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### **IFES SURVEY REVEALS MOST UKRAINIANS SUPPORT CLOSER RELATION WITH EUROPE**

#### *In the East, More Respondents Prefer Closer Alignment with Russia*

WASHINGTON/KYIV — April 30, 2014 — More than twice as many Ukrainians believe that Ukraine would be better off with closer economic and political relations with Europe than with Russia (44% vs. 21%); while 21% believe that Ukraine should have good relations with both, according to a new survey conducted by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). By contrast, in the East, more respondents prefer closer relations with Russia (46%) than Europe (16%).

IFES' 22nd public opinion survey in Ukraine polled respondents throughout the country – with particular focus on the Eastern and Southern oblasts – on attitudes and opinions regarding the current government and key institutions, the current crisis in the East, alignment with Russia vs. Europe, and political views ahead of the May 25 early presidential elections. IFES has conducted regular public opinion surveys in Ukraine since 1994.

Despite the fact that a majority of Ukrainians describe the country as being divided (73%), a clear majority of respondents also believes that Ukrainians will be able to repair their divisions in the long run (74%). However, a majority of respondents in the East do not think that the current government represents all regions of the country (64%). Instead, those respondents said that the government represents Western and Central Ukraine, as well as oligarchs.

Most Ukrainians, including significant majorities in the East and South, do not believe that the Russian language is discriminated against in Ukraine (82%). Also, just over half of respondents believe that Russian should either be an official state language (27%) or a recognized regional language (24%), with those figures being significantly higher in the East.

The majority of Ukrainians in all regions of the country support a system of government in which oblasts have more control over decision-making (32% strongly agree, 41% somewhat agree). The majority also believes that this arrangement can probably help resolve differences between various regions of Ukraine (25% definitely, 56% probably).

A majority of respondents in all regions of the country say that they are very (56%) or somewhat likely (25%) to participate in the May 25 presidential elections. Historically in Ukraine, actual voter turnout on Election Day has been closer to the number of “very likely to vote” in IFES pre-election surveys.



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Among the registered presidential candidates, Petro Poroshenko (Solidarity Party) is the clear favorite garnering the support of over a third of likely voters (35%) followed by Yulia Tymoshenko (Batkivschyna Party) with just over 10%, Serhiy Tygypko (Strong Ukraine) with 5%, and Oleh Liashko (Radical Party) with 4%.

Close to half of all Ukrainians believe that the election will be either completely free and fair (7%) or relatively free and fair (39%). Negative perceptions are especially high in the Eastern part of the country, with close to a third of respondents (29%) saying that the results cannot be trusted.

The 2014 survey was sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and includes responses from 2,039 Ukrainians polled between April 8 and 15, 2014. The opinions expressed in this survey do not necessarily reflect the opinions of USAID or U.S. Government

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