CSO sustainability

Index

in Ukraine

report
2024

INTERNATIONAL
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UCIPR

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4 CSO sustainability Index methodology

This report is based on the Civil Society Organizations Sustainability Index (CSOSI) methodology that measures the sustainability of civil society organizations (CSOs). The CSOSI's methodology was developed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by FHI 360 and the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) in 73 countries.

Since 2023, CSOSI reports have been prepared by the Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research (UCIPR) with the support of the International Renaissance Foundation.

The Civil Society Organizations Sustainability Index (the Index) covers the following seven dimensions that are critical to sectoral sustainability:

1) legal environment,
2) organizational capacity,
3) financial viability,
4) advocacy,
5) service provision,
6) sectoral infrastructure,
7) public image.

Expert panel members engaged in different areas of CSO activities and from different oblasts of Ukraine discuss changes during the year assessed on a year-on-year basis in each of the dimensions covered by the Index and determine proposed scores for each dimension. Dimension scores are averaged together for a preliminary score for overall CSO sustainability.

The CSOSI uses a scoring scale to rate each dimension from 1 (most developed) to 7 (most challenged).

Expert scores are supplemented with data of desk studies in each of the dimensions and focus group discussions by UCIPR experts on CSOs from different oblasts of Ukraine engaged in different areas of activity. This report is based on data of 6 focus groups with the participation of 41 civil society organizations.

You can explore detailed findings from previous studies on the website featuring the Interactive Dashboard of the Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index in Ukraine[1].

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1   https://dasboard-cso-index.ucipr.org.ua

Abreviations and acronyms

ACTED	Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
AFU	Armed Forces of Ukraine
AI	Artificial Intelligence
ASC	Administrative Services Center
ATC	Amalgamated Territorial Community
CEDEM	Centre for Democracy and Rule of Law
CF	Charitable Foundation
CMU	Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine
CO	Charitable Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EEF	East Europe Foundation
EU	European Union
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HOA	Homeowners Association
ICNL	International Center for Not-for-Profit Law
ICUV	International Center for Ukrainian Victory
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IE	Individual Entrepreneur
IREX	International Research & Exchanges Board
ITA	International Technical Assistance
KIIS	Kyiv International Institute of Sociology
LSGB	Local Self-Government Body
MA	Military Administration
MM	Mass media
NAPC	National Agency for Prevention of Corruption
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPO	Not-for-Profit Organization
PFME	Primary Financial Monitoring Entity
PO	Public Organization
SSU	Security Service of Ukraine
TOA	Temporarily Occupied Area
UBO	Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research
UCIPR	Штучний інтелект
UN	United Nations Organization

General context

2024 marked the third year of Russia's large-scale invasion of Ukraine. The overall situation in Ukraine remained difficult, as Russia's ongoing hostilities and attacks on critical infrastructure and industrial facilities continued to adversely affect the country's socio-economic development. Without taking into account active military operations on the line of contact, Russia used various weapons against Ukraine 12,554 times in 2024[2]. Moreover, systematic power outages were reported in all oblasts of the country.

The full-scale invasion and the extension of martial law resulted in temporary restrictions on usual forms of political activity. 2024 was supposed to be the year of the election of a new president, but the Law of Ukraine "On the Legal Regime of Martial Law"[3] says no election can be held in wartime. A number of sociological surveys show that the majority of Ukrainians are not against such restrictions. For example, 69% of those polled in 2024 believed that President Zelenskyi should remain in office until the end of martial law.[4]

European integration processes have significantly intensified; Ukraine has launched EU membership negotiations with the involvement of representatives of the civil society sector. CSO representatives participated in working meetings on the development of roadmaps, strategic documents that outline key reforms needed to be implemented for the further negotiations on Ukraine's accession to the European Union. Furthermore, CSO representatives were included in all 36 working (negotiating) groups for Ukraine's negotiating framework for EU membership.

Despite another year of the Russian-Ukrainian full-scale war, the overall CSO Sustainability Index remained at the same level as in 2023 and was 3.0 points in 2024. Some improvements in the legal environment, organizational capacity, financial viability, advocacy and public image were recorded. CSOs advocated for a number of favorable laws and actively participated in the approximation of Ukrainian legislation to the EU acquis communautaire. International donors continued to provide significant support for the activities of CSOs, allocating additional funds for their organizational development. In 2024, calls for proposals for public funding were launched to support projects of public organizations working with youths, people with disabilities, veterans, as well as those working in the area of culture.

According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 105,908 public organizations, 2,464 public associations, 28,801 trade unions and 179 trade union associations, 27,923 religious organizations, 31,740 charitable organizations, 1,841 population self-organized bodies, 40,725 homeowners associations (HOAs), and 323 creative unions had legal status in Ukraine as of 1 January 2025.

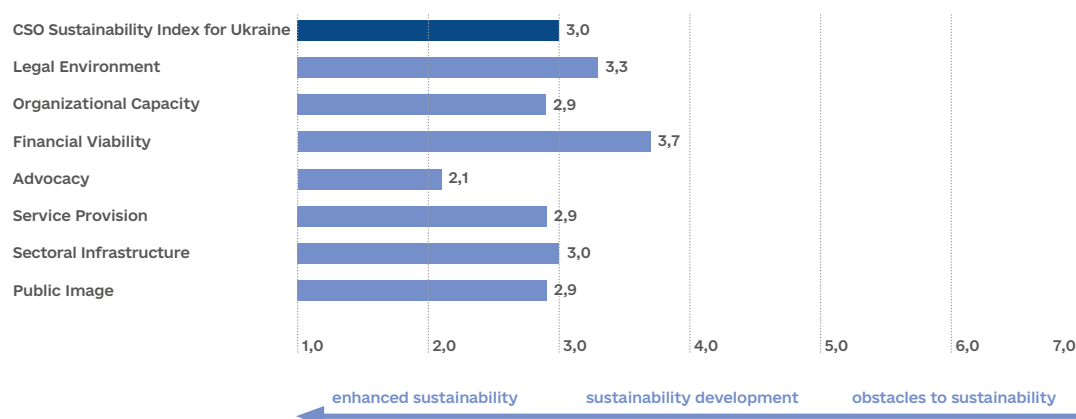The above data do not cover the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol[5].

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2 Outcomes of 2024 in Numbers. Radio Svoboda. URL: https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/pidsumky-roku-2024/33258143.html

3 Law of Ukraine "On the Legal Regime of Martial Law". URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/389-19#Text

4 Perception of the Need for Presidential Elections. KIIS. URL: https://www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=ukr&cat=reports&id=1371&page=1

5 Geography of calculation of the number of CSOs in 2024 is provided as defined by the State Statistics Service of Ukraine.

The dimensions of the Index in 2024: 3.0

CSO Sustainability Index for Ukraine	3,0
Legal Environment	3,3
Organizational Capacity	2,9
Financial Viability	3,7
Advocacy	2,1
Service Provision	2,9
Sectoral Infrastructure	3,0
Public Image	2,9

1,0   2,0   3,0   4,0   5,0   6,0   7,0

← enhanced sustainability   sustainability development   obstacles to sustainability

I. LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 3.3

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
3,6	3,5	3,5	3,4	3,4	3,4	3,3
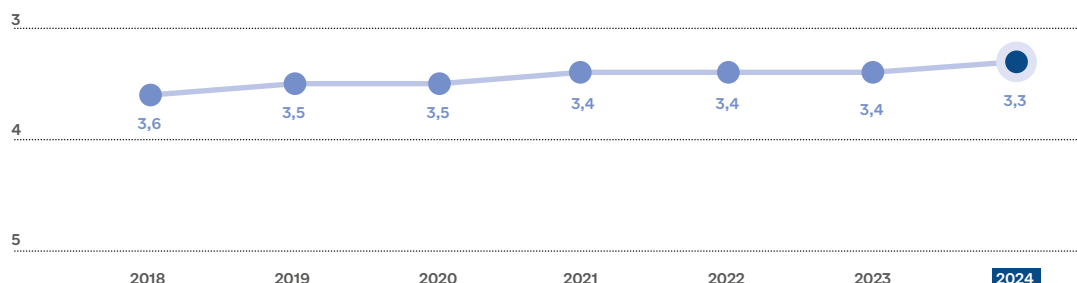
The CSO legal environment score was 3.3 in 2024, marking a 0.1 points improvement compared to 2023. Notwithstanding attempts to lobby restrictive and threatening legislation, positive trends for the civil society sector prevailed.

Despite some changes and amendments, registration procedures and terms for public and charitable organizations remained favorable. In 2024, changes to the procedure for state registration of separate divisions of a legal entity established in accordance with the laws of a foreign state came into force. The procedure was simplified and unified with the norms of EU aquis. As in the previous year, the legal framework governing CSO activities incorporated the Law of Ukraine "On State Registration of Legal Entities, Individual Entrepreneurs and Public Organizations", the Law of Ukraine "On Public Associations", the Law of Ukraine "On Charitable Activities and Charitable Organizations", the Law of Ukraine "On Volunteering", and orders of the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine on state registration within the boundaries of several administrative and territorial units and on the procedure for state registration of legal entities, individual entrepreneurs, and public associations without legal status.

Respondents from among CSOs registered in Ukraine's oblasts assessed the accessibility of registration procedures as high level, emphasizing improvements in the accessibility of registration services and the quality of services provided by the Ministry of Justice. However, difficulties remained in making changes in management boards or legal addresses in already registered statutory documents. Often, the following reasons for the delays were indicated:

the excessive burden on public registrars, and a lack of opportunities to use online services. Respondents emphasized the need to develop document templates to minimize the human factor.

Russia's cyberattack on registers of the Ministry of Justice in late 2024 marked a serious challenge.[6] The adoption and signing by the President of the Laws of Ukraine "On Ensuring Transparency of Local Self-Government" [7], "On Public Consultations" [8], and the adoption by the parliament of the Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on Democracy at the Level of Local Self-Government" [9] that entered into force in 2025 was a significant achievement of 2024. The latter piece of legislation, among other things, significantly enhanced public participation at the local level and expanded the opportunities of public activists, IDPs, and youths. However, interactions of local self-government bodies with the civil society sector remained unstable. Respondents from among CSOs registered in Ukraine's oblasts criticized local authorities for 'arbitrary interpretation' of legislative norms under the legal regime of martial law which created unequal conditions for various civil society organizations. For the most part, communication with local authorities in the oblasts depended on personal contacts and informal relationships.

The Law of Ukraine "On Public Consultations" will come into force only a year after the end of martial law. However, the key amendments to it are already in force for local self-government bodies, because the Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on Democracy at the Level of Local Self-Government" (hereinafter referred to as the Law of Ukraine "On Democracy") empowers community members to demand public consultations. In some territorial communities that have adopted their charters, e.g. in Berdychiv and Sumy urban communities, the above provisions are already in force. Overall, with the support of the International Renaissance Foundation, some forty territorial communities have already been developing their charters, even prior to the introduction of the relevant rule in the Law of Ukraine "On Democracy".[10] However, the application of public participation tools provided for by the Law is complicated in territorial communities where military administrations operate.

The draft Law of Ukraine No. 12010[11] "On Amendments to Articles 6 and 15 of the Law of Ukraine "On Humanitarian Aid"" marked an important step to promote CSO activities. It offered public and charitable organizations the possibility to purchase vehicles as humanitarian aid. In 2024, the draft Law was approved in principle and its further adoption will mean a significant support for financial viability of the civil society sector. Furthermore, the list of recipients of humanitarian aid was expanded at the legislative level. The government also simplified the registration of humanitarian vehicles for military personnel and expanded the list of vehicles that could be imported as humanitarian aid (amendments were made to the Cabinet Resolutions Nos. 927[12] and № 953[13]). The issue of receiving vehicles as humanitarian aid was

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6   Stefanishyna O. Today the largest external cyberattack in recent times occurred with Ukraine's state registries. Facebook. URL: https://www.facebook.com/olga.kravets.796/posts/pfbid02Myo3WzLnRXpiwBhsP42MxAWrHK4QvHyTug4WQBvU8BwQxheLdfujd6DH3g9eDgPYl?__cft__[0]=AZX91v-KtDMd_kUvkYXnKJNCJeuRMyzZIE04vqp4Bz-6rLatXmw2gFNDr9nxjWy9GG2lcjG0PTAfzdtUcLTg8q-LjO3y9ZdFTlIYy5uduQA4hEgGWqJM7IeS_rEw2evrXQnLrDxK9m0_eAxhr8Yq0Nr05jCFQLWFInUhJ5lu1h2AzqwnPxBFjks_WNgMN5FFzx6A4MC0V8Kx_xORyG8zGK98thkb7NwONZqyASNGGQVkPQ&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-y-R

7   Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to the Law of Ukraine "On Local Self-Government in Ukraine" to Ensure Transparency of Local Self-Government". Official website of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3590-20#Text

8   Law of Ukraine "On Public Consultations". Official website of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3841-20#Text

9   Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on Democracy at the Level of Local Self-Government". Official website of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3703-20#Text

10 Chernihiv oblast's Kipti community detailed forms of public participation in its Charter. Dobrochyn Center. URL: https://dobrochyn.org.ua/news/kiptivska-gromada-na-chernigivshhyni-detalizuvala-formy-gromadskoyi-uchasti-v-statuti

11 Draft Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Articles 6 and 15 of the Law of Ukraine "On Humanitarian Aid"". Electronic user account. URL: https://itd.rada.gov.ua/billInfo/Bills/Card/44822

12 CMU Resolution "On Certain Issues of Organizing the Maintenance of the Automated Humanitarian Aid Registration System". URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/927-2020-%D0%BF#Text

13 CMU Resolution "On Certain Issues of the Passage and Accounting of Humanitarian Aid under Martial Law". URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/953-2023-%D0%BF#Text

a focus of attention in 2024, as the Cabinet Resolutions Nos. 1388[14] and № 584[15] were also amended in terms of the procedure for state registration of vehicles.

Legislative changes in volunteering were also on the agenda in 2024. The draft Law was approved in principle to promote the development of volunteering among students.[16] The Law drafted by civil society and authorities promotes volunteering and its introduction in educational institutions.

In 2024, ZMINA Human Rights Center reported 21 cases of deaths of activists, volunteers, and journalists[17]. as a result of Russia's aggression in Ukraine against 19 cases in 2023. In 2024, the Institute of Mass Information documented 113 cases of pressure on the media and violations of freedom of speech committed by Ukrainian individuals, local self-government bodies, law enforcement officers, central and executive authorities, and the judiciary[18]. against 83 cases recorded by IMI in 2023. In early 2024, the persecution of Bihus.Info by the SBU sparked a wide public response. Along with that, Russia's military aggression and its actions against Ukrainian activists in the temporarily occupied areas remained a major threat to the country's civil society sector.

Respondents from among CSOs registered in Ukraine's oblasts claimed that although the persecution was not systematic, mild but targeted forms of pressure were applied. These included surprise inspections, denial of access to municipal premises without explanation, or blocking of access to information. There were also cases of gender-based persecution and threats from local self-government officials.[19]

In September 2024, the Procedure for notifying the holder of the Unified State Register of Legal Entities, Individual Entrepreneurs and Public Organizations of discrepancies between the information received by the primary financial monitoring entity (PFME) as a result of relevant inspection and the information on UBO and/or ownership structure of a legal entity contained in the Unified State Register of Legal Entities, Individual Entrepreneurs and Public Organizations.[20] came into force. If any discrepancies are found, legal entities are threatened with penalties. As part of the Ukraine Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity, CEDEM carried out an awareness-raising campaign on how to identify UBO for CSOs and what to do for UBO verification by a public registrar through releasing handouts and holding a training seminar. [21]. The identification of UBO was one the most frequently mentioned problems by respondents from among CSOs registered in Ukraine's oblasts.

In 2024, problems with banking services for CSOs were still recorded. The vast majority of banks required CSOs to provide information about their founders. The difficulty lies in the fact that, for example, some organizations were founded 20 or more years ago and their founders

14 CMU Resolution "On Approval of the Key Terms for the Transaction Involving Contingent Liabilities Resulting in a Loan to the State from the Federal Financing Bank". URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1388-2024-%D0%BF#Text

15 CMU Resolution "On Driver Training and State Registration of Vehicles during Martial Law in Ukraine". URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/584-2022-%D0%BF#Text

16 Draft Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Certain Legal Acts of Ukraine on Promoting the Development of Volunteering among Students". Electronic user account. URL: https://itd.rada.gov.ua/billInfo/Bills/Card/43945

17 Losses of Civil Society and Media in Three Years of Russia's Full-Scale Invasion of Ukraine. Memorial report in memory of victims of the Russian aggression in Ukraine (2022–2024). ZMINA Human Rights Center. URL: https://zmina.ua/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2024/12/memory_web.pdf

18 Freedom of speech in Ukraine in 2024 summarized: 268 violations, most committed by Russia. The Institute of Mass Information. URL: https://imi.org.ua/monitorings/pidsumky-stanu-svobody-slova-v-ukrayini-u-2024-rotsi-268-porushen-bilshist-z-yakyh-vchynyla-rf-i65987

19 Information on threats from local government officials against a female public activist was provided by a respondent to a focus group survey of CSOs.

20 Order of Ministry of Justice of Ukraine "On Approval of the Procedure for Notifying the Holder of the Unified State Register of Legal Entities, Individual Entrepreneurs and Public Organizations of Discrepancies between the Information Received by the Primary Financial Monitoring Entity as a Result of Relevant Inspection and the Information on the Ultimate Beneficial Owner and/or Ownership Structure of a Legal Entity Contained in the Unified State Register of Legal Entities, Individual Entrepreneurs and Public Organizations". Official website of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1185-23#Text

21 The training seminar entitled "Mission Possible. Determining the Ultimate Beneficial Owner of NGOs and Charitable Organizations under the New Rules" was held. The Center for Democracy and Rule of Law. URL: https://cedem.org.ua/news/navchalnyi-seminar-kbv

have not maintained contact with the organization for long periods (pursuant to Article 7(7) of the Law of Ukraine "On Public Associations", the powers of the founder of a public association expire after its state registration in accordance with the procedure established by law). The civil society sector highlighted the problem of enhanced financial monitoring measures, notably in cases when the founders of the organization were registered in the temporarily occupied areas. Every year, banks require CSOs to confirm that their founders do not stay in the TOAs. In late 2023, the Ministry of Justice provided the opportunity to remove information about CSO founders from the Register. Though experts say that, in practice, banks still request information on CSO founders in 2024. Meanwhile, according to respondents from among CSOs registered in Ukraine's oblasts, the removal of information on CSO founders from the Register depends on the 'desire' of a particular territorial unit of the Ministry of Justice.

Special attention was drawn to the provision of banking services to CSOs in the frontline areas. Zaporizhzhia-based respondents were forced to re-register their CSOs in another oblast, since foreign banks used by donors consider the entire Zaporizhzhia oblast as Russia-occupied and therefore subject to sanctions.

CSOs continue to get free legal advice from other CSOs, authorities (free legal aid centers, ASCs), and representatives of law firms. Hotlines are available at the Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research (UCIPR), Ukrainian Philanthropists Forum, and on Pro Bono platform. Volunteers and volunteer organizations are provided with counselling and other support by the Lawyers' Move CF and the Legal Headquarters PO. CSOs that have been registered and/or have been operating for no longer than 5 years and whose main activity areas include work with IDPs and vulnerable population groups are provided with counselling by Ukraine's Horizon of Change PO.

II.   ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 2.9
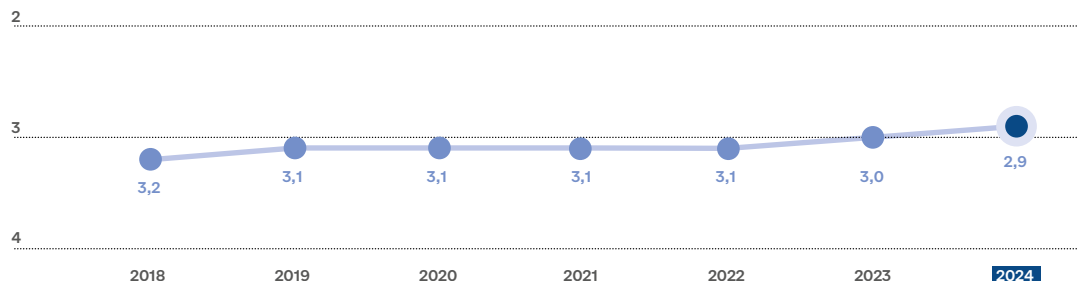
The organizational capacity score was 2.9 in 2024, marking a 0.1 points improvement compared to 2023. Having adapted to the new conditions, organizations could return to more systematic activities and planning, although they faced a number of challenges.

According to ISAR Ednannia`s research "Civil society in Ukraine under wartime conditions - 2024-2025", over the past year organisations have demonstrated the capacity to adapt to the conditions of the protracted war and restructured their activities to the permanent needs of our time, for example, changed priorities on reconstruction, recovery, and other topics that were previously associated exclusively with the post-war period. Moreover, CSO`s self-assessment of their adaptation to operating under full-scale war conditions has improved. According to the above-mentioned research, 55% of surveyed CSOs now consider themselves fully adapted, compared to 46% in 2023. Overall, 79% of organizations currently consider themselves at least partially or fully adapted, (in 2023, the percentage was 75%).

In 2024, donor organizations actively supported CSOs and their institutional partners which gave an impetus to strengthening the organizational resilience of civil society. The East Europe Foundation provided institutional support to its 11 partners.[22] In 2024, ISAR Ednannia, the largest provider of organizational development grants in Ukraine, provided over UAH 9 million in grants to 131 CSOs. These grants were especially valuable for small and newly created organizations, because it was their first experience of systemic development accompanied by an increase in the budgets, expansion of teams, and improvement of fundraising capacities.

According to ISAR Ednannia, CSOs awarded with grants for organizational development in 2024 highly appreciated the services received and the effect of the grants provided. The absolute majority of CSOs indicated that the grants boosted changes in organizations and contributed to the improvement of their strategic development, planning and/or procedures.

The ISAR Ednannia study "Assessment of the Organizational Development Marketplace Tool" also identified a trend on sector professionalization — an increasing number of managers are striving for professional growth, viewing it as inseparable from the overall organizational development. This, in turn, creates a foundation for the organization's comprehensive development.

Grants for strengthening organizational capacity were provided both to CSO stakeholders and to individual groups of CSOs based on the specifics of their activities. For example, there were initiatives that encouraged veteran organizations, local organizations operating in the humanitarian sector, organizations dealing with recovery issues, etc. Organizational Development Schools, co-organized with Curly Management Bureau in Kyiv and Lviv, engaged 76 participants. The initiative incorporated strategical, advocacy, and communication modules covering strategic development, fundraising, donor engagement, and development of communication strategies.[23]

Along with that, the overall organizational development of local CSOs varied greatly

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22 Hudozhnyk Yu. Stories of the Development of Ukrainian CSOs in Wartime. 2024. The "Phoenix: Strong Ukraine in Time of War" project. The East Europe Foundation. URL: https://eef.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/EU_Phoenix_stories_UA.pdf

23 2024 ISAR Ednannia Annual Report. URL: https://ednannia.ua/attachments/article/13206/A4_ICAP_Report_2024_UA_web.pdf

from oblast to oblast. For example, CSOs in Zaporizhzhia and Zhytomyr paid more attention to organizational development, while CSOs in the frontline areas experienced greater difficulties. According to 2024 Mapping of the Civil Society Organizations Ecosystems in Ukraine by the Agence Française de Développement (hereinafter referred to as AFD), 66% of survey respondents stated lack of resources for organizational development, relying heavily on short-term, project-based grants.

Overall, there was a significant demand for strategic planning in the civil society sector. CSOs review their strategies to address new challenges, including reintegration of veterans and community recovery, but they need additional expertise and training opportunities. This is especially true for newly established CSOs which do not always understand the need for organizational development or have an internal lack of knowledge, administrative and financial resources. Although long-term planning has become more common compared to the previous year, it remains challenging due to the ongoing war. As in 2023, a planning horizon was reduced to a year or a maximum of two years as a compromise to maintain the course of development while remaining sufficiently flexible. Meanwhile, strategic planning remains a challenge for many local CSOs either due to their insufficient capacity (lack of staff, time, resources) or due to rapidly changing circumstances. CSOs operating in the frontline areas often acknowledge the formalistic nature of strategies, if any, and raise doubts about the possibility of planning in a state of perpetual danger. Focus group respondents paid special attention to the specifics of the institutional capacity of veteran CSOs established to meet the needs of their target audiences.

The staffing issue remained acute. Organizations noted a certain shortage of experts and burnout of teams working in Ukraine. CSOs also said their staffing capacity depends on access to donor resources. Despite the possibility to reserve staff members engaged in international technical assistance (ITA) projects of critical CSOs, mobilization continued to be a challenge for those liable for military service. [24] Also, security risks have somewhat decreased, especially for organizations operating in the rear areas. Online work and the use of new digital tools enable them to continue working with people who have fled the country or the CSO's city of operation. Along with that, understaffing has greatly affected the CSO capacity to implement their plans. Understaffing and team burnout have negative implications for CSO work with clients and internal communications.

A trend towards differentiating the quality of management of CSOs depending on their size remained unchanged in 2024. Some organizations with more experience and own sources of funding (e.g., social entrepreneurship) managed to maintain stable teams and pay basic wages which enabled them not to rely solely on project-based grants. Meanwhile, CSOs established in wartime often operate from project to project, without clear management structure. The reliance on project-based grants alone was typical for many organizations. Also, most CSOs had only a manager and an accountant on staff and hired other members as IE providing counselling. As in the previous years, problems of retention of financial experts, lawyers, and managers on staff were reported.

Among the positive trends of 2024 was a focus on psychological well-being of CSO staff: CSOs increasingly hired psychologists or engaged them as external consultants.

The civil society sector was well-equipped with technical resources. Many CSOs purchased recharging devices in case of power outages. In 2024, there was a noticeable rise in attention to digital security and an increased interest in using AI and innovative technological solutions, such as chatbots, to optimize CSO activities. Rental of office space also became optional for some surveyed CSOs because of unnecessary additional costs or different locations of staff members.

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24   CMU Resolution "On Certain Issues of Conscripts Reservation for the Period of Mobilization and Wartime". Official website of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1332-2024-п#Text

III. FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 3.7
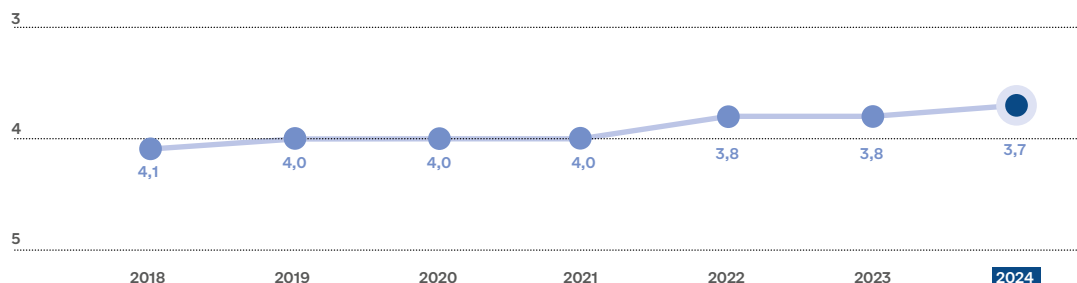
The financial viability score was 3.7 in 2024, marking a 0.1 points improvement compared to the previous year. CSOs had the opportunity to receive funds from donors, from the government as donations, from the provision of their services, and from other sources.

According to a study by Zagoriy Foundation, 39% of CSO revenues in 2024 were grant aid from foreign or Ukrainian donors. Funding from the population and legal entities made up 31% and 25%, respectively. Organizations providing aid to the Ukrainian defense forces received the greatest support from Ukraine's population and legal entities.[25]

Donor funding continued to be a key source to support CSO activities. According to the U.S. government's website, ForeignAssistance.gov, non-resident U.S. CSOs in Ukraine received $261,200,000 in 2024.[26] The International Renaissance Foundation allocated UAH 592.6 million for 427 CSO-led projects in 2024.[27] As reported by the EU Mission to Ukraine, the EU channeled around EUR 148.97 million in 90 project-based grants to the Ukrainian civil society sector. Most projects were supported by donor organizations in Kyiv city, Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, and Lviv oblasts, with more than half of the funding going to nationwide initiatives.[28]

The above data are confirmed by a survey of CSOs registered in Ukraine's oblasts. International donor funding remained the main source of financial support for most CSOs in 2024. However, the reliance on foreign donor funds poses systemic risks. The major problem, according to respondents, was a lack of a CSO strategic reserve or fundraising infrastructure which makes them 'survive' from grant to grant.

Donations and charity remained a stable trend among Ukrainians. Meanwhile, financial aid was primarily allocated based on personal contacts (acquaintances or acquaintances of acquaintances), notably to particular military service members, loved ones, or as part of other personal initiatives, with 88% of all donors engaged in such practice. Only 26% of donors donated to charitable foundations.[29] The same stands true for donations to the Ukrainian defense forces, with personal support dominating aid through volunteers and charitable foundations.

According to AFD, 79.6% of surveyed local CSOs reported that they do not yet have confirmed funding for 2025 which makes them neglect the need for overhead costs and the efforts for strategic development. Local funding, including from authorities and local businesses, has considerably decreased or completely disappeared since the onset of a full-scale invasion which makes CSOs vulnerable to changes in donor priorities.

Respondents from Odesa oblast reported competition for donor attention, while

25   Charity Sector Research. The Comprehensive Report. Zagoriy Foundation. URL: https://zagoriy.foundation/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/02_12_2_doslidzhennya_sektoru_blagodijnosti.pdf

26   U.S. Foreign Assistance by Country. URL: https://foreignassistance.gov/cd/ukraine/2024/obligations/0

27   2024 ISAR Ednannia Annual Report. The International Renaissance Foundation. URL: https://www.irf.ua/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/richnyj-zvit-2024.pdf_compressed.pdf

28   Activities of donor and international organizations in Ukraine from 2022 to 2024. URL: https://api.home.ednannia.ua/upload/kch/24/09/10/Activities_of_donor_and_%20international_%20organisations_%20in_Ukraine.pdf

29   Charity Sector Research. The Comprehensive Report. Zagoriy Foundation. URL: https://zagoriy.foundation/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/02_12_2_doslidzhennya_sektoru_blagodijnosti.pdf

CSOs from Chernihiv and Vinnytsia noted that donors focus on the most affected areas (e.g., Zaporizhzhia and Zaporizhzhia oblast), disregarding the significant needs of other territorial communities. The allocation of donor funds by target groups was also uneven. As in the previous year, respondents stated that donors allocated grant funds to particular target groups (e.g., humanitarian organizations or CSOs working with IDPs), completely or partially neglecting other areas. As a result, CSOs have to refocus efforts on relevant grant proposals, changing their target audience. Respondents from among CSOs registered in Ukraine's oblasts paid special attention to financing of expenses related to aid for the military, since foreign donors often prohibit spending grant funds for military needs.

In 2024, calls for proposals for public funding were also launched to support CSO-led projects. The Law of Ukraine "On the State Budget of Ukraine for 2025"[30] provides for certain costs to be allocated for calls for proposals for public funding of CSO-led initiatives. The relevant ministries, notably the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, and the Ministry of Social Policy, held calls for proposals in 2024. The Ministry of Youth and Sports [31], earmarked UAH 14.2 million for 35 CSO-led projects, the Ministry of Veterans Affairs[32], allocated UAH 4.92 million for 10 initiatives, and the Ministry of Social Policy[33] channeled UAH 2.52 million through the Fund for Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities. The Ukrainian Cultural Fund provided UAH 64.6 million to 87 CSO-led initiatives.[34]

Cooperation of CSOs with the business sector was not sustainable. Little cooperation was received from Gramarly, Oleina, Vivat, Factor Group of Companies, Nova Poshta, and local companies.[35] At the local level, private companies also rarely considered the civil society sector for corporate investment

The provision of paid services by CSOs was gradually developing and was not sufficient to cover the basic needs of most organizations. In 2024, focus group participants listed the following factors preventing them from making revenue from the sale of their services, products or property rental: fears of losing their not-for-profit status, tax and accounting difficulties, difficulties of utilizing budget funds, and a lack of clear regulation of the social services market. Respondents emphasized that CSOs attempting to make revenue are forced to seek legal remedies to simplify document management and avoid legislative gaps.

The level of CSO financial management in 2024 varied significantly from the availability of policies and developed financial management systems in large CSOs to their almost complete absence due to understaffing and underfunding in local CSOs. In 2024, audit inspections were carried out in some CSOs where this was required by donors (with the audit costs included in the budgets). Only a few CSOs employed fundraising and crowdfunding experts.

30 Law of Ukraine "On the State Budget of Ukraine for 2025". Official website of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/4059-20#Text

31 List of projects developed by youth and children's public organizations to be financially supported in 2024. The Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine. URL: https://mms.gov.ua/storage/app/sites/16/Molodizhna_polityka/Konkurs_molodizhnyh_proektiv/2024/Normatuvna%20baza/Додаток-2364.pdf

32 Order of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine "On Approval of the List of Civil Society Institutions Recognized as Winners of the Competition to Determine Nationwide Programs (Projects, Activities) Developed by Public Associations of Veterans with the Financial Support to be Provided for Their Implementation in 2024". The Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine. URL: https://mva.gov.ua/media/1/Про.pdf

33 Final conclusion on the projects developed by civil society institutions for the implementation of which financial support is provided. The Fund for Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities. URL: https://www.ispf.gov.ua/storage/app/sites/1/uploaded-files/250415ПІДСУМКОВИЙ%20ВИСНОВОК.pdf

34 2024 Annual Report. The Ukrainian Cultural Fund. URL: https://ucf.in.ua/storage/docs/15042025/_2024_5c822b8ecbb889a7abe3badd88e7d025dd7938b6.pdf

35 Charity Sector Research. The Comprehensive Report. Zagoriy Foundation. URL: https://zagoriy.foundation/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/02_12_2_doslidzhennya_sektoru_blagodijnosti.pdf

IV. ADVOCACY: 2.1
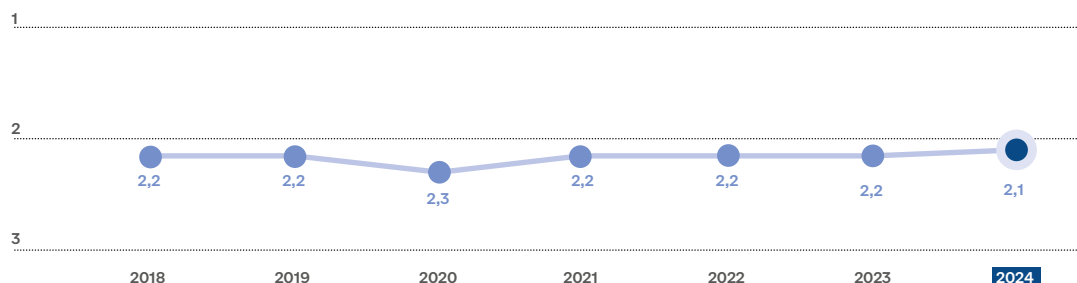
The CSO advocacy score was 2.1, marking a 0.1 points improvement compared to 2023. The civil society sector became more capable and assertive in its communication with authorities. Although the martial law regime remained a factor limiting public engagement, especially at the local level, CSOs continued to influence decision-making, participated in European integration processes, and contributed to promoting democratic change.

In 2024, new platforms for communication with authorities appeared, notably regular working groups chaired by the Deputy Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine, Iryna Vereshchuk, enabling representatives of the civil society sector to actively participate in discussions of major changes in the socio-humanitarian area. Also, a broad meeting of civil society representatives with the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyi took place in 2024, for the first time during his term of office.

The implementation of European integration reforms was an active advocacy dimension in 2024. As part of Ukraine's accession to the EU, the government started developing roadmaps outlining key reforms and transformations in relevant areas as provided for Ukraine's negotiating framework for EU membership. CSO representatives were actively involved in the preparation of the roadmaps. The success of CSO advocacy efforts is mirrored, among other things, in the EU Enlargement Package presented by the European Commission. The European Commission's Ukraine 2024 Report says civil society remains a key element in Ukrainian democracy, maintaining social bonds and fabrics and repeatedly mentions reforms advocated by the civil society sector.[36] Moreover, CSO representatives were included in each of the 36 working (negotiating) groups for Ukraine's negotiating framework for EU membership.

Seeking to strengthen its participation in recovery, the civil society sector faced certain problems. The involvement of CSOs varied at the national and oblast levels. More than half of Kyiv-based CSOs reported active or very active government engagement in the recovery effort, whereas only 37% gave such a positive response at the oblast level as of May 2024. Government efforts to engage CSOs in developing the Ukraine Plan under the EU Facility, or under the Digital Recovery Ecosystem for Accountable Recovery Management (DREAM), have proven only marginally effective.[37]

It has to be mentioned that programs for the comprehensive recovery of territories were actively developed in 2024. As of December, some 200 territorial communities were engaged in developing or implementing recovery programs.[38] Most often, the public and CSO representatives were episodically engaged in their development as public councils

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36   Ukraine 2024 Report https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/ukraine-report-2024_en

37   Ukraine's wartime recovery and the role of civil society. Chatham House survey of Ukrainian CSOs. 2024. URL: https://api.home.ednannia.ua/upload/kch/24/06/11/2024-06-05-ukraine-wartime-recovery-role-civil-society-lutsevych.pdf.pdf

38   Year of recovery: how Ukrainian communities are moving towards sustainable development amid challenges. Spilno HUB. URL: https://spilnohub.org/rik-vidnovlennya-yak-gromady-ukrayiny-ruhayutsya-do-stalogo-rozvytku-v-umovah-vyklykiv

and working groups.[39] However, the vagueness of the prescribed mechanisms for public involvement poses the risks of a box-ticking approach to the issue.[40]

Of special note were international advocacy efforts. Representatives of Ukrainian CSOs, notably the Anti-Corruption Center, New Europe Center, and ICUV, carried out a number of large-scale advocacy visits and campaigns, including meetings with ministers, high-ranking officials and members of foreign parliaments, state secretaries, representatives of the European Commission and NATO, signaling a growing level of trust in Ukraine's civil society sector on the international scene. #MakeRussiaPay advocacy campaign by the International Center for Ukrainian Victory (ICUV) united over 100,000 participants and was presented at some 30 public events around the globe. [41] Also, a creative campaign, #MakeRussiaSmallAgain, was launched in 2024. The campaign was implemented by ICUV in partnership with the Anti-Corruption Center. Its central element was a symbolic artifact, T-shirt with the inscription "#MakeRussiaSmallAgain" and a map of the Moscow principality of 1462. Public opinion leaders, international experts, and politicians wore those T-shirts. Even the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyi wore it during his state-of-the-nation address on the day of the announcement of the decision to give Ukraine $50 billion in frozen Russian assets which was also advocated by CSOs.[42]

Ukraine's civil society sector was represented at a number of international events, including the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Berlin, Warsaw Security Forum, NATO Summit in Washington, D.C., and GLOBSEC 2024 Forum in Prague, where CSO representatives participated in panel discussions and held their own parallel events.[43]

The adoption of the Law of Ukraine "On Lobbying" adversely affected the advocacy dimension in late 2023. However, 2024 was the year of finalizing that piece of legislation to reduce potential threats to the civil society sector. Despite continued efforts of NAPC representatives and individual MPs to worsen lobbying legislation through creating potential threats to the activities of the civil society sector, such initiatives were not implemented. Thanks to joint efforts by civil society, the text of the Law was substantially improved to remove threats to the CSO sector contained in the initial wording of the document registered in the parliament. However, the Law was not put into effect in 2024.

Advocacy campaigns ongoing in 2024 and yet to yield fruitful results included online registration of CSOs in Diia (the draft Law No. 8084), and preparation for the second reading of the draft Laws Nos. 11082 "On Appeals" and 6319 "On Population Self-Organized Bodies".

The following examples of effective advocacy initiatives demonstrating the potential of involving the public in local policy making were recorded at the local level: the development of a city strategy by Ivano-Frankivsk authorities together with CSOs; a public discussion of the Charter in Odesa; and a public discussion of the functioning of secondary educational institutions in Zaporizhzhia. These indicate the growth of civic engagement and the ability of residents to influence local policies.

In terms of CSO interactions with local self-government bodies, experts emphasize their high potential in the implementation of advocacy initiatives. This is due to the fact that representatives of local self-government bodies have, as a rule, a deeper understanding of the local context and practical needs of territorial communities compared to central authorities. Such an approach contributes to a more flexible response to local social challenges and

39   Recovery of Ukrainian Regions: Report on the Results of Community Survey. DREAM Survey report. URL: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ufy2P0VWFSvhp2slzfZ-I6MQNBg9bSjC/view?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR1piEvyWJ12jzmpb1QD5jcZik_ZxI6wL0fcwFaTjcButN90ZJluF-DiCws_aem_K6_hzDGG8oYwWNW6bwyK0w

40   People want, but the government holds back: what Ukrainians know about post-war recovery in their communities. The Anti-Crisis Media Center. Kramatorsk. URL: https://acmc.ua/lyudy-hochut-a-vlada-galmuye-shho-ukrayinczi-znayut-pro-pislyavoyenne-vidnovlennya-u-svoyih-gromadah

41   The Full Story #MAKERUSSIAPAY. ICUV. URL: https://ukrainianvictory.org/uk/publications/povna-istoriia-makerussiapay

42   The story of MakeRussiaSmallAgain T-shirt. Ukrainska Pravda. Blogs. URL: https://blogs.pravda.com.ua/authors/kalenuik/671a39ee072be

43   International Center for Ukrainian Victory. URL: https://ukrainianvictory.org/uk

requests and promotes the development of inclusive decision-making mechanisms. However, interactions with oblast authorities were irregular. A significant number of civil society organizations underscored the formalistic nature of involvement in decision-making. Invitations to discussions or public consultations often do not mean that CSOs have a real impact on the content of documents. In some territorial communities, local authorities were becoming more non-transparent. Public reports, draft decisions and budgets were not always publicly available or were published with a delay.

Work with military administrations still was a serious barrier to advocacy activities at the local level. Advocacy efforts of CSOs in areas where MAs operate directly depended on MA Heads and their communication with the civil society sector.
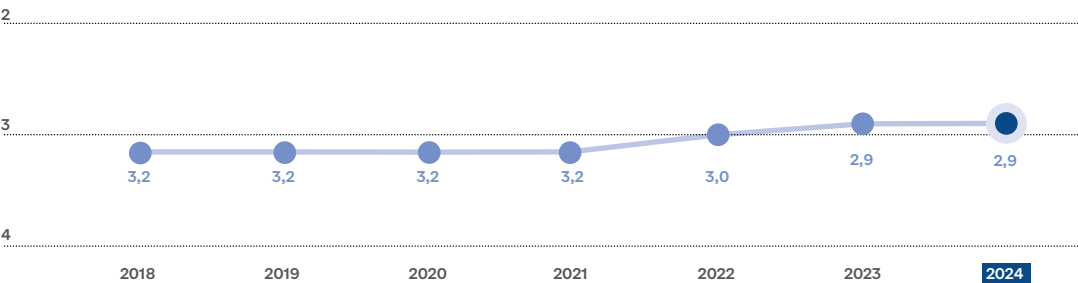
Along with that, according to CHESNO movement's analysis, the quality of information and transparent reporting by city councils significantly improved in 2024 due to the requirement for video recording of meetings of standing committees. More than half of local councils, 13 or 62%, broadcast their sessions live, while 8 or 38% published video recordings later. Local self-government bodies of Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Lviv, Odesa, Rivne, Uzhhorod, Khmelnytskyi, Cherkasy and Chernivtsi[44] already have a mechanism for video recording of meetings in place.

The Transparency International's study on transparency of cities in wartime also stressed a general increase in transparency of Ukrainian cities. In 2024, 5 cities became transparent. For the first time since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, Chernivtsi, Vinnytsia, and Lutsk joined the ranks of transparent cities, alongside 2023 leaders Mukachevo and Lviv. The average level of city transparency constituted 41.6%. The average transparency level of frontline cities exceeded the overall average, reaching 43.9%. Across all areas, cities demonstrated the strongest performance in indicators related to openness (43.6%), public relations (41.7%), and response to war-related challenges (39.6%). The majority of assessments were marked as "not implemented" in the areas of citizen services (67%), municipal property and land management (61.1%), and HR policy and integrity (60.3%).[45]

44 Here and now or safety first: how city councils publish video recordings of their meetings. CHESNO movement. URL: https://www.chesno.org/post/6133

45 Chernivtsi, Vinnytsia, and Lutsk topped the Transparency Ranking of Ukrainian Cities. Transparency International Ukraine. URL: https://ti-ukraine.org/news/chernivtsi-vinnytsya-ta-lutsk-ocholyly-rejtyng-prozorosti-mist-ukrayiny-ti-ukraine

V. SERVICE PROVISION: 2.9

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
3,2	3,2	3,2	3,2	3,0	2,9	2,9

The service provision score was 2.9 in 2024 and remained unchanged. CSOs continued to focus on providing social services to war-affected individuals/families and those in difficult living conditions. According to the Register of Social Service Providers and Recipients, 821 CSO providers of social services were registered as of March 2025[46] which shows a significant increase compared to December 2023 (525 organizations[47]). At the same time, according to the "Interest and Capacity of Civil Society Organizations to Provide Social Services" study, only 8% of civil society organizations prioritized the provision of social services in their activities, while around 3% considered it a source of their funding.[48]

As in 2023, in 2024, representatives of CSOs registered in Ukraine's oblasts noted that organizations were not always capable of fully meeting the needs of target audiences. Overall, the 2023 trend was maintained in 2024: CSOs actively participated in tenders, competed for public contracts, provided social services, and carried out fundraising campaigns. Some CSOs even performed logistical tasks for international organizations and did not encounter obstacles from public authorities.

Of special note was cooperation of the civil society sector with the Ministry of Social Policy on social service provision. In 2024, the Ministry of Social Policy continued to implement a pilot project on resilience centers in communities — barrier-free spaces where community members could be provided with advice, first psychological aid, referral to necessary services and organizations, and the opportunity to attend psychosocial support groups. As part of activities of the centers, the government started to procure services from the civil society sector which positively affected the capacity of CSOs to provide social services. 185 resilience centers operated in 243 territorial communities of 23 oblasts of Ukraine as of late November 2024.[49]

However, oblast-level CSOs experienced a number of administrative and logistics obstacles, including the need to obtain the social service provider status (registration in the Register of Social Service Providers and Recipients), which required amendments in the CSO charters; the risk of losing their not-for-profit status; high rental prices for premises; a lack of inclusive spaces needed for providing services to veterans and people with disabilities; and unstable access to communal spaces which could be offered for work only for a short period of time.

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46 Register of Social Service Providers and Recipients. The Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine. URL: https://www.msp.gov.ua/reyestr-nadavachiv-i-otrymuvachiv
   Here and further in the paragraph, CSOs include such organizational and legal structures as a public organization, a charitable organization, a public association, a public union, a trade union, a population self-organized body, a religious organization, an organization of citizens' associations.

47 Interest and Capacity of Civil Society Organizations to Provide Social Services. The report on the results of sociological research. KIIS. April 2024.

48 Only 8% of CSOs prioritized the provision of social services in their activities, another 10% considered it a promising activity area — the study results. The Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine. URL: https://msp.gov.ua/press-center/news/tilky-dlya-8percent-ohs-sotsialni-posluhy-pryoritet-u-roboti-shche-10percent-vvazhayut-tse-perspektyvnym-napryamom-diyalnosti-rezultaty-doslidzhennya

49 Zholnovych O. Resilience Centers Will Open in 243 Communities of Ukraine. URL: https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/oksana-zholnovych-tsentry-zhyttiestiikosti-zapratsiuiut-u-243-hromadakh-ukrainy

International donors, notably the UN, GIZ (Germany), Cordaid (the Netherlands), HelpAge International, USAID, Government of Germany, International Public Health Alliance, DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal, Government of Canada, Save the Children, Mercy Corps Ukraine, ACTED (France), IREX, Danish Refugee Council, Norwegian Refugee Council, and others, actively supported the sector of social service provision.

As for developing the capacity of CSOs to provide social services, of special note were activities of the "Further strengthening civil society engagement in the social sector in Ukraine" project (EU4CSOs EmpowerUA) implemented by 100 Percent Life Network Rivne. Within the project framework, 12 CSOs received financial support for the implementation of social projects in various oblasts of Ukraine in 2024. A total amount of sub-grants was estimated at EUR 630,102.85 channeled into developing social services, improving their quality, and expanding access to financial aid for vulnerable population groups.[50]

The level of provision of educational, consulting, environmental, and other services was much lower than that of social services. Surveyed local CSOs said they consider the possibility of providing paid services to businesses to increase their financial capacity. However, these are plans for the future because of such constraints as a lack of resources to launch new services and ethical dilemmas regarding fundraising in wartime.

VI. SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 3.0

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
3,2	3,2	3,2	3,2	3,1	3,0	3,0
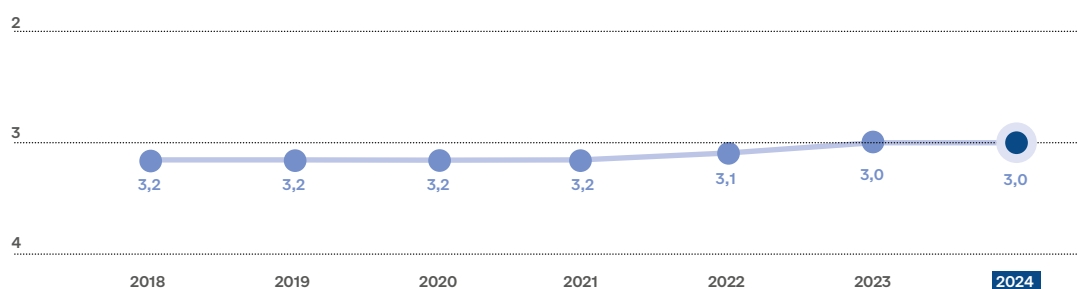
The CSO sectoral infrastructure score was 3.0 in 2024 and remained unchanged compared to the previous year.

Ukrainian organizations were subcontractors rather than main grantees of donor funds. Notwithstanding a trend towards increasing localization in humanitarian response and the role of local CSOs in 2024, only 0.8% ($80.1 million) of a $9.95 billion humanitarian aid package provided from February 2022 through October 2024 was channeled directly to local and national actors (CSOs).[51] The International Renaissance Foundation, ISAR Ednannia, and the East Europe Foundation were among the largest local grant recipients.

Specialized training was in high demand among representatives of the civil society sector. Well-established training programs were held, including "Management of Non-Profit Organizations" by the Ukrainian Catholic University, "Anti-Corruption Studies" by Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, and "Project Management for the Public Sector" by Kyiv-Mohyla Business School. Furthermore, subject-matter courses were made available on Prometheus, Zrozumilo, Diia.Osvita, Edera, GURT, and Prostir web portals, ISAR Ednannia marketplace, etc. Training in developing both internal and external competencies was in high demand among newly established organizations, especially those set up after 2022.

CSOs also paid some attention to improving security competencies of their teams given the dangerous work environment. According to "Security needs of CSOs, activists, volunteers,

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50 Further strengthening civil society engagement in the social sector in Ukraine. EU4CSOs EmpowerUA. URL: https://eu4csos.org/about-2024

51 2024 annual survey on the status of localization in Ukraine. December 2024. Refugees International (US) and East SOS CF.

human rights defenders" study, 54% of surveyed organizations conducted security and first aid trainings, self-defense courses, etc.[52] This was confirmed by a focus group study on CSOs that paid higher attention to digital security in 2024. Organizations mapped out their own security policies, carried out training for their members, etc.

The full-scale invasion made cooperation of CSOs with local authorities closer, especially in the areas of community development and humanitarian aid. A study by AFD shows that the war increased the need for joint efforts in supporting internally displaced persons where CSOs provided them with food, hygiene kits, and psychological support, while authorities were responsible for the registration and accommodation of IDPs. Along with that, it was a little more difficult for local CSOs to cooperate with national and local authorities.

It has to be mentioned that the dynamics of cooperation significantly varied from oblast to oblast, with frontline areas demonstrating greater openness to partnerships. Local authorities of frontline areas often asked CSOs for resources and coordination on urgent issues, notably evacuation and distribution of humanitarian aid. In less affected areas, cooperation was often superficial or involved CSOs 'friendly' to authorities. A survey of local CSOs showed systemic disparity in cross-sectoral partnership. In some territorial communities, active public involvement was reported, while others demonstrated disregard of or even opposition to it; cooperation often was 'one-sided' or 'beneficial for authorities'. In many areas, communication with local authorities depended on personal contacts and informal relationships.

Cooperation between CSOs was characterized by horizontal ties, often without formalizing relationships. Such cooperation however remained strong enough and most stable compared to interactions of CSOs with other sectors. The CSO Mapping by AFD showed that cooperation was based on capacity building and professional growth (75%), increased visibility and trust (65%), and expanded funding opportunities (53%). Only a few percent of respondents indicated impact on local or national agendas as a motivation for cooperation. Similar trends are shown in a study by Zagoriy Foundation. 90% of respondents said that the main areas of cooperation in the public sector were sharing of information and knowledge among CSOs. Only 35% of those surveyed indicated experience of cooperation on joint advocacy of CSO-led initiatives and activities. According to Ukrainian CSOs, a lack of experience of newly established public organizations[53] poses the greatest barrier to cooperation between one another which confirms the thesis of a high demand for training among newly established CSOs.

The surveyed representatives of oblast CSOs also underscored that despite the growing number of CSO coalitions and networks, problems of coordination, efficient interactions and relationships with government agencies persist. Respondents noted that although networking was becoming more widespread, especially in joint cooperation efforts, not all networks proved to be effective. Most respondents identified themselves as coalition members or gave examples of successful coalitions in their areas. At the same time, geography does not affect the establishment of CSO associations. Respondents provided examples of cooperation with international organizations to enlarge and apply new experience in Ukraine. In the oblasts, networking was often informal, and there was a trend towards establishing new forms of associations, for example, through social partnerships, and concluding agreements for mutual service provision.

The largest cross-sectoral networking event (CSOs–the government–donor organizations–businesses) organized by ISAR Ednannia, XIII Civil Society Development Forum, took place on 5 December 2024. Over 4,000 people participated in the event, both live and via video. Unity and resilience became key topics of discussion.[54]

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52 Security needs of CSOs, activists, volunteers, human rights defenders of Ukraine in 2024. The Center for Democracy and Rule of Law. URL: https://cedem.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Bezpekovi-potreby-zvit.pdf

53 Charity Sector Research. The Comprehensive Report. Zagoriy Foundation. URL: https://zagoriy.foundation/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/02_12_2_doslidzhennya_sektoru_blagodijnosti.pdf

54 (With)STAND Civil Society Development Forum. ISAR Ednannia. URL: https://forum.ednannia.ua

VII. PUBLIC IMAGE: 2.9

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
3,3	3,3	3,3	3,2	3,0	3,0	2,9
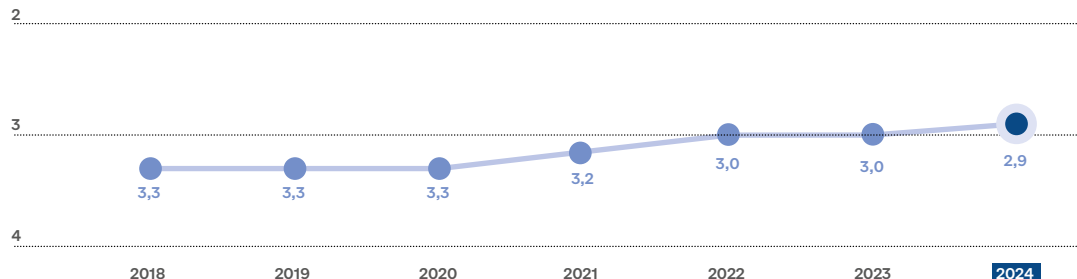
The CSO sector's public image score in 2024 stands at 2.9 points, showing an improvement of 0.1 compared to 2023. Trust in CSOs has increased among both the general public and authorities. Additionally, CSOs have continued to enhance their transparency and public accountability.

According to a September 2024 sociological survey by Razumkov Center, volunteer organizations and public organizations[55] remain the one of the most trusted institutions in Ukraine, with 80% and 59%, respectively. These indicators are slightly higher than those in a similar January 2024 survey by Razumkov Center, where trust in volunteer organizations was 79% and in public organizations 55%.[56] It has to be mentioned that volunteer initiatives enjoy more trust than charitable foundations. A study by Zagoriy Foundation shows that volunteer initiatives (70%) are more likely to receive assistance than charitable foundations (16%)[57] , while half of those surveyed are ready to support local rather than international foundations. Come Back Alive Foundation and Serhiy Prytula Charitable Foundation are the most trusted institutions.

There has been a certain improvement in the perception of CSOs by central authorities. It has to be mentioned that the President Volodymyr Zelenskyi held a meeting with representatives of the civil society sector in 2024 for the first time ever.[58] The meeting was dedicated to discussing the Victory Plan and finding ways of cooperation. It also yielded practical results, e.g. the establishment of the institution of military ombudsman. Furthermore, the Presidential Office cooperated with CSOs on issues of humanitarian aid, volunteering development, veterans' policy, etc. At the same time, local CSOs interviewed during focus groups emphasized that it was much easier for them to build partnerships with local authorities, whereas they continue to face a lack of systemic recognition and stable support in communication with national authorities.

Direct interactions with the business community remain sporadic so far. Although CSOs are aware of the potential of such partnership, both in the field of fundraising and through corporate social responsibility, they stress a lack of resources for cooperation with the business community and a lack of sustainable models of interaction or experience to reach a business audience.

Together We Act Fest, which took place on 25 May at Kyiv's Mystetskyi Arsenal with the support of the EU Mission to Ukraine, marked an important communication event to highlight the crucial role of civil society in the life of the country and in European integration processes. The Fest included public discussions, master classes, and contests with the participation of

55 Citizens'assessment of the situation in the country and actions of the authorities. Trust in social institutions, politicians, officials and public figures, belief in victory (September 2024). Razumkov Center. URL: https://razumkov. org.ua/napriamky/sotsiologichni-doslidzhennia/otsinka-sytuatsii-v-kraini-ta-diialnosti-vlady-dovira-do-sotsialnykh-instytutiv-politykiv-posadovtsiv-ta-gromadskykh-diiachiv-vira-v-peremogu-veresen-2024r

56 Ibid

57 Charity Sector Research. The Comprehensive Report. Zagoriy Foundation. URL: https://zagoriy.foundation/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/02_12_2_doslidzhennya_sektoru_blagodijnosti.pdf

58 President Discussed the Victory Plan with Representatives of Ukraine's Civil Society. URL: https://www.president.gov.ua/news/prezident-obgovoriv-plan-peremogi-z-predstavnikami-ukrayinsk-94009

representatives of CSOs and the media. A number of CSOs and the outcomes of their work were presented at the CSO Alley.[59] Also, the CSO Alley traditionally took place at the venue of Atlas Weekend music festival, giving visitors the opportunity to get acquainted with activities of more than 30 CSOs.[60]

Cooperation with the media remained at the same level as in 2023. Large organizations with resources to work closely with the media ran various awareness-raising campaigns and projects. For example, these were traditional media partners of CSOs, including Media Detector, Ukrainska Pravda, LB.ua, Liga.net, etc. The situation varied at the local level. Some CSOs had close ties with local editorial offices, whereas others faced refusals or offers to pay for placing information. There were examples of effective partnerships when the information about CSOs was distributed free of charge, but those were few and far between. Some focus group respondents noted that media outlets, especially oblast-level ones, are often focused on covering high-profile events and are unwilling to cover less acute problems faced by CSOs.

The civil society sector continued to develop its own communication capacities. Along with that, the level of professionalism in the use of communication tools remained quite low. CSOs often failed to involve at least one communications specialist; neither did they have SMM and PR managers, targeting experts, etc. (which is typical only for large organizations and unions). To promote their activities, CSOs used such social networks as Facebook, LinkedIn, X (ex-Twitter), Instagram, and TikTok. Most CSOs had their own websites where they posted key information about organizations and their activities.

In 2024, CSOs attempted to maintain open reporting: they published annual reports, financial statements, and success stories and actively responded to public inquiries. Often, this was not only the initiative of CSOs but also a requirement of donors. The surveyed focus group respondents emphasized that public reporting builds trust and demonstrates their responsibility to society.

59 EU-Ukraine Cooperation Newsletter. May 2024. EU for Ukraine. URL: https://eu4ukraine.eu/media-ua/cooperation-newsletter-ua/eu-ua-cooperation-newsletter-may-2024.html

60 CSO Alley at ATLAS UNITED 2024! Atlas Weekend Festival, Instagram. URL: https://www.instagram.com/atlasweekend/p/C9rVhTUo1ei

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