

**INTERNATIONAL RENAISSANCE FOUNDATION (IRF)
ABRIDGED REPORT ON
2008 ACTIVITIES**

This is the International Renaissance Foundation's (IRF) condensed annual report on activities over the past year.

In 2008, IRF provided nearly US\$6 million in support for program activities aimed at democratic improvements and reform in the legal sphere (human rights, reforming the legal and criminal justice systems, access to information); consolidating civil society (strengthening public impact and control over all levels of government); Ukraine's European integration; media; general and higher education, including inclusive education for children with special needs; public health, including the rights of patients and other vulnerable groups; integrating national minorities into Ukrainian society, while preserving and developing their cultural differences; in the cultural sphere, the Foundation supported the publication of Ukrainian translations of works of global public opinion and development of the Ukrainian publishing industry.

2008 was a difficult year for IRF - as it was for all Ukrainians. Fostering democratic development and trying to support and promote best public initiatives under conditions of permanent political, and later, financial-economic crisis isn't easy. Nevertheless, we believe that despite the crises (or rather – thanks to them), Ukrainian civil society became more mature in 2008. This report reflects those often invisible processes taking place in civil society and the country overall. It contains only the main description of socially important undertakings and projects that were implementing or are being implemented with the financial support from IRF with funds obtained from its founder George Soros and other IRF co-donors and partners.

We would like to add that even amidst the global crisis, George Soros, in approving of the program strategies developed by IRF's Board of Directors and management, has increased the Foundation's grant expenses for 2009 by US\$1 million.

The Foundation's charitable donor activity is only possible thanks to the work of independent expert members of the IRF Program Boards, which make decision on the financing of public and other initiatives. IRF would like to thank the members of the Program Boards, our co-donors and partners, as well as representatives of different branches of power, ministries and agencies, that, despite the unfavorable conditions for democratic transformations, were open to cooperation with IRF-supported projects and directly with IRF and its experts.

IRF is still the largest charitable and donor institution promoting the development of modern civil society in Ukraine. IRF sees its mission as not only supporting individual public initiatives and institutions, but in persistently creating better conditions, including legal, which will maximize public activism and public self-organizations in all sphere and levels of Ukrainian society.

For the complete IRF 2008 annual report and list of supported initiatives and projects, visit: <http://irf.kiev.ua/en/>. There you can also find detailed information about our program priorities and corresponding grant competitions in 2009. Watch for competition announcements in the media and on the Internet.

Yevhen Bystrytsky
IRF Executive Director

CIVIL SOCIETY IMPACT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The Civil Society Impact Enhancement Program (director – *Oleksiy Orlovsky*) aims to promote the development of various forms of public self-organization, protection and lobbying the government on common interests of NGOs, ensuring equal dialogue with the authorities from development to implementation of decisions on all levels of government, monitoring government activities by NGOs to ensure transparency and accountability to the public.

One of the program's important lines of activities in 2008 was **supporting the development of a system of public self-organization**. Bodies of public self-organization are representative bodies established by residents of villages, cities, towns or neighborhoods. They can include building, street or block committees, as well as microdistrict, district, city, village and town committees, created by active residents. These groups allow citizens to participate in managing and solving local problems. The issue of improving the normative and legal foundations for public self-organization was discussed during the Fourth All-Ukrainian Conference "Improving the Normative and Legal Foundation for Bodies of Public Self-Organization" (<http://www.samoorg.com.ua>). Also discussed was the new version of the draft Law of Ukraine "On Bodies of Self-Organization" which was to replace the one registered in the *Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine* (#2108, February 21, 2008).

With the aim of promoting effective public self-organization in communities, support was provided for the opening of **centers for organization and methodological support to existing and new public self-organization bodies**. They were created locally to provide support to apartment condominiums in cities such as Mykolayiv, Luhansk, Khmilnyk, Kremenchutsk, etc. The centers provide community members with free methodological, consultative, organizational, legal, informational and other forms of assistance necessary for the proper functioning of public self-organization bodies and condominiums.

An important initiative implemented in 2008 was the "European Dialogue" NGO's project "**Network of Local Rural Development Agencies in the Lviv Oblast**." The project called for actively working with village communities to create local development agencies in the Lviv region. Project activities included trainings for community representatives, assistance with preparing documents to improve public services and supporting public initiatives, preparing 10 community microprojects for submission to competitions, forming a network of agencies in two raions, etc. A special page was created on the www.dialog.lviv.ua website with information about the project.

Civic Assembly of Ukraine (CAU). The economic and political crises exacerbated the issue of public dialogue with the central government. Several professional public associations have already forced different branches of power to engage in such a dialogue, or, at least, start considering its importance. It should have begun at the start of the term of any Cabinet of Ministers or Verkhovna Rada convocation. However, IRF has been supporting the activities of the Civic Assembly of Ukraine, which formulates and voices society's positions on strategic problems of Ukrainian society, for the past three years. Nearly 450 NGOs are currently members of the CAU.

The CAU-2007 proposal on the need for constitutional reform as the best solution to the political crisis was a key public opinion issue. The idea of creating a Constitutional Assembly was discussed and supported during the Second Civic Assembly "A New Constitution: Civil Society's Positions" (June 2008). A resolution with the following demands was approved and widely publicized: that politicians and government representatives refrain from using the constitutional process to gain political advantages; that they stop manipulative attempts to amend the Constitution without wide public discussion and create a Constitutional Assembly that will draft and approve a new Ukrainian Constitution and whose delegates will be directly elected and forbidden to occupy a post in high-level governments within 10 years; introduce a system of "open" (preferential) regional election lists; bring back a majoritarian system for local government elections; increase the accountability of deputies to the electorate, etc. (<http://gau.org.ua>).

Transparency of Revenues in the Ukrainian Oil and Gas Sector. The lack of openness of the state oil and gas sector remains a key problem and one that demands much greater attention from the point of view of transparency and true accountability to the public. In 2008, IRF continued its work in supporting public monitoring of revenues from the production, transport, storage and distribution of energy.

The result was an expert assessment of the most problematic issues that breed public corruption in the Ukrainian energy sector. IRF provided support for trainings on transparency in the oil and gas sector for journalists that was based on the green paper “*The Ukrainian Oil & Gas Sector: Transparency of Operations and Revenues*” (edited by Mykhailo Honchar, Anna-T Publishers, Kyiv-Sevastopol, 2008, 308 p.). Training and research materials were used in the preparation of numerous publications in print media, as well as radio and television programs. The green paper became the basis for initiating cooperation with similar Open Society Institute (OSI) programs in the US, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Kazakhstan (<http://nomos.com.ua>).

Program experts and experts from these countries developed a strategy to expand the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) to countries across which these energy sources are transported. This document was presented during the EITI Conference in Doha, Qatar in February 2009. At the 5th Yalta European Strategy Annual Meeting July 2008, with co-financing from the Victor Pinchuk Foundation, leading international and Ukrainian experts and high-level officials from all branches of the Ukrainian government discussed introducing principles of transparency and accountability in the Ukrainian energy sector (<http://yes-ukraine.org/en>).

Monitoring the Work of Local Government. An example of effective monitoring that was financing by IRF is the Chernivtsi City Youth NGO “Union of Active Youth” project entitled “Public Monitoring of the Work of Local Government – Barrier to Destruction of the Historical and Architectural Sections of Chernivtsi and the Inappropriate Use of Budget Funds.” During the first stage of the project (the project will last through mid-2009), numerous contractual and budgeting documentation violations were uncovered that led to the destruction of the city’s historical and architectural monuments. As a result of public pressure, workers were forced to redo the work they had already done.

(<http://www.pamjatky.org.ua/DetailedNews.aspx?NewsID=6040>)

Promoting Administrative and Territorial Reform. Understanding the long overdue need for administrative and territorial reform in Ukraine, and finding a mutual solution to the various approaches, IRF announced the tender “Promoting Administrative and Territorial Reform.” Support was given to the “Civil Society Institute” NGO (project manager - Oleksandr Vrublevsky) for a project to involve the public in formulating a concept for administrative and territorial reform, implementation policies and relevant draft laws necessary to carry out the reforms – all through direct dialogue with the government. The *Ministry of Regional Development and Construction of Ukraine* is the government partner in this initiative. Representatives of leading NGOs are part of the Government Interdepartmental Working Group, which was created via an order of the Prime Minister of Ukraine. (<http://www.csi.org.ua>)

Professionalizing Local Community Cadres. Among the several other initiatives support by IRF in this line of activities, we will note only the Podillya Pershyi Association’s pilot initiative “Professionalizing Cadres for Effective Partnership and Local Development in the Khmelnytsky Oblast.” The project’s goal is to approbate the practical-theoretical course “Professionalizing Local Community Cadres” for local community members. The course is regularly being taught at the Khmelnytsky Regional In-Service Training Center for Workers of Bodies of State Power and Local Self-Government, State Institutions, Businesses, Institutions and Organizations and in the future will be financed by money from the oblast budget. (<http://www.ppngo.org/eng>).

Electronic Democracy in Ukraine. Electronic government (e-government) is computerized interaction between public administration bodies and citizens, between NGOs and business, as well as within these groups (manager – Olesya Arkhypska).

In 2008, within the framework of the Memorandum of Cooperation signed by IRF, the Ministry of Regional Development and Construction of Ukraine, the Council of Ministers of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (AR Crimea), and the Sudak City Council Executive Committee (Autonomous Republic of Crimea), IRF implemented the operational project “Creation and Activities of E-Government Centers” to set up the Regional Center for the Development of Electronic Government in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

A joint study was conducted with the project’s Council (Council Chair – Inna Maliukova), which included noted experts, researchers, representatives of NGOs, parliament and government, entitled “E-Government in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea: Analysis and Recommendations” based on surveys of civil servants, and representatives of NGOs and business. Trainings material was also developed for the courses “Basics of E-Government” and “Computer Awareness.” Distance education technology is provided by the Electronic Education Center at the National Technical University of Ukraine “Kyiv Polytechnic University” that has been selected by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine as the coordinating center for introducing distance education technology in Ukraine. With support from the Ukrainian Embassy in Denmark and Ambassador Natalia Zarudna, a Ukrainian delegation visited Copenhagen to study the Danish experience of introducing e-government technologies into the everyday work of government bodies, practice in regulating this field, specifics of administrative and territorial reform in the context of expanded use of information technology, and the design and implementation of electronic voting.

Project partners include: e-Governance Academy (Tallinn, Estonia), Ukrainian Internet Association, Science Park “Kyiv Polytechnic,” and world renowned companies specializing in e-government technologies, namely: Intel Ukraine Microelectronics Ltd and Kvazar-Micro. The Regional Center for the Development of Electronic Government in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea officially opened in September 2008 (<http://crimea.e-gov.org.ua>)

A Tolerant Ukraine: Culture of Good-Neighborliness. The Civil Society Impact Enhancement Program supports initiatives aimed at increasing tolerance and the social integration of ethnic minorities.

Work continued on introducing the integrated course “Culture of Good-Neighborliness” in schools and kindergartens in AR Crimea. Taking into account the current social and political problems in Crimea stemming from the existence of different ethno-national, religious and linguistic groups, introducing this course at general education schools may prove to be effective. Future plans calls for teaching the course at Crimean institutions of higher education. The project is implemented by the “Integration and Development” Information and Research Center in close cooperation with the Council of Ministers of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, local state television, and the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. Experts from Georgia and other countries are very interested in studying this experience. (<http://www.integration.org.ua/>)

The program supported the “Informational Press Center” NGO’s (Simferopol) project to decrease the negative impact of one of the main factors that gives rise to intolerance in Crimea – **land use**. The project opened three special consulting centers that provide previously deported peoples with free legal advice and is conducting a campaign to explain land use rights, etc. (<http://www.integration.org.ua/>)

ROMA IN UKRAINE

Increasing tolerance and social integration of ethnic minorities is also central to the Roma in Ukraine program (manager – Nataliya Kyyak).

The Roma are one of Ukraine's most vulnerable ethnic and cultural minorities. According to official statistics, approximately 50,000 Roma live in Ukraine; however, experts believe the true figure exceeds 150,000. The Roma minority's problems have yet to gain proper official policy attention. They are discriminated against by social services, law enforcement bodies, etc. The Roma, as a group, are most hard hit by unemployment, illiteracy, and unsanitary living conditions.

The program directs its efforts at developing and monitoring effective state policy on Ukraine's Roma people, increasing the level of legal protection for Roma, improving the quality of medical services provided to the Roma population, and increasing employment numbers among Roma youth.

In 2008, during the program's lobbying of Ukraine's joining the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 communication and information exchange was established with the State Committee for Nationalities and Religion – the government institution responsible for introducing new programs and strategies to improve the life of the Roma minority. With support from the program, the Congress of Roma of Ukraine organized the June 2008 International Roma Conference "Roma in Ukraine: from the Past to the Future" (in honor of International Roma Day and the *Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015*). Conference participants – representatives of government, Roma NGOs, Ukrainian and foreign experts, researchers from the US, Serbia, Moldova, Bulgaria and Russia – discussed the urgency of state policy on Roma, Ukraine's chance of joining the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, and approval of the new "State Program for the Development of the Roma People in 2009-2013" that was developed by the Congress. The program coordinates its work on this issue with the World Bank.

A groups of projects continued working on **improving the Roma population's access to medical services** in the Zakarpattia oblast, the region where the Roma suffer most from socially dangerous diseases. Together with the Open Society Institute's (New York) Roma Health Program, support was given to an initiative to assess the situation and obtain reliable and relevant data in order to improve state policy on Roma public health. A series of trainings was also held for representatives of Roma NGOS on how to protect their rights and receive medical assistance. For example, in the city of Perezhyn, Zakarpattia oblast, the local polyclinic has an office where the deputy chief doctor holds special open hours.

On the **human rights** front, the program supports the most active Roma NGOs, which have been working in this field since 2004. Together with the Open Society Institute's Human Rights and Governance Grants Program, support was provided to a network of Roma NGO's in the Zakarpattia oblast that work in the human rights field and provide legal consultations to Roma. Within the framework of the "Human Rights for Zakarpattia Roma" project, the Association of Zakarpattia Gypsies "Roma" provided legal aid to Roma at a daily operating human rights center. Most often, human rights organizations dealt with groundless administrative detentions and beatings of Roma, and helped with filling out paperwork to get a passport, childcare or pension. (Center's address: Association of Zakarpattia Gypsies "Roma" Donska St., 4, Uzhhorod, tel. +38 (03122)13758)

In 2008, the program coordinated the **scholarship program for Roma students** (joint initiative of the Roma Education Fund and supported by the German Remembrance, Responsibility and Future Foundation. For information about the scholarship program, visit the Roma Education Fund's website <http://romaeducationfund.hu>). Scholarships were given to 38 Roma students studying in institutions of higher education in Kyiv, Uzhhorod, Odesa, Cherkasy, Lviv and Dnipropetrovsk. IRF hopes that young Roma professionals will return home with an understanding of the cultural and social specifics of their communities and steps necessary to improve their living standards.

RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The Rule of Law Program (program director – Roman Romanov) supports initiatives to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, and promotes institutional reforms in the legal system.

Ensuring Access to Information that is of Public Interest. The right to access to information (according to the Laws of Ukraine “On Information” and “On Public Appeals”) is an integral component of the rule of law and in ensuring greater openness in the work of government bodies and officials. In 2008 this line of activities increased its effectiveness.

Thanks to the program’s support, there were more legal rulings that state officials acted illegally by refusing to provide information or not providing answers to public information requests and appeals. In March 2008, at the request of NGO’s, the Ukrainian government recognized as illegal the practice of applying the restrictive classifications “Off the record” and “Not for publication” to government decrees and removed such classification from nearly 1,500 government documents issued since 1991. (<http://www.stop-x-files-ua.org>)

Supporting Strategic Legal Cases to Defend Victims of Human Rights Violations (strategic cases are cases that serve as precedent for rulings in similar cases in Ukraine). Thanks to the program’s work, in 2008 there was a stable increase in the number of success cases. Dozens of new cases were filed with the European Court of Human Rights. Lawyers who joined the projects succeeded in preventing the extradition on individuals who are being persecuted by their governments in Turkmenistan, Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan and other countries for the non-violent expression of their personal views. The regional network of lawyers capable of effective arguing court cases in defense of human rights in increasing, including within Ukrainian jurisdiction and with the help of international mechanisms (European Court of Human Rights, UN Human Rights Committee). (<http://hrlawyers.khpg.org/>, <http://www.helsinki.org.ua/index.php?r=a1b9>)

The Rule of Law Program was a pioneer in **reforming the free legal aid system in Ukraine**. The free legal aid system aims to help people who can’t afford legal assistance by providing consultations, information, and a lawyer in criminal cases. The state legal aid program in Ukraine has not been established properly.

Over the length of the project, experts from IRF and the Open Society Institute built cooperation with the legal profession, NGOs, justice and internal affairs bodies. The Public Defenders Offices in Kharkiv, Bila Tserkva (Kyiv oblast) and Khmelnytsky signed agreements with oblast internal affairs departments and provide legal assistance from the moment of detention. The project has had rather impressive results: the number of people detained by those police precincts working with the project has decreased, as has the number of people arrested. The International Renaissance Foundation works closely with the project’s co-financer – the Victor Pinchuk Foundation. Joint work continues with the *Ministry of Justice of Ukraine* on drafting a relevant law and submitting it to the Verkhovna Rada for review. (<http://pravo.prostir.ua/>)

Lobbying International Human Rights Organizations that monitor human rights in Ukraine (UN Human Rights Council, UN Committees, Monitoring Committee of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly). With program support, NGOs draft and present on the international level alternatives to state reports on human rights in Ukraine. The opinions of independent reports are included in the recommendations of many international institutions that objectively assess the human rights situation in Ukraine. (<http://www.helsinki.org.ua/en/index.php>)

A concept for criminal justice reform developed with the participation of public experts (and program staff) was approved by the National Commission for Strengthening Democracy and the Rule of Law, National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, and approved by presidential decree. Legislative acts are currently being drafted to implement these reforms (administrative responsibility, criminal code, prosecutor general’s office, etc.) (<http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/cgi-bin/laws/main.cgi?nreg=311%2F2008>)

The **National Assembly of Invalids of Ukraine**, with support from the program, launched a campaign to speed up Ukraine's joining the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. They also monitor Ukrainian legislation and its compliance with the UN Convention. As a result of the given campaign, the President of Ukraine instructed the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy to sign the Convention on behalf of Ukraine. On September 24, 2008, Ukraine signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol. The program plans to continue working with its partners on ratifying and implementing this important international document. (<http://naiu.org.ua/>)

Information activities in the human rights field include expanding the network of information resources on the Internet. The program provided support to the following specialized portals: Human Rights in Ukraine www.khpg.org, Legal Space pravo.prostir.org.ua, Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union www.helsinki.org.ua, UNIAN-Human Rights <http://human-rights.unian.net>, Anti-Xenophobia www.xenodocuments.org.ua, Prison Portal www.ukrprison.org.ua, and Ukrainian Human Rights Portal www.upp.org.ua.

In cooperation with the Norwegian Helsinki Committee and the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union, the program launched an educational program for new activists, law professors and civil servants. In 2008, 8 week-long human rights schools were held (www.edu.helsinki.org.ua).

Human Rights Documentary Film Festival. In 2008, the festival's audience grew considerably. In addition to Kyiv, the festival was invited to more than 30 Ukrainian cities, including: Vinnytsia, Dnipropetrovsk, Kryvyi Rih, Donetsk, Ivano-Frankivsk, Luhansk, Lutsk, Lviv, Odesa, Poltava, Rivne, Sumy, Hlukhiv, Shostka, Lebedyn, Kharkiv, Kherson, Chernihiv, AR Crimea: Sevastopol, Simferopol, Armiansk, Dzhankoy, Novoozerne, Yevpatoria, Kerch, Krasnoperekopsk, Rozdolne, Feodosia and Yalta.

UKRAINE'S EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

The European Program (program directors – Iryna Solonenko and Dmytro Shulga) aims to increase the quality and effectiveness of state policy on Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic integration and formulate a social inquiry for Ukraine's Europeanization. In 2008 the program initiated and provided financial, expert and organizational support to civic initiatives to bring Ukraine closer to integration with the European Union.

Government-public cooperation in the field of European integration. A public expert council was created within the Ukrainian component of the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council (a bilateral EU-Ukraine group, created within the framework of the EU-Ukraine Partnership and Co-operation Agreement) and includes 31 independent public experts. The work of this Council is important for consolidating government-public cooperation in the field of European integration. It also consolidates often separate expert and public initiatives in the field of European integration. The program provided organizational and financial support for the creation of a Public Council and the work of its secretariat. For more information about the Council and its achievements, visit: <http://www.eu.prostir.ua/themes/rada.html>.

Increasing the transparency of the negotiation process between Ukraine and the EU on an Association Agreement. Due to the program's support for an international conference in Kyiv, Ukrainian citizens and stakeholders learned about the experience and successful practices of involving the public in countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Western Balkan in the negotiation process with the EU. A roundtable was also held on the issue of intellectual property rights as a component of the Association Agreement. With the program's support and participation of experts from the Public Expert Council, a study was conducted and analytical report published on the role of civil society in the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. (<http://www.eu.prostir.ua>) The experts' recommendations were incorporated into drafts of certain sections of the Association Agreement. The European Space portal also now includes a separate page dedicated to this negotiation process (<http://www.eu.prostir.ua/themes/ua-eu.html>).

Public assessment of the state of implementation of the Ukraine-EU Action Plan (project by a consortium of leading think tanks: *Razumkov Centre, Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting, Centre for Political and Legal Reforms*. Project materials are available under the “International Relations” section at <http://www.uceps.org>). The results of public monitoring – alternative to the Ukrainian government’s and European Commission’s assessments – were taken into consideration in the bilateral report on the implementation of the *Ukraine-EU Action Plan* (March 2008) and the European Commission’s report on the European Neighborhood Policy in 2007 (April 2008). Following the recognition of the competence of the independent public assessment, both the Ukrainian government and European Commission decided to consult with public experts during the development of a replacement for the EU-Ukraine Action Plan, which is set to expire in 2009.

Public monitoring of the implementation of the agreement on a simplified visa regime between Ukraine and the EU (signed on June 18, 2007 and went into force on January 1, 2008). The situation was monitored in two stages by a consortium of seven NGOs (six of which were regional NGOs) under the management of the *Centre for Peace, Conversion and Foreign Policy*. Representative sample surveys were conducted of people leaving consulates or visa centers who had used the services of 21 consulates from 11 EU member states. According to the survey results, despite definite improvement in the situation with issuance of visas to Ukrainians by “old” Schengen countries, the agreement has yet to become an effective mechanism capable of compensating for the negative effect that expansion of the Schengen Zone has had on most Ukrainians who travel to the EU (<http://eu.prostir.ua/news/24965.html>).

The Cabinet of Ministers has approved a much improved new State Program of Raising Public Awareness on Ukraine’s European Integration for the years 2008-2011 (CMU Resolution No, 594 from July 2, 2008), which was developed using proposals from the Razumkov Centre, International Renaissance Foundation, Internews, and other NGOs that took into consideration the results of a public assessment of the previous State Programs for 2004-2007 (Razumkov Centre project) and best domestic and international practices. A coordinating council has been established to implement the program, which is comprised of NGO representatives, and a procedure has been approved for competitively selecting NGO projects and programs to inform the public about European integration (CMU Resolution No. 956 from October 30, 2008). This sets a precedent for financing NGO projects from state and local budgets in the form of grants, and was the result of efforts by experts from the Foundation for Regional Initiatives, European Law Advancement Network, Razumkov Centre and IRF (<http://www.rada.gov.ua>, www.kmu.gov.ua).

European Information Centers. The number of regional European Information Centers (EIC) grew in 2008 by 4 to a total of 24 such centers at oblast libraries in Ukraine, opened with support from the program. (contacts for all the EICs can be found here: <http://eu.prostir.ua/in/39896.html>). In July 2008, an EIC Network Forum was held during which an initiative coordinating group was set up. According to the State Program of Raising Public Awareness on Ukraine’s European Integration for the years 2008-2011, starting in 2009, the EICs at oblast and raion libraries should be financed from local budgets.

First European Integration School (project of the Ukrainian European Studies Association). The goal of the annual School is to increase civil society’s capacity to influence Ukraine’s European and Euro-Atlantic integration processes by deepening theoretical knowledge and developing practical skills. The first pilot European Integration School trained 40 NGO leaders from various regions of Ukraine to effectively carry out informational and educational activities in the field of European and Euro-Atlantic integration. (<http://eu.prostir.ua/news/9786.html>)

Informational-education campaign “Tolerance as a Path to Europe.” In autumn 2008, the Network of Pro-European Organizations in Ukraine conducted the first nationwide informational-educational campaign in the field of European integration, dedicated to popularizing tolerance as a fundamental European value. Detailed information about the campaign is available online: <http://www.tolerant.org.ua>.

Open Debates on NATO. With program support, well-made and unique media products for Ukraine aimed at stimulating open debates on NATO were produced and distributed. The television series “NATO: Friend or Foe?” was produced (excerpts can be viewed and downloaded at <http://eu.prostir.ua/archive/2.html> and used as a handy visual device for public discussion on the pluses and minuses, risks and advantages of Euro-Atlantic integration) along with a Russian language version (suitable for predominantly Russian-speaking regions). The series was aired twice on UT-1 and a number of regional television channels, and by a host of NGOs during such debates.

PARTNERSHIP BEYOND BORDERS

The East-East: Partnership Beyond Borders Program (manager – Tetiana Kukharenko) promotes the development of cooperation between representatives of the international public in solving social and socio-economic problems.

In 2008, 500 Ukrainian experts and public activists took part in the implementation of 60 international projects abroad. These were projects such as study visits and internships (for Ukrainian target audiences) and ones with an informational and analytical character, where Ukrainian experts presented domestic practices and experience.

With the goal of studying the European reform process, support was given for study visits on housing and communal services reform and municipal tariff setting (Poland), fiscal decentralization (Slovakia), local economic development and introducing social and ecologically responsible economics (Czech Republic), medical law and insurance (Czech Republic).

Ukrainian experts also had the opportunity to study best practices in such areas as: mobilizing public participation in the local decision-making process (Czech Republic); transparency in local self-government (Poland); gender sensitivity in local government (Lithuania); informational and educational work dealing with European integration (Poland, Czech Republic, Romania); youth leadership (Poland and Romania); mediation in schools and decreasing juvenile violence (Poland); rehabilitation, social integration and support of vulnerable population groups (Poland); social and psychological support for families with autistic children (Poland and Czech Republic); and managed learning for children with special needs (Poland).

Ukrainian experts are actively invited to participate in regional projects on issues that trouble the international community and demand collaborative efforts, joint expert assessments, and constant exchange of information – namely: energy security, migration processes in Europe, tolerance, contemporary geopolitical processes and frozen conflicts, relations between Russia and Ukraine, relations between Russia and its neighbors, etc. These problems will remain in the program’s focus in the upcoming year.

Meanwhile, nearly 50 international projects were implemented in Ukraine. We will note the following:

“Information as a Tool Against Illegal migration!” Ukrainian journalists from those regions of the country with the greatest migration problems received assistance from Czech and Ukrainian experts on providing media coverage of migration and migrants. The project is working on a collection of journalist reports entitled “Ukrainian Laborers Abroad: Searching for Ways Out of the Labyrinth of Exploitation of Illegal Laborers.” (http://migration4media.net/uk/about_ua)

Studying Housing and Communal Services Reform in Poland. Polish cooperation between local government, local communal enterprises, condominiums and management companies in reforming housing and communal services on market principles was analyzed and shared. A manual was written entitled “Developing a Training Course for Managers of Condominiums and Local Communal Enterprises on the Basis of the Polish Experience of Reforming Housing and Communal Services” (Lviv-Krakow, 2008, in Ukrainian), that provides practical advice on managing a building, economic and legal aspects of placing a

building with communal services under the management of condominium group, etc. Certain information is available on the website of the Center for Local Self-Government Research. (http://www.cdms.org.ua/ua/economic_policy/management/) Program support also made possible the publication of the manual “Public-Government Cooperation in Krakow in Setting Tariffs for Communal Services and Extending the Experience to Ukraine” (Lviv-Krakow, 2008, in Ukrainian) that highlights the public impact on formulating tariffs for housing and communal services – excerpts are available on the following website: http://www.cdms.org.ua/ua/economic_policy/tariff_policy/?articles_id=68&num=0).

“Business Centers – Against Unemployment.” Borrowing the Polish experience, two Youth Career Clubs were started in the Kosiv raion, Ivano-Frankivsk oblast and the Kitsmanskyy raion, Chernivtsi oblast in partnership with local schools, to help youth make a career choice and gain basic skills to find their way in the labor market in a market economy. Youth employment and business development consultants were trained. A “Business and Youth” training program was developed and manual published. A series of seminars on applied enterprise were conducted for deputy school directors and counselors. (<http://mgcetalon.org.ua>)

“Integrating Socially-Isolated Groups: the Polish and Ukrainian Experience.” Based on the best Polish and Ukrainian practices, recommendations were developed for social workers and NGOs working with socially-excluded individuals – the homeless, long-term unemployed and poor. The recommendations were compiled in the manual entitled “How to Adapt the European Experience to Curing Homelessness in Ukraine” (Kyiv, Narodna Dopomoha, 2008), which also contains a comparative analysis of the problems of homelessness in Poland and Ukraine, excerpts from legislation and a glossary. With support from East:East, project partner Mutual Aid Community “Oselya” published the manual “Everyone has Potential” (Lviv, Pais, 2008), which outlines a method of working with the socially excluded. The “help for self-help” method seeks to help individuals become motivated, grow and function successfully without expecting passive assistance. (<http://emaus-oselya.org.ua>, <http://www.nardop.org.ua/kiiev>)

“Patient Organizations in Eastern Europe and Asia for Patient Safety.” A comprehensive study has been launched of patients’ safety and rights in Southeastern Europe and Asia with the goal of getting participating countries to implement the Global Health Declaration, improve national legislation that regulates patients’ safety, and the international movement for patients’ rights. Material from this project, which will end in 2009, is available online: <http://ps.medpravo.org>.

PROFESSIONAL MEDIA FOR UKRAINE

The Mass Media Program (program director – Vitaliy Zamnius) aims to promote the strengthening of freedom of speech and information in Ukraine as one of the key elements of an open, democratic society; support the formation of a pluralistic media environment through the development of independent and professional mass media; and ensure balanced coverage of issues that are of utmost importance for Ukrainian society.

Bureau for Investigative Journalism. The winner of the tender to create a *Bureau for Investigative Journalism (BIJ)* was the “For Professional Journalism” NGO (director – Yehor Sobolyev). The mission of the “Svidomo” Bureau isn’t to “uncover” social ills such as corruption, but to investigate social processes (to counterbalance facts) so as to stimulate readers to become involved in civic initiatives that may yield alternative answers. The following topics have been covered: “Why isn’t beer alcohol?”; “How the gambling industry is gripping Ukraine and what is the central government doing about it?”; “Knocked off course. What’s the future of the hryvnia?”; “Experiment with the unknown. Why doesn’t Ukraine label genetically-modified foods?”; “Medicine from greed. How to protect yourself from doctors turned medicine salesmen.”; “Blood shackles. Why are patients in Ukraine being infected through blood transfusions?” The Bureau also focused its attention on problems involved with switching to a professional army, hepatitis B and C epidemics, the harm of total gasification of Ukraine, and other issues. Investigation materials are available online at: <http://www.ogo.ua/rubrics/Inves/2009-01-22/28177/>, <http://www.vezha.org/news/12793.html>, <http://20minut.ua/news/141051>, <http://www.gazeta.rv.ua/?n=13771>, <http://www.gazeta.rv.ua/?n=13449>.

The Bureau partners with a number of regional and national publications that obtain and publish all materials prepared by the Bureau; 17 leading regional publications currently subscribe to the given materials. The Bureau plans to launch a website, create a network of investigative journalists, and provide journalists with consultation and legal assistance during their investigations.

“New Ukraine” School of Professional Journalism was Launched. The given tender was won by the *Laboratory for Legislative Initiatives* NGO (director – Ihor Kohut). The school will promote the formation of a new professional Ukrainian journalism elite, help participants gain a deeper understanding of not only professional standards, but complex political and social processes in Ukraine. 2009 will be the first school year. (for more information about the School, visit <http://www.usps.org.ua/index.php?mid=38>)

Increasing journalists’ professional preparedness to cover a wide range of issues that are IRF priorities. Throughout the year, the Mass Media Program provided assistance to journalist trainings on covering the problem of tuberculosis; a three-day training event to teach journalists how to write about various topics in public health; regional seminars for journalists on inclusive education.

Monitoring Freedom of Speech. The program continuously supports NGO initiatives to monitor adherence to media law and the professional ethics in journalism. The Institute of Mass Information monitored violations of journalists’ rights on a daily basis and published the monthly “Freedom of Speech Barometer” report (<http://imi.org.ua/>). The Simferopol NGO “Integration and Development” Information and Research Center comprehensively monitored print media in Crimea for use of “hate language,” racist, xenophobic and other language of intolerance (<http://www.integration.org.ua/>). Telekrytyka did weekly monitoring of informational television programs and investigated cases of made-to-order journalism and other violations of professional media standards (<http://www.telekritika.ua/media-corp/corruption/>).

Digital Broadcasting. IRF provided support for an international conference on “Problems of Introducing Digital Broadcasting on the National, Regional and Local Levels” held in Odesa, and the Second International Digital Broadcasting Forum in autumn 2008 (<http://www.dtvforum.org.ua/>).

EDUCATION IN UKRAINE: EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION

The Education Program (directors - Heorhiy Kasianov, Olena Zaplotynska) helps employ the potential of the Ukrainian third sector and scientific–educational establishments for the sustainable development of the educational system, improving the quality of education in Ukraine, and providing youth with equal access to education.

University Autonomy as a Component of Civil Society. The project aims to create a new model of relations between the university, society and the state, whereby universities themselves set their tasks and answer for the results of their actions to society in the person of their academic staff, students and local community, caring about the consistency of their goals with national interests. The project is implemented with participation of representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the Secretariat of the President of Ukraine, and a consortium of eight universities: Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukrainian Catholic University (Lviv), National University of “Kyiv-Mohyla Academy”, University of Economics and Law “Krok” (Kyiv), Dnipropetrovsk National University, V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University and Donetsk National University. The consortium is chaired by Serhiy Kvit, President of the National University of “Kyiv-Mohyla Academy.”

In early 2008, the consortium resumed cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science and Ukrainian government. In January 2008, Minister of Education and Science Ivan Vakarchuk attended a meeting of the Council of Consortium Rectors, during which they approved an action plan for 2008-2009 and developed proposals for the government’s action plan on education. The universities were involved in developing the education component of the Tymoshenko government’s action plan. IRF and consortium representatives were

part of the working group drafting amendments to the Law of Ukraine “On Higher Education,” and the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Science and Education expert group. University autonomy was among the Ministry’s priority issues for 2008 (see: *Dzerkalo Tyzhnia*, #4, 2-8 February 2008). (<http://www.rpl.org.ua>, www.irf.kiev.ua)

“Public Platforms for Education Reform in Ukraine” – this joint Ukrainian-Dutch project was started by IRF and the International Center for Schooling Improvement – APD (Holland) in late 2006 with the goal of starting open and democratic discussions on education problems in Ukraine (project manager - Heorhiy Kasianov). The project envisages the organization of a system of continuous exchange and dissemination of information between the education community, subjects of the education process and local education departments. This project is financed jointly by IRF and the *MATRA Program of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands*.

Throughout 2008, the project direction was “School of the Future: Problems of Reforming Education Administration (from Decentralization to Self-Administration).” Project activities were aimed at introducing a balanced model of coordination between all stakeholders working on improving schools (local departments of education, teachers, principals, parents) to implemented education reform on the local level with the goal of establishing modern standards of analysis and public debate on socially important aspects of education reform. Poltava and Odesa were locations of trainings (April 2008), a series of local sessions for educators from these oblasts (April-June 2008), two regional (September 2008) and one national (November 2008) conferences on school reform and the “ideal” school of the future. Publications included the bulletins: “Ukrainian Textbooks: Time to Speak Out, Time to Act” and “School of the Future,” brochures, and the analytical report “Textbook Publishing in Ukraine. Systematic Problems and Options for Change” (written in 2007). The project will end in 2009. (www.upper.org.ua)

Introducing Inclusive Education in Ukraine - in 2008 this was the logical continuation of the following projects previously implemented and supported by IRF programs in 2005-2006: “Rights of Children with Special Educational Needs to Equal Access to Quality Education” (Education Program) and “Education Policy on Inclusive Education: International Experience and Ukrainian Realities” (East-East: Partnership Beyond Borders Program). With the aim of promoting legislative changes to further inclusive education in Ukraine, two-day seminars were held in Lviv and Poltava, during which participants developed a series of recommendations for the Statute on Inclusive Classes/Schools and the Social Services Standards for Inclusive Schools; public hearings were held in Kyiv and Poltava, as well as a roundtable during the international conference “National Strategies for Implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Policy, Experience, Practice” (23-24 October 2008)

(<http://www.ussf.kiev.ua/index.php?newlang=en>)

Law and Education. This new initiative was begun in 2008 – a program concept was developed, consultations were held with interested partners, and the competition “Implementing the Principles of Rule of Law in the Ukrainian Education System” was held. The results will be announced in March 2009. (www.irf.kiev.ua)

Education Administration and Financing: Opportunities for Change. A study was done of the system of school financing in the city of Kyiv, the report “Cities vs. Raions. Administration and Financing of Kyiv Schools” was written, as was a manual for school administrators “School Budget under Conditions of Incomplete State Financing” (it is being readied for publication). This line of activities will expand in 2009.

EXTERNAL TESTING

Center for Testing Technologies and Education Quality Monitoring. Since 2002, the IRF Education Program has been the main initiator and supporter of introducing external testing in Ukraine. In the

framework of the project “Center for Testing Technologies and Education Quality Monitoring” (former manager – Liliya Hrynevych) technological and procedural testing cycles were developed and approved that became the basis for external assessment. A regulatory base was also created. During 2005-2006, there was close cooperation with the Presidential Secretariat on introducing external testing and creating a Ukrainian Center for Education Quality Assessment.

In 2008, the Center focused on building a system of public monitoring of education quality and the state external testing system. With IRF support, the *Committee of Voters of Ukraine* organized extensive public monitoring to ensure that tests are administered honestly in the regions (http://www.cvu.org.ua/?&lim_beg=105&mid=fp). The Center was part of a coalition of NGOs that kept a watchful eye over the external testing process (22 April – 4 June 2008). The Center also put together a form for public monitors to fill out at testing sites and monitored appeals by students.

As part of the project, the Center wrote an analytical report based on the results of surveys of 11th graders and teachers at general education schools on the level of information available about external testing. The program also contributed to the improvement of the “Statute on Public Monitoring of External Testing in 2008” with regard to involving the public in all stages of testing (information, student registration, transporting testing materials, grading, and applying to institutions of higher education).

In 2008, the Center published a concise dictionary of testing terms – the first attempt in Ukraine to systematize the most common foreign and Ukrainian terms used during the testing process (*A Concise Testing Dictionary*, compiled by L.T. Kovalenko – K: Hramota, 2008). The TIMO (Testing and Monitoring in Education) newsletter continues to be published (<http://www.timo.com.ua/journal>).

Thanks to the initiative and support of IRF, in December 2008 the results of the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study 2007 (TIMSS) were obtained and publicized. The study was conducted in May 2007 by the Center for Testing Technologies and Education Quality Monitoring together with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and Academy of Pedagogical Sciences. Ukraine participated in the TIMSS for the first time (approximately 9,000 students), providing objective information on the state of secondary math and science education in Ukraine, and a comparison with students in countries with different education systems, thus helping identify factors that influence differences in levels of preparation. This will help improve the Ukrainian education system, at least in math and science. The results of TIMSS 2007 are available on the Boston College website: <http://timssandpirls.bc.edu/TIMSS2007/release.html>.

482 TRANSLATIONS OF SOCIAL AND SCIENTIFIC BOOKS FOR UKRAINE

The Social Capital and Academic Publications Program (manager - Taras Lyuty) aims to increase access to information (primarily research) so that it can be used effectively; enhance the role of academic publications for the benefit of the development of Ukrainian society; enrich the public environment in Ukraine by using the opportunities offered by *new media*.

Translation Project – this joint initiative of the International Renaissance Foundation, the Open Society Institute Information Program and the Next Page Foundation (Sofia, Bulgaria) has been in Ukraine since 1998. As of February 2009, 481 translated books have been published in Ukrainian with program support and another 160 are being prepared for publication in 2009 and upcoming years. *The project works in partnership with the Goethe-Institut in Ukraine, British Councils in Ukraine, Polish Institute in Kyiv, Polish Embassy in Kyiv, and the Victor Pinchuk Foundation.*

Open Access to Scientific Literature. In 2008, the program and OSI provided support to four projects: National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine Programming Institute (Kyiv) (www.publications.nas.gov.ua); Lviv NGO “Centre for the Humanities” (Lviv) (www.humanities.lviv.ua); Oblast NGO “Center for Strategic

Initiatives” (Khmelnysky) (<http://www.csi.km.ua/eng/index.php>); Ternopil State Ivan Puluj Technical University (Ternopil) (<http://www.tu.edu.te.ua/?l=en>).

These projects: created and expanded open access archives at research organizations and educational institutions with full-text publications and educational materials; organized informational seminars for stakeholders – educators, librarians and research organizations – to expand the practice of open access; informational seminars for the media, competitions for journalists that write about open access; competitions for student research, etc.; increased user rights relating to access to information and its effective use in personal and public development. (<http://www.dspace.humanities.org.ua:80/dspace/>, www.tstu.edu.ua, <http://library.tstu.edu.ua>, <http://www.csi.km.ua/>)

The Ukrainian Book Trade Project. After three years, the Ukrainian Book Trade Project came to a close in November 2008. The project was made possible thanks to a grant received by the International Renaissance Foundation and *Fund for Central and East European Book Projects* – Amsterdam (CEEBP) from the MATRA Program of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. The goal was to create a professional and powerful book market throughout Ukraine.

As a result of the project, central and regional government in Ukraine opened a dialogue with the publishing industry, books became more accessible for consumers, and there was an increase in the number of places where one can buy Ukrainian books in Zakarpattia, the Vinnytsia, Volyn, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Mykolayiv, Odesa, Poltava, Rivne, Kherson, Khmelnytsky and Chernivtsi oblasts and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (the first regional distribution centers were opened in these cities). The first database of Ukrainian books was created (<http://vsiknygy.org.ua/>), which contains detailed information on 153,721 books by 2,609 publishers (69,221 can be purchased and 5,534 are new releases. Approximately half of Ukrainian publishers and distributors attended the 41 project seminars and consultations. Most participants were successful in starting new sales and publication projects. Internet portals were developed for the Ukrainian book industry: (www.UABooks.info) (Ukrainian Publishers and Booksellers Association) and (www.VlasnaSprava.info) (Business Technology Development Centre). In culmination of the Ukrainian Book Trade Project, recommendations were prepared and disseminated on development of state and regional policy to support of the Ukrainian book industry.

PUBLIC HEALTH

The Public Health Program (manager – Viktoriya Tymoshevskya) promotes public health reform and improved overall health of the Ukrainian population through access to quality and proper medical assistance.

Law and Public Health. One of the achievements of this initiative in 2008 was the launch of a new movement in Ukraine that unites more than 25 patient, human rights and medical organizations that together are working on protecting human rights in the public health sphere and are developing recommendations for improving legislation in this field.

The movement united the winning projects that are currently being implemented in several regions of Ukraine – Lviv, Luhansk, Vinnytsia, Kharkiv, Kherson oblasts and AR Crimea. These projects have already helped uncover a number of systematic violations in patients rights that served as the foundation for strategic legal cases that in the future may be submitted to the European Court of Human Rights. Project activities include: providing free legal assistance to patients and families; holding regular educational events for medical workers on human rights that help establish long-term cooperation between public health institutions, human rights organizations and patient organizations (www.healthrights.in).

In five Ukrainian cities (Lviv, Mykolayiv, Poltava, Chernihiv and Kherson), support was given to provide legal defense to intravenous drug users (IDU) and people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWH). The legal

assistance provided in criminal cases helped prevent incarceration or lowered the penalty for detainees belonging to these vulnerable social groups, and change the nature of relations between these groups (IDU and PLWH), law enforcement and medical institutions.

In June 2008, a report was presented based on the results of a study conducted by the five projects – “Justice for All: the importance of legal aid in the context of medical services provided to drug users in Ukraine.” This report provides examples of how free legal aid allows intravenous drug users to better protect themselves from human rights violations, obtain medical assistance and improve the quality of their life. (<http://ww.irf.kiv.ua>)

Public Health and Education in Ukraine – This initiative aims to promote the further development and inclusion of public health issues in the training of lawyers and doctors. The All-Ukrainian Conference on Medical Law and the Legal Status of Patients (Lviv, 17-18 April 2008) was attended by over 150 representatives of human rights organizations, patient groups, medical associations and health departments. Work has begun on developing the training course “**Human Rights in Public Health/Medical Law**” to be approved by the Ministry of Health of Ukraine and introduced in Ukrainian medical schools. A training module was developed and approved in 2008 entitled “**Human Rights. Instructions for the Police on how to Work with People Living with HIV/AIDS and Drug Addicts,**” which is used part of in-service training courses taught at the Kyiv National Internal Affairs University for active law enforcement. This project is being implemented by the Center for Psycho-Social Rehabilitation of Chemically Dependent Youth “Step by Step” in conjunction with the National University “MIA Academy of Ukraine.” The training course will be finalized by March 2009.

Harm Reduction. NGOs working with people directly affected by drug use and HIV/AIDS did advocacy work in the regions aimed at increasing the level of access to medical and social services and preventing human rights violations by medical staff and law enforcement. The all-Ukrainian organization of parents whose children are undergoing substitution therapy “Nadia” was formed and works with potential clients and on informing stakeholders about the advantages and results of substitution therapy. The All-Ukrainian Association of Substitution Therapy Patients started working in late 2008 to unite patients from different regions, represent their interests and protect their rights in Ukraine. A three-day training on “Practical Aspects of Conducting a Media Campaign Advocating Harm Reduction Projects” was held for representatives from six regions (Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kyiv, Mykolayiv, Poltava and Sumy oblasts). The third summer advocacy school was held for HIV/AIDS NGOs to build their advocacy skills. The summer school was organized jointly with the International HIV/AIDS Alliance. As a result of the trainings, there is a new generation of activists and leaders among those people who have been directly affected by drugs use and HIV/AIDS who have started implementing advocacy projects. (<http://www.aidsalliance.org.ua>)

An information campaign called “Return Ticket” - on the advantages and results of substitution therapy in Ukraine - was launched in November-December 2008. (<http://www.zpt.in.ua>).

Palliative Care – helping those with incurable diseases as a sign of true Ukrainian compassion. With support from IRF, the All-Ukrainian Palliative Care Association and the All-Ukrainian Council for Patient Rights and Safety successfully lobbied the creation of a Coordinating Council for the Expansion of Palliative Care in Ukraine, whose membership and mandate was approved by a Ministry of Health (<http://zakon.nau.ua/doc/?uid=1039.8148.0>). The Coordinating Council has been given the mandate to develop and submit for approval a National Program for the Development of Palliative and Hospice Care for 2010-2014, which will not only make palliative care an element of the general health system, but will require the government to allocate a budget to finance palliative services for the public.

The Program supported projects that gave a push towards analyzing the problems faced by palliative patients from the point of view of human rights, especially related to access to painkillers and overall medical care. An analysis was done and report prepared on access to painkillers (opioids) for palliative patients in Ukraine, the

results of which will form the basis for large-scale advocacy and development of normative and legal documents for approval of the *National Palliative Care Program* (<http://www.moz.gov.ua/ua/main/docs/?docID=10398>).

Access to Essential Medicine. Support was provided for the first time to an innovative project by the “Civic Initiative to Help People Suffering from Chronic Viral Hepatitis in Ukraine” aimed at uniting the efforts of the public, medical staff and patients who have Hepatitis C to develop a joint action plan for advocating improved prevention, diagnosis and treatment for those suffering from chronic viral hepatitis. Information about this project and hepatitis in Ukraine is available at: <http://hepatit.org.ua/>