

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

SUMMARY

Results of the sociological surveys on attitudes of Ukrainian citizens towards the judiciary

September 2025

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1. The Razumkov Centre's sociological service conducted two surveys as part of the Council of Europe project "Support to Ukraine in implementing Council of Europe standards on the judiciary" to study Ukrainian citizens' attitudes toward the judiciary and to assess their opinions concerning various aspects of judicial performance.

Nationwide survey of general public

2. *The nationwide sociological survey* was conducted from 12 to 19 August 2025 in oblasts of Vinnytsia, Volyn, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zhytomyr, Zakarpattia, Zaporizhia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kyiv, Kirovohrad, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Poltava, Rivne, Sumy, Ternopil, Kharkiv, Kherson, Khmelnytskyi, Cherkasy, Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, as well as in the city of Kyiv. The survey was conducted only in government-controlled areas of Ukraine, which are free from active military action.
3. A total of 2,020 respondents aged 18+ were interviewed. The sampling error does not exceed 2.3%. However, additional systematic deviations in the sample may occur due to the consequences of the Russian Federation's war of aggression, including the forced evacuation of millions of citizens.
4. The survey results were compared with four previous nationwide surveys conducted by the Razumkov Centre's sociological service:
 - on 15-20 November 2012 - 2,010 respondents,
 - 6-11 October 2017 - 2,018 respondents,
 - 7-14 February 2019 - 2,016 respondents and
 - 9-14 October 2020 - 2,019 respondents.

Nationwide survey of participants of judicial hearings exiting courts

5. *An additional survey of participants of judicial hearings exiting courts (a post-judicial-hearing survey)* was carried out from 8 September to 13 October 2025. The sampling design was two-stage and stratified: at the first stage, courts were selected; at the second, respondents were chosen. The stratification of courts followed their classification by judicial instance.
6. A total of 2,055 respondents were surveyed in oblasts of Vinnytsia, Volyn, Dnipropetrovsk, Zhytomyr, Zakarpattia, Zaporizhia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kyiv, Kirovohrad, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Poltava, Rivne, Sumy, Ternopil, Kharkiv, Kherson, Khmelnytskyi, Cherkasy, Chernihiv, and Chernivtsi, and the city of Kyiv. The survey was conducted only in government-controlled areas of Ukraine, which are free from active military action. The sampling error also does not exceed 2.3%.
7. Similarly, the results were compared with previous similar surveys, conducted by the Razumkov Centre's sociological service:
 - on 30 October-1 November 2017 – 829 respondents,
 - 11-25 February 2019 – 1,107 respondents and
 - 21-28 October 2020 – 1,117 respondents.

Key Findings

8. In 2025, **34%** of respondents in the nationwide survey of the general public believe that judges in Ukraine are independent, while among those surveyed at the court exit this figure is **52%** – a share that has increased from 42-43% in 2019 and 2020.
9. Across both samples, levels of trust in the judicial and law enforcement institutions have improved comparative to surveys from previous years. Thus, the net balance of the trust to the courts among the general population improved from -72% in 2017 and -65% in 2020 to **-56% in 2025**. The net trust in the courts among the court exit respondents improved from 6% in 2017 and -6% in 2020 to **16% in 2025**.
10. Ukrainian citizens continue to perceive corruption in the judiciary as high: **78%** of nationwide respondents and **66%** of court exit respondents fully or mostly agree that Ukrainian courts are corrupt, politically dependent, and biased.
11. Only 4% of nationwide respondents believe that judicial reform in Ukraine is nearly complete and that all fundamental changes have been made; 45% think it is ongoing and requires further important steps; and 40% say it has not yet begun.
12. 62% of respondents in the nationwide sample believe that Ukrainian citizens are more likely to obtain a fair ruling from the European Court of Human Rights than from a Ukrainian court. The primary reasons cited remain the greater independence and objectivity of the judges of the European Court of Human Rights.
13. Only **19%** of respondents considered the enforcement of court decisions satisfactory, though this represents a slight improvement compared to 8% in 2019 and 12,5% in 2020.
14. Only 13% nationwide respondents reported noticing changes in the justice system in recent years: 48% - positive, 13% - negative, 37% - both positive and negative. Although the share of the positive changes has increased slightly compared to 2019 (9%), there are also fewer of those who believe that there have not been any changes. These changes were more obvious for the court exit respondents – 21% of those who had direct contact with the judicial system. However, this assessment of changes in the justice system remains the same as in 2019.
15. In 2025, 55% of nationwide respondents support involving international experts in the appointment of judges in Ukraine—up from 42% in 2020.
16. The media plays a decisive role in shaping public opinion about the functioning of Ukraine’s judiciary and the progress of judicial reform, as the relative majority of Ukrainians receive information about the courts solely from media sources.
17. Comparative analysis shows that respondents surveyed at the exit of court buildings—who evaluated the judiciary on the day of their participation—tended to assess all aspects of court performance more positively than respondents in the nationwide survey, who evaluated their experience over the previous two years.
18. Participants of court hearings were more likely to consider that reaching the court was easy; waiting conditions, the punctuality of hearings, and the overall handling of cases were satisfactory; the time between receiving a summons and the hearing was reasonable; judges, prosecutors, and court staff were polite and unbiased; the language used was clear; and the time taken to deliver the court’s decision was appropriate.

19. Overall, the respondents in both surveys gave more positive evaluations of most indicators compared to previous years.
20. When asked how the administration of justice has changed since the start of the full-scale war (after February 2022), a relative majority in the nationwide survey and an absolute majority in the post hearing survey stated that the situation had not changed. However, in most aspects, those who reported deterioration outnumbered those who perceived improvement.
21. In both surveys, a majority of respondents with experience of court interaction considered the court's decision lawful and fair. An improvement in this aspect compared to previous years was particularly visible among the participants in the nationwide survey.
22. The perception of fairness did not differ significantly depending on the judge's gender.