***Press release***

***July 9, 2014***

**The real face of Maidan: statistics from protests that changed the country**

**Results of protests, repressions and concessions monitoring by the Centre for Society Research**

On July 9th at a press conference in the UNIAN information agency, the Centre for Society Research presented the results of monitoring of protests, repression and concessions, supported by the International Renaissance Foundation and the National Endowment for Democracy, that took place during the period of Maidan.

During Maidan sociologists of the Centre for Society Research were documenting all the protest events that took place all over Ukraine as well as repressions organized by the Yanukovych government. They created a unique database consisting of all the protests and repressions at all maidans, antimaidans and outside events, which now allows us to answer a lot of topical questions about the participants of Maidan, its nationwide distribution and the role of violence - still subjects of ongoing heated debates, political manipulations and distortions in the media.

**MAIN RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH**

* In general, from November 21st to February 23rd, at least **3950 protest events** were counted (the data are still being supplemented and updated). This number of protests during three months is larger than the protest activity during all of 2013 before November 20th (3428) and the number of protests for all previous years separately starting from 2010.
* **Among 3950 protests, 3235 protests were directly related to Maidan and were held in its support, while 365 protests can be referred to as Antimaidan.**

**The most notable participants of Maidan**

* Among participants of Maidan participation of **the far right ‘Svoboda’ party** was most frequently reported by the media. The participation of this party was counted in at least 18% of protests in support of Maidan. Other parties participated in a smaller number of Maidan protests. In particular, participation of the Batkivshchyna party (Tymoshenko party) was reported in 13% of protests, the UDAR party (Klychko) in 10%, Democratic Alliance (a new Christian Democratic party) in 3%, Radical party (Lyashko)in 1%. Participation of “opposition parties” was reported in 2% of the Maidan protests without specification. In 5% of the Maidan protests, participation of only unidentified politicians or local officials was reported. In general, the participation of political parties, individual politicians, and local authorities was reported in 35% of all Maidan protest events. **At the same time, the participation of political parties and politicians was higher at the early stages of Maidan (before January 19th), over 40%; however, it plummeted during the last stage (February 18th-23rd) to 20%.**
* Among civic non-partisan participants and initiatives, the participation of Automaidan (6%), Right Sector (6%) and Maidan Self-Defense (4%) was the most notable. **Participation of NGOs was documented** **in 13% of Maidan protests events.**
* It is important to keep in mind that these are participation levels that were **reported** **by the** **media**; often participants were described only in very general terms, for example, ’Euromaidan activists’. **This is why in 50% of protest events there was no information about the participation of any particular political party, any formal organization, trade-union or ideological initiative.** These indicators should be treated as a picture of the ‘minimum level’ of participation in the protests as well as how visible this participation was for the mass-media. It is also important to note that these data are specifically about *protest* participation. Humanitarian initiatives which were not oriented to protest activity, like *Euromaidan-SOS* or *Hospital Guards*,were therefore not reported in the messages about protest events.

**The role of the far right**

* In general, **the participation of the far right (‘Svoboda’ party, the Right Sector or other ultranationalist parties, organizations or initiatives) was counted** **in 25% of Maidan protests**. This obviously **contradicts the propaganda pictures from Russian television, as most Maidan protests, according to those reports, took place without their participation, and the role of the Right Sector was exaggerated at times.** However,it is nevertheless a considerable part of Maidan that cannot be disregarded, concealed or downgraded. One way or another, the ‘Svoboda’ party was the most active party at Maidan.
* In addition, **the visibility of ‘Svoboda’ party and the Right Sector was much higher than that of other identified organizations/initiatives in specifically violent events**, which received disproportionate attention in the media. The Right Sector was the most active initiative in violent Maidan protests; its participation was reported in more than 16% of violent events. Then there is the ‘Svoboda’ party with participation in 10% of violent events. The participation of Maidan Self-Defense initiatives was reported in 7% of violent protests; other parties and initiatives participated in less than 3% of violent events each.

**The importance of regional maidans**

* Despite the fact that the media reported about the **Kyiv** **Maidan** most frequently, a relative proportion of its protests **was only 13% from the whole Maidan (433 protests events).**
* Instead, **the Western region of Ukraine was the** **leader of Maidan protests**; 38% of protests were reported there (not less than 1218 protests). The Central region of Ukraine was ahead of Kyiv as well (29%; at least 918 protests). Therefore, **two thirds of Maidan protest events occurred in the Western and Central regions outside of Kyiv.** In the East and the South of Ukraine (without Donbass and Crimea), 8% of protests occurred in each region; in Donbass (3%) and Crimea (1%) the number of protests was lower than it was in Kyiv. Nevertheless, the total number of Maidan protests even in the South-Eastern oblasts of Ukraine was larger than the number of protests that took place in Kyiv.
* At the same time, **among individual cities Kyiv hosted the largest number of Maidan protests**. The nearest city by this indicator – Lviv – was behind the capital by more than twice (185 protests). In general, **among the top ten cities of Maidan protests, the Western Ukrainian cities (Rivne, Lutsk, Ivano-Frankivsk, etc.) were present, as expected, while there was only one city from the South-Eastern** **part of Ukraine – Odesa** (at least 94 protests) in the top ten.
* **The mass character of Maidan in the West and the Centre on average was not smaller than Kyiv Maidan.** There were no rallies of several thousand people like in Kyiv in December; however, the number of Maidan protests of more than a thousand participants was much higher than that was in Kyiv. In the Western region 131 such protests have been documented, 75 in the Central regions and 58 in Kyiv. **The lowest mass character of maidans, as expected, was in the South-Eastern** **oblasts, especially in Donbass and Crimea where more than 50% of Maidan protests had less than 100 participants.**
* The fact that **maidans in the Eastern and Southern regions (except Crimea) had more party and far right** **participation** is very indicative in understanding the current military conflict. Thus, after Kyiv (32%), the highest participation of far rights was at maidans in the Eastern region and Donbas (29%), and the lowest was in the Central regions (24%) and Western regions (23%). The same is true for the participation of the opposition parties at local maidans. In Donbass (54%), Southern (51%) and Eastern (40%) regions it was higher than in Kyiv (37%), Central (34%) and Western (29%) regions, where maidans had a really massive support from local residents. At the same time, the opposition parties and far right, which already had a very low level of trust from the residents of the Southern and Eastern regions, only pushed those people away from Maidan even more, making a real nationwide movement against Yanukovych and the approval of Maidan impossible.

**Violence and repressions**

* The share and the absolute number of confrontational and violent events at Maidan, of course, were higher than they were previously. Twenty-four percent of protests at Maidan were confrontational (compared to 19% of protests in 2013 before Maidan) and 12% were violent protests (compared to 8% of protests in 2013 before Maidan). **However, almost two thirds of Maidan protests (64%) were peaceful and conventional, in the form of meetings, pickets and tent camps.**
* **It is worth noting that the share of confrontations and violence was much higher in Kyiv (49%), in the Centre (39%) and in the West (37%), where the support of Maidan had a mass character, than it was in the Southern and Eastern regions, where the share of radical protest was less than 15% of all Maidan protests.** Among individual cities,Kyiv was the leader in the confrontational and violent protests (239 events), while Western Ukrainian cities followed with a considerable margin.
* **Our analysis indicates that violence by the protesters was a response to the violence by government, not vice versa.** While only 12% of Maidan protests were violent, every third protest suffered from repressions. The agents of the repressions against Maidan protests were not only law enforcement. Besides the police, at least a quarter of repressions were committed by unknowns, often called as ‘titushkas’ – paid pro-government thugs (moreover, in a considerable amount of events they acted with the police). The courts were also activein at least 13% of repressions.
* **Despite the fact that the level of violence by protestors before the breaking up of Kyiv Maidan on November 30th was minimal (6%), 40 out of 100 protests have faced a negative reaction from the government.** And during the last stage of Maidan (starting from February 18th) when the police were openly using weapons, the rate of repressions to the number of protests has fallen by half. The government generally used different tactics of confrontation with activists with varying degrees of success: ignorance, pacification and suppression. At the beginning of Maidan, attempts to undermine demonstrations and court injunctions prevailed, but, as time went on, the methods became more radical. The government started actively using the courts for direct repressions against activists, and the pressure of police and number of arrests increased. Finally, the government blocked the protestors at Maidan and proceeded to use violence openly.
* There were also regional variations in methods of repressions. In all the regions there was a consistently high instance of physical confrontation between police and protesters. **The largest number of repressive judgments was delivered in Kyiv, in the Centre the largest number of barriers for activists who were attempting to get to the central Maidan were created.** ‘Titushkas’ were most active in the East. Protestors in the West were more active because they faced smaller resistance from the local authorities.

You can find complete graphs and tables, methodology and classification of events in the **“Statistics from Maidan protest event: participants, geography, violence” report** on the Centre for Society Research website: <http://www.cedos.org.ua/uk/protests>.

**REFERENCES:**

**Protests, repressions and concessions monitoring** has been conducted by the Centre for Society Research since October 2009. It is a unique project for the systematic collection of information about all (regardless of the issue or size) protests as well as negative and positive reactions to the protests taking place in real time all over Ukraine based on the monitoring of more than 190 national, oblast and activist web-media.

*The goal of the present project, conducted by the Centre for Society Research and supported by the International Renaissance Foundation and National Endowment for Democracy, is the objective study of protest activity and social movements in Ukraine and providing this information to the general public aiming to defend the right of peaceful assembly and to draw attention to grassroots socioeconomic protest initiatives.*

**Centre for Society Research** was founded in 2009 as an independent non-profit centre for studying social problems and collective protests in Ukraine. The Centre for Society Research unites critically-oriented social researchers: professional sociologists, political experts, economists, culture experts, historians and lawyers. The mission of the Centre is to create methodologically grounded, critical and reflexive knowledge for activists of social movements, journalists, experts, politicians, researchers and the general public. The Centre actively supports an egalitarian and just society, opposes the policies of privatization and commercialization of social sphere and public goods, and condemns any kind of discrimination including discrimination by gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, age. Specific areas of the Centre's work are analysis of education policies, monitoring of protest and repressive activities, analysis of city-planning policies and study of migration processes.

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