

LANGUAGE RIGHTS ARE IMPORTANT

Hans Loos believes that Europe benefits from a strong and stable Ukraine (O&D, 30 September), he forgets to mention that language rights are an essential condition for meeting these requirements. As early as 2012, our foundation warned through its report “Broken Promises” Hans van Baalen that EU member Romania is not respecting the language rights of its own autonomous Hungarian-speaking population. Ex-Prime Minister Basescu of Romania, even spoke of the annexation of the Russian-speaking, break away republic of Transdnistria into a Greater Romanian empire. Under these circumstances, Van Baalen addressed a crowd on maidan square. The next day, Ukraine’s parliament repealed the 2012 language law, which guarantees the Russian minority the right to speak their language in public life. A week later, this revocation was indeed reversed, but as long as Ukraine deals so lightly with core European values such as basic human rights of autonomous linguistic minorities and the EU is unable to enforce these on its own members, the Netherlands must prevent further erosion of the European legal order.

G. Landman, chairman of the European Language Rights Foundation

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