

**No Peace from the Outside:
Friction and Civil Society Perceptions
in the Conflict in Donbas**

Word Count: 9989

Sofus Malte Rønberg

Abstract

The paper is based on an online field study, investigating Ukrainian civil society actors' perceptions of the peace processes regarding Donbas. The study builds on the premise of civil society's importance for peace processes. The study, therefore, investigates civil society perceptions by analysing frictional encounters between the civil society and international and local actors as seen from a civil society perspective. This is investigated in regard to the Minsk Agreements, the OSCE SMM and civil society inclusion. The study finds that the civil society perceptions of any actor are based on the perceived relationship to Russia and that the processes are not seen as a peace process by the Ukrainian civil society actors. This is seen through the lens of a friction between bottom-up and top-down approaches between the civil society and national and international actors. Furthermore, there is a perception of an international community that does not uphold the liberal values that are seen as international but adopted to a civil society context, showing a perception of a disconnection between discourses and the practices by international actors. This shows a perception of a national and international top-down approach, which is seen as unable to bring peace in Donbas.

Key words: Donbas, Post-Maidan Ukraine, civil society, Civil society inclusion, friction, perceptions, peace process, Bottom-up approaches

Word Count: 9989

Table of content

1	Introduction	6
2	Background.....	7
2.1	Maidan and post-Maidan.....	7
2.2	The Minsk Agreements and after	7
3	Literature review	9
4	Theory.....	10
4.1	Inclusion of Civil Society.....	10
4.2	Friction	10
4.2.1	Low-intensive conflict or post-conflict?.....	10
4.2.2	Friction or hybridity?.....	11
4.2.3	Four frameworks of friction	11
5	Methods.....	12
5.1	Conceptualisation and operationalisation.....	12
5.1.1	Civil society actors	12
5.1.2	Perception.....	13
5.1.3	Peace Processes	13
5.2	Research design.....	13
5.2.1	Sampling.....	14
5.2.2	Anonymity, consent, and preparations	15
5.2.3	Interview questions.....	16
5.3	Analytical framework.....	16
5.3.1	Secondary material	17
5.4	Reflections.....	17
5.4.1	Recent developments.....	17
5.4.2	Affiliation and identity	18
5.4.3	Anonymity and language.....	18
6	Analysis.....	19

6.1	What conflict?	19
6.2	The Minsk Agreements	20
6.2.1	What peace process?.....	21
6.2.2	Connotations about peace.....	21
6.2.3	Difference in practices.....	22
6.2.4	The signing of the Minsk Agreements.....	22
6.2.5	Implementation of the Minsk Agreements	23
6.2.6	International community.....	24
6.2.7	Concluding remarks on the Minsk Agreements	25
6.3	The Perception of OSCE SMM.....	26
6.3.1	General view of OSCE SMM.....	26
6.3.2	The difference over time the perception of OSCE	27
6.3.3	OSCE's practices.....	28
6.3.4	Concluding remarks on OSCE SMM	29
6.4	Civil Society Inclusion	29
6.4.1	Civil society agency.....	29
6.4.2	Long contra short term	31
6.4.3	<i>Who</i> is included?.....	31
6.4.4	Inclusion of NGCA-population	32
6.4.5	Concluding remarks on inclusion	32
7	Discussion.....	34
7.1	Civil society: <i>who</i> is included?.....	34
7.1.1	Eastern Ukraine and NGCA	34
7.1.2	Pro-Russian narratives.....	35
7.2	Conceptual discussions.....	35
7.2.1	Is it even a peace process?	35
7.3	Theoretical developments.....	36
7.3.1	Civil society inclusion in the context of interstate conflict	36
7.3.2	Global and illiberal?	36
8	Conclusion.....	38
9	References	40
9.1	Interviews	40
9.2	Literature	41

11	Appendix 1: MFS Conditional Grant	47
12	Appendix 2: Cancellation of MFS.....	48
13	Appendix 3: Interview Guide	49
14	Appendix 4: Consent Form.....	52

1 Introduction

Inclusion of the civil society (CS) is vital for a peace process and increases a peace process' durability (Nilsson, Svensson, Magalhães Teixeira, Martínez Lorenzo & Ruus 2020:226; Nilsson 2012:262). But how do civil societies perceive a peace process, negotiated by international actors? The Ukrainian CS was paramount in the 2013-2014 Maidan Revolution and has grown to unprecedented levels in post-revolutionary Ukraine (Worschech 2018:69). The paper builds on premise of the strong Ukrainian CS-agency and the theoretical premise of CS' possible importance to a peace process' durability (Nilsson 2012:262). From these premises, it investigates CS's perceptions of the peace processes in Donbas in Eastern Ukraine and power structures between CS, local and international actors. This is done through an online field study with the following research question: "*How do Ukrainian civil society actors perceive the peace processes regarding Donbas?*". The research question is descriptive (Halperin & Heath 2017:96-97) and investigates on the *interplay* between CS-actors and the peace processes, focusing on *CS-perceptions*. The research question has three sub-questions:

- 1) "*How do the CS-actors perceive the Minsk Agreements?*" This is to understand the perceptions of the agreements made for peace efforts (UN S/2015/135; TCG 2015)
- 2) "*How do the CS-actors perceive the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission?*" This is to understand the perceptions of the mission deployed for the monitoring of the conflict (UN S/2015/135).
- 3) "*How do the CS-actors perceive the peace processes in terms of inclusion?*" This is to understand the peace processes in terms of inclusion of CS.

2 Background

2.1 Maidan and post-Maidan

Ukrainian CS had a major role in the 2013-2014 Maidan Revolution and was revolutionized by it (Worschech 2018:69; Shapovalova & Burlyuk 2018:11). Protests started when then-President Yanukovich scrapped a partnership agreement with the EU to have closer ties with Russia. In January 2014, Yanukovich was ousted as president and a new, pro-EU government was formed (UCDP).

Anti-Maidan and pro-Russian protests started in Eastern and Southern Ukraine (UCDP). In February and March 2014, Russia annexed Crimea (Szpak 2017:261). Pro-Russian protesters took over administrative buildings in Donetsk in Eastern Ukraine. Fighting soon covered Donetsk and Luhansk, together referred to as Donbas (Szpak 2017:262; Malyarenko & Wolff 2018:200). Separatists formed the unrecognized “Donetsk People’s Republic” and “Lugansk People’s Republic” (LPR/DPR) (Szpak 2017:262). This led to war between the Ukraine and DPR/LPR with support from Russia. The government took back some of the major cities of Donbas (UCDP).

2.2 The Minsk Agreements and after

The Normandy Format (NF) was formed as a diplomatic format between the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, Germany, and France in June 2014 (Everett 2020:304). The first Minsk Protocol and Memorandum were signed in September 2014, by the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) between Russia, Ukraine and OSCE. OSCE formed the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (Everett 2020:305; Tagliavini 2015:222). These did not prevent fighting. In January 2015, an additional package, the Minsk II Agreement (UCDP), was agreed upon as a mutual ceasefire (Tagliavini 2020:222). This did not stop the fighting either. In March 2015, the Ukrainian parliament signed a special status to LPR/DPR, and there was a decrease in violence.

However, a permanent ceasefire has not been reached (International Crisis Group 2020[2]). The Minsk Protocol, Memorandum and Package are together referred to as the Minsk Agreements (MAs) (International Crisis Group 2020 [2]).

In April 2019, Zelensky became the president of Ukraine, beating the president since the Maidan Revolution, Poroshenko. Zelensky ran on an anti-corruption and anti-war agenda (Place 2020:271).

3 Literature review

This section describes the literature on the inclusion of CS, the Ukrainian CS, as well as on frictional encounters.

CS-inclusion can increase the durability of peace (Nilsson 2012:262). While Paffenholz (2014) focuses on *how* CS-inclusion might work, Nilsson et al. (2020) focus on the interaction between elite-driven approaches and mass-based action.

Furthermore, Holper & Kyselova (2020), Kyselova Kraus, Kirchhoff & Dobeneck (2017) and Kyselova (2019), Worschech (2020) as well as Bazilo & Bosse (2017 and 2020) have a focus on the post-Maidan Ukrainian CS concerning conflict, dialogue and peacebuilding.

However, both in the general literature on CS-inclusion and specifically on Ukrainian CS, there is a lack of investigation of CS's *perceptions* of peace processes and *power relations* between CS and national and international communities. Here, the study builds on the premise of the CS's importance for peace processes to understand the power relations as perceived from a CS-standpoint. This is done through friction: a term introduced in ethnography by Tsing (2005). However, in peace and conflict research *friction* is used to understand the power-relations between local and international in the context of peacebuilding (Björkdahl, Höglund, Millar, van der Lijn & Verkoren 2016; Björkdahl & Höglund 2013). Friction has already been applied to CS (Verkoren & Leeuwen 2013). However, friction was used to investigate power relations between CS and *international NGOs* rather than CS' frictional encounters *with national and international diplomatic actors*.

4 Theory

The theoretical framework will consist of CS-inclusion in peace processes and frictional encounters.

4.1 Inclusion of Civil Society

CS-inclusion in peace processes increases the durability of a peace accord (Nilsson 2012:262). CS-inclusion can, among other things, create a broader public inclusion as well as it can bring higher accountability and legitimacy to the process (Paffenholz 2014:73).

4.2 Friction

The paper sees CS as important actors in conflict. Even though local ownership is often stressed, inclusion is rarely the case in practice (Donais 2009:2-3). The paper, therefore, investigates power relations between local, national, and international actors. This is seen from a local, CS-perspective. To understand this relationship, the paper uses *friction*. Björkdahl et al. argue that friction is “...*a process triggered by global-local interactions...*” among global, regional, national, and local actors in peacebuilding (Björkdahl et al. 2016:2).

4.2.1 Low-intensive conflict or post-conflict?

Friction is often used to describe *post-conflict* situations rather than an ongoing conflict (e.g. Mannergren Selimovic 2016; Philipsen 2016). However, as well as the dichotomous relationship between war and peace is contested (Millar 2020:263-264), the study argues that the distinction between *conflictual* and *post-conflict* societies is arbitrary. This is because Ukraine is both *post-peace accord* (Darby & Mac

Ginty 2008:3) and sees an ongoing, yet low-intensive conflict (UN S/2015/135; TGC 2015; UCDP). Frictional encounters as power structures are processes rather than products (Björkdahl et al. 2016:7), why friction *can* be used to analyse *low-intensive conflicts*.

4.2.2 Friction or hybridity?

The paper uses friction to *describe* power relations that are *changing*: processes rather than products (Björkdahl et al. 2016:2). The term *friction* is used rather than *hybridity*. *Friction* and *hybridity* have similarities where a hybrid peace government is the *result* of international and domestic bargaining (Jarstad & Belloni 2012:1). However, friction is chosen since a) the hybridity has been used *prescriptively* rather than *descriptively* in peacebuilding (Millar 2014:502), and b) because forms hybrid peace to an extent is a *product* of global and local interactions (e.g. Mac Ginty 2010:392).

4.2.3 Four frameworks of friction

The paper strives to understand the frictional encounters regarding Donbas. This will be done through four frameworks of friction:

- 1) *Frictional feedback loops* between frictional encounters, responses and outcomes as a result of friction as a process rather than a product (Björkdahl & Höglund 2013:298).
- 2) Friction can be understood through four *axes*: universalistic/particularistic, homogenous/heterogeneous, liberal/illiberal and global/local (Björkdahl et al. 2016:6).
- 3) Björkdahl and Höglund see friction as conceptualized through actors/agents, discourses, and practices (Björkdahl & Höglund 2013:295). The paper focuses on CS-actors and their frictional relation to international actors, discourses, and agents.
- 4) Björkdahl et al. identify six subprocesses of friction: *Compliance, Adaption, Adoption, Co-option, Resistance and Rejection*, as well as multiple subprocesses can occur simultaneously (Björkdahl et al. 2013:6).

5 Methods

This section underlines the methodology of the study to answer the research question “How do civil society actors perceive the peace processes regarding Donbas?” and its sub-questions regarding the perceptions of the MAs, the OSCE SMM, and inclusion in the peace processes. This is done through “conceptualization and operationalization”, “research design”, “analytical framework” and “reflections”.

5.1 Conceptualisation and operationalisation

This sub-section describes how CS-actors, perception and peace processes are conceptualised and operationalised (Halperin & Heath 2017:130-136).

5.1.1 Civil society actors

CS is *conceptualized* as non-warring, formed on voluntary and collective action on shared interests, purposes and values and distinct from state, family, and market (Nilsson et al. 2020:229; Paffenholz 2014:70). The paper sees CS-actors as being individuals that are organized within CS.

It is estimated that there are around 20.000 active civil society organisations (CSOs) in the country (Kyselova 2019:9). To narrow it down, CS is *operationalized* as either a) calling for a specific group’s *inclusion* into political processes or b) *directly involved with conflict-related issues* such as rights groups, refugee groups or dialogue centres. CS-actors are operationalized as individuals within CS.

5.1.2 Perception

“Perception” is *conceptualised* as the observation in the sense of understanding (Talentino 2007:156). It holds a subjective element of interpretation, including *what is seen* as available (Ibid.:153). Local perceptions in the context of peacebuilding are *operationalized* as “*how local actors build their understandings of the reform program based on how it affects their interests or concerns.*” (Ibid.:156).

5.1.3 Peace Processes

Peace processes are *conceptualized* through the understanding that it is “...*a convenient term...*” (Darby & Mac Ginty 2008:3) to persistent peace initiatives, more than initial statements or isolated proposals and which involve the conflict’s main antagonists (ibid.).

Peace processes are *operationalized* as the following:

- 1) The MAs as the specific peace agreements (UN S/2015/135; TCG 2015),
- 2) TGC and NF as diplomatic formats to negotiate the conflict (Everett 202:304-205).
- 3) The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission as the international mission in Donbas established after the first Minsk Protocol (UN S/2015/135).

5.2 Research design

The study is an online field study using the method of qualitative, in-depth interviews (Brounéus 2011:130-131; Halperin & Heath 2017:289). The study was originally conditionally granted the Minor Field Studies (MFS) scholarship (Appendix 1). Due to corona, MFS was cancelled (Appendix 2). Therefore, the field study was conducted online (Halperin & Heath 2017:287) through Zoom. The in-depth interviews were semi-structured (ibid.:289) with eight Ukrainian CS-actors. The interviews were supplemented with secondary material (Brounéus 2011:131).

5.2.1 Sampling

The population of interest (Brounéus 2011:134) is Ukrainian CS-actors as described in "operationalization". More narrowly, it is individuals who have or have recently had a somewhat leading position within the organization, so they are knowledgeable about the organisation. These actors were identified in two ways: 1) through snowball sampling (Söderström 2011:153) and 2) identification of CSOs by going through the existing literature.

Ad. 1) Snowball sampling was used through two entry points: Center for Civil Liberties (CCL) and The Ukrainian-Danish Youth House (UDYH). I am a former CCL-intern, and I am an Advisory Board-member of The Ukrainian-Danish Youth House. This will be discussed under "affiliations".

Ad. 2) Snowball sampling risks not representing the population of interest (Halperin & Heath 2017:277). Therefore, the study also identified relevant actors through existing literature Ukrainian CS in Worschech (2018:78-79), Bazilo & Bosse (2018:167), Kyselova et al. (2017:25), Kyselova (2019:26) and the CivilM+-network (CivilM+ 2021). Often, this identification would intertwine with snowball sampling, where interviewees identified through one method had already been identified through the other. The study strived towards obtaining theoretical saturation (Söderström 2011:151). This was obtained in terms of themes discussed but partially in terms of the perceptions of these themes with differences in how interviewees saw certain issues. The lack of full theoretical saturation makes secondary material even more important.

Representatives from 33 organisations were contacted. The organisations consisted of rights, dialogue, IDP-, minority, women, and youth organisations. 15 replied. Of these, one organisation did not wish to participate; two did not feel that they were confident enough in English to participate; two replied initially but stopped replying; and one replied too late in the research process, why it was not practically possible to interview the person.

9 organisations were interviewed in 10 interviews. However, after two interviews with members from the same organisation, it was realized that the organization did not live up to the conceptualization that CSO's interests should be distinct from the market (Paffenholz 2014:70), nor the operationalization of inclusion into political processes. Therefore, the organisation is not included in the analysis.

The interviews were held from the 16th of March till the 27th of April 2021. The organizations that have been interviewed are the following in alphabetical order¹:

Center for Civil Liberties

Dignity Space

Eastern-Ukrainian Center for Civil Initiatives

Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group

Kharkiv Institute for Social Research

Maidan Monitoring Information Center

NYCU (National Youth Council of Ukraine)

Vostok SOS

5.2.2 Anonymity, consent, and preparations

The interviewees were anonymous and had the possibility to anonymize their organization: no one chose this option. The organisations have been anonymized to the single quote, but not to their general participation. Interviewees were provided with an interview guide (Appendix 3) and a consent form (Appendix 4) before the interview.

The interviewees were not able to physically sign the consent form as the interviews were conducted online. Therefore, the interviews would start with a passage where the consent form was gone through verbally (Deakin & Wakefield 2014:610). This part would start with asking whether the interviewee agreed to the interview being recorded, and hereafter the part to obtain full informed consent would be gone through. This part was also transcribed. This process will be elaborated under "reflections".

The interviews were recorded and stored on two external hard disks. These recordings were the basis for transcripts, in which the interviewees are anonymous.

¹ Furthermore, JCI Youth was interviewed, but its activities are interlinked with the market and it sees itself as non-political. The organisation was therefore not included in the study

5.2.3 Interview questions

The interviews were semi-structured (Halperin & Heath 2017:289), and the questions were based on the research question and sub-questions. The interviewees were asked about 1) their background, 2) their perception of the peace processes 3) their perception of the international interveners 4) whether they, their organisations and their opinions have been included, and 5) if they think the processes can bring justice and/or peace to the situation. However, as the paper narrowed its focus and research design after the interviewing process, the understanding of peace and justice has a minimal role in the analysis. For the detailed version of the interviews and follow-up question, see the interview guide (Appendix 3).

5.3 Analytical framework

The interviews were transcribed and analysed as textual material. This has been done through qualitative content analysis (Halperin & Heath 2017:346). Qualitative content analysis has been used to analyse the latent content of the interviews to understand CS-perceptions (Halperin & Heath 2017:346-347). Qualitative content analysis was used instead of the process of data reduction and coding (Halperin & Heath 2017:304-306) due to the limited time span of the research period. Furthermore, it has been used instead of discourse analysis (Halperin & Heath 2017:336-344). This has been done since the interviews were seen through not only frictional *discourses* but also through *actors* and *practices* (Björkdahl & Höglund 213:295).

The analysis has been based on themes that emerged from interviews. Hereafter, the texts were coded through manual, open coding (Heath & Halperin 2017:350), constantly comparing the passages of the texts. The codes were first based on the themes that emerged from the interviews in terms of the overall questions. Through open coding, the themes expanded, where both additional themes emerged, such as a differentiation between international interveners, or a discussion about *who* when it comes to CS inclusion. These themes were then put into the analytical framework of frictional encounters. Four elements of friction are used:

- 1) *Frictional feedback loops*.
- 2) The *axes* of friction, where liberal/illiberal and local/global are focused on.

3) Friction between actors, discourses, and practices. Here, CS-actors are seen through their relation to international and national actors, discourses (seen as linguistic practices (Bergström & Boréus 2016:357)), and practices (seen through approaches to the conflict and peace initiatives).

4) Sub-processes of friction: *Compliance, Adaption, Adoption, Co-option, Resistance and Rejection* (Björkdahl, Höglund 2013:295-298; Björkdahl et al. 2013:6).

5.3.1 Secondary material

The interviews were supplemented with secondary material (Brounéus 2011:131). As research on the Ukrainian CS is new, the information is scattered. It consists of the following:

1) Research and reports on the Ukrainian CS to compare results and validate statements: Kyselova (2019), Kyselova et al. (2017), Holper & Kyselova (2020), Bazilo & Bosse (2017 and 2020), Druey, Hess, Kaplan & Cherevanko (2020), SCORE for Eastern Ukraine (2019) and OSCE (2015).

2) Research on the conflict itself: Szpak (2017), Haug (2016)

3) News articles, analysis, and background material to validate statements by interviewees and show general perceptions in Ukraine of the conflict: The European Parliament (2018), CivilM+ (2020), Kramer (2016), and Shevtsova (2020) and Aarup (2021), Presidential Office of Ukraine (2020 [1] & [2]).

4) Official documents and OSCE reports: OSCE (2014), OSCE SMM (2021), UN S/2015/135, TCG (2015) and Tagliavini (2015).

5) Quantitative material from SCORE for Eastern Ukraine [1] to understand general Ukrainian perceptions of the MAs.

5.4 Reflections

5.4.1 Recent developments

In March 2021, Russian troops were deployed to the Ukrainian border and Crimea (International Crisis Group). However, some troops withdrew in late April (UN 2021). This happened during the interview

period and might have influenced answers. The escalation was explicitly discussed during three interviews (Interviews 5:08/04/21; 6:09/04/21 and 7:12/04/21).

5.4.2 Affiliation and identity

Due to my affiliation with CLL and UDYH, I knew two interviewees before the interview. This provided me access as a somewhat insider (Höglund 2011:124). However, to not be perceived as coming with certain values, I would not mention my affiliations, if this did not come up naturally in the conversation.

Some interviewees focused on my identity as an EU-citizen, Dane, or Swede (assuming that I was a Swede since I come from a Swedish university) (Interviews 1:16/3/21; 3:23/03/21 and 7:12/04/21). This can be seen in calls for international solidarity, and through the argument, as will be seen in the analysis, that the international community should be more active.

5.4.3 Anonymity and language

Since the interviewees could not sign the consent form before the interviews, I would go through the consent form by the start of the interview. Despite its necessity, this gave a strange start to the interview. One interviewee even argued that focusing on procedures of the consent form might seem strange in Ukraine (Interview 5:08/04/21). Despite the procedures' necessity, this shows a *frictional encounter* in the very research process between practices of procedure in Swedish academia and Ukrainian CS-actors.

I experienced difficulties in gaining access to CS-actors in Eastern Ukraine. Multiple Eastern Ukrainian activists replied that they did not feel confident enough in English to partake in the study. As MFS was cancelled, it was not possible to have funding for interpretation. Even though other interviewees would have been able to interpret an interview, this would discount the interview's confidentiality. Even though different options were investigated, no solution was found to this problem under the short research process. Thus, there is a question about *who* was included based on language barriers. The issue of *who* will be highlighted further in "discussion".

6 Analysis

6.1 What conflict?

To understand the perceptions of the peace processes, it is vital to understand the perceptions of the *conflict* itself. There is a frictional encounter in the *discourse* about the conflict's character: whether the conflict is an *interstate* conflict, as seen from the actors' discourse, or an *intrastate* conflict, which is perceived as a Russian discourse.

The frictional encounter lies between CS-discourse and what is seen as a Russian discourse. The discourses are the following: a) The interviewees' understanding of Russia as an aggressor (Interviews 1:16/03/21; 2:19/3/21; 3:23/03/21; 4:24/03/21; 5:08/04/21; 7:12/04/21 and 8:27/04/21) and b) What is perceived to be a Russian discourse, where the conflict is fought between Ukraine and LPR/DPR with no Russian involvement (Interviews 2:19/3/21; 3:23/03/21 and 8:27/04/21). One interviewee said that “*You can't make peace with a lion that is trying to eat you*” (Interview 5:08/04/21). This understanding of Russian aggression is also seen at a political level, where it is argued that the Ukrainian government where President Zelensky calls Donbas “*...the region most affected by Russian aggression...*” (Presidential Office of Ukraine 2020[1]). The CS-actors argue that it is a part of a Russian tactic, where Russia tries to play the role of an observer to the conflict (Interviews 3:23/03/21 and 8:27/04/21). This shows a frictional encounter in discourse: CS-actors see Russia as able to be perceived as a part of the international community, even though Russia, from the stance of CS, is the aggressor in the conflict. This discussion of interstate or intrastate conflict is also addressed in the sphere of international humanitarian law. Szpak (2017) argues that despite lacking knowledge about the degree of Russian control over LPR/DPR, “*...it is clear that the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine has an international character...*” (Szpak 2017:276).

As the conflict is perceived as interstate by CS, LPR/DPR are *not* seen as the main enemy, but rather a proxy to Russia. They are delegitimised as independent from Russia and described as “proxy-agent” (Interview 4:24/03/21), “proxies” (Interview 7:12/04/21), “so-called separatists” (Interview 3:23/03/21)

or made quotation marks with their fingers then describing them as republics or independent (Interview 8:27/04/21). This plays into the conflicting discourses of interstate contra intrastate conflict, where an *interstate* discourse to the conflict is seen as Russian tactics to be seen as observers (Interviews 3:23/03/21 and 8:27/04/21). This shows a conflicting discourse about the conflict, with a CS-rejection to what is seen as the Russian narrative of intrastate conflict.

This is different from Bazilo and Bosse (2017)'s result: they argue that the CS-actors only focus to a small extent on Russian involvement in the conflict (2017:100). This can be due to Bazilo & Bosse's focus on *CSOs engaged in dialogue and reconciliation* (2017:93), while this study focuses on a *broader spectrum of CSOs*, as described in "operationalization". According to Kyselova, there is a divide within the Ukrainian CS, between rights and dialogue organisations, with a difference in the focus on e.g. "...*punishment for perpetrators*..." (Kyselova 2019:20) and the dialogue-focused perspective (Kyselova 2019:20). Furthermore, among the general population, Dreuy Hess, Kaplan & Cherevatenko (2020) identifies that the understanding of Russia as the main aggressor is a common understanding (Dreuy et al. 2021:5-6). Therefore, the different results might be due to different results about discourses of the conflict can be due to the *type* of CS-actors interviewed.

In conclusion, there is a rejection of what is seen as a Russian discourse of intrastate conflict in Donbas. This discourse is seen as a way for Russia to be both an aggressor and be perceived as an outsider at the same time.

6.2 The Minsk Agreements

The frictional encounters in this sub-section are between CS and the MAs. The MAs are seen as an outcome of international negotiations between Ukraine, Russia, DPR, LPR and OSCE (UN S/2015/135; TCG 2015) with international mediation from NF: France and Germany (Tagliavini 2015:22). Thus, the frictional encounters are between civil society and the outcome of international negotiations. Since OSCE SMM will be analysed in 6.3, it is not included in this sub-analysis.

6.2.1 What peace process?

This sub-section argues that there among CS-actors is a perception that there is no peace process. There is friction in discourses about whether the MAs *are* peace agreements, showing a clash between local and international discourses about the MAs. In CS, there is a perception of the MAs as unable to bring peace (Interviews 4:24/03/21; 6:09/04/21 and 7:12/04/21). The MA have “...*nothing to do with peace process*” (Interview 6:09/04/21) or are “*halfway*” and not solving the problems (Interview 3:23/03/21). If anything, the MAs are seen as military rather than a peace agreement (Interview 6:09/04/21). This contrasts the MAs, officially aimed “...*at the implementation of the Peace Plan...*” (UN S/2015/135), while OSCE SMM aims to, among other things, contribute to fostering peace (OSCE 2014).

This shows a frictional encounter between the CS-understanding of the conflict and the international discourse of the MAs. This frictional encounter has a subprocess of rejection of the international discourse to the MAs: perceived by CS, there is no peace process.

6.2.2 Connotations about peace

The understanding of peace is not only contested in the specific instance of the MAs, the very connotation of the *term peace* is also contested. Here, there is a reluctance amongst the CS to become involved in peace advocacy, as “peace” is perceived as a call for surrender to Russia (Kyselova 2019:30).

There is, however, a feedback loop in the discourse around peace. It has changed, where the critique of the word “*peace*” is not as explicit as before, where “... “*peace*” *was* [my emphasis] *associated with “traitor”...*” (Interview 3:23/03/21). This is seen at a political level, where there is “*less hate speech*” due to the CS-advocacy (Interview 3:23/03/21). Furthermore, the equation between peace and treason was especially present during the former Poroshenko administration until 2019 (Holper & Kyselova 2020:5). This shows a feedback loop, where the interaction is not only between CS and the *internationals* but also to *Ukrainian politicians*: there is a perceived change in the language of conflict due to the work of CS (Interview 3:23/03/21). This shows that there has been a discourse of peace as surrender in the political discourse. However, this political discourse is changing due to CS-discourses of peace: While there is a rejection to the MAs as seen as peace processes, there is a higher degree of adoption to “peace” as a term.

6.2.3 Difference in practices

This sub-section underlines the frictional encounters in practices between the MAs top-down and the CS's bottom-up approaches. There is a friction between the CS-practices and the MAs as an outcome of top-down negotiations: between "high politics" and CS's bottom-up approach (Bazilo, Bosse 2020:153-154; Pigman 2018:82). The MAs are being described as "*formalistic*" (Interview 4:24/03/21), contrasting CS-practices (Interview 3:23/03/21). A bottom-up practice would enable reconciliation with people in NGCA, which is not seen as possible at the current top-down approach (Interview 3:23/03/21). This should be done through local peacebuilding through dialogue and educational activities (Interviews 3:23/03/21; 6:09/04/21 and 8:27/04/21): there is a need to "*use our own tools*" (Interview 6:09/04/21). Thus, there is a rejection of the practices of the international community, where the split lies between a top-down and a bottom-up approach to peacebuilding.

This approach of CS-peacebuilding is also seen with the CivilM+ format with representatives from Ukrainian and Russian and international organizations are present (CivilM+). These kinds of CS forums are living *despite* rather than *because* of the MAs (Interview 7:12/04/21). This shows frictional encounters between the approaches of the international and local community with a difference in top-down and bottom-approaches to the conflict. There is an understanding of the MAs as either non-existing in terms of peace or "formalistic".

6.2.4 The signing of the Minsk Agreements

This sub-section investigates the sub-processes of friction when the MAs were *signed*.

While there is a *rejection* to the discourse of MAs as an enabler for peace, there is somewhat of a *compliance* to *why* MAs were signed, as there has been a decrease in violence: MAs were seen as the only solution because "*...our army was totally weak at that time and that could lead to real tragedy*" (Interview 2:19/3/21). This can be seen through a framework of positive and negative peace, where the MAs were signed to stop (personal) violence rather than about making (positive) peace (Interview 7:12/04/21; Galtung 1969:183): The MAs brought no justice but less violence (Interview 6:09/04/21). Within the Ukrainian public, there was some support for the MAs in 2018 at 6,2 out of 10 (Score for Peace [1]). This shows that there has been a support for the MAs but that it is moderate. This shows a certain degree

of compliance with Ukraine's signing of the MAs, which were seen as necessary at the time it was signed: there were no other options but to sign.

However, this *compliance* to the Ukrainian decision to sign MAs is disputed: there are *multiple* sub-processes of both compliance and rejection: MAs is seen as a mistake (Interview 8:27/04/21). Decisions about MAs have been taken behind closed doors (Bazilo & Bosse 2017:92): the lack of transparency to MAs is argued to make it impossible to know whether there was an actual threat of Russian invasion. Therefore, they "...*have no legitimacy in Ukrainian society...*" (Interview 4:24/03/21). This is also seen by the fact that the MAs do not address Crimea (UN S/2015/135, TCG 2015). This is criticised since the war in Donbas and the annexation of Crimea are seen as interlinked (Interviews 4:24/03/21 and 8:27/04/21): an expression of an *interstate conflict* discourse of Russian aggression. By not addressing Crimea, the MAs can be seen as expressing *intrastate conflict* discourses. Thus, there is an inherent frictional encounter in discourses of the conflict between CS and the MAs.

In conclusion, there are multiple frictional sub-processes about Ukraine's signing to the MAs, ranging between *compliance* and *rejection*.

6.2.5 Implementation of the Minsk Agreements

It is argued that there has not been an implementation of the MAs (Interviews 1:16/03/21; 2:19/3/21; 4:24/03/21 and 5:08/04/21; Bazilo & Bosse 2017:92; European Parliament 2018). The lack of implementation is especially present when it comes to the local elections in Donetsk and Luhansk according to OSCE standards (TCG 2015, §12). Here, the interviewees argue, that it is not possible to hold elections in the Non-Government Controlled Areas (NGCA), because they are controlled by Russia and elections would not be democratic (Interviews 1:16/03/21 and 2:19/03/21).

This shows a friction between the MAs as an outcome of international negotiations and the discourse of democratic election, that the interviewees hold: friction between international approaches in negotiations and the discourse of liberal values. Thus, when it comes to the *axes* of friction, there is a perception of liberal and universalistic values on a *local*, CS-level, which does not correlate with the perceived global, illiberal, and particularistic level, which the MAs are seen as an outcome of. Hereby, as argued again later, the discourse liberal ideals are adapted by CS, the local, which again is in opposition to the *international*, which is perceived as *illiberal*. The CS-focus on liberal values can also be seen in the focus on EU-integration (Interview 1:16/03/21), international institutions as ICC and international rule of law

(Interviews 4:24/03/21 and 5:08/04/21), or an explicit focus on the term “liberal values” (Interview 2:19/03/21). This understanding of the *global* as *illiberal* in the case of the MAs is highly intertwined with a question of friction towards *who*: Russia is e.g. seen as both international and illiberal, where, if the MAs are implemented “...as Russia demands...”, there will be a frozen conflict (Interview 4:24/03/21). Thus, the implementation of the MAs is stuck through the understanding of them as an *illiberal, international* agreement.

There has been some implementation of the MAs: In December 2019, there was a prisoner’s exchange between Ukraine and LPR/DPR under the MAs’ framework (TCG 2015 §6; OHCHR 2020:13)². However, there is a perception that if NGCA is occupied, new people can be imprisoned the following day (Interview 4:24/03/21), and that there have been no improvements since then (Interview 2:19/3/21 and 8:27/04/21). This shows a friction to the MAs as an outcome of international negotiations: friction between global and CS-practices, where the MAs are not perceived as able to address the situation.

The MAs outcome of international negotiations are seen as unable to be implemented democratically and thus illiberal (Interviews 1:16/03/21; 2:19/3/21 and 4:24/03/21). They are seen as a result of illiberal actors within the framework of the MAs and therefore the frictional encounters of the MAs are seen through the lens of friction to Russia. This shows an understanding of the MAs as both international and illiberal, thus unable to be implemented. Furthermore, in the cases that MAs are implemented, they are not seen as able to address the situation properly. This shows a resistance to the current framework of the MAs, leaning towards a rejection.

6.2.6 International community

As described in 6.1, Russia is seen as the aggressor (Interviews 1:16/03/21; 5:08/04/21; 7:12/04/21 and 8:27/04/21). However, Russia can also partake in OSCE SMM (OSCE SMM 2021), due to the understanding of the conflict as intrastate (Interview 8:27/04/21). Hereby, Russia is seen as *both* the international community and the aggressor at the same time, as well as the frictional encounters with the rest of the international actors are seen through the lens of their perceived relationship to Russia. There is a

² Furthermore, in September 2019, there was a prisoner’s exchange between Ukraine and Russia (International Crisis Group 2020 [1]:2)

certain disappointment with France and Germany: the non-warring parties to NF. France and Germany are seen as having economic interests in having good relations with Russia, which affect their actions in the conflict, as well as they are reluctant to get involved at all (Interviews 7:12/04/21 and 8:27/04/21). Germany is especially criticised due to the building of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline (Interviews 5:08/04/21; 7:12/04/21 and 8:27/04/21). This criticism is also seen at a political level, where the pipeline has been called “*100 percent anti-Ukrainian*” (Kachka by Aarup 2021). This creates a frictional encounter with international actors which is defined through their relationship with Russia.

Oppositely, it is argued that the US does not see Ukraine as a “*nuisance*” (Interview 8:27/04/21). It is argued that it would be positive if the US was included in NF (Interviews 3:23/03/21 and 6:09/04/21). Thus, the activists perceive the international community in general as supporting Ukraine, but that there is a greater need for international support (Interviews 1:16/03/21 and 4:24/03/21).

The main frictional encounter with *international actors* is towards Russia, where there is a frictional subprocess of rejection. The frictional relationship to *international actors* is defined through the lens of the actors’ perceived relationship to Russia. The understanding of the international community is two-fold: There is a clash between the pro-European stance that some activists articulate (Interview 1:16/03/21 and 6:09/04/21) and the view of the (lack of) action taken by European countries (Interviews 1:16/03/21; 2:19/3/21; 4:24/03/21; 7:12/04/21 and 8:27/04/21). Thus, the frictional encounters towards international actors other than Russia are seen through rather the *lack of more* intervention by European countries. Furthermore, frictional encounters with international actors are again shaped by the relationship with Russia, making the perception of the USA positive.

6.2.7 Concluding remarks on the Minsk Agreements

In conclusion, there are several frictional encounters between the Ukrainian CS’s and the Ukrainian government and the international community's understanding of the MAs.

Firstly, there is a rejection of the MAs as understood as a peace process, as well as there is a disputed understanding of the very term peace. However, there has been a change in the discourse around “peace” as a term, which is perceived as due to CS-advocacy to Ukrainian politicians. Thus, there is a frictional feedback loop in the relationship between Ukrainian CS and the political establishment. This shows friction between the discourse of the MAs and CS's understanding of them.

Secondly, there is a frictional encounter in the practices of the local and international community, where international negotiations creating the MAs are not seen as able to bring peace. Thus, there are frictional encounters between top-down and bottom-up approaches between the local and the international community.

Thirdly, there are multiple frictional encounters with the MAs in terms of the Ukrainian government's *signing* of the MAs, where there is both a rejection and compliance to the MAs. However, when it comes to the *implementation* of the MAs, it is not seen as possible to uphold liberal values. This shows a difference in the *axes* of friction, where the MAs as a result of international negotiation are seen as global-illiberal, contrasting the local-liberal: there are *not enough* liberal approaches to the conflict by the CS-actors. Thus, it can be argued that there is a call for a more universalistic approach from the international community.

Fourthly, when it comes to the international actors behind the MAs, the understanding of the actors is seen through the lens of their perceived relationship to Russia. This creates a clash between what is perceived as liberal *norms* and the *actions* of the international community, especially in terms of German-Russian relations.

6.3 The Perception of OSCE SMM

This sub-section analyses the perceptions of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (OSCE SMM) as an *actor* and its *practices*. OSCE SMM was deployed as an international monitoring mission, “*reducing tensions and fostering peace, stability and security; and to monitoring and supporting the implementation of all OSCE principles and commitments*” (OSCE 2014 §2), including the monitoring of human rights (OSCE 2014 §3).

6.3.1 General view of OSCE SMM

There is a discrepancy between the OSCE SMM perception of themselves as monitors and the perception of them within the Ukrainian society. Multiple activists mentioned a Ukrainian joke that OSCE stands for “blind observers” (Interview 2:19/3/21; 5:08/04/21 and 8:27/04/21). This discourse about the OSCE

SMM is further seen in the Ukrainian society, where OSCE is called “*deaf, dumb and blind*” (Kramer 2016).

This shows a frictional encounter, where there is a *discourse* of OSCE SMM’s *practices* as unable to monitor the situation. There is a frictional subprocess of resistance to OSCE SMM. Even though some of the activists did not agree with the critique of OSCE SMM (Interviews 5:08/04/21 and 6:09/04/21), they still see the need to address this discourse about OSCE SMM. OSCE SMM’s work is often restricted in NGCA (Interviews 1:16/03/21 and 2:19/3/21; Haug 2016:353), why one activist argued that because OSCE is often restricted in reporting violations, it is a “*theatre mission*” (Interview 2:19/3/21). Furthermore, OSCE are seen as “*...more formalistic than human rights minded.*” (Interview 4:24/03/21) This shows a frictional encounter, where there is a difference between the *liberal ideals* of human rights monitoring and the *practice* with a lack of reporting of human rights violations. This again shows a liberal, local CS, which addresses what it sees as an illiberal, international actor.

However, there is a disagreement within the CS about OSCE SMM, and they are also seen more positively (Interviews 3:23/03/21; 5:08/04/21; 6:09/04/21; 7:12/04/21 and 8:27/04/21). One activist argued that despite the critique of OSCE SMM, they have been able to decrease violence and that it would be worse without them (Interview 6:09/04/21), while another argued that it is “*good that they exist*” (Interview 7:12/04/21). Hereby, there are multiple frictional encounters to the OSCE SMM with both a resistance and an understanding that they are better than nothing.

6.3.2 The difference over time the perception of OSCE

There has been a change in the perception of OSCE SMM. Those more positive towards OSCE SMM, argue that it has changed for the better. By the start, the staff members were seen as pro-Russian (Interview 7:12/04/21): there were argued to be Russian spies and influencers within the OSCE SMM mission (Interview 8:27/04/21). However, it is perceived as having changed for the better, and OSCE is seen as more objective (Interview 7:12/04/21 and 8:27/04/21) and viewed more positively in the general society (Interview 5:08/04/21). This is argued to be because of OSCE SMM's gradual understanding of interaction with CS and it is incorporated in OSCE SMM's approaches (Interview 8:27/04/21). Here, OSCE SMM itself stresses the importance cooperation with of the Ukrainian CS (OSCE 2015:10).

This shows two important features to understand the perception of OSCE SMM in terms of friction: 1) as argued earlier, the perception of an actor is determined by the perception of this actor's relationship

to Russia: whether the actor is seen as pro-Russian or impartial. One interviewee argued that the role of international organizations, in general, is dependent on how pro-Russian their member-states are (Interview 7:12/04/21). This shows an understanding, where international organizations are *not* seen from a vacuum of their members, but rather that the impartiality of the organization and its missions depend on their composition.

2) There is a perception of a frictional feedback loop in the frictional encounter, where there is less of a rejection of OSCE-practices than before. This feedback loop is seen as of CS-action. There has been a change in frictional encounters, which changed from a rejection to somewhat more of an adaption of OSCE SMM among some of the CS-actors.

6.3.3 OSCE's practices

"...we will not find peace from the outside" (Interview 6:09/04/21)

There is a frictional encounter in the practices of OSCE SMM and the CS in terms of top-down and bottom-up approaches. One interviewee argued that OSCE has a *"formalistic"* approach and does not focus enough on human rights violations. The interviewee saw this as a *"reflection of the global crisis"* in the international community's inability to stop human rights violations (Interview 4:24/03/21). This shows a friction, where OSCE SMM *practices* are not able to uphold the liberal values, where it is perceived that OSCE is not able to uphold these very ideals due to their *"formalistic"* approaches. However, there is a frictional subprocess of adoption within the CS of the *liberal ideals*. Hereby, there is again an understanding of a local, liberal CS-community, and hereby deconstructing the relationship between the frictional axes, where the local is the liberal and the international is the illiberal. This furthermore shows a difference between liberal ideals and the international organisation's practices, which are not seen as able to uphold these ideals: the friction towards international actors is not only in its *action* but rather in its *inaction*.

Furthermore, there is a friction in approaches between the local and international, where there is a more "high politics" (Pigman 2018:82) approach by international organizations rather than a human rights-based approach of the CS-activists. OSCE SMM has had a top-down rather than a bottom-up approach (Bazilo & Bosse 2017:104). It is argued that there is a need for a bottom-up approach because, as one actor put it, *"...we will not find peace from the outside"* (Interview 6:09/04/21). Another interviewee

argued that OSCE SMM is doing the best that foreigners can do (Interview 3:23/03/21), portraying a perception of a need for bottom-up approaches and the limits of top-down approaches. Hereby, there is also a perception of limitations to the international community in its top-down approaches.

6.3.4 Concluding remarks on OSCE SMM

In conclusion, there are multiple subprocesses between the Ukrainian CS and the OSCE SMM, as seen from the CS-perceptive: A) There is a rejection of OSCE SMM in their practices, where they are unable to fulfil their mandate of monitoring, somewhat pro-Russian and not living up to the liberal values. This is furthermore seen in a general discourse in the Ukrainian society of OSCE SMM as blind, B) There is a more positive perception, where OSCE SMM are seen as gone from pro-Russian to being impartial, where there has been a frictional feedback loop in the meeting with CS. The understanding of OSCE SMM should be seen through the lens of whether they are perceived as friendly towards Russia: again underlining that the frictional encounters are dependent on the relationship to Russia. However, there is a friction between CS and OSCE SMM practices, where OSCE SMM is not seen as able to focus on human rights and that they hold a top-down approach. Thus, there is a frictional encounter not to the liberal values of human rights, but rather to the *lack* of liberal values in OSCE SMM *practices*.

6.4 Civil Society Inclusion

This sub-section analyses the frictional encounters in terms of the inclusion of CS. This is to understand friction in *practices* between the international, national, and local levels.

6.4.1 Civil society agency

The CS-actors normatively see several reasons as to why they *should* be included in peace processes: Firstly, there is a perception that CS represents “...*the view of ordinary people*...” (Interview 5:08/04/21), thus showing a perception of legitimacy in the wider population.

Secondly, it is argued that CS can include voices of victims and IDPs (Interview 4:24/03/21 and 8:27/04/21). Hereby, it can be argued that CS can provide a more pluralistic understanding of the conflict.

Thirdly, CS is seen as able to foster peaceful dialogue (Interview 3:23/03/21 and 6:09/04/21), thus showing a bottom-up practice.

Fourthly, CS are also seen as watchdogs for political processes (Interview 2:19/3/21), thus keep political elites in check.

Hereby, CS is argued to hold an agency to the peace processes and thus *should* be included.

This is, however, not the case: many of the activists described small, if any inclusion, both in the MAs as well as in the general peace processes (Interviews 1:16/03/21; 3:23/03/21; 4:24/03/21; 6:09/04/21; and 7:12/04/21). This shows a friction in practices between the top-down and bottom-up approaches: on one hand the local CS, on the other hand, both the Ukrainian government and the international community.

It is argued that even though CS would have been able to help the Ukrainian government with the 2019 prisoner's exchanges (International Crisis Group 2020[1]; OHCHR 2020:13), they were not included. This is even though CS was perceived as more competent than the government group working on the issue (Interview 4:24/03/21). There is hereby again a frictional encounter between CS and the Ukrainian government in their practices, where the government is seen as dismissing CS-agency and competence. This frictional encounter in the understanding of CS-agency correlates with previous research, where CS-activism, if mentioned, is reduced to monitoring rather than fostering dialogue (Bazilo & Bosse 2017:77).

Hereby, there is not only a frictional sub-process of resistance from CS to the processes: there is also a perception that the government rejects CS-agency in the peace processes. This furthermore shows friction between top-down and bottom-up approaches, where CS-actors do not feel recognized in the top-down approaches. There is an understanding of friction between negotiations among governmental elites and the international community and then CS. Thus, there is a difference in the perception of the CS-*agency* between CS and the international community.

6.4.2 Long contra short term

Some interviewees agree that there is a difference in the CS-inclusion on a long-term and short-term basis: there were no CS-inclusion when the MAs were signed, but a higher degree of inclusion today (Interviews 1:16/03/21; 2:19/3/21 and 8:27/04/21), as well as that the current Zelensky-government is trying to include CS-actors in the processes (Interview 8:27/04/21). This shows a frictional feedback loop between CS and the local level, where there might be a higher degree of inclusion than before. However, even though Zelensky *did* rally on CS-inclusion, there has been no “*significant changes*” to CS-inclusion (Shevtsova 2020). Hereby, even though there might have a frictional feedback loop and a higher degree of CS-inclusion, this is disputed, and there is still a frictional encounter between CS and the Ukrainian government in terms of agency.

6.4.3 *Who* is included?

There have been measures by the Ukrainian government to include CS in the processes: In June 2020, Ukraine started including IDPs from NGCA in the Ukrainian delegation to TGC (Presidential Office of Ukraine 2020[2]; CivilM+ 2020). This would give a direct CS-representation at the negotiation table (Paffenholz 2014:76).

However, this measure is disputed *within* CS: The process of *who* to include in the delegation is criticised as non-transparent, where CS-actors have not been heard, as it is argued that the individuals are not known to the CS-community (Interview 4:24/03/21 and 7:12/04/21;). However, others are more positive towards the inclusion (Interviews 2:19/3/21 and 8:27/04/21), where one even argues that one of the included members of the Ukrainian delegation attended the organization’s workshops (Interview 8:27/04/21).

While there is an agreement between those activists who are critical and those who are positive to the inclusion into the Ukrainian delegation to TCG, they agree that IDPs’ voices *should* be included (Interviews 4:24/03/21 and 8:27/04/21), as well as it is important that CS documents the processes (Interviews 2:19/3/21; 7:12/04/21; and 8:27/04/21). The disagreement about the inclusion into the delegation is seen in its *process* of inclusion (Interviews 4:24/03/21 and 7:12/04/21). This brings a central aspect to the approach of CS-inclusion: *who* is included and *who* is not included?

Thus, there are multiple subprocesses of frictional encounters towards the Ukrainian government: A) There is an argument of a frictional feedback loop in practices, where the government incorporates the bottom-up approaches of CS into governmental processes. This could show a government *adoption* of CS-practices, upholding CS-agency. B) Other CS-actors do not see a frictional feedback loop, but rather that the Ukrainian government incorporates the bottom-up *discourse* of inclusion, but not the *practice* of inclusion. This furthermore shows a dispute within CS where there is a question of not only inclusion but also the inclusion of *who*.

6.4.4 Inclusion of NGCA-population

In terms of inclusion, there is also a question of inclusion of the NGCA-population. Here, there is a friction in the CS' and the Ukrainian government's practice towards the population. The interviewees see a dehumanization of NGCA-population (Interview 3:23/03/21), where the Ukrainian government does not care for the population (Interviews 4:24/03/21 and 7:12/04/21). This correlates with the perception of the Ukrainian government amongst the NGCA-population, where 75% from Donetsk NGCA and 57% from Luhansk NGCA feel that the Ukrainian authorities "do not care at all" about their needs (SCORE for Eastern Ukraine 2019[2]:26). Here, the CS differs between LPR/DPR, which are perceived as Russian proxies (Interviews 4:24/03/21 and 7:12/04/21), and the NGCA-population, which is perceived as dehumanized due to the conflict. There is a fear amongst NGCA-inhabitants that they would be treated as "second-class citizens" if reintegrated into Ukraine (Druey et al 2020:10). This fear is also being addressed by where the importance makes the inhabitants of NGCA feel a part of Ukraine (Interview 6:09/04/21). Here, there is friction with the practices of the Ukrainian government, who are not seen as providing for the NGCA-inhabitants.

6.4.5 Concluding remarks on inclusion

There is a perception of CS-agency, where CS sees itself as legitimate to be included in the peace processes. However, there is a frictional encounter between CS and the Ukrainian government: some CS-actors do not feel included in the peace processes. For those, who are not included, it is seen as a rejection of CS-inclusion by the Ukrainian government, and therefore friction between bottom-up and top-down approaches. However, there is a dispute *within* CS as to whether there is inclusion into the Ukrainian

delegation to TCG: whether there is a frictional feedback loop, where the Ukrainian government has adopted CS-practices, or whether the government has only adopted the *discourse* of CS-inclusion but not the *practice* of CS-inclusion. This further brings the question of *who* to include in CS-inclusion. Furthermore, there is a frictional encounter in the practices towards NGCA-inhabitants between CS and the Ukrainian authorities, where the authorities are seen as dehumanizing the inhabitants. This is different from the CS-perception, where DPR/LPR is seen as illegitimate, but that the NGCA-population should be provided for.

7 Discussion

The discussion will problematize both the understanding of *CS* and *peace processes*: central terms for the research question. Furthermore, it will discuss theoretical developments. This is done in three parts: a discussion about *who* is included in CS, a conceptual discussion of the term “peace process” and a discussion about theoretical contributions.

7.1 Civil society: *who* is included?

This sub-sequence discusses *who* is included in the civil society, based on the argument that CS-inclusion broadens peace processes to the public (Paffenholz 2014:73). This is seen in terms of both NGCA and pro-Russian narratives.

7.1.1 Eastern Ukraine and NGCA

It is likely that certain Eastern Ukrainian voices are not heard. Civil engagement is generally lower in eastern Ukraine and decreases the closer one gets to the contact line, which is reported to the fear of political repercussions (SCORE for Eastern Ukraine 2018:2-8). Furthermore, it is hard to obtain information about the NGCA population (SCORE for Eastern Ukraine 2019:14) and the area has a rank at 5/100 in terms of political rights and civil liberties (Freedom House 2021). This follows the argument that there is no CS in NGCA to talk about peace processes (Interview 7:12/04/21). Therefore, it is likely that certain Eastern Ukrainian voices are not heard in the CS-community, especially in NGCA.

7.1.2 Pro-Russian narratives

Despite the importance of listening to CS-voices, it can be discussed *why* there were no pro-Russian stances amongst the interviewees. After the Maidan Revolution, there has been a disappearance of the legitimacy of "*pro-Russians*" within CS, which Holper & Kyselova calls a "*structural exclusion*" of pro-Russians in the Ukrainian public and thus also CS (Holper & Kyselova 2020:6-7). This can be seen as a frictional encounter between narratives of conflict, where frictional encounters lead to a marginalisation of certain actors and narratives (Mannergren Selimovic 2013:348). Thus, the frictional encounter disables certain actors from being a part of CS and hereby from being included in the study. This provides an understanding of not only who is included in *peace processes*, but also who is included in the *call for CS-inclusion* of peace processes. However, this does not delegitimize the voices that *are* heard in the Ukrainian CS but rather brings a larger understanding of *who* is included.

7.2 Conceptual discussions

7.2.1 Is it even a peace process?

This section discusses the term "peace process" and whether it can be applied to Donbas. Several of the interviewees argue that there are no peace processes (Interviews 4:24/03/21; 6:09/04/21; and 7:12/04/21). This shows a problematization of what peace process "*...has become a convenient term to describe...*" (Darby & Mac Ginty 2008:3). As conceptualized in 5.2, a peace process can be seen as:

- 1) *Persistent peace initiatives*: There is a persistence to the process, where some parts of the MAs have been implemented (OHCHR 2020:13), even though most have not (European Parliament 2018).
- 2) *Involve main antagonists*: All main antagonists signed the MAs (Tagliavini 2016:219,222).
- 3) *More significant than an isolated peace proposal*: The MAs are agreements rather than proposals (UN S/2015/135, TCG 2015)
- 4) *Develop beyond initial statements of intent made by the main actors*: Even though the agreements are far from implemented, some provisions have "partially implemented" (European Parliament 2018), as well as there has been an exchange of prisoners (OHCHR 2020:13).

From this definition, there is a peace process in Ukraine, but this understanding is rejected by some CS-actors (Interviews 4:24/03/21; 6:09/04/21 and 7:12/04/21). This problematizes the term “peace process”. Even though the Ukrainian peace processes strictly speaking *can* be defined as peace processes it is in its narrowest understanding, but also that the narrowest understanding is too narrow to be seen as an actual peace process.

7.3 Theoretical developments

The study of CS-perceptions of the peace processes regarding Donbas can furthermore be used to develop the theories of CS-inclusion and friction:

7.3.1 Civil society inclusion in the context of interstate conflict

It can be discussed, if the low CS-inclusion in Ukraine might be due to the conflict’s international character. Even though there are conflicting narratives about whether the war is inter- or intrastate, the international character of the conflict is clear (Szpak 2017:276). The CS-inclusion could be seen as due to the geopolitical feature of the conflict, where the “high politics”-understanding has dominated the academic discourse on the conflict (Bazilo & Bosse 2017:92; Pigman 2018:82). There is a high level of top-down approaches due to the conflict’s international and geopolitical character. The frictional encounters between top-down and bottom-up practices are so unequal that a bottom-up practice is marginalized despite its rooting in CS. It can be argued that the low degree of CS-inclusion might be due to the international character of the conflict.

7.3.2 Global and illiberal?

This sub-discussion underlines a deconstruction of the interlinkedness between the axes of friction. The theory of friction already deconstructs the dichotomous relationship between local and global (Björkdahl et al 2016:1). However, the axes of e.g. of global/local and liberal/illiberal are highly used in a global-liberal and local-illiberal understanding (Björkdahl et al 2016:6; Buckley-Zistel 2017:17). In the case of

the Ukrainian CS, as seen in the analysis, there is a strong focus on liberal values: a liberal discourse, which has been adopted by the local CS. From a Ukrainian CS-perspective, the local actors are the liberal, while the global is seen through the lens of an illiberal "high politics". It can be argued, that there is a frictional sub-process of adaptation to liberal discourses but a resistance to the actors and their practices that are not seen as upholding these discourses. Building on this, the frictional encounter between the civil society and the global actors is not only seen through global actors *actions* but also in their *inaction*. Thus, the frictional encounters paradoxically show empowerment of the local CS based on liberal values, but at the same time a frictional encounter, where the international community is not seen as upholding the liberal ideals that are empowering CS.

8 Conclusion

To answer the research question "How do Ukrainian civil society actors perceive the peace processes regarding Donbas?" and the sub-questions relating to perceptions of MAs, OSCE SMM and the peace processes in terms of inclusion, the following can be concluded:

Firstly, to investigate the CS-actors' perceptions of the MA, the OSCE SMM and inclusion, their perception of the conflict must be understood. There is a competing discourse between intra- and interstate conflict: from the Ukrainian CS-perspective, Russia is seen as the aggressor. Thus, perceptions of anything related to the peace processes are seen through the lens of their relationship to Russia and the frictional encounters to international encounters differentiate depending on this.

Secondly, *The MAs* are not seen as able to bring peace, since their practices are seen as top-down, contrasting the bottom-up approach of CS: there is a frictional sub-process of rejection to the understanding of a peace process. This shows a frictional encounter with the MAs as an outcome of international negotiations. The MAs top-down approach is seen as in opposition to the liberal values of human rights due to a "high politics"-practice. This shows an adoption of liberal ideals but a perception that global actors, that should uphold these ideals, are not upholding them: there is an adoption of the liberal discourses, but a resistance to the international practices.

Thirdly, *OSCE SMM* is seen through the lens of its perceived relationship to Russia: whether it is "pro-Russian" or "impartial". However, there has also been a frictional feedback loop, where OSCE SMM practices are seen as more impartial than by the start of the conflict. Furthermore, the OSCE SMM as an international actor is seen as unable to uphold a human rights-based approach, creating friction between OSCE SMM practices and CS' bottom-up practices.

Fourthly, in terms of *inclusion*, CS-actors do not believe that the peace processes are inclusive. This is despite the understanding that CS have an agency to be included. This again shows a frictional encounter between top-down and bottom-up practices. However, the Ukrainian government has lately undertaken measures to include CS into TCG. This brings the question of *who* is included. With those who *are* included, it can be perceived as a frictional feedback loop between CS and the Ukrainian government.

With those, who *are not* included, the measure of inclusion can be seen as the Ukrainian government's adoption of the discourses of CS-inclusion, but not of its practices.

In conclusion, there is a perception amongst Ukrainian CS-actors that the peace processes in Donbas are close to non-existing: the peace processes are global actors' top-down practices, unable to create a peaceful situation in Donbas.

For future research, it would be fruitful to apply the concept of *horizontal* friction (the friction between local actors (Björkdahl & Höglund 2013: 298)) to the context of Ukraine between activists in Kyiv and Eastern Ukraine. Horizontal friction is currently underdeveloped, where it could be conceptualized through an understanding of a frictional encounter between these groups' respective frictional relationship to the international community. This would create a deeper understanding of CS-perceptions and a nexus of vertical and horizontal friction. Furthermore, it would be fruitful to understand a more general comparison of CS-inclusion in interstate and intrastate conflicts to understand whether there, in general, is a low degree of CS-inclusion in interstate conflicts: whether the international character of the conflict affects CS-inclusion.

9 References

9.1 Interviews

- Interview 1, 16th of March 2021. Ukrainian civil society actor. [Interview conducted over Zoom].
- Interview 2, 19th of March 2021. Ukrainian civil society actor. [Interview conducted over Zoom].
- Interview 3, 23rd of March 2021. Ukrainian civil society actor. [Interview conducted over Zoom].
- Interview 4, 24th of March 2021. Ukrainian civil society actor. [Interview conducted over Zoom].
- Interview 5, 8th of April 2021. Ukrainian civil society actor. [Interview conducted over Zoom].
- Interview 6, 9th of April 2021. Ukrainian civil society actor. [Interview conducted over Zoom].
- Interview 7, 12th of April 2021. Ukrainian civil society actor. [Interview conducted over Zoom].
- Interview 8, 27th of April 2021. Ukrainian civil society actor. [Interview conducted over Zoom].

9.2 Literature

- Aarup, Sarah A., 2021. "Kyiv: Nord Stream 2 is 100 percent anti-Ukrainian". *Politico*. News article. 11/02/21. [Electronic] <https://www.politico.eu/article/nord-stream-2-is-one-hundred-percent-anti-ukrainian-ukrainian-deputy-minister-says/>. Accessed the latest 26th of May 2021.
- Bazilo, Ganna & Giselle Bosse, 2017. "Talking Peace on the Edge of War: Local Civil Society Narratives and Reconciliation in Eastern Ukraine", *Kyiv-Mohyla Law & Politics Journal*, vol 3, pp. 91-116.
- Bazilo, Ganna, Giselle Bosse, 2018 "Invisible Peacemakers : Civil Society and Reconciliation in the East of Ukraine" in Natalia Shapovalova & Olga Burlyuk (eds.) *Civil Society in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine: From Revolution to Consolidation*. Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag
- Bergström, Göran & Kristina Boréus, 2016. *Textens Mening och Makt: Metodbok i samhällsvetenskaplig text- och diskursanalys*. 3rd Edition. Lund: Studentlitteratur
- Björkdahl, Annika, Kristine Höglund, Gearoid Millar, Jaïr van der Lijn & Willemijn Verkoren, 2016. "Introduction" in Annika Björkdahl, Kristine Höglund, Gearoid Millar, Jaïr van der Lijn and Willemijn Verkoren (eds.) *Peacebuilding and Friction: Global and local encounters in post-conflict societies*. New York: Routledge.
- Buckley-Zistel, Susanne, 2016. "Frictional spaces: Transitional justice between the global and the local" in Annika Björkdahl, Kristine Höglund, Gearoid Millar, Jaïr van der Lijn and Willemijn Verkoren (eds.) *Peacebuilding and Friction: Global and local encounters in post-conflict societies*. New York: Routledge.
- CivilM+ 2020. *Pulse of Peace in Donbas*. CivilM+ June 2020. [Electronic]. Accessible at https://civilmplus.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Pulse-of-Peace-in-Donbas_June-2020.pdf. Accessed the latest 26th of May 2021
- CivilM+: "About Us". [Electronic]. Accessible at <https://civilmplus.org/en/about-us/>. Accessed the latest 26th of May 2021.
- Deakin, Hannah, Kelly Wakefield, 2014. "Skype interviewing: reflections of two PhD researchers", *Qualitative Research*. Vol. 14, nr. 5, pp. 603-616
- Donais, Timothy, 2009. "Empowerment or imposition? Dilemmas of Local Ownership in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding Processes", *Peace & Change*. Vol. 34, no. 1, pp. 3-26

- Druey, Cécile, Anna Hess, Julia Kaplan, Valentina Cherevatenko, 2020. "The Minsk Process: Societal Perceptions and Narratives", *OSCE Insights*, vol. 8, pp. 113 - 128. [Electronic]. Accessible at <https://doi.org/10.5771/9783748922339-08>
- European Parliament 2018, *At a glance: A UN peacekeeping mission in eastern Ukraine?* European Parliament Members' Research Service March 2018. [Electronic] Accessible at [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2018/614737/EPRS_ATA\(2018\)614737_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2018/614737/EPRS_ATA(2018)614737_EN.pdf). Accessed the latest 26th of May 2021.
- Everett, Judas 2020: "The 'Steinmeier Formula': A Path to Peace?" in Carsten Sander Christensen (ed.) *Analyzing Political Tensions Between Ukraine, Russia, and the EU*. Hershey, Pennsylvania: IGI Global
- Freedom House: "Eastern Donbas*". [Electronic]. Accessible at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/eastern-donbas/freedom-world/2021>. Accessed the latest 26th of May 2021.
- Galtung, Johan, 1969. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research", *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 167-191.
- Haug, Hilde, 2016. "The Minsk Agreements and the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission: Providing Effective Monitoring for the Ceasefire Regime", *Security and Human Rights*. Vol. 27, pp. 342-357
- Höglund, Kristine, 2011. "Comparative Field Research in War-torn Societies" in Höglund, Kristine & Magnus Öberg (eds.) *Understanding Peace Research - Methods and Challenges*. Routledge: London & New York
- Holper, Anne & Tatiana Kyselova, 2020. "Inclusion Dilemmas in Peacebuilding and Dialogue in Ukraine", *Peace and conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*.
- International Crisis Group 2020 [1]: *Peace in Ukraine I: A European War*, April 2020. [Electronic] Accessible at <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/eastern-europe/ukraine/256-peace-ukraine-i-european-war>. Accessed the latest 26th of May 2021
- International Crisis Group 2020 [2]: *Peace in Ukraine (II): A New Approach to Disengagement*. August 2020. [Electronic]. Accessible at <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/eastern-europe/ukraine/260-peace-ukraine-ii-new-approach-disengagement>. Accessed the latest 26th of May 2021
- International Crisis Group: "Responding to the New Crisis on Ukraine's Border". [Electronic] Accessible at <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/eastern-europe/ukraine/responding-new-crisis-ukraines-borders>. Accessed the latest 26th of May 2021.
- Jarstad, Anna K., Roberto Belloni, 2012. "Introducing Hybrid Peace Governance: Impact and Prospects of Liberal Peacebuilding", *Global Governance*, Vol 18., no. 1, pp. 1-6

- Kramer, Andrew E. 2016. "Keeping Bankers' Hours, European Observers Miss Most of Ukraine War", *Politico*, News Article. 27th of July 2016. [Electronic]. Accessible at <https://www.ny-times.com/2016/07/28/world/europe/ukraine-war-osce-observers.html>. Latest accessed 26th of May 2021
- Kyselova, Tatiana, 2019. "Mapping Civil Society and Peacebuilding in Ukraine: Peacebuilding by Any Other Name", *SSRN*. [Electronic]. Accessible at <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3521515>. Latest accessed 26th of May 2021
- Kyselova, Tatiana, Anne Isabel Kraus, Lars Kirchhoff, Julia von Dobeneck, 2017. "Research Report: Track III Dialogues in Ukraine", *Center for Peace Mediation*. [Electronic]. Accessible at http://www.peacemediation.de/uploads/7/3/9/1/73911539/track_iii_dialogues_ukraine_full_research_report.pdf. Latest accessed 26th of May 2021
- Mac Ginty, Roger 2010. "Hybrid Peace: The Interaction Between Top-Down and Bottom-Up Peace" *Security Dialogue*. Vol. 41, no. 4, pp. 391-412
- Malyarenko, Tatyana, Stefan Wolff, 2018. "The Logic of competitive influence-seeking: Russia, Ukraine and the conflict in Donbas", *Post-Soviet Affairs* vol. 34, no. 4, pp. 191-212
- Mannergren Selimovic, Johanna 2013. "Making peace, Making memory: Peacebuilding and politics of remembrance at memorials of mass atrocities", *Peacebuilding*, vol. 1, no. 3, pp. 334-348
- Mannergren Selimovic, Johanna 2016. "Frictional commemoration: Local agency and cosmopolitan politics at memorial sites in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda" in Annika Björkdahl, Kristine Höglund, Gearoid Millar, Jaïr van der Lijn and Willemijn Verkoren (eds.) *Peacebuilding and Friction: Global and local encounters in post-conflict societies*. New York: Routledge.
- OHCHR (United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner) 2020, "Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine 16 November 2019 to 15 February 2020" in *OHCHR*. Accessible at https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/UA/28thReportUkraine_EN.pdf. Accessed the latest 26th of May 2021.
- OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe), *DECISION No. 1117 DEPLOYMENT OF AN OSCE SPECIAL MONITORING MISSION TO UKRAINE*, 21st of March 2014, PC.DEC/1117. Available at <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/d/6/116747.pdf>. Accessed the latest 26th of May 2021.

-OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe), *Civil Society and the Crisis in Ukraine*, 4 March 2014, SEC.FR/125/15/Corr.1*, 4th of March 2015, [Electronic]. Accessible at <https://www.ref-world.org/docid/598c4d334.html>. Accessed the latest 26th of May 2021.

-OSCE SMM (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine) 2016: “OSCE SPECIAL MONITORING MISSION (SMM) TO UKRAINE: The Facts” [Electronic]. Accessible at <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/b/a/116879.pdf>. Accessed the latest 26th of May 2021.

-OSCE SMM (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine) 2021 “Status Report as of May 2021” [Electronic]. Accessible at <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/c/1/487291.pdf>. Accessed the latest 26th of May 2021

-Paffenholz, Thania, 2014. “Civil Society and Peace Negotiations: Beyond the Inclusion-Exclusion Dichotomy”, *Negotiation Journal*, vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 69-91.

-Philipsen, Lise 2016. “Escaping friction: Practices of creating non-frictional space in Sierra Leone” in Annika Björkdahl, Kristine Höglund, Gearoid Millar, Jaïr van der Lijn and Willemijn Verkoren (eds.) *Peacebuilding and Friction: Global and local encounters in post-conflict societies*. New York: Routledge.

-Pigman, Geoffrey Allen 2018, “Debates about Contemporary and Future Diplomacy” in Kerr, Pauline and Wiseman, Geoffrey (eds) *Diplomacy in a Globalizing World. Theories and Practices*. 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

-Place, Joseph Jack 2020: “Zelensky and the Servant of the People: New Party, Old problems - An Examination of Volodymyr Zelensky’s Ideology and Progress” in Carsten Sander Christensen (ed.) *Analyzing Political Tensions Between Ukraine, Russia, and the EU*. Hershey, Pennsylvania: IGI Global

-Presidential Office of Ukraine 2020 [1]: “For the first time, representatives of certain districts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions are involved in the work of the TCG as part of the Ukrainian delegation” [Electronic]. Accessible at <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/do-roboti-tkg-vpershe-u-skladi-ukrayinskoyi-delegaciyi-zaluc-61525>. Accessed the latest the 26th of May 2021

-Presidential Office of Ukraine 2020 [2], “Address by President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy to the Verkhovna Rada on the Internal and External Situation of Ukraine”. [Electronic]. Accessible at <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/poslannya-prezidenta-ukrayini-volodimira-zelenskogo-do-verho-64717>. Accessed the latest the 26th of May 2021

- SCORE for Eastern Ukraine [1]: “Average score for Ukraine 2018: Support for Minsk Agreements” in *SCORE for Eastern Ukraine* [Electronic] Accessible at <https://scoreforpeace.org/en/ukraine/2018-General%20population%20Government%20Controlled%20Areas-183>. Accessed the latest the 26th of May 2021.
- SCORE for Eastern Ukraine, 2018. “Active and tolerant citizenship: revealing drivers and barriers of participation” in *SCORE for Eastern Ukraine*. [Electronic]. Accessible at https://scoreforpeace.org/files/publication/pub_file//Citizenship2018_ENG.pdf. Accessed the latest the 26th of May 2021.
- SCORE for Eastern Ukraine, 2019 [1]. “Drivers of Migration Tendency in Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts” in *SCORE for Eastern Ukraine*, [Electronic]. Accessible at https://scoreforpeace.org/files/publication/pub_file//PUB_SeeD_SCORE19_Migration_brief_ENG.pdf. Accessed the latest the 26th of May 2021.
- SCORE for Eastern Ukraine, 2019 [2] “TOWARD A COMMON FUTURE, VOICES FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE CONTACT LINE” in *SCORE for Eastern Ukraine*, [Electronic]. Accessible at https://scoreforpeace.org/files/publication/pub_file//PUB_DGEUKR19_Brief_Voices_from_both_sides_of_the_contact_line_ENG.pdf. Accessed the latest 26th of May 2021.
- Shevtsova, Maryna 2020, “Ukraine’s Civil Society and Zelensky: A Romantic Affair or Quest Marriage?” in *ISPI*. [Electronic]. Accessible at <https://www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione/ukraines-civil-society-and-zelensky-romantic-affair-or-guest-marriage-25792>. Accessed the latest the 26th of May 2021.
- Söderström, Johanna 2011. “Focus Groups: Safety in numbers” in Höglund, Kristine & Magnus Öberg (eds.) *Understanding Peace Research - Methods and Challenges*. Routledge: London & New York
- Szpak, Agnieszka 2017. “Legal classification of the armed conflict in Ukraine in light of international humanitarian law”, *Hungarian Journal of Legal Studies*, vol. 58, no. 3, pp. 261-280
- Tagliavini, Heidi, 2016. “Mediation in the Crisis in Eastern Ukraine up to 23 June 2015” In IFSH (ed.) *OSCE Yearbook 2015*, Baden-Baden
- Talentino, Andrea K., 2007: “Perceptions of Peacebuilding: The Dynamics of Imposer and Imposed Upon” *International Studies Perspectives*. Vol 8. Pp. 152-171
- TCG (Trilateral Contact Group), 2015. “Package of measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements” in *United Nations Peacemaker*. [Electronic]. Accessible at <https://peacemaker.un.org/ukraine-minsk-implementation15>. Accessed the latest the 26th of May 2021

- UCDP (Uppsala Conflict Data Program): “Ukraine” [Electronic]. Accessible at <https://ucdp.uu.se/country/369>. Accessed the latest the 26th of May 2021
- UN (United Nations), *Letter dated 24 February 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council*, 25th of February 2015, S/2015/135, available at <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/788519?ln=en#record-files-collapse-header>. Accessed the 26th of May 2021
- UN 2021: “Daily Press Briefing by the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General”. [Electronic]. Accessible at <https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/db210423.doc.htm>. Accessed the latest the 27th of May 2021
- Verkoren, Willemijn, Mathijs van Leeuwen, 2018. ”The imagined agent of peace: Friction in Peacebuilding through civil society strengthening” in Annika Björkdahl, Kristine Höglund, Gearoid Millar, Jaïr van der Lijn and Willemijn Verkoren (eds.) *Peacebuilding and Friction: Global and local encounters in post-conflict societies*. New York: Routledge.
- Worschech, Susann, 2018. “Is Conflict a Catalyst for Civil Society? Conflict-Related Civic Activism and Democratization in Ukraine” in Natalia Shapovalova & Olga Burlyuk (eds.) *Civil Society in Post-Euromaidan Ukraine: From Revolution to Consolidation*. Ibidem-Verlag: Stuttgart

11 Appendix 1: MFS Conditional Grant

ER - MFS <mfs@er.lu.se>
to me

Thu, Jun 11, 2020, 4:46 PM ☆ ↶ ⋮

🌐 Swedish ↘ English ↘ [Translate message](#) [Turn off for: Swedish](#) x

Hej Sofus Malte Petersen Rønberg!

Tack för din Minor Field Studies-stipendieansökan.

Alla ansökningar har nu granskats av studenternas hemfakulteter och av MFS:s centrala bedömningskommitté. Din ansökan var av god kvalitet och har bedömts uppfylla kraven för stipendiet! Enligt regelverket för MFS för Lunds universitet dock inte fatta beslut och tilldela studenter Minor Field Studiesstipendiet just nu, under rådande omständigheter. På grund av situationen med covid-19 kan din ansökan bli villkorligt beviljad tidigast i slutet av augusti. Detta gäller samtliga ansökningar som i normalfallet hade fått ett slutgiltigt godkänt besked vid det här laget.

Vad innebär ett besked om att min ansökan kan bli villkorligt beviljad?

Ett villkorligt beviljande innebär att du kan tilldelas stipendiet under förutsättning att följande villkor möts:

1. Utrikesdepartementet (UD) lyfter sin avrådan från resor till landet och regionen du avser att åka till.
2. Lunds universitet tillåter resor i utbildningssyfte samt att inget rektorsbeslut/policy hindrar din resa.
3. Det land som du planerar att resa till kan ta emot utländska resenärer. Du ansvarar för att kontrollera detta.
4. Det finns en uppdaterad bekräftelse från kontaktperson i fält (i form av ett intyg eller e-post) där hen intygar att projektet bör vara genomförbart på lokal nivå och att kontaktpersonen fortfarande kan agera din kontaktperson. Diskutera läget med din kontaktperson och försäkra dig om att studien är genomförbar och att de lokala förhållandena är säkra för dig.

Vad händer härnäst?

Om punkt 1 och 2 ovan är uppfyllda i slutet av augusti kommer du få information om hur du tackar ja/nej till stipendiet. I samband med att du tackar ja behöver du underteckna ett stipendiekontrakt, ladda upp bekräftelsedokument (se punkt 4 ovan), få ett trepartskontrakt signerat av din kontaktperson samt fylla i dina bankuppgifter. När detta blir aktuellt skickar vi information om hur du tackar ja/nej samt hur du laddar upp dokument i databasen. <https://www.scholarship.lu.se/mfs> Kanske önskar du avvakta med att fatta ett beslut om du ska resa iväg eller inte, pga covid-19. Från stipendiets sida behöver du resa hem från ditt värdland senast 30 maj 2021. Utbetalning av stipendiet sker när du tackat ja, alla dokument är på plats och som tidigast i september 2020.

Feedback på din ansökan

Din ansökan har granskats av din hemfakultet samt av MFS:s centrala bedömningskommitté bestående av representanter från flera fakulteter vid Lunds universitet. I vissa fall finns, för dig, mycket värdefulla kommentarer antecknade om din projektplan. Inom ett par dagar kommer feedback på din ansökan att mailas till dig. Kommentarer kan tas med till din uppsatshandledare för att diskutera din fältstudie.

På universitetets vägnar,

Hilda Fhager

MFS-handläggare
Lunds universitet
Externa relationer
Mottagande, mobilitet och service
Box 117, 221 00 Lund
Telefon: 046-2220137
E-post: mfs@er.lu.se
<https://www.lu.se/mfs>

12 Appendix 2: Cancellation of MFS

Inställd MFS Inbox x

ER - MFS <mfs@er.lu.se>
to ER

Wed, Jan 27, 2:06 PM ☆ ↶ ⋮

🌐 Swedish > English Translate message Turn off for: Swedish x

Kära student som sökt MFS i april 2020,

Hoppas att allt är okej under omständigheterna. Utrikesdepartementet har givit besked om förlängning av avrädan från icke-nödvändiga resor till samtliga MFS-länder pga pandemin. UD:s avrädan gäller tom 15 april. <https://www.regeringen.se/uds-reseinformation/ud-avraderna-andringar-av-avradan-fran-icke-nodvandiga-resor-til-alla-landst/> Enligt regelverket för MFS får stipendier inte beviljas, samt fallstudier inte pågå, om UD avråder från icke-nödvändiga resor till destinationen.

Det MFS-stipendium du sökte i april 2020 gällde för MFS-faltresor som ska vara avslutade senast siste maj 2021. Några av de andra villkoren för MFS är att faltresan genomförs under den termin studenten är registrerad på examenssuppskurs vid LU och att faltstudien pågår under minst 8 sammanhängande veckor.

Av dessa anledningar behöver vi tyvärr meddela att du inte kan beviljas det MFS-stipendium du sökt.

Om du nu studerar på kandidatnivå kanske MFS vara aktuellt för dig igen om något år, på masternivå. Det är möjligt att söka MFS för uppsatsskrivning både på kandidat-, magister- och masternivå. Du finner info om de planerade ansökningsomgångarna på www.lu.se/mfs

Om du tidigare meddelat oss att du ställt in dina MFS-planer, kan du bortse från detta utskick.

Återkom om du har några frågor och ta hand om dig!

Med vänliga hälsningar,
Hilda Fhager

MFS-handläggare
Lunds universitet
Externa relationer
Mottagande, mobilitet och service
Box 117, 221 00 Lund
Telefon: 045-222 0137
E-post: mfs@er.lu.se
<https://www.lu.se/mfs>

13 Appendix 3: Interview Guide

(On next page)

Interview guide: Civil society perceptions of the peace processes with Russia

First of all, thank you very much for participating in the field study.

About the study

The study is for my bachelor thesis in Peace and Conflict Studies at Lund University. The study investigates Ukrainian civil society actors' perception of the peace processes with Russia: both in terms of the Minsk Protocols and in the peace processes in general. This is to understand the peace processes in terms of inclusion of the civil society.

The interview

The interview will take approximately an hour and will be conducted over Zoom or another medium if you prefer. The interview will understand *your* perceptions of the peace processes with Russia: the Minsk Protocols in specific and the peace processes in general. If you do not want to answer a question, you can always choose to not answer it. I will ask follow-up questions throughout the interview. Again, you can always choose to not answer a question. The interview will be done through semi-structured questions as follows:

Introduction: I will start with asking if it I can record the interview. We will then talk about consent, anonymity, how the interview will be conducted, its structure and possible concerns.

Background: Please, tell me about your background, the background of your organisation and where you are based in the country.

Question 1: What is your general view of the peace processes?

Possible follow-up questions: What is your view of the Minsk Protocol? What is your view of the current development in the war with Russia? Have the Minsk Protocol made the situation better/worse? Why/why not?

Question 2: What is your perception of the international interveners in the peace negotiations?

Possible follow-up questions: What is your opinion on the role of OSCE, France, and Germany in the peace negotiations and peace processes? What do you see as the priorities of OSCE, France and Germany? Do you agree with their priorities in terms of the peace process?

Question 3: Have you, and your organisation and your opinions been included in the peace processes?

Possible follow-up questions: If so, how? Do you believe it is important to include organisations such as yours in the process? Why/why not? Do you agree with the priorities of the Minsk Protocol?

Question 4: Do you perceive the process as being able to bring about justice and/or peace to the situation?

Possible follow-up questions: Why/why not? Do you see a difference in peace or justice in the peace processes? If you see a difference in peace and justice, which would you prioritize? Why so? Do you believe that the peace agreements prioritize one over another?

Closure: If you feel that there is anything that has not been covered. I will also ask if there are others that you could imagine would be preferable to interview.

Anonymity and consent

You will be anonymous. I will ask you as to whether you would like the identity of your organisation to be anonymous too. The interview will be recorded in order for me to transcribe it. However, you will be anonymous in the transcription or described with your organisations' name depending on what you prefer. The transcriptions will be for academic use only. You can at any time throughout the interview choose to discontinue the interview.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,

Sofus Malte Rønberg

BSc student of Peace and Conflict Studies,

Department of Political Science

Lund University, Sweden

Mail: sofusroenberg@gmail.com and so7103ro-s@student.lu.se

Phone: +45 28 69 68 96

14 Appendix 4: Consent Form

(On next page)

Consent form

Background and purpose: The study investigates Ukrainian civil society activists' perception of the peace processes with Russia. This is to understand the peace processes in terms of the inclusion of civil society in the Minsk Protocols and in the peace processes in general.

Interviews: The interview will be conducted one-on-one through Zoom or another digital platform if you prefer. It will be conducted in English. The questions will be semi-structured, circulating around the themes described in the interview-guide. You can at any time before, under or after the interview choose to discontinue your participation in the study. You can also choose you not answer specific questions. The study will take approximately an hour.

Anonymity: Your participation will be anonymous. If you prefer, the identity of your organisation can also be anonymous, when I am listing what organisations that have participated in the study. The interview will be recorded. I will start the interview with asking if it is okay if I record. The recording will be made into a transcription that will be used for academic purpose only. You will be anonymous in the transcription. The recording of the meeting will be saved on two external hard disks. The in-terviews will be handled with confidentiality.

If you have any question prior to the interview, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,

Sofus Malte Rønberg

BSc student of Peace and Conflict Studies,

Department of Political Science

Lund University, Sweden

Mail: sofusroenberg@gmail.com and so7103ro-s@student.lu.se

Phone: +45 28 69 68 96