

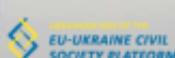


Civic Synergy

Final Project

Report

*Society for EU
Integration
Reforms*



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS:

AA — Association Agreement
between Ukraine and the EU

CSO — civil society organization

DCFTA — Deep and
Comprehensive Free Trade
Agreement

EAP — Eastern Partnership

EAP CSF — Eastern Partnership
Civil Society Forum

EU — European Union

IRF — International Renaissance
Foundation

NGO — non-governmental
organization

UA-CSP — Ukrainian Side of the
EU-Ukraine Civil Society Platform

UNP — Ukrainian National
Platform of the Eastern Partnership
Civil Society Forum



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FOREWORD

Dear friends and colleagues, partners and all those who care about Ukraine's European integration!

The Civic Synergy Project has come to an end. With the support of the European Union and the International Renaissance Foundation, for three and a half years we have been helping civil society to be actively and systematically involved in promoting European integration reforms in Ukraine.

Our work focused on the development of two institutions of public participation in European integration — the Ukrainian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum and the Ukrainian side of the Ukraine-EU Civil Society Platform created in accordance with Art. 469 of the Association Agreement. Both civil society networks had existed before the Project started (by that moment they had been operating for five years and a year respectively). However, a lack of resources did not allow them to become strong players in the European integration process perceived as effective partners by the Government. The Project had to overcome such challenges as the weak internal organization and insufficient external communication of the Platforms, passive attitude of many members, absence of high-quality analytical products and others.

For this purpose we established the Secretariats of the Platforms that organized work processes and established effective internal and external communication of the Platforms. We held strategic sessions and fully ensured the statutory activities of the Platforms (regular meetings of working group members and those of governing bodies, large-scale annual meetings and members' participation in international events). We helped Platform members to deepen their knowledge in the European integration field and to strengthen practical skills of analytical, advocacy and communication work during our trainings and webinars.

We informed the wide audiences of community activists, students, entrepreneurs, farmers, etc. about the European integration tasks, requirements and opportunities through regional awareness-raising events and dissemination of popular publications on the subject. Ukraine's first online course on the Association Agreement has provided an opportunity to understand the content of this complex legal document not only for civil society activists but also for civil servants, students, and all those interested in Ukraine's European integration.

We helped experts Platforms to prepare high-quality analytical documents, organize multi-stakeholder discussions, propose solutions to policy problems, and provide feedback and proposals to draft legislation, government strategies and roadmaps. Civil society monitoring and advocacy for the implementation of the Association Agreement has helped to pass a number of important laws and move closer to EU integration in a number of sectors, maintain the European integration agenda in the face of the government change, and initiate discussions with the EU on updating and deepening the Association Agreement. As a result, the Platforms have become perceived by government officials and parliamentarians as full-fledged actors of the European integration process whose opinions should be listened to.

We have also ensured that the Platforms reach foreign target audiences and establish productive cooperation with CSOs, experts, journalists, diplomats and officials from the EU and the Eastern Partnership countries. This helped to promote Ukraine's ambitions of deeper EU integration and reforming the Eastern Partnership, as well as to develop a constructive bilateral societal dialogue with the neighbouring countries and build trilateral cooperation on European integration with Moldova and Georgia (for this purpose a unique platform was established — the annual Association Exchange Forum in Kyiv).

In addition to the centralized activities that were run by the Project team in cooperation with the Platforms, we supported 57 grant projects of the Platforms' member organizations providing for analytical, advocacy and awareness-raising activities in specific thematic areas covered by the Association Agreement and the Eastern Partnership priorities.

You can read about all these activities and their results in more detail in this Final Project Report.

We sincerely thank the Platforms' members and all our partners for the cooperation and contribution to the common cause of Ukraine's transformation into a European state. We hope that the achievements of the Project will serve as a basis for further strengthening of public participation in the European integration reforms and that the Platforms will continue their active work on monitoring of, and participation in, the Association Agreement implementation and fulfillment of the Eastern Partnership potential.

Sincerely,

DMYTRO SHULGA,

European Program Director, International
Renaissance Foundation,
Civic Synergy Project Director

ZORIANA MISHCHUK,

Civic Synergy
Project Team Leader

Sy- ner- gy

«CIVIC SYNERGY»

Civic Synergy is the project that has strengthened civil society participation in the implementation of European integration reforms in Ukraine. We achieved this through boosting the activities of the two European integration civil society networks — the Ukrainian side of the EU-Ukraine Civil Society Platform and the Ukrainian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum. Together, they unite about 350 non-governmental organizations dealing with various aspects of European integration and representing all regions of Ukraine.

The Project provided organizational and financial support to the Platforms and their participating organizations for their analytical, advocacy, awareness-raising and capacity-building activities aimed at the effective implementation of the Association Agreement (AA) and achievement of Eastern Partnership (EaP) goals.

The project was funded by the European Union and the International Renaissance Foundation (IRF) and implemented by the IRF European Program. The project implementation lasted from July 2016 till March 2020.

PROJECT COMPONENTS



Provision of grant support for Platforms' activities

Providing competition-based financial support to the Platforms' member organizations to back up their active and coordinated actions in the implementation of the AA, realization of EaP priorities and development of the Platforms' potential.



Institutional development of platforms

Ensuring that the Platforms carried out their statutory activities, while working in a more systemic and concerted manner, and developed knowledge and skills of their members for efficient performance of their tasks.



EU and EaP cooperation

Enhancing interaction among Ukrainian, EU and EaP civil society through the effective exchange of information and facilitation of cooperation. Making the Platforms' position and products known to important target audiences outside Ukraine.



Policy analysis and advocacy

Support to analytical and advocacy efforts of the Platforms: monitoring and assessment of the AA implementation and realization of the opportunities under the EaP initiative, production of analytical papers on various aspects of European integration reforms, organization of discussion events and stakeholder dialogues, and conduct of advocacy campaigns.



Awareness raising and communication

Improving informing about the Platform's activities through the development of communication strategies, active collaboration with the media and filling of the websites and social media with content. Carrying out awareness-raising campaigns on the AA tasks and opportunities, EaP policies, etc.



THE UKRAINIAN NATIONAL PLATFORM OF THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM (UNP)

The civil society organizations within the UNP are arranged in 5 working groups:



Democracy, human rights, good governance and stability



Economic integration and convergence with EU policies



Environment, climate change and energy security



Contacts between people



Social and labor policy and social dialogue

The Ukrainian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (UNP) is a network of approximately 140 Ukrainian civil society organizations that aims at advocating Ukrainian interests in the framework of the Eastern Partnership initiative. The Platform, established in 2011, is a part of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF), an association of representatives of Ukrainian, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Belarusian, Georgian, Moldovan and EU civil society organizations.

The EaP CSF helps civil society organizations of the region to advocate issues that are important for their countries on the EU level, fosters cooperation and exchange of experience between the EaP civil society organizations and ensures civil society monitoring of the progress towards EaP objectives.

With the support of the Civic Synergy Project, the Ukrainian National Platform:

- Prepared analytics regarding the EaP region
- Conducted discussion events
- Provided recommendations on important issues to Ukrainian and EU authorities
- Informed the public about the potential and challenges of the EaP
- Developed international cooperation with EU member states and EaP countries, especially those that have signed the Association Agreements with the EU — Georgia and Moldova



THE UKRAINIAN SIDE OF THE EU-UKRAINE CIVIL SOCIETY PLATFORM (UA-CSP)

The Ukrainian side of the EU-Ukraine Civil Society Platform (UA-CSP) is the national part of the Civil Society Platform, one of the bilateral bodies established under the Association Agreement (AA).

On the Ukrainian side, the Platform includes 15 members — representatives of civil society organizations, trade unions and employers' organizations. Additionally, within its working groups, the UA-CSP unites more than 280 organizations.

On the EU side, the Platform includes 9 members — representatives of the European Economic and Social Committee and 6 permanent observers — representatives of other powerful EU civil society organizations.

According to Art. 469-470 of the AA, the Platform officially represents the interests of civil society of Ukraine and the EU in the process of the AA implementation. The Platform is one of the four association bodies along with the Association Council, the Association Committee and the Parliamentary Committee of the Association. The Civil Society Platform may make recommendations to the Association Council; the Association Committee and the Parliamentary Association Committee shall liaise regularly with the representatives of the Platform in order to obtain their views on the achievement of the AA objectives.

The civil society organizations within the UA-CSP are arranged in 6 working groups:



Political dialogue, foreign and security policy



Freedom, justice, human rights



Economic cooperation, free trade area, cross-border cooperation



Employment, social policy, equal opportunities and health



Energy, transport, environment and climate change



Science and technology, information society, education, youth, culture and sports

With the support of the Civic Synergy Project, the Ukrainian Side of the EU-Ukraine Civil Society Platform:

- Monitored the AA implementation
- Prepared analytics on European integration in various sectors
- Cooperated with the European Economic and Social Committee
- Provided recommendations to the Ukrainian authorities and EU institutions on the AA implementation
- Advocated its recommendations during meetings with government officials and other stakeholders

Plat- for- ms



STATUTORY ACTIVITIES AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLATFORMS

From their establishment and until the launch of the Civic Synergy Project, one could hardly speak about the systemic work of the Platforms: there was virtually no institutional support behind and the volunteer resources were insufficient to coordinate the operation of the two big civil society networks.

To become active and effective externally, the Platforms needed to become stronger internally: tune up coordination of their activities, ensure uninterrupted internal communication, develop clear rules of work as well as strategic and operating benchmarks, put their membership policy in order, engage new expert organizations, and build up the capacity of the member CSOs that had been already engaged.



Providing the Platforms with the organizational “rear”, the Project, during the three and a half years of its implementation, has:

- Set up the proper functioning of the Secretariats for the steady organizational and communication support of the Platforms’ operation;
- Provided a floor for regular meetings of the steering bodies and working groups;
- Improved information exchange inside the Platforms and established constant liaison with key stakeholders;
- Ensured organizationally the Platforms’ statutory activities (annual conferences of the UNP and assemblies of the UA-CSP);
- Provided support in developing internal policies and strategic and operating plans;
- Facilitated engagement of new members.





The UA-CSP is a collegial body which cannot work without

a constant support between its meetings, ensuring proper documentation and monitoring of the implementation of decisions taken. The Project ensured such work and made the activities of the Platform not only regular but also productive. The Project helped to communicate with other stakeholders — the Government, parliament, the EU side — without this the Platform is not able to be a part of the wider dialogue on European integration.



Olena Pavlenko,
President of Dixi Group, Head of the UA-CSP (October 2018-June 2019)

THE PLATFORMS' SECRETARIATS AND A CONFERENCE SPACE: the headquarters of pro-European integration civil society at Civic Synergy

The biggest difference from the “pre-Project” period of the Platforms’ life is, probably, the existence of standing Secretariats that ensured their day-to-day internal communication; organization of working meetings and public events; communication with stakeholders and statutory partners (EESC in case of the UA-CSP and the EaP CSF Secretariat and other national platforms in case of the UNP); documentation keeping; production of newsletters, reports, and draft statements; maintenance of the websites and social media pages; and many other things.

Thanks to the Project’s organizational and financial support and the availability of conference space in the Civic Synergy office, the Platforms received the possibility to hold regular meetings of their governing bodies and working groups, which intensified their activities in general. Now, instead of mostly remote communication, as had been the case, the Platforms’ members met more often to discuss problematic aspects of reforms in specific sectors, as well as to plan their actions and coordinate their positions for subsequent advocacy.



In total, during
the Project period,
there were

33

meetings of the UNP
working groups

41

meetings of the UA-
CSP working groups

(including 4 joint
meetings)

21

meetings of the UNP
Steering Committee

15

meetings of the UA-CSP

including several
joint meetings

The availability of funding allowed the working groups to meet in a wider circle, with a regular involvement of regional participants. On the one hand, this helped the Platforms to receive more information on the status of reforms from the regions and, on the other hand, encouraged civil society organizations beyond Kyiv to participate in European integration activities more actively.

The working groups started to include elements of external consultation in their meetings, involving representatives of authorities and colleagues from other civil society organizations in the discussions. The interaction with stakeholders became more regular and characterized by constructive working relations.



The volunteer
principle lies at
the bottom of the
activity of the

Ukrainian National Platform
of the EaP CSF. Therefore,
the availability of the resource
support has been very
important for strengthening
the institutional capacity
of pro-European civil society.
The foundation laid during
the Project implementation
has enabled the UNP to in-
crease its weight in relations
with its partners and
allowed to continue its work
on supporting European
integration with confidence.



Yuriy Vdovenko,
National Facilitator
of the UNP
(2019-2020)

The existence of the common Project pushed the Platforms towards looking for synergy between each other — planning joint activities, combining expert resources, and coordinating advocacy efforts.



ANNUAL CONFERENCES AND ASSEMBLIES: from internal discussions to a dialogue between the pro-European civil society and authorities

With the launch of the Civic Synergy Project, the UNP Annual Conferences and the UA-CSP Assemblies became more complex and of a larger scale: during these meetings, the Platforms not only carried out their reporting and electing activities, as required by their statutes, but also held discussions with officials and other stakeholders on the Association Agreement implementation and achievement of the EaP goals, presented their analytical products, discussed draft strategic documents, and jointly explored ideas of future priorities in their activities.



3

UA-CSP
Assemblies

4

UNP Annual
Conferences

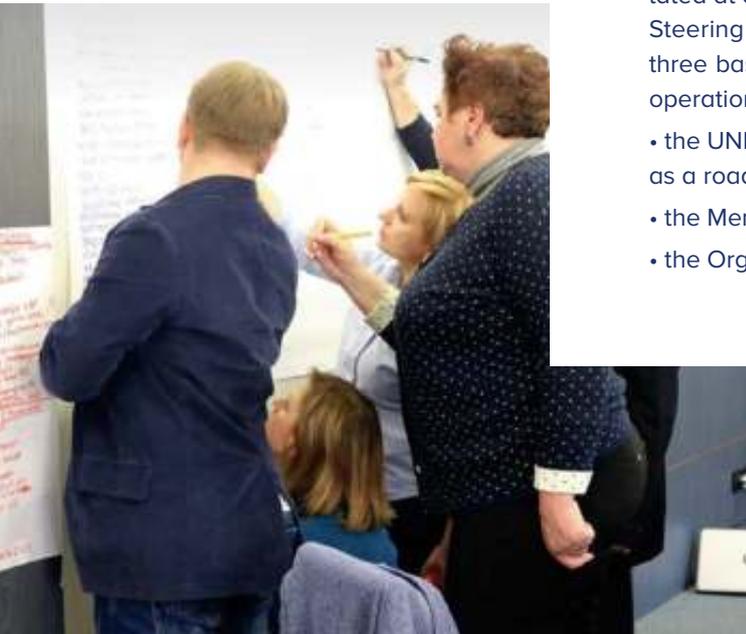
The grown level of the Platforms' statutory activities is also demonstrated by the rank of speakers at the events: Vice Prime Ministers for European integration, ambassadors of the EU and EU Member States to Ukraine, chairpersons of relevant parliamentary committees, MPs, and government officials. The UNP Annual Conferences and the UA-CSP Assemblies were amply covered in the media, attracting broader attention of society and the expert community to the Platforms' activities.



INTRODUCING STRATEGIC PLANNING

By the moment of the Project launch, the UNP had only one document defining the principles of its functioning: the Statute of the Platform. However, a part of its provisions were somewhat outdated by the time and certain aspects of the Platform's activities were not regulated at all. During the first year of the Project, members of the UNP Steering Committee in consultation with UNP members developed three basic documents that laid out the algorithm of the Platform's operation for years to come:

- the UNP Strategic Plan for 2017-2020, which served as a roadmap for the Platform's key activities;
- the Membership Policy; and
- the Organization and Communication Principles.



In 2019, the UNP Communication Strategy and Gender Equality Policy were drafted. The two documents are expected to be adopted at the next Annual Conference.

As for the UA-CSP, it has essentially worked up its Regulations and additionally developed Regulations for its working groups. The UA-CSP also held a number of strategic sessions, identifying common values and searching for what would unite the Platform that comprises various sectors of the public, including CSOs, trade unions, and employers.



280

organizations in UA-CSP

139

organizations in UNP

PLATFORMS' MEMBERSHIP: the pro-European civil society united

The strength of the Platforms is in their members, whereas the increased membership results from the Platforms' improved reputation, conditions created for carrying out joint activities and understandable rules and procedures for participation.

To put their membership in order, the Platforms' Secretariats and governing bodies started from taking stock of their member organizations by checking the participants for abidance by the basic formal requirements. Further on, the Platforms' approaches to membership diverged. The UNP re-registered its members to keep only active participants and improve the current members' engagement quality. As a result, 124 organizations of over 200 confirmed their membership. Moreover, the new membership policy, adopted in 2017, stiffened the accession requirements for those organizations that applying for the Platform membership. As of March 2020, the UNP had a total number of 139 member organizations, which means that 15 new members joined the Platform during operation of the new rules.

The UA-CSP, on contrast, opted for widely engaging practically any organization wishing to get involved in its work, setting up minimum requirements for membership in the working groups. This approach resulted in an increase in the number of member organizations up to 280 over three years, allowing the UA-CSP to extend its regional representation among other things.



The information efforts of the Civic Synergy Project also contributed to the inflow of new members to the Platforms: we developed and distributed a leaflet about the advantages of membership in the UA-CSP and the UNP as well as membership requirements and steps to be taken to join. Some of our webinars explained what the Platforms worked on and how and why it is worth joining them.

Capacity Building



CAPACITY BUILDING AND AWARENESS RAISING

The effective implementation of the Association Agreement and the realization of opportunities provided by the EaP requires deep expertise in the domain of European integration, a proper understanding of the policy and law making processes, and up-to-date communication and other skills.

For the public to knowingly engage in the European integration reforms, we have carried out over 120 trainings, webinars and other training events, which have enhanced the capacity of the Platforms' member organizations and other interested CSOs.

The Project paid special attention to involving participants from regions, who, while having fewer training opportunities, are faced with a bigger challenge — to become the local drivers of European integration changes.



To make their influence on decision-makers stronger, we, in addition to training, established contacts of the regional participants with the UNP and the UA-CSP through the governmental campaign 'European Integration: The Power of Opportunities' that we supported in three oblasts. We used the same approach with Chatham House in 2018 during the presentation in regions of 'The Struggle for Ukraine' study.

The Project engaged in its training and awareness-raising activities high-skilled experts with many years of experience — former negotiators on the Association Agreement, government officials, journalists of European Pravda and Radio Liberty, experienced practicing trainers, and foreign experts.



TRAININGS: the Platforms and their member organizations became stronger

The Civic Synergy Project organized 83 trainings for 1,917 persons. More than half of the NGO representatives who participated in the Project's centralized activities were from outside Kyiv. The participants of the training programmes either developed or consolidated their skills necessary for effective involvement in European integration policy and the realization of the Platforms' potential.



The training programme consisted of several components:

- The essence and objectives of the AA;
- Drafting legislation and analysing it for its compliance with European law;
- Advocacy of civil society proposals;
- Effective communication: SMM, public speeches and presentations, and cooperation with the media;
- Facilitation.



The trainings improved the quality of grant applications aimed at solving specific problems. There was also a growing number of successfully implemented advocacy campaigns, conducted either under individual grant projects or within large-scale campaigns of the Platforms involving multiple NGOs. Besides, these training activities extended the circle of partners and stakeholders with which the participants could then develop collaboration.



I participated in three trainings organized by the Civic Synergy

Project. They have substantially extended my understanding of the approaches to Association Agreement monitoring and preparation of project applications. Now I pay attention to many details that I simply ignored earlier. Well, and the training on public communication — it was just super! Useful and productive, both for our organization and for me personally. Our motto now is, ‘Communications change the world’.



Serhiy Moskvyn,
President of the
Ukrainian Capital
Markets Association,
member of the UA-CSP
Working group 3



We also held a series of trainings in regions, explaining how civil society organizations and the Platforms can help local communities and businesses release the economic potential of their oblasts. For example, the trainings on the AA implementation in Kharkiv and Odesa emphasized the opportunities arising with the establishment of the Free Trade Area with the EU. They demonstrated its advantages for Ukrainian entrepreneurs and opportunities for CSOs activities.

The grant component allowed Civic Synergy to cover more regions and themes with capacity-building activities. Platforms’ experts conducted their own trainings, inter alia, raising awareness about Eastern Partnership opportunities. UNP activists shared with representatives of Ukraine’s border regions the European approach to working out regional development strategies and using opportunities of cross-border cooperation programmes. Representatives of SMEs and agricultural producers received help in understanding the EU financial support procedure for own business development and innovation activities as well as learned about expected changes in technical regulation and production of food (HACCP). Participants in the trainings on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) are now involved in environmental protection in their regions, benefiting from the consultative support of the Platform member organizations, while some have become certified trainers on the subject themselves.

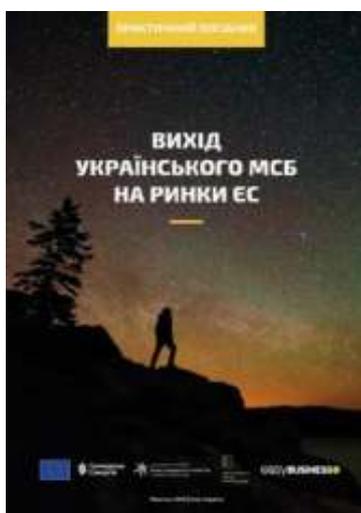


EDUCATIONAL AND AWARENESS-RAISING MATERIALS: publications to educate businesses, officials and citizens

The organizations implementing the grant projects also developed educational materials that helped participants in trainings and seminars better absorb the knowledge and spread it among their colleagues. These materials included manuals with infographics for small and medium businesses on how to obtain the training and financial support from the EU, for agrarians and food producers on how to adapt their business to the new technical regulation requirements, and guides for the public and businesses on their role in the EIA and SEA procedures as well as an explanation of the changes in environmental protection that would be brought about by implementing EU directives. A series of information booklets were also produced for lawmakers and employers on how to improve the conditions for employing persons with disabilities.



All the above deliverables of the Platforms are being used for training and awareness raising even after the the grant projects are completed, e.g., during trainings for MPs or in communities, to explain the importance of implementing European legislation, etc.



3



Civic Synergy
Schools

2212



training participants

76



training events

GRANT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

ORGANIZED BY THE PROJECT

29



training events

179



training participants

2391

training participants

105

training events



56%

of participants from outside Kyiv*

Participants said they would apply the knowledge

58% from the trainings on advocacy 

46% from the trainings on writing project proposals 

80.8% from the trainings on communication 

* The data derived from the poll among participants of centralized trainings organized by the Civic Synergy Project

15



webinars

3118



views of

10

webinars on the Project's YouTube channel

672

views of

5 webinars developed by the Platforms' participants

4223

views

433



participants in the Project's

10

live-streamed webinars

45%

representing NGOs*



51%

from outside Kyiv*

3

296

views



online trainings on writing policy papers

* From the poll among participants of centralized trainings organized by the Civic Synergy Project

WEBINARS: over 4,000 training participants instead of a few hundred

The opportunity to acquire knowledge from professional trainers interested and encouraged to learn not only the existing members of the UNP and the UA-CSP but also potential new members of the Platforms. To make as many people as possible benefit from our campaign, we launched a series of webinars for public activists, researchers and students. By going online, we reached out to a much wider audience, and the recorded webinar videos on the Project's YouTube channel are still gaining views.

The webinars have also helped us to tell a wider audience about the Platforms and their tasks and opportunities as well as acquaint the viewers with representatives of the UA-CSP and the UNP.



Webinar topics:

- EU law;
- Association Agreement;
- Sustainable development and trade in the Association Agreement;
- Free trade area between Ukraine and the EU;
- Common policies of the EU;
- Eastern Partnership;
- EU energy policy;
- EU assistance to business development in Ukraine;
- Horizon 2020;
- Strategic Environmental Assessment;
- Renewable energy;
- Impact of the EU-Ukraine Civil Society Platform on the Association Agreement implementation.



ONLINE COURSE: the Association Agreement made understood

On 15 May 2019, the Project, in conjunction with EdEra, an educational portal, launched Ukraine's first online course on the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement.

This special educational project covered many topics — from the essence of the AA and its key provisions to sectoral reforms, explaining the Agreement's impact on changes in Ukraine.

To develop the online course, the Project engaged leading Ukrainian experts in European policies and law, including experts from the UA-CSP and the UNP, members of the team negotiating the Agreement, and officials responsible for its implementation at the time. They explained complicated things in plain language, using examples from practical experience.

Presently, the special training project is one of the top results given by Google Search for the query about the Association Agreement in Ukrainian. The course gets about 4,500 views per month.



The online course on the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, placed on the EdEra webportal, provides an opportunity to systematize one's knowledge of the Agreement in an interesting and convenient manner. For a public official such way of studying is valuable because it allows to harmoniously combine studying with work. The course is rich in content and easy to follow.



Volodymyr Kuprii,
Acting Head of the
State Agency
for Public Service
of Ukraine

Course topics:

- What is the Association Agreement?
- European standards for building Ukraine
- Who implements the Agreement?
- Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area
- Public procurement. ProZorro
- Market competition and state aid
- Agriculture
- Environmental protection

24



video lectures

4500

views per month

8



experts

8



abstracts of the lectures

8



sets of tests to check the acquired knowledge

5



interviews with diplomats, business people, and experts

55210

views

388



issued certificates of successful completion of all course blocks

2115



registered users

10661



users

EUROPEAN INTEGRATION: the power of opportunities

In early 2019, the Civic Synergy Project supported the governmental awareness-raising campaign 'European Integration: The Power of Opportunities'. Within its framework, the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration and other officials, as well as UNP and UA-CSP experts, went on a regional tour where they told Ukrainians about the benefits of European integration. We supported the campaign in 3 of 10 oblasts, including Khmelnytsky, Zaporizhyya, and Ivano-Frankivsk, and reached 730 participants. The experts shared information about the opportunities that the Platforms have in promoting reforms, as well as the importance of and prospects for public participation in the European integration processes.



We also organized meetings of the Platforms' representatives with regional civil society activists. The meeting participants learned how the AA provisions could be used to promote reforms on the local level and shared their perception of the European integration progress in their regions. We used this insights for further planning of our work in the regions as well as for our analytical papers.

The three regional visits resulted in 68 published written news and 13 video reports.



EUROPE DAY: what is the European Union and what are the European values?

Over the Project's life, we have conducted three awareness-raising campaigns dedicated to Europe Day in Ukraine. Using games and open-space discussions, we told Ukrainians that the sometimes complicated directives and regulations, about which experts talk, would actually help Ukraine carry out the reforms every citizen ho-pes for: make the environment cleaner, the economy energy-efficient, and the human rights protected.

For Europe Days in Ukraine, we held Facebook contests, joined activities of the EU Delegation to Ukraine, and organized 20 awareness-raising events in about 20 Ukrainian regions for over 550 persons.

Ana- ly- sis



POLICY ANALYSIS

To fulfil Ukraine's European integration opportunities at most, while taking into account relevant societal interests, high-quality policy analysis is needed. This is what the Platforms expect from the Government, the Parliament and EU institutions, and what the Platforms themselves need as a basis for further advocacy.

Therefore, one of the Civic Synergy priorities was to assist the UA-CSP and UNP in establishing proper analytical activity. We conducted trainings on writing policy papers for Platform experts and provided them with methodological, organizational and financial support in the preparation of various analytical documents. In this way, we helped the Platforms to establish themselves as a centre of European integration analysis and as authoritative holders of expertise, whose opinions are listened to by stakeholders in Ukraine and the EU.



With the support of the Project, Platform experts prepared:

- monitoring reports on the implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement,
- monitoring reports on the implementation of the EaP key deliverables (20 results expected by 2020),
- sectoral policy papers and other analytical documents with proposals for solving specific problems in certain areas of European integration reforms.

European integrators in the Government and the Parliament have confirmed their active use of the analytical products of the Platforms and the Project in their work. These documents make it possible to at least partially close the deficit of high-quality analysis observed in many areas of European integration and, at the same time, to get acquainted with civil society views, which should be taken into account when developing a public policy. The analytical documents have contributed to the growth of the Platforms' credibility and to building a dialogue between officials and civil society experts on the basis of trust and constructive cooperation.

Some of the analytical materials of the Project were prepared and distributed in English. Owing to this, stakeholders in the EU and the EaP countries received independent civil society analysis from Ukraine and the Platforms increased their awareness among foreign audiences.

111

in Ukrainian, out of which

24 were translated into English

120

analytical publications

9

originally in English

TOPICS COVERED:



Security



Innovations and science



Non-discrimination in the sphere of labour



Eastern Partnership



Food safety and quality



Intellectual property



Education



Technical regulation



Elections



Small and medium business



Employment of people with disabilities



Cross-border cooperation



State aid



Customs



Protectionism



Transport



Environment



Migration policy / Mobility



Public administration reform



Finance



Energy issues



Monitoring the implementation of the Association Agreement



Social policy



EU financial assistance



Consumer protection



Digital policy

3



nation-wide opinion polls regarding:



air transport use



attitude towards environment



attitude towards European integration

MONITORING OF THE AA IMPLEMENTATION: introducing new approaches to analysis

The preparation of a comprehensive public report on the implementation of the AA in various areas covered by the Agreement was one of the most important tasks for the Project and the UA-CSP as a body of civil society control over the AA implementation. Yet, it was also one of the most challenging: difficulties were related to the lack of systemic information from the authorities on the state of the AA implementation (the Government's "Pulse of Agreement" as a tool for the AA implementation monitoring became public only by the end of the Project); the big volume of the AA, requiring significant human resources to fully monitor its implementation; the Platform lacking expertise in a number of thematic areas, as well as different qualifications and experience of analytical work among the UA-CSP members; different views and expectations of civil society representatives regarding the AA implementation; the lack of an agreed methodology in the Platform for monitoring and evaluating the AA implementation; and the difficulty of coordinating such work in the network structure, which does not involve vertical leverages of influence.

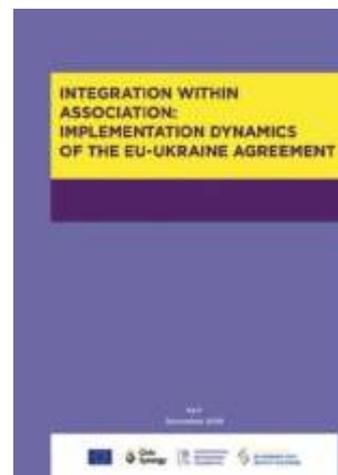
The search for solutions led to two different analytical products: first — the report "From Objectives to Results: Implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement as Seen by Stakeholders" (2017), and then a series of three reports "Integration within the Association: Dynamics of Implementation of the Agreement between Ukraine and the EU (2018-2020).

The first report — **From Objectives to Results: the Implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement as Seen by Stakeholders** — was experimental and built on one of the UA-CSP strengths, that is the presence of stakeholders from various sectors of civil society. The methodology of the report was based on the involvement of stakeholders in the evaluation of the AA implementation in 8 areas using the so-called "trees of objectives" — modeling the necessary decisions and measures to be adopted or fulfilled to fully implement the provisions of the AA and then comparing them with decisions and actions actually adopted/taken. The study findings were presented to the EU Delegation, the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, individual ministries, MPs and EU representatives, as well as publicly at a press conference.



The UA-CSP experts involved in writing the report noted that the preparation process allowed them to significantly strengthen their analytical and advocacy skills, as well as to establish good contacts with stakeholders, especially officials in line ministries, with whom previously it was difficult to establish a dialogue. Thanks to the consultations, some involved officials have "sliced and diced" their own tasks under the AA for the very first time.

On the other hand, this also proved to be a valuable experience for stakeholders themselves, with some government officials later using the report's proposed model of the "trees of objectives" to plan their activities on the AA implementation. Despite these clear benefits, the preparation of the report proved to be very time-consuming, so the Project continued its search for an effective methodology for preparing a comprehensive non-governmental report on the implementation of the AA.



The report you
have produced
[Integration within
Association]

and the work you are doing is just amazing. In this report on some parts you have been able to dig even deeper than the EU bureaucrats. It is a very important sign that the Ukrainian government, which is very dedicated to Ukraine's European path, is under the best possible democratic pressure by its own citizens, by civil society to deliver.



Matti Maasikas,
Head of the EU
Delegation to Ukraine

The analytical report "**Integration within the Association: Dynamics of Implementation of the Agreement between Ukraine and the EU**" became a successful result of such search. The three editions of this report were prepared by the Project with the involvement of UA-CSP and other independent experts from the end of 2018 till the beginning of 2020. The report analyzes the progress in implementing the most specific provisions of the AA — Ukraine's integration into the EU common market (the AA provides for the prospect of the EU adopting a decision on such integration in 14 sectors). The first two editions of the report provide an in-depth analysis in 6 sectors, while the third edition covers 8 sectors. Within each sector, there is an analysis of the potential benefits of the EU internal market integration, the dynamics and current state of Ukraine's 'homework', the reasons for lagging behind or going further ahead, as well as recommendations for both sides — Ukraine and the EU.

The report was publicly presented in Ukrainian and English in Kyiv, Brussels and the capitals of the EU Member States and received positive feedback from all sides — Ukrainian Government officials and parliamentarians, as well as from foreign diplomats and representatives of EU institutions and think tanks.

The report and media publications based on it helped the new Government in Ukraine to formulate priorities in the AA implementation. That way, at the end of 2019, laws on customs procedures, standardization and market surveillance, public procurement, and financial services were adopted. Thanks to these laws, the EU has decided to recognize Ukraine's implementation of the first phase of public procurement reforms and agreed to send a preliminary assessment mission to Ukraine to begin the process of concluding the Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products (ACAA).

The Parties to the AA also started a discussion on revising the provisions of the sectoral annexes to the AA in order to specify mutual expectations and bring the content of the Agreement in line with the development of EU legislation. Based on the recommendations of the Report, public experts formulated **proposals** to update the content of the Agreement, which were publicly presented on the eve of the meeting of the Association Council in early 2020.

12

CSP reports were prepared during the Project

Another series of analytical publications that served as a basis for the preparation of joint declarations of the CSP was the CSP thematic reports, which contained an analysis of the situation with the implementation of the AA in specific areas. According to the CSP statute, before each meeting such reports are prepared in parallel by both sides, i.e., it is possible to compare the assessment of the situation from the perspective of the Ukrainian and EU civil societies.

In total, **12 CSP reports** were prepared during the Project, covering the following areas: anti-discrimination, media freedom, IDPs' rights, food security, labour market, wage regulation, trade union and workers' rights, environmental protection, climate change, transport, development of science and technology, and Digital Single Market. Most of these reports were prepared with the organizational, methodological and financial support of the Project, also using prior analytical products of grant projects. Typically the UA-CSP reports were deeper than those of the EU side — with a thorough analysis of the state of implementation of the relevant AA provisions and specific recommendations on the necessary further steps for all stakeholders.



The parallel reports from both sides were discussed at CSP meetings, with their key recommendations being included in the text of joint declarations. After the meetings, the joint CSP declarations and thematic reports were officially sent to other Association bodies and to Ukrainian executive and legislative bodies and the EU institutions, as well as published on the European Integration Portal. The key conclusions of the thematic reports were communicated to the representatives of the Ukrainian authorities at special meetings with the VPM and relevant ministries.

ANALYTICAL DOCUMENTS ON EASTERN PARTNERSHIP: assuring the UNP's leadership in the region

For UNP, the basic document around which its analytical activities were built was a joint working document "Eastern Partnership — 20 Deliverables for 2020: Focusing on Key Priorities and Tangible Results" (hereinafter — "20 Deliverables for 2020"), first presented by the European Commission in December 2016 as a roadmap for the development of EU's cooperation with the EaP. In 2017, UNP initiated the monitoring of Ukraine's implementation of the objectives set out in this document and became the first among the national platforms of the EaP CSF to conduct a **comprehensive analysis of the implementation of "20 Deliverables for 2020"**. The methodology developed by UNP experts is now used by national platforms in other EaP countries.

Starting in 2017, UNP experts have prepared three issues of the annual **monitoring report on "20 Deliverables for 2020"**. In addition to analyzing the status of implementation of the deliverables, the reports included expert recommendations on priority steps the Government should take to achieve the desired indicators, as well as proposals for the EU institutions on how update the reform roadmap. For the Ukrainian authorities, the monitoring report was useful in determining the priorities of sectoral policies in the process of implementing the AA and "20 Deliverables for 2020", as well as to build a dialogue with partners from the EU and the EaP in accordance with these priorities.

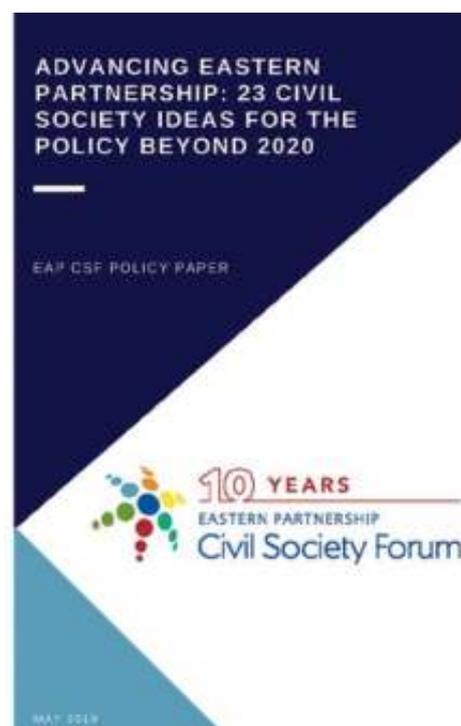


The Civic Synergy Project contributed to turning many advocacy ideas of our colleagues from the EaP CSF UNP into reality. The UNP has become a leader in the civil society efforts to monitor regularly the implementation of the 20 Deliverables for 2020, inspiring the colleagues from other EaP countries. The project also facilitated harnessing the expertise of the UNP members in a structured way with the effective assistance of the well-functioning secretariat that helped shaping the provide expertise into the advocacy messages delivered in Brussels as an input to EU-UA Human Rights Dialogues, regular AA/DCFTA reports as well as on other specific occasions.

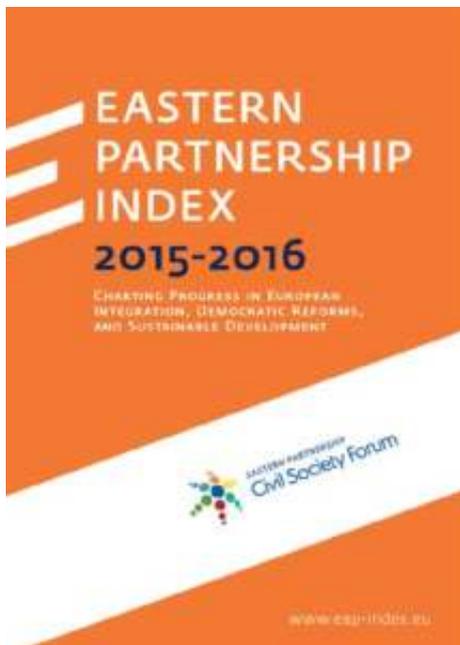


Vera Rihackova Pachta, Advocacy Manager, Secretariat of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum

According to government officials, responsible officials in line ministries used the report when preparing to participate in official EaP events. In 2019, when the Government Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration was preparing its own assessment of Ukraine's implementation of the "20 Deliverables for 2020", UNP experts submitted their proposals to be included in the conclusions of the government report. UNP monitoring reports were also useful for representatives of EU and EaP institutions, who received information on the state of reforms in Ukraine and desirable priorities from the civil society point of view, which helped them in dialogue with the Ukrainian government. Recommendations of UNP experts regarding expanding or changing the EaP approaches and objectives in certain areas have become an important contribution to the development of the updated EaP policy after 2020.



Monitoring the implementation of the “20 Deliverables for 2020” has given impetus to a number of other studies under the auspices of the UNP. For example, in the paper **“Comparative Analysis of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement and 20 Key Deliverables of the Eastern Partnership: What is the Added Value for Relations between Ukraine and the EU?”**, Platform experts analyzed the extent to which the provisions of both documents duplicate or complement each other, and thus determined the added value of the EaP for Ukraine. In the study **“The Future Economic Integration of the Eastern Partnership: a View from Ukraine”**, other experts considered various possible options for further development of economic integration processes within the EaP and proposed a vision of creation of the “Neighbourhood Economic Community” of the three associated countries.



With the Civic Synergy support, the UNP also contributed to the preparation of the **“Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016”** report — a comprehensive study that assesses and compares the progress of six EaP countries in democratic reforms, implementation of European norms and development of political, economic and social ties with the EU. The Project ensured the preparation of the Ukrainian part of the study and the report publication, as well as joined the presentation of the general edition of the Index to stakeholders in Brussels.

OTHER ANALYTICAL DOCUMENTS

In addition to working on collective documents, the Project supported the work of the Platform members who prepared policy papers in specific areas of European integration. The experts who received support were selected on a competitive basis upon considering their concept notes of proposed papers. Before submitting the concepts, the interested Platform members participated in trainings on how to write policy papers. Those experts who won the policy papers competition received methodological consultations on how to analyze public policy problems, collect and examine positions of stakeholders, develop possible scenarios and argue the best solutions. The support was provided during the whole period of the document preparation. For us, both the result and the process were important. This approach allowed to strengthen the analytical skills of the involved Platform experts and to raise the overall bar of the quality of the Platforms' analytical products.

There have been 10 publications prepared in this framework, and they present findings of the studies on effective public policy-making in various areas — in particular, in the development of adult learning, e-commerce, establishing of the social dialogue; increasing the level of real labor income of working citizens; ensuring food security; implementation of international conventions in the field of environment; consumer calculations for natural gas, etc. The project also supported public events to discuss the documents with stakeholders: some were held at the stage of preparation of the final version in order to test the conclusions and supplement the analysis with stakeholders' positions, while others were organized at the stage of presenting the final product to communicate the findings to decision-makers and other addressees of the recommendations. Thus, a number of these studies became a basis for further public advocacy efforts to promote effective public policy changes (for more details see the Advocacy section).

10

publications presenting findings of the studies on effective public policy-making

In total

83

analytical documents

Also, various analytical documents were prepared with the Project support in the framework of the grant projects implemented by the Platform member organizations. In total, there were 83 analytical documents on foreign and security policy, information security and fighting disinformation, human rights, migration, state aid, economic policy, free trade area, cross-border cooperation, consumer protection, social dialogue, environment, energy efficiency, transport, science and innovation, etc. (for more details, see the Grant Support section).

Advo- ca- cy



ADVOCACY

The UA-CSP and the UNP have a significant potential to influence Ukrainian and EU authorities. It arises from their formal status under the AA and within the EaP institutional framework as well as from the big number of non-governmental organizations from all over Ukraine united by the Platforms.



To realize this potential, the Platforms need to regularly interact with key European integration actors, maintain the interest of the latter in cooperation by providing them with high-quality expertise, initiate public discussions of the most topical issues of European integration reforms, and promote their own positions through media.

Supporting exactly these lines of the Platforms' advocacy activities was the focus of the Civic Synergy Project, which other European integration actors (such as the Government of Ukraine, the Delegation of the European Union to Ukraine, etc.) used to perceive as a 'point of entry' to pro-European civil society. They approached us with requests to collect civil society opinions on various aspects of pro-European reforms, disseminate information about the possibility to participate in public consultations, organize an expert discussion on the eve of Association bodies' meetings, or provide conclusions on draft laws under consideration in Parliament. Now, with the quality analyses done by the Platforms with the Project's support and the active advocacy of public proposals for the implementations of the AA and other reforms, the Platforms themselves are seen as an essential participant in the European integration process.

ADVOCACY IN UKRAINE: cooperation of the Platforms with main European integration stakeholders established

Since 2016, the UA-CSP and the UNP have been regularly meeting with key decision-makers in the European integration sphere. These include the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration and representatives of the Government Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministries, relevant parliamentary committees, etc.

Such meetings have become actual consultations between civil society and authorities on the implementation of reforms, analysis of decisions for their conformity with the country's European integration course, and coordination of joint actions in the dialogue with European partners.



Over the last few years, cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

with the civil society platforms has been very active and productive. The activities organized by the Project provided a space for effective dialogue between the authorities responsible for EU integration and foreign policy and interested civil society organizations, during which we developed common approaches in promoting Ukrainian interests in cooperation with international partners. The government and civil society also worked together on external advocacy issues, and the "voice" of Ukrainian civil society at the EU level became stronger and more visible.

The analytical deliverables of the Platforms, in particular, their vision of AA implementation priorities and Ukraine's ambitions within the EaP, are in demand of officials. Serving as an example is the 'Transition Book' which the Government Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration produced for the new government in the summer of 2019. The book, beside the Government's inventory of European integration state of affairs by each ministry, also provided civil society recommendations on further priority steps formulated by the Platforms' experts with the organizational support of Civic Synergy. In the next Government, the office of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration and the Government Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, when they were developing Ukraine's position within the framework of consultations on the future of the EaP, consulted UNP experts and directly used their analytical works to write the official position paper.



Serhiy Saienko, Deputy Director, Department of the European Union and NATO, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

On the eve of the last Association Council, Civic Synergy, together with the Platforms' experts and European Pravda, identified priorities for developing the Ukraine-EU relations in key areas for 2020 and the mid-term perspective. At a round table, the views of civil society experts were presented to all key European integration actors, including the Head of the EU Delegation to Ukraine, the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, and the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Ukraine's EU Integration. The civil society position was also disseminated among other persons involved in the European-Ukrainian relations. These steps allowed the Ukrainian officials in Brussels to refer to the public opinion to advocate a more ambitious vision of cooperation with the EU, in particular, revising the AA to extend the opportunities for integration into EU markets.

Although we have not succeeded in establishing as effective cooperation with all the ministries as that with the central EU integration institutions, we had success stories there too. Representatives of the Platforms are involved in carrying out certain initiatives of the ministries: the development of strategies and other roadmaps. For example, UNP members provided their suggestions for the development of youth participation roadmaps that the Ministry of Youth and Sports worked on, and UA-CSP experts worked with the Ministry of Education and Science on the development of the draft law 'On Adult Education' and supplied a number of recommendations for the governmental Innovation Development Strategy of Ukraine for 2030.



The implementation of the EU-funded Civic Synergy

Project allowed to

coordinate the expert potential of civil society and ensure coordinated and consistent interaction with the Government, Parliament and EU institutions. Analytical reports and recommendations prepared with the Project's support contributed to developing a clear agenda of EU-Ukraine relationship, as well as provided comprehensive independent monitoring of Ukraine's progress in fulfilling its obligations under the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, Euratom and their Member States. The Project created a platform for ongoing sectoral and inclusive dialogue authorities and civil society on the approximation of Ukrainian legislation to EU law and advancing political priorities for deepening economic integration with the EU.



Olga Stefanishyna,
Director of the Government Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine (2016-2019)



Collaboration with the parliamentary EU Integration Committee has improved: Platforms' members regularly participate in its meetings and make proposals relating to the draft legislation on the consideration of the Committee. As of early 2020, with the Civic Synergy support, over 200 expert conclusions were provided for draft laws in the areas covered by the AA (customs, state aid, electronic trust services, digital policy, etc.). Thus, the Platforms created an additional filter to cut off legislation that contradicts the AA.

To draw the attention of the authorities to pressing public problems or prevent actions that could be detrimental to the image and national interests of Ukraine, the Platforms made official statements, which had a political weight owing to the Platforms' status. In total, over the life of the Project, the UA-CSP has issued 6 statements, and UNP, 13, including four jointly approved by both Platforms or their working groups. For example, both Platforms consistently advocated rejecting the new version of the Labour Law. Statements on the matter were made by both Platforms' social and labour policy working groups and brought to the knowledge of relevant stakeholders, whereas proposals of the working groups' representatives were taken into account in the process of considering the draft law by the Parliamentary Committee on Ukraine's EU Integration.



The Civic Synergy Project interacted effectively

with the executive and legislative authorities. It coordinated the development of analytical materials to ensure civil society monitoring of the Association Agreement implementation. The Project also did not stand aside from the expert discussion about drafting of EU integration legislation in Parliament. The Project provided expert support in examining the draft laws for their conformity with the Association Agreement and EU law.



Ivanna Klympush-Tsyntsadze,
Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Ukraine's Integration with the EU



BUILDING A DIALOGUE WITH STAKEHOLDERS ON EUROPEAN INTEGRATION REFORMS

The attitude of various societal groups toward European integration reforms is not always undivided: what is good for some could lead to losses for others. Sometimes, the reason for a negative attitude toward reforms lies in unawareness of their long-run benefits that are not obvious in the mid-term. Sometimes, however, the reforms suggested by the Government could be implemented less painfully by finding trade-off solutions that would take into account the interests of a broadest possible circle of stakeholders.

Dialogue is required to figure out the positions of different parties and find a consensus. Although setting up an effective stakeholder dialogue in policy-making is a task of the state, the Civic Synergy Project in collaboration with the Platforms also applied this tool to look for and advocate solutions for those aspects of European integration that lacked a unified vision among societal actors.

For example, in early 2019, we discussed the issue of energy poverty with our partners within the framework of a public discussion joined by Ukrainian and EU experts as well as representatives of trade unions and other civil society organizations, Naftogaz, the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, and the media. UA-CSP experts provided their proposals on how Ukraine could switch over to market relations in the energy sector while taking into consideration the inability to pay of a part of the population.





In April 2019, we convened a round table with representatives of the Ministry of Energy and Coal Industry, natural gas market operators, traders, gas suppliers, and experts to look for a common way out of another problem situation: the consumers began paying for gas more but continued receiving the fuel of variable quality for a flat price. The experts suggested a solution based on the European model: switch over from paying for the volume of consumed gas to paying for its energy value.

One more reform that has matured in Ukraine is changing approaches to social dialogue development. One of the proposals was to involve NGOs (beyond trade-unions) in the process. A round table was organized to discuss which proposals would meet present-day requirements and which would challenge the very existence of social dialogue. The event participants included representatives of state authorities, trade unions, employers' organizations, NGOs, and research institutions. The round table wound up in a resolution that was distributed among key stakeholders in this area.





- 1 An appeal to presidential candidates signed by the Platforms' 88 member organizations demanding to publicly declare the support of the European course of Ukraine during the electoral debates



- 3 An analysis of party electoral programmes for their conformity with the European integration course of Ukraine



- 2 The Platforms' appeal to political parties suggesting to include key EU integration priorities identified by experts into the party electoral programmes



- 4 A press conference to present the study findings and related articles published in Ukrainian and foreign media



- 5 After the elections, detailed recommendations on priority EU integration steps provided by the Project to the winning parties and an invitation extended to cooperate with the Platforms



ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION: the Platforms' had an impact on the political agenda during the elections in Ukraine

In 2019, the Platforms actively participated in and influenced the formation of the European integration agenda during the presidential and parliamentary elections in Ukraine. The campaign resulted in the inclusion of the Platforms' proposals into the programmes of certain political parties.

- 1 Consultations with the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration



- 3 Infographics prepared for MPs on the benefits for Ukraine of having updated Annex XXVII to the AA approved



EU ENERGY MARKET: ratification of updated Annex XXVII to the Association Agreement

Ukraine's accession to the EU energy market is only possible on the condition of having national legislation harmonized with EU acquis. The adoption of updated Annex XXVII to the AA has paved the way toward this goal. According to the updated Annex, Ukraine has to agree its energy legislation with the European Commission. The approval of the new version of the by the Ukrainian Parliament in early June 2019 became possible owing to joint consultations of all stakeholders with the Parliament as well as the advocacy campaign held by the civil society Platforms.

- 2 Consultations with representatives of the Ministry of Energy and Coal Industry



- 4 The Platforms' appeal to parliamentary factions to ratify the updated Annex.





SUCCESS STORIES

National level



European Media Platform



The experts were first to respond to and analyse the changes and opportunities that the updated European Electronic Communications Code opened up for Ukraine's integration into the EU Digital Single Market. The analytical materials produced under the Project along with the translation of the Code were used by the government and MPs in developing two draft laws on electronic communications in 2019 and 2020.



Agency of European Innovations



Ukrainian scientists will receive up to €7 million for their own research. This was made possible by a regulation approved by the Ministry of Education and Science that took into account suggestions by the Platforms' experts. In the future, it will also facilitate the more effective involvement of Ukrainian researchers in Horizon 2020.



Center of Economic Strategy



The Center provided recommendations on the implementation of the new rules under the Law ‘On currency and currency operations’. Eventually, the National Bank of Ukraine listened to the recommendations: it cancelled the mandatory sale of currency earnings, allowed the withdrawal of dividends, relaxed the conditions for investing abroad, etc.



Europe without Barriers



Thanks to the advocacy within the Project, the State Migration Service of Ukraine has made changes in the procedure for issuing residence permits for foreigners. An electronic waitlist and an online service for checking the application status were implemented, and the deadline for the issue of residence permits was reduced to 15 workdays.

Regional level



NECU



The National Ecological Center of Ukraine has managed to secure a decision of the Parliamentary Committee on Environmental Policy on the necessity to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Hydropower Development Programme until 2026.

The Programme provided for constructing several hydropower plants, a hotly-debated issue, and raising the water level in the Oleksandriyske Reservoir. The experts also provided consultation to the community of the town of Pervomaysk, Mykolaiv Oblast. Eventually, the City Council appealed to the President, the Parliament Speaker, and the Prime Minister of Ukraine, objecting to the raise of the Oleksandriyske Reservoir level. Mykolaiv Oblast residents also rallied under the walls of the Parliament and submitted to the legislature over 6,000 signatures for preserving the Bug Gard National Nature Park. The action succeeded in saving the reserve, in particular the Gardovy (presently Klepany) Island.



Ecoclub



The NGO, in cooperation with the Khmelnytsky Energy Cluster, developed a methodology for estimating the potential of renewable energy sources in Khmelnytsky Oblast to identify necessary changes to be made in the area of energy efficiency and renewable energy. After the project presented its results, its experts joined a working group on drafting the Khmelnytsky Oblast Development Strategy for 2021-2027. Their recommendations allow creating conditions for the implementation of investment projects on energy development in the region.



I sincerely thank you for cooperation! A wonderful Project with fantastic results! Owing to the collaboration with you, hundreds of representatives of communities, regional authorities, and local governments acquired knowledge and skills in applying the important environmental protection tools, such as the environmental assessments (EIA and SEA). We thank your communication experts for their patient work on adapting legal texts and setting them forth in the language understandable to society. Our team derived only pleasure from working with you.



Olena Kravchenko,
Executive Director, Board
Member of the International
Charity Organization
'Environment-People-Law'



Environment-People-Law



The EPL team provided expert support to communities in undergoing the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure. Thanks to this support, the damage to the environment from felling in Sumy Oblast and clearing of the Oril riverbed in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast was prevented or reduced. Within the EIA framework, the organization also suggested new approaches to the construction of a solid waste processing complex in Lviv. In particular, the EPL proposed to separate collection of organic and hazardous waste before the production of technical compost and to abandon the mechanical and biological waste management, which is currently recognized as the least effective in Europe. The organization also stressed that the construction site crosses the river Poltva, which was taken into account in the EIA conclusion, and therefore the complex has the right to carry out its activities only in compliance with the regime of the riverbank protective strips.

EU and EaP



EU AND EAP COOPERATION

European integration advocacy is not limited to civil society's interaction with domestic stakeholders. It is no less important to cooperate with institutions and civic/expert communities of the EU and EU member-states, as well as those in the EaP countries.

This is necessary, primarily, to seek an effective reform support from the EU and to coordinate efforts with those neighbours who have EU integration aspirations and face challenges similar to the Ukrainian ones.



The Platforms have unique opportunities for international impact that are inherent in their organizational nature. In the case of the UA-CSP this is a dialogue with EU civil society embodied by the European Economic and Social Committee — an official civil society body within the system of the EU institutions that forms the EU side of the EU-Ukraine Civil Society Platform (CSP) by delegating its members. Results of bi-annual CSP deliberations are conveyed to other association bodies.

Meanwhile the UNP uses the opportunities for interaction with civil societies of the other five EaP countries, the representatives of which make up, together with their Ukrainian counterparts, the EaP Civil Society Forum. It also benefits from the possibility to advocate its proposals in the EU institutions under auspices of the Forum, which is an official EaP civil society body.

The Project helped the Platforms take full advantage of these opportunities, as well as use additional channels to reach international audiences. With the Civic Synergy support, the Platforms communicated to EU stakeholders their independent assessments of the AA implementation and progress towards EaP deliverables, defended Ukraine's ambitions to deepen integration with the EU, exchanged experiences with European civil society organizations, established societal dialogue with the neighbouring countries and drew international attention to the challenges that are common for the region, in particular the security ones.

The Project launched the Association Exchange Forum, which has become the first and so far the only regular platform for exchanging views and establishing cooperation between senior officials responsible for EU integration in Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova, as well as relevant experts and civil society activists from the three countries, and representatives of EU institutions and think tanks.

CSP: providing association bodies with civil society assessment of the Association Agreement implementation

The CSP is an official association body that exercises civil society control over the AA implementation, providing its assessments to other association bodies, in particular, the Association Council and the Parliamentary Association Committee. In practice, the process looks like this: the Platform meets twice a year for its meetings (alternately in Ukraine and Brussels), during which Ukrainian and EU public experts discuss the state of the AA implementation as a whole and — in more depth — in several priority areas, regarding the performance in which both parties prepare special reports. Based on the deliberations, the Platform approves a Joint Declaration — the main document of the CSP, which is submitted to other association bodies as an official recommendation from civil society.

The Civic Synergy Project financially and organizationally supported the work of the UA-CSP in the bilateral Platform but also arranged activities of the latter in Ukraine: during the Project duration we organized three Ukraine-based CSP meetings (two in Kyiv and one in Lviv), and also ensured the participation of the Ukrainian delegation in three CSP meetings in Brussels.

The Project supported the preparation of thematic reports for the CSP meetings by rapporteurs from the Ukrainian side, while the UA-CSP secretariat organized the preparation of draft Joint Declarations — the main document of the CSP, approved at each meeting and submitted to other association bodies. We also ensured the dissemination of CSP findings among foreign target audiences so that as many relevant people as possible were informed about the assessments and recommendations of Ukrainian and EU civil societies.



EU officials are traditionally interested in the Platform's findings — for them this is an alternative assessment of reforms in Ukraine, with which they can compare the official reports of the Government on the AA implementation, and later, in dialogue with Ukrainian colleagues, draw the attention of the latter to certain problematic aspects signalled by civil society. After receiving one of the Joint Declarations, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Federica Mogherini described the role of the CSP in her reply: “The Civil Society Platform has been playing an important role by contributing constructively to the monitoring and implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. The forum provides an opportunity to discuss important issues in our relations with Ukraine with the active participation of all social partners.



Civil society is very active in Ukraine and your cooperation [the cooperation between Ukrainian and EU civil societies] is thus of particular value to push forward important reforms in Ukraine. These discussions and the Joint Declaration adopted at the recent meeting are also helping us prepare for upcoming political dialogue meetings with Ukraine.”

UNP: a leader among the EaP CSF national platforms

The UNP is the only national platform within the EaP CSF, which, thanks to the Civic Synergy Project, had a large-scale resource support to implement its activities. Although, before the Project started, the UNP had been also active in the Forum, during the Project operation its engagement and visibility within the Forum, at the EU and EaP levels have grown significantly. The UNP has become a clear leader of the Forum in the production of analytical documents, which turned into models to be followed by other national platforms. It also led in the preparation of position documents that unite civil societies of the EaP in defending common interests and the initiation of the discussion on the future of the EaP and the Forum's further institutional development.

Thanks to the analytical products and advocacy success stories that were realized with the Civic Synergy support, UNP representatives were more often invited to work in the EaP panels (official intergovernmental platforms for cooperation in specific sectors of the EaP) and various expert initiatives. The constant communication between the Secretariats of the UNP and the Forum contributed to a more effective information exchange, planning and implementation of joint advocacy initiatives. The project also organized Ukrainian discussions in the framework of the annual Assemblies of the EaP CSF, promoting better public awareness of the EaP and EU civil society of the situation with reforms in Ukraine.





Using the methodological and financial support of the Civic Synergy Project, UNP experts prepared high-quality policy analysis for the Forum — in particular, the Ukrainian part of the comparative analytical study "Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016". With the Project support, UNP experts assessed the added value of the objectives for the EaP determined by the EU (the so-called "20 deliverables of the EaP by 2020") for Ukraine and, inter alia, compared them with AA provisions, and later provided their assessments of the progress in the implementation of the deliverables. In addition, they analyzed options for economic integration between the EaP partner countries (for more details, see the Analysis section).

During 2018-2019, with the financial support of the Project, a monthly analytical digest "Bridges of the Eastern Partnership" ("EaP Think Bridge") was published and disseminated among the interested expert audience in the EaP countries and the EU. The digest was prepared by Ukrainian experts together with partners from the other five countries of the EaP. In 2019, the Project helped to involve UNP experts in the preparation of a joint analytical document of the Forum **"Advancing the Eastern Partnership: 23 Civil Society Ideas for the Policy beyond 2020"**, later presented to EU officials as a common position of the regional civil society at the 10th anniversary EaP high-level conference in Brussels.



During the Project implementation, the UNP started to use statements at the international level to draw the EU's attention to Ukrainian issues more frequently. Within the Project period, the UNP initiated 12 statements adopted by the Steering Committee of the EaP CSF. Among **the main topics** raised by the UNP were the following:

- maintaining pressure on Russia in connection with its armed aggression in eastern Ukraine;
- protection of human rights in the occupied territories of Crimea and Donbas;
- release and protection of the rights of Ukrainian political prisoners and prisoners of war held in the territory of the Russian Federation;
- preventing the participation of the Russian delegation in the PACE;
- criticism of certain legislative initiatives of the Ukrainian Government deemed as anti-European by civil society, such as e-declaration for anti-corruption activists, etc.

Considering that, within the EaP, the Forum is considered an official "voice" of civil societies of the EaP countries, the Forum statements were taken into account by key responsible institutions of the EU, EU Member States and EaP. Some statements initiated by the UNP received official responses from the EU institutions and certain EU countries.

ASSOCIATION EXCHANGE FORUM: a unique platform for the European integration dialogue of the three associated countries

A special pride of the Project is its signature event — the Association Exchange Forum, an annual gathering of senior officials and public experts from Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, and the EU working on the AA implementation. The purpose of this unique platform is to create opportunities for a regular exchange of experience and best practices in the AA implementation between the three countries, discussion of problematic issues of the implementation and identification of common interests and opportunities for the associated countries to work together in promoting deeper EU integration.



Altogether about

450

participants

16000+

views of the online stream and recorded sessions
of the Association Exchange Forum (2018-2019)

100

mentions in Internet media (2018-2019)



During the three gatherings of the Forum, it was attended by more than 450 participants, including senior governmental officials of the three countries responsible for European integration, heads of relevant committees of the Parliaments, MEPs, representatives of EU institutions, experts from leading think tanks from the EU, Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, members of European integration civil society platforms, ambassadors of the EU and EU member states, representatives of international organizations and projects, etc.

Altogether about two hundred speakers participated in panel discussions on topical issues of European integration — from general, such as the institutional capacity and role of the EU in implementing European integration reforms, to sectoral — the progress in the field of DCFTA, judicial reform, energy security and others. All sessions were broadcasted online in real time, and video records of the Forum sessions continue to be available on the Project's website and YouTube channel. Thanks to the latter, around 16,000 people in different countries were able to watch the discussions.



The Association Exchange Forum has become a central event for those who work on Association Agreements. It provided the necessary breadth and depth for officials and experts. The speakers were invariably experts in their field and provided insights into the implementation of the AAs and, perhaps more importantly, the associated challenges. There is nothing that comes close in terms of what the Forum is able to offer to those working in the three partner countries and the EU institutions. It is critical that, somehow, it can be sustained to continue its work in the future.



Prof. Kataryna Wolczuk, School of Government at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom



For the third Forum, which took place in November 2019, we prepared a publication that compares the situation with the AA implementation in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine — from differences in the text of the three Agreements to institutional implementation mechanisms and other aspects of implementation. This comparative review has already become a basis for further research on the AA implementation by experts from European think tanks.

Forum participants appreciated the level of its discussions and the opportunity to obtain up-to-date first-hand information on the state of affairs in European integration in the associated countries. Being the only platform for interaction of AA experts from the three countries plus the EU, the Forum also facilitated deepening of participants' professional ties and resulted in development of cooperation projects with colleagues from the other countries.





During three years, the Association Exchange Forum played a leading

role in motivating civil society, the Governments of Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine and the international community to formulate and achieve the common goals of the associated countries. The Association Exchange Forum has played an important part in uniting civil society of the three countries and promoting cooperation between them. At the same time, it has strongly contributed to the process of fostering institutional cooperation between the associated countries to reinforce their collective efforts for eventual functional and future institutional integration into the EU.



Kakha Gogolashvili,
Co-Chair of the
EU-Georgia Civil
Society Platform

An important result of the 3rd Association Exchange Forum was the adoption of a Joint Statement of all six civil society European integration platforms from Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine regarding a special format of cooperation between the three associated countries and creation of a separate track in EU relations with the latter (EU+3). Representatives of civil society from the three countries agreed to strengthen their own cooperation and coordination of efforts, and called on their Governments and Parliaments to create a tripartite format of cooperation to exchange reforms experience, coordinate policies and ensure mutual support for deeper EU integration. The Civic Synergy project, in cooperation with the Office of MEP Andrius Kubilius, also held an advocacy event in the European Parliament to present the Joint Statement as a common position of civil society of the three associated countries.



These ideas were soon supported by the Governments of the three countries in the form of joint tripartite statements by foreign ministers on the EU+3 format as a key expectation of the EaP reform.



The future of the Eastern Partnership will depend on the upgrading of EU

relations with the most advanced reformers, which currently are the three EU-associated countries. This is how the main principle of ‘more for more’ should work and we suggest doing so in our proposal for the EU Trio Strategy. Civil Society organisations are main stakeholders in promoting this incentive-led approach of the EU Trio Strategy as they have been raising it many times. Now it remains to be seen if the EU institutions will have enough courage to accept it and give a new momentum to the EU relationship with the Eastern Partners. The European Parliament, its Euronest delegation and EU Neighbourhood East Forum will continue promoting European values and supporting EU integration efforts of our Eastern Partners, especially of the ones with ambitious European agendas.



Andrius Kubilius,
Member of the European Parliament



OTHER ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES IN BRUSSELS

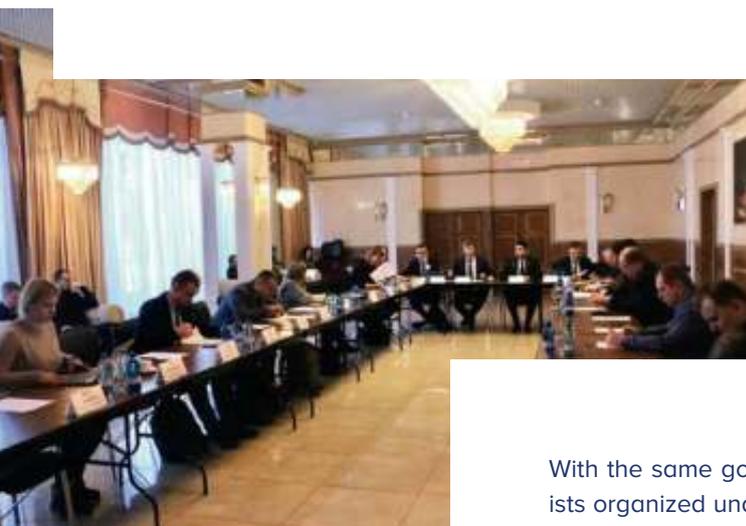
We also helped to bring the Platforms' analytical work to the European audience, inter alia, through direct mailing of analytical papers to European stakeholders and joint activities with the Ukrainian Think Tank Liaison Office in Brussels, in particular by involving UNP and UA-CSP experts in UkraineLabs organized by the Office. These activities provided an opportunity for the Platform experts to present their analytical materials prepared with the Project support, as well as to communicate their assessments and recommendations to EU stakeholders. In particular, the audience in Brussels was very interested in the analytical reports "Integration within the Association: the dynamics of the implementation of the Agreement between Ukraine and the EU", prepared with the participation of UA-CSP experts.

The handbook **“How the Ukrainian Pro-European Civil Society Platforms Can Effectively Work in Brussels: Target Audiences Analysis”**, prepared by Civic Synergy in 2017, even after the Project ends can continue to serve as a guideline for the Platforms on building successful advocacy activities aimed at EU officials and expert community.

CIVIC SOCIETY DIALOGUE WITH NEIGHBOURS IN EU AND EAP

During 2018-2020, the Civic Synergy Project, together with the UNP and the Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism”, held 5 international forums dedicated to Ukraine's cooperation with its neighbours — Belarus, Moldova, Hungary and Romania. These events were attended by experts and diplomatic representatives of Ukraine and partner countries in a closed format according to the rules of the Chatham House. This allowed to discuss, in a professional, open and constructive manner, many inconvenient issues on the bilateral relations agenda, explore options of further development of the cooperation with the EU and cross-border cooperation, and ponder joint efforts in the fight against hybrid threats and other common challenges. Based on the findings of each discussion, UNP experts prepared analytical documents with recommendations for the development of the bilateral dialogue and cooperation, which were passed on to stakeholders.

The dialogues with the neighbours have effectively paved the way for the creation of a network of institutionalized formats of expert diplomacy in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and the neighbouring countries. Thus, the Project and UNP contributed to the development of constructive dialogue, mutual understanding and improvement of bilateral relations in the region.

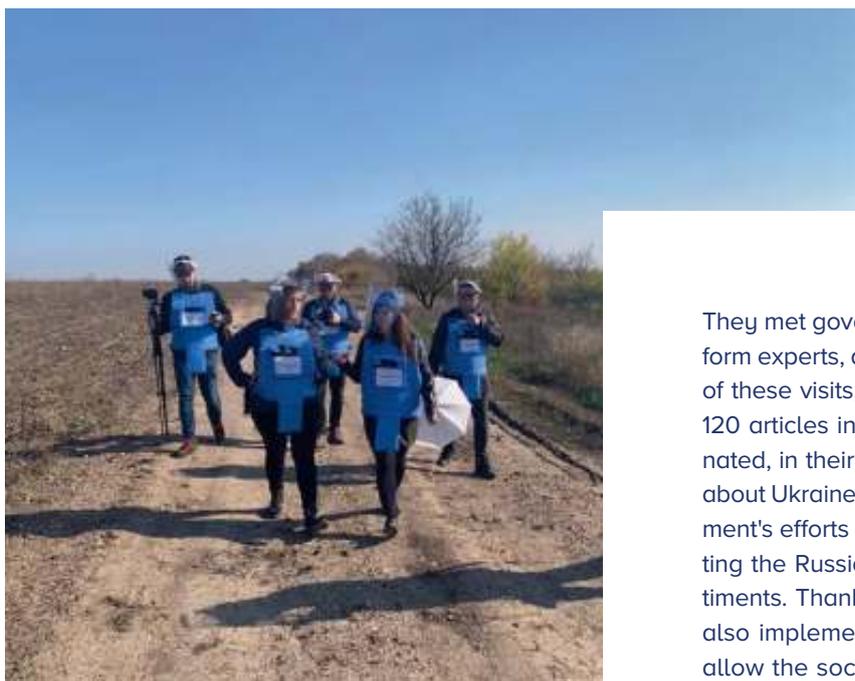


To influence the decision-making process, CSOs need effective and sustainable channels of communication with their national governments, as well as governments in the EU member states and Eastern Partnership countries. Therefore, it has been important to introduce the practice of holding annual expert forums at the bilateral level with neighbouring countries (Belarus, Moldova, Hungary, etc.). It is symbolic that the approach proposed within the framework of the Civic Synergy Project was extended by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine to other countries, using budget funding in 2020 (e.g., the Ukrainian-Czech Forum took place in February 2020).



Hennadiy Maksak,
National Facilitator
at the UNP in 2017-2019,
Head of the Board
of the Foreign Policy
Council “Ukrainian Prism”

With the same goal, the Project supported visits of foreign journalists organized under the auspices of the UNP by the Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Prism" and partner organizations. During 2018-2019, 45 journalists from Hungary, Poland, Belarus, Romania, the Czech Republic and Slovakia came to Ukraine as part of 5 missions.



They met government officials, diplomats and Platform experts, and visited frontline areas. As a result of these visits, the journalists published more than 120 articles in media, through which they disseminated, in their own countries, objective information about Ukraine, the situation in Donbass, the government's efforts in the context of reforms and combating the Russian aggression, and the societal sentiments. Thanks to the trips, some journalists have also implemented their own special projects that allow the societies of the neighbouring countries to better understand the Ukrainian challenges. For example, Hungarian ATV journalist Ildiko Eperesi wrote a documental book called "A Book of Destinies from the Front — Excerpts from the War," and Romanian journalist Marian Voicu released a documentary about the Russian aggression, "War and Peace in Ukraine," which was shown on one of Romania's main TV channels.

COOPERATION WITH FOREIGN DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS IN UKRAINE

In addition to supporting the international activities of the Platforms and holding international forums, the Project actively cooperated with the EU Delegation to Ukraine and the embassies of the EU member states. In particular, we arranged the participation of Platform representatives and other civil society experts in the consultations of the EU Delegation on the preparation of the EU annual report on the AA implementation, on the priorities of EU assistance, certain sectoral policies, etc. Considering the role of EU member states in decision-making in support of Ukraine's European integration, we sent Platforms' analytical and position documents to EU member states' embassies in Ukraine and invited their representatives to discussion events or organized special joint events, as it was in the case of the roundtable "EU Focus on the Black Sea region and Ukraine: Priorities of the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the EU", co-organized with the Romanian Embassy to Ukraine.



Com- mu- nica- tion



COMMUNICATION

The Civil Society Platforms need coordinated internal and external communication both to collaborate efficiently with each other and to communicate with a broader audience beyond their membership base. For this purpose, we maintained Platforms' websites and Facebook pages and ensured their effective internal communication.

We cooperated with media to disseminate materials produced by the Platform experts and kept the public posted on key European integration tasks of Ukraine and the Platforms' role in the process. Due to the credit given to the materials developed with the support of Civic Synergy, the Platforms' analytical papers circulated through governmental and non-governmental portals, leading to the increased visibility and authority of the Platforms among stakeholders, and hence the willingness to take their positions and recommendations into consideration.



244

materials on the UA-CSP website

340

materials on the UNP website

HOW THE PROJECT AND THE PLATFORMS BECAME A EUROPEAN INTEGRATION INFORMATION HUB FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

With the launch of the Project, the Platforms' member organizations significantly intensified their activities, organizing numerous round tables, workshops, presentations of analytical materials, etc. The events were carried out under the aegis of either one of the Platforms or both. In addition, Civic Synergy organized events of its own. To consolidate information from various sources on diverse European integration activities of NGOs, in 2018, the Project launched its own website, which became a kind of information hub for pro-European civil society.

This resource consolidates all training and analytical materials, news and event announcements. It has provided Platforms' members, foreign experts, and the media, as well as Ukrainian and European high-ranking officials with easy access to a single information base and independent analyses on the AA implementation and Ukraine within the EaP. The site is visited not only by Ukrainians, but also by residents of the EU member states and EaP countries.

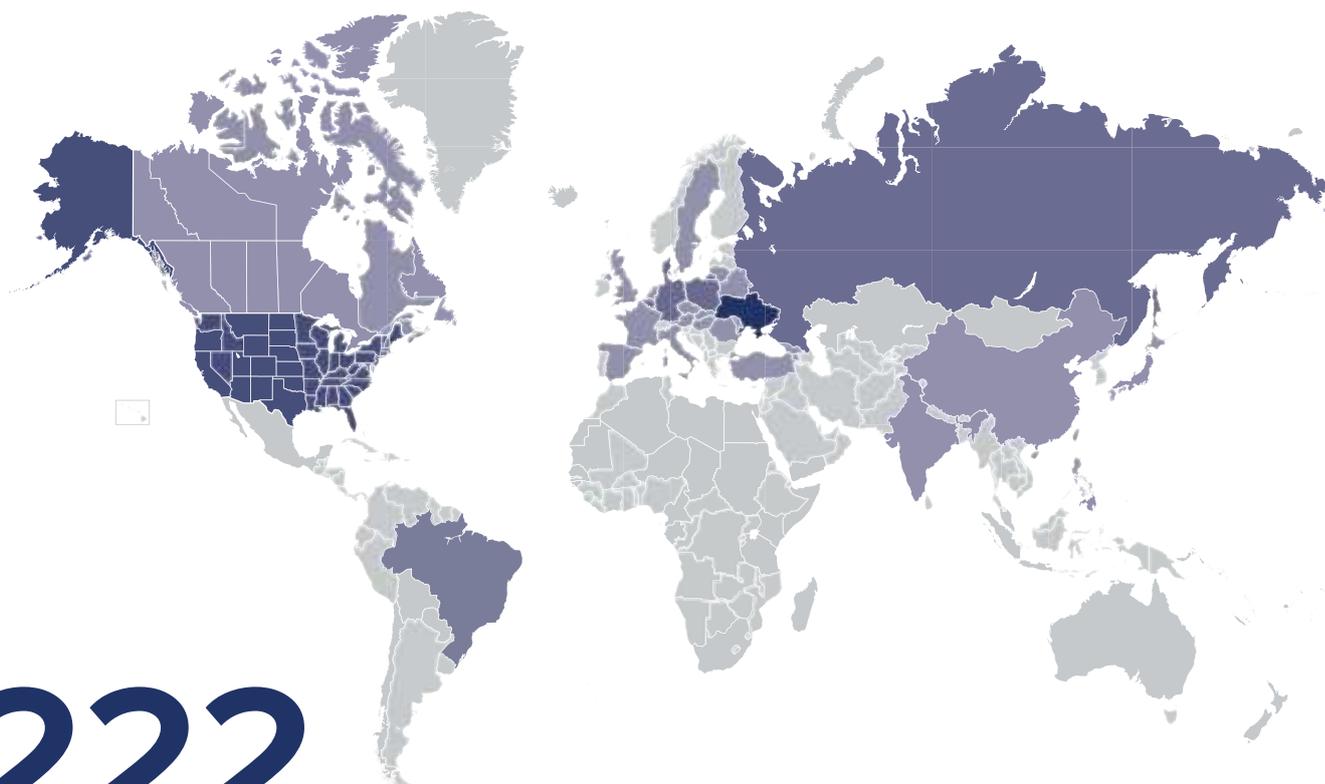
742

materials on the
Civic Synergy website

Simultaneously, we were updating the Platforms' websites. Today, they provide comprehensive information on UNP and UA-CSP members and their activities and also contain the Platforms' charters, by-laws, and official positions on important policy issues.

16589

Civic Synergy website unique visitors from Ukraine



222

Civic Synergy website unique visitors from EAP countries

1325

Civic Synergy website unique visitors from EU Member States

Like it was with the websites, we kept the Facebook pages of the Platforms and the Project separate in order to reach out to diverse audiences. The Platforms' real-time communication with experts and government officials was maintained by updating the UNP and UA-CSP Facebook pages with fresh analyses, statements, event streams, and information on working group meetings.

At the same time, the rather informal communication on the Civic Synergy page, which included active posting on developments related to the European integration of Ukraine, made it possible to reach out to a wider audience of European integration supporters.

**CIVIC SYNERGY
FACEBOOK
STATISTICS**

Reach: a total in 2019

341 327

Posts:

755 

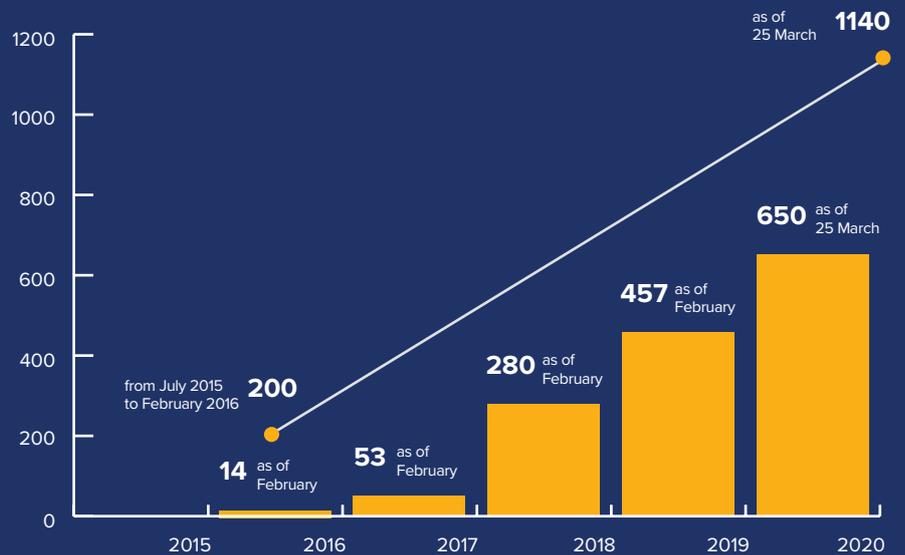
Followers:

2385 

since March 2017

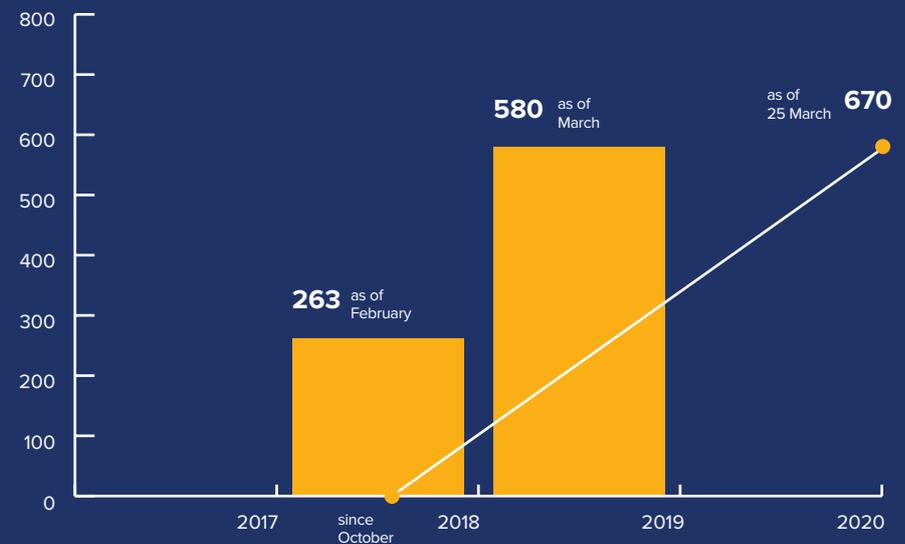
**UA-CSP
FACEBOOK
STATISTICS**

 number of posts
 number of followers



**UNP FACEBOOK
STATISTICS**

 number of posts
 number of followers



1551 

Group subscribers

Information is the ‘blood’ of any public association and the efficient exchange of information is a sine qua non of the organizational ‘health’. The Platforms’ effective internal communication under the Project was ensured by their secretaries, who ensured that the Platforms’ members would receive on time information about planned events, outcomes of meetings of the steering bodies and working groups, as well as about opportunities for public participation in the European integration policy-making. For those of the Platform members who were unable to regularly follow the Platforms’ websites or social networks, we produced monthly digests of the UNP and the UA-CSP. Thanks to that, Platform members have always been kept updated and in touch with potential partners. In 2018, we merged the digests into one joint newsletter to ensure informational synergy. This move has increased the Platforms’ members’ awareness of the UNP and UA-CSP resources and opened up new perspectives for the implementation of joint projects.

The project also issued another interesting informational product — **Ukraine’s first bi-weekly review of European integration news**. It helped the Platforms’ members and other stakeholders keep their finger on the pulse of:

- The latest European integration developments;
- News from the EU and the EaP;
- Analysis by the Platforms’ members and leading foreign think-tanks.

The digest was popular among NGOs, reposted on the Platform members’ websites, and shared through Facebook, including the page of the Government Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration. In 2018, we suspended issuing the newsletter after the Office of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration had taken up this initiative, launching a newsletter of similar content.

37

European integration digests

11

UA-CSP digests

8

UNP digests

18

Joint digests



COOPERATION WITH MEDIA: how Platform experts informed Ukrainians about European integration

We enhanced the visibility of the Platforms and their communication with Ukrainian citizens through systemic cooperation with the media. Since 2017, the Project team, in cooperation with the Platforms, have written and distributed over 150 press announcements and releases among journalists. As the Platforms' visibility and activity grew, so did the visibility of Civic Synergy as a public node for European integration. In the media mentions ranking by the EU Delegation to Ukraine, the Project was 16th among 158 EU-supported projects, including large-scale technical assistance projects.

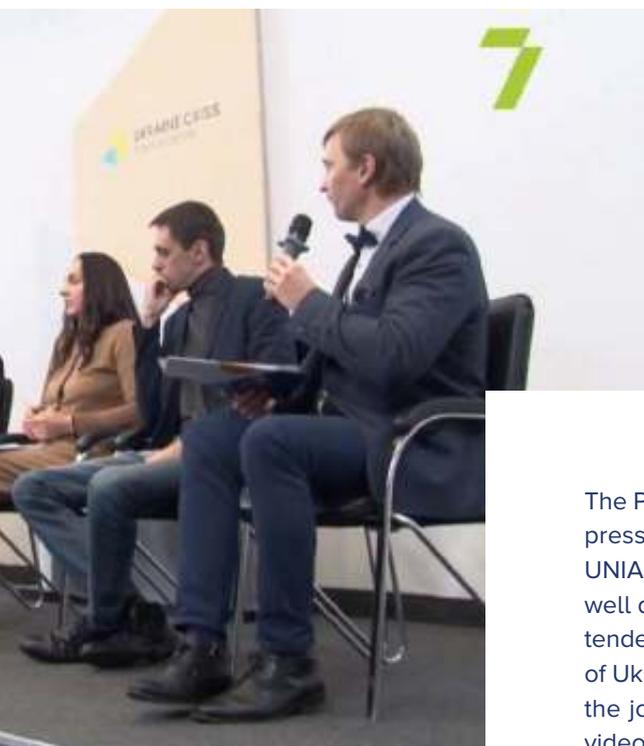
Not only the Project team actively disseminated information about the Platforms but it also endeavoured to strengthen their own communication capacity, including that of their member organizations. To this end, we held numerous workshops on various aspects of communication activities and provided recommendations to grantee organizations on how to communicate effectively. We also supported a communication strategic session for the UNP, the results of which were used to prepare the Platform's communication strategy.



The Civic Synergy Project provided extraordinarily powerful and systemic communication support. They provided expert assistance in drafting articles, press releases, and media announcements for every event. They carried out training for specialists in charge of communication in member organizations. All this significantly helped us organize public events and promote project products. Perhaps, it is the best-quality communication support we have ever happened to see in the framework of cooperation with international donor organizations.



Liudmyla Chabak,
Project Director
at the Siversky Institute
for Regional Studies



The Platforms established closer cooperation with journalists during press conferences on the country's biggest media floors, such as UNIAN, Ukraine Crisis Media Centre, Ukrinform, and Glavcom, as well as at regional facilities. We have held 27 press conferences attended by experts and high-ranking officials involved in the process of Ukraine's European integration. Based on this information supply, the journalists produced both standard news and more elaborate video reports and stories for their publications.

Civic Synergy
media activity
ranking among
158 EU projects

11th 

on Facebook

5th 

on YouTube

16th 

by media mentions

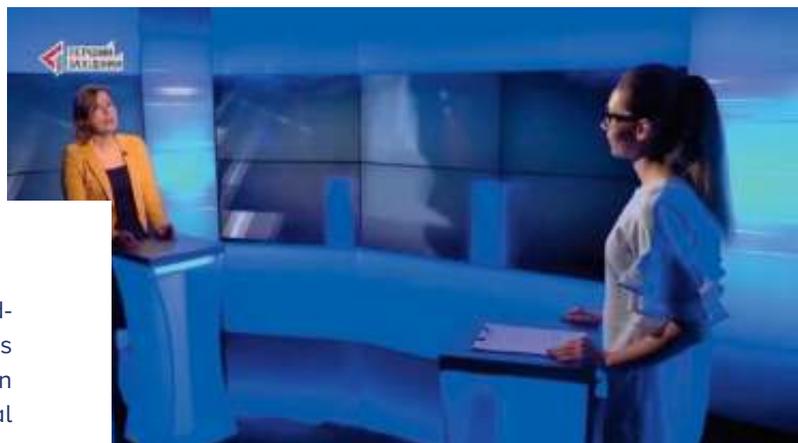
The statements the Platforms made to draw the attention of authorities and Ukrainians to pressing political issues were traditionally published in *European Pravda*, one of the most respected media, which for three years has been the Project's media partner. The statement by the UNP on the possible integration of Russia and Belarus was published by many Belarussian media outlets.

Closer cooperation with the foreign media was developed by the Platforms thanks to visits of journalists from Poland, Hungary, Belarus, Romania, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia. This campaign resulted in more than 120 media reports abroad.

The information support by the Project allowed Ukrainians to learn more about the European integration challenges and tasks as well as civil society's suggestions on how to spur the reforms. To raise public awareness, the analysts who closely collaborated with the Project and the Platforms provided their comments to regional and national television, radio, and print media.

We also helped experts establish contacts with media during regional events of the Platforms. In particular, before the meeting of the EU-Ukraine Civil Society Platform in Lviv in 2019, the Project organized several interviews that allowed reaching out to a broad audience through live TV and radio broadcasts and stories in the print media. Opportunities to communicate with the regional media also opened for the Platforms' members during the governmental awareness campaign 'European Integration: The Power of Opportunities' that the Civic Synergy supported in Khmelnytsky, Zaporizhya, and Ivano-Frankisk Oblasts.

The regional media's special interest was kindled by communicating with grant projects' experts who spoke about taking advantage of European integration opportunities as a way to solve local problems. These issues included, e.g., renewable energy development in Khmelnytsky Oblast and solution of labour migration problems in Odesa and Volyn Oblasts.



To make complicated and lengthy analytical papers interesting and comprehensible to readers, experts, in cooperation with the Project team, have prepared on their basis 134 articles of different styles and with infographics for different target audiences. These materials were published in the major Ukrainian media, such as *European Pravda*, *LB.ua*, *Syohodni*, *Economichna Pravda*, *Censor.net*, and others.



European Pravda and the Civic Synergy Project complemented

each other in their activities. Analyses by NGOs are important but usually not interesting to the public at large. On the other hand, our staff has the capacity to unveil the importance of complicated topics for Ukrainians but a priori is unable to communicate with each expert individually. That is why the activities of the Civic Synergy Project as an expert centre were very useful to us.



Serhiy Sydorenko,
European Pravda Editor



Whereas the UA-CSP Assembly in 2017 went unnoticed by journalists, such meetings in 2018 and 2020 were covered in 120 news stories in the media. The UNP conference in 2018 generated 40 media mentions. These annual events were a good floor for journalists to receive comments from the Platforms' experts on European integration issues of the day.

The systemic communication of the Platforms and dissemination of information via the public portals *GURT* and *Hromadsky Prostir* allowed other NGOs to learn about the Platforms. In this way, the Project has engaged the active public in activities of the UNP and the UA-CSP.



266

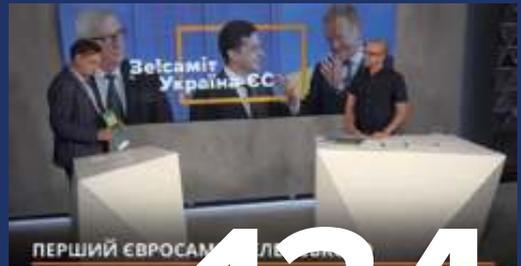
materials on *Hromadsky Prostr*



200

materials on *GURT*





134

articles in the media



>150

press announcements and releases



27

press conferences

Grants

GRANT SUPPORT

The grant support component aimed at intensifying activities of the Platforms is a major cross-cutting component of the Civic Synergy Project. Most of the supported projects focused on analytical studies, awareness raising, opinion polls, adjustment of different stakeholders' positions, and advocacy at the national and European levels. Almost a third of the projects dealt with training for participants from all regions of Ukraine. The grants' implementation was in line with Association Agreement priorities and Eastern Partnership goals as well as the Platforms' and their working groups' tasks.

6

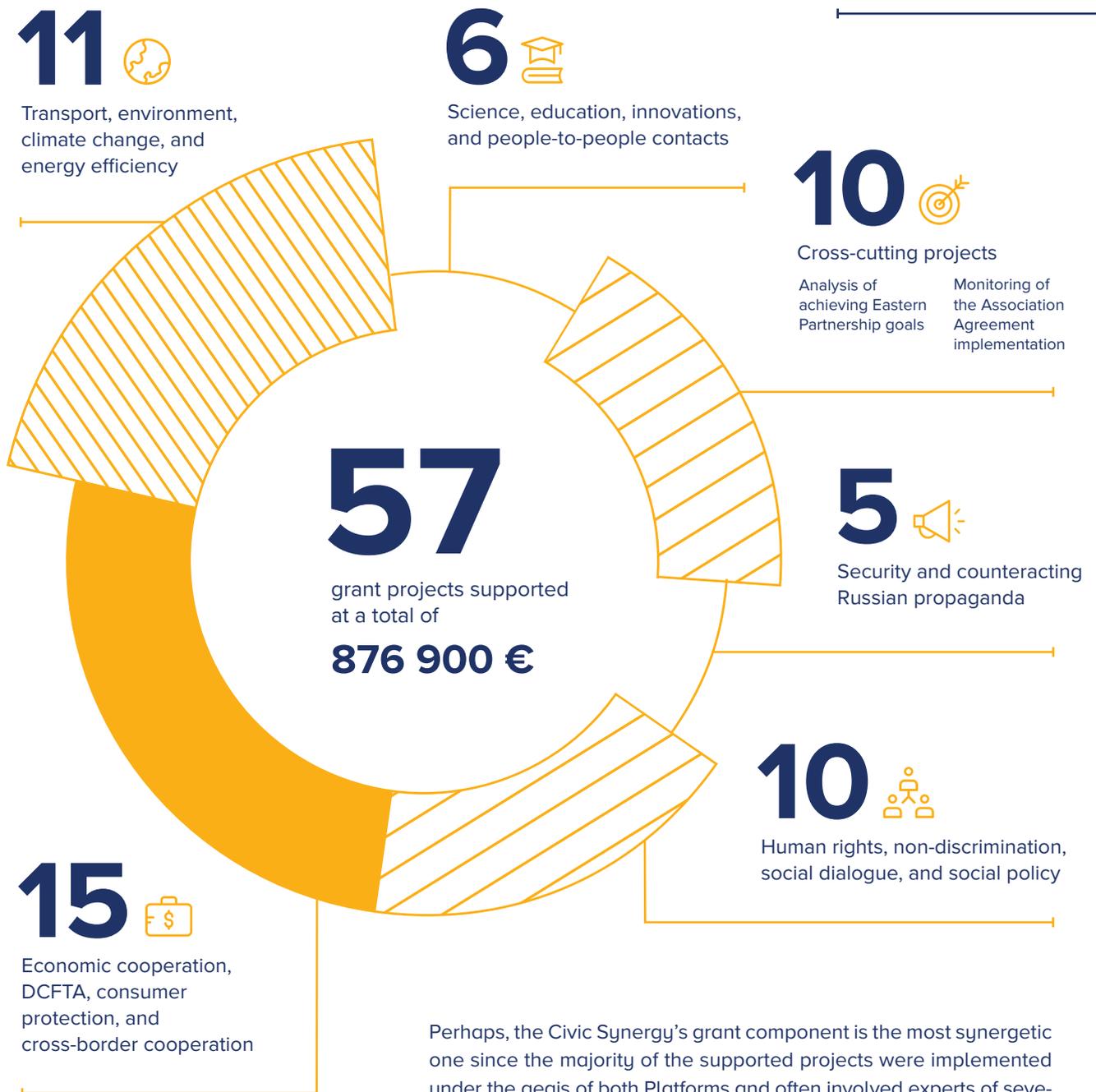
public calls for proposals
during 2016-2019

224

applications
submitted by the

138

Platforms' member
organizations



Perhaps, the Civic Synergy's grant component is the most synergetic one since the majority of the supported projects were implemented under the aegis of both Platforms and often involved experts of several thematic groups. Although only the Platforms' members were eligible, they could engage experts from outside the Platforms. In this way, the grant component helped enhance the Platforms' visibility in the expert community and increase the number of new members of the UNP and UA-CSP.

Beside the financial support, we also helped the organizations implement the projects at a high quality, carrying out training, assisting in information dissemination, and attracting speakers and participants to events.

More details on the grant projects and their results can be found on the Civic Synergy site.



CROSS-CUTTING PROJECTS



NGO 'Foreign Policy
Council 'Ukrainian
Prism' (Chernihiv)

1-2. Projects 'EaP Think Bridges: Raising Awareness'

The Eastern Partnership's policy is not only about relations at the top state level but also civil society development and wide opportunities for cooperation between citizens of Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, and the EU. Hence, UNP focused its activities on raising awareness of Ukrainians as well as citizens of EaP and EU countries about the EaP and its programmes and advantages for each country.

During 2018-2019, the Ukrainian Prism team together with representatives of think-tanks from the six EaP countries produced 15 issues of the bilingual monthly analytical digest **EaP Think Bridge**. The digest's readers — over 6,000 contacts from EaP and EU countries — were regularly and in an integrated manner updated on the situation in the region.

The project's experts also held awareness-raising seminars in Chernivtsi, Odesa, Chernihiv, and Kharkiv for 82 community activists, local government officials, education workers, and young people from all regions of Ukraine. The seminars helped residents of the regions learn about UNP activities and EaP policies, namely where they could find partners and resources for their projects in Ukraine, the EaP, and the EU.





Phase I — NGO 'Institute of World Policy'

Phase II — NGO 'New Europe Centre'

3. Project 'Index of European Integration for Eastern Partnership Countries 2015-2016'

The Eastern Partnership Index is a unique international study that compares progress in approaching EU standards and practices in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. The study methodology was developed after the model of well-known international indexes, and its results are deduced based on over 700 variables.

The project, supported by Civic Synergy, ensured the work of Ukrainian experts in developing the Ukrainian part of the Eastern Partnership Index 2015-2016. As for the whole study, it was carried out by over 50 experts from the EaP countries and the EU and coordinated by the EaP CSF Secretariat. The analytical **paper** was presented in Brussels to representatives of the EU institutions that influence the EaP policy-making.

The project team also presented an **abridged version of the study** in Kyiv with an emphasis on the key findings of interest to Ukraine. Proceeding from the conclusions of the analyses, experts together with diplomats and government officials discussed how Ukraine could speed up the pace of the reform implementation and integration with the EU. The Index can help the governments of the partner countries and EU institutions develop more effective cooperation within the EaP framework.





Ilko Kucheriv
Democratic Initiatives
Foundation (Kyiv)

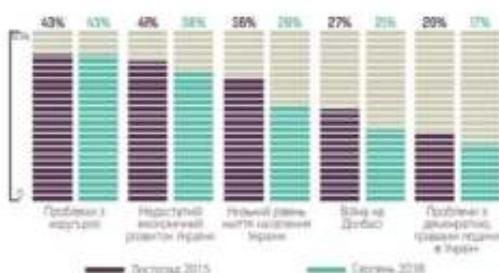
4. Project 'Securing Support for the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement in South-Eastern Ukraine'

Despite holding regular public opinion polls on European integration, we still do not have a complete picture: what people know about the European integration reforms, what motivates them to support the approximation to the EU, what they beware of, and what they are willing to do to for the sake of pro-European changes in Ukraine.

The project of the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation has filled up this gap. In August 2018, the Foundation in conjunction with the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology conducted a nation-wide poll on the motivation and factors for choosing foreign-policy development vector and people's expectations related to EU membership. The poll methodology was developed in consultation with the office of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration who was responsible for the implementation of the European Integration Communication Strategy for 2018-2021.

The **poll findings** showed that the support of the European integration vector of Ukraine was growing but the necessity to go on with pro-European reforms was seen differently in different regions (supported by 48% in the East and 38% in the South as against 78% in the West and 68% in the Centre). To increase the success level of the governmental awareness campaign on European integration, the Democratic Initiatives Foundation held five round tables in Severodonetsk, Zaporizhyha, Kharkiv, Odesa, and Kherson, discussing these issues with local experts and representatives of local authorities.

An **analytical report with recommendations** was presented in Kyiv to relevant authorities, the media, and the public. The materials produced by the project were also used in the development of the Action Plan 2019 for the implementation of the European Integration Communication Strategy for 2018-2021.





NGO 'Open Society Foundation' (Kyiv)

5-7. Projects 'Civil Monitoring of Draft Bills' Conformity with AA and EU Acquis'

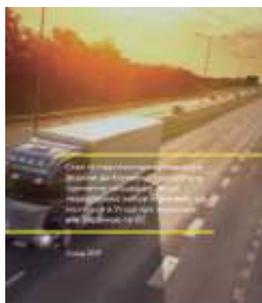
A key task in implementing the Association Agreement is to bring Ukrainian legislation in line with EU acquis. In practice, however, Ukrainian Parliament encounters here a number of problems due to the lack of expertise and knowledge of EU legislation norms and sometimes also through neglect of these norms when drafting laws. Having such bills passed may be in contradiction with the Association Agreement and lead to tensions with European partners.

To overcome this problem, we supported a project of the independent public Parliamentary Expert Group on European Integration (PEG). The group provided the Parliamentary Committee on European Integration with an impartial expert examination of draft legislation, received by the Committee, on its compliance with the AA and EU law. During 2017-2019, with support of Civic Synergy, the PEG furnished 190 conclusions that helped the Committee make well-considered decisions. Their analyses of the most controversial bills were covered in the media — a total of 52 articles in European Pravda, Ukrinform, Censor.net, and UNIAN.

Most proposals by the PEG were put on the official parliamentary-governmental roadmap approved in early 2018. Moreover, the PEG carried out complex online monitoring of progress in drafting and adopting laws envisaged by the Association Agreement.

Thus, the project became a kind of safeguard against populist bills, and the Platforms facilitated the formation of a constructive and meaningful legislative discourse in the context of the Association Agreement implementation.





NGO 'Ukrainian
Centre for European
Policy' (Kyiv)

8. Project 'Analytical Support and Advocacy of Sectoral European Integration Reforms According to the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement'

The approximation of Ukrainian legislation to EU norms goes at varied speed and quality. UCEP experts identified a number of important areas where this process is especially slow.

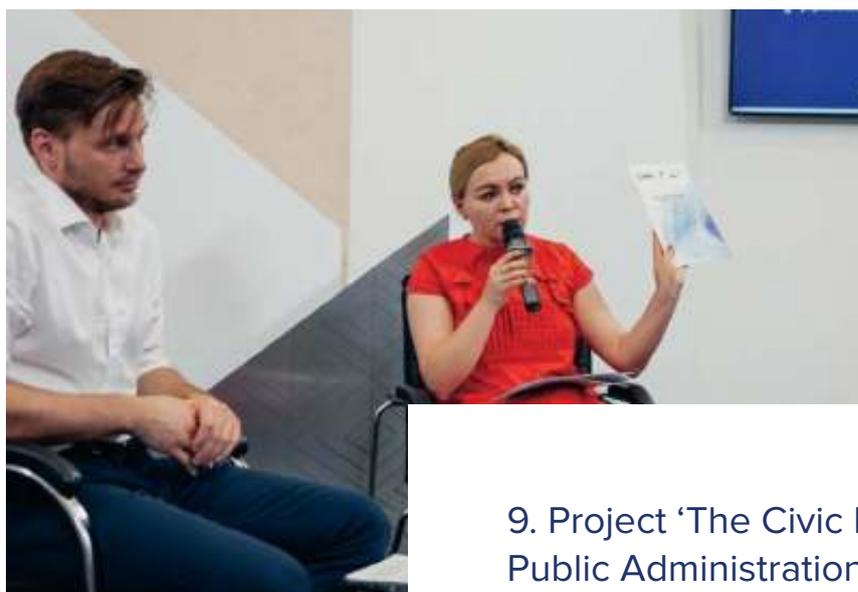
During 2019, the UCEP released **six** studies with an analysis of the situation and recommendations on how to accelerate the adaptation of legislation. The topics include:

- Building an efficient state aid system;
- Implementing electronic source documents;
- Ukraine's integration into the joint New Computerized Transit System (NCTS);
- Reforming the procedure for mandatory roadworthiness inspection;
- Implementing an effective transplantation system;
- Joining to the Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products (ACAA).

Recommendations from the UCEP studies were given to stakeholders at public discussions, private meetings, and meetings of relevant parliamentary and governmental committees.

The studies' results had an impact on the Ministry of Finance and the Antimonopoly Committee of Ukraine. For example, the Ministry of Finance staff that were drafting a law on joint transit procedure began collaborating with businesses to ensure the successful implementation of the law in the future. Most recommendations on state aid were also accepted by representatives of the Antimonopoly Committee. The analytical note on ACAA was used by the UA-CSP in writing the Platform's appeals to the chairs of parliamentary factions and groups to support the bills necessary for ACAA approval. The UCEP recommendations were also included in the 7th Joint Declaration of Civil Society Platform.





9. Project ‘The Civic Monitoring of the Public Administration Reform for the Effective Implementation of European Integration Reforms’



NGO ‘Agency
for Legislative
Initiatives’ (Kyiv)

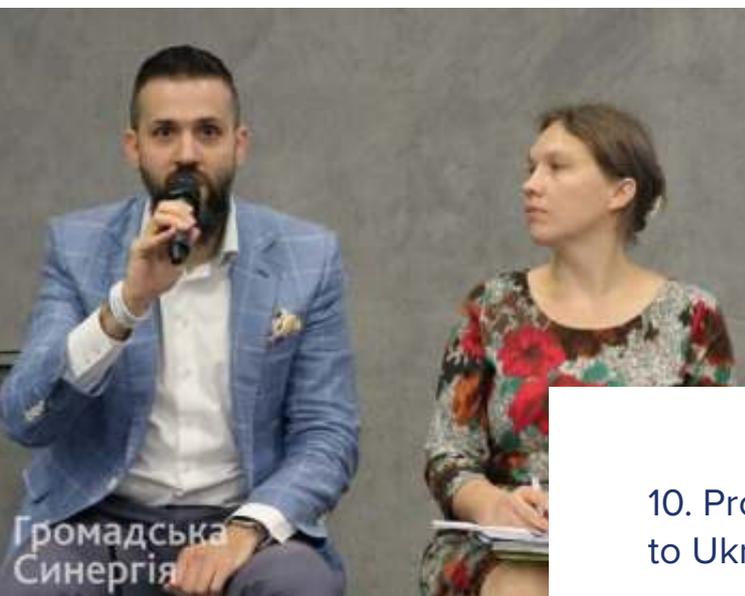
Reinforcement of government institutions and good governance is a priority of the EaP initiative. However, according to the 2016-2018 report by European experts of the SIGMA programme, there is still limited progress in the public administration reform in Ukraine. No unified approaches to policy development and planning have been approved, there is a gap between planning and financing, and the government still prepares its plans as a long list of activities without a focus on results and performance indicators.

In 2019, the Agency for Legislative Initiatives issued a **Shadow Report** in which experts analysed whether Ukraine had taken into account SIGMA’s recommendations in the revised version of the governmental Administration Reform Strategy for 2018. The Shadow Report was based on interviews with experts from relevant state agencies.

The report identified the roots of the problems encountered by officials and institutions in charge of the reform as well as provided recommendations for further reform implementation.

The report’s findings were presented and discussed at a conference on ‘The Public Administration Reform: Challenges and Prospects’ organized by the Secretariat of Cabinet of Ministers. About 300 participants attended the event, including representatives of the Presidential Administration and the Cabinet of Ministers, state secretaries and staff of ministries, international partners and representatives of the technical assistance projects involved in the public administration reform, and experts from NGOs.





10. Project ‘Priorities of EU Assistance to Ukraine: Beneficial Alignment’

A variety of international organizations and countries provide assistance to Ukraine, including the European Union. This support, rendered under different programmes using several mechanisms, includes technical assistance, budgetary support, macro-financial assistance, and funding of infrastructural projects. However, there is no platform with consolidated information on international assistance to Ukraine, nor there is an analysis of how much this assistance corresponds with the state policy priorities defined in Ukraine.

Experts of the Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting polled stakeholders and analysed and structured information on international assistance that Ukraine receives from the EU and other donors. International technical assistance was analysed by its priorities with a focus on the Association Agreement implementation. The findings of the study were presented to stakeholders in the analytical report **‘Priorities of EU assistance to Ukraine: beneficial alignment’**. Together with the stakeholders, the experts determined how much the provided support met Ukraine’s needs and how the effectiveness of this assistance could be increased.

The report was favourably received and publicly disseminated by the project’s main beneficiaries — the Government Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, and the Support Group for Ukraine in the EU — as well as other donors.



NGO ‘The Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting’ (Kyiv)



SECURITY AND COUNTERACTING RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA



Centre for Global Studies
'Strategy XXI' (Kyiv)



11. Project 'Promoting the Capacity Building of Ukraine to Guarantee Society's Security in the Conditions of Hybrid Threats'

A specific feature of hybrid warfare is that it is waged in a disguised manner and aims primarily at gaining control over a state through influence on its population, policy, businesses, and law enforcement agencies. To counteract hybrid threats, they must be identified, the society's resistance needs to be increased, and involved in the process should be practically all state agencies, nongovernmental organizations, business, and civil society.

The Centre for Global Studies 'Strategy XXI' explored the best practices of counteracting hybrid challenges and threats in Ukraine. The experts also studied the experience of certain EU and EaP countries that can be useful to Ukraine. Expert discussions, polls, and an **international round table** allowed the project team to process a wide range of expert assessments and produce a complex analytical document on '**The Hybrid Threats to Ukraine and Public Security. The EU and Eastern Partnership Experience**'.

The study includes recommendations on the political reform of the state and the endurance of its institutions in the hybrid warfare conditions; the military arrangement and the law enforcement system of Ukraine; the energy sector; information security; the national memory policy; and consolidation of the society and support of Ukrainian citizens on the temporarily occupied territories. The recommendations also concern the strengthening of international cooperation, first and foremost with the Baltic countries that have significant successful experience in effectively counteracting hybrid threats from Russia.





NGO 'Institute for
Euro-Atlantic
Cooperation' (Kyiv)

12. Project 'The Civic Monitoring of the EU-Ukraine Cooperation in the Security Area'

The security policy is one of the Association Agreement's areas that requires special attention in the current foreign and home political condition of Ukraine. Before the launch of the project, the lack of information on security cooperation with European partners did not allow assessing the level of Ukraine's involvement in the EU Common Security and Defence Policy.

The IEAC carried out complex **monitoring** of cooperation programmes between Ukraine and the EU as well as between Ukraine and individual EU Member States. The monitoring's results along with proposed decisions to be made by Ukraine to reform the security area following its international commitments and own needs were presented to key stakeholders.

In particular, the discussed issues included organized crime, illegal arms trafficking, cyber threats, participation in the EU Common Security and Defence Policy, etc.

To draw broad attention to the topic, the project's recommendations were spread through the publication of articles with infographics in the Ukrainian and European media.





NGO 'Internews
Ukraine' (Kyiv)

13-15. Projects 'How to Combat Propaganda: Developing Strategic Recommendations on Counteracting Russian Information Warfare'

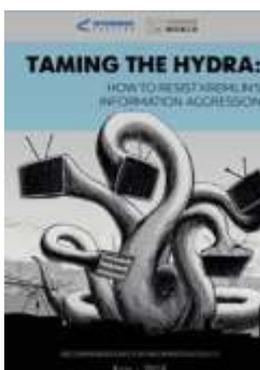
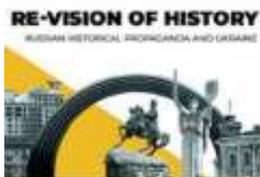
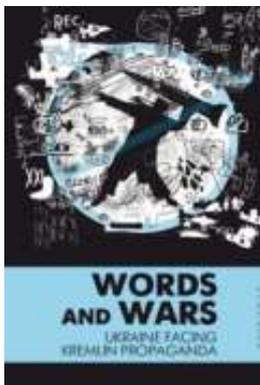
The understanding of the threat posed by Kremlin propaganda and disinformation is growing in Europe. Ukraine was among the first to come up against the Russian hybrid aggression and still is at the frontline of this confrontation. Other countries need to learn from the Ukrainian experience to better understand how to counteract the Kremlin propaganda effectively. To this end, in 2017-2019, analysts of Internews Ukraine conducted several studies:

- **Words and Wars: Ukraine Facing Kremlin Propaganda.** Published in 2017, this book is Ukraine's first comprehensive analysis of the Russian propaganda and disinformation mechanisms. The study also investigated the main approaches and channels of influencing the Ukrainian and European media.

- **Taming the Hydra: How to Resist Kremlin's Information Aggression?** The authors developed recommendations for Ukraine and the European Union on what every stakeholder should do to counter the propaganda.

- **Re-vision of History: Russian Historical Propaganda and Ukraine.** Based on a media analysis, the book describes the key narratives of the Russian historical propaganda against Ukraine. Ukrainian historians disprove these manipulations.

All the three studies were published in English and Ukrainian and distributed among Ukrainian and foreign experts and high-ranking officials. The project's foreign partners, including leading think-tanks from EU countries and book fairs, on their initiative, organized presentations attended by the authors in Strasbourg, Brussels, Paris, and Berlin.



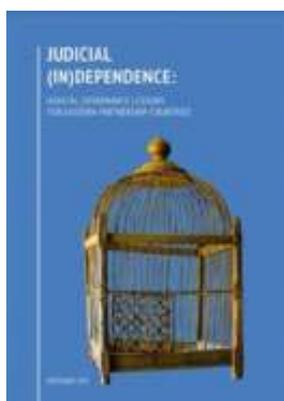
HUMAN RIGHTS, NON-DISCRIMINATION, SOCIAL DIALOGUE, AND SOCIAL POLICY



NGO 'Centre of Policy
and Legal Reform' (Kyiv)



NGO 'DEJURE
Foundation' (Kyiv)



16-17. Projects 'Public Monitoring of the Judicial Reforms in Associated EaP Countries'

The rule of law is a key principle defined by the Association Agreement and EaP documents. The Eastern Partnership countries have to implement this principle by reforming their judicial branch and law-enforcement agencies. At present, the level of public trust in these institutions is rather low.

In 2019, two renowned Ukrainian organizations, the Centre of Policy and Legal Reform and the DEJURE Foundation, joined forces, engaged international partners, and **investigated** Ukraine's progress in the judiciary area in accordance with the EaP's '20 Deliverables for 2020'. They also carried out a **comparative analysis** of the performance of the judicial governance bodies in Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova.

The findings of these studies were presented at the **international conference**, where experts from the three countries together with representatives of key Ukrainian judicial entities discussed challenges of the Ukrainian judicial reform and possible solutions based on lessons learned in Chişinău and Tbilisi. Some of the experts' positions were taken into account as soon as in 2019 when certain provisions of draft law No. 1008, which suggested changes to the operation of judicial governance bodies, were adjusted.





NGO 'Europe without Barriers' (Kyiv)

18. Project 'Civic Assessment and Advocacy of Changes to State Citizenship Policy in Line with Association Agreement'

The Ukrainian citizenship policy features quite different approaches. On the one hand, citizenship can be acquired as a 'political gift', and on the other hand, there are additional barriers to the legitimate acquisition of citizenship by representatives of migration risk countries.

Europe without Barriers analysed the procedures for the acquisition of Ukrainian citizenship and the issue of residence permits to foreigners. The study included interviews with experts and foreigners who had undergone these procedures.

The findings of the **study** and recommendations on eliminating faults based on Polish and Czech experience were discussed at public events and consultation meetings with human rights organizations as well as representatives of the State Migration Service, the State Tax Service, the Interior Ministry, and the International Organization for Migration.

The recommendations dealing with how to simplify the procedures for submission of documents and issue of residence permits were partly implemented by the State Migration Service in 2019.

The project team also produced a **video** explaining grounds for citizenship and typical infringements encountered in the citizenship acquisition process, the role of migration brokers, etc.





NGO 'Europe without
Barriers' (Kyiv)

19. Project 'Promoting Implementation of the Effective Visa Policy of Ukraine'

In 2017, Ukrainians were granted the right to visa-free trips to the European Union. Ukraine itself, however, remains a closed country with visa requirements for over 100 countries of the world. Although an online system for visa processing was implemented in 2018, this procedure is accessible from only 52 countries, whereas residents of nearly 70 countries continue applying for Ukrainian visas locally, being exposed to the rigid and untransparent system of visa procedures.

Experts of Europe without Barriers carried out a complex assessment of visa practices. They analysed Ukrainian legislation, studied international experience, and interviewed consular officers and foreigners. Based on the findings of their study, the project team presented an **analytical report containing recommendations** on the elimination of drawbacks in the visa issuing procedure. These recommendations were discussed with the authorities responsible for migration management. A story in the **Dzerkalo Tyzhnya** weekly set off a further constructive public discussion.

An electronic waitlist and an online service for checking the application status by foreigners were also implemented, and the deadline for issue of residence permits was reduced to 15 workdays.





Trade Union
of Construction Workers
and the Building
Materials Industry
of Ukraine (Kyiv)

20. Project ‘Impact of Labour Migration of Ukrainian Workers on Labour Markets in Ukraine and the EU as Exemplified by Construction Workers’

The Association Agreement gave an impetus to opening the labour markets of European countries to many Ukrainians. Although it means a process of Ukraine’s integration into the European labour market, once underwent by all EU countries, this trend also has certain negative aspects. On the one hand, the Ukrainian migrants lack proper protection, and on the other hand, the Ukrainian labour market suffers from a shortage of skilled blue-collar employees.

To find solutions to these issues, the Trade Union of Construction Workers and the Building Materials Industry of Ukraine in cooperation with its partners from Moldova, Georgia, and the EU, **explored** the illegal migration problems as a case study based on the construction industry. The project experts developed recommendations on amendments to be made to Ukrainian and EU legislation to improve the situation in this area. The findings of the study were discussed with about 200 representatives of stakeholders both in Kyiv and in regions, including Chernihiv, Mykolaiv, Lutsk, and Odesa. The recommendations were also presented at a meeting of the Construction Chamber of Ukraine and a seminar of the Polish Union of Migrant Workers.

The project results interested the Ministry of Social Policy, which included the Trade Union in the Interdepartmental Working Group to work on a solution to these issues.





NGO 'Human Rights'
(Kyiv)



21-22. Projects 'Ensuring Equal Employment Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in the Context of the Association Agreement Implementation'

Over 2.6 million persons with disabilities live in Ukraine. Although 74% of them are of working age (18-60 years), only 26% are employed, at low-paid and low-skilled jobs in their overwhelming majority. For comparison, the average employment rate of persons with disabilities in the EU is 38%.

Experts of Human Rights NGO analysed Ukrainian legislation on labour and on persons with disabilities for how much it respects the labour rights of people with special needs and is in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Directive 2000/78/EC. The results of the study were published as an **analytical report** and an **information booklet**. These findings were also discussed at private meetings and a conference attended by relevant central executive agencies, employers, workers with disabilities, and experts.

The project was able to draw the attention of people in Ukraine to the problem through a wide awareness campaign, publishing eight interviews with successful Ukrainians who have disabilities and producing a series of articles with infographics as well as educational inspiring videos and TV stories.

These deliverables brought their first results in late 2018 when the Ukrainian Parliament registered draft law No. 9431 on amending the law of Ukraine 'On the basic principles of protection of persons with disabilities in Ukraine'. This bill took into account recommendations of the organization on setting up a general equal treatment system in the area of employment and professional activities.





23-24. Projects ‘Practices of the Ministry of Social Policy in Implementing the ‘Antidiscriminative’ EU Directives’



NGO ‘Bureau of Social and Political Developments’ (Kyiv)

Equal rights for women and men can be only achieved when we get rid of discrimination in their access to labour, services, and social security. According to data of the State Statistics Service, there is still a significant gap between men and women in Ukraine in terms of employment and labour remuneration. This situation can be changed by implementing the EU’s six non-discrimination directives mentioned in the Association Agreement.

The project team conducted a detailed social, legal, and gender expert examination of Ukraine’s progress in implementing non-discrimination legislation in the areas covered by the directives. The resulting report on the **study** contains an assessment of the implementation plans of the Government of Ukraine and recommendations on priority steps that should be taken to improve these plans. The project results were presented to and discussed with key Ukrainian stakeholders, international experts from the Council of Europe and EaP countries, and representatives of Ukrainian trade unions and business.

At the request of the Ministry of Social Policy, the project experts developed a broader **analysis** of legislative acts with tables of conformity with the EU directives. At present, the Government uses these materials to improve national labour legislation.





25. Project ‘Analysis of Practices of SME Organizations’ Participation in Bargaining with Authorities in Social and Labour Regulatory Policy-Making’



NGO ‘Centre for Social Security and Regional Initiatives’ (Kharkiv)

Creating favourable conditions for small to medium enterprise development is one of the goals of the governmental SME development strategy until 2020. However, imperfect legislation hampers effective negotiations between SMEs and authorities, which is in contradiction with provisions of the Association Agreement and the EU-Ukraine Association Agenda.

In 2017, to find ways for solving this problem, the project team analysed Ukrainian and international legislation and held four round tables in regions of Ukraine. These events united representatives of small and medium businesses and local governments, members of national and regional business associations, entrepreneurs, and representatives of civil society organizations. The participants discussed key problems and possible ways of involving SMEs in the work on regional development programs. The project results were summarized in an **analytical paper**, including recommendations for key stakeholders on how to improve the bargaining in social and labour regulatory policy-making.

ECONOMIC COOPERATION, DCFTA, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION



NGO 'Siversky Institut
for Regional Studies'
(Chernihiv)



26. Project 'Using European Financial Instruments for the Development of the Agro-Industrial Sector (Small and Medium-Sized Businesses) in Ukraine'

The European Union and its Member States offer a broad range of assistance to Ukrainian SMEs as grants, easy loans, and other opportunities. This assistance allows SMEs to improve their operations in Ukraine and go out to EU markets. However, the insufficient awareness of the existing opportunities and the lack of success stories hamper the utilization of the available financial assistance tools.

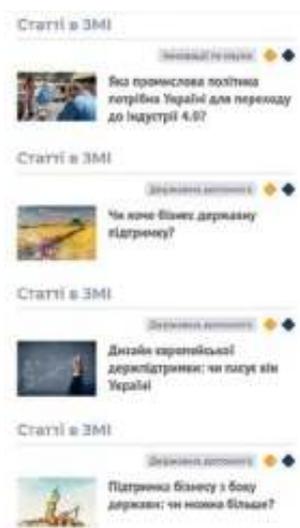
A team of the Siversky Institute for Regional Studies carried out an analysis and collected, in the form of **infographics** with algorithms of actions, useful links that would help Ukrainian SMEs benefit from the opportunities provided by the EU.

To popularize their findings, the experts carried out workshops in five oblasts — Chernihiv, Rivne, Chernivtsi, Kharkiv, and Mykolaiv. The workshops' participants included over 160 representatives of SMEs, local governments, and civil society, who received comprehensive and comprehensible information about the available financial tools of the EU. Involved in these activities were also regional businesspeople who had already made successful use of the European assistance tools in the agribusiness sector. The direct communication with 'those who succeeded' motivated other participants to reproduce their successful experience and allowed them to be advised 'from the field' on how to avoid possible mistakes. The project's materials won favourable feedback from the participants and were posted on the sites of the Oblast State Administrations and relevant organizations as well as the office of the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration.





NGO 'The Institute for
Economic Research and
Policy Consulting' (Kyiv)



27. Project 'Does Ukraine Need Protectionism? Opportunities and Constraints of the DCFTA with the EU'

In many countries throughout the world, the economy stands at the crossroads of protecting national goods and producers vs. liberalizing foreign trade relations. Ukraine constitutes no exception to this situation. In particular, the decision to impose a moratorium on exporting round timber and the draft law 'Buy Ukrainian' prove the necessity of an expert assessment and an independent expert analysis of potential advantages and disadvantages of such a policy.

Experts of the Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting (IER) intensified the discussion on optimal ways for developing the state policy on national producer protection, focusing on the following three themes:

- What should be the design of the state support in Ukraine?
- Which industrial policy does Ukraine need for its transfer to Industry 4.0?
- What the population and politicians ought to know about the timber export moratorium?

For each of the themes, the project team wrote **analytical articles** and organized public discussions. Acting as an independent moderator in these discussions, the project gathered at one table representatives of state authorities, business associations, civil society, and other key stakeholders who often had opposite interests and positions regarding the above circle of issues. The IER experts were also among the initiators of setting up in 2019 a platform of industrial development stakeholders, Industry4Ukraine. The recommendations developed under the project for the successful industrial policy implementation were included in the platform's manifesto for the newly-elected President, the future MPs, the Cabinet of Ministers, and political parties.





28. Project 'EU-Ukraine Association Agreement vs State Aid'



NGO 'European Dialogue' (Lviv)

The state aid to economic entities in Ukraine is based on hundreds of forms of assistance. Unjustified government guarantees at the expense of the state budget, doubtful tax concessions, selective write-offs of tax debts, and subsidies to certain economic entities account for a good deal of this aid, all being detrimental to the competitive environment.

The European Dialogue team developed a methodology and used it to analyse relevant target-oriented programmes in Lviv Oblast for the transparency of the state aid provision and the corresponding regulation-making by regional authorities. The **findings of the study** and the analysis of the decisions made by the Antimonopoly Committee of Ukraine on applications from Lviv Oblast were discussed with structural units of the Lviv Oblast State Administration, journalists, and the public.



The methodology for state aid assessment was also transferred to Sumy, Chernihiv, Cherkasy, and Poltava Oblasts. This transfer was carried out by conducting seminars to train participants from these regions in analysing the allocation of state aid financial resources at the oblast and local levels.



NGO 'Easy
Business' (Kyiv)

29. Project 'Integration of Ukrainian SMEs into EU Value Chains within the EU Association Agreement'

According to open data, although Ukrainian SMEs account for about 70% of jobs domestically, they find it rather difficult to enter foreign markets, having the worst internalization level among the EaP countries (1.6 on a five-point scale, OECD, SME Policy Index 2016). The low involvement in EU value-added chains reflects on the business profitability, labour utilization efficiency, and enterprise potential realization level.

To assist in solving this problem, experts of Easy Business carried out a complex analysis of Ukrainian and European legislation as well as a series of interviews with representatives of state authorities, businesses, and civil society on key barriers to and missed opportunities for entering European markets.

The project team produced an **analytical report** with recommendations for authorities as well as a **practical handbook** for SMEs on how to look for opportunities of getting embedded into the EU value-added chains.

These materials were distributed among 80 representatives of SMEs during workshops in four Ukrainian regions. The project also organized a round table in Kyiv, engaging in the discussion representatives of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, the Reform Support Office, the Export Promotion Office, and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, as well as the Platforms' member organizations and a broader expert community. Additionally, the project disseminated its recommendations by publishing articles with infographics on European Pravda.

Thus, the project's deliverables have eased SMEs' access to information about participation in the EU's free movement of goods, services, and capital. And if the expert recommendations are implemented, Ukraine has prospects for improving its place in SME internalization rankings among EU and EaP countries.





NGO 'Centre for
Economic Strategy' (Kyiv)

30. Project 'Monitoring and Support of Ukraine-EU Association Agreement Implementation in Capital Mobility and Financial Markets'

The limited opportunities for the movement of capital and financial services is a problem resulting in the low level of foreign investment in Ukraine. The Law 'On currency and currency operations', adopted in late 2018 as part of Ukrainian commitments under the Association Agreement, was a significant step forward. Before this law, the National Bank of Ukraine (NBU) had published eight resolutions setting up currency regulation rules.

The project team assessed the new regulation after the implementation of the law and analysed the European currency regulation experience as well as the practices of foreign economic operations in the Visegrád Group countries during their accession to the EU.

The project presented the findings of the study in **three analytical notes** and infographics. Its recommendations were publicly **discussed with key stakeholders** of currency liberalization, including representatives of the NBU, the Government Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, the National Investment Council, banks, PwC, businesses, and civil society.

As a result, after the project completion, the NBU's actions in 2019, as a matter of fact, followed the experts' recommendations, as it cancelled the mandatory sale of currency earnings, allowed the dividend repatriation, mitigated the outward investment conditions, etc.





International Charitable
Organization
'Information Centre
'Green Dossier' (Kyiv)

31-32. Projects 'Raising Awareness of Small Agricultural Producers on Adaptation to EU Legislation'

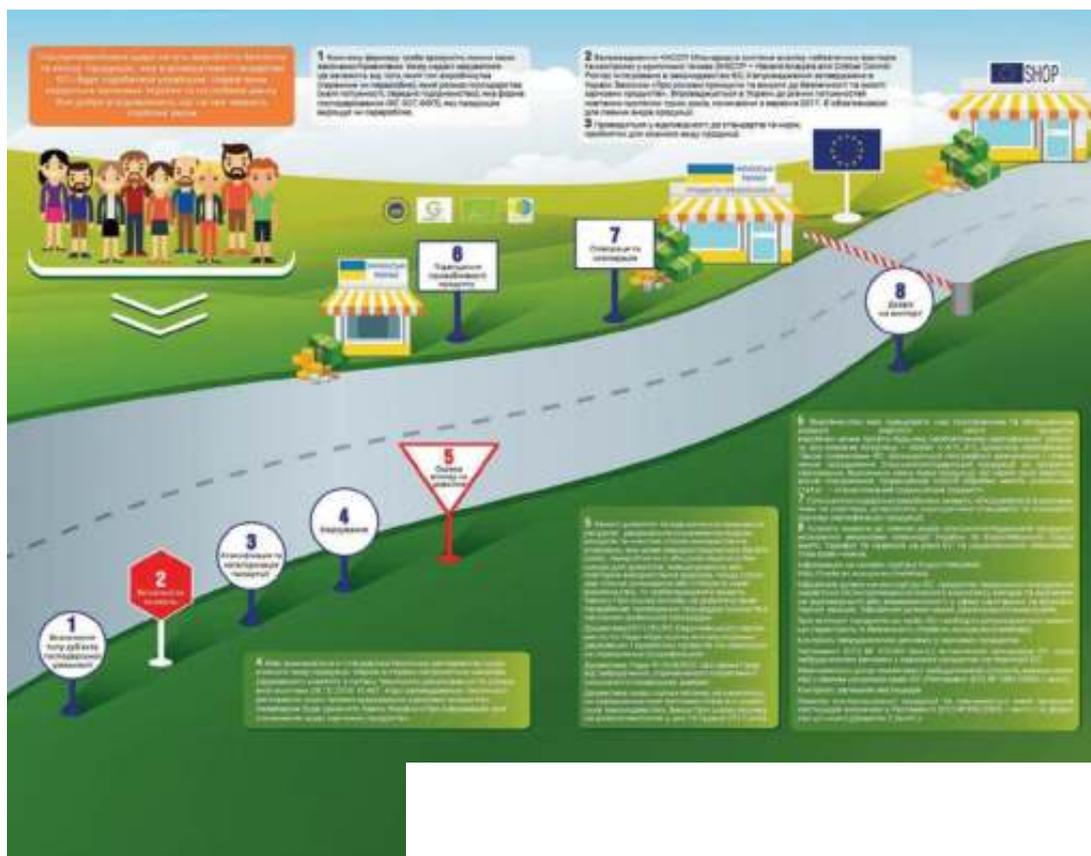
The Association Agreement has set ambitious tasks for the Ukrainian agricultural sector. Ukraine has to adapt and implement a total of 44 EU legislative acts on agriculture and 255 documents more on sanitary and phytosanitary measures that are inseparable from the possibility for Ukrainian foodstuffs to access the EU market. These novels will soon concern all Ukrainian farmers, including small producers. It is therefore important for farmers to timely receive comprehensible information on how they need to change own production.

Green Dossier experts analysed and compared relevant EU standards with Ukrainian legislation and developed recommendations on amendments that should be made to the latter. They also set forth what Ukrainian producers should do to switch over to the European quality standards and collected successful examples of creating cooperatives among Ukrainian companies. All results of this work were presented in the study **'Adaptation to EU Legislation: Focus on Small and Medium Agricultural Producers'** and an **infographics-based guide** for agricultural producers.



A wide awareness-raising campaign was carried out to deliver the developed recommendations to regions. During 2017-2019, six workshops were conducted in Kyiv, Uzhgorod, Poltava, Dnipro, Zaporizhyya, and Berdychiv for 250 producers, civil servants, and workers of educational organizations from 12 Ukrainian regions. A study tour to enterprises that had implemented a food safety management system (HACCP, ISO, FSSC) was organized for 20 agricultural producers. A press tour to a private agricultural enterprise (Trostynka™) with close cycle production was also conducted for central and regional media.

The project helped the agricultural producers step-by-step figure out the changes they had to implement in line with the new market conditions. The civil servants received a kind of reference book that would help them in their day-to-day work and advising farmers.



The journalists were explained complicated notions of the EU standards in the food processing industry and saw these notions were translated into practices. Scientists and civil society organizations will be able to use these materials to develop new training courses. For example, the Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University, teachers from which participated in the workshop in Poltava, introduced a course on adapting agricultural production to the EU standards.



NGO 'Agromegapolis'
(Kyiv)

33. Project 'Advocacy Campaign for Farmers and Private Farms to Ensure the Safety and Quality of Products in Accordance with the Requirements of the Association Agreement'

The signing of the Association Agreement has opened up new opportunities for the Ukrainian agricultural produce to hit the European market. Most Ukrainian farmers would like to catch at these opportunities but first, they should adapt their production to EU requirements. However, associations of agricultural producers do not have enough experts with a sound knowledge of these requirements, and neither there are enough training and awareness-raising activities locally.

The Agromegapolis team helped farmers from regions understand the new standards. Its experts produced information **materials** with recommendations for Ukrainian agricultural and food producers — how to meet AA requirements at the stages of setting up and upgrading their production.

In its second phase, the project carried out an advocacy and awareness-raising campaign at the raion centre level in three Ukrainian oblasts: Kherson, Kirovohrad, and Sumy. The experts conducted 30 seminars on requirements for ensuring proper produce quality. About 500 farmers and representatives of relevant local authorities participated in the events. The seminars were delivered in an easy-to-perceive form with examples of successful practices existing in the regions. Since this information was the order of the day, representatives of the local authorities applied the experts for consultation and assistance in disseminating the materials among farmers even after the project's completion.





34. Project ‘Regional Debates on Rural Territories Development in the Context of the Association Agreement (Product Standards, Phytosanitary Measures, Innovations)’



NGO ‘Analytical Centre of the Agrarian Union of Ukraine’ (Kyiv)

Representatives of the agrarian sector and local governments are the market actors that are often left unaware of the new produce standards being implemented under the Association Agreement. That is why it is important to carry out awareness-raising activities in regions and explain the European integration-related changes in the agricultural and territorial development policies.

The project’s experts held a series of debates in Vinnytsya, Ivano-Frankivsk, Sumy, Lutsk, and Kramatorsk for over 100 farmers, representatives of the oblast councils’ relevant departments, students, and scientists. The participants discussed the development problems of their territories as well as how to overcome technical barriers, such as the implementation of sanitary and phytosanitary measures and the protection of intellectual property rights. Based on the debates’ outcomes, the project produced a **signpost paper** with recommendations from the regional participants on the implementation of the concerted national policies on agriculture and rural territorial development.

Members of oblast councils may use the recommendations in drafting regional development programmes; territorial communities, in adopting local development programmes; and agricultural enterprises, in investment planning. This will ensure the implementation of the agricultural and territorial development policies in the context of the AA implementation.





NGO 'Siverian Institute
for Regional Studies'
(Chernihiv)



35. Project 'Increasing Public Participation in the Implementation of the EU Requirements on Technical Regulation'

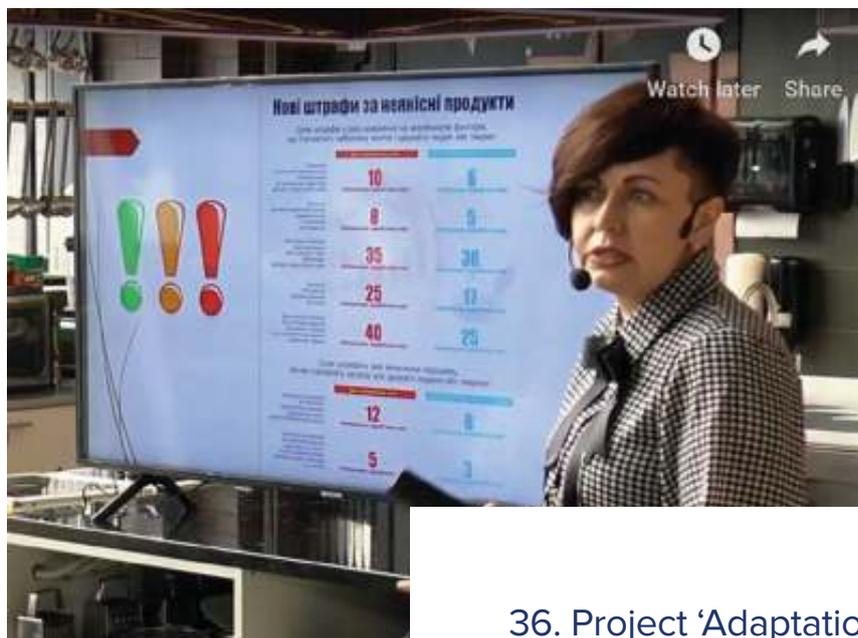
The free trade area with the EU allows SMEs to significantly save on export and import duties, whereas the implementation of European technical standards helps them overcome non-tariff barriers to trade. However, far from all Ukrainian SMEs see these advantages. This is primarily due to the lack of information and training on the implementation of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area.

To fill up this gap, the Siverian Institute for Regional Studies in collaboration with the Platforms' experts produced an overview of the EU regulatory requirements pertinent to the implementation of technical regulation for Ukrainian SMEs. Besides, the paper provides practical recommendations to farmers, producers, and tour operators on how to bring their activities in line with the European standards and explains how these standards would impact their enterprise competitiveness.

The project team also carried out online consultations and delivered five seminars in Poltava, Sumy, Chernihiv, Lutsk, and Lviv to over 300 representatives of farms, the oblast administrations' agribusiness, culture, and tourism departments, as well as higher education institutions specializing in agribusiness. The participants learned about approaches to technical regulation, activities of international standardization and metrology organizations, etc.

The materials developed by the NGO were also used after the project completion. For example, the Chernihiv Retraining and Skills Development Centre engaged its experts to organize similar seminars in Chernihiv Oblast's Bakhmach, Nizhyn, and Pryluky Raions.





36. Project 'Adaptation of Separate Norms of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement and Increase of SME Awareness of their Implementation in Terms of Effective Implementation of the Food Quality Assurance System in the Kharkiv and Vinnytsia Regions'



NGO 'Association
of Private Employers'
(Kharkiv)

To enter the EU market, Ukrainian companies need to switch over to the European food safety standards. In particular, their production must observe the international system of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP). Since 2019, the HACCP implementation has been mandatory and regulated by Ukrainian legislation. However, the awareness of these measures and the readiness of the Ukrainian food sector's small enterprises and relevant supervisory authorities to implement HACCP are still questionable. To overcome this barrier, the project team developed an analytical **note/manual** that explained new legislation's requirements and contained a package of model documents for the implementation of the food quality and safety system.

The experts together with the project's partners also conducted three seminars for over 200 participants, including entrepreneurs, public activists, and representatives of supervisory authorities in Kharkiv and Vinnytsia Oblasts. The participants raised their awareness of the EU procedures and requirements for the effective implementation of HACCP norms in production. The seminars also helped the entrepreneurs and supervisory authorities enter into dialogue and lay the foundations for their future trust-based relations.



Pulse Consumers
Federation (Kyiv)

37. Project ‘Reformation of Consumers Rights Protection System according to the Association Agreement EU-Ukraine’

In the conditions of world trade globalization, the demand for services of independent consumer organizations is growing. In addition, the unstable economic situation along with the low ability to pay of many citizens amplify the demand for reforming the consumer protection system and approximating it to the best European practices.

In 2017, the project team performed a complex work aimed at putting the tasks from the Association Agreement on the governmental Implementation Action Plan for the Concept of the State Consumer Protection Policy until 2020. And to make stakeholders better informed on the consumer protection level and procedures in Ukraine and the EU, the experts produced a series of **seven** narrowly focused analytical reviews. The papers were based on a study of European legislation as well as consultations with relevant executive agencies and consumers.

Moreover, the project submitted its conclusions and suggestions for draft law No. 5548, amending the Law of Ukraine ‘On consumer protection’, and the draft law ‘On information for consumers regarding foodstuffs’ to relevant parliamentary committees and the Government Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration. As a result, the latter was recommitted, as was the experts’ recommendation. The project activities also helped the Platforms increase their real participation in decision-making on consumer protection and are expected to create the conditions when consumers will have a higher level of trust in the system, actually exercising their rights.





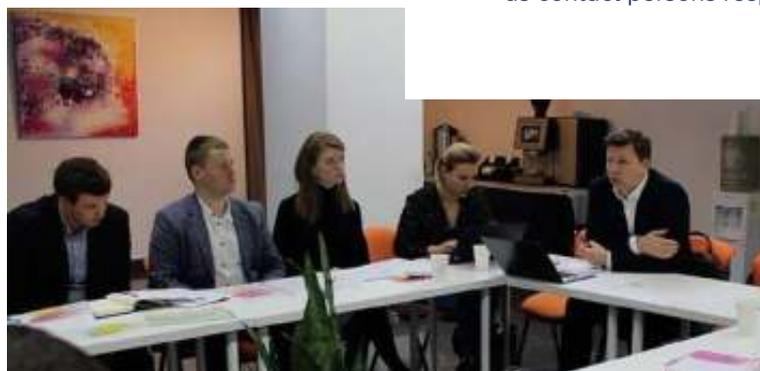
NGO 'Ukrainian
Institute for International
Politics' (Kyiv)

38. Project 'Promotion of Ukraine's Participation in the EUSDR by Priority Areas'

The EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) is a unique tool for cooperation between EU and non-EU countries on equal footing in the Strategy's 11 priority areas addressing social, economic, energy, cultural, and environmental issues. Ukraine joined the EUSDR in 2011; however, it made its first important steps as recently as in 2016-2017 when the Ministry of Regional Development, Construction, and Housing & Utilities (MinRegion) became the EUSDR national coordinator for Ukraine. Still, to make actual use of EUSDR opportunities, it was necessary to coordinate the work of ministries and set up an algorithm of interaction between all parties involved.

This task was tackled by the UIIP. In 2018, the project team provided consultations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and MinRegion in their preparations for ratification by Parliament of the Agreement on financing the Danube Transnational Programme. Concurrently, the experts developed an **analytical memo** and a methodology for implementing the Programme in Ukraine with recommendations on tasks allocation, coordination between relevant ministries, and interaction at the international level. Round tables were held for each of the 11 priority areas, engaging national and regional stakeholders in revising the EUSDR Action Plan.

In 2019, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved an Implementation Action Plan for the Agreement on financing the Danube Transnational Programme. This allowed communities in Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Chernivtsi, and Odesa Oblasts to secure €5 million for the realization of joint initiatives with European partners. The project also succeeded in having representatives of the ministries appointed as members of most priority areas' steering groups, and the European Commission included UIIP experts in the lists of these groups as contact persons responsible for communication with Ukraine.





39. Project ‘The Synergy of Cross-Border Cooperation Programmes and Regional Development Strategies in Ukraine – a Window of Opportunities for Border Regions’



NGO ‘Polissya
Foundation for
International and
Regional Studies’
(Chernihiv)

Ensuring sustainable development of Ukrainian border oblasts is one of the objectives of the Association Agreement implementation and the EaP initiative. However, this development is hampered by the weak links between regional development programmes, effective cross-border cooperation programmes, and projects funded under these programmes. This situation leads to duplication of efforts in solving development problems of the oblasts, limiting opportunities for creating a synergic effect of the implementation of these strategies and programmes.

In 2018, the project team in conjunction with regional partners studied how much concerted the regional policies and cross-border cooperation were in 11 border regions of Ukraine. Findings of the study were discussed with representatives of local authorities and experts at round tables in each of the regions. A consolidated **analytical report** with recommendations on the ways to improve the interaction effectiveness of regional policies and cross-border cooperation was presented at a conference attended by key stakeholders at the national and regional levels. To attract broader attention to the topic, an **article** was also written for European Pravda.

Later on, some of the project experts joined working groups that drafted regional development strategies for 2021-2027, and their recommendations will facilitate more effective utilization of the EU assistance in cross-border and regional cooperation by Ukraine.





NGO 'Centre for
Cross-Border
Cooperation' (Chernihiv)

40. Project 'Enhancing Public Influence on Development of Territorial Cooperation of Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova'

The EaP territorial cooperation programmes open up opportunities for the region's countries to identify and jointly solve problems of border territories. Ukraine participates in two such programmes: 'Moldova-Ukraine' and 'Belarus-Ukraine'. Even though the contests were held in 2015-2016, the implementation of the projects has never started as of early 2018, jeopardizing prospects of further support of the programmes by the EU in its next budget cycle.

The project team analysed practices of providing and receiving EU assistance under the programmes in eight border oblasts of Ukraine. Based on the study, the experts developed **bilingual recommendations** on further ways to overcome barriers to cross-border cooperation development. The paper was presented to key stakeholders during an international expert discussion attended by representatives of the European Committee of the Regions, the Regional Development Directorate of the Ministry of Regional Development, Construction, and Housing & Utilities, the Government Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, international donor organizations, as well as civil society experts from Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic who directly or indirectly participated the development and implementation of the programmes.

The recommendations were additionally presented and discussed during the Annual Assembly of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum in late 2018 in Tbilisi (Georgia).



TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT, CLIMAT CHANGE, AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY



NGO 'Europe without
Barriers' (Kyiv)



41. Project 'Civil Facilitation of the Association Agreement Implementation through the Harmonization of the EU and Ukraine Legislation in Aviation Sphere, based on the Eastern Partnership Countries Experience'

The Association Agreement provides for Ukraine's accession to the European Common Aviation Area, which is expected to increase the air carriage accessibility for Ukrainians. To this end, we have to harmonize our aviation legislation with 64 directives and regulations of the EU.

To carry out this task, Europe without Barriers entered into a dialogue with the Ministry of Infrastructure and the State Aviation Administration of Ukraine. The project's experts joined the drafting of the Administration's order 'On approving the Aviation Rules of Ukraine 'Procedure for granting and withdrawing the rights to airline operations'.

Having engaged international partners, the project produced an **analytical report** that compared the progress of three EaP countries in harmonizing their aviation legislation with that of the EU. And in partnership with the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation and the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, Europe without Barriers held a nationwide public poll on the use of air transport on the routes to Europe. The poll's findings were presented as **infographics** and explained in a story by European Pravda.





NGO 'Resource and Analysis Centre 'Society and Environment' (Lviv)



42. Project 'Promoting European Reforms in the Field of Environment and Climate Change in Ukraine'

By signing the Association Agreement, Ukraine has committed to approximate its environmental legislation to 29 directives and regulations of the EU. The difficult legislation adaptation process would be more effective and in line with the order of the day, if the responsible officials and the public were able to rely on the European experience in implementing such norms as well as on the knowledge of the current trends in the European environmental and climate policies.

With this goal in mind, Society and Environment's project supported reforms related to environment and climate change in line with the AA by analysing and spreading information about the corresponding trends in the EU as well as initiating a dialogue among stakeholders.

The experts produced **six analytical sector-specific papers** with recommendations for Ukraine on climate diplomacy, the implementation of environmental commitments in the conditions of deregulation, environmental issues in the trade policy, etc. These materials were discussed at three round tables attended by over 1,000 participants, including ecologists and representatives of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources.

The Resource and Analysis Centre also filled the media space with European integration news on the EU environmental law and policies. The NGO issued 19 digests of environmental news from the EU and the best environmental protection practices. The publications were actively shared on Facebook by environmental organizations.





Ukrainian National
Environmental NGO
MAMA-86 (Kyiv)



43. Project ‘Monitoring and Assessment of Implementation by Ukraine of the Luxembourg Declaration’s Environmental Governance Provisions’

The project’s relevance is due to the necessity to fulfil a number of commitments under the EaP and AA to reach a level of public environmental administration effectiveness that will allow seeing a real improvement in the environment condition. An important tool to ensure progress toward better environmental governance is the Luxembourg Declaration Implementation Plan. It was issued as a living document based on proposals made by participants in the EaP Environment and Climate Change Panel in late July 2017.

Under the project, UNP and UA-CSP experts systematized and analysed strategic planning documents as well as analysed the implementation effectiveness of the international technical assistance projects and the national programme documents related to environmental protection, in particular, environmental governance and the reform of the nature conservation sector. A number of meetings were also held with representatives of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources on the Luxembourg Declaration implementation.

The project team developed **four analytical papers** with recommendations for the Government of Ukraine on the Luxembourg Declaration implementation and a matrix for monitoring and assessment of the environmental governance implementation, which can be used in the EaP countries. These materials were discussed during a meeting of the EaP Intergovernmental Panel on the environment and climate change attended by nongovernmental environmental experts and the deputy minister for European integration of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine.

For the public at large, the experts produced two newsletters Environmental Partnership that comprehensively characterized the state of affairs and developments in environmental governance.





44-45. Projects ‘Public Encouragement for Launching the European Environmental Impact Assessment Procedure in Ukraine’



International Charity
Organization
‘Environment-People-Law’
(Lviv)

Pursuant to the Association Agreement, Ukraine has undertaken to implement the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) procedures. Since these procedures were new and complicated to many people, those willing to participate needed explanations and consultations with experts.

Experts of EPL conducted seminars for businesses, local authorities, and the public in Lviv, Odesa, and Kyiv attended by a total of 350 participants from various Ukrainian regions. Thirty-seven of them were also certified as trainers to independently hold such events in the future.

To allow more Ukrainian citizens to learn how to participate in EIA and SEA, EPL recorded three thematic webinars, published **three papers**, and issued **two explanatory leaflets**, which intelligibly explained what EIA and SEA were and how they could be used.

Within the project framework, the EPL team provided expert support to Ukrainian communities in 11 EIA procedures. EPL experts also commented on 34 EIA reports, thus preventing or reducing harm to the environment. These reports included EIAs of a solid waste processing complex in Lviv, **clearing of the Oril riverbed in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast**, the felling in Sumy Oblast, etc.

EPL also produced 33 digests of news on EIA and SEA, reaching out to over 11,000 readers. The publication of digests had practical results. For example, the Rivne Reserve wrote and submitted **comments within the EAI framework** after consultations with EPL experts.





NGO 'Resource and Analysis Centre 'Society and Environment' (Lviv)

46. Project 'From EU-Ukraine Association Agreement to Successful Practices: Environmental Protection in Action'

The implementation of European environmental protection practices will not work if it focuses only on adapting national legislation to EU law. This process certainly needs the involvement of citizens and alteration of their attitude toward environmental protection. Such a change requires that people understand what the implementation of environmental directives will bring and what they can do themselves to improve the environmental situation in their localities. Therefore, experts of the project in 2019 held a nationwide Forum of Successful Practices that gathered together over 150 activists from various Ukrainian regions who locally implement innovative environmental solutions. They reported how they implemented the Association Agreement even where Ukraine did not have respective legislation. At an Eco-marathon, they told about Ukrainian know-how in environmental protection, such as a technology of making paper from oak leaves, a cryoacoustic method of used tires recycling, or a robotized laboratory for Dnipro safety monitoring.

The environmental activists were able to share their experience, tie up new partnerships, and learn about the best practices as well as the opportunities provided by the AA. The latter was also facilitated at the Forum by the distribution of **eight booklets** produced under the project that explained which legislation Ukraine had to implement, how it would benefit Ukraine, and what ordinary citizens could do to improve the situation with waste management, air and water quality, etc. Now, experts use these publications during workshops for MPs, and environmental organizations to locally raise public awareness, explaining the importance of the implementation of European legislation.





47. Project ‘Development of Hydropower of Ukraine — Public Analysis in the Context of European Integration Processes’



ALL-Ukrainian NGO
‘National Ecological
Centre of Ukraine’

In 2016, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the Hydropower Development Programme until 2026. The advantages of hydropower seem obvious: the reduced consumption of fossil fuels. On the other hand, there is also an increased risk of damaging the environment and the Nature Reserve Fund of Ukraine as a result of hydropower plant construction and the raised water level in reservoirs.

The project team scrupulously analysed the way the hydropower sector would have to develop if the European standards were to be observed and produced **four analytical papers** with corresponding recommendations.

With the Parliamentary Committee on Environmental Policy and representatives of communities, the team drafted a resolution on appealing to the Government for revoking or revising the Hydropower Development Programme. The NGO also managed to secure a decision of the Committee on the necessity to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Programme.

Moreover, project experts held seminars for 190 participants in **Kyiv**, **Chernivtsi**, and **Mykolaiv** where they explained how the public could effectively participate in decision-making on hydropower development. The experts also provided consultation to the community of the city of Pervomaysk. Eventually, the City Council applied to the President, Parliament Speaker, and Prime Minister of Ukraine, objecting to the raise of the Oleksandrivske Reservoir level.



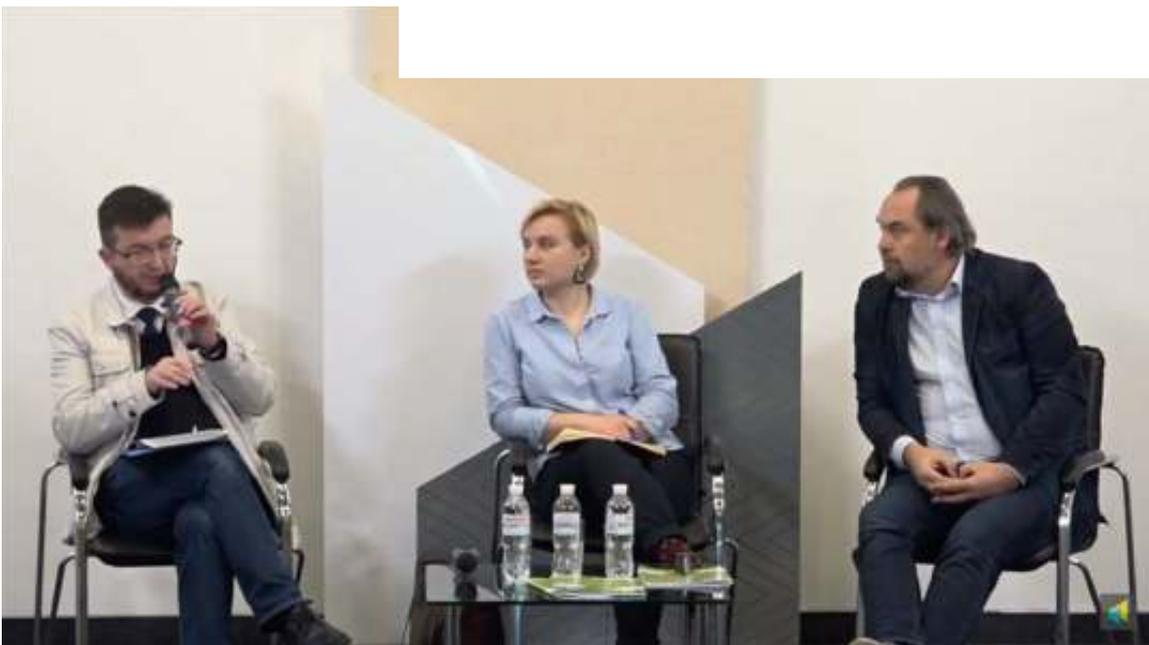


NGO 'Institute
for Green
Economy' (Kyiv)

48. Project 'Monitoring of the Greening of the Economy in Frames of the Implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement'

The issue of economy greenization is already on the agenda of many countries, and it has become even more relevant for Ukraine. A green economy creates conditions for reducing the consumption of natural resources and harmful impact on the environment, while simultaneously developing business.

Within the framework of the project, experts carried out an analysis of European green economy indicators as well as the processes of greenization of the Ukrainian economy and their conformity with AA provisions. Based on the analysis results, the project presented and discussed with representatives of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, businesses, and expert community and **analytical report** with recommendations for state authorities and businesses on the green economy implementation in Ukraine. The publication provided greenization indicators for industry and economy that can be considered in determining the extent of approximation to European requirements within the AA range at the individual enterprise level.





NGO 'Resource and Analysis Centre 'Society and Environment' (Lviv)

49. Project 'An Environment-Minded Citizen as a Pledge of the Successful Association Agreement Implementation'

Before the launch of this project, there had been no sociological surveys in Ukraine to comprehensively assess citizens' attitudes and values related to environmental protection, their attitude toward waste sorting or their support of environmental reforms. The lack of such knowledge did not allow state authorities and civil society organizations to properly work on the development of legislation that would serve the needs of citizens themselves, not turning into 'documents in a drawer'.

In 2018, the Society and Environment team with the sociological agency Fama used Eurobarometer methodology to conduct Ukraine's first comprehensive opinion poll on citizens' attitude toward environmental issues. The survey allowed collating the views of Ukrainians with those of residents of EU countries.

The survey findings were presented in the **publication 'Environmental Portrait of a Ukrainian Citizen'**. The poll revealed a very strong value component in Ukrainians' attitude toward the environment. This means that Ukrainians and EU citizens are within the same value space regarding environmental issues.

A media event with the minister of ecology and natural resources was held to publicise and publicly discuss the survey findings. A **video** and an **explanatory article** on European Pravda were produced for the public at large.

The project's deliverables were used after its completion, too, e.g., during workshops for MPs within the EU/UNDP parliamentary reform project as well as at seminars for regional activists with the support of other donors.





NGO 'Institute
for Regional
Development' (Lviv)



50. Project 'Strengthening Public Influence on Accelerating the Reform of the Energy Sector in Accordance with the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement'

The AA implementation in the area of energy efficiency has to include a thorough analysis of local policies and available resources.

Such a study was carried out by the team of the Institute for Regional Development. Its experts analysed the existing situation in energy efficiency and the use of alternative energy in four Ukrainian oblasts: Lviv, Ternopil, Kharkiv, and Chernihiv.

To realize own know-how during the implementation of EU directives and policy reform at the regional level, the project implementer entered into a dialogue with key stakeholders responsible for the process. In particular, the **strategic papers** developed under the project were presented and discussed with the local public and authorities at four round tables in the regions. And to deliver the recommendations to central authorities, the project's concluding conference was held in Kyiv.





NGO 'Ecoclub'
(Rivne)

51. Project 'Synergy of Civil Society, Authorities and Business Activities in the Format of the Energy Cluster for the Energy Reform of Khmelnytsky Region'

Absence of a strategic vision of how energy efficiency and renewable energy are to be developed regionally has a negative impact on the Ukrainian economy, environment, and territorial communities development. That is why, when the process of drafting 2021-2027 regional development strategies was launched in 2019, it was important that civil society would engage in the process with expert recommendation for energy efficiency reforms.

Ecoclub in conjunction with the Khmelnytsky Energy Cluster developed a methodology for estimating the potential of renewable energy sources in Khmelnytsky Oblast. To obtain objective data and description of all resources in possession of the oblast, the project engaged local authorities, businesses, and energy suppliers in the study. Now, this methodology can be applied in any Ukrainian oblast to estimate necessary changes in energy efficiency. The **analytical paper** produced under the project was presented to and discussed with over 100 participants in the Khmelnytsky Energy Forum.

Following the project, its experts joined a working group on drafting the Khmelnytsky Oblast Development Strategy for 2021-2027 for the section of 'Energy, Energy Efficiency, and Renewable Energy Sources'. Their recommendations will help create conditions for the implementation of investment projects on energy development in the region.

To roll out this technique onto other regions, the project experts held a **webinar/presentation** for participants from other Ukrainian cities and partners from EaP countries. Based on this methodology, the project team also advised the Chortkiv community, Ternopil Oblast, on an analysis of the city's renewable energy potential.



SCIENCE, EDUCATION, INNOVATIONS, AND PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE CONTACTS



NGO 'Agency
of European
innovation' (Lviv)



52. Project 'Strengthening the Public Influence on European Integration Processes in the Field of Scientific, Technical and Innovative Development of Ukraine'

Using the Association Agreement's opportunities to accelerate reforms in the area of Ukraine's scientific and technological development is an important activity of the Platforms.

In 2017-2018, the Agency of European Innovation held private meetings with stakeholders and a round table where experts identified what should be done to develop innovation in the economy and how to adapt the European experience to the Ukrainian reality. The discussions resulted in a package of **six analytical papers** with recommendations on Ukraine's science and technologies sector development.

The project team actively negotiated with the Ministry of Science and Education of Ukraine advisable changes in its R&D funding approaches and ways of using the opportunities of Ukraine's associated membership in the EU framework programme for research and innovation Horizon 2020. As a result, the experts' suggestions were included in the governmental Roadmap for Ukraine's Accession to the European Research Area and taken into account in the Regulation on the Horizon 2020 Projects Contest and the amendments to the Procedure for conducting the contest, both approved by the government.

These changes allow Ukraine's to deeper be integrated into the European Research Area and receive up to €7 million from the EU for research and infrastructure.

A number of information events and seminars were also held in Odesa, Kharkiv, and Kyiv for about 100 representatives of small businesses, research institutions, and civil society to learn about opportunities for participating in the Horizon 2020 contests.





NGO 'Centre of Strategic Partnership' (Uzhgorod)

53. Project 'Support for the Regional Dialogue in the Education Reform in Odesa, Chernivtsi and Zakarpattya Oblasts'

The Association Agreement provides that Ukraine and the EU have to promote cooperation in the field of education, training, and youth in order to enhance mutual understanding, and promote intercultural dialogue. However, the Law of Ukraine 'On Education' of 2017, which increased the volume of teaching in the state language, provoked sharp criticism from representatives of certain ethnic minorities and politicians of neighbouring EU Member States. To a significant extent, this resulted from both the poor internal communication and the attempts from without to ferment language-based contradictions. Hence, there is a need to minimize the manipulations in the public space and set up a constructive dialogue between politicians, inside communities, between the government and ethnic minorities, and with the government of the neighbouring countries.

In 2019, experts of the Centre of Strategic Planning together with the Platforms' regional members polled 460 persons and conducted 146 in-depth interviews in the border areas of Zakarpattya, Odesa, and Chernivtsi Oblasts. The respondents included representatives of local authorities, civil society organizations, and ethnic minorities, as well as heads of educational institutions, students, parents, and employers.

The survey's results were summarized in an **analytical report** with proposals on how to improve education legislation. The experts also provided recommendations on how to take into account the specifics of communication on educational topics locally and internationally.

These materials were given to stakeholders in regions as well as the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, the diplomatic missions of Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, and Slovakia, and the EU Delegation to Ukraine.





NGO 'Agency of European Innovations' (Lviv)



54. Project 'Advocacy of pro-European Changes in the National Innovation Policy'

EU countries are actively implementing innovation policies, making their economies more competitive. As for the Ukrainian national innovation policy, it has, for years, been developed fragmentarily. As a result, we cannot make full use of the opportunities opened by the Association Agreement.

To intensify the innovation policy development in Ukraine, the project team held six round tables and engaged practically all Ukrainian stakeholders as well as European organizations in the domain of innovation development. The project's key recommendations and proposals for target groups took shape in three **analytical notes**: on implementing digital technologies, on creative industries, and on development in the area of culture.

In July 2019, the government approved the Innovative Activities Development Strategy until 2030, which included a number of suggestions from the project team. The Agency of European Innovations also became a partner in the joint platform of industrialists and hi-tech sectors **Industry4Ukraine**.

With assistance from the Platforms' experts, new organizational and project forms were launched for innovative activities in the areas of culture, heritage, and creative industries. A new Working Group was established to facilitate the processes of digitalization of the domestic historical and cultural heritage sector. Participants in the group included experts of the project, the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, and the Hi-Tech Office Ukraine.





55. Project ‘Strengthening Civic Participation in the Development and Implementation of Digital Agenda for Ukraine and Harmonization of its Digital Markets with the EU and EaP countries’



Civic Union ‘Centre for Innovations Development’ (Kyiv)

Ukraine’s integration into the EU Digital Single Market (DSM) is a logical task emanating from the Association Agreement’s provisions and the EaP’s priorities. This task requires clear priorities and specific measurable objectives defined for the county’s digital development in line with corresponding European priorities and objectives.

In 2018, the Centre for Innovations Development with its partners analysed the situation in Ukraine’s digital economy and information society in six basic areas: digital infrastructure, trust and security in the digital economy, e-commerce, digital competences development, research in the information and communication technologies, innovations and startup ecosystems, and eHealth. Results of the analysis were discussed at thematic brainstorming round tables with representatives of the Government Office for Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, the Ministry of Education and Science, the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, the Hi-Tech Office of Ukraine, the State Agency for e-Governance of Ukraine, the National Commission for the State Regulation of Communication and Informatization, etc.

The discussions with the key stakeholders wound up in a **Digital Development Forum** where the project presented a complex **report** with the analysis of key problems and priorities of Ukraine’s integration into the DSM. The project experts also applied the results by joining working groups of the newly-formed Coordinating Council on Development of Digital Economy and Society under the Cabinet of Ministers.





NGO 'European Media Platform' (Kyiv)

56. Project 'Integration of Ukraine into European Digital Single Market: Turning Challenges into Opportunities'



Ukraine has step by step been approximating its legislation to European standards as provided for by the Association Agreement. Simultaneously, the EU continues improving own legislation, in particular, reforming its e-communications sector. In December 2018, there was published a new European Electronic Communications Code (EECC) and the revised Regulation on the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC).

UNP and UA-CSP experts led by the European Media Platform analysed the opportunities for integration into the EU Digital Single Market that the new EECC opened for Ukraine.

The project team also gathered key Ukrainian stakeholders at a round table to jointly discuss top priority tasks in this area and avoid variant readings in the drafting of legislative acts.

A translation of the Code with a consolidated table of terms prepared by the experts was used by government officials and MPs in the development of two draft laws 'On electronic communications'. Moreover, the recommendations based on the project results were also presented at the European Dialogue on Internet Governance in 2019.





57. Project 'Open Dialogues: Giving a Chance for Expression to Proactive Citizens. Increasing the Role of Grassroots Civil Society in European Reforms in Ukraine'



Stan Youth
Organization
(Ivano-Frankivsk)

Every year in May, Ukraine together with the European community celebrates Europe Day. We thus confirm our unity with the EU Member States not only geographically but also by sharing the common values and the aspiration for freedom, democracy, and respect for human rights. The celebration in cities includes street actions, concerts, quizzes, film shows, and exhibitions.

The Open Dialogues project focused on holding street actions for Europe Day 2017. In this way, the activists promoted the European integration ideas and values at the local level. As its first step, the project held a Coordinating Workshop at which 18 competitively selected participants from 14 Ukrainian regions analysed existing European integration initiatives and systematized experience of the Platforms' member organizations in carrying out regional actions. Based on this work, information materials were jointly developed and awareness-raising actions for Europe Day 2017 in the regions were planned.

The participants in this newly-formed informal network carried out in their regions a nationwide action 'Open Dialogues' dedicated to Europe Day, which consisted of 20 events in 18 regions and involved over 550 persons. The action included open-space discussions on human rights, environment, education, cultural diversity, and visa-free opportunities. Additionally, in September 2017, this network used a similar format to organize the nationwide action 'World Day in UA 2017'. The action included discussions and lectures on 'World Culture as the Cornerstone of Society Development', film shows, and children's drawing contests on relevant topics.



Pro- ject team





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