

## **ENGAGING UKRAINIAN DIASPORA IN THE UK AND POLAND IN DEVELOPMENT**

**Iryna Lapshyna**

*Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS),  
University of Oxford, UK*

Ukraine has been going through a series of political and economic crises, notably the 'Euromaidan' revolution, also sometimes called the 'Revolution of Dignity' which not only resulted in a change of government but also triggered a Russian military intervention and subsequently a partly related economic downturn. These events opened up opportunities for diaspora engagement that were not there before. Diaspora groups set up solidarity groups like 'London EuroMaidan', 'Warsaw EuroMaidan' and others, organised demonstrations, public awareness raising events or collected money and engaged in Ukrainian matters.

Drawing on interviews and observational research of the Ukrainian diaspora engagement in London and Warsaw, five main findings could be identified. First, Euromaidan and the war in East Ukraine transformed the Ukrainian Diaspora from more inward looking to more outward looking communities who as a result are now more engaging with Ukrainian affairs. Second, these events in Ukraine have mobilized activists, volunteers, associations, various NGOs and foundations and triggered a powerful wave of diasporic activities in London and Warsaw. Third, the Ukrainian diaspora and the communities of Ukrainian migrants in the UK and Poland have the resources, power and a willingness to contribute to the development of the home country. Fourth, the Ukrainian diaspora claims to be recognized as an important stakeholder. And fifth, Ukrainian authorities hardly engage with its diaspora and have been almost absent from these processes.

In strategic terms Ukraine could consider applying the International Organization's for Migration policy to diaspora development, namely to engage, enable and empower diaspora communities, the so-called '3Es Strategy', and accordingly develop a road map for engaging its diaspora in development matters. In detail, the Ukrainian government could consider engaging with its diaspora through trust building measures, developing appropriate communication, strengthening dialogue initiatives, outreach and partnership policies and actions within the country and abroad so that the Ukrainian diaspora can apply their knowledge, experience, skills, networks and links and play a more constructive role in the post-conflict reconstruction.

### **Bibliography:**

1. D. R. Mendoza & K. Newland (2012). *Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development: A Handbook for Policymakers and Practitioners in Home and Host Countries*. Migration Policy Institute, International Organization for Migration, 256 p.