

Abstract for the
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Rushed Reforms:

Evaluating Ukraine's National Minority Legislation Amidst EU Integration Aspirations

This paper critically examines the rapid legislative changes in Ukraine concerning national minority rights, prompted by the country's aspirations to join the European Union. It addresses the central question: In the haste to meet EU requirements, has Ukraine fully addressed the needs and protections of its national minorities, or do significant gaps remain?

The research is guided by the following questions: How effectively do these expedited legislative reforms meet EU standards for minority protection? What potential drawbacks and challenges arise from this accelerated process, and how can they be addressed to ensure comprehensive minority rights?

Employing a critical discourse analysis, the study scrutinizes key legislative documents, including the Law on National Minorities (Communities) adopted in December 2022 and subsequent amendments in 2023. These laws were crucial steps in meeting EU requirements for starting membership negotiations. However, the paper explores whether these reforms genuinely align with EU standards or if they fall short in practice.

The analysis reveals potential drawbacks, such as the marginalization of minority languages in education and public life, and the limited representation of minority groups in political and social spheres. The paper argues that while these legislative changes are a step forward, they may not fully address the complex needs of Ukraine's diverse population.

To address these challenges, the paper proposes a set of recommendations, including enhanced dialogue with minority communities, more inclusive policy-making processes, and robust mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing minority rights. By examining the interplay between national minority rights and EU integration efforts, the study provides insights into the complexities of aligning domestic policies with international standards.