

ICPS newsletter®

2008: The year in the life of ICPS

In 2008, the International Centre for Policy Studies (ICPS) continued to initiate and implement new projects aimed at improving the quality of state policy. During public discussions organized by ICPS, the Centre served as a discussion platform for the development of important government decisions, both economic and political. ICPS also published reports and papers that clearly define new challenges and offer solutions to problems. Here are some of the Centre's main achievements in 2008

ICPS among top think-tanks in the world

The US-based Foreign Policy Research Institute's Think-Tanks and Civil Societies Program has drawn up its list of leading think-tanks around the world. Through research and surveys of 5,080 think-tanks in various countries, the program singled out 228 top institutions, and the International Centre for Policy Studies was among them. This is not the first time the Centre has earned international recognition. In 2005, the Global Development Network recognized the International Centre for Policy Studies as the most successful think-tank in Ukraine.

New ICPS Director

By a decision of the Supervisory Board, Olga Shumylo, an expert on European integration, was named the new ICPS director. Olga Shumylo is an expert in European integration who worked as an advisor to Hryhoriy Nemyria, Ukraine's Deputy Premier for European and International Integration, this past year. Over 2003–2007, Ms. Shumylo ran the Department for European Integration at ICPS and was responsible for the Centre's external relations. She also led the expert group that prepared policy papers and briefs on various critical EU-related issues. In 2004, Ms. Shumylo also worked as a visiting research fellow at the Center for European Policy Studies in Brussels. Ms. Shumylo holds a Master's degree from the London School of Economics.

Vira Nativska – one of Ukraine's most influential women

For the second year in a row, Vira Nativska, Honorary Chair of ICPS and President of the National Academy of Public Administration under the Office of the President of Ukraine, has been included in Focus magazine's list of 100 most influential women in Ukraine (Issue #40, October 3, 2008). According to Focus, Ms. Nativska's influence is due to her high-level government post, important research

work and connections in government agencies.

ICPS supports EU-Ukraine FTA+ negotiations

ICPS continues to work on formulating the Ukrainian position during negotiations with the European Union on a new enhanced agreement. In 2008, with financial support from the Swedish Agency for International Development (SIDA), the Centre implemented the "EU-Ukraine FTA: Analytical, methodological and informational support for negotiations" project.

Under the project, ICPS has published two reports: "Economic modeling as a preliminary component in negotiating a Free Trade Area between Ukraine and the EU" and "Ukraine's Participation in European Union Agencies and Programs: Prospects and opportunities."

ICPS experts together with the Ministry of Economy also held regional consultations on the possible consequences and prospects for FTA+ in Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Poltava, Kharkiv and Lviv. Discussants concluded that economic integration, as opposed to political integration, had a good chance of being implemented, but the government needed to consult more actively with regional business circles on current and planned European integration measures.

Ukraine's performance and potential

Ukraine needs a system for developing and evaluating state policy that is based on the analysis of real data. Benchmarking is one of the instruments that can help the Ukrainian government set objective policy priorities and find solutions to them. As part of the "Socio-Economic Performance and Potential Analysis Capacity" (SEPPAC) project, ICPS, the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance, and National Bank of Ukraine prepared two analytical reports benchmarking Ukraine's performance. The ICPS report presents the results

of a comparative analysis of quality of life in Ukraine and 62 other countries, a demographic forecast for Ukraine through 2050, and an evaluation of its potential GDP. The paper also focuses on two other burning issues for Ukraine: energy efficiency and the effectiveness of funding the social welfare system.

ICPS promotes effective migration policy

ICPS continues to focus on Ukraine's migration policy, which generally comes down to doing battle with illegal migrants and fulfilling Ukraine's international commitments regarding the protection of asylum-seekers. Resolving general issues in managing migration flows, using the potential of the Ukrainian diaspora abroad, and effectively controlling migration is so far beyond the attention of policy-makers.

As part of the "Managing Migration in the Black Sea Region: Improving the implementation of national policy in Ukraine, Moldova and Rumania through regional cooperation among NGOs" project, a study was conducted of the realities, problems and potential ways of improving migration policy in these countries. The results of the analysis were presented to all interested parties in Kyiv, Chisinau and Bucharest. Another outcome was the establishment of a regional network of NGO and government experts and politicians who specialize in migration policy.

ICPS proposes new approaches to national security policy

ICPS has been working on strengthening Ukraine's security and defense policy. First and foremost, this means establishing a common methodological basis. Together with another leading think-tank, the Razumkov Center, ICPS is implementing the "Ukraine in the Regional Security System: Methodological barriers to forming national security policy" project. As part of the project, experts conduct seminars and workshops for specialists from security-related departments at central executive bodies, educational institutions and research centers. These measures are aimed at instituting a common approach to establishing a rational national security system in Ukraine.

ICPS helps develop an innovative doctrine

Countries that have made innovative development a national priority have taken a leading role in the modern globalized world. Ukraine, despite opposition to innovation by certain interest groups, has not lost its potential for such development.

The International Centre for Policy Studies became one of the initiators of an innovative doctrine for Ukraine and the previous ICPS Director, Volodymyr Nikitin, was one of its authors. The success of innovative policy should be based solely on public support for innovative ideas for development. In particular, the ideology of simple survival and the revival of outdated social relations should be replaced with the ideology and organization of an innovation-oriented society. According to the doctrine's authors, the main strategic objective should be the creation of a specific center for policy and directing the country's future.

ICPS improves gender legislation

In 2008, ICPS worked on gender issues, having successfully implemented the "Policy campaign for promoting gender equality in Ukraine" project in partnership with the Center for Ukrainian Reform Education (CURE). As a result of the project, changes to legislation were drafted that will introduce effective mechanisms to protect against gender discrimination and set the conditions to equalize the representation of women and men in elected bodies. The Centre's experts drafted two bills: "On preventing gender-based discrimination" and "On changing and amending certain laws of Ukraine regarding equal rights and opportunities for women and men." The latter was submitted to the Verkhovna Rada by National Deputy Iryna Herashchenko (NU-NS).

A successfully component of the project was the information campaign: know-how gained as a result of analyzing gender policy and the drafted bills were widely presented to the public in 13 oblast centers in Ukraine.

Path to the EU: Spain's recipe for Ukraine

The Centre is expanding an initiative launched last year to strengthen Ukrainian-Spanish relations. Following the working group on "Spain and Ukraine: Prospects for partnership," which took place in Barcelona in 2007, experts from ICPS and the CIDOB Foundation (Barcelona) prepared recommendations

on how to further build the Ukrainian-Spanish partnership.

During the second joint event in Kyiv in December 2008, Spain's experience in democratization and European integration was presented to Ukrainian experts. Participants also discussed the priorities of Spain's EU presidency in 2010 and outlined possible forms of cooperation between the two countries.

ICPS evaluates service quality in the capital

The opinion of the local community is critically important for municipal policy to be successful and effective. In October 2008, the International Centre for Policy Studies carried out the second survey under the "An Evaluation of Municipal Services in Kyiv: Selecting the Best District" project. Compared to last year, the Shevchenkivskiy District strengthened its position even more and took first place for the second time among the 10 districts of Kyiv for the quality of services provided.

Of the eight types of municipal services surveyed, Kyiv residents only gave two services better-than-average points: education and the distance to grocery stores, markets and pharmacies from their places of residence. The most problematic areas were conditions for satisfying local demand for cultural and sports activities (3.36 points), public transit services, and medical services.

Public consultations on local government reform in Ukraine

ICPS experts and the Center for Ukrainian Reform Education (CURE) held extensive public consultations on reforming local government bodies as part of the "Public Consultations on Reforming Local Government in Ukraine and Public Awareness Campaign—Phase 2" project.

ICPS's political analysts presented options for reforming local government bodies in Chernivtsi, Lutsk, Zhytomyr, Sumy, Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolayiv, and Kirovohrad. Based on the results of these discussions, the Centre's analysts prepared a White Paper that summarized the positions of various interest groups regarding current problems and suggested pathways to a solution, outlined key problems in local government, and described the reform measures proposed to resolve them. This helped inform the public about the importance of reform and problems with carrying it out.

ICPS's best-rated roundtables

"How will Ukraine's economic integration with the EU in the context of a Free Trade Area affect the social sphere?"

Ukraine and the EU have begun talks on an Agreement to set up a Free Trade Area (FTA). Today, there are already results of various assessments of such an agreement for Ukraine's economy and various sectors. However, there is no information about the likely impact on the labor market with the liberalization of trade and the adoption of European standards.

In March, the Federation of Ukrainian Trade Unions (FUTU) and ICPS organized a roundtable to determine which sectors and regions are vulnerable and which policy issues will need further study and consultation between the Government and interest groups. ICPS specialists presented the results of a study into the likely impact of liberalized trade with the EU on Ukraine's labor market.

"How to resolve problems in the residential services sector in Kyiv and in Ukraine." Ukraine's residential services sector is one of the largest in the country and one that has a major impact on the daily lives of every individual and on the economy as a whole. Since Ukraine gained independence, this sector has accumulated unresolved problems that today give reason to say that it is in a state of ever-deepening systemic crisis. And this threatens the lives of Ukrainians as well as their national security.

In March, ICPS and the Urban Institute, a think-tank, held a roundtable on the topic "How to resolve problems in the residential services sector in Kyiv and in Ukraine." Representatives from this sector summed up the results of their work over the year and discussed the sector's problems. The main conclusion was that, without radical reform in the residential services sector, the country could be facing an infrastructure catastrophe.

The ICPS strategy for 2009–2011

The unstable political situation and difficult economic times demand better government policy. Experts have pointed out the necessary reforms for a long time now. However, the question of introducing these reforms remains unanswered. Starting in 2009, the Centre plans to focus its attention on developing and introducing an algorithm for carrying out reforms on the basis of a public policy cycle. The Centre's new mission is to support Ukraine's further democratization through active and rational Europeanization. ■

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