Language Policy in Ukraine: What People Want the State to Do

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Popular preferences: main features

• 1. Diversity
  (different ethnic, linguistic and regional groups want different policies)

• 2. Ambivalence
  (people want different things that are not fully compatible with one another)

• 3. Potential for compromise
  (different groups’ preferences are not quite incompatible)
Popular preferences: Desirable language situation in the future

[Bar chart showing preferences for language usage across different groups and regions.]

- All population
- Ukrainian speakers
- Russian speakers
- West
- Center
- East + South

Popular preferences:
Primary task of the state language policy

- All population
- Ukrainian speakers
- Russian speakers
- West
- Center
- East+South

Promote use of Ukrainian
Upgrade status of Russian
Ensure implementation of minority rights
Popular preferences: statuses of Ukrainian and Russian

- All population
- Ukrainian speakers
- Russian speakers
- West
- Center
- East+South

- Russian as now or less
- Russian a regional language
- Russian a second state language
Popular preferences:
statuses of Ukrainian and Russian - 2

- National democrats
  - Russian as now or less
  - Russian a regional language
  - Russian a second state language
- Social democrats
- Communists
- Market + integration
Popular preferences: scopes of use of the two languages

- All population
- Russian-speakers
- East
- Communists
- Market + integration

- More of Russian
- Less of Ukrainian
Popular preferences: scopes of use of the two languages - 2

The bar chart shows the popular preferences among different populations in Ukraine regarding the use of two languages. The chart compares the percentages of people who prefer more of Ukrainian versus less of Russian in the following categories:

- All population
- Ukrainian speakers
- West national democrats
- Center

The chart uses bars to represent the data, with light blue for 'more of Ukrainian' and dark blue for 'less of Russian.' The y-axis represents the percentage range from 0 to 90, while the x-axis lists the different populations and groups.
# Determinants of popular preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Nati onality</th>
<th>Nat. lang</th>
<th>Every day lang.</th>
<th>Locality lang</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Settl. type</th>
<th>Well-being</th>
<th>R²</th>
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<td>0.04</td>
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</table>
Determinants of popular preferences: main findings

• 1. Native language (language identity) is no less important than everyday language
• 2. Region is important factor in itself, not just due to the structure of its population
• 3. Locality influences by its language & type
• 4. Nationality is unimportant, once native language is taken into account separately
• 5. More well-off people are more supportive of the promotion of Ukrainian
• 6. Age, education and sex play almost no role
Language use and age

- 60+: Ukrainian (40%) - both (60%) - Russian (0%)
- 46-59: Ukrainian (40%) - both (60%) - Russian (0%)
- 31-45: Ukrainian (40%) - both (60%) - Russian (0%)
- 18-30: Ukrainian (40%) - both (60%) - Russian (0%)

- Ukrainian
- both
- Russian
Preferences of Russian-speakers: scope of Ukrainian

- 60+:
  - More: 10%
  - Same: 30%
  - Less: 60%

- 46-59:
  - More: 20%
  - Same: 40%
  - Less: 40%

- 31-45:
  - More: 30%
  - Same: 50%
  - Less: 20%

- 18-30:
  - More: 50%
  - Same: 20%
  - Less: 30%
Preferences of Russian-speakers: main task of the state’s policy

- Promote Ukrainian
- Upgrade Russian
- Protect minorities
Language use and wellbeing
Preferences of wellbeing groups: language situation in the future

- Rich: 40% Ukr. Only, 60% both, 0% Rus. Only
- Medium: 40% Ukr. Only, 60% both, 0% Rus. Only
- Poor: 40% Ukr. Only, 60% both, 0% Rus. Only
Language issue in political process

• 1. Polarization of political parties in election campaigns (in particular 2004 and 2006)
• 2. Low priority of language issue between the elections (few parliam. initiatives, no debates)
• 3. No readiness to compromise because of perceived benefits of a radical position
• 4. Potential for compromise present in popular preferences not realized in policy-making (status quo due to a balance of force)
Prospects for the future

1. Downplaying of language issue in search of support of the Center & moderate groups in the last election (2007)
2. Middle ground parties/candidates will need a compromise suggestion
3. Language compromise would strengthen democracy but it is hardly possible without progress towards democratic policy-making
4. Presidential elections will give fresh data on the political use of the language issue