

CONSEQUENCES OF THE LANGUAGE LAW

In the opinion article Ukraine is not pro-Western, let alone liberal (10/2) by Don Kalb and Volodymyr Ischenko, the authors rightly argue that the status of the Russian language is being curtailed. However, Russian is not the only language whose status is restricted. Immediately after ratifying the association agreement with the European Union in 2017, Ukraine introduced a language law that makes the free use of the previously co-official regional languages impossible. A salient detail is that this language law is also in conflict with precisely those European values that were always appealed to by proponents of the association agreement during public debates in the run-up to the Ukraine referendum.

This language law means that it is no longer possible to use these languages freely in public administration, trade, health care, justice, police and the media outside your own private sphere. The teaching of languages other than Ukrainian is limited to the lower classes. Although this law is directed against the speakers of Russian, the speakers of Hungarian, Romanian and Polish in Ukraine are simply sucked into the conflict with Russia as collateral damage by Ukraine.

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