

April 22, 2022

Briefing Note

Current Situation in Ukraine and the Work and Roles of Parliamentarians

Prepared by the Parliamentary Centre and the Agency for Legislative Initiatives under the Parliamentary Accountability for the Security Sector (PASS Ukraine) project, funded by the Peace and Stabilisation Operations Program of Global Affairs Canada.

The analysis included in this note is based on media reports and information obtained from the Verkhovna Rada and other legislative bodies. It is essential that Ukraine's democratically elected officials continue to perform their duties while enduring Russia's unprovoked, illegal and horrific invasion.

This note is for information only and is not meant to convey opinions regarding policy decisions in the Verkhovna Rada's sole purview. The contents of this note do not necessarily reflect the views of PASS partners or Global Affairs Canada.

This note may not necessarily reflect the up-to-date current state of affairs as the situation changes every hour. Every attempt is made to ensure the accuracy of all information, acknowledging the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian and security situation, the disruption of the flow of information and organized disinformation all present incredible challenges.

SITTING OF THE RADA

Legislative Work

- The Verkhovna Rada assembled for a plenary sitting on April 21, 2022. Ten bills were adopted, and nine bills were adopted at the first reading. Two draft laws did not receive enough votes for adoption and were rejected. The adopted laws focused on economic and social issues.
- Adopted bills had support in the range of 230 to 302 votes (only three bills had more than 300 votes).¹ Unlike previous martial law sessions, the April 21 meeting debated many laws. Amendments to one bill was discussed for more than an hour and was not passed. In addition, the ability to monitor the personal voting results of each MP was restored. The video-record of the meeting was published on April 22, 2022.
- For security reasons, the meeting was held in a semi-secret location. The meeting was not broadcast on television. In addition, the public was not informed about the date or time of the meeting. Information only began to appear during the session.

Other aspects of work

¹ 226 votes are needed to pass an ordinary law, and 300 votes are needed to pass amendments to the Constitution.

- The Verkhovna Rada expelled Viktor Medvedchuk from the Human Rights Committee. Viktor Medvedchuk is a leader of the “Opposition Platform for Life” faction. He supported Russia, was accused of treason, escaped from house arrest at the beginning of the war, and was recently caught. Viktor Medvedchuk is currently in jail.
- Twenty-three parliamentarians who were members of the “Opposition Platform for Life” faction decided to create a parliamentary group entitled “Platform for Life and Peace.” On April 14, 2022, activity of this fraction was suspended. The group is led by Yuriy Boyko, former chairman of the “Opposition Platform for Life.” A group has similar opportunities (especially procedural opportunities) as a faction but cannot form a coalition.

Key issues covered by the adopted Laws included:

- Resolution № 7301 - Medvedchuk was dismissed from his position as a member of the Committee on Human Rights, Deoccupation and Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories.

Adopted laws:

- № 7300 - Martial law in Ukraine was extended until May 25, 2022.
- № 7299 - Increased the amount of internal and external borrowings by UAH 200 billion, which are planned to be used for defense purposes.
- № 7194 - This Law allows for the confiscation of property of those who support Russian aggression, according to a court decision.
- № 7270 - Identified areas for protection of the rights and freedoms of civilians in the temporarily occupied territories.
- № 7275 - The procedure for obtaining the status of the unemployed and the payment of unemployment benefits has been simplified.
- № 5847 - The powers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Emergency Service have been separated.
- № 3688 - Improved the logistics of firefighters.
- № 6416 - Participation of international organizations in procurement of medicines for Ukraine has been continued.
- № 4284 - Approximately 1,200 which were still in force in Ukraine since the Soviet era have been declared invalid.
- № 7278 - Remuneration for military equipment of the aggressor state voluntarily transferred to the Armed Forces of Ukraine is exempt from taxation.

Draft laws passed in the first reading (they have not yet become laws):

- № 7269 - Regulation of the peculiarities of exercising the powers of local self-government bodies in martial law.
- № 7280 - Exemption from the need to declare gifts, purchases, and donations that are transferred to the Armed Forces.
- № 7255 - Increasing the effectiveness of civil protection against military threat.
- № 7249 - Optimization of the tax burden on domestic gas companies.
- № 7282 - Solving several urban issues that arose as a result of the military invasion of the Russian Federation.
- № 7264 - Reduction of the bureaucratic burden on farmers.
- № 7227 - Strengthening measures to prevent the intervention of enemy forces in the functioning of the state's electronic communications network.
- № 7289 - Simplification of the provision of land for the needs of the national economy, agricultural sector, and citizens of Ukraine during martial law.

Details

Details of the 'Adopted laws' section:

Adopted laws:²

- № 7300 - Martial law in Ukraine has been extended for a period of 30 days (from April 25, 2022, until May 25, 2022).
- № 7278 - Remuneration for military equipment of the aggressor state voluntarily transferred to the Armed Forces of Ukraine is exempt from taxation.
- № 7299 - The volume of internal and external borrowings increased by UAH 200 billion, which is planned to be used for defense purposes. Additional funds from the reserve fund of the state budget are used exclusively for the implementation of measures that ensure security and defense, and financial support for internally displaced persons. Furthermore, this Law proposes the introduction of a new mechanism of automatic crediting of the tax from tobacco sales to the budgets of local governments (January 1, 2023, to May 1, 2022).
- № 7270 - The direction of the protection of rights and freedoms of the civilian population in temporarily occupied territories has been determined. The bill:
 - o Defined the conceptual apparatus, in particular the definitions of "humanitarian corridor," "deoccupation," "line of contact," "occupation administration of the Russian Federation," and "temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation territory of Ukraine (temporarily occupied territory)."

² Draft laws adopted only in the first reading were not included in the text, as their content may be changed before the second reading.

- o Set public policy objectives in the temporarily occupied territory.
 - o Identified areas for the protection of rights and freedoms of the civilian population in temporarily occupied territories.
 - o Clarified the procedure for entry and departure of persons into the temporarily occupied territory.
 - o Clarified the legal response measures in the temporarily occupied territory.
 - o Clarified the features of the movement of goods to and from the temporarily occupied territory.
 - o Streamlined other aspects (education and military service) in connection with the temporary occupation of certain territories of Ukraine.
- № 7275 - The procedure for obtaining the status of the unemployed and payment of unemployment benefits has been simplified. During martial law and within 180 calendar days after its abolition, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine is authorized to determine:
 - o List the types of provision, social services, compensations, and benefits provided by the laws of Ukraine (“On Employment” and “On Compulsory State Social Insurance in the Event of Unemployment”), as well as the features of their provision.
 - o Procedures for registration, re-registration of the unemployed, and keeping records of job seekers, as well as the features of the appointment, postponement, reduction, termination, and resumption of unemployment benefits.
 - o Approve the budget of the Fund of Compulsory State Social Insurance of Ukraine in the case of unemployment.
 - o The law also clarifies the content of the concept of “partial unemployment” and the procedure for payment of partial unemployment benefits.
- № 5847 - The powers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Emergency Service have been separated.
- № 3688 - Improved the logistics of firefighters “on the ground” by granting permission for the free transfer of state property.
- № 6416 - The participation of international organizations in the procurement of medicines for Ukraine will continue until December 30, 2023.
- № 7194 - According to a court decision, this Law allows for the confiscation of property of those who support Russian aggression. The Law:
 - o Clarified the grounds in which sanctions may be applied. This includes individuals who have (through their actions) threatened national security, sovereignty or the territorial integrity of Ukraine or have significantly contributed (such as through funding) to such actions by other entities.

- o Defined the exclusive grounds, special conditions, pre-trial and judicial procedures for applying a new type of sanction (recovery of assets to state revenue), as well as the scope and powers of entities that initiate, decide on the application, and implement this type of sanction.
- o The proposed procedure for the application of this sanction will allow the court to assess whether the imposition of such a sanction is legitimate and proportionate in view of the actions taken by a particular person.
- o Established that individuals who have reported confiscated assets to the National Agency for the Prevention of Corruption, as well as their relatives, are under state protection. Additional guarantees of personal safety, confidentiality, and protection from prosecution of these individuals and their relatives have been established.
- o Supplemented the list of grounds on which the subject of primary financial monitoring is obliged to establish an unacceptably high risk of business relations (financial transactions without establishing business relations) in relation to customers. It is proposed to determine the application of special economic or other restrictive measures (sanctions) to clients on this basis.