

The War in Ukraine from a Civil Society Perspective (2014-2022)

Panel discussion with guests from Ukraine:

Yuliia Kaplan (Political analyst, Kyiv UA)

Svetlana Netreba (Former deputy major, Khartsyzsk, Donetsk oblast UA)

Ekaterina Guseva (Mediator, Odessa UA)

Moderation: Cécile Druey (University of Bern)

18 May 2022, 18h15

Venue: University of Fribourg, Room MIS 03 3016, (Uni Miséricorde, Av. de l'Europe 20, CH-1700 Fribourg, 3rd floor)

Language: Russian/Ukrainian, with translation to English

Hosts: Uni Fribourg, Institute of Political Science and Ost|Est Osteuropa-Netzwerk Bern-Fribourg

The Donbas region in Eastern Ukraine is not only one of the hot-spots of the war that ravages Ukraine since 24 February 2022, but it is also a veritable “information hole”, since the access to the region is blocked and media coverage is overshadowed by propaganda on all sides. How does the situation look like for active members of civil society who perceive this conflict from within? What were the corner-stones in its recent development, were there moments of special threat or, on the opposite, of relief? And is it from their view possible at all to talk about “peace” or “peacebuilding” in times of conflict escalation, as we witness it in Ukraine today?

The aim of this panel discussion is to jointly draft an analytical mosaic of the war in Ukraine with a specific focus on the Donbas region, together with our guests from Ukraine who since 2015 cooperate in the framework of the dialogue platform “Women’s Initiatives for Peace in Donbas/s (WIPD)”.

Participants’ biographies

Yuliia Kaplan (Kyiv, Ukraine)

Head of humanitarian policy and civil society development department of the National Institute for the Strategic Studies (Kyiv, Ukraine); analyst of the non-governmental organization “Think Tank Donbas”; expert of the National Platform “Dialogue on Peace and Secure Reintegration”; participant of the dialogue platform “WIPD”; PhD in political science, Taras Shevchenko National University (Kyiv, Ukraine).

Svetlana Netreba (Khartsyzsk, Ukraine/Donetska oblast)

From Khartsyzsk, Ukraine (Donetsk Oblast). Employed as an engineer prior to 2010. Served as the city’s first deputy mayor for the council’s social affairs executive from July 2010 to October 2014 (Suspended due to military action and restructuring of the Executive Committee). Founder of the public women’s organisation “Women’s Dialogue” (Khartsyzsk, Donetsk Oblast). Since 2016 regional coordinator of the “WIPD”.

Ekaterina Guseva (Odessa, Ukraine)

NGO “Odessa Regional Mediation Group”; facilitator, mediator (since 1998); organisational development coach (since 2000); advisory work in the fields of intergroup-, ethnic and socio-political conflicts since 1999 (Crimea, North Caucasus, Kyrgyzstan, Eastern Ukraine); development of civic initiatives and NGOs working in different fields (ecology, civic participation, municipal elections, urban planning etc.; co-founder and expert of the “Odessa Regional Mediation Group. Gender focal point of the East Europe GPPAC Network. Expert in the OSCE dialogue programme (Ukraine).

Cécile Druet (Bern, Switzerland)

Senior researcher at the University of Bern, Historical Institute (since 2018); practitioner in mediation and dealing with the past; advisory work for the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), at the Swiss Peace Foundation swisspeace and at the dialogue platform “WIPD”; PhD in International History and Politics, Graduate Institute for International and Development Studies in Geneva (Switzerland); academic interests: peacebuilding approaches in the post-Soviet space, with a particular focus on Ukraine and the North Caucasus.