

## Ecological trends of political and electoral programs in Ukraine

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The purpose of the article is to determine the environmental trends of election (presidential, parliamentary) programs. In terms of research tasks, an attempt has been made to find out which of the types of environmental consciousness are the preferences of election programs; to trace the relationship between the environmental components of the programs of Presidential candidates and the political parties they represent; to find out whether the objectives of the state environmental policy of Ukraine for the period up to 2030 are taken into account in the election programs. The study was based on the environmental components of the election programs of the top five 5 presidential candidates and the top five political parties that entered the parliament. The results of the analysis revealed that they were not filled enough: some did not contain such information or were formulated as a slogan of a single sentence. It is revealed that the content of election programs legitimizes the postmodern (harmonious) type of environmental consciousness. Only one program combines characteristics of all three types, including traditionalist and modernist (technocentric). It has been found that the environmental provisions of the programs of the presidential candidates and their political parties in the parliamentary elections are only partially correlated.

The authors conclude about old trends of formal, ideologically unformed attitude of the political elite towards the environment in the election programs, the emergence of a business component as a relatively new trend in one of the election programs, and also express the opinion about the debate over the complex environmental policy and the new power of the new authorities management decisions in this area.

**Key words:** natural healing resources; recreation areas; physical and chemical studies; experimental studies; clinic

### Introduction

In 2019 in Ukraine there were two election campaigns - the presidential and the parliamentary. This period mobilized citizens' expectations for positive changes in various spheres of society. Surveys show that the most pressing issues for the population in Ukraine today are the problems of lowering tariffs, raising salaries and pensions, improving the health care system, restoring peace in the Donbass region, overcoming corruption and unemployment, etc. (Ukrainian Center, 2018; UNDP) 2019). "Solving environmental problems has an average importance of 7.5" (Ukrainian Center, 2018). In spite of this desire to find out the basic, state positions of the political elite in the sphere of environment is not losing its relevance. After all, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the President of Ukraine have certain constitutional powers in the field of general management of nature management and environmental protection. Directions for responding to environmental challenges are documented in many normative documents that regulate the state environmental policy of Ukraine. The Framework Law of Ukraine "On the Fundamental Principles (Strategy) of the State Environmental Policy of Ukraine for the Period up to 2030" (On the Fundamental Principles, 2019). The implementation of the tasks set out in this document will require decision-making by political leaders and teams that have entered the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine following the 2019 elections. Understanding the formal legal requirements for election programs and their level of populism, we take into account the general public requirements. They are an opportunity for citizens to obtain objective information in order to make an informed choice for a particular presidential candidate or political party seeking to enter parliament. This view is both theoretical (assess the environmental attitude at the starting point) and applied (informing society and public authorities about the need for environmental policy adjustments in the decision-making process). Therefore, the purpose of the study is to determine the environmental trends of election (presidential, parliamentary) programs. To achieve it, the following tasks have been set: 1) to identify: a) which types of environmental consciousness the preferences of election programs tend to; b) the relationship between the environmental components of the programs of Presidential candidates and the parties they represent; 2) to find out whether the election programs take into account the goals of the state environmental policy of Ukraine for the period up to 2030.

During the election campaign, analysts' views on political leaders' and parties' attention to environmental issues diverged. Some have noted the possibility of their use for manipulative purposes, since it has become a worldwide trend, despite the fact that "environmental problems are not really solved" (Boreyko, 2019). The "greening" of policy, especially in the part of the election campaign (programs), was mentioned among other factors that will influence the environmental policy in Ukraine in 2017-2020 (decentralization of power, war in the east of Ukraine, implementation of EU environmental legislation, economic development

and deregulation, implementation European environmental standards) (Andrusevich N., Kozak Z., Andrusevich A. & Khomyakova O., 2016). Instead, others have justified the lack of a politicians' proper interest in environmental issues by not being properly informed in the society (Firsov, 2019). The legislative focus of environmental policy remained the focus of experts (Kutsevol, 2019). Eco-friendly NGOs and experts have encouraged politicians to debate openly. On the agenda for the presidential candidates, a coalition of 17 non-governmental NGOs made a number of topical issues (Coalition of NGOs, 2019). After analyzing election content (programs, election debates, speeches, debates) at the election stage of the President of Ukraine, N. Andrusevych concluded that "none of the candidates has environmental protection as the basis of their election campaign" and that "the agenda of our election campaign does not contain a holistic vision of Ukraine's green development" (Andrusevich, 2019).

The shared discourse of the mentioned publications is connected with the analysis of environmental problems, recognition of the unformed (absence) of consistent and effective state environmental policy of Ukraine, attempts to suggest its new foundations. Among them, the key ones are: formation of an ecocentric type of public consciousness, introduction of the "green economy" model, strengthening of the responsibility for environmental offenses, harmonization of national environmental legislation with international legal norms, guarantee of natural-technogenic and environmental safety, improvement of environmental management.

## Material and methods

The study is based on an unformalized (traditional) analysis of the environmental component of the presidential election programs in 2019 (V. Zelensky, Y. Boyko, Y. Tymoshenko, P. Poroshenko), and five political parties that have overcome the 5% barrier in the snap elections of the People's Deputies of Ukraine on July 21, 2019 and entered the Parliament ("Servant of the People", "Opposition Platform - For Life", "Motherland", "European Solidarity", "Voice"). The total number of programs is 9 (S. Vakarchuk did not run in the presidential election). Secondary sociological analysis was conducted according to the annual monitoring of the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine "Ukrainian Society: Monitoring of Social Change" (Paraschevin, 2018). The sample size of each survey is an average of 1800 people and represents the adult population of Ukraine (over 18 years of age). The questionnaire method is self-administered questionnaires. To find out the dynamics of environmental pollution concerns, one of the following options was used ("Nothing causes serious concern") to the question "What environmental factors in your area of residence cause you serious anxiety?" (Several options could be selected simultaneously).

## Results and Discussion

### World outlook orientations.

Considering that election programs can reflect the tendencies of development of ecological consciousness in the modern Ukrainian society, let us analyze their ecological component (Table 1) above all in this context. In this way, the outlook of the political elite in the field of environmental policy will be fixed.

Despite the fact that in each of the environmental components information is presented in a small amount, worldviews are transmitted quite clearly. The provisions of the analyzed programs tend to take an eccentric (postmodern, harmonious) approach. The content focus is on minimizing the negative impact on the environment and the waste of resources. The focus on the future is emphasized: "Ecology of the country is an investment in future generations", "sorting and recycling of garbage ... - our contribution to the future of the country" (V. Zelensky); "We support the country's transition to energy of the future" (Voice). The provisions of five programs trace the pathos of constructive activity: "let's create the conditions ...", "introduce electronic marking ...", "solve the garbage problem ...", "stop theft ...", "support the country's transition to the energy of the future ..." and more.

Against this background, the emotional position of V. Zelensky's program is different. Along with the type of ecological consciousness mentioned above, they also reflect elements of others: bio- or nature-centric (traditionalist) ("... the Carpathian forests are inviolable..."); modernist (technocentric) ("Ukraine is to become the world's ecological food supermarket"). The latter provision contains a business component that distinguishes V. Zelensky's position among all other analyzed programs.

### The relationship between the environmental components of presidential and parliamentary election programs.

As can be seen from Table 1, the relationship between the programs of the top 5 presidential candidates and the programs of the top 5 political parties in the elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine can be traced only partially. P. Poroshenko and the Opposition Platform - For Life party ignored environmental issues in their election programs. The environmental content of the programs of presidential candidate Yuriy Boyko and the European Solidarity political party are summarized in one sentence. S. Vakarchuk did not run for the presidency, and the program of the Voice party, which altogether covers about 30 pages, reflects only support for the "energy of the future" (two sentences).

**Table 1.** Environmental components of election programs.

Election of the President of Ukraine		Elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine	
Candidate	Environmental components of election programs	Name of the party	Ecological composition of election programs
<b>V. Zelensky</b>	"... The Carpathian forests are inviolable... The country's ecology is an investment for future generations. Introduction of European standards for industrial and food production. Ukraine needs to become a global eco-friendly supermarket. Garbage sorting and recycling, plastic rejection, control of deforestation, river pollution, depletion of black earths are our contribution to the country's future. "	<b>"Servant of the people"</b>	"We will create conditions for the development of green energy while preventing the risk of monopolization of the industry. Let us create legislative incentives for the construction of waste processing plants. We will introduce electronic tree marking to counteract illegal logging. We will bring criminal responsibility for illegal deforestation and gross violations of waste management rules." "
<b>Y. Boyko</b>	"Let's stop the theft of Ukraine's natural resources."	<b>Opposition Platform – "For Life"</b>	No information available.
<b>Y. Tymoshenko</b>	"We will create the conditions for the rapid development of renewable energy: solar, wind, geothermal and others." "The barbaric exploitation of agricultural land will be stopped and effective control over crop rotation and tillage technologies introduced."	<b>"Homeland"</b>	"We will create the conditions for the development of renewable energy: solar, wind, geothermal and others. We will solve the garbage problem, reduce environmental pollution, which will reduce the incidence rate, prolong the life expectancy of Ukrainians, help to cope with global climate challenges. "
<b>P. Poroshenko</b>	No information available.	<b>"European Solidarity"</b>	"Infrastructure development and environmental protection are essential factors for a comfortable life of citizens."
<b>S. Vakarchuk</b>	He did not run.	<b>"Voice"</b>	"We support the country's transition to the energy of the future, which relies on clean technologies and renewable sources (sun, wind, biomass, etc.). This will greatly improve the country's ecology."

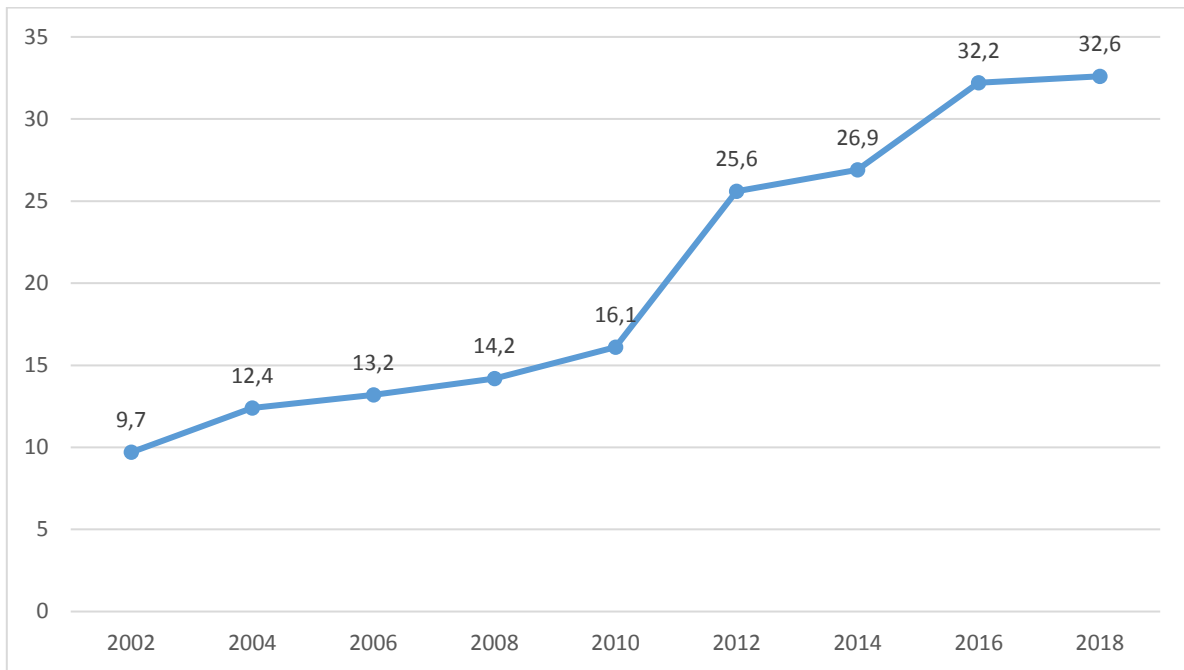
**Source:** (Presidential Election Programs, 2019; Political Party Elections, 2019).

In the programs of the two leaders (V. Zelensky, Yulia Tymoshenko) and political parties, whose representatives they are ("Servant of the People", "Motherland"), ecological positions are set out in more detail. The issues of forest protection, waste management and pollution control are correlated in the programs of V. Zelensky and the Servant of the People's Party. However, during the parliamentary elections there is no mentioning of the introduction of European standards of industrial and food production declared in the course of the presidential campaign. Programs «Yu. Tymoshenko - Batkivshchyna Party agreed on the development of renewable energy. The protection and reclamation of land declared during the presidential election did not find continuation in the Batkivshchyna party program in the parliamentary elections.

#### **The goals of the state environmental policy.**

Ukraine's environmental legislation covers many sectors and is governed by a large number of sources of law. We deliberately limit ourselves to the strategic document of the state environmental policy, which is designed for the period until 2030 (About the Fundamentals, 2019). Taking into account the 5 goals defined in it, we follow them into the election programs. According to the aforementioned normative document, one of the five strategic goals of state environmental policy is to green the world outlook (values, education, awareness, interaction, participation, rights and responsibilities...). This Goal (#1) was left unaddressed by the top 5 presidential candidates and political parties that entered the Parliament of Ukraine by voting. It should be noted that its achievement is recognized as important in the context of fulfilling the tasks of the environmental component of the Association Agreement with the EU. Some experts set out to "train and inform business, the public and civil servants" in 2019 (Kutsevol, 2019). After all, the willingness to support environmental reforms depends on the citizens' environmental awareness (Andrusevich N., Zozak Z., Andrusevich A. & Khom'yakova O., 2016). In this context, indicators of concern for Ukrainian citizens about environmental pollution are alarming. This is confirmed by the results of national annual monitoring

polls conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (Paraschevin, 2018). As we can see, in the last 16 years the number of those who are seriously concerned about environmental pollution in their area of residence has decreased more than three times (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Dynamics of absence of serious concern about environmental pollution factors in the area of residence, 2002-2018 (N=1800,%).

Among the 19 tasks of sustainable development of Ukraine's natural resource potential (Objective 2), the programs of the Servants of the People and the Motherland Party partially reflect the stimulation of the development of waste management infrastructure (to address the problem of garbage). Topical issues for Ukraine are the formation of natural resources inventories, statistical reporting on the use of natural resources and pollution of the environment; certification and product labeling, implementation of e-government technologies, etc. are not presented. It should be noted that none of the analyzed programs also stated a willingness to introduce an environmentally and economically sound system of payments for the special use of natural resources. Although the existence of socio-economic conditions and the importance of such decisions for the socio-economic development of Ukraine has been justified by scientists for a long time (Kutsevol, 2019).

Greening the socio-economic development of Ukraine (Objective 3), among other things, leads to the development of sectoral strategies for improving air and water quality; conservation of the ozone layer; prevention of climate change; waste and resource management; reduction of industrial pollution and risks; promoting environmentally friendly, resource-efficient production and eco-innovation, limiting the use of plastic products, etc. Among these positions they are declaring refusal from plastic (V. Zelensky), the development of renewable energy (Yulia Tymoshenko, "Servant of the People", "Voice"). The Batkivshchyna Party program has announced its intention to tackle global climate challenges.

Only some of the environmental risk reduction targets (Goal 4) were declared during the presidential campaign (not mentioned at all during the parliamentary campaign). The program of V. Zelensky proclaims "control over deforestation, pollution of rivers, depletion of black earths". Yulia Tymoshenko promises to stop "barbaric exploitation of agricultural lands", to introduce "control of crop rotation, land cultivation technologies". Other tasks related to air pollution, management of hazardous chemicals, use of genetically modified organisms; use of waste; involvement in environmental risk management of the latest information technologies, restoration and environmental protection of Donbass are not presented.

The strategic objectives of improving and developing the state's environmental management system (Goal 5) were not declared during the presidential campaign. They are only reflected in the Servant of the People program in terms of increasing responsibility for environmental damage. Issues of institutional capacity for environmental policy were ignored; improvement of environmental legislation, including approximation of the legislation of Ukraine to the acquis; environmental monitoring and control; distribution of powers in this area; financing of nature conservation measures, etc. Among the political parties that were members of the parliament, there was no mentioning of any measures within the objective analyzed. The general picture regarding the consideration of strategic goals of the state environmental policy in election programs is presented in Figure 2.

As we can see, greening the worldview as a strategic goal has been ignored in both campaigns. Good environmental governance is partially taken into account in the program of one, and sustainable development of natural resource potential - in two of the five political parties that are members of the parliament. Separate measures to reduce environmental risks and the environment are only declared during the presidential campaign in the two candidate programs. In both campaigns, most attention was paid to greening management decisions on Ukraine's socio-economic development. Measures under this objective are enshrined in the programs of three presidential candidates and three political parties.

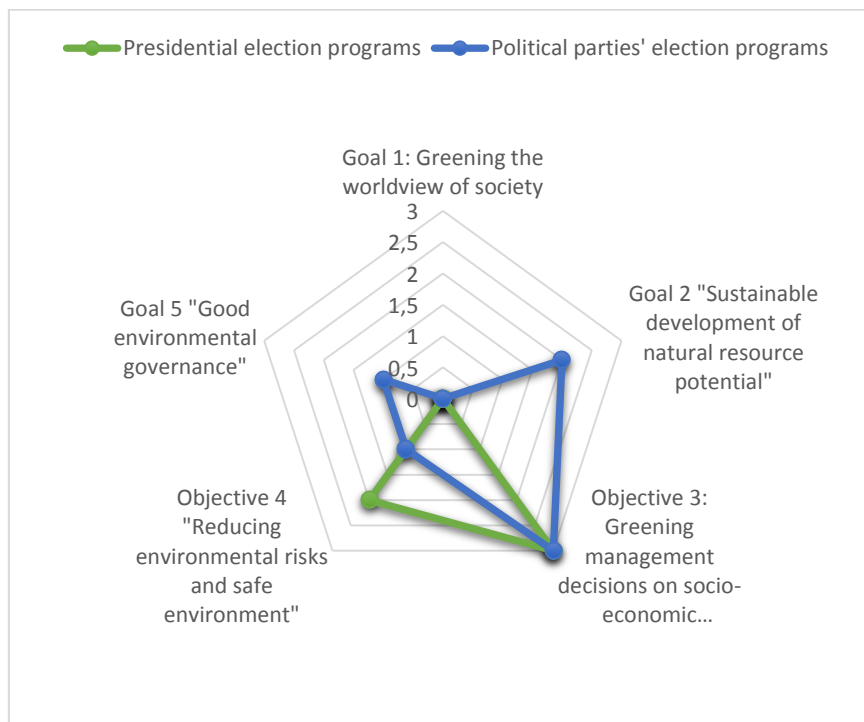


Figure 2. Taking into account the goals of the state environmental policy of Ukraine in the 2019 election programs.

## Results and discussion

The analysis showed that the environmental component of the election programs is not filled enough. Some of them do not contain relevant information or are limited to short slogans. The formulation of others is quite abstract, without specifying the tools to influence problems in this area. Considering the general public requirements for election programs, it is obvious that they have not been implemented in the environmental component. The close relationship between the programs of the Presidential candidates and the political parties they represent is not traced. Some of the provisions declared during the presidential campaign were not confirmed during the elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Thus, the existence of clear ideological positions on the environment by political leaders and parliamentary parties can be doubted. On the other hand, this situation is largely due to the lack of a relevant request from society.

Short-term, purely contingent interests outweighed the normalized goals and objectives of strategic environmental development. The goals set out in the strategy of the state environmental policy of Ukraine for the period up to 2030 have not been comprehensively reflected. New paradigms for greening the socio-economic development of Ukraine are outlined. Attention is focused on particular eco-practices, especially in terms of resource conservation. All this testifies to the formal filling of the election programs and the lack of a coherent, strategically agreed vision of the development of the environmental sphere.

Environmental populism as a manipulation of environmental issues for the sake of using environmental issues for election purposes can be talked about cautiously (not even environmental problems of the Donbass are mentioned). Only 3 candidates out of 39 registered in the Central Election Commission responded to the initiative "An Environmental Agenda for the Candidates for President of Ukraine", which was presented by a coalition of 20 non-governmental organizations.

## Conclusion

The environmental components of the 2019 presidential and parliamentary election programs in Ukraine show an orientation towards the postmodern type of environmental consciousness, as well as the continuation of trends of the formal, ideologically unformed attitude of the political elite towards the environment. The business component of one of the programs (Ukraine's vision of a "global ecological food supermarket") can be distinguished as a relatively new trend, given the state of the national organic produce market.

In such circumstances, it is difficult to expect a consolidated movement to address environmental issues. It is also risky to argue that the models declared will work in practice. After all, the ideological positions in the field of the environment presented in the two campaigns were only partially agreed, and much of the strategic goals and objectives of the state environmental policy were ignored. Therefore, monitoring of environmental management decisions in this area at the national and regional levels is relevant. It is also worth focusing on the realization of the idea of a "world-class ecological food supermarket": what will be the structure of exports of organic products and the environmental impact of Ukraine.

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