



Understanding Ukraine

Student-Led Historical Insight Project

Project Overview

This project is a student-led educational initiative designed to create a series of social media posts covering significant moments and themes in Ukrainian history and politics. The project is an experimental collaboration between Ukrainian student organisations and the Ukrainian Politics Network (UPN) to foster broader engagement with Ukraine among the UK student community.

The project will consist of a sequence of short, accessible, and academically grounded posts published throughout the spring semester, followed by a consolidated collection published on the UPN website together with reflections on the project's outcomes.

Aim

The primary aim of the project is to implement an experimental, student-led format for promoting knowledge about Ukraine and stimulating interest in Ukrainian history, politics, and contemporary challenges among the student body in UK universities.

Partners

The project is implemented in cooperation between:

- The Ukrainian Politics Network (UPN)
- The Ukrainian Student Union (USU)
- Edinburgh University Ukrainian Society
- The Diaspora Journal

The project is run by:

- Daniil Malitskyy (UPN)
- Danylo Riabtsev (USU)
- Taras Harasym (Edinburgh University Ukrainian Society)
- Benjamin Pyatski (the Diaspora Journal)

Timeline and Key Dates

- First post published: 21 January
- Last post published: 18 May
- Full collection (plus reflections) published on UPN website: before the end of June
- Partners' evaluation meeting: 20 June (to discuss outcomes and possible continuation in the next semester)

Target Audience

The student body in British universities with an interest in politics, history and international relations with special reference to Eastern Europe.

Rationale

The project is motivated by several interconnected objectives:

- Promoting knowledge of Ukrainian history and political development
- Encouraging discussion on historical memory, state-building, and the challenges faced by emerging democracies
- Situating all of the above within the broader context of hybrid warfare and information conflict

Expected Tangible Outcomes

Increased student engagement with Ukrainian topics

- Publication of at least five thematic posts, with the potential for continuation
- Publication of a complete collection of posts on the UPN website in June

Selection of Topics

The project partners agreed on the following list of topics and publication dates:

- 21 January: The Human Chain (1990)
 - o A lesser-discussed but highly symbolic demonstration of public will for independence on the eve of the collapse of the Soviet Union.
- 20 February: The Beginning of the Russo-Ukrainian War (2014)
 - o An emphasis on the fact that the war did not begin in 2022, and that such conflicts do not emerge in a vacuum.
- 9 March: The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and Cultural Tradition

- Not only a discussion of religion, but of the Church's role in education, culture, and the formation of national consciousness, including its contribution to institutions such as the Ukrainian Institute in London.
- 26 April: Chornobyl (1986)
 - Moving beyond the disaster itself to focus on the human aspect: the scale of sacrifice, the efforts of the liquidators, and the long-term impact on Ukrainian society.
- Third Thursday of May: Vyshyvanka Day (optional)
- 18 May: Remembrance Day of the Deportation of the Crimean Tatars
 - A critically important topic in the context of decolonisation, highly relevant to British academic discourse and still insufficiently known even among Ukrainians.

The selection of events is guided by the principle of focusing on under-discussed or less widely known topics, while also ensuring that the material is engaging and accessible for a British student audience.

Feasibility and Division of Responsibilities

- The participating Ukrainian societies will be responsible for drafting the texts (each post authored by a different society through the USU network)
- The Ukrainian Politics Network will provide fact-checking and editorial oversight
- Visual design and presentation will be facilitated jointly by UPN, USU, Dïaspora, and the University of Edinburgh Ukrainian Society