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PARLIAMENT IN TIMES OF WAR

A weekly update on legislative activity of Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada

SITTING OF THE RADA

On September 20 and 21, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine held plenary sittings, at which a total of 17 laws and 10 resolutions were adopted, the most important of which are:

- Law on the ratification of the Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism;
- Law on the National Register of Emissions and Transfer of Pollutants;
- Resolution on the formation of the Temporary Investigative Commission of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to investigate the facts of sexual violence committed as a result of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine;
- Resolution on the formation of the Temporary Investigative Commission of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on the investigation of possible violations of the legislation of Ukraine in the field of receiving, distributing, transporting, storing, and using for the intended purpose humanitarian and other aid.

In addition, the mandate of MP Dmytro Shentsev was prematurely terminated. According to information in the media, this MP left Ukraine and was outside Ukraine during martial law. Dmytro Shentsev's personal statement was the reason for the termination of his mandate.

On September 20, the Temporary Investigative Commission of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine was established to investigate the facts of sexual violence committed as a result of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. The investigative commission included 11 women members of parliament. The purpose of the Commission's activity is to investigate, search and bring to justice those guilty of sexual violence. The term of the commission's activity is 1 year, after 6 months it is planned to hear the first reports on the activities of this TIC.

According to the General Prosecutor's Office of Ukraine, 26,305 crimes of aggression and war crimes have been registered so far only during the period of the full-scale invasion of russia. On April 14, 2022, the Verkhovna Rada adopted the Statement "On the Perpetration of Genocide by the russian federation in Ukraine", in which, among other illegal acts, rape is recognized as aimed at the destruction of the Ukrainian people. The parliaments of the states - Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, and Canada - also recognized such illegal actions of the russian federation in Ukraine as an act of genocide.



Also, on September 20, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted the Law "On the Ratification of the Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union on Ukraine's Participation in the EU LIFE Program - Environmental and Climate Action Program." The ratification of this agreement will ensure Ukraine's acquisition of associate membership in the LIFE

Program and will facilitate the implementation of joint projects within the LIFE Program. The agreement was signed on June 24, 2022 in Kyiv and on July 13, 2022 in Prague.

The LIFE program is an EU instrument for financing projects for environmental protection and climate action, which has been operating since 1992 and co-finances more than 5,500 projects in the EU and beyond. It supports government bodies, non-governmental organizations and private entities, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, in the transition to a sustainable, energy-efficient, renewable, climate-neutral and sustainable economy, thereby contributing to its sustainable development.

On September 21, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine established control over public funds in the field of mandatory state social insurance. The relevant Law defines the legal, financial and organizational principles of mandatory state social insurance, guarantees to working citizens regarding their social protection in connection with temporary loss of working capacity, pregnancy and childbirth, in case of an accident at work or occupational disease, protection of their life and health. With the adoption of the new Law, all pension and insurance payments, as well as social services, which the victims of industrial accidents and their family members currently receive from the Social Insurance Fund of Ukraine will be preserved, and in some cases - increased.

At the same time, the Law changes the body that will administer the payments above. According to the new Law, from January 1, 2023, the Pension Fund of Ukraine will be the authorized management body in the system of mandatory state social insurance in connection with temporary loss of working capacity and from an accident. By 2025, the Pension Fund plans to introduce international financial reporting standards in the mandatory state pension insurance system.



In addition, the bill on the State Budget of Ukraine for 2023 was presented at the plenary sitting. Presenting this draft law in the Verkhovna Rada, Minister of Finance Serhii Marchenko noted, in particular, that:

- expenditures of the general fund are planned in the amount of UAH 2 268.5 billion (taking into account the provision of loans) (about USD 62 billion at the current exchange rate of the National Bank of Ukraine);
- priority No. 1 in the draft budget for 2023 is defense expenditures, which will make up almost half of all budget expenditures next year, while the total resource for national security and defense is UAH 1 141 billion (about USD 31 billion at the current exchange rate of the National Bank of Ukraine);
- a fund for liquidation of the consequences of armed aggression will be created in the amount of over UAH 19 billion;
- the deficit of the state budget in 2023 is expected at the level of 20% of GDP, while there is hope to attract almost USD 38 billion from international partners, in particular from the USA, the EU, the IMF.

Despite the martial law, the Government submitted the draft law on time, and the presentation of this document is in accordance with the established requirements.



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Background on the update on activity of Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada

Ukraine's democratically elected officials continue to perform their duties while enduring Russia's unprovoked and horrific invasion. These briefing notes provide the latest information about the legislative activities of the Verkhovna Rada.

Briefing notes are 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 Stabilization 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.

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.

Every attempt is made to ensure the accuracy of all information, acknowledging the fluid humanitarian and security situation, the disruption of the flow of information and organized disinformation.

Previous PASS Ukraine briefs are available on our website:

<https://parlcent.org/parliament-in-times-of-conflict-a-weekly-update-on-legislative-activity-of-ukraines-verkhovna-rada/>