186, 21 April 2003

A publication of the International Centre for Policy Studies

ICPS newsletter

Lack of information about the EU must be overcome

Representatives of regional NGOs, the mass media, educational institutions, and the civil service who were interviewed during public hearings on European integration challenges noted the inadequate level of dissemination of information on European integration issues, the European Union, and EU standards and requirements for different areas of societal life. This feedback was made public at a presentation last week organised by the International Centre for Policy Studies jointly with the Ministry of Economy and European Integration of Ukraine

At the end of the last year, six oblast centres of Ukraine—Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Lviv, and Ternopil—hosted public hearings on European integration that were attended by representatives of the majority of Ukraine's oblasts. This series of events, organised with support from Freedom House and the World Bank's "Dialogue for Reforms" project, promoted a discussion of Ukraine's EU integration process and of the possible impact of EU enlargement upon Ukraine.

93% see future EU accession as beneficial

Responses to the questionnaire circulated among the participants of the public hearings demonstrated the approval by most of them of the idea of Ukraine's EU accession:

• the overwhelming majority of interviewees believed that EU accession would be favourable for their country, oblast, city;

• respondents associated the European Union with a pledge of economic and political security, a democratic society, freedom of movement, stability, and protection of civil rights;

• most respondents were interested in receiving information on the European Union and materials on European integration procedures and processes. They were interested in the information about the Ukrainian government's activities in this respect, materials about the experience of countries preparing for EU accession, policy papers from independent think tanks, and publications of the Delegation of the European Commission to Ukraine;

• central and local TV broadcasts, newspapers, and the Internet were among the sources most in demand with regard to information on Europe-related issues.

Ukrainians want to know more about the EU and the European integration process

Among the main problems with the delivery of information interviewees named the following:

• insufficient information about European integration process and procedures, government activities in this domain, and political discussion around the integration process;

• most respondents knew nothing about specific EU enlargement consequences for their city, oblast, or the country overall;

• most respondents were not familiar with the standards and requirements of the European Union related to their particular activity. However, a small group of interviewees that was familiar with European standards and requirements did show a willingness to apply them in their work. This group included education workers who specifically study EU standards in their area and are committed to applying them.

A special block of questions aimed at assessing how well official agencies inform the public demonstrated the following results:

• respondents assessed as insufficient the activities of the Ministry of Economy and European Integration of Ukraine in informing the public about its policy and activities. Interviewees believed that the ministry lacks the analytical and information resources to describe the integration process and related activities. Mass media coverage of the ministry's activities pertaining to European integration was also assessed as insufficient, as was the accessibility of its official publications to ordinary citizens;

• respondents believed that the Delegation of the European Commission to Ukraine is not active enough in disseminating information about the European Union and its policy, standards, and requirements in various areas.

Official institutions, NGOs, and the mass media should launch an information campaign

Given these opinion poll results, we strongly advise conducting educational activities and holding public awareness campaigns to improve people's understanding of the importance and usefulness of Ukraine's integration into the European Union.

We recommend that the **Ministry of Economy and European Integration of**

ICPS news

ICPS project seconding an expert to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine completed

Over the past year ICPS, with sponsorship from the Open Society Institute (OSI), provided analytical and methodological support for the European integration process implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

Under the framework of this project, a number of policy papers were developed on the impact of European integration processes upon Ukraine, the integration experience of EU candidate countries, how to effectively target foreign technical assistance supporting European integration, etc. Based on the experience of CEE and Baltic states, a template was designed for planning, coordinating, monitoring, reporting, and assessing the European integration process; it will be employed by Ukrainian ministries when conducting European integration-related events.

Ukraine (as well as other government bodies in charge of policy implementation in the domain of European integration and information society):

• to conduct educational events pertaining to the process and procedures for Ukraine's EU integration by means of public readings, debates, and seminars, and by disseminating analytical and informational materials;

• to commence the regular preparation and dissemination of analytical and informational materials on the government's activities in the process of Ukraine's European integration, on Ukraine-EU relations, and on the procedures and standards to be introduced in Ukraine to facilitate its accession to the EU;

• to launch a series of training programs and courses on the European Union and the process of Ukraine's European integration at higher educational institutions;

• to embark on educational activity about the consequences of EU eastward enlargement for Ukraine, the oblasts, and cities by disseminating analytical materials at the national, regional, and local levels (using the resources of oblast state administrations);

• to provide information about the activities and policy of the Ministry of Economy and European Integration of Ukraine for dissemination and publication in the Ukrainian mass media.

The Delegation of the European Commission to Ukraine should conduct a more vigorous informational campaign about the European Union, its role in the region, and the impact of EU enlargement eastward upon Ukraine by opening regional information centres (in cooperation with oblast state administrations or higher educational establishments).

Independent research organisations should do the following:

• expand their analytical research work on current issues of European integration of Ukraine, the consequences of EU eastward enlargement for Ukraine, and the possibilities of implementing EU standards and requirements in Ukraine;

• hold public events involving discussions of the problems of Ukraine's European integration, and broadly disseminate informative and analytical materials on this issue.

We believe that in order to ensure the proper coverage of issues related to European integration by the **Ukrainian mass media,** it is necessary to do the following:

• cover developments in the country in the context of European integration processes and Ukraine's accession to the EU—many developments ought to be considered from this standpoint;

• participate in public events on Ukraine's European integration that are conducted by both governmental and non-governmental institutions;

• provide unbiased information about European integration processes in Ukraine, and emphasise the importance of Ukraine's accession to the EU and the introduction of its standards and requirements, with explanations of their substance.■

The detailed survey results were published in the form of a booklet. An electronic version of this publication is posted on the ICPS website at http://www.icps.com.ua/eng/projects/eu_public_hearings.html. For further information, please contact Olga Shumylo (oshumylo@icps.kiev.ua) at tel.: (38-044) 236-4477.

ICPS announces research competition

The International Centre for Policy Studies and the Razumkov Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies announce a competition for research on current issues of regional (local) socioeconomic development. The competition will be financed by the International Renaissance Foundation, under the framework of the "Capacity Building of Regional Centres for Policy Analysis at the Local Level" project

The invitation to tender is extended to community organisations that are engaged in analytical activities and are wishing to increase their capabilities in the sphere of public policy. Regional organisations will be given preference.

Your tender should include:

• the organisation's capability statement with regard to public policy research, cooperation with local government bodies, business, and other community organisations, based on the experience of previously done work (up to 1 page);

• definition of a current issue of local/regional socioeconomic development that would constitute the substance of the research (up to 1 page);

• ways of using the research results and applying them in the activities of local government bodies and other interested parties (up to 1/2 page);

• a list of representatives of local government bodies, businesses, and other organisations which are to be involved in the research;

• a list of projects completed by the public organisation, and of their deliverables;

• a research budget, based on the list of activities stated in the terms of reference.

Organisations selected on the basis of tender shall undertake to carry out the research in accordance with the terms of reference.

The maximum amount of expected financing for one organisation is 13,500 USD. The public organisation's own financial contribution must be not less than 10% of this amount.

Project research duration: June 2003-February 2004.

Deadline for tenders: 16 May 2003.

Please send your applications to the following address:

International Centre for Policy Studies

13a Pymonenka Street
Kyiv 04050, Ukraine

or email them to:
policynetwork@icps.kiev.ua

For the terms of reference and further information, please see the websites of the International Centre for Policy Studies at http://www.icps.kiev.ua; and of the Razumkov Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies at http://www.uceps.com.ua.■

Contact persons:

Volodymyr Hnat

(38-044) 239-1536,
e-mail: vhnat@icps.kiev.ua

Olena Houmenyuk

(38-044) 239-1537,
e-mail: houmenyuk@icps.kiev.ua

ICPS Newsletter is a weekly publication of the International Centre for Policy Studies delivered by electronic mail. To be included in the distribution list mail to: marketing@icps.kiev.ua.
ICPS Newsletter editor Yevhen Shulha (shulha@icps.kiev.ua). Phone: (380-44) 236-4477.
English text editor D. (Ksenia) Ovcharenko.
Articles may be reprinted with ICPS consent.