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**LEGAL STATUS OF WEST UKRAINIAN LANDS
AND THE UKRAINIAN MINORITY POSITION
AS PART OF THE SECOND POLISH REPUBLIC
(1918 1939)**

The article examines one of the complex problems in terms of international law, the problem of defining the territory of the Polish state and its borders after World War I due to the inclusion of Ukrainian lands.

The legal basis for final inclusion of Ukrainian ethnic lands into Poland were two international documents: the Riga Peace Treaty (1921) and the decision of the Council of the Entente for recognition of Polish Eastern Galicia (1923).

The author states that even if we agree with the Polish interpretation of the Riga Peace Treaty of 1921 and consider that the inclusion of Western lands to the Second Polish Republic is not as annexation but a cession, it must be recognized that it was forced and did not meet the right to self-determination.

The study made it possible to conclude that Poland has failed to establish by us-

ing legal and political mechanisms such conditions which have been laid down in international standards and could lead to a real protection of minorities. The main reasons were: lack of close cooperation between international and national law, absence of effective control over the implementation of rules and responsibility for violations of international obligations for the protection of minority rights.

Poland's experience confirms that the mechanical reproduction of the previous state ethnic structure without the empowerment of minority rights leads to the ethnic hatred and tension in international relations.

The author highlights the urgent problems in modern Ukraine that must be solved taking into account the experience of Ukrainian-Polish relations in interwar period and modern EU standards in this area.