sup>31</sup> Presidential Decree №119/2021 of 24 March 2021 “On the National Human Rights Strategy”:

<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/119/2021#Text>

<sup>32</sup> Implementation of the Action Plan for the National Human Rights Strategy for 2021–2023:

<https://nads.gov.ua/plani-ta-zviti/vykonannya-planu-dii-z-realizatsii-natsionalnoi-strategii-u-sferi-prav-liudyny-na-2021-2023-roky>

<sup>33</sup> Ministry of Justice Develops a New Version of the National Human Rights Strategy for the Period up to 2035:

<https://minjust.gov.ua/news/ministry/minyust-zdiysnyue-rozrobku-novoi-redaktsii-natsionalnoi-strategii-u-sferi-prav-lyudini-do-2035-roku>

<sup>34</sup> Notice of Online Public Consultations on the Draft Presidential Decree “On Approval of the National Human Rights Strategy for the Period up to 2035”:

<https://minjust.gov.ua/m/19032026-povidomlennya-pro-provedennya-elektronnih-konsultatsiy-z-gromadskisty-schodo-proektu-ukazu-prezidenta-ukraini-pro-zatverdjennya-natsionalnoi-strategii-u-sferi-prav-lyudini-na-period-do-2035-roku>

<sup>35</sup> Report on the Results of Online Public Consultations on the Draft Presidential Decree “On Approval of the National Human Rights Strategy for the Period up to 2035”:

<https://minjust.gov.ua/m/17042026-zvit-pro-rezultati-provedennya-elektronnih-konsultatsiy-z-gromadskisty-schodo-proektu-ukazu-prezidenta-pro-zatverdjennya-natsionalnoi-strategii-u-sferi-prav-lyudini-na-period-do-2035-roku>

<sup>36</sup> Statement on the development of the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy, ZMINA, 28.05.2026:

<https://zmina.ua/en/statements-en/statement-of-the-human-rights-centre-zmina-on-the-development-of-the-action-plan-for-the-e-implementation-of-the-national-human-rights-strategy/>

<sup>37</sup> **Ukraine has ratified the Rome Statute; further legislative alignment with international criminal law is ongoing, including necessary amendments to provisions on war crimes, aggression, and the application of crimes against humanity and command responsibility.**

On 21 August 2024, the Verkhovna Rada adopted the Law of Ukraine “On the Ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the Amendments Thereto”<sup>38</sup>, and in 2025 Ukraine became a full State Party.

The process of bringing Ukrainian legislation into line with international criminal law is still ongoing. The Implementing Law adopted in October 2024<sup>39</sup>, criminalized crimes against humanity, introduced the institution of command responsibility, introduced the principle of universal jurisdiction, and also changed the provisions of the articles on the crime of aggression, genocide and war crimes. At the same time, it did not complete the harmonization of Ukrainian legislation with international criminal law.

There remains a need to improve the wording of Article 438 of the CC of Ukraine on war crimes, align the definition of the crime of aggression in Article 437 of the CC of Ukraine with the corresponding provision of the Rome Statute by clarifying the scope of potential perpetrators<sup>40</sup>, and determine approaches to the retroactive application of the provisions on crimes against humanity and command responsibility.

#### ***9. S-116.27 (Georgia) on ensuring humanitarian access to the entire territory of Ukraine – in progress, the RF blocks access***<sup>41</sup>

International human rights and humanitarian organisations continue to operate in the territory controlled by the Government of Ukraine. As of April 2026, the ICRC had visited more than 8,900 POWs from both parties to the international armed conflict, primarily in Ukraine<sup>42</sup>.

Since the full-scale invasion in 2022, crossing points between the territory controlled by the Government of Ukraine and the territories under the effective control of the RF have not been operational. Monitoring mechanisms have highlighted in their reports that they lack access to the territory of the RF and the occupied territories of Ukraine because the Russian Government has not responded to their requests<sup>43</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> Law of Ukraine “On the Ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the Amendments Thereto” of 21 August 2024, №3909-IX: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3909-IX#Text>

<sup>39</sup> Law of Ukraine “On Amendments to the Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine in Connection with the Ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the Amendments Thereto” of 9 October 2024, №4012-IX: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/4012-20#Text>

<sup>40</sup> Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court of 17 July 1998: [https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995\\_588#Text](https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_588#Text)

<sup>41</sup> **Humanitarian organisations continue to operate in the Ukrainian government-controlled areas; however, access to territories under the effective control of the Russian Federation remains blocked, with repeated requests by international monitoring bodies unanswered, while ongoing hostilities and attacks further hinder humanitarian operations.**

<sup>42</sup> Russia–Ukraine international armed conflict: Your questions answered about the ICRC’s work. International Committee of the Red Cross, 16 January 2026, updated 28 May 2026:

<https://www.icrc.org/en/article/FAQ-icrc-work-russia-ukraine-international-armed-conflict>

<sup>43</sup> Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine. United Nations Human Rights Council, 9 March 2026: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/coiukraine/a-hrc-61-61-auv.pdf>; Report on Violations and Abuses of International Humanitarian, Human Rights and Criminal Law related to Militarization and Indoctrination of Ukrainian Children by the RF. OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 9 July 2026: [https://odihr.osce.org/sites/default/files/documents/official\\_documents/2026/07/odgal0034c1%20ODIHR%20NV%20201-2026%20with%20MM%20Report.pdf](https://odihr.osce.org/sites/default/files/documents/official_documents/2026/07/odgal0034c1%20ODIHR%20NV%20201-2026%20with%20MM%20Report.pdf)

Situation of human rights in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, including the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. Report of the Secretary-General, A/HRC/62/59. United Nations Human Rights Council, 13 May 2026: [https://ukraine.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2026-06/A\\_HRC\\_62\\_59-EN.pdf](https://ukraine.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2026-06/A_HRC_62_59-EN.pdf)

The work of humanitarian organisations in the territory controlled by the Government of Ukraine is hampered by Russian strikes and hostilities<sup>44</sup>. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, eight humanitarian workers were killed in Ukraine in 2025<sup>45</sup>. Moreover, three OSCE SMM employees have been illegally detained by the RF since 2022<sup>46</sup>.

#### ***10. S-116.62 (Canada) on the implementation of OHCHR recommendations on human rights in the context of armed conflict – in progress***<sup>47</sup>

An analysis of OHCHR reports covering the period from December 2023 to November 2025 shows that several key recommendations to Ukraine were reiterated across successive reports, indicating that the corresponding issues had not been fully addressed.

OHCHR has repeatedly called for legislation on collaboration-related activities to be brought into line with international law, and for the authorities to refrain from prosecuting individuals for acts that the occupying authorities could lawfully require them to perform. Several draft laws introducing the relevant amendments to the CC of Ukraine have been registered with the Verkhovna Rada, but the necessary legislative changes have still not been adopted after four years<sup>48</sup>.

Regarding conflict-related sexual violence, OHCHR emphasised in 2025 the need to adopt secondary legislation and provide adequate funding for the mechanism for the legal and social protection of survivors and the provision of urgent interim reparations. It was not until June 2026 that the Cabinet of Ministers approved a procedure establishing mechanisms for recognising a person as a survivor, awarding a one-off urgent cash payment, supporting applicants and providing access to rehabilitation measures<sup>49</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> Investigation Obtains Evidence of Russia's Involvement in the Deaths of Red Cross Workers in the Donetsk Region: Details / Suspilne Donbas, 21 September 2024:

<https://suspilne.media/donbas/841321-zagibel-pracivnikiv-cervonogo-hresta-na-doneccini-slidstvo-mae-dokazi-pricetnjista-ro-sij/>; UN Condemns Drone Strike on Its Humanitarian Mission Vehicle in Kherson / Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 14 May 2026: <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-kherson-pratsivnyky-oon-ataka/33757138.html>

<sup>45</sup> Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2026. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 13 January 2026:

<https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ukraine/ukraine-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-2026-january-2026-enuk>

<sup>46</sup> OSCE and participating States must act now to free its staff members from Russia's captivity and prosecution, ZMINA, 31.07.2025:

<https://zmina.ua/en/statements-en/osce-and-participating-states-must-act-now-to-free-its-staff-members-from-russias-captivity-and-prosecution/>

<sup>47</sup> **Key OHCHR recommendations have been repeatedly reiterated, indicating incomplete implementation.**

<sup>48</sup> Report on the Human Rights Situation in Ukraine, 1 June–30 November 2025. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 9 December 2025:

<https://ukraine.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2026-01/2025-12-09%20OHCHR%2043rd%20periodic%20report%20on%20Ukraine%20UKR.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> Payments to Survivors of Sexual Violence Related to the RF's Armed Aggression: What Mechanism Has the Cabinet of Ministers Introduced? / Right to Protection Charitable Foundation, 8 July 2026:

<https://r2p.org.ua/page/vyplaty-postrazhdalym-vid-seksualnoho-nasylstva-poviazanoho-zi-zbroinoiu-ahresiieiu-rf-yakyi-mekhanizm-zaprovadyv-kabmin>

**11. S-116.56 (Spain) on the respect for the principles of international humanitarian law – in progress**<sup>50</sup>

Specific instruments have been introduced within the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine and the Armed Forces of Ukraine to ensure that Ukrainian military personnel comply with international humanitarian law (IHL). In particular, the Ministry of Defence published a Voluntary Report on IHL describing approaches to its implementation and application<sup>51</sup>.

In 2022, a system for reporting on compliance with IHL was introduced within the Ministry of Defence. Units must submit monthly information on examples of proper compliance with IHL as well as cases of alleged violations. Reports of alleged violations are submitted by representatives of the Ministry of Defence's legal service to the Central Legal Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, which forwards them to the Office of the Prosecutor General for investigation. Potential violations of IHL are also investigated through internal review and official investigation procedures.

Separate external monitoring of places of deprivation of liberty is conducted by the Ombudsman under the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM). However, the NPM is not a general mechanism for monitoring compliance with IHL in the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Publicly available information indicates the existence of an internal reporting system and individual monitoring tools rather than a fully transparent and independent mechanism for monitoring compliance with IHL within the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

**12. S-116.100 (Hungary), S-116.108 (Lithuania), S-116.109 (the UK) on the investigation of international crimes and combating impunity – in progress**<sup>52</sup>

Ukraine is documenting and investigating international crimes on a large scale. As of 13 July 2026, more than 248,000 crimes related to the RF's aggression against Ukraine had been documented in Ukraine<sup>53</sup>.

Within Ukraine's national system, the Security Service of Ukraine (SSU) continues to bear the burden of investigating international crimes. It lacks sufficient resources to ensure the effective investigation of crimes on such a scale. There is no political will to introduce alternative investigative jurisdiction by formally transferring some proceedings to the National Police of Ukraine.

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<sup>50</sup> **Ukraine has introduced internal mechanisms to promote and monitor compliance with IHL; however, existing frameworks remain primarily internal, and concerns persist regarding the lack of a fully transparent and independent monitoring mechanism.**

<sup>51</sup> Delivery of Humanitarian Aid by Drone and Evacuation of Civilians from Areas under Shelling. Ministry of Defense Published Voluntary Report on Implementation of International Humanitarian Law / Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, 15 November 2024:

<https://mod.gov.ua/news/dostavka-gum-dopomogi-dronom-i-vivedennya-czivilnih-z-pid-obstriliv-minoboroni-opublikovalo-obrovinij-zvit-u-sferi-mizhnarodnogo-gumanitarnogo-prava>

<sup>52</sup> **Ukraine has established a large-scale system for documenting and investigating international crimes and strengthened cooperation with international partners; however, the overwhelming caseload, limited resources, lack of redistribution of investigative jurisdiction, and the predominance of in absentia proceedings continue to constrain the effectiveness of accountability efforts.**

<sup>53</sup> Crimes Committed during the RF's Full-Scale Invasion, as of 13 July 2026 / Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine: <https://www.gp.gov.ua/img/3d516dc3-1892-4f40-8493-60a3f1f97284/warcrime-13072026ua.jpg>

Prosecutors also continue to face a significant workload: in the Donetsk region, each prosecutor handles approximately 7,000 war crimes cases, while in the Kharkiv region, the figure is approximately 2,000–2,500<sup>54</sup>.

At present, more than 1,222 people are suspects in war crimes cases before Ukrainian courts, 893 are defendants and 273 have been convicted.

All actors involved in delivering justice for international crimes face common challenges, including heavy workloads; limited human resources, particularly staff losses and turnover; dangerous working conditions, especially in regions close to the combat zone; and the need for additional training and professional development, depending on their level of prior experience.

An important step was the establishment of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine<sup>55</sup>. In addition, Ukraine is developing its cooperation with the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICC, which, since March 2022, has been investigating alleged international crimes committed in the territory of Ukraine since 21 November 2013<sup>56</sup>.

Ukraine also participates in the joint investigation team (JIT) established in March 2022 with the support of Eurojust. It comprises representatives of Ukraine and six EU Member States, while the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICC, Eurojust and Europol also participate in its work. The JIT facilitates close cooperation among its participants and the prompt exchange of information and evidence<sup>57</sup>.

Ukraine submits materials collected during national investigations of international crimes to the Core International Crimes Evidence Database. Their analysis make it possible to establish links between individual incidents, identify patterns of criminal conduct and potential duplication between investigations, and locate evidence collected by other states that may be relevant to criminal proceedings in Ukraine<sup>58</sup>.

Ukraine participates in the work of the International Centre for the Prosecution of the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine at Eurojust. Ukrainian prosecutors work with representatives of partner states to exchange evidence, coordinate investigations and, in particular, build the body of evidence required for the future work of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine<sup>59</sup>.

To strengthen Ukraine's capacity to investigate the most serious international crimes, the EU, the US and the UK established the Atrocity Crimes Advisory Group in 2022. It provides expert and practical support to the Office of the Prosecutor General, assists with

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<sup>54</sup> Around 800 Investigators and Prosecutors in Ukraine Are Documenting More Than 239,000 Russian War Crimes / ZMINA, 24 June 2026:

<https://zmina.info/news/v-ukrayini-blyzko-800-slidchyh-i-prokuroriv-dokumentuyut-ponad-239-tysyach-vovennyh-zlochyniv-rf/>

<sup>55</sup> Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine. Council of Europe:

<https://www.coe.int/uk/web/special-tribunal-ukraine>

<sup>56</sup> Situation in Ukraine. International Criminal Court: <https://www.icc-cpi.int/situations/ukraine>

<sup>57</sup> Joint investigation team into alleged crimes committed in Ukraine. Eurojust:

<https://www.eurojust.europa.eu/joint-investigation-team-alleged-crimes-committed-ukraine>

<sup>58</sup> Core International Crimes Evidence Database (CICED). Eurojust:

<https://www.eurojust.europa.eu/core-international-crimes-evidence-database>

<sup>59</sup> International Centre for the Prosecution of the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine (ICPA). Eurojust:

<https://www.eurojust.europa.eu/international-centre-for-the-prosecution-of-the-crime-of-aggression-against-ukraine>

specific criminal proceedings and coordinates international assistance, including in regions affected by the war<sup>60</sup>.

Ukraine has therefore established an extensive national investigation system and developed international cooperation on the investigation of international crimes. However, the large number of documented violations, the critical workload of investigators and prosecutors, limited human resources and the predominance of judgments delivered in absentia significantly restrict the scope for holding perpetrators accountable in practice.

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<sup>60</sup> Ukraine: The European Union, the United States, and the United Kingdom establish the Atrocity Crimes Advisory Group (ACA) for Ukraine. European External Action Service, 25 May 2022: [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/ukraine-european-union-united-states-and-united-kingdom-establish-atrocity-crimes-advisory-group-aca\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/ukraine-european-union-united-states-and-united-kingdom-establish-atrocity-crimes-advisory-group-aca_en)

## ANNEX I

### Endnotes:

Taking into account the abovementioned information, we recommend:

1. Ensure that the application of martial law does not result in undue restrictions on the activities of civil society organisations, including access to public registers, freedom of assembly, and participation in international events;
2. Guarantee the transparent and non-discriminatory implementation of the Law “On Lobbying” through effective monitoring to prevent undue pressure on human rights organisations;
3. Ensure that measures taken under martial law do not unduly restrict freedom of expression and media pluralism, including by safeguarding independent journalism, limiting the blocking of media outlets to strictly necessary and proportionate cases, and restoring access to public information and registers;
4. Review recent and draft legislation affecting the media and access to information to prevent undue restrictions on investigative journalism and public oversight;
5. Adopt comprehensive legislation to effectively address hate crimes and hate speech based on sexual orientation and gender identity, including by ensuring the prompt consideration of draft law №13597;
6. Strengthen the capacity of law enforcement to properly investigate and prosecute such crimes, including by recognising bias motives, while ensuring effective protection of LGBTIQ+ activists from violence and harassment;
7. Ensure prompt, effective and impartial investigations into all cases of attacks, intimidation and pressure against civil society activists and journalists;
8. Take measures to prevent the misuse of criminal proceedings, including undue delays and protracted investigations, as well as the use of SLAPPs to silence critical voices;
9. Strengthen protections against harassment by both state and non-state actors, including at the local level;
10. Bring the procedure for the election and appointment of candidates for the position of the Ukrainian Ombudsman into line with the principles of transparency and accountability, in particular by finalising draft Law №13181 “On the Ukrainian

Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights”, ensuring broad public consultations in order to depoliticise candidates for the position;

11. Adopt and implement the new National Human Rights Strategy and its Action Plan, ensuring that it addresses current challenges and issues arising in the context of European integration and Russia’s armed aggression, in particular by safeguarding the rights of the LGBTIQ+ community, combating discrimination, and protecting war-affected persons;
12. Continue aligning the Criminal Code of Ukraine with international criminal and humanitarian law, including the Rome Statute and relevant rules of customary international law, by clearly defining types of war crimes and by harmonising provisions on the crime of aggression;
13. Strengthen the legal and procedural framework for universal jurisdiction and clarify the temporal application of provisions on international crimes and command responsibility;
14. Fully implement outstanding recommendations of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, including by bringing legislation on collaboration-related activities into line with international law and ensuring that individuals are not prosecuted for acts they were compelled to perform under occupation;
15. Establish an independent, transparent and comprehensive mechanism for monitoring compliance with international humanitarian law within the Armed Forces of Ukraine;
16. Strengthen the capacity of national authorities to effectively investigate and prosecute international crimes by allocating adequate human and financial resources;
17. Further enhance cooperation with international partners to combat impunity and ensure accountability.