



Ukraine – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 17 August 2012

Information on whether police protection is available and effective against organised crime in Ukraine.

An *Australian Government – Refugee Review Tribunal* country advice document, in a section titled “SBU”, states:

“The Sluzhba Bespeky Ukrayiny (SBU) subunit, Administration A, also known as ‘Alpha’ unit, is the main state authority responsible for witness protection. The Conflict Studies Research Centre refers to the same unit as ‘Main Directorate A’ or ‘Alfa’, reporting that between 1994 and 2004 the Alfa team conducted ‘over 3,400 special operations including 980 preventions of dangerous crimes, arrests of armed criminals, and liberations of hostages’. No recent information has been located on the effectiveness of the Alpha/Alfa unit regarding the provision of state protection.” (Australian Government – Refugee Review Tribunal (29 April 2011) *Ukraine – UKR38527 – Demographics – Political System – Sluzhba Bespeky Ukrayiny – Human Trafficking – Child Prostitution – Organised Crime – Mafia – State Protection – Corruption*, p.8)

A *Ukraine General Newswire* article refers to the release of a criminal suspect as follows:

“Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense MP Hennadiy Moskal has asked the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine to institute proceedings against police officers who released from criminal liability a suspect in the murder of Kharkiv journalist Vasyl Klymentyev. ‘Moskal has sent a deputy request to the Prosecutor General's Office asking it to open a criminal case against police officers for negligence and covering for a criminal gang, and find out why [Andriy] Kozar [a former employee of the department for combating organized crime in Kharkiv, a suspect in the murder of Klymentyev] was released from criminal liability for participation in an organized criminal group, released from prison, and then reinstated in the interior bodies, even in the department for combating organized crime, which is supposed to deal with the fight against organized crime groups,’ the deputy's press service reported on Friday. Moskal said that he had spoken about Kozar's involvement in the crime after the disappearance of the journalist.” (Ukraine General Newswire (3 August 2012) *Moskal asks prosecutors to bring to account those who released from prison and hired suspect in Klymentyev's murder*)

A report on the Ukrainian police from the Ukrainian TV station *Inter TV* states:

“Almost every interior minister has said that crime poses a threat to national security and each repeatedly made statements to the effect that the police system must be reformed - the quicker the better. However, none of them delivered. The minister says that equipment used by the police is good for nothing and wages scanty. This is the reason why one in every four police

officers is ready to quit.” (Inter TV (18 February 2012) *Ukrainian minister says rising crime poses threat to national security*)

A *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* report states:

“Volodymyr Yavorskiy, UHSPL's executive director, told RFE/RL that his organization recently completed extensive surveys with the Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group showing that the number of complaints by Ukrainians about corruption in local politics had greatly increased. He said most of the complaints were about public prosecutors, mayors, and police -- people whose first duty is to 'protect human rights and uphold the law.' Yavorskiy said people living in rural areas 'feel completely unprotected; police are not fulfilling their duties.' He said local politicians and other elites are also acquiring large plots of land. Yavorskiy added that people's human rights are being violated in Ukraine but officials are closed off from society and fail to react to people's complaints.” (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (28 July 2010) *Helsinki Group Says Ukraine Becoming 'Feudal State'*)

An *Amnesty International* report, in a section titled “Police Corruption”, states:

“Corruption is very widespread within the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine as in the rest of Ukrainian society, and extortion by the police was alleged in many of the cases that have come to Amnesty International's attention. In a meeting with Amnesty International in March 2011, Anatoliy Onishchuk, the head of the police trade union acknowledged that corruption in the police was rife. Corruption is encouraged by low salaries - the average monthly salary for police officers in Ukraine is 210 Euros– and chronic underfunding of police work.” (Amnesty International (12 October 2011) “*No evidence of a crime*”: *Paying the Price for Police Impunity in Ukraine*, pp.11-12)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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