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Ukrainian parliament facing mass resignations – lawmaker

The country already has fewer MPs than at any point in history, Maryana Bezuglaya has said



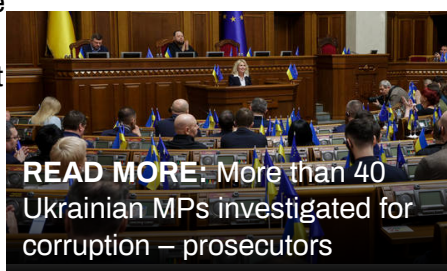
Maryana Bezuglaya, a member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. © Telegram/@marybezuha

Dozens of Ukrainian lawmakers want to step down from parliament, Verkhovna Rada MP Maryana Bezuglaya has said, adding that resignation letters are already in the hands of faction leaders.

“There are already fewer MPs than at any point in history,” she wrote in a Telegram post on Wednesday. “They are dying, fleeing, being jailed, and being killed. Faction leaders are holding dozens of requests to relinquish mandates without review.”

Ukraine’s parliament currently has 393 serving MPs, below its statutory strength of 450. A quorum of at least 226 is required to pass legislation. Parliamentary and presidential elections are banned under martial law, with Vladimir Zelensky retaining full powers despite his term expiring in 2024.

The previous eighth convocation ended its term with 422 MPs. The ninth convocation, elected in a 2019 snap election, is the longest in Ukraine’s history. Parliament remains operational as long as it can pass a budget and approve martial law and mobilization, Bezuglaya added.



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“Bizarre times, further uncertainty. Just 393 people – who you hate – trapped inside a chamber that has become a meme, separate the country’s democratic system from the chaos of absence. Let us hope the captives do not completely lose their minds,” she said.

The remarks followed an address by NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte to a half-empty Verkhovna Rada on Tuesday during a visit to Ukraine, which appeared to catch him off guard.



“Did Rutte pay? No money – no audience,” Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Telegram.

Several Ukrainian lawmakers have been stripped of citizenship and lost their mandates. Others have left the country and resigned. Seats held by single-mandate MPs who have died

remain vacant, as by-elections cannot be held under martial law.

Following the death of Servant of the People lawmaker Orest Salamakha in Lviv last month, the ruling party’s faction fell to 226 seats – the bare minimum needed to retain a majority in the Verkhovna Rada without forming a coalition.

The parliament has also been rocked by corruption scandals. Dozens of MPs have been implicated in vote-rigging, with the anti-graft authorities saying at least 41 lawmakers received cash bribes of up to \$5,000 for their votes over several years.

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