
ACTIVITY REPORT
FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES
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During the first six months of 2009, ICPS launched a slew of strategic projects and initiatives that are intended to bring Ukraine close to European and international standards. One such project involves analytical and methodological assistance to the Ukrainian Government in the implementation of the forthcoming Association Agreement with the European Union. At the same time, ICPS is improving its analytical, communication and institutional components. The ICPS team has been revamped, as have the Centre's publications in order to offer Ukrainian society answers to key issues facing the country today: how to minimize the impact of the crisis; how to work with key global players; which issues should the Government of Ukraine tackle as a top priority.

ICPS – a government partner in resolving key issues

The Centre continues to be a reliable analytical partner to Ukraine's central government. Cooperation between the Centre's analysts and government officials has been established over the years, dispelling the myth that there is no effective cooperation between those in power and the third sector in Ukraine.

1) Preparing the Government to implement the future EU-Ukraine Agreement Association

The future Agreement will bring new comprehensive commitments to Ukraine. There will be large-scale adaptation of domestic legislation to the EU *acquis* in more than 20 spheres, as well as the form of institutions.

Within its new Sida-funded project, ICPS is now assisting the Government to form qualitatively new approaches to strategic planning in the area of European integration and to horizontal coordination, and to establish a qualitatively new system for coordinating foreign aid. The project is scheduled to run 18 months and consists of three main components: methodological support for the work of the Coordination Bureau for European and Euroatlantic Integration; analytical support for Ukraine's negotiations regarding FTA; and assessment of Ukraine's institutional readiness to undertake an Association Agreement. The project's first publication, a report called "European integration: New context, new institutions," has been prepared, focusing attention on the need for new approaches to foreign aid coordination and providing recommendations for how to institute such approaches.

2) Improving the coordination of Ukraine's migration policy using Polish experience

Over the last few years, ICPS has been advocating the need to establish an effective system for coordinating migration policy, especially setting up a specialized body to function as a migration service. At the end of June, a Cabinet Resolution was issued, establishing the State Migration Service of Ukraine¹. However, in order for it to be up and running, many other institutional and legislative changes have to be introduced. Undertaken in tandem with the Polish Institute of Public Affairs, the "Improving Coordination of Migration Policy in Ukraine: The Polish experience" project is expected to define recommendations for Ukrainian government.

3) Macroeconomic forecasting with the Ministry of Economy

Given its considerable experience in complex economic forecasting, ICPS launched a project that is intended to improve the work of the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine. The Centre's economists have been putting together an integrated system of models for

¹ While this report was being drafted, the President of Ukraine cancelled some points in the Cabinet Resolution.

macroeconomic forecasting. In the future, this will make it possible to undertake multi-variable forecast calculations and to resolve a wide range of analytical problems in the course of developing policies. Together with Government officials, ICPS economists have already developed three main components of this system: a balanced model, a model for short-term annual forecasts, and a model for short-term quarterly forecasts.

4) Examining the quality of public services at the municipal level in Ukraine

Earlier research at ICPS has concluded that the quality of the services that are provided by the government to the general population is far from European standards. The Centre has gradually expanded the geographic reach of its research into municipal services. Within project implemented together with the Norwegian Institute of Local and Regional Studies (NIBR), ICPS team will carry out a series of applied studies on various aspects of public services that are offered by the state in Odesa and Mykolayiv Oblasts. On 10-13 June, ICPS and NIBR held a seminar “Applied research on municipal services” for a group of Ukrainian researchers in Odessa.

5) Gaining the trust of the International Monetary Fund

The consumer mood is a decisive factor for business, especially during a crisis period. ICPS’s monthly Consumer Confidence report helps our business clients to know what that mood is, based on a poll and analysis by ICPS in tandem with GfK Ukraine. This publication is equally important for foreign clients, as we use international methods for calculating results, which makes it possible to compare Consumer Confidence Indices across many countries, such as the US, EU members and others. In May of this year, the International Monetary Fund itself used the results of this poll.

ICPS tackles new issues

New areas call for in-depth analysis and innovative approaches. The Centre’s experts focus on current issues that are not sufficiently studied in Ukraine and Europe. The recommendations resulting from these studies will be of help to both the Ukrainian and EU policy-makers as well as Ukrainian citizens.

1) Four Seas: Different policies, common future

One of the main strategic outcomes of the 2007 EU enlargement has been the Union’s access for the EU has been access to the Black Sea. Along with that, the EU became neighbor to new countries and obtained new opportunities and challenges that need to be faced. At this time, the EU does not have a coordinated policy in these areas or a clear, specific vision of the future evolution of relations in these regions. For this reason, seven European think-tanks, including ICPS, launched a new project called “EU 4 Seas” at the end of 2008. The project aims to analyze the effects of EU policies and strategies on sub-regional multilateralism in four areas: the Baltic, Black, Caspian and Mediterranean basins. Last spring, two international conferences were organized, one in Rome and the other in Reykjavik, at which security and environmental pollution issues were raised.

2) European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument – what’s in it for Ukraine?

The European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) is a new European institutional and financial instrument for Ukraine and other states of the region. It was instituted in 2007 as part of the European Union’s Neighborhood Policy. There is the risk that the European Commission funds will not be used to the greatest effect in Ukraine. ICPS experts researched ENPI funding planning, receipt, disbursement and absorption. The result is a unique document: the first-ever general overview of ENPI priorities processes, funding, and significantly, entry points for NSAs participation. This report goes beyond analysis of ENPI per se to illustrate where NSAs are currently involved and identify areas and processes in which they should be – but are not.

Communication, analytical and institutional changes strengthen ICPS's position

ICPS management has been entrusted with a new core and institutional grant from the Open Society Institute provided to ICPS for strengthening of communication. ICPS developed a new communication and advocacy strategy whose main objective is to bring the Centre to a new level of interaction with the press and to widen the circle of Centre's partners. ICPS management has brought new individuals to its administrative team as well and engaged new high-quality analysts. ICPS ideas will be promoted through the new ICPS website and revamped publications.

1) Working on a communication strategy

Today, for ICPS to influence the decision- and policy-making processes and to shape public opinion, the Centre must develop an entirely new approach to communication and advocacy.

The Centre is working on new instruments for holding dialog with stakeholders such as the Government, the Verkhovna Rada, the private sector, NGOs and the press. Unique media campaigns will have to be developed to reach each of these groups and provide targeted analysis. To affect public opinion, the Centre's experts will provide commentary and raise ideas on a regular basis at roundtables for the press.

To bring such a strategy to life, ICPS has hired new professionals with considerable experience in communication and advocacy. An important tool in our communication arsenal will be renovating the Centre's site and our new regular publications.

2) Developing a new web-site

ICPS is launching a new site. In developing the design and structure of this upgraded site, the communication team uses experience of the leading western think-tanks, especially the Brookings Institution, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the Centre for European Policy Studies, and FRIDE. ICPS has picked up the best elements of technology, innovation and content from these sites and incorporated them into the design, structure and content of the Centre's new site. The new site will also differ from the old one in terms of user friendliness, a contemporary look, and a multi-level search engine, interactive images. The new site will focus on the Centre's ongoing research while establishing a suitable structure for older research that will make it easy-to-use.

3) Launching new publications:

- Economic Insight is an updated version of Quarterly Predictions, which now contains macroeconomic forecasts for 36 months, a database of statistical data, and analyses of factors and risks to the forecast.
- European Focus will be a monthly publication that raises debate on key issues of European integration for Ukraine, EU policy towards Ukraine, and other important issues connected to Ukraine's European ambitions.
- Policy Studies is a new quarterly that will focus on current Ukrainian, European and global issues that require a response from the government and a reaction from voters.

4) Searching for new partners

ICPS maintains contact with its long-term partners and continues to search for support among new ones. The Director's recent visit to the US proved a milestone for the Centre as partnership with top American think-tanks, such as the Brookings Institution and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, was established.

The Centre is expanding the 2007 initiative to strengthen Ukrainian-Spanish relations that will result in bilateral consultations before the Spanish EU presidency and is

developing new initiatives on democratization with the leading Spanish think tanks, such as CIDOB (Barcelona) and FRIDE (Madrid).

ICPS has also become a partner of Europe's World, a highly-successful policy journal that has won itself a global readership of over 100,000 international policy-makers and analysts since its launch in 2005.

5) Strengthening the team of analysts

ICPS continues to invite highly-qualified professionals to work with it, individuals who have trained and worked abroad, who have strong experience working with government agencies and international institutions, and who are fluent in several foreign languages. Among the experts who have joined the Centre's staff are Tetiana Korotka (structural reforms), Sasha Tessier-Stall (security and foreign policy), and Victoria Gumeniuk (European integration).

Besides this, ICPS is launching a system of associates, who will work with the core team on various projects. It will increase ICPS's analytical capability and civil society frames. Prominent Ukrainian and foreign analysts and journalists are being invited as such associates.