

KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The results of the 2025 sociological survey indicate that the role and recognition of the institution of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights (hereinafter referred to as the Commissioner or the Ombudsperson) are increasing, which is particularly important in the context of war and the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups. At the same time, most respondents have only a general understanding of the Ombudsperson's mandate and do not always aware of how to apply for assistance. The responses reveal a significant gap between the number of reported human rights violations and the actual number of appeals submitted to the Ombudsperson. This difference may be related to insufficient public awareness of existing human rights protection mechanisms or barriers to accessing the Ombudsperson's Offices, in particular at the regional level.

Public awareness of the activities of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights is increasing: 75% of respondents know or have heard something about the institution. Among those surveyed, 26% were able to name the current Ombudsperson, Dmytro Lubinets. The level of awareness varies across population groups. People aged 35–44 (80%), those with higher education (80%), urban residents (76–78%), and respondents with medium or above-average levels of well-being (82–85%) are better informed. Lower levels of awareness were observed among residents of Eastern Ukraine (63%), young people under 35 (71%), people aged 65 and older (69%), rural residents (70%), and the poorest and less affluent population groups (62% and 69% respectively). The name of the current Ombudsperson, Dmytro Lubinets, was mentioned more often by men than women (29% vs. 22%), as well as by people aged 45 and older (29%). The lowest level of awareness about the Ombudsperson was recorded among youth aged 18–24 — only 10%.

Most respondents who are aware of the Ombudsperson's work **generally understand his mandate correctly**. Between 65% and 85% of respondents familiar with the Ombudsperson's activities were able to correctly identify five key competences of the institution. Respondents who are aware of the Ombudsperson's work most often correctly indicate the following functions: issuing act of responses to public authorities in cases of human rights violations (85%), submitting petitions to the Constitutional Court of Ukraine (84%), participating in court proceedings as a third party to protect the rights and freedoms of persons with disabilities, elderly people and other vulnerable groups (83%), and proposing improvements to the Ukrainian legislation (82%). A smaller share of respondents is aware of such functions as conducting unannounced visits to prisons, pre-trial detention centers and other places of deprivation of liberty (68%).

Respondents are significantly better informed about the Ombudsperson's work related to the war than about his routine systemic activities. They are more aware of the following areas of the Ombudsperson's work: prisoner exchanges (64%), protection of children's rights, including the return of deported and illegally transferred children from the Russian Federation and temporarily occupied territories (56%), and the return of Ukrainian citizens unlawfully detained by Russia, as well as support for internally displaced persons (IDPs) (50% each). At the same time, only 31% are aware of the Ombudsperson's annual reports to Parliament, 36% know about activities aimed at ensuring children's access to education (including monitoring the situation of children studying in combat zones and temporarily occupied territories), and 37% are aware of responses to unlawful actions by representatives of territorial recruitment centers and police officers.

The level of trust in the Ombudsperson and his Secretariat is high. The trust indicator for the Ombudsperson is higher than for most other state institutions. Overall, 41% of citizens trust the

Ombudsperson and his Secretariat. This is the fourth highest level of trust after the Armed Forces of Ukraine (93%), the President (55%), and local self-government bodies (51%). Other institutions enjoy lower levels of trust; for example, the Government is trusted by 28% of respondents, and courts by 26%. The institution of the Ombudsperson belongs to a limited number of institutions with a positive trust balance: the share of citizens who trust the institution (41%) exceeds the share of those who do not trust it (32%) by 9%. Women demonstrate slightly higher levels of trust than men (44% vs. 39%), and older respondents tend to trust the institution more (44%) than other age groups. Residents of Kyiv and Western Ukraine reported higher levels of trust (44%) than residents of other regions.

Most respondents who are aware of the Ombudsperson's activities evaluate his work positively.

Among those who know about Ombudsperson's activities, 58% evaluate the work of Dmytro Lubinets and his team positively, 16% negatively, and 27% have no definite opinion. Higher positive evaluations were recorded among older age groups (62–79%), residents of the Western and Northern macro regions of Ukraine (61% and 62% respectively), and residents of small towns (61%). Lower evaluations were recorded among youth (45%), residents of the Eastern macro region (45%), and residents of large cities (53%).

Society considers two **key areas of the Ombudsman's activity** to be the most effective: protection of children's rights (69%) and international cooperation (64%). Work related to assistance for IDPs (59%) and activities aimed at protecting rights in the security and defense sector (53%) were also rated relatively highly. However, respondents perceive significantly lower effectiveness in such areas as combating discrimination (43%), influencing legislation (36%), and combating torture (32%).

Respondents have limited awareness of Ombudsperson's regional offices. Only 10% of those familiar with the Ombudsperson's activities know about their existence. Another 58% do not know about them but would be willing to look for information if needed, while 31% learned about them for the first time during the survey and did not express willingness to seek additional information. These indicators reflect the level of awareness only among the portion of the population familiar with the Ombudsperson's work. When recalculated for the entire sample, the figures become even lower: only 7% know about the existence of regional offices, while 43% do not know about them but would be willing to search for information if necessary.

Among respondents who know about regional offices or willing to look for information about them, only 12% are confident that such office operates in their region. This level of confidence is higher among residents of Kyiv (27%) and Sumy region (20%). At the same time, 56% assume that a regional office operates in their region but are not certain. Only 4% stated that they are sure no office operates in their region. Among those confident that a regional office operates in their region, 14% do not know how to contact it, and 46% only know theoretically how to do so.

Although only a small share of the population has direct experience contacting the Ombudsperson, such interactions often produce positive results. The level of satisfaction is closely linked to the successful resolution of the issues raised in appeals. Only 5% of citizens reported that they or their family members had contacted the regional offices or the Ombudsperson's Secretariat. Among those who did so, 42% reported that their issue was fully or partially resolved, while another 20% stated that their appeal is still under consideration. The main topics of appeals relate to wartime issues, particularly the search for missing military personnel, the status of prisoners of war, and the rights of IDPs and military personnel (62%), as well as social issues such as social benefits, pensions, assistance for low-income households, and other social protection matters (18%). Significantly fewer respondents reported contacting the Ombudsperson regarding healthcare, housing conditions, education and other issues (2–8%).

Cases of human rights violations are more widespread than the practice of seeking protection for those rights. Overall, 18% of Ukrainians reported that they or their family members had experienced

human rights violations. This figure is almost four times higher than the share of respondents who reported that they or their family members had contacted the regional offices or the Ombudsperson's Secretariat (5%). Most frequently, respondents reported violations related to mobilization and military service (43%), healthcare and social protection (28% and 25% respectively), and restrictions on civil rights (23%).

Men reported violations of their rights more often than women (16% vs. 7%), as well as violations affecting their family members (12% vs. 9%). Respondents aged 25–44 reported human rights violations most frequently.

Internally displaced persons reported violations of their rights more often than other groups (22% stated that they had personally faced violations of their rights and 15% reported violations affecting their family members). These violations most often relate to social and housing rights, as well as compensation for war-related damages.

Respondents in Western Ukraine reported fewer human rights violations: 7% experienced them personally and another 7% reported cases affecting family members. Respondents from the Eastern macro region reported violations more frequently: 11% experienced them personally and 19% reported violations affecting family members. In Southern Ukraine, violations were reported more often than in other regions: 13% experienced them personally and 12% reported cases among relatives. In other regions the distribution was as follows: in Kyiv, 11% reported personal experience and 8% reported cases among family members; in the Centre — 12% personally and 7% among relatives; in the North — 12% personally and 11% among family members.

The study results demonstrate a strong need for **legal awareness and improved communication**. Overall, 54% of the population believe that there is insufficient information about the Ombudsperson's activities, and 21% believe that the information provided is incomplete. Only 17% consider the level of information to be sufficient. At the same time, 70% of respondents are interested in learning more about their rights, particularly people aged 35–65 and IDPs (78%). Interest is higher in the northern and central regions of the country (75–76%) and lower in Southern Ukraine (62%) and Kyiv (67%).

The most convenient channels and formats for receiving information, according to respondents, are short videos on platforms such as YouTube and TikTok (36%), social media — mainly Facebook and Instagram (34%), television (27%), telephone hotlines (21%), as well as information and chatbots in messengers, particularly Telegram (18%).

Communication priorities differ significantly depending on the audience. Respondents under the age of 44 primarily pay attention to social media (56% among youth under 24 and 41–48% among those aged 25–44) and short videos on YouTube and TikTok (42–45%), as well as messengers, the official Ombudsperson's website, infographics and articles on websites.

Among people aged 45–65, relevant channels include social media (24–34%) and short videos on YouTube and TikTok (31–34%), but this group relies more on television, hotlines, the official website and personal meetings with representatives of the Ombudsperson. For people aged 65 and older, television is the main source of information (60%). They also choose short videos on YouTube and TikTok (24%), hotlines, personal meetings with Ombudsperson representatives, printed materials and local media. Rural audiences are oriented towards television (34%), short videos on YouTube and TikTok and social media (33% each), hotlines, personal meetings with Ombudsperson representatives and lectures. For residents of Eastern Ukraine, where awareness levels are lower, important channels include short videos on YouTube and TikTok (40%), hotlines (26%), messengers and social media, television, Dmytro Lubinets' Telegram channel and offline lectures. Internally displaced persons mainly rely on short videos on YouTube and TikTok (38%) and social media (29%), messengers including the Telegram channel of Dmytro Lubinets, as well as television and hotlines. Low-income population

groups trust television the most (33% and 52% among the poorest groups), as well as short videos on YouTube and TikTok (30–31%) and hotlines.

Research note: *The nationwide survey on public awareness of the role of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights and the level of citizens' trust in the Ombudsperson's Secretariat was conducted between 25 July and 20 August 2025 by the Info Sapiens company at the request of the Council of Europe Project "Support to the implementation of European Human Rights Standards in Ukraine: Phase II".*

A total of 3,000 respondents aged 18 and older were surveyed across the territory under the control of Ukraine (excluding temporarily occupied territories). The mixed quantitative survey combined computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI) and telephone interviews (CATI), with 1,500 respondents surveyed using each method. The maximum theoretical sampling error for the total sample is 0.8 percentage points with a probability of 95%.

For analytical purposes, the regions of Ukraine were grouped into six macro regions as follows: Kyiv (separately); North — Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Sumy and Chernihiv regions; West — Volyn, Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil and Chernivtsi regions; Centre — Vinnytsia, Kirovohrad, Poltava, Khmelnytskyi and Cherkasy regions; South — Mykolaiv, Odesa and Kherson regions; East — Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kharkiv regions.