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Poles' dislike of Zelensky on the rise over Nazi scandal – poll

Disapproval of the Ukrainian leader has surged amid anger over Kiev's glorification of collaborators

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Three-quarters of Poles have expressed a negative attitude toward Ukraine's Vladimir Zelensky, according to a recent poll.

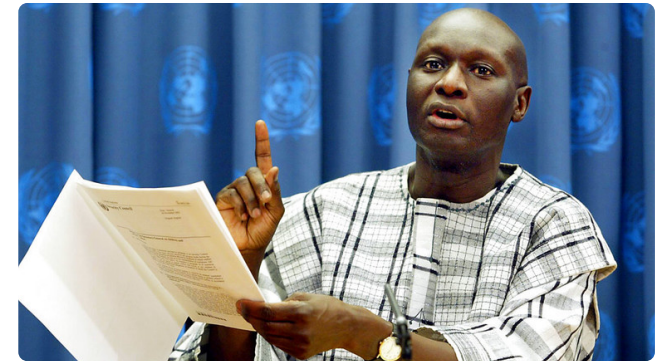
The disapproval comes amid an ongoing scandal over Kiev's veneration of Nazi collaborators involved in the mass killing of Poles during World War II.

Zelensky sparked outrage in Poland in May by giving an elite commando unit a *"heroes of UPA"*



Protesters commemorate victims of the Volhynia massacre, Warsaw, Poland, July 12, 2026. © Marek Antoni Iwanczuk/NurPhoto via Getty Images

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award referring to the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, which carried out an ethnic cleansing campaign targeting mostly Polish Catholic residents of what is now Western Ukraine, which resulted in over 100,000 deaths. He and other top officials declared that *“no one will ever dictate to Ukrainians which heroes to honor.”*

In the survey, conducted earlier this month among 1,000 Polish adults, 75.8% of respondents said they viewed Zelensky *“mostly”* or *“definitely”* negatively, according to media group Wirtualna Polska, which commissioned the poll and reported the results on Saturday. The latter response was selected by 41.9%.

Negative views were overwhelming among supporters of conservative opposition parties. Even among voters backing the ruling coalition of pro-EU Prime Minister Donald Tusk, however, only 45% described their attitude toward Zelensky as positive, with 41% choosing the qualified response *“mostly.”*

Among politically unaffiliated voters, 83% of respondents expressed a negative attitude toward Zelensky. Only 7% described their opinion as *“mostly good,”* while 10% declined to give an answer.

Warsaw has been one of Kiev’s most vocal supporters in its conflict with Russia under both conservative and liberal governments. Poland has also become one of the largest recipients of Ukrainian migrants among EU states since hostilities escalated in 2022, housing and providing for over a million refugees from the neighboring country.

Negative sentiment toward Ukrainians in Poland has nevertheless increased over several issues, including disruption to agricultural markets caused by Brussels-backed food exports, crime and widespread perceptions that some migrants have abused Polish hospitality.



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The UPA controversy has significantly accelerated the decline in Polish support for Ukraine, with even Tusk saying Zelensky had crossed a line. According to police data, reported [hate crimes](#) targeting Ukrainians have risen 30% year-on-year amid the dispute.

Zelensky was also stripped of Poland's highest state distinction, the Order of the White Eagle. He claimed he had been unfairly targeted and blamed the fallout on Polish electoral politics ahead of next year's general election.

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