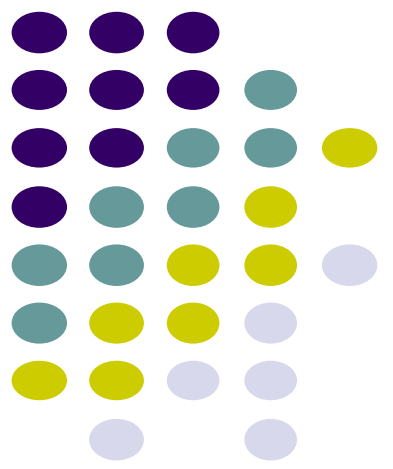
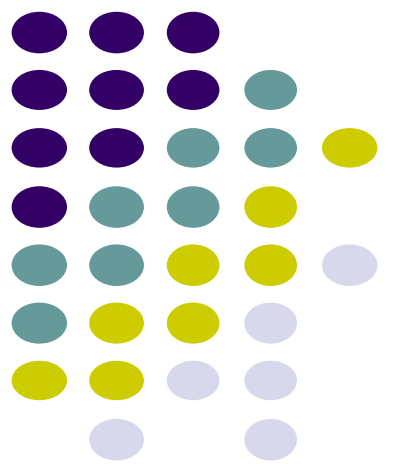


Democracy and civil society in Ukraine in the wartime



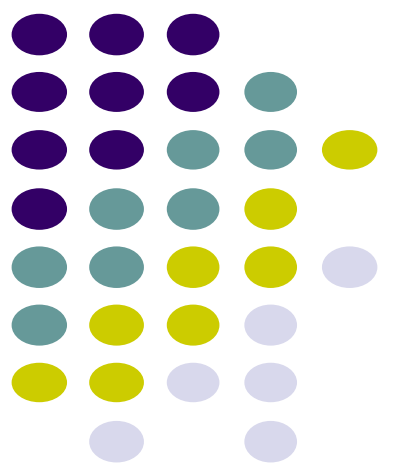
***Viktor Stepanenko, Institute of Sociology,
National Academy of sciences of Ukraine
(Kyiv, Ukraine) vikstepa@gmail.com***

Power configuration btw. the state and civil society in Ukraine



| Stages: | “the State – Civil Society” relations: |
|---------------------------------|---|
| I. Formation | <p>Civil society <i>before</i> the state (from the end of 1980-s until the state independence in 1991)</p> <p>Civil society <i>under</i> the state (from 1991 until the 2004 Orange revolution)</p> |
| II. Institutionalization | <p>Civil society <i>above/along with</i> the state: (the 2013-2014 Euromaidan and Revolution of dignity, the Donbas war from 2014, current challenges after the 2019 elections and the large-scale war)</p> |

Democracy and its forms of communication and representations: elections, dialogue, debates, rotations, public hearings, institutionalized media channels for opposition and criticism etc.



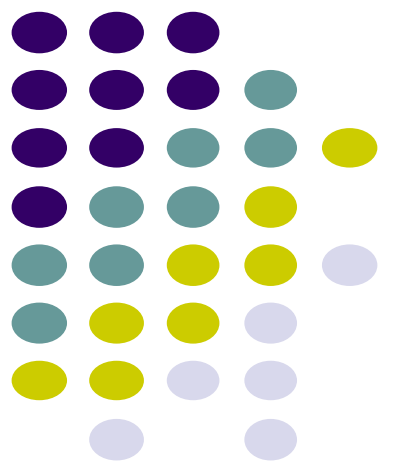
Demonstration and protest as the forms of communication btw. civil society and the state
Vibrant civil society as a factor of modernization and an element of the check-balance system in Ukraine



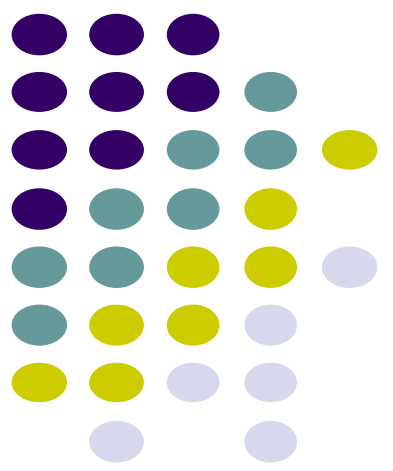
Democracy and freedoms vs security dilemma:

Transformation of the parliamentary-presidential republic in “office-presidential” after the 2019 elections. The command administrative management (partly justified by the interests of national security and the country defense) allows the state bureaucracy to take over most of the decisions without usual and well-established discussion procedures.

The functional space of democracy is objectively shrinking in the wartime (Ukraine is the case).



(Verkhovna Rada (the Ukrainian parliament): democracy in wartime form)



The state centralized regulation of the communication in the wartime (shrinking deliberative democracy):

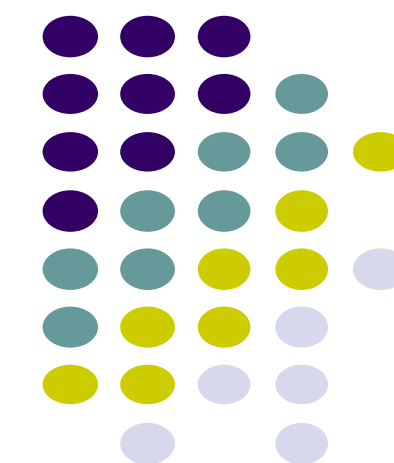
- The state control over main TV-channels (“one voice” policy): united TV-marathon in which oppositional TV-channels are expelled
- The new Law on media (adopted in 1-st hearing by the parliament on 30/08/2022) is criticized by journalists as a “step back” from the usual freedom of speech
- The authorities’ attempts in controlling and influencing social media (Internet-bots, hiring popular bloggers, political promotion in media, discreditation of political opponents etc.)
- The authorities’ attempts in influencing and dividing civil society and volunteer’s network (loyal and state-controlled NGOs etc.)

Due to the authorities’ monopoly over main information channels:

- pressure on and discreditation of political opponents instead of policy of national unity
- no transparency (without TV covering) in parliamentary discussions
- the control upon the political agenda

Risks of authoritarian trends

New challenges for civil society in the wartime



- transforming the protest energy into the country's defense, national resistance and unity, volunteer movement and civic activism
- SC in preventing the actual authoritarian risks under conditions of highly concentrated power (lobbying the anti-corruption initiatives and court reform etc.) - if the system of check and balances is weak the civil society still remains one of the powerful counterbalance to the risks
- active engagement in the “peace and victory” agenda based on national interests and constitutional principles (*‘red lines’* for the authorities etc.)
- new enlightenment and CS educational activity in fostering public’s critical thinking against fakes, informative and political manipulations and populism
- the challenges for Ukraine’s civil society itself – its ambivalent character combining both illiberal and liberal, uncivil and civil trends

Democracy, civil society and post-war prospects in Ukraine



Ukrainian vibrant civil society keeps its influential position and enjoys a great public trust.

In the post-war period there would be two main actors which are capable of playing the role of a counter-balance preventing authoritarian risks in Ukraine.

These are international democratic community and national civil society.



THANK YOU!