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**Ukraine**

# **Corruption (Ukraine): a victory**

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**Significant demonstrations took place during the last ten days of July in Ukraine against the adoption of a law that would reduce the independence of bodies responsible for fighting corruption by placing them under the control of the prosecutor general, directly appointed by President Zelensky's office.**

According to the *Kyiv Independent* [Ukraine's English-language newspaper], the demonstrations on 30 July were essentially addressed to Parliament to demand that MPs decide to withdraw the controversial law. According to the daily, the protesters largely refrained from slogans hostile to Zelensky, who had nevertheless been criticised during the first few days. It is therefore, at this moment in time, the parliamentarians, the government and Parliament who are in the crosshairs of the democratic protest movement. The majority bloc of Zelensky's party [Servant of the People] is moreover beginning to crack under the pressure of this popular mobilisation where young people carry significant weight.

How should we interpret the fact that Zelensky, who had put his full weight behind this decision, is not (no longer) directly being challenged? Undoubtedly because the protesters perceive the dual reality in which the country finds itself: on one side there is the Zelensky whose neoliberal policies and authoritarian tendencies are perceived as harmful by part of the population and who has just been called to order; and on the other, the Zelensky "war leader", "soul of the resistance" to Russian aggression, in whom Ukrainians place their trust.

This is undoubtedly one of the essential political elements to retain from the moment that has just opened with the warning shot shaking Kyiv [Ukraine's capital]. This is in a certain way the meaning of the declaration of a protester collected by the *Kyiv Independent*: "I think the authorities will now engage more in dialogue with the population, having seen the strength of its reaction." Or that of another who declared to *Suspilne* [Ukraine's public broadcaster]: "The country is going in the wrong direction, which is why people are taking to the streets to put it back on the right path. We hope the authorities will hear the voice of the people." Or again: "It is important for us to live in a rule of law state. Corruption destroys the country from within, whilst they are already trying to destroy it from outside."

The attitude is not, for me, without evoking – in an obviously totally different situation – what Chileans said about the Allende government: "It's a shit government, but it's ours."

The *campistes* [French far-left political tendency that aligns with authoritarian regimes perceived as anti-Western] and other zealots, like French MP Hadrien Legrave, will be able to denounce the Zelensky who attacks democratic freedoms, others will be able to forget, more or less voluntarily, that Ukrainian democratic mobilisation is taking place under Russian bombs and despite martial law which forbids demonstrations.

For our part, we will know, with the Ukrainian left and the social movement, to walk on both legs as we have done since the beginning of the large-scale war.

There will be no victory over Russian imperialism without democracy and there will be no democracy in case of victory by Russian imperialism.

1 August 2025

Translated for [ESSF](#) by Adam Novak.

PS:

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