



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on August 23, 2023

## Ukraine's Parliament to Legalize Porn Production, Saying It Could Help Fund Military Efforts

Lawmakers in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, or Ukrainian parliament, declared last Friday that they have garnered adequate signatures for a bill that would legalize the production of pornography. The main champion of the proposal, Yaroslav Zheleznyak, has alleged that the present laws give rise to corruption. Zheleznyak further claimed that decriminalizing porn could help fund the country's military efforts.

Measure 9623 would amend Article 301 of Ukraine's criminal code, which Zheleznyak lambasted as "nothing short of stupidity." It does not change anything regarding child pornography, human trafficking, or prostitution.

"We are not even talking about OnlyFans [a London-based online platform utilized by "sex workers"], but about consuming this content in general," he told the *Kyiv Post*, elaborating that imprisoning someone for up to eight years for sending or receiving nudes is a legacy of the former Soviet era.

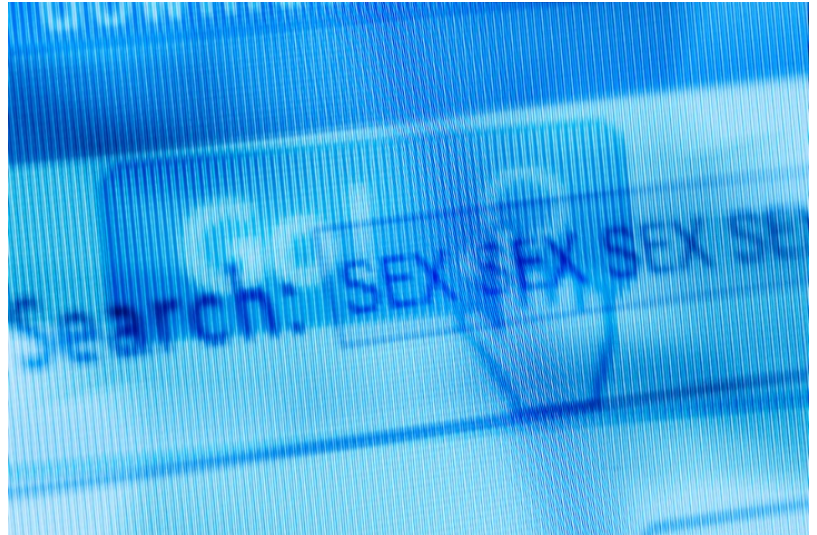
Moreover, Ukrainian police apparently spend a lot of time trying to nip the problem of pornography in the bud. "Our colleagues from BRDO (Better Regulation Delivery Office) calculated that in 2021, law enforcement officers spent about 85,500 working hours on cases related to the distribution of porn. This is approximately a year of daily work without holidays by 41 investigators," Zheleznyak posted on his Telegram channel. He posited that Ukrainian police have other things to do than hunt down cam girls.

According to the explanatory note for the suggested draft law, 704,667 people received a court summons in 2022 for charges that fall under Article 301 of Ukraine's Criminal Code, which refers to pornography.

Ukraine's quest against pornography also gives rise to opportunities for corruption, Zheleznyak elaborated. For example, based on figures given by Zheleznyak, the state received over 34 million hryvnia (\$920,000) in taxes in the first half of 2023 from sites like OnlyFans, whose majority owner is Ukrainian-American businessman Leonid Radvinsky. "We receive their tax money, but anyway put them behind bars," he said.

A charity using nudes to raise funds for the Ukrainian military has also raised some money. Called "Teronlyfans," the group rewards those who donate to the armed forces or refugees with risqué photos.

"As citizens of Ukraine, our primary responsibility is to provide our soldiers with everything they need," Teronlyfans executive Anastasia Kuchmenko told the *Kyiv Post*. The group dabbles in "erotic and not pornographic content," Kuchmenko admitted, and could be charged under the current law if the government keeps tabs on their activities.



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While the proposal already has the required co-sponsorships to proceed to a vote, some Ukrainians are unhappy about the move.

“This is worse than alcohol dependence. People masturbate rather than engage in creating a family and raising a healthy generation,” one user posted on the Telegram channel of the People’s Deputy of Ukraine Yaroslav Zheleznyak.

“The same people that are for the legalization of LGBTs (lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgenders) are for the legalization of porn. This will lead to great problems and the degradation of the nation,” another user wrote.

Indeed, Zheleznyak’s party, Golos, suggested decriminalizing same-sex civil partnerships in March. The party has 20 seats in the 450-member legislature. It has a mandate that is scheduled to expire in October but will likely be extended, as Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelensky’s martial law would not permit a new election to be held in the near future.

Other users slammed Zheleznyak that the topic was unsuitable for wartime. “Insanity! Let’s welcome this issue to the forefront (of the legislative agenda)!” one user penned satirically.

The signatures needed for the registration of the bill in the Verkhovna Rada have already been collected. Zheleznyak quipped that this was because its “voters are also active consumers of pornographic content.”

Following the registration of the draft law, a committee would examine it for any amendments or suggestions. If the draft law needs no amendments, the parliament would then vote on it. Subsequently, it would be presented to Zelensky for his signature.

The bill is not applicable to — and protects the present state of regulations referring to — criminal responsibility for child pornography, human trafficking, pimping, or engaging someone in prostitution.

Earlier this year, Ukraine’s former deputy culture minister, Inna Sovsun, suggested legalizing same-sex civil partnerships, alleging that such measures would both reward the service of LGBTQ soldiers and pander to the requirements of Kyiv’s foreign supporters. Sovsun declared that she has submitted the bill to the Verkhovna Rada for deliberation.

“Legalization of single-sex relationships is very important to me now, because if I come home [dead], my partner can’t even bury me,” was one of the arguments from the Ukrainian LGBT Soldiers and Allies’ Facebook community that Sovsun quoted in proclaiming her bill.

The bill, which is a culmination of nine months’ work with the participation of two NGOs, would set up legal grounds for people in same-sex relationships to regulate property ownership, inheritance, pensions, and death benefits, Sovsun posited.

“I could say that this is what our Western allies are demanding of us — and it is true, they are,” but 56 percent of Ukrainians agree that LGBTQ people should be entitled to civil partnerships, she wrote. “As a society, we have matured beyond the ‘Russian swamp’ and Soviet worldview.”

Although Ukraine decriminalized homosexuality in 1991, its constitution defines marriage as a voluntary union between a man and a woman (Article 51), and as late as 2018, the Justice Ministry in Kyiv declared there were no legal foundations for same-sex civil partnerships.



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