Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

This report was made possible with support from the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). UCIPR shall be solely responsible for the content that may not reflect the views of USAID or the Government of the United States of America

CONTENTS

Who we are 4

Lines of Effort 5

Achievements in 2014 6

- Support to public political communications, transparency of political parties, evaluation of political risks 9
- Development of procedures for representative and direct democracy 11
- Development of legal environment for civil society 13
- Civic education and counseling for civil society organizations 15
- Culture of dialogue, socio-cultural policy, prevention of conflicts in communities 17
- Rights of national minorities and indigenous people, policy development and advocacy 19
- Human rights in Crimea, analysis of processes 21
- Advocacy for discrimination combating practices 23
- Support to European integration processes 25

Public activity 26

Partnership, coalitions 27

Major UCIPR projects in 2014 29

2014 Budget 30

Capacity building 31

WHO WE ARE

Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research (UCIPR) is a non-governmental and non-partisan organization, a think tank that affects the state policies in the domain of democratic dimension. UCIPR was established in 1991.

UCIPR mission is to promote irreversibility of democratic transformations.

Our activities are aimed at promotion of democratic values and procedures in the domain of public policies and administration as it is this way that makes the state transparent and accountable and unites people into the civil society.

We are working to ensure that in Ukraine human rights are guaranteed, political environment is competitive, elections are fair and free, system of public authorities is balanced and local self-governance is effective. Citizens shall have conditions to influence the decision making both on the state and local levels and to monitor actions of the government both personally and through the network of capable civil society and political organizations.

LINES OF EFFORT

- Support to public political communications, transparency of political parties, evaluation of political risks
- Development of procedures for representative and direct democracy
- Development of legal environment for civil society
- Civic education and counseling for civil society organizations
- Culture of dialogue, socio-cultural policy, prevention of conflicts in the communities
- Rights of national minorities and indigenous people, policy development and advocacy
- Human rights in Crimea, analysis of processes
- Advocacy for discrimination combating practices
- Support to European integration processes

ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2014

Distribution marketing participation in the securities market.
SEARCH
SCANNING
COMPLETE
OIL AND GAS

Support to public political communications, transparency of political parties and evaluation of political risks

Among the most important tasks of Ukraine is its integration and cooperation with the major democracies in the world. In order for the partners of Ukraine to plan their actions, it is important to understand the potential developments in the country. By weighing the factors that influence the developments in Ukraine, UCIPR evaluates political risks and makes projections on whether the factors will persist or change. Document on political risk assessment is prepared in cooperation with external experts twice a year and is used by all groups both in Ukraine and abroad that are interested in additional sources of information for understanding of the political situation in Ukraine – banks, business groups, civil society and public authorities.

In the year of two snap elections that took place as a result of Euromaidan, political positions of the presidential candidates and those of political parties during the parliamentary elections were evaluated. Materials that help understand approaches and intentions of the candidates were published in traditional UCIPR bulletins "Your choice".

Institutionalization of political parties and their strengthening add weight so that they can bear political responsibility. Among the factors of such institutionalization are the stable financial support and compliance with the rules that ensure the transparency of the party funding. In 2014, analytical overview was prepared on the principles of financing the political parties by the state in the countries that have varied specific experience of such financing and border on Ukraine – in Poland and Germany. These surveys formed the basis for further development of legislation governing the activities of the political parties in Ukraine.

Shutterstock.com/Sergey Nivens

Development of procedures for representative and direct democracy

UCIPR was one of the initiators of the coalition of civil society organizations (CSO) "For Fair Referendum" designed to hold public awareness campaign on the risks of the legislation on referenda adopted in 2012. The most powerful Ukrainian CSOs that united in a network raised awareness in the mass media on the potential consequences of using non-democratic provisions of the laws on referenda. In cooperation with the experts from Election Law Institute, Center of Policy and Legal Reform, Internews-Ukraine, International Foundation for Electoral Systems, with the assistance from the law firm Lexfor and in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, UCIPR experts drafted the new version of the Law of Ukraine "On All-Ukrainian Referendum" and promoted the idea of reviewing this bill in Ukrainian Parliament.

In 2014, UCIPR experts were actively engaged in establishing the expert group under the auspices of the Reanimation Package of Reforms on the reform of electoral laws, together with experts from field-specific CSOs supported the powerful campaign on the the necessity to provide for transparent and inclusive electoral process that would include introduction of open party lists in the voting process; organized and participated in the public events in promotion of this idea.

Shutterstock.com/Bikeriderlondon

Development of legal environment for civil society

In 2014, UCIPR experts focused on monitoring positive legislative innovations in registration procedures for civil society and charitable organizations.

UCIPR in cooperation with the partners developed and advocated for the amendments to the Law "On Volunteering". Efforts were joined to prepare the Bill No. 1408 that was registered by 15 Members of Parliament. The major achievements of this Bill are: abolition of bureaucratic registration procedures for volunteer organizations, reduction of the age of volunteers, right to individual volunteering, elimination of the financially burdensome insurance and mandatory contracts.

Our experts advocated for inclusion to the Action Plan on implementation of the "Open Government" Partnership" Initiative (approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Resolution of 26 November 2014 No. 1176-p) the provisions on introduction of the following: 1) a new law on public consultations; 2) rights to support charitable organizations from the state budget; 3) obtaining the non-for-profit status during the registration of the legal entity using the one-stop-shop (single window) principle.

Shutterstock.com/Carlos andre Santos

Civic education and counseling for civil society organizations

School of social action

In spring of 2014, social activities soared in Ukraine. Understanding the needs of this target group, UCIPR held the School of social action for 285 people from the following regions of Ukraine: Khersonska, Kirovogradska, Dnipropetrovska, Chernihivska, Kharkivska, as well as Zakarpatska, Lvivska and Rivnenska regions.

This School helped new activists gain knowledge on how:

- to influence the decisions of the city council,
- to register a civil society organization,
- to hold a peaceful assembly,
- to access public information,
- to monitor the fairness of public procurements,
- to influence the formation of the local budget.

Hot line

Starting from July 2014, UCIPR launched the Hot Line for registration of civil society and charitable organizations. Tel.: +38 (044) 227-5420. Public activists from the entire country receive samples of documents and advice on registration of organizations or amendments to the Charters.

Information booklets

UCIPR experts paid significant attention to the legal education of community and development of local democracy. 8 information booklets on legal procedures to influence the decisions of the local governments were developed and distributed:

"How to hold public hearings"
"How to conduct public evaluation of local council activities"
"How to submit a draft decision to the city council by way of local initiative"
"How to get information from public authorities"
"Local referendum in Ukraine"
"Your influence on the local authorities: new opportunities"
"How to hold a general meeting of the members of the territorial community"
"How to hold consultations with the community"

Shutterstock.com/Drop of Light

Culture of dialogue, socio-cultural policy, prevention of conflicts in communities

UCIPR partnered with CMI (Crisis Management Initiative – Martti Ahtisaari Centre) to implement dialogue initiatives regarding the political resolution of the conflict in some localities of Donetsk and Luhansk regions in 2014. As a part of this initiative, regular meetings and consultations are held with experts and politicians with the view to resolve the situation, to find ways and scenarios to end conflict, international practices that led to political resolution http://goo.gl/KLWt81 are investigated.

This Initiative provides framework to hold seminars for members of Parliament, officials of the President Administration to get acquainted with diverse practices and political measures to resolve conflicts, to find political mechanisms for respective processes.

UCIPR experts extensively cooperate with various dialogue initiatives and projects of civil society organizations, in particular, on holding working meetings, trainings on conflict analysis and prevention. For instance, ongoing cooperation was established with "Youth Alternative", a non-governmental organization that facilitates education in democratic practices in youth environment and prepares interns for Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and other public authorities. http://goo.gl/iNBWqH

UCIPR experts held trainings on conflict prevention, advocating for civil society initiatives as a way to prevent conflicts in communities together with the experts of Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (DVV International) http://goo.gl/Op1Clk

Shutterstock.com/Micolas

Rights of national minorities and indigenous people, policy development and advocacy

UCIPR experts became the members of the Council on Interethnic Concord at the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine when the Government introduced the post of Ombudsman for Ethnic Policy.

UCIPR cooperates with the Office of OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities within the frameworks of implementation of monitoring initiatives to ensure the rights of the national minorities.

UCIPR experts are the members of the Expert Council at the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Human Rights, National Minorities and Interethnic relations. We took part in drafting the National Strategy on Human rights in compliance with the President of Ukraine Decree of 15 October 2014 No. 811/2014, in particular, with regard to ensure the national minority rights, to identify new challenges related to human rights in the temporarily occupied and uncontrolled territories.

UCIPR experts participated in drafting the Law of Ukraine "On the Status of the Indigenous Peoples in Ukraine".

Shutterstock.com/Daria Tishchenko

CRIMEA
UKRAINE

Human rights in the Crimea, analysis of processes

In 2014, UCIPR concentrated its activities on monitoring and analyzing the situation around the Crimea that was occupied and annexed by the Russian Federation.

In 2014, the following Legal comments were drafted for the citizens of the annexed Crimea: citizenship, documents, crossing the border, welfare payments, financial transactions, etc. Topics were selected based on the common issues raised during interviews with the Crimeans.

Experts of UCIPR Support to Democratic Processes program prepared the first ever in Ukraine public informational and monitoring report – "Annexed" education in the temporarily occupied Crimea" http://goo.gl/eg35wc that sets forth the summarized description of the situation related to education in Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar languages in the Crimea following the annexation of the peninsula.

Shutterstock.com/blurAZ

Advocacy for discrimination combating practices

UCIPR experts are the members of the Coalition for Combating Discrimination in Ukraine (CCD) http://goo.gl/FGmYe1. The purpose of the CCD is to promote the ideas of equality in the society, formation of legal and institutional tools and mechanisms to ensure such equality. In 2014, UCIPR experts joined in to launch informational campaign to promote equality in the society, in particular, the studies were carried out that helped actualize various stereotypes existing in the society with regard to vulnerable groups.

In 2014, coalition made a number of statements on discriminatory manifestations in the Crimea on the part of the Russian occupants.

Shutterstock.com/Pressmaster

Support to European integration processes

In 2014, UCIPR joined in to form Ukrainian side of the EU-Ukraine Civil Society Platform in compliance with the Articles 469-470 of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. UCIPR experts contributed to coordination of the Work Group 3 "Human Rights, Gender Equality and Non-discrimination": the activities resulted in the monitoring report that allowed to evaluate the implementation of the agreement in the areas of ensuring the national minority rights, non-discrimination and gender equality.

UCIPR is among the founding members of the Ukrainian Think Tanks Liaison Office in Brussels. In 2014, UCIPR experts took part in informational and analytical activities of the Office that featured elections and situation in the Crimea.

Shutterstock.com/DmyTo

PUBLIC ACTIVITY

From the moment it was created, UCIPR have become an integral part of the civil society and takes pro-active position during pivotal moments in Ukrainian history.

Our efforts have always been directed to promotion and facilitation of civil action.

In 2014, during the Revolution of Dignity, UCIPR employees took part in protests of the civil society against corruption, abuse of power and suppression of political rights of Ukrainians.

We took part in mass protests and joined in to organize cultural and educational events during Euromaidan. In particular, we joined in to launch the Open University of Maidan.

PARTNERSHIP, COALITIONS

UCIPR acts based on the trusted and reliable partnerships with influential civil society organizations and networks thereof:

Coalition "For Fair Referendum"
Platform "Decentralization"
CMI (Crisis Management Initiative – Martti Ahtisaari Centre)
Ukrainian Think Tanks Liaison Office in Brussels
The Civil Network OPORA,
Institute of Political Education
ISAR Ednannia
Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS)
The Laboratory for Legislative Initiatives
Youth Alternative
Charity Foundation Counterpart Creative Center (CCC)
Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union (UHHRU)
The Ukrainian Philanthropists Forum
The Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation (DIF)
Centre UA
Centre of Civic Advocacy
Centre of Policy and Legal Reform

In 2014, UCIPR was among the initiators of the new expert initiative "Reanimation Package of Reforms" that emerged among the activists of Euromaidan. UCIPR experts were members of the following groups: Decentralization and Regional Development, European Integration, Reform of Election Laws.

MAJOR UCIPR PROJECTS IN 2014

In 2014, UCIPR became a direct recipient of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) having launched "Citizens in Action" Project, a new systemic 5-years' project at the national level. Project is aimed at improvement of legal environment for operations of the civil society organizations and building capacity of such organizations when using such legislative novels. We sincerely appreciate your support to the following lines of effort:

- Dialogue between Local Government, Civil Society and Media – Council of Europe (CE)
- Support to civil society in promoting the program of reforms – Private Agencies Collaborating Together, Inc (PACT)
- Protection and Information: Lack of social and political rights of citizens of Ukraine in Crimea – United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Respect for the national minorities rights in educational environment of Crimea: monitoring, informing and response – United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- Management of Inter-Ethnic Relations in the Crimea. Phase IV, OSCE High
- Commissioner on National Minorities (OSCE HCNM)
- Analytical support of the Reanimation Package of Reforms, International
- Renaissance Foundation (IRF)
- Perspectives of Democratic Development of Ukraine before and after Presidential elections in March of 2015, National Endowment for Democracy (NED)
- Improving legislative framework for civil society in Ukraine, Private Agencies Collaborating Together, Inc (PACT)
- Protection of freedom of peaceful assembly in Ukraine by creating favorable legal environment and expansion of the rights and possibilities of civil society activists, Rule of Law (Embassy of Kingdom of Netherlands)

Shutterstock.com/Yurylmaging

2014 BUDGET

In 2014, UCIPR managed to raise UAH5,580,835 to implement statutory tasks. We sincerely appreciate the support of our initiatives by international partners:

USAID
ВІД АМЕРИКАНСЬКОГО НАРОДУ

pact
building local promise.

NED
National Endowment for Democracy
Supporting freedom around the world

OSCE
HCNM

міжнародний фонд
Відродження
INTERNATIONAL RENAISSANCE FOUNDATION

UNDP
Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Kingdom of the Netherlands

CAPACITY BUILDING

In 2014, UCIPR took a number of important steps for institutional development to ensure high standards of good governance, transparency and accountability to the management of the organization.

Major achievements in organizational development include:

- Introduction of Good Governance standards
- Improvement of internal controls system and implementation of international financial management standards
- Launch of internal training and personnel development program

Consequently, these changes brought UCIPR to a totally new level of organizational performance. Now, UCIPR is capable of ensuring effective implementation of systemic long-term projects at the national level.

Establishment of the UCIPR Board that performs supervisory functions became one of the milestones of the year.

We are proud that the below mentioned esteemed and honored civil society activists and businessmen agreed to manage our organization:

Mykola Riabchuk, Chairman of the Board, UCIPR, Ukrainian journalist, publicist, poet, novelist, translator and editor-at-large. Vice President, Ukrainian Center of International PEN Club

Mykhaylo Veselskiy, member of the Board, UCIPR, business man, manager, founder and Chairman of the Board of Directors, Evrotek

Gulnara Bekirova, member of the Board, UCIPR, historian, Candidate of Political Sciences, Deputy Head, Special Commission of Quriltai for Study of Genocide of Crimean Tatar people

Natalya Polyakova, member of the Board, UCIPR, businesswoman, manager, Director, LLC “Renome-Smart”

Natalia Bourjaily, member of the Board, UCIPR, Vice President, International Center for Non-for-Profit Law (ICNL), USA, Washington

Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research

www.ucipr.org
Telephone/Fax: + 38 (044) 278-2825
Telephone: +38 (044) 599-4251, 592-9823
executive@ucipr.org.ua