

ICPS newsletter®

2007: ICPS reports on results

In 2007, the International Centre for Policy Studies worked actively on instituting public policy procedures in Ukraine. The Centre developed and carried out projects whose main aim is to democratize government and society. ICPS initiated debate on key issues, for the purpose of addressing the challenges facing Ukrainian society today. Here are some of ICPS's main achievements for 2007

ICPS among top think-tanks in the world

Based on surveys and studies carried out by the Think-Tanks and Civil Societies Program, a US program, a list of top think-tanks in the world was drawn up. Among 5,080 analytical centers across the world, the Foreign Policy Research Institute, which implemented this program, singled out 228 top organizations, and the International Centre for Policy Studies is among them.

PACE quotes ICPS

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) cited an article called "In search of a way out: How to find democracy in this political crisis" written by ICPS's political analysts and published in the ICPS Newsletter [Issue #360].

In their 17 April report entitled "The functioning of democratic institutions in Ukraine," PACE observers to Ukraine Hanne Severinsen and Renate Wohlwend commented on the political crisis in Ukraine: "The state machine can still be used for administrative leverage in political struggles, the Constitutional Court has proved ineffective, the judiciary is not carrying out its functions, the rights of the opposition are not enshrined in law, the organization of political parties remains far from democratic, and the levers of political influence available to civil society exist only on paper."

Vira Nanivska among the most influential women in Ukraine

President of the National Academy of Public Administration under the Office of the President of Ukraine and Honorary Chair of the ICPS Board Vira T. Nanivska was 50th among the 100 most influential women in Ukraine, according to Fokus, a business

journal [№45, 9 November 2007]. The journal described Ms. Nanivska's influence as the result of her serious scholarly achievements and connections in government circles. This is the second year that Fokus has published the rating. Last year, Ms. Nanivska did not make this list, but in 2007, she was rated 50th, scoring 1,171 points.

Reforms, business and policy

ICPS commissioned SOCIS, a sociological service, with the support of the Institute of Sociology under the National Academy of Sciences, to carry out a nationwide survey on the topic, "Reforms, Business and Policy." ICPS analysis of the survey revealed a number of contradictory trends: Ukrainians are market-oriented and link their future and the future of their country as a whole with the development of entrepreneurship, while holding on to soviet stereotypes about property, business and social justice. The study also showed that Ukrainians see business as the only player with all the basic resources needed to implement reforms.

Deeper agreement between Ukraine and the EU

ICPS worked on formulating Ukraine's position for negotiations between Ukraine and the European Union on a new, enhanced agreement. Having successfully completed the "Public consultations on an EU-Ukraine FTA" project at the beginning of the year, the Centre launched a new project in September 2007, with the financial support of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA).

As part of the "EU-Ukraine FTA: Analytical, methodological and informational support for negotiations" project, ICPS experts and government officials are analyzing the impact of a Free Trade Agreement at the macro level. They will also analyze the opportunities and

consequences of Ukraine's participation in the Union's agencies and programs.

ICPS and the Ministry of Economy have already held debates on the possible impact and prospects of a Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and the EU in Dnipropetrovsk and Donetsk.

Realizing Ukraine's potential

The "Socio-Economic Performance and Potential Analysis Capacity" (SEPPAC) project funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has gradually come to the application stage. ICPS experts and project partners from the Government prepared policy reports called "Ukraine's Potential and Its Realization," where they presented the results of benchmarking for Ukraine and long-term forecasts for the demographic and fiscal situation in the country, and also for potential GDP.

"People's Voice" reports on results

In 2007, the large-scale "People's Voice" project came to an end. Implemented by the World Bank, PADCO, a consultancy, and the International Centre for Policy Studies (ICPS) with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), "People's Voice" aimed at supporting the development and facilitation of various citizen engagement activities throughout Ukraine, as a way to improve the quality of municipal services. For three years, the project team worked in six Ukrainian cities: Alchevsk, Chernihiv, Kolomyia, Komsomolsk, Lutsk, and Makiyivka.

Among the main project results were the promotion of public involvement, better capacity among community organizations, and the building of an active public position among the residents of partner cities. This project was one of the first in Ukraine that set the objective of instituting QMS according to ISO standards in local governments. One important outcome was the development of ways and means of reforming systems for managing multi-story housing stock.

Services in the capital as Kyiv residents see it

For the first time, an independent, large-scale public opinion survey regarding the quality of public services was carried out in Kyiv. On the initiative of ICPS, "The Best District in Kyiv" project was implemented in Fall 2007. The results of this poll made it possible to develop a rating of the capital's districts in terms of the quality of their services. As a result, ICPS analysts were able to conclude that public opinion on the quality of municipal service should continue to be tracked, not only in Kyiv, but also in other cities across the country. Such a practice should offer an effective mechanism for public participation in the management of cities, while similar polls could become the basis for changing municipal policies.

Debates on civil society issues

In 2007, ICPS continued the practice of holding public debates on important social issues. In the summer, the Centre held a series of roundtables. Among them, two are worth emphasizing:

Right Turn: France's experience and Ukraine: At this roundtable, ICPS presented a brief on the successful experience of France's rightists in dissipating leftist stereotypes and promoting liberal values and reforms during the 2007 presidential election. Participants agreed that the issue of rightist and leftist ideology is a key point in Ukraine.

Lessons in Democracy: World Practice and Ukraine: At this roundtable, ICPS experts presented a compendium of articles intended to familiarize Ukrainian policy makers and the general public with Western democracy and the use of coalitions, oppositions, "cohabitation," primaries, lobbying and the delegation of power. One of the main conclusions of this roundtable was that any political system can be successful if it is focused on the needs of the country and learns from its past mistakes.

ICPS publications analyze and recommend

Assessment of the impact of a Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and the EU is a report on the results of a project called "Consultations on a Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and the EU." In this paper, ICPS analysts study the possible impact of such an agreement on key sectors of Ukraine's economy and the positions of

various stakeholders on such an agreement, and provide recommendations for talks between Ukraine and the EU.

Party Policy: The impact of NGOs on their formation and implementation is a handbook based on the results of a project called "The impact of NGOs on the formation and implementation of party policy." This guide presents methodology for analyzing, monitoring and evaluating the activity of local organizations of political parties, and instruments for community organizations to strengthen their impact on the formation and implementation of party policies.

The Future of Ukraine's Economy is a report that criticizes the country's current economic policy and proposes responses to the challenges of a globalizing world. The ability of a society to respond quickly to changes and to generate such changes determine that country's place in the modern world. Ukraine's main responses to globalization should be to switch to an innovative model of economic growth, to accede to the WTO, and to integrate with the EU.

A civilized housing market

In 2007, ICPS and the Ukrainian Construction Association (UCA) held a series of roundtables whose goal was to draw on all stakeholders to develop proposals to tackle problems that hinder the development of a proper housing market in Ukraine. How to lower housing prices by instituting procedures for public debate on town planning documentation—this was discussed at the first roundtable called "How to reduce the cost of housing: The Law on public consultations" that was held in March.

The second roundtable called "How to Reduce Residential Property Prices: Simplifying permits to eliminate corruption" that took place in May was dedicated to possible ways of improving permit procedures. The third event called "Self-regulation in the Construction Industry to Prevent Developer Scams like Elita Center" took place in October. In the opinion of organizers of this event, self-regulation in the construction industry could provide answers to the current challenges.

Fostering legal support for gender equality

Starting in 2007, the Centre began increasing its involvement in ensuring

gender equality in Ukraine. The goal of the "Policy Campaign for Promoting Gender Equality in Ukraine" project is to increase the participation of women in political processes and policy-making.

Over 2007, the Centre's experts drafted two bills: "On preventing sexual discrimination" and "On amending some laws of Ukraine to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men". ICPS experts say the adoption of these bills will make it possible for Ukrainian society to come closer to international standards of gender equality. At the end of the year, ICPS analysts held press conferences in 24 Ukrainian oblast capitals where they presented these two bills to the public.

A resource center for NGOs

ICPS provided ongoing help to NGOs in identifying their development needs and prospects. In 2007, the "Methods and Training for Regional NGOs to Run Public Lobbying Campaigns" project came to an end. During the two-year project, ICPS specialists regularly provided local NGOs with advice on how to prepare and run public lobbying campaigns and how to organize work in similar projects.

Under the "Strengthening Policymaking in Kyrgyzstan" project, ICPS Director Volodymyr Nikitin ran a workshop in Bishkek and a series of individual consultations for NGOs that are working in public policy.

Public consultations on political reform

Together with the Center for Ukrainian Reform Education (CURE), ICPS implemented a project called "Public Consultations and Awareness Campaign on Political Reform in Ukraine." After holding consultations in Lutsk, Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolayiv, Simferopol, and Chernivtsi, the Centre published two handbooks — "Political Reform as Seen by the Public" and "Political Reform as Seen by the Government" — that analyze the system of checks and balances in the Ukrainian government before and after political reform. ■

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icps newsletter is a weekly publication of the International Centre for Policy Studies, delivered by electronic mail. To be included in the distribution list, contact the ICPS publications department at marketing@icps.kiev.ua or call (380-44) 484-4400. **icps newsletter** editor Olha Lvova (olvova@icps.kiev.ua). Phone: (380-44) 484-4400. English text editor L.A. Wolanskyj. Articles may be reprinted with ICPS consent. **icps newsletter** on the web: <http://icps.com.ua/eng/publications/nl.html>