Outcome document
Forum of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine: European Perspective, Dialogue, Protection of Rights
7 June 2024 Kyiv, Ukraine

The Constitution of Ukraine and relevant national legislation guarantee the rights and protection of national minorities in Ukraine. Despite the full-scale military invasion by Russia on 24 February 2022 and its ongoing aggressive war, Ukraine is moving towards democratic and rule-of-law reforms. During this time, Ukrainian society has become more unified and focused on victory in the war for real independence and the further development of Ukraine as a highly developed democratic European state.

As representatives of institutions of national minorities (communities) in Ukraine, we acknowledge that Ukraine keeps making essential steps toward ensuring the rights and freedoms of national minorities. Furthermore, we do believe that deep integration with the EU will promote further democratic development in human rights, the rule of law, humanitarian approaches, and international relations, in particular the protection of national minorities (communities), as one of the key aspects of EU accession in accordance with the Copenhagen criteria. We strongly urge all leaders of EU member states to continue supporting Ukraine on its path towards European integration and call on for the adoption of the negotiation framework and official launch of accession talks with Ukraine.

We welcome the initiative of the “Forum of National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine: European Perspective, Dialogue, Protection of Rights” as a platform for a constructive dialogue and to discuss the best practices, challenges, and opportunities related to minority rights and integration.

The present Outcome document was prepared by the representatives of the national minorities who participated in the Forum (150 participants from the different regions of Ukraine). The recommendations in the Outcome document are based on the needs of the national minorities and the discussions held at the Forum. They reflect the contributions made by the participants during the sessions. The recommendations aim to provide guidance for the further implementation of the Law of Ukraine on National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine, the State Targeted National and Cultural Programme “Unity in Diversity” till the period of 2034 as well as other relevant documents and policies.

The key recommendations are as follows:

1) We acknowledge the efforts of the Government of Ukraine to improve legislation, in particular with regard to the protection of national minorities (communities), as one of the key aspects of EU accession in accordance with the Copenhagen criteria. We stress that the State should ensure full and effective implementation of the Law on National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine and a State Targeted National and Cultural Programme "Unity in Diversity" as well as other relevant policies. The State Service of Ukraine for Ethnic Affairs and Freedom of Conscience should make efforts
to raise awareness of the benefits of protecting minority rights as an effective means of preventing conflicts.

2) We welcome the recently established Council of Public Associations of National Minorities, which has been set up under the State Service of Ukraine for Ethnic Affairs and Freedom of Conscience. We call on it to work effectively as a platform for addressing national minority issues in accordance with the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), Article 15.

3) We stress that national/regional and local authorities should increase their efforts to ensure a systematic dialogue on minority issues, in particular with regard to IDPs of the Russian-Ukrainian war.

4) The Council of Europe, the OSCE and other regional international organizations, State and donor institutions should support the capacity-building of civil society organizations of Ukraine representing minority groups for monitoring, advocacy and strengthening of their human rights and freedoms.

5) We recommend political parties of Ukraine to be inclusive to the participation of minority representatives and offering traineeship/internship scheme in the Ukrainian parliament (Verkhovna Rada) for enhancing representatives of national minorities political participation.

6) It is crucial to recognise the vital role and leadership of national minority women and to support their initiatives in different fields of social life. We recommend political parties and schools/institutions for public policies providing training for national minority women to become leaders for public policy and party candidates and offer opportunities to practice achieved skills.

7) Campaigns aimed at raising awareness of minority issues and engaging those with influence over communities, such as political, religious and community leaders and civil society actors in advocating for peaceful coexistence, should be launched.

8) The Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine must intensify commitment to “leave no one behind” and take steps to eliminate multiple, aggravated and intersecting forms of discrimination in social, economic, and public life, and promote the socioeconomic development and political participation of minority groups, including minority representatives with disabilities.

9) Ministry of Education should develop long-term, comprehensive policies for combating negative stereotypes of and discrimination against minority individuals and groups, and promote intercultural understanding by, among other things, the teaching of the culture and history of minorities in the national curriculum.

10) We urge national and local authorities, in particular the Ministry of Interior, State Migration Service and Ministry of Justice taking responsibility and addressing
without delay, lack of personal and identification documents, legal status/citizenship faced by vulnerable Roma women and men to ensure that access to rights and services as citizens of Ukraine.

11) The State Statistic Service should ensure the collection of data disaggregated by ethnicity, religion, language, race and other relevant characteristics to enable legislators and policymakers to establish targeted public policies and programmes for minorities.

We commit to work together with the state institutions and relevant international organisations on the implementation of the aforementioned recommendations. We are open to constructive dialogue with national and international partners through the established councils at the national and local levels and other platforms.

We call on the European Commission to adopt the negotiating framework and to start the actual accession negotiations with Ukraine.

We reaffirm our commitment to developing cooperation on the implementation of policies aimed at improving the situation of national minorities and enhancing equal rights, freedoms and opportunities for the national minorities (communities) in Ukraine.