



UP Foundation



UKRAINIAN PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN 2019

ANALYTICAL REPORT

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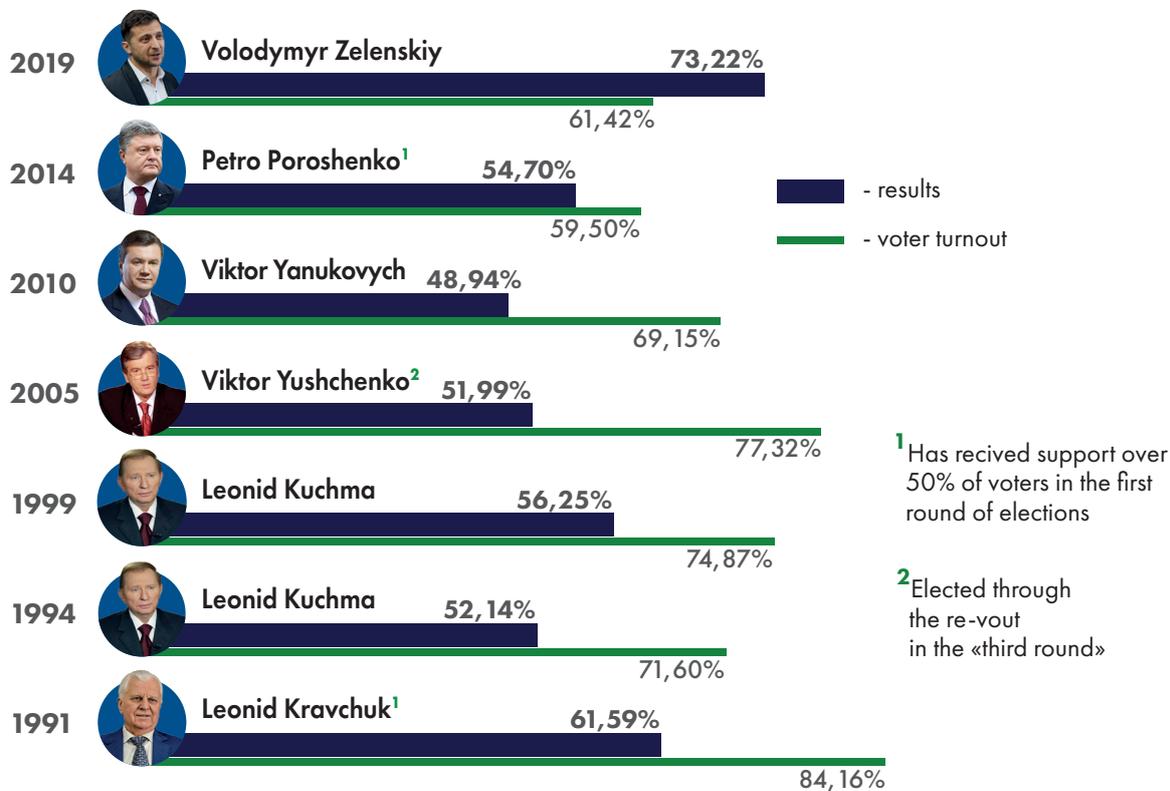
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Ukrainian presidential elections brought an unexpected result: the actor, who had not previously participated in the political life of the country, had no governmental experience and was not considered as a favourite at the very beginning of the campaign, won the election. Moreover: **he won with a record result for Ukraine – 73.22%**. This indicates a deep crisis of elites and institutions in Ukraine, the total disbelief of society towards politicians.



Many experts consider the current situation as a second stage of the Maidan-2014 or as a reaction to the incompleteness of the revolutionary processes intended to fundamentally change Ukrainian society. The regime of Petro Poroshenko, which combined European slogans, speculations on war and Maidan topics, anti-Russian discourse, corruption schemes and nationalist ideology, caused irritation in many citizens, which led to results of voting. **However, at the same time, not a single politician from the old system received more than 15% support – neither Yulia Tymoshenko, nor Anatoly Gritsenko, nor Oleg Lyashko, nor representatives of the south-eastern opposition.**



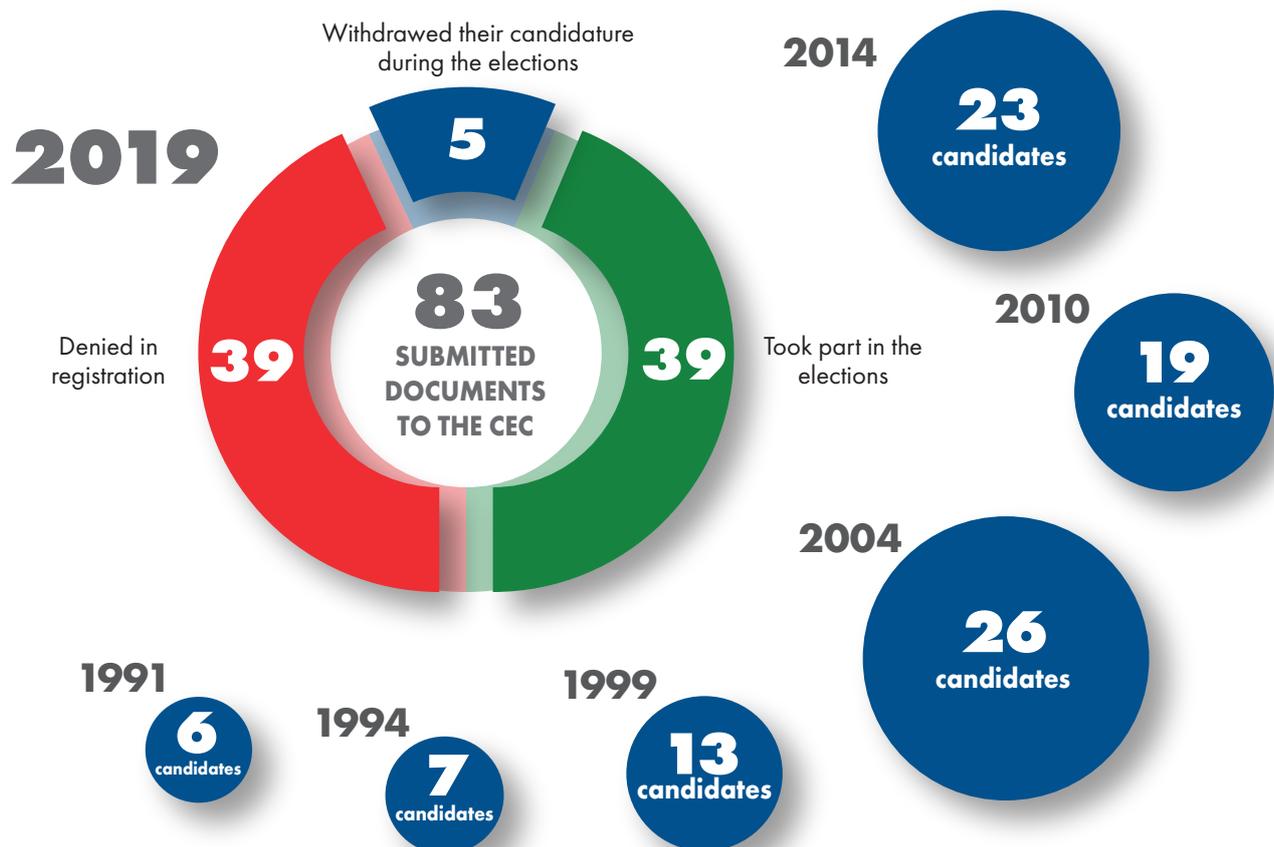
The fact that by the beginning of the election campaign sociologists showed an extremely low level of support for all potential candidates without exception is indicative: the highest level of support was demonstrated by Yulia Tymoshenko, but her result reached only about 20%. The presence of almost 40% of undecided citizens at the time of the start of the election campaign could turn into big surprises, as political experts warned about. And this surprise has become a reality.

With more than paradoxical (and at the same time logical) election results, it is worth to highlight the rather high activity of citizens (62.8% in the first round, 61.37% in the second round), as well as the minimum number of irregularities of election law recorded on election day. The elections were held in an orderly manner and without attempts to disrupt and compete with the authorities (although significant part of experts expected a possibility of falsifications and actions aimed at results disrupting).

In general, international observers noted that elections were held without significant violations. **Ukrainian opposition protested against denial of access to observe elections for observers from Russian Federation, as well as the decision of the Central Election Commission not to hold elections in Russia, where about * 1 million Ukrainian citizens are located.** The Central Election Commission recommended these citizens to come to the polling stations in Helsinki, Astana and Tbilisi and to vote.

A record number of candidates were registered in the elections – 44 candidates. Of these, 5 withdrew their candidacies during election process. Also 39 candidates were denied the right to nominate due to their violation of legal requirements. The ballot in the first round was 86 cm long!

NUMBER OF CANDIDATES IN THE PRESIDENTS ELECTIONS (1991-2019)



* According to official information of the Federal State Statistics Service, about one million Ukrainian citizens over 18 years old (those who can vote) live in Russia.

At the same time, some sources claim that the number of Ukrainian voters in the Russian Federation reaches 2.5 - 3 million.

ABOUT US



UP Foundation

Ukrainian Politics Foundation is an independent think tank, which conducts research into political processes in Ukraine and around the world.

Our research involves reviewing the media landscape, sociological and expert surveys, forecasting international developments for better understanding of tendencies and trends, as well as the role and place of Ukraine in the global context. We pay special attention to the study of processes in hegemonic countries (USA, Russia, China) and in groups of countries (the EU, the Balkans, Southeast Asia, Middle East, Central Asia, Africa, Latin America). We also focus on the study of personalities and political groups, election campaigns and legislative initiatives.

Our Foundation's analytical materials are used by Ukrainian politicians and political circles abroad. We have developed close cooperation with many research organizations in Europe, America, Asia, as well as the numerous foreign governments. Our consultants provide expertise and prepare exclusive analytical materials for many influential organisations, foreign diplomatic missions, and the media. We have developed our own system of collecting and systematizing information, avoiding "mass-product" and "crowd pleasing". We are convinced that real analytics cannot be a product for the mass consumer.

In 2018, we published 29 analytical reports, ranging from a detailed analysis of events in Iran and a detailed psychological portrait of European political leaders, to a summary report "World in 2018", "Hegemonic countries in 2018: search for internal and external landmarks" and "Europe in 2018: elections and choice.»

During the first quarter of 2019, our team managed to publish 11 analytical reports for foreign partners, and also presented an in-depth study «Presidential Campaign in Ukraine», an analysis of the electoral programs of the main candidates for the presidency on the eve of the first round and possible personnel actions.

In the near term we will be working on a series of important and lengthy analytical reports, organising round tables in European countries, holding training sessions and lectures for a specialised audience, as well as implementing a number of ambitious projects.

We are open to cooperation, as well as to constructive criticism. You can always keep in touch at uapolicyfund@gmail.com

For further information about us and our projects, visit us at: www.uapolicy.com



This report has been prepared with the cooperation of **ICEUR-Vienna**



**UKRAINIAN
PRESIDENTIAL
CAMPAIGN
2019**

1

**RESULTS
OF THE FIRST
ROUND OF THE
PRESIDENTIAL
CAMPAIGN
IN UKRAINE**

2

The first round of presidential elections held on March 31, 2019 gave reason to talk about a number of trends.



Volodymyr Zelenskiy

Volodymyr Zelenskiy was at first perceived by many as the promoter of the disgraced oligarch Igor Kolomoisky, which is now living in Israel. However, during the campaign, the Zelenskiy team extended, and today Kolomoisky's influence on Zelenskiy has significantly decreased.

The appearance of V. Zelenskiy's factor was predicted, but most of experts at the start of the campaign considered him an "autumn candidate" – in other words, as a factor that would allow Igor Kolomoisky to hold a large faction in the autumn parliamentary elections. As an independent player who could qualify for the second round, Zelenskiy was perceived only a few weeks before the end of the first round of elections.

Current regime underestimated Zelenskiy's factor, since it perceived him exclusively as a technological project aimed at a) helping Yulia Tymoshenko (Zelenskiy removes the candidature and strengthens Tymoshenko, perhaps even calls to vote for her); b) trading with Poroshenko (Kolomoisky plays Zelenskiy to obtain financial and political preferences from the current regime). According to some representatives of current regime, they practically did not have the task of fighting Zelenskiy – everyone was focused on Tymoshenko and on the inadmissibility of her possible alliance with Interior Minister Arsen Avakov.

The phenomenon of Zelenskiy comes down to three points.

- Firstly, Zelenskiy is a completely new politician, he was not in the government, he was not in politics, he was not seriously compromised. The novelty factor played a role.
- Secondly, he is an absolute "Tao", which everyone fills with his content. For a voter in Eastern Ukraine, Zelenskiy is a Jewish boy from Kiviy Rig, a Russian-speaking, Russian-cultural, an opponent of zealously implanted nationalism. For voters in the West of Ukraine, Zelenskiy is a patriot who donated large sums to the *ATO, and who was not afraid to criticize the President and the authorities.
- Thirdly, Zelenskiy was perceived through the prism of the TV show hero he embodied from the Servant of the People series – a teacher of history, Mr. Goloborodko, who became an ideal Ukrainian president by fighting corruption and the International Monetary Fund.

* [Anti-Terror Operation, a Ukrainian legal regulation of War in Donbass during 2014 – 2018]

Another important point is that Zelenskiy became a manifestation of the reaction of the Ukrainian middle class to a complete disregard for its interests after Maidan. In this sense, Zelenskiy – along with Gritsenko – became another rudiment of Maidan in 2014, the last hope of those who felt deceived and «thrown out» during the post-revolutionary events. It is not by chance that sociologists showed the largest percentage flow of votes from Gritsenko to Zelenskiy: **73% of those who voted for Gritsenko in the first round were ready to vote for Zelenskiy in the second.**



**Aivaras
Abramovičius** **Oleksandr
Danylyuk** **Serhiy
Leshchenko**

Gradually, as the elections approached and Zelenskiy's ratings grew (for the first time, the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology reported about his leading position and that his rating exceeded 20% in early March 2019), not only Kolomoisky and the company began to be interested. In Zelenskiy's entourage a few people appeared, oriented toward the structures of **George Soros**, influential circles in USA and large transnational corporations. A week before the elections, Zelenskiy, who had diligently hidden his team, appeared surrounded by former Minister of Finance

Oleksandr Danilyuk (ex-British citizen, closely associated with the structures of Soros and Rothschild), MP **Sergey Leshchenko** (working with the US National Democratic Institute, one of the leaders of "Euro-optimists" in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine), former Minister of Economy **Aivaras Abromavičius** (a former citizen of Lithuania). Zelenskiy also met twice with US Ambassador to Ukraine **Marie Yovanovitch**.

People expressively focused on the West began to appear in Zelenskiy's entourage.

By the end of the first round of elections, Zelenskiy's team consisted of several influence groups.

Firstly, these are people of **Ihor Kolomoisky**. Among this team, lawyer **Andrey Bogdan**, who represented Zelenskiy's interests in the Central Election Commission and is now applying for high government posts in the new system of government, is worth highlighting.



**Andriy
Bogdan** **Ihor
Kolomoisky**

Secondly, these are business partners of Zelenskiy himself, in particular, brothers **Boris and Sergey Shefir**, **Ivan Bakanov**, a chief of the election headquarters and others.



**Serhiy
Shefir** **Borys
Shefir** **Ivan
Bakanov**

Thirdly, the law group of **Sergei Nizhniy**, a lawyer through which Zelenskiy has made contact with Interior Minister **Arsen Avakov** and politicians and lawyers close to him.



**Serhiy
Nyzhniy** **Arsen
Avakov**

Fourthly, a significant role in Zelenskiy's team was played by those representatives of the old Party of Regions, who did not play a key role in Viktor Yanukovich's entourage. These people differed by being performance-oriented and knowledge of the executive office works but turned out to be unclaimed after 2014. The fact that Zelenskiy's main target was to the electorate of Southeastern Ukraine reanimated members of the Party of Regions, which brought additional votes.

One of the key figures of the campaign and the main technologist was 35-year-old **Dmitry Razumkov**, son of Alexander Razumkov, former first assistant and mastermind of President Leonid Kuchma in 1994-1999.

In the end, Zelenskiy turned into the gravity center for those who are dissatisfied with the policy of Petro Poroshenko – regardless of political ideology and worldview. However, it is felt that the project is clearly ready to become pro-American under certain conditions – moreover, concentrating around itself the most comprador layers of the Ukrainian elite.



Dmytro Razumkov



Petro Poroshenko

The current President has made a number of mistakes, both during the campaign and during his entire presidential term.

First of all, by coming to authority as the President of Ukraine, a man on whom hopes were placed to stabilize the situation in the country and ensure its economic development, he became fascinated by populism and nationalist discourse. The ostentatious anti-Russian rhetoric was not perceived by everyone: the majority knew that Poroshenko speaks Russian in everyday life, that he has a Russian wife and a Russian daughter-in-law. Anti-Russian policy was not perceived by everyone: the majority knew that Poroshenko was Russian-speaking in everyday life, he had a Russian wife and a Russian daughter-in-law. The lack of concrete actions Poroshenko disguised with pro-European and pro-American rhetoric, as well as with accusations against Russia and V. Putin. He credited all his political opponents as «Kremlin agents». Poroshenko's regime suppressed all manifestations, imposed certain stereotypes in the information sphere, pursued a policy of pressure on the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church and forced Ukrainization, rewrote the history of Ukraine to suit the new political moment. All this multiplied discontent over a number of corruption scandals. That is why Poroshenko very quickly lost the trust of voters. If in 2014, 54% of voters voted for him, then as of the end of 2018, his rating was only 8%.

54%

2014



8%

2018

Secondly, Poroshenko's stake on Western Ukraine, dalliance with radicals and demonstrative nationalism significantly narrowed his electoral base as a candidate in the 2019 elections. Attempts to play on patriotic sentiments, to appear as the main opponent of Russia ("Either I or Putin") would have been possible if the issue of entering the second round of a candidate from the South-East had been actualized. Poroshenko could (theoretically) present Zelenskiy in such a role, if he had not previously represented him as a "Kolomoiskiy's puppet". The presence in the second round of the representative of the Opposition bloc (which could be represented in the form of "forces of white and blue revenge") did not take place. As a result, Poroshenko found himself in a niche that is extremely difficult to expand in electoral terms. Attempts to «play back» some ideologies (for example, the signing of the Decree on celebrating Victory Day on May 9 – while Poroshenko tried to fight this holiday as a relic of the Soviet system for five years) – is too deliberate and insincere.

Thirdly, after a series of foreign policy defeats and mistakes, he fully trusted the curators from the United States and relied on the State Department to see him as the only acceptable candidate for the role of head of the bridgehead country for American politics in the center of Europe.

Fourthly, throughout practically the entire campaign, Poroshenko mistakenly thought that Yulia Tymoshenko would become his main opponent and was preparing for the next meeting in the second round with Tymoshenko.

Fifthly, Poroshenko honestly did not understand how to win the election with “the clown”. He tried to appeal to the voice of reason, while on the side of Zelenskiy play emotions. Under these conditions, he tried to pull out Zelenskiy in the field of rational discussions, however unsuccessfully.



Moshe
Kliuhgaf

Sixthly, Poroshenko has a frankly weak team (he never really trusted his team and tried to close all decisions on himself), and his attempts to strengthen it by hiring foreign political technologists (such as **Moshe Kliuhgaf**, Israeli black technologist) hardly gave the desired result.

Seventh, the recent scandals (the case of ***Ukroboronprom**, the case of ****Ekaterina Gandzyuk** and others), swayed the situation in society and convinced that the Poroshenko regime was rotten and corrupt to its core.

Eighth, Poroshenko came into conflict with Interior Minister Arsen Avakov and received several serious blows from him (liquidation of the campaign grid, several resonant police statements about violations by headquarters of the President). This also includes Poroshenko’s frank confrontation with the “National Corps” controlled by Avakov: radical nationalists from NC disrupted rallies and other actions involving Poroshenko for several times, which caused a serious resonance in the media.

Ninthly, Poroshenko clearly overestimated the factor of bribing voters through the monetization of subsidies and pension supplements: a significant part of citizens perceived this as a desire to buy off, realizing that the President himself and his entourage are turning over with big money.

Lastly, Poroshenko could not control his emotional state, in the course of the campaign he repeatedly broke down, sometimes being openly rude to people. Poroshenko’s opponents were well aware that due to a serious illness (diabetes) he was predisposed to nervous breakdowns, but Poroshenko’s team did not consider ways to respond to abnormal situations, and attempts to solve the problem by putting pressure on those who tried to put Poroshenko in an awkward situation questions, especially aggravating what is happening.

Therefore, Petro Poroshenko actually drove himself into a corner of hopelessness, only a miracle or outright foreign intervention could deduce from it (although the US Special Representative for Ukraine Kurt Volker, who had previously supported Poroshenko, immediately after the first round of elections stated that the United States was ready to cooperate with any President of Ukraine).

* The scandal that erupted on the eve of the first round of elections because of the documents that got into the network, according to which, a close friend and partner of Petro Poroshenko, Oleg Gladkovsky, was implicated in the creation and control of money laundering schemes for the army.

** The case of the activist, who was acid-attacked in July 2018, in consequence of which she died in the hospital after 3 months. The case is still unsolved.



Yulia Tymoshenko

The leader of the Batkivshchyna party throughout the whole 2018 was perceived as the undoubted leader of the presidential campaign. She was the first to enter the election process (she held a presentation of her program last June). By November 2018, her ratings significantly (almost twice) exceeded the ratings of the current President. By the beginning of 2019, Tymoshenko gained assurances from Interior Minister Arsen Avakov in full loyalty and willingness to act together.

In many ways, her success was prevented by appearance of Volodymyr Zelenskiy in the big political game, who actually pulled off the part of the electorate that Tymoshenko tried to increase over the past five years (12.8% voted for Tymoshenko in 2014, 13.4% in 2019, but sociologists showed in November 2018 21.4% were ready to vote for Tymoshenko; by and large, Zelenskiy «ate» a significant part of the «staggering» Tymoshenko's electorate, leaving her with the same result as in 2014).



Preliminary agreements between Tymoshenko and Igor Kolomoisky did not work: Kolomoisky was expectedly an unreliable partner. According to popular information, after Kolomoisky agreed to the nomination of Volodymyr Zelenskiy, Tymoshenko phoned Israel (where the Ukrainian oligarch now lives) about the status of the preliminary agreements. Kolomoisky replied: “Well, who knew that he would have such a high rating?” – and offered to negotiate on the post of prime minister, which Tymoshenko considered as an honest offence.

The main problem of Tymoshenko was excessive confidence in the victory and the creation of sometimes illusory pictures of her presidency. Already in the summer of 2018 she was engaging in negotiations as a winner of the presidential election.

The second problem was her team, which did not enter into discussions with Tymoshenko, but submitted to her opinion. Tymoshenko's inability to listen to team members, an authoritarian approach to manage the process, and, conversely, the team members' desire to please the leader and create a “warm bath” for her also played a negative role. When sociological data started show that Tymoshenko begins to give a way to Zelenskiy, members of her headquarters hesitated to inform the Leader about this for three days. And vice versa: sometimes Tymoshenko was slipped by frankly fantastic sociology, which she thereafter gave out as reality and even believed in it (as was with the case about 30% support based on processing 2.5 million (!) questionnaires or information about 20% Tymoshenko in election round – ostensibly on the basis of parallel counting of votes).

The third problem was that Tymoshenko saw Petro Poroshenko as her main rival, and it was with him that she led the discussion throughout the campaign. She did not consider Zelenskiy seriously (as Poroshenko also did). But at the same time, she was competing for the same electoral field with Poroshenko – for the votes in the West of Ukraine and in the Center. Hence the absence of a separate position on Russia and on the situation in the Donbas, a common position regarding *Tomos on autocephaly, integration

into the EU and NATO. Poroshenko managed to get Tymoshenko to go in his fairway. Two significant discrepancies between the positions of Poroshenko and Tymoshenko boiled down to a) the Government's tariff policy and b) the proposal to replace the Normandy format with Budapest.

The fourth problem is that Tymoshenko is perceived by many as a politician of yesterday. She has been in politics since 1996. At the same time, for a while she does not change the rhetoric and even verbal turns. For many, she is too predictable. Many people remember her work as prime minister – especially in 2007-2010. Poroshenko's messages did not fail to remind the Ukrainians about the gas contracts signed by Yulia Tymoshenko and Dmitry Medvedev in 2009 under – essentially enslaving conditions for Ukraine.

However, Tymoshenko's defeat should not be seen as her departure from big politics. She will continue to be an influential player, regardless of who becomes the President.

* On January 5, 2019, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew signed Tomos about the autocephaly of the united Orthodox Church of Ukraine.



Anatoliy Gritsenko

Former Minister of Defense Anatoliy Gritsenko is one of the most prominent representatives of the comprador's part of Ukrainian politicians, unconditionally oriented towards USA. A graduate of the Kennedy School, the husband of the famous journalist **Yulia Mostova** (owner of the newspaper 'the Weekly Mirror'), a retired colonel Gritsenko tried

to appear as a politician with a "hard hand", while uniting around himself a number of grant organizations and those who were dissatisfied with results of Maidan-2014.

In August-October 2018, sociological studies showed a sharp dynamic of growth in the Gritsenko ratings: he suddenly reached the second position (after Yulia Tymoshenko), but already in November, Gritsenko's rating indicators sank. It was at this time Poroshenko's propaganda began to unwind the theme of embezzlement in the army when Gritsenko was a Minister of Defense.



Yulia
Mostova

Gritsenko himself rather inadequately behaved in the course of discussions: when journalists asked him questions about embezzlement, he raised his voice to shout and outright loudness (which contrasted with the image of an "intelligent officer"), journalist ***Danilo Mokrik** was humiliated right in the studio of **ZIK.



Andriy
Sadovyy

By 2019 it became obvious: Gritsenko cannot win the election. The union with the mayor of Lviv, **Andrei Sadovyy**, who withdrew his candidacy in favour of Gritsenko, did not bring the desired result. Sadovyy has found a way to get out of the presidential campaign with minimal image losses and taking part of the Gritsenko team into his orbit.

The appearance of General Igor Smeshko among the candidates levelled Gritsenko's chances for success even more: in the minds of those who were nostalgic for the "strong hand" and "for the officer with the American bearing", the colonel with an irreproachable reputation, who started the sale of the army, and an honest general, began to fight among themselves.



The defeat of Gritsenko led to what he stated: he will not take part in the presidential elections anymore. Prospects for the «promotion» of his own political project in the autumn elections of 2019 are also rather dubious (in 2014, Gritsenko received 5.5% of votes in the presidential elections, which only 3.1% of his political power gave him a Civic Position, now he could improve their performance by only 1.4%). Part of Gritsenko's team moved to the camp of Vladimir Zelenskiy.

* A Ukrainian TV channel.

** During the broadcast on ZIK, the journalist asked Anatoly Hrytsenko a question regarding the participation of Viktor Baloga [Ukrainian businessman, "kingmaker" of Ukrainian politics, closely connected with the "orange team" of Viktor Yushchenko), during his election campaign, while citing Baloga himself, in which he stated that Hrytsenko appealed to him for help. In response to a question, Hrytsenko began to be frankly rude, trying to accuse the pre-senter of bias in posing the question.



Igor Smeshko

General Igor Smeshko showed an unexpectedly high result – 6.04% of the votes, while practically not conducting active work in the media and not spending money on the campaign (his entire campaign is estimated at 1.5 – 2 million USD). The main resources of conveying information to the voter became the programs of the popular TV presenter **Dmytro Gordon**, who openly campaigned for Smeshko.

In fact, Smeshko took the part of the electorate that was ready to vote for Tymoshenko and Gritsenko. The link with the Presidential Administration in the case of Smeshko is obvious: he could only give up the status of adviser to the President during the campaign, in mid-February 2018 (the decree was backdated). Also, Smeshko is traditionally close to Viktor Medvedchuk, who in 2003 lobbied for Smeshko's appointment to become a head of the Security Service of Ukraine.



In the near future, Smeshko will try to form a political force on the basis of the "Strength and Honor" party and lead it to parliament. However, after the first round of elections, he, having received proposals to join the team of both Petro Poroshenko and Vladimir Zelenskiy, decided to step back into the shadows – until the disposition of the players becomes clearer.



OPPOSITION (Yurii Boyko - Oleksandr Vilkul)

The split of the Opposition bloc on the eve of the elections led to serious political consequences. For a long time, work inside the OB was practically not conducted because of the outright sabotage of the

group of **Yurii Boiko** and **Serhiy Levochkin**, who did not want to hold a congress and blocked any changes in the party structure. The party was formed as a “double star” with two groups of influence, weakly intersecting among themselves and leading their own informational and organizational policies.



**Viktor
Medvedchuk**

**Vadym
Rabinovych**

In September 2018, negotiations began with the ‘For-Life’ party in the format of six participants: **Viktor Medvedchuk** and **Vadim Rabinovich** (from the For Life party), **Vadim Novinsky** and **Boris Kolesnikov** (the “industrial” part of the Opposition bloc), **Yuri Boyko** and **Sergey Levochkin** («Nomenclature» part of the Oppoblock). By early November, negotiations on the merger ceased due to their futility and incorrectness of the issues proposed for consideration.



**Boris
Kolesnikov**

**Vadym
Novinskyi**

However, at the same time, **Yuriy Boyko** and **Serhiy Levochkin** got into separate negotiations with **Viktor Medvedchuk** and announced their urgent completion, as well as the creation of a joint project – the “For Life” opposition platform led by **Yuriy Boyko** and **Vadim Rabinovich**. The real (shadow) party leader at the same time became **Viktor Medvedchuk**. In the course of numerous interviews, **Boyko** said that the “Opposition bloc” project for him was in the past.



**Serhiy
Levochkin**

On November 21, 2018, **Yuriy Boyko** and **Serhiy Levochkin** were expelled from the Opposition Bloc faction in the Verkhovna Rada. The party congress in early December adopted a new party structure and leadership. However, the supporters of **Y. Boyko**, using formal reasons, ensured that the decisions of the congress were blocked at the level of the Ministry of Justice. This decision played a cruel joke with **Yuriy Boyko** himself, who, being a co-chair of the Opposition bloc since May 2016, could not enter the governing authorities of the “For Life” opposition platform and could not be nominated for the presidency by this political force. The decision on the resignation and termination of membership in

the Opposition bloc for **Yuriy Boyko** could be made only by the congress, which **Boyko’s** supporters themselves recognized as illegitimate.

The “industrial” part of the Opposition bloc nominated **Oleksandr Vilkul** as a presidential candidate of Ukraine, who had not previously been considered as a possible presidential candidate.

This situation had several weak points.

Firstly, Olexander Vilkul had a relatively low recognition level. Although he had the experience of leading the Dnipro region (2010–2012), being a vice-prime-minister in the second government of N. Azarov (2012–2014), has become a MP twice and for some time he was a co-chairman of the faction, but until of his nomination for the presidential election, he was perceived as a politician of regional scale, with reference to Dnipro and the region. He did not have bright electoral victories (he lost the election of the mayor of Dnipro in 2015, although with a decent result). With a lot of undoubted talents, Vilkul, nevertheless, cannot be considered a bright and charismatic politician, which at the start gave a number of limitations to the possibilities for rating growth.

Secondly, Olexander Vilkul and Yuriy Boyko have a minimum of distinctive moments in positioning and biographies. Both came from the industrial environment. Both worked as vice-prime-ministers in the government of Azarov. Both are associated with the Party of Regions, and in the Opposition Bloc faction both were appointed as co-chairmen for a long time. Programs of candidates and ideological positions in most cases converge. However, for Boyko, this is already the second participation in the presidential election, and in addition to it, the party has been working for four years to promote Boyko's image, raising his awareness. During meetings with voters in many regions, Vilkul was perceived rather as Boyko's confidant (information about the split of the party reached the average voter too late).

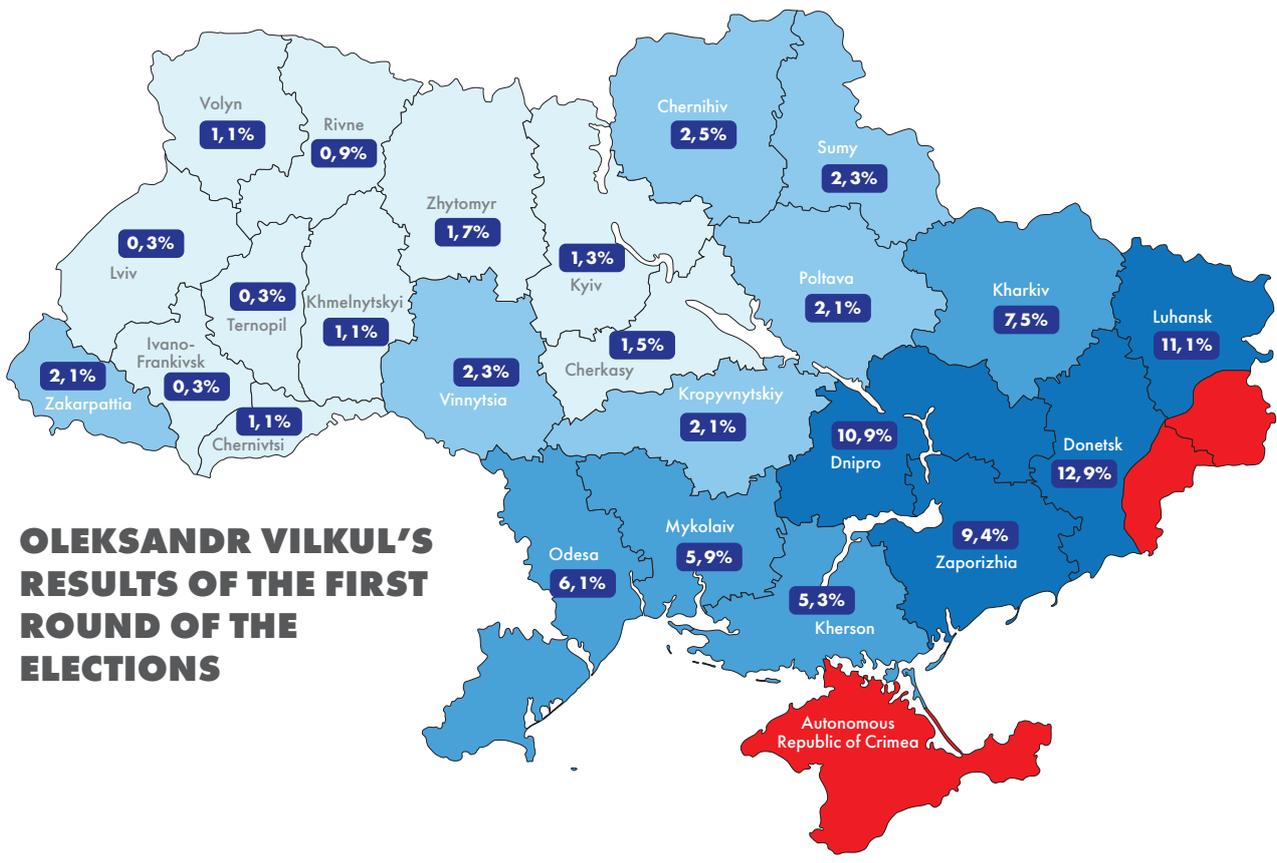
Thirdly, in favour of Boiko, a serious media resource was working, which after the split of the party became inaccessible to the supporters of Vilkul. *Inter TV channel, *NewsOne and * 112 news channels, ** Strana.Ua website blocked Oleksandr Vilkul and his supporters access to the airs. At the same time, these channels spread outright disinformation about Vilkul and the leadership of the Opposition bloc. "Ukraine", the only available TV channel for Vilkul, and its regional satellites could not fully perform the functions of a political tool since the ideology and structure of the channel was practically not oriented towards the formation of political views of the viewer. Thus, Vilkul has faced problems with delivering information.

Fourthly, a great dynamism of the Opposition Platform "For Life" has to be acknowledged, which sometimes was combined with unprincipledness. Distribution of "anonymous letters" with outright lies (for example, that Vilkul removed his candidacy in favour of Boyko) by the method of direct-mail, usage of targeted programs – all this was organised in much better way than in Ol. Vilkul's headquarters. Vilkul's campaign was less creative and technological, less focused on creating emotions and too rational.

Fifthly, there was a serious disorientation in the field; for many reasons, the unsatisfactory work of headquarters at the local level can be blamed for this. Some regions on which extra hope was imposed on (Donetsk, Kharkiv, Dnipro, Zaporizhzhya oblasts) gave less votes that was planned: the rate on the use of the resource of industrial enterprises worked poorly. Initially defined geography of the project did not bring the result. At the same time, elections showed that there are serious resources in previously underestimated regions: Kherson, Nikolaev, Odesa, and even in Vinnitsa oblasts, as well as in the city of Kyiv. In eight regions, Vilkul received more than 5% of support (in Donetsk and Lugansk regions it reached 11–12%, although a higher result has been expected).

* Inter TV channel, NewsOne and 112 news channels - popular news channels with a large audience and broadcast frequency throughout Ukraine.

** Opposition news resource on which, over the past few years, carried out numerous attacks by the authorities. Fabricated criminal cases were opened against a number of journalists. Resource chief editor, Igor Guzhva, was forced to leave to Austria, where he received political asylum.



OLEKSANDR VILKUL'S RESULTS OF THE FIRST ROUND OF THE ELECTIONS

Sixthly, the Zelenskiy factor, which recruited its supporters in the South-East, played against Vilkul. A significant part of the opposition-minded voters in the Southeast, who were determined to search for alternatives, but not revenge, have voted not for Vilkul, as was shown by initial sociological research, but for Zelenskiy. Now the Opposition bloc is faced with the task of returning this voter after disappointment in Zelenskiy (which is inevitable).

Seventhly, the Russian factor played its role, which worked in several aspects. A) Vilkul and the entire leadership of the Opposition bloc, who did not support Yuriy Boyko and Viktor Medvedchuk, ostentatiously came under sanctions from the Government of the Russian Federation, which was used as an argument in South-East Ukraine. B) Russian TV channels and other media were closed to the Opposition bloc's position, whose leaders were indiscriminately accused (with the filing of Medvedchuk) of work on Petro Poroshenko. C) The visit of Yuriy Boyko and Viktor Medvedchuk to Moscow and the meeting with Dmitry Medvedev and Alexey Miller were filed as the greatest victory of the opposition.

Eighthly, the decision to divide the electoral resource, which was influenced by the structures of 'Metinvest' and DTEK, between two completely different political projects – the Opposition bloc and the Radical Party of Oleg Lyashko, was a mistake. As a result, this resource did not play a decisive role either in the case of Vilkul or in the case of Lyashko.



Evgeniy Muraev

Ninthly, the union between Alexander Vilkul and another candidate (***Evgeniy Muraev**, who withdrew his candidacy in favor of Vilkul on March 7) during the campaign did not give a significant tangible result – a) due to low ratings of Muraev; b) due to impossibility of conducting a well-coordinated team game, the obstacle to which is over-ambitions of both politicians.

At the same time, serious internal processes are observed in the camp of supporters of Yuriy Boyko, caused by mutual distrust between Boyko and

Medvedchuk. The congress of the Opposition Platform “For Life” organised in February 2019 did not provide to Boyko supporters any seats in the party’s governing authorities. At the local level Boyko’s structures subordinate to the structures of both Medvedchuk and Rabinovich. A meeting of the Party’s Political Council held last week before the first round of elections sharply criticised Boiko and Levochkin for excessive “liberalism” and inability to lead the process.

Internal conflict and distrust within the party remain: Boyko will be pushed aside and Medvedchuk will try to take advantage of his electoral success. Understanding this, media controlled by Levochkin have already launched a campaign that “we need to unite with Oppoblok and restore unity”, while the media controlled by Medvedchuk continues to repeat the phrase that “if there weren’t a split, Boyko would go out the second round, and Poroshenko would have lost in the first” (in fact, this thesis is not confirmed sociologically).

The defeat of Petro Poroshenko can create certain problems for Viktor Medvedchuk, who is a close friend of Poroshenko and enjoyed the informal status of «a person who solves issues in Moscow.» A few days before the election, Medvedchuk said that if Zelenskiy won, the new President would still need the services of Medvedchuk, since no one else can provide contact with the Russian authorities. Obviously, Medvedchuk has forgotten that **Ihor Kolomoiskiy** has quite good connections with ex-vice-Prime Minister **Valeriy Khoroshkovskiy**, who in turn has connections at the level of the Russian establishment.



Oleg Lyashko

The leader of the Radical Party, Oleg Lyashko, who showed the third result in the last presidential election, this time finished seventh with a result of 5.48%. Ukrainian experts started talking about a possible decline of the “Lyashko phenomenon”.

Oleg Lyashko is a bright populist, a brilliant speaker, appealing primarily to an uneducated electorate and creating emotions at the expense of disgraceful behaviour. He tries to exploit the theme of “justice in action”, sometimes making real shows for people who are far from politics.



Since 2016, Lyashko has been in the political orbit of businessman Rinat Akhmetov. Most of the team Lyashko was formed by Akhmetov’s managers. Lyashko’s big mistake was that he, being a product of the agrarian environment, tried to get votes mainly in the industrial part of Ukraine, where Akhmetov’s enterprises are located. However, for the Southeast, he was a stranger. At the same time, leaving the old discourse behind led to the fact that Lyashko lost his voices in the basic regions – in particular, in the Chernihiv oblast.

The second point is that at the level of outrageous and creating grotesque situations Lyashko had a competitor in the person of Zelenskiy, who «led off» a significant part of the electorate. Therefore, Lyashko finished not too persuasively.



Ruslan Koshulynskiy

The former vice-speaker of the Verkhovna Rada, the nominee of the right-radical party «Freedom» Ruslan Koshulynskiy was not initially considered as a serious political player. Without a doubt, an intelligent and prudent politician, he does not possess the leadership qualities and skill of the speaker, especially in difficult situations of discussion.

The leader of Svoboda, **Oleg Tyagnibok**, *decided not to nominate his candidacy (in 2014 only 1.16% of voters voted for him, even though Tyagnibok himself was one of the leaders of the Maidan and headed a rather large **faction in parliament).

Koshulynskiy's nomination was a frank "game of giveaway" with the authorities. Petro Poroshenko, who claims to be the nationalist part of the electorate of Western Ukraine, did not want the nomination of a bright and charismatic Tyagnibok. In fact, nationalists and national radicals played along with Poroshenko.



The paradox of the situation is that the rating of the "technical candidate" Koshulynskiy turned out to be slightly better than the rating of Oleg Tyagnibok – 1.63%.

However, this rating hardly allows 'Svoboda' to hope for a more or less acceptable result in the 2019 parliamentary elections. In fact, it can be said that Petro Poroshenko will try to occupy and exploit the nationalist niche in the near future, while all other political projects on the right-wing flank will have to either compete with the serious financial capabilities of the ex-President or join the general movement.

* On October 14, 2018, Oleg Tyagnibok publicly stated that he was not going to take part in the upcoming presidential election and supported the nomination of his close associate Ruslan Koshulynskiy from the «Svoboda» party.

** In the parliament of the 7th convocation, Oleg Tyagnibok headed the fourth, in terms of the number of deputies, the «Svoboda» faction in the parliament (38 Deputies)



UP Foundation



**PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTIONS
IN UKRAINE:
VICTORY OF
VLADIMIR
ZELENSKIY**

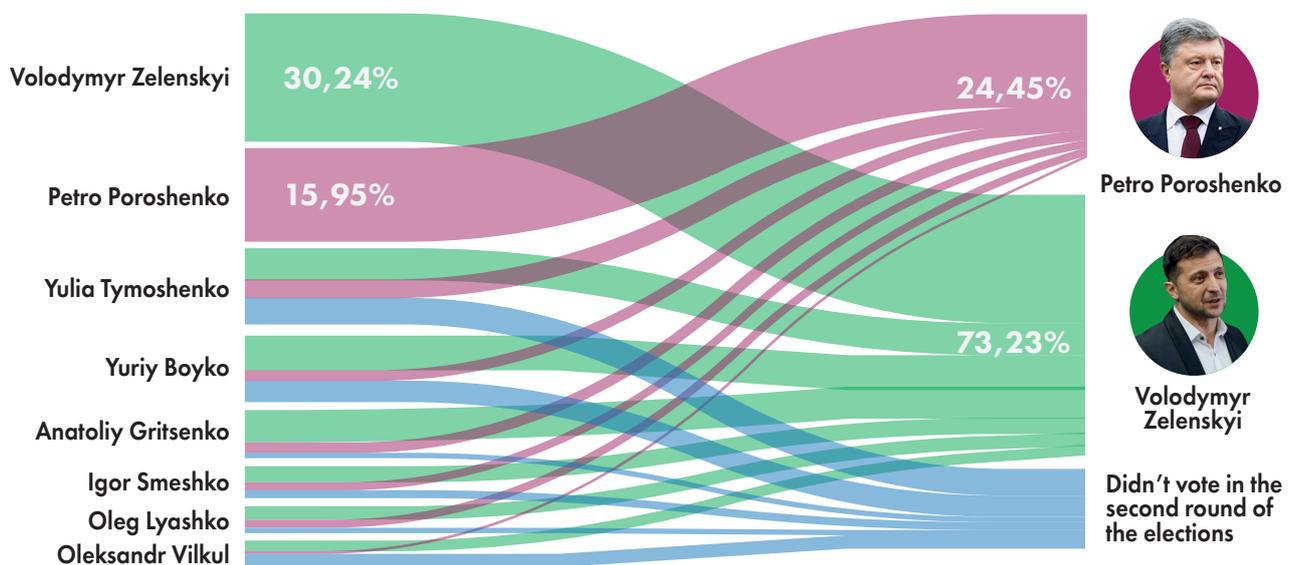
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The second round of the presidential election in Ukraine predictably ended with the victory of actor-comedian Volodymyr Zelenskiy. On March 31, in the first round of elections, 30.24% of voters voted for Volodymyr Zelenskiy, while only 15.95% gave their votes for the current president, Petro Poroshenko.

Already after the announcement of the results of the first round of elections, it became clear that the gap received by Zelenskiy was too large for Petro Poroshenko to overcome.

Analysis of votes from one candidate to another showed that Vladimir Zelenskiy is most likely to win in the second round. 38% of voters who voted for Yulia Tymoshenko, 37% of Yuriy Boyko's voters, 30% of Anatoliy Gritsenko's voters, 35% of Igor Smeshko's voters, 33% of Oleg Lyashko's voters and 39% of Oleksandr Vilkul's voters could have fallen in favour of Zelenskiy. On the average, Zelenskiy improved his performance, obtained in the first round, by 20.4%.

At the same time, 9% of Tymoshenko's supporters, 3% of Boiko's supporters, 21% of Gritsenko's voters, 24% of Smeshko's voters, 13% of Lyashko's voters, 2% of Vilkul's voters (according to data of the Sociological Group "Rating") were ready to support Poroshenko.



candidates that has been overcome in the second round was a 15.7% gap between the candidate for the right-wing Freedom Party **Norbert Hofer** and the candidate for the Green Party **Alexander Van der Bellen** during the presidential elections in Austria in January 2017. But in that case almost the entire European establishment, who did not want to come to terms with the possible victory of the «fascist», shown their support to Van der Bellen. A blind eye was turned to violations which have been discovered during the voting procedure. Poroshenko's entourage believed in the recurrence of the van der Bellen precedent.

Further actions of the candidates were more like a political show than an attempt to talk with voters about the future of the country. At first, candidates had long agreed on the conditions for passing tests that were necessary to refute conventional stereotypes (Zelenskiy voters genuinely suspected Petro Poroshenko of addiction to alcohol, Poroshenko voters accused Zelenskiy in drugs abuse). Then, for almost two weeks, the venue for the debate was coordinated: Zelenskiy insisted on the Olympic Stadium in the presence of several tens of thousands of spectators, Poroshenko referred to the rule of law on which the debate should take place at the premises of the National Television Company of Ukraine.

The debates itself resembled cabaret rather than serious political action. Both candidates tried to make jokes and injections against each other, to recall old abuses and misbehaviours. Neither side has decided to present a serious political program.

At the same time in social networks battles between supporters of Zelenskiy and Poroshenko have started. The firsts saw in their candidate a hope for a renewed country and for getting rid of the corrupt regime. The others considered Poroshenko to be the personification of patriotism and the supporter of the pro-Western course of Ukraine, and Zelenskiy was considered a "protege of the oligarch and Russia".

The initiative of the French President Emmanuel Macron, who decided to meet with both candidates, created an additional intrigue. In fact, Zelenskiy held the first foreign policy meeting at the highest level. The oligarch Viktor Pinchuk, the son-in-law of the former President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma, organised several meetings with retired world politicians for Zelenskiy.

Attempts to discredit Zelenskiy due to the release into the information space of the information that he refused to serve in the army, about the doubtful Facebook posts made by the candidate's wife in 2014, about business in Russia had no effect. By voting day, Petro Poroshenko realised that he would lose – and with a really crushing score.

The election results showed that 73.23% of voters voted for Vladimir Zelenskiy (a record figure for the entire history of election campaigns in Ukraine), for Petro Poroshenko – 24.45%. **The only blast of Ukraine in which Poroshenko received the majority of votes is Lviv oblast, in all other oblasts current President took a back-seat.**



In fact, Zelenskiy, who had no previous political experience and came into politics from the stage, became an answer of the Ukrainian people to the policy of President Poroshenko. Voters voted not so much for Zelenskiy, but against Poroshenko.

Petro Poroshenko who came in 2014 after the revolutionary Maidan, introduced high hopes, fuelled by populist discourse, in people. He promised to keep national currency rate, to end the war in a few days, increase financial payments to the militaries, keep social guarantees for the population. Part of the southeastern voters, frightened by Maidan and radical groups that terrorize the country under patriotic slogans, decided to vote for Poroshenko as a medium politician who has a business in Russia, who uses Russian in everyday life and who is definitely against to extreme nationalism manifestations.

For five years, Poroshenko has made a sharp turn towards the right-conservative model, making a bet on Western Ukraine and the "Galician" model of the country's development (Galicia is characterised by hostile perception of everything connected with Russia – Russian language, culture, Russian Orthodoxy). Giving reasons for his actions with the need to stand against Russian aggression, Poroshenko actually occupied a nationalist niche in Ukrainian politics and naively believed that a large part of Ukraine was also able to support this niche.

In addition, Poroshenko, who promised systemic reforms, simply drowned in these reforms. There was no system work. All failures in the economy and the social sphere were written off to the war. Citizens were frightened by direct and full-scale aggression from Russia. Investigations made public during the election campaign, testifying to corruption in Poroshenko's entourage (including in the arms trade) and well-known data on the President's business in the Russia led to an understanding: Poroshenko was lying.

Unlike Poroshenko, Zelenskiy does not make promises. His program is rather indistinct and formless. There are many important and serious points in it. He speaks of the need for an audit of the state, the introduction of a 5% tax amnesty and a tax on withdrawn capital, the creation of a Financial Investigation Service, and ratification of a convention on the international exchange of financial information. Zelenskiy also proposes to strengthen the Normandy format by incorporating the US and the UK (a utopian proposal). He intends to organise a direct meeting with Putin (something that was impossible under Poroshenko and has already received approval from the United States). The Presidential Administration of the country's all-powerful authority should become the office and coordinating authority, and Administration building itself plans to be moved from the centre of Kyiv to the border districts of the capital or to another settlement.

However, there are several points, which disturbs people.

It is not clear how Zelenskiy's relations with the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine will develop. He himself said that he has a "secret plan" for parliament, but what it is – is not clear. Ivan Bakanov, the business partner of the newly elected President, is in charge of communications and work with the parliament surrounded by Zelenskiy and leads his electoral headquarters. But Bakanov is also new to political issues. Lawyers have already made it clear that before May 27 there is an opportunity to dissolve the Rada on formal grounds and to announce early parliamentary elections (in this case, Zelenskiy would like to repeat Macron's success in 2017, when the result obtained in the presidential elections was transformed into electoral success in parliamentary elections – the main thing is that the interval between elections was small). But the Speaker of the Rada, Andrei Parubiy, who is to determine the date of the inauguration, wonderfully understands: time must be delayed.

Zelenskiy will have to face opposition from the parliament when appointing key political players – the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Defense, the head of the Security Service of Ukraine, the Prosecutor General and the Head of the National Bank. He will also have to deal with the attempts of the Rada to continue the hurray-patriotic line of Petro Poroshenko (The Rada is now reviewing a discriminating draft law on language policy in Ukraine, and it's quite possibly that will be given to Zelenskiy for signature, which will be the first test of the strength of the new President).

Zelenskiy will also have to deal with the government of Vladimir Groysman until the end of the year, which he will not be able to dismiss.

Zelenskiy will have to face the situation in the forces, which are quite sceptical of the new Supreme Commander. The possible candidate for the post of defense minister Ivan Aparshin (a member of the team of another presidential candidate, Anatoly Gritsenko), declared by Zelenskiy, cannot boast of authority in the army, to put it mildly.

The new President will have to bring order to the hooligan militants from the volunteer units, who are increasingly acting as separate political units. Poroshenko tried to flirt with them (*** although at the end of the presidential campaign, these detachments staged a real hunt for Poroshenko, disrupting his election rallies and arranging obstruction**). This, in turn, could lead to the radicalisation of the actions of paramilitary units accustomed to impunity.

Already in June, Zelenskiy will meet with Vladimir Putin – for instance, in celebration of the anniversary of the landing of Allied forces in Normandy, where, according to Poroshenko, the Ukrainian President has been invited. How effective will this meeting be? Will an experienced player Putin be able to outplay the novice player Zelenskiy? Will Ukraine fulfil the requirements of the Minsk Agreements?

So far there are more questions than answers. It is clear that with Zelenskiy Ukraine will not turn 180 degrees to the side of the Russian Federation. It is clear that the external control regime established by the United States will be maintained (**** on the eve of Ukrainian elections, U.S. Special Representative for Ukraine Kurt Volker, said that the United States came here for a long time**). And with the International Monetary Fund Zelenskiy will not talk like his movie character Vasiliy Goloborodko in the satirical series 'Servant of the People'. But certainly Zelenskiy (a Jew by nationality) will not promote Ukrainian nationalism and promote all those experiments with the humanitarian sphere that were characteristic his forerunner.

In any case, Zelenskiy, if he wins, will act extraordinarily, assertively, sometimes breaking the rules and cancelling them – up to the abolition of the Constitution, something that other politicians who understood the importance of traditions and mutual guarantees would not do.

In his populism, Zelenskiy can start an open war with the oligarchs – in order to please the voters and keep them until the parliamentary elections (with the aim of forming the largest faction). In addition, the establishment of the United States, frankly those, who are in charge of Ukraine, have a request for a «war with the oligarchs» in Ukraine.

If early elections are announced (with the possible holding of them on July 31), many parties (including opposition parties) may experience a temporary crisis and a simple lack of time to regroup and achieve their goals. And it should also be taken into account when modelling and predicting the situation in Ukraine for the coming years.

* During the campaign of Petro Poroshenko in the regions of Ukraine, in some cities he was met by groups of activists who tried to disrupt the speech. The most resonant actions took place in Zhytomyr and Lviv regions, from where Poroshenko and his team, in fact, had to run away.

* * Kurt Volker made a similar statement on Twitter: "The United States is here for a long time to maintain a peaceful, strong, democratic, prosperous, and secure Ukraine, which has been fully restored within its borders and territory, including the Crimea."

**LESSONS
FROM THE
UKRAINIAN
ELECTIONS
FOR EUROPE**

4

The European Union cannot be calm with elections in Ukraine. Despite this, the EU itself defiantly withdrew from the Ukrainian elections, considering them exclusively a Ukrainian problem. EU was confident that Petro Poroshenko would be re-elected (as an option, Yulia Tymoshenko was considered as an alternative, which was also an acceptable option). Zelenskiy's victory was highly unexpected. The very first meeting of the ambassadors of the EU states with Zelenskiy showed that the candidate is absolutely not ready to speak on foreign policy issues, he is absolutely "raw". And this has plunged many into shock – considering the fact, that the President in Ukraine has very broad powers and determines the foreign policy course of the state.

For the past five years, Europe has existed with Ukraine in realities in which:

- Ukraine was a state that lost part of the territories and led hostilities on its territory, which forced the EU to impose and maintain sanctions against the Russian Federation as an aggressor state – as a sign of support for Ukraine;
- Ukraine was the most important state-transporter of energy carriers to Europe;
- Ukraine was a country under the protectorate of the United States and one of the places of American policy in Central and Eastern Europe;
- Ukraine collaborated with the European Union under the Association Agreement signed (more beneficial for the EU and unequal in the economic part from Ukrainian point of view), as well as the Eastern Partnership program. At the same time, Ukraine not only declared its desire to become a full member of the EU and NATO, but even made certain amendments to this effect in its Constitution;
- Ukraine was in permanent conflict with several neighbours, including EU members (Poland and Hungary, and to a lesser extent – with Romania).

However, in the near future with the new President, the situation may be changed significantly.

Firstly, prerequisites can be created for de-escalating the situation around Donbass. Zelenskiy has repeatedly stated that he is ready for direct negotiations with V. Putin without surrendering state interests of Ukraine. Earlier, Petro Poroshenko strongly avoided such negotiations. The fact that Russia decided to start the process of issuing passports to Ukrainian citizens living in the DPR and the LPR, is an additional signal: Putin decided to begin the process of withdrawing from uncontrolled territories those who do not fall under the future law on amnesty. Perhaps there will be a process that Russia will try to pass off for constructive actions on its part trying to withdraw the sanctions.

Secondly, Ukraine will continue to be under the unstated control of the United States, and processes similar to Romanian in the mid-2000s (active struggle against corruption, mass exposures, etc.) can unfold in the country.

Thirdly, Ukraine will continue to focus on integration into the EU, however, against this background, serious Euroskeptical trends will develop, aimed not so much at a return to a focus on Russia, but on the isolation of development and the 'Third Way'.

***Fourthly, after the completion of the construction of the 'North Stream 2' and the Turkish Stream (December 2019), Ukraine will lose its transport potential, and the European Union will see Ukraine exclusively as a donor of workforce.**

Fifthly, the instability of the Ukrainian economy in the coming year may create problems for the whole region.

Sixthly, inexperience of Zelenskiy as a politician can lead to a number of incidents – especially during negotiation processes and state visits. In this regard, it is important for Zelenskiy to find a strong candidate for the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs (in the past five years, this post has been held by a clearly weak Minister Pavel Klimkin).

Given the closeness of elections to the European Parliament, the experience of a frank populist coming to power in a neighbouring country can give a new motivation to the strengthening of populist projects in the European Union.

* The head of the Nord Stream project, Jens Muller, stated that his company is not going to make adjustments to the plans to build the Nord Stream-2 gas pipeline, despite attempts to disrupt the implementation of this project:

“Our project is being implemented in accordance with the established schedule,” he said in an interview with Reuters on May 24 last year.

“We take note of the political debate on this topic. However, we are implementing the project in accordance with the schedule and fulfilled all the conditions to start laying a gas pipeline through the Baltic Sea on time in 2018», - he added.

Also, the official authorities of the Russian Federation have repeatedly stated that the planned completion dates of the construction of both the Nord Stream 2 and the Turkish Stream has not been changed.

**LESSONS
FOR RUSSIA**

5

Russia's behaviour in the conditions of the presidential elections of 2019 in Ukraine was extremely clumsy. It seemed that Russia was trying in every way to leave Petro Poroshenko in power and was ready to assist him in this – despite the fact that the entire information and propaganda machine of Russia was built only on criticism of the Poroshenko regime.

First of all, one should not look at events in Ukraine and the processes in Ukrainian politics through the eyes of only one, and not an objective player, Viktor Medvedchuk, no matter how close he is to the centre for political decision making. Otherwise, Russia can easily lose its friends in Ukraine, leaving only one "friend".

Secondly, the electoral base of the Ukrainian opposition has been undermined by the war in the Donbas and migration processes. Up to 5 million voters who would never have voted for Poroshenko, today do not take part in elections for various reasons, the reason of which is in Moscow.

Thirdly, sanctions against Ukrainian politicians and business representatives, drawn up at the request of V. Medvedchuk, significantly limited possibilities of the opposition, gross of whose are included in the sanctions lists.

Fourthly, a signal of a possible de-escalation of the situation in the East was important for Ukraine. Russia was unable to send this signal.

Fifthly, the victory of Vladimir Zelenskiy creates new inconveniences for Russia. Russian counter-elites can get a role model (like other counter-elites in the post-Soviet space): a young, forty-year-old man without experience in politics was able to come to power. «Ukrainian Macron». Shouldn't we try to repeat his experience? In addition, its possible orientation to Soros' structures makes it possible to assume: Ukraine will turn into a more uncomfortable neighbour of Russia than under Poroshenko (he was an open enemy).

Zelenskiy has already voiced his attitude towards Russia. It does not contain aggressive rhetoric, as in the days of Poroshenko, but far from being considered Zelenskiy as a «friend of Russia.» In this regard, most likely, we should expect several creative surprises and increased diplomatic activity in the Russian direction.