

# Ukrainian Elections: A Voice of Labour

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**The left was not very visible during the elections to the Ukrainian parliament on 21 July this year., once again various oligarchic candidates dominated the show. This time however in the industrial city of Kryvyi Rih there was one candidate standing in an effort to give a voice to Ukrainian labour. Vitaliy Dudin is a prominent solicitor representing trade unions who has campaigned for workers' rights. He is an active member of Соціальний рух (Social Movement) for whom he stood as a candidate. Published below is his election programme.**

Election programme of Vitaliy Mykolaievych Dudin, balloting in the single member constituency No. 31 in Kryviy Rih, for election to the Verkhovna Rada on 21 July 2019

I confess this is not just an election programme. These are ideas which I and my community organisation Social Movement are fighting for all the time, not just during elections. I did not write these demands on my own, but did so together with the workers of the Krviy Rih Basin. Kryviy Rih is unique not only for its mineral resources and hard-working people. Its right here that we have trade unions demanding a redistribution of wealth and respect for working people. The workers' struggle will be crowned with success if they have their representatives in government. I am ready to be their representative.

If you have a few seconds to spare then I will put my programme to you as follows: return the offshored profits, pay a decent wage, oppose discrimination. If you have a few minutes, then acquaint yourself with a fuller exposition of the ideas that I will defend in parliament.

**1. Democracy for all.** The removal of millionaires from government posts. Priority to workers' representation in government bodies. Electronic means of ongoing democratic participation. Election and recall of parliamentary deputies, judges and leaders of law enforcement bodies. Making strikes simpler to hold. The right of trade unions to initiate legislation. Expanding civil rights and restricting the apparatus of repression.

**2. Prosperity for all.** The daily online publication of all purchases and expenditures by government institutions and big enterprises. Progressive taxation of oligarchs' capital to increase revenues to the government's budget. Confiscation of wealth for not paying taxes, seizure of the property of offshore companies. Ending employment in the shadow economy by increasing the powers of employment inspectors and the trade unions. A minimum wage no lower than two-thirds of the average wage. Regulation of the prices for basic necessities.

**3. The economy for all.** Production not for the sake of profit but for the satisfaction of people's needs. Affordable rates for household utilities rather than the market rates. Two measures of effectiveness should be an ecologically sustainable use of natural resources and a reduction of the working day. Companies that violate labour rights and don't pay their taxes must not be permitted to tender for contracts. A guarantee that the state will pay those wages that are held back by employers. Socialisation of production under the control of work collectives and independent trade

unions. The planning of social development. Nationalisation of the banks, strategic sectors of the economy and monopolies in energy, transport and communications.

**4. Development for all.** An end to austerity. Genuinely free education and health care. Medicines cannot be anyone's "intellectual property", but should be available to sick people free of charge. An increase in life expectancy, not in the pensionable age. The abolition of restrictions on the use of intellectual products for commercial purposes. Creating the necessary conditions for people's freedom and creativity by guaranteeing unconditionally to everyone a minimum basket of consumption goods. The development of science, science-intensive industries and a space programme.

**5. Security and solidarity for all.** The restoration of peace and the territorial of Ukraine by way of the united action of the working class of the whole country. The withdrawal of foreign armies and mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine. Opposition to attempts to divide the people of Ukraine. Equal rights and solidarity of all working people regardless of their race, gender, ethnic or any other affiliation. A guarantee of the rights of all minorities. Liberation from Russian imperialism and the IMF's debt prison. Solidarity with the working masses of the entire world and with the progressive movements fighting for their freedom.

**The Social Movement** added on 24 June the following on Facebook:

For the first time in history a young trade union lawyer and activist in the Social Movement could become the Kryviy Rih workers' representative in parliament. Why would his election be useful to you?

We are demanding a minimum wage of 1,000 Euros in the iron ore mines. Their owners have the money, but they are taking their considerable profits to offshore locations.

We stand for strict control over the protection of health and safety at these enterprises and for really penalising employers for dangerous and unsatisfactory working conditions.

We stand for strengthening equal rights between men and women. We want to make creches and nurseries more widely available. This is a key necessity to allow women to work and protect themselves from poverty.

The status of a parliamentary Deputy will help workers in their struggle to improve wages. How so? A Deputy has the right:

- To raise the question of inspecting the work of an enterprise where there is evidence of the violation of the country's laws;
- To turn to the directors of enterprises, institutions and organisations located on the territory of Ukraine, regardless of who controls them or owns them. They are penalised if they fail to respond to the deputy;
- To have free access to all workplaces regardless of who controls them, or owns them, or their level of secrecy under state security. The directors of these enterprises have to make sure that a Deputy can meet with its all of its workers.

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**P.S.**

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