

The policy of Gorbachov's Perestroika stimulated the emancipation of soviet society. At the same time it also launched the process of the political life democratization - different opposition associations and political parties started to appear. An impulse for the rise of the opposition movement in Ukraine was connected to the tragedy of Chernobyl, which influenced public and political life in the country. Many ecological and cultural organizations, which occurred right after the Chernobyl tragedy, became the base for the mass Ukrainian opposition movement named Rukh few years after. From the very start it was just the organization which gathered together people with different political views. In a few years Rukh became the strongest political subject in the opposition to the ruling power and gave the foundation for the rise of the new political parties.

Despite the fact that the Communist party of Ukraine lost its absolute power and control over society, the sympathy to the left ideology among Ukrainian population still remained strong. New left-wing parties began to appear in the political stage soon after the prohibition of the Communist party. The forbidden party served as the base for newly appeared parties with the leftist ideology (similar as Rukh for national oriented parties). Renewed Ukrainian Communist party became the serious competitor for its party rivals. Hardships connected to the transition from the totalitarian state to the democracy as well as the consequences of economical and political crises created a fruitful field for strengthening of the communist ideology. Communist party became the biggest and the strongest political party in the independent Ukraine with well-structured regional organization and mass and steady electoral support. In the first Ukrainian parliamentary elections held in 1994 the

Communists gained 90 seats in the newly elected parliament. Its strongest opponent Rukh held the second place with only 20 seats. Other political parties turned out to be weak competitors because of poor and unstable electoral base, unclear programs and political aims. Among few exceptions were the Socialist Party of Ukraine and the Ukrainian Republican party.

The Ukrainian state did not show much support for the political parties. The only law which regulated the juridical status for the parties was the Law of Ukraine on Public Associations introduced in 1992. In spite of the certain reluctance of the state and unstable status of the party, the process of gradual transition to democratization was obvious. For the Ukrainian political system the period of 1988-1994 could be characterized as the beginning stage of multi-party system formation.