

## SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

DOI <https://doi.org/10.51647/kelm.2023.3.15>

### WPLYW WOJNY NA PEŁNĄ SKALĘ NA STRUKTURĘ GRUP WYBORCZYCH UKRAINY I ICH CECHY SPOŁECZNO-PSYCHOLOGICZNE

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**Adnotacja.** Wojna na pełną skalę znacząco wpłynęła na architekturę ukraińskiego pola wyborczego. Badania wyborcze w czasie wojny wykazują niezdolność kryteriów społeczno-demograficznych do wyjaśnienia procesów zachodzących w społeczeństwie, co stawia naukowcom wyzwanie opracowania integracyjnego podejścia do badań elektoratu, które uwzględni również jego cechy społeczno-psychologiczne. W artykule przedstawiono wyniki eksperckiego badania typologii grup wyborczych Ukrainy, które opiera się na podejściu społeczno-psychologicznym i zostało przeprowadzone w przeddzień wyborów prezydenckich w 2019 roku. Podjęto próbę, na podstawie analizy i uogólnienia wyników badań socjologicznych w czasie wojny, wyodrębnienia nowych zjawisk społeczno-psychologicznych, na podstawie których możliwe będzie różnicowanie grup wyborczych w przyszłości. Wykazano, że w znacznym stopniu się zmieniły system wartości, relacje społeczne, ocena wizerunku państwa, poziom patriotyzmu i optymizmu społecznego, struktura źródeł informacji, nastąpiły zmiany psychoemocjonalne i sformułowano wniosek o żołnierzy w organach władzy. Przy planowaniu i przeprowadzaniu badań wyborczych należy wziąć pod uwagę te zmiany, co pozwoli zobaczyć aktualny obraz grup wyborczych Ukrainy.

**Słowa kluczowe:** elektorat, grupy wyborcze, typologia elektoratu, kryteria typologizacji elektoratu, wybory, portret wyborcy, podejście społeczno-psychologiczne, wojna na pełną skalę.

### THE IMPACT OF A FULL-SCALE WAR ON THE STRUCTURE OF ELECTORAL GROUPS OF UKRAINE AND THEIR SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS

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**Abstract.** The full-scale war has significantly affected the architecture of the electoral field of Ukraine. The article presents the results of an expert study of the typology of electoral groups in Ukraine conducted on the eve of the presidential elections in 2019. An attempt was made to identify new socio-psychological phenomena based on the analysis and synthesis of the results of wartime sociological research, which will make it possible to differentiate electoral groups in the future. It is shown that the system of values, assessment of the image of the state, the level of patriotism and social optimism, the structure of information sources, psycho-emotional changes and the demand for the military in power have undergone significant changes in Ukrainian society during the war. These changes should be taken into account during electoral research, which will allow us to see the current picture of electoral groups in Ukraine.

**Key words:** electorate, electoral groups, electorate typology, criteria for electorate typology, elections, voter portrait, socio-psychological approach, full-scale war.

### ВПЛИВ ПОВНОМАСШТАБНОЇ ВІЙНИ НА СТРУКТУРУ ЕЛЕКТОРАЛЬНИХ ГРУП УКРАЇНИ ТА ЇХ СОЦІАЛЬНО-ПСИХОЛОГІЧНІ ОСОБЛИВОСТІ

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**Анотація.** Повномасштабна війна суттєво вплинула на архітектуру електорального поля України. Електоральні дослідження воєнного часу фіксують неспроможність соціально-демографічних критеріїв пояснити про-

цеси, які відбуваються в суспільстві, що ставить перед дослідниками задачу з розробки інтегративного підходу дослідження електорату, який враховуватиме також його соціально-психологічні особливості. В статті викладено результати експертного дослідження типології електоральних груп України, яке базується на соціально-психологічному підході і було проведене напередодні виборів президента у 2019 році. Зроблена спроба на основі аналізу та узагальнення результатів соціологічних досліджень воєнного часу, виокремити нові соціально-психологічні феномени, на основі яких буде можливим диференціювати електоральні групи в подальшому. Показано, що суттєвих змін під час війни в українському суспільстві зазнали система цінностей, соціальних взаємовідносин, оцінка образу держави, рівень патріотизму та соціального оптимізму, структура джерел інформації, відбулися психоемоційні зміни та артикулювався запит на військових у владі. Під час планування та проведення електоральних досліджень має бути враховано ці зміни, що дасть змогу побачити актуальну картину електоральних груп України.

**Ключові слова:** електорат, електоральні групи, типологія електорату, критерії типологізації електорату, вибори, портрет виборця, соціально-психологічний підхід, повномасштабна війна.

**Introduction.** The study of electoral groups in the inter-election period has always been difficult, since electoral groups finally form just before elections. Subsequently, the electoral group disintegrates and is formed anew before the new elections and may have different composition and characteristics from the previous one. These processes are significantly influenced by external factors, such as changes in the political and social situation in the country, the appearance of new candidates and political forces, and the formation of a new agenda. Considering the fact that the political landscape of society is constantly changing from election to election in normal circumstances, it can be assumed that such a social upheaval as a full-scale war has had a significant impact and continues to have an impact on the structure of electoral groups and the peculiarities of their differentiation. Even before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, it was of scientific interest to find criteria for typologising electoral groups that would not depend on the political landscape and would take into account the individual characteristics of voters. In today's realities of the socio-political situation in the country, the issue of developing an integrative approach to electorate research is particularly acute, as the term of the parliament and the president is coming to an end, so elections can be held immediately after the victory, and it is possible that they will be held under martial law. The war has affected not only society at the social and individual levels, but also the approaches to research, and a new range of political and social issues has emerged, which can now be used to differentiate electoral groups.

The purpose of the article is to summarize the phenomena that have emerged in Ukrainian society during the full-scale invasion and should be taken into account in further studies of electoral groups within the framework of the socio-psychological approach.

Before proceeding to the analysis of the impact of a full-scale war on the structure of Ukraine's electoral groups and their socio-psychological characteristics, it is worth defining the main concepts of the study and presenting the results of the study of socio-psychological characteristics of electoral groups conducted before the full-scale invasion.

**Main part.** Traditionally, there are two definitions of the electorate. In the broad sense, the electorate is defined as the totality of all citizens who have the right to vote and who exercise or do not exercise this right in conditions specially created for this purpose. In a narrow sense, the electorate is a circle of voters who vote for a particular party or candidate for an elected office; supporters of a particular political force.

We consider the electorate in its broad sense, which is typical for the behavioural sciences. Since the electorate is a large social group, like any large group, it has a heterogeneous composition and can be divided into subgroups or electoral groups.

In social and behavioural sciences, there is no common understanding, and therefore no definition of the concept of "electoral group". In our understanding, an electoral group is a set of people with similar socio-psychological characteristics that are important to the researcher, which is relatively homogeneous in terms of these characteristics. People who intend to vote for different candidates may be included in the same electoral group. We consider the assignment of voters to the same electoral group as a prerequisite for the flow of votes from one candidate to another if their voters are in the same electoral group. Based on this, we consider an electoral group as a nominal group of voters united on the basis of common psychological characteristics, relatively homogeneous and stable in composition.

We understand the socio-psychological profile of an electoral group as an average portrait of a typical voter who is part of the electoral group, selected on the basis of socio-psychological characteristics.

A voter is a citizen who has an active electoral right and can exercise it or not. Thus, the concept of a voter also includes groups of absentees and protest electorate (Безрукова, Травець, 2022: 6).

Based on the views of such researchers as P. Lasarsfeld (Lasarsfeld, 1969: 74) and M. Fiorina (Fiorina, 1981: 173), we assumed that psychological and socio-psychological characteristics of voters are among the indicators that distinguish members of one electoral group from others.

Socio-psychological characteristics of a voter are subjective characteristics of a voter, which may include characterological features, communication features, voter's personality orientation, regulatory features. The socio-psychological characteristics of voters may also include a system of values, relations with other subjects, etc. We consider the socio-psychological characteristics of voters to be an important factor for political participation and electoral choice.

Socio-demographic characteristics of the voter are objective characteristics of the voter, such as age, gender, region of residence and type of settlement, financial status, marital status, level of education, nationality, religion, etc.

**Materials and methods.** In order to come closer to creating a typology of Ukraine's electoral groups and identifying criteria by which Ukrainian voters can be differentiated, on the eve of the 2019 presidential election in

Ukraine, we conducted an expert study aimed at finding and summarizing criteria by which the total population of voters can be divided into groups and voters can be assigned to a particular type.

In the course of our research, we used the following methods: an expert survey (to identify and summarize experts' perceptions of the main types of Ukrainian voters and determine their socio-psychological characteristics); the method of semantic differential (to assess the socio-psychological characteristics of Ukrainian voters); Miller's sorting method (to identify groups of voters similar in socio-psychological characteristics); content analysis (to create a thesaurus of criteria for typologising the electorate by experts); statistical analysis (for analysis of the obtained results).

The research was conducted in Kyiv. It was attended by representatives of the expert community (political psychologists, electoral sociologists, political consultants) in the total number of 25 people. The method of semantic differential was used to study the experts' opinions on the socio-psychological profiles of electoral groups. Experts were offered a questionnaire consisting of 30 socio-psychological criteria for describing electoral groups, which were presented as dichotomies and a block of socio-demographic characteristics of electoral groups. In the course of the survey, experts evaluated the electoral groups. In addition, given the heterogeneity in the proposed groups, experts had the opportunity to identify subgroups in them and evaluate them separately. Later, using theoretical generalization and quantitative analysis, unified social and psychological profiles of the identified electoral groups were created.

In order to assess the electoral field of Ukraine during the 2019 presidential election in terms of similarities and differences between the electorates of 44 presidential candidates, Miller's sorting method was chosen. Experts were asked to group electorates according to the criterion of similarity of voters in them. They were not limited in the number of groups, and each expert had an arbitrary number. After the expert grouped the candidates' electorates, the interviews took place. The data obtained at the interview stage were analysed using the content analysis method, which allowed us to obtain a list of criteria used by experts to describe voters. The results of the sorting were analysed by clustering the electorates (using K-means and hierarchical cluster analysis) of presidential candidates by socio-psychological criteria. The results obtained by applying the semantic differential method also made it possible to cluster 8 electoral groups based on the similarity of the scores given by experts in the course of the survey. The results of the clustering of electorates based on the results of Miller's sorting and semantic differential were compared with each other. The electorates of the candidates that most often fell into the same group were identified.

The difference in the scores of the compared electoral groups on the semantic differential scales of both stages of the study was assessed by calculating the Wilcoxon signed-rank test.

We have proved that the electorates of presidential candidates differ not only in certain socio-demographic characteristics, but also in a number of socio-psychological characteristics, that is, they have their own socio-psychological profile.

The socio-psychological characteristics that were offered to experts to evaluate electorates by semantic differential, as well as the characteristics that they themselves offered to describe electoral groups in the course of sorting electorates by Miller's method, became the source material for identifying unique profiles of electoral groups. Out of the entire set of given voter characteristics, we recognized only those that differentiate the electorate and allow us to distinguish one group of voters from another as typology criteria.

The results of the clustering of presidential candidates' electorates based on the data obtained from the expert survey allowed us to develop our own socio-psychological typology of Ukrainian voters (the names of the groups were formulated by the author). Namely: "former regionalists", "moderate utopian theorists", "radical social avengers", "anti-systemic destructors", "reckless illogists", "paternal totalitarians", "national-patriotic passionaries", "indifferent protesters" (Безрукова, Безрукова, 2020: 236).

The content analysis of interviews with experts allowed us to identify 72 unique characteristics of voters, which were classified into 7 groups: voter's characteristic features, voter's communication features, voter's personality orientation, voter's regulatory features, voter's socio-demographic characteristics, characteristics related to the candidate's personality, and objective indicators of the electorate. The most numerous criteria for typologising the electorate were the voter's characterological and regulatory features and the voter's personality orientation (Безрукова, 2021: 19).

**Results and discussion.** The results of the expert study allowed us to identify groups of criteria that can be used to develop a model of electoral research in the future. They are the personal traits of voters, voters' values, voters' needs, the level of voters' political culture and the form of political participation.

It is worth noting that the expert study does not allow us to investigate the representation of the identified electoral groups in Ukrainian society and their number, which confirms the need for an electoral study using quantitative methodology to better understand the architecture of the electoral field and confirm the impact of these socio-psychological features on the electoral choice.

**The impact of a full-scale war on the architecture of the electoral field.** The challenges posed to Ukrainian society by the war have had a significant impact on people, both at the individual and social levels. Sociologists have recorded changes in the system of values, needs, and social relations (Ідентичність. Патріотизм. Цінності: 2022). A significant number of Ukrainians of all ages and genders are involved in the defense of the state. For many Ukrainians, their place of residence and income level have changed, they are affected by factors of separation from their families, deterioration of physical and psychological health, and they go through the process of adaptation in different ways. The war makes people's views more unambiguous and categorical, people face stress, experience

traumatic events and “survivor’s guilt” (Як війна змінила мене та країну: 2023). The level of patriotism, social self-esteem, and national identity is growing, and the assessment of the state’s image and vision of its future is changing (Суспільно-політичні погляди в Україні: 2022). These factors are significant in the situation of electoral choice and influence the configuration of the electoral field.

**Socio-demographic criteria.** The socio-demographic criteria (age, gender, region of residence, type of settlement, financial status, education), which are used in most modern electoral studies and have always been considered relatively stable and objective, are no longer universal in a full-scale war. In particular, many studies conducted during wartime that look at social demographics use an atypical geographical distribution. The usual distribution of the sample by region of residence (West, East, North, South, Centre, and Kyiv) is being replaced by a more adapted and fundamentally important distribution in a war situation, taking into account the intensity of hostilities during a full-scale invasion (partially or fully occupied regions; regions where active hostilities are taking place; frontline regions; de-occupied areas; regions that have not been occupied at all or almost at all) (Оцінка шкоди, завданої воєнними злочинами Росії в Україні: 2022).

**Sources of information.** Sociological studies have recorded a change in the structure of Ukrainians’ information sources and an overall increase in trust in the media during the war. Trust in national and local media is growing, while consumption of their news content is decreasing. Instead, there has been a significant increase in the consumption of information in messengers (from 11 to 41%) and YouTube (from 21 to 29%). Social media remained influential (35%). Among the sources of information about the war in Ukraine, the most trusted are the TV marathon (40%), eyewitness accounts, friends (35%), and channels in messengers (33%) (Як війна змінила мене та країну: 2023).

**Assessment of the state image.** One of the most significant changes in the minds of Ukrainians during the war, which is important for political and electoral psychologists, is a significant improvement in the assessment of the state’s image and its effectiveness. Sociologists note that in 2021, the majority of Ukrainian citizens had a negative image of the state. A year after Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, more than half of respondents say they have a distinctly or moderately positive image of the country. The key indicator for assessing the image of the state is the indicator of the country’s correct direction, which is a record high in the history of the survey (during the year of war, fluctuations of 70-80% are observed). This indicator is based on high confidence in the country’s military and political leadership, belief in victory, a significant increase in public self-esteem and pride in the country, and the realization of the people’s aspirations for Euro-Atlantic integration. At the same time, sociologists still record a certain socio-demographic difference in assessments of the state’s image – in the regional context, the image of the state is somewhat more restrained among residents of the East. Also, a slight decrease in this parameter occurs with an increase in the age of respondents. It is noteworthy that there are significant differences between the electorates of different parties, and the worst image of the Ukrainian state is typical for those who are not going to vote at all. This is the only group in which more than half of the respondents have a moderately or strongly negative image of the state – 38% and 15% respectively (Як війна змінила мене та країну: 2023).

**Patriotism.** The civic sense of patriotism has also undergone changes, and it has acquired additional measurement parameters, such as belief in victory, assessment of the state’s position in the world, civic and linguistic identity, frequency of consumption of Russian information content, etc. One of the scales for measuring patriotism in wartime sociological research was the emotions that citizens feel towards the country today. Sociologists have recorded that the main emotion that respondents feel when thinking about Ukraine today is pride (75%). As a result of the full-scale invasion and heroic resistance of the Ukrainian people, this indicator has more than doubled (Як війна змінила мене та країну: 2023).

**Psycho-emotional changes and adaptation to war.** The full-scale war has affected every citizen of Ukraine, which was reflected in the change in the emotional state of Ukrainians. Studies have shown that negative emotions prevail over positive ones – Ukrainians feel sad, angry, fearful, and disappointed. During the year of war, the feeling of self-love has decreased, while the level of love for others has increased. This demonstrates how the individual is inferior to the collective in the face of modern challenges. At the same time, the war has undermined Ukrainians’ trust in people and the world. The results of a study by sociologists on the types of adaptation allowed us to distinguish two groups of people among Ukrainians – adapted people who have high resilience, low emotional stress and psychological exhaustion, and non-adapted people who experience significant emotional stress, psychological exhaustion and low vitality (Психологічні маркери війни: 2022). It is not yet possible to predict how these trends will manifest themselves in the electoral processes.

**Values.** Military psychologists, in particular P. Lisovsky, note that war primarily affects the mental and value aspects of a person (Лісовський, 2017: 26). Wartime research shows age-specific peculiarities of experiencing war trauma – war trauma has the greatest impact on the system of values and beliefs of adolescents and young people (Кузікова, Зликов, Лукомська, 2023: 69). The results of sociological research conducted by the Rating Group show that the basic value scale of Ukrainians has undergone minor changes in the context of the war. There has been a shift towards the values of self-determination and openness to change, with universalism and kindness dominating, conformity and independence being at a high level. The values of security and tradition are also significant (Ідентичність. Патріотизм. Цінності: 2022).

The war has had a significant impact on the perception of ideological issues, with a total rejection of Soviet identity and separation from Russians. The absolute majority of Ukrainians (91%) do not support the thesis that “Russians and Ukrainians are one nation”. Today, the number of those who share this opinion is only 8% (in August 2021, it was 41%, in March 2022 – 21%). Support for this idea is still recorded among 23% of residents of the East

and 13% of older respondents. At the same time, in other macro-regions and age groups, there is almost no support for this thesis (Україна в умовах війни: 2022). This issue was actively used earlier by representatives of pro-Russian political forces, who activated their electorate around this thesis, the potential share of which has now significantly decreased.

The comprehensive study “How the War Changed Me and the Country. Results of the Year” records significant changes in the views, assessments and lives of Ukrainians during the year of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine. There has been a significant increase in public self-esteem. The majority of respondents rated Ukraine’s position above average – 4.6 points out of 7 maximum, which is 1.5 times higher than in 2021. Two-thirds of respondents rated Ukraine’s future prospects at the highest level. There have also been changes in national self-identification: the vast majority of respondents identify themselves as citizens of Ukraine (compared to 2021, the figure has increased from 76% to 94%). Half identify themselves as Europeans (double growth) (Як війна змінила мене та країну: 2023).

**Language.** During the war, there was a tendency towards more active use of the Ukrainian language in everyday life. Studies have shown that residents of the South and East, as well as refugees, have begun to use Ukrainian more often. Since the beginning of the war, 19% of Ukrainians have switched to using Ukrainian either regularly or more often. In general, since the beginning of the war, 41% of Russian-speakers and bilinguals have started to speak Ukrainian more often, 24% of them constantly, 17% more often. Over the past six months, the number of those who have started to speak Ukrainian all the time has increased to 64%. Sometimes speak Ukrainian – 24%, rarely or never – 12% (Ідентичність. Патріотизм. Цінності: 2022). The state language and attitudes towards it is an important political issue that was articulated by various political forces in Ukraine on the eve of the elections. Some of them activated their electorate on the language issue, so it is likely that the trend of increasing number of Ukrainian-speaking Ukrainians, along with the boycott of Russian-language content by Ukrainians, may also be reflected in the public rhetoric and political programs of Ukrainian politicians and parties.

**Controversial issues.** Before the full-scale war, there were a number of questions in Ukrainian society that could be used to distinguish between the electorates of different political forces and electoral groups. Now, the questions that used to show significant differences in regional, gender, or age breakdowns (national identity, attitudes towards Russia, the status of the Ukrainian language, Ukraine’s foreign policy, etc.) do not show demographic differences. For example, support for joining the EU and NATO is almost unanimous among representatives of all macro-regions, age and income groups (Суспільно-політичні погляди в Україні: 2022). The issue of the status of the Ukrainian language is no longer controversial – 86% believe that Ukrainian should be the only state language (Ідентичність. Патріотизм. Цінності: 2022).

Instead, new fundamental issues have emerged that can be used to classify Ukrainians into certain electoral groups. These include a vision of the end of the war, readiness for territorial concessions, attitudes towards “reconciliation” with Russia, the status of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ban on its activities or special status, the need for state intervention or non-intervention in church affairs), a vision of Ukraine’s post-war development, including political and military alliances, restoration of the nuclear power status, etc. In addition, the question of the time needed for reconciliation with Russians demonstrates a certain socio-demographic difference in the answers – older respondents, residents of the East and South, and Russian speakers are more inclined to “reconcile” in a relatively short time perspective (Україна в умовах війни: 2022).

**Consolidation of society.** Sociologists note that Ukrainian society has found a nation-building idea, which is the victory in the war, resulting in the consolidation of society, the formation of interregional social cohesion, the strengthening of horizontal and vertical ties and the erasure of interregional differences. Thus, two formulas of cohesion were born: a common threat and a common good (Як війна змінює українське суспільство: 2022). This had a significant impact on the architecture of Ukraine’s electoral field, as electoral groups that could previously be distinguished, for example, by the types of information consumption, level of paternalism, or attitude to politics in general, united on issues that were more fundamental during the war and actually grew larger. However, after a year and a half of full-scale war, having undergone a certain process of adaptation to the new conditions of today, electoral groups have again split into smaller associations, and the search for criteria for their differentiation is a challenge for researchers. The socio-psychological characteristics of their members also play an important role in the development of the typology of electoral groups, as they are relatively stable and do not depend on changes in the political landscape or social conditions.

**Assessment of the effectiveness of the state image.** During the war, assessments of the effectiveness of the Ukrainian state have significantly improved, and citizens’ trust in state institutions has grown. Trust in the Armed Forces of Ukraine has increased from 65 to 97%, and in the President – from 36 to 90% (Як війна змінила мене та країну: 2023). An important trend of the war for electoral processes is the growth of positive attitudes of Ukrainians towards the military and war veterans. According to the results of sociological research, Ukrainians endow veterans of the Russian-Ukrainian war with many positive qualities, such as patriotism, independence in decision-making, discipline, hard work, and law-abidingness (Образ ветеранів в українському суспільстві: 2022).

It is noteworthy that 47% of respondents are rather positive about the fact that various political forces can invite veterans to run for office, which is evidence of the demand of Ukrainian society for the military in power (Образ ветеранів в українському суспільстві: 2023).

In addition, interesting trends in the popular rating of the most prominent Ukrainians are recorded by sociologists – this year, the traditional historical figures of Ukraine, such as Taras Shevchenko, Lesya Ukrainka, Bohdan

Khmelnitsky, were joined by President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Valeriy Zaluzhnyi (Народний ТОП: 2022). This demonstrates the unprecedented support of the people of Ukraine for the country's top military and political leadership, which may certainly be reflected in future elections.

Confidence ratings can largely be converted into electoral ratings, so one of the likely scenarios for constructing the electoral field during the next elections will be a further increase in the presence of the military in Ukrainian politics due to the high confidence rating and support for the actions of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. At the same time, a number of political leaders who were popular before have lost their support today, so the next elections may see a significant change in the presence of political forces in power, resulting in the breakdown of old and the creation of new electoral groups.

**De-occupation of the occupied Ukrainian territories.** The de-occupation of the Ukrainian territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, which did not participate in elections during the war and whose electoral moods are not entirely clear today, is expected to have a significant impact on the social and electoral structure of Ukrainian society. Given the limited access to citizens living in these territories, including the lack of opportunities for independent public opinion research, the issue of electoral sentiment in these regions is open. Understanding the correlation between electoral groups and their socio-psychological characteristics can be key in the process of information reintegration of residents of Donetsk and Luhansk regions and Crimea.

**Conclusions.** Thus, we can state a significant change in the architecture of Ukrainian society, which will be reflected in the change of the electoral field, the picture of electoral groups in Ukraine and their socio-psychological characteristics.

Sociological surveys conducted during the full-scale invasion recorded an increase in the level of patriotism, national pride, social self-esteem, national identity, and an improved assessment of the state's image. During the war, Ukrainians' trust in the media increased and the structure of information sources changed. An important electoral trend is the increase in trust in the country's top military and political leadership and the demand for military personnel in power. The general emotional background of Ukrainians and the process of adaptation to new social conditions may become a significant factor in the new elections, in particular, the possible increase in the group of absentees at the expense of maladjusted people.

In general, sociologists have recorded a significant consolidation of society on many issues that were previously controversial, including Ukraine's membership in the EU and NATO and the status of the Ukrainian language. There has been a total rejection of Ukrainians' Soviet identity and ideological separation from Russians. However, a new field of political and social issues has emerged that may further differentiate electoral groups – the issue of the vision of the end of the war, readiness for territorial concessions and reconciliation with Russia, restoration of the status of a nuclear state, etc. The de-occupation of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea is expected to have a predictable impact on the architecture of the Ukrainian electoral field.

Analysing the changes in Ukrainian society recorded by sociological research, it can be concluded that the results of an expert study of Ukraine's electoral groups conducted on the eve of the 2019 presidential election, which identified 8 electoral groups, do not currently reflect the real electoral picture of Ukraine. Given the current political situation, it can be assumed that the electoral group "former regionalists" will significantly decrease and undergo ideological changes, softening its pro-Russian ideology. The groups of "moderate utopian theorists" and "national-patriotic passionaries" are likely to unite on the basis of their strong patriotic views, high political culture and education. It is possible that they will be joined by the group of "paternal totalitarians", whose striking difference, at the time of the study, was the demand for the military in power, which is currently characteristic of the majority of the country's population. The group of "anti-systemic destructors" may disintegrate or join the group of "reckless illogists", undergoing fundamental changes. At the same time, new electoral groups that did not exist or were not recorded in previous studies may be created.

Thus, the results of sociological research allow us to identify new factors that significantly affect political processes within the state, in particular the configuration of the electoral field, and should be taken into account in further scientific research. The study of these processes, taking into account new variables and complex conditions of today, is an ambitious challenge for scientists working in the field of electoral research.

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