

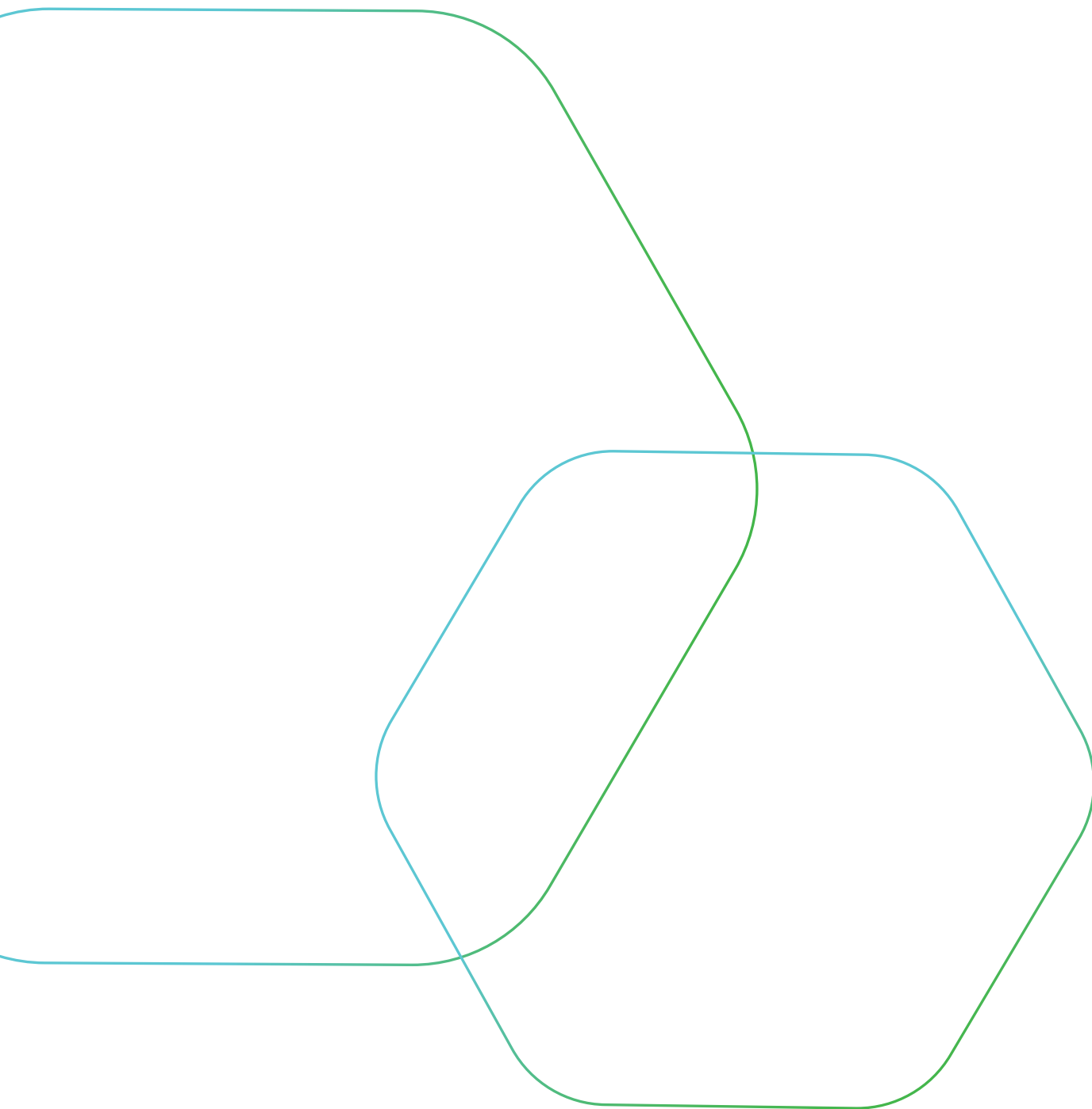


# SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF CSO AND NETWORKS/ COALITIONS

report on the study of the main factors  
and reasons for the termination of their  
activities



**April  
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# Introduction

Today, Ukrainian society demonstrates one of the highest levels of the social cohesion, with everyone trying to make their own contribution to accelerating the victory, and civil society organizations in many cases being the drivers of such initiatives.

Civil society is highly influential in Ukraine, especially in the key periods of Ukraine's independence. That is why civil society organizations (CSOs) enjoy high trust not only from Ukrainians themselves, but also from the international partners. More than 200 representatives of CSOs, experts, activists, and other partners of Ukraine from the European Union came together to develop a common vector of work in the process of Ukraine's accession to the EU.<sup>1</sup> Civil society organizations and think tanks have been instrumental in the implementation process of the Association Agreement. They have also become the basis for the development of a strong volunteer movement in Ukraine. The development of the civil society sector in Ukraine can be divided into several periods, but the main breakthrough in the development occurred after the Revolution of Dignity. A radical change in the government's attitude toward CSOs, a willingness to cooperate and interact, and eventually a staff exodus from the civil society sector to the public sector are not the only characteristics that describe the activities of the public sector after 2014.

Over the thirty years since independence, Ukrainian CSOs have come a long way in their formation and development, from initiative groups of citizens to sustainable and powerful institutions. According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, as of January 1, 2023, 99,556 civic organizations, 28,757 trade unions, 27,091 religious organizations, 26,846 charitable organizations, 2,212 associations, 1,762 population self-organization bodies and 318 creative unions were registered in Ukraine.<sup>2</sup> From 2021 to 2023, the number of charitable and volunteer organizations increased the most. In 2023 alone, the number of registrations of new charitable organizations amounted to almost 5,000.<sup>3</sup>

In Ukraine, unlike in a number of other post-Soviet countries, civil society organizations play an important role in the development of the democracy in general, and are actively involved in a wide range of the socially important tasks. CSOs are engaged in decentralization and community development reforms, as well as social reforms. Civil society organizations participate in the formation of the state policy in the various spheres of social and political life. They play an important role in the issues of electoral transparency and the electoral process. CSOs are constantly providing assistance to the vulnerable groups of the population, are actively engaged in protecting the rights of national minorities, fighting corruption, and supporting gender equality. Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion in February 2022, CSO activities have formed the basis for the development of a strong volunteer movement in Ukraine.

Recent civil society sustainability assessments show that the sustainability and development of Ukrainian civil society organizations is the highest among the Eastern Partnership countries. This is confirmed by both the CSO Sustainability Index (3.2 out of 7 points, where 1 is the best score) and the CSO Barometer (5.2 out of 7 points, where 7 is the best score). At the same time, according to the Sustainability Index and the ranking of indicators for Ukraine: the strongest areas of development of Ukrainian CSOs are advocacy (2.1 points) and institutional capacity (3.1 points).

The research on the state of the civil society in the early 2022 revealed several new trends in the development of the domestic public sector. First, the Russian-Ukrainian war has become a significant challenge for CSOs, as there was a need to reorient priorities and areas of work, and there were movements of CSO representatives within the country, mobilization of some staff, travel abroad, etc.<sup>4</sup> Secondly, Russia's full-scale armed invasion has intensified the growth of new

2 Ukraine has improved the sustainability of civil society organizations. - October 2023//

3 Civil society of Ukraine in the conditions of war. - February 2024//

4 On the state of development of the civil society in Ukraine in 2021 and its changes in early 2022: annual report / [V. Potapenko, Y. Tyshchenko, Y. Kaplan, et al: Kyiv, NICD 2022. 56 p. - (Humanitarian Development Series).



volunteer and charitable organizations and initiatives. At the same time, existing organizations have acquired new roles and tasks to meet the challenges of the times.<sup>5</sup>

Creating a successful civil society organization is not an easy task, and maintaining its sustainability is even more difficult. To be truly successful, CSOs need to have financial stability, strong leadership and a dedicated team, and the ability to communicate and work for the results. However, this is not the only thing that distinguishes successful organizations from the unsuccessful ones. Today, it is important to be able to adapt and act proactively, as well as to anticipate possible needs, changes or risks.

## Methodology of the study

The main goal of this study is to identify the main factors and reasons that influence the success and/or decline or termination of CSOs and networks/coalitions.

The study (research) was organized around the analysis of the five key hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 1:** There is a clear set of the internal organizational factors/characteristics that determine the success of a civil society organization.

**Hypothesis 2.** The influence of the external factors is crucial for the termination/decline of CSOs.

**Hypothesis 3.** Without the attitude to the continuous learning and improvement of its activities, any organization is doomed to the ineffective operation due to the inability to take into account changing needs, new challenges and risks.

**Hypothesis 4.** CSOs use different strategies for survival and continuation of their activities.

**Hypothesis 5.** Successful CSOs are active and influential members of one or more networks/coalitions.

The following methods were used in the course of the study:

desk research and analysis of the information and analytical documents available online, which became the basis for studying and analyzing trends in the development of the public sector, research of the theoretical concepts that formed the basis for formulating the assumptions and hypotheses of the study.

In order to test the above hypotheses, in-depth interviews were conducted with various stakeholders: CSOs and coalition representatives (12 interviews, including 5 local/regional CSOs), representatives of donor organizations, experts in organizational development and research of CSOs (8 interviews in total). Organizations were selected for in-depth interviews based on the following criteria:

- maturity (organizations older than 10 years; organizations older than 5 but younger than 10 years; young organizations (younger than 5 years) and those that have ceased to exist);
- sectoral criterion (organizations from the certain sectors, in particular, anti-corruption organizations; organizations engaged in the development of local self-government and democracy processes and CSOs engaged in the charitable activities);
- regional criterion (at least one third of the organizations are representatives of the local/regional level).

In order to increase the coverage of CSOs and expand the scope of testing the study/research hypotheses, an online survey was conducted with 76 respondents representing CSOs (Questionnaire - Appendix 1). The survey participants represent CSOs from the different sectors, including:

- 21 (27.6%) – CSOs engaged in the charitable activities;
- 13 (17.1%) – CSOs related to the reconstruction and recovery activities;

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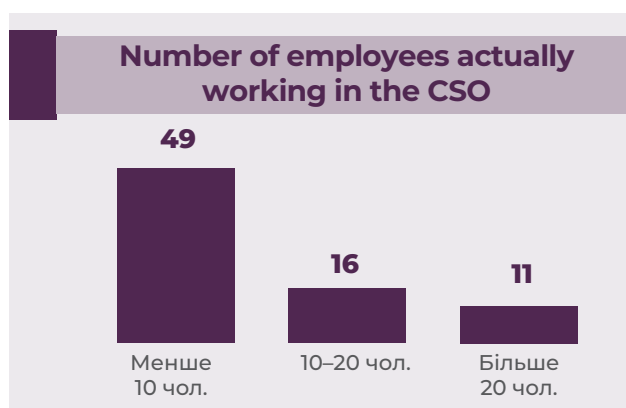


- 9 (11.8%) – CSOs engaged in the overcoming the consequences of war;
- 5 (6.6%) – CSOs in the anti-corruption and advocacy sector
- 28 (36.9%) – CSOs from other sectors of activity (development of the territorial communities, education, environmental, human rights, etc).



At least 32 interviewees (42.1% of respondents) represent mature CSOs that have been operating for more than 10 years. While 20 respondents (26.3%) are representatives of the young organizations, up to 5 years of operations. The rest - 24 respondents (31.6%) - are representatives of CSOs that have been operating from 5 to 10 years.

The majority of CSOs whose representatives took part in the survey — 64.5% (49 organizations) are small organizations with up to 10 employees. At the same time, 11 CSOs (14.5%) that took part in the survey are rather large organizations for the public sector, with the number of employees exceeding 20 people.



The limitations of the study are related to the military situation in the country, which led to a certain difficulties and delays in collecting information, organizing interviews, and filling out the questionnaire. The survey was conducted online. Its results are based entirely on the information collected using the above research methods.

The study was conducted between January and April 2024.

# Main findings of the study:

**1. Internal organizational success factors:** The success of CSOs depends on several internal factors, such as adaptability, team spirit, professionalism, a clearly defined mission, strategic management, partnerships and effective communications.

**2. Team spirit and leadership:** Effective leadership is important, but not the decisive factor. A professional team and the ability to innovate are more essential in building success. Successful CSOs are often active participants in coalitions and networks, which helps to achieve results.

**3. Different success factors for young and mature CSOs:** Both types of organizations can succeed, but the factors that influence it may differ. Continuous learning and improvement allow CSOs to adapt to changes in the environment.

**4. Influence of the external factors:** Adapting to the changes in the external environment is a key factor for the sustainability of CSOs. Pandemics and war, changes in political leadership affect the priorities and strategies of many CSOs, which emphasizes the need for constant adaptation.

**5. The role of the donor support:** Donors have a significant impact on the success of CSOs by providing financial, technical and organizational support. Donors also give preference to supporting successful CSOs. Long-term support and institutional programs contribute to the development of organizations and support their sustainability.

**6. Participation in coalitions:** Although participation in coalitions is not a determining factor of success, it creates additional opportunities and enhances the success of CSOs. Active participation in coalitions facilitates the exchange of resources and skills.

**7. Flexibility and strategic leadership:** Flexibility, adaptability and strategic leadership are essential to respond effectively to changes in the environment. Most CSOs have faced periods of slowdown or decline in their activities in the course of their life.

**8. Causes of slowdown or decline:** The main reasons for the slowdown or decline of CSOs' activities include unforeseen circumstances, financial problems, burnout, staffing problems, bureaucratic difficulties and lack of grants. It is important for CSO management to respond to these challenges in a timely manner.

**9. Strategies for responding to the slowdown:** CSOs adopt different strategies to slow down or change their activities, such as partial curtailment, reprioritization or temporary suspension of activities. This requires wise leadership and proper management.

**10. Impact of coalitions on the success of CSOs:** Participation in coalitions allows CSOs to expand their capacities, improve cooperation and achieve common goals. Coalitions help to improve reputation and open up new opportunities.

**11. Key factors of success of coalitions:** The success of coalitions depends on the shared values, trust between participants, focus on specific issues and priorities, active participation of strong CSOs, effective leadership and financial resources.

**12. Adaptation of the coalitions to changes:** Coalitions should constantly analyze and respond to new trends and issues. This is a strategic step for the development of CSOs and strengthening their influence.

The study emphasizes the importance of the internal organizational factors, adaptation to external changes, donor support and participation in coalitions for the successful functioning of CSOs.

# 1. Internal organizational factors that determine the success of CSOs

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**Hypothesis 1:** There is a clear set of the internal organizational factors/ characteristics that determine the success of CSOs.

The main research questions under this hypothesis are:

- Can the organizational profile of a successful CSO be identified and maintained?
  - How to distinguish successful CSO practices from the unsuccessful ones?
  - Do the organizational factors that determine the success of «mature» and «young» successful CSOs differ?
  - Do learning CSOs demonstrate better results and sustainability?
- 

CSOs play an important role in Ukrainian society, working on issues ranging from human rights to environmental issues and social justice. However, the success of such organizations can be defined from different perspectives.

In order to better focus the study, a definition was introduced at the beginning: “A successful CSO is an organization that has demonstrated sustainable performance (or development) in achieving its mission, the amount of the financial resources raised and projects implemented, staff stability, sustainable partnerships and a reliable reputation over a certain period of time.”

*The results of the study indicate that the success of a CSO is a collective concept described by a number of the typical factors that determine the organizational profile of a successful CSO.*

In particular, during the in-depth interviews, the respondents mentioned the following typical factors that determine the success of a CSO:

- **Mission and goals of the organization:** a successful organization has a clear mission and goals that it seeks to achieve. It is innovative and able to adapt to changes in society.
- **Team motivation and decision-making efficiency:** A successful organization has engaged and motivated team members who share common values. The internal architecture and communications of the organization should be clearly defined and understood by team members.
- **Resilience and adaptability:** A successful organization looks to the future and adapts to change. It knows its beneficiaries well and is able to communicate with different stakeholders and build coalitions.
- **Stakeholder trust:** Successful organizations are able to play a leadership role in their region and enjoy the trust of their partners, including the public.
- **Process efficiency and result orientation:** A successful organization has clearly defined policies, procedures and processes and works systematically to achieve its mission. It is result-oriented and able to work with stakeholders.
- **Resilience and credibility:** A successful organization has an excellent reputation and track record in its sector. It is resilient to external challenges and has an impact on society.
- **Funding from different donors and professional development:** Successful organizations have long-term support and funding from sustainable donors and are able to engage in ongoing professional development. They effectively interact with their audience and fit into the challenges and initiatives of the society.



Participants in the online survey overwhelmingly rated their organizations as successful. In particular, 28 (36.8%) respondents answered “Yes” to the question “Do you consider your CSO successful?”, 38 (50%) respondents rated it “More yes than no”, and 10 (13.2%) respondents rated it “More no than yes”. The results of the online survey also confirmed the existence of a number of typical factors that play an important role in the shaping the success of their organization. The organizational profile of a successful CSO presented below is based on the answers of the respondents who were asked to identify at least 3 key factors that determine the success of their organizations.

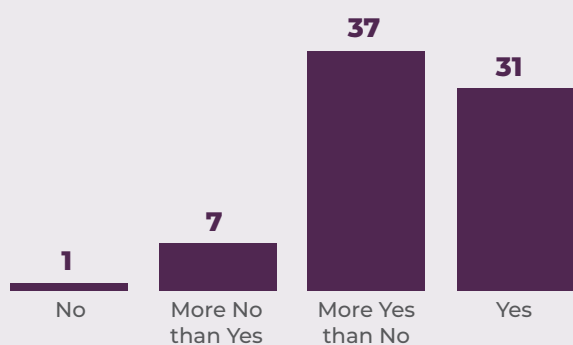


**Figure 1. Factors of the organizational development that determine the success of CSOs (according to the survey)**

Among the most important factors are: the ability to adapt (46 respondents), team spirit and professionalism (43 respondents), clearly defined mission and strategic management (38 respondents), established partnerships and cooperation with key players in the sector (35 respondents), and effective communication with stakeholders (35 respondents). Less important factors were successful leadership (22 respondents), influence and recognized role in the sector (21 respondents), and the financial viability and resource mobilization (17 respondents).

The results of the survey to some extent correspond to the conditions of the changing domestic environment, which makes CSOs learn to adapt quickly to changes and challenges. At the same time, “financial viability” from the above list is one of the last factors that determines the success of an organization. It is also obvious that “team spirit and professionalism” is a priority in the formation of a successful organization compared to the “successful leadership”. This was also confirmed by the survey results.

## The role of the CSO leader is crucial in maintaining successful activities



**Fig. 2. Respondents' answers about the role of a leader in ensuring the success of CSOs**

The results of the survey showed that 41% of respondents consider the role of the leader to be crucial in maintaining successful activities. At the same time, 49% indicated that leadership is important but not crucial in ensuring the success of CSOs. It requires an effective and professional team that the leader and the organization can rely on to achieve their goals and objectives. During the interviews, it was repeatedly noted that the role of a leader in a CSO is gradually changing, which is related to the maturity of both the organization and the non-governmental sector in Ukraine. More mature organizations succeed, based on the team experience and knowledge, established communications, reputation and other factors.

However, it is important to remember that success can be a subjective concept and depends on the specific context and goals of each individual CSO. "Sometimes even failures can serve as a learning experience and contribute to the further development and growth of an organization. Thus, although the success of CSOs is important, it should be assessed taking into account various factors and contextual circumstances."<sup>6</sup>

*The results of the interviews confirmed that both mature and experienced CSOs as well as young, newly established ones can be successful. However, according to the respondents, the factors that ensure this success are somewhat different.*

The responses received show that the success of "mature" and "young" CSOs may differ according to different criteria, including

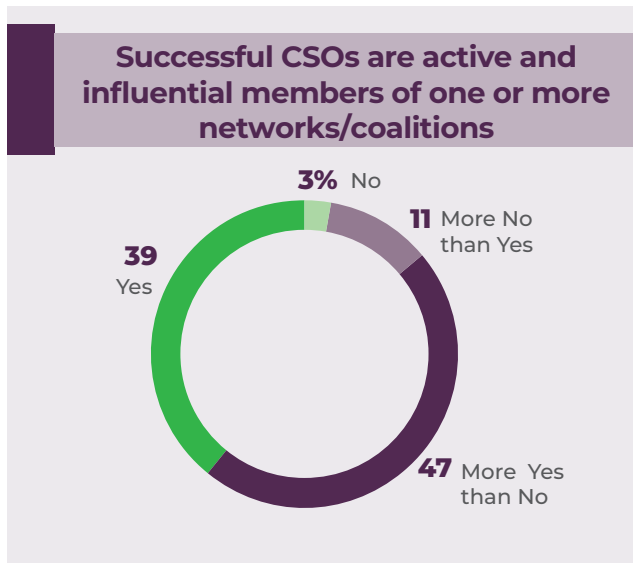
- **Experience and resources:** "Mature organizations have more experience and access to resources, such as finances, human and material assets. They have an established network of experts and a reputable history, which provides them with the wider access to the grants. While "young" organizations have fewer resources, they are able to learn from their own experience. This is usually a sign of the different stages of the life cycle at which these organizations are.
- **Organizational processes and flexibility:** "Mature" organizations, i.e. those that have been in the operation for more than 10 years, have established and organized processes and may be less flexible when changes occur. Mature organizations have well-established policies and procedures related to, for example, strategic and operational planning, fundraising, internal communications, human resources, feedback, etc. This, in turn, affects the organization of the internal processes and their duration. Mature organizations clearly adhere to the priorities set out in their strategic plans. These organizations are recognized in the field of activity by the stakeholders they work with. On the other hand, "young" organizations are more flexible and dynamic, but may not have well-established organizational processes. "At the same time, in today's environment, young CSOs learn much faster."<sup>7</sup>
- **Ambitions and experiments:** "Young" organizations are usually ambitious, active and ready for the experiments and innovations. They are ready to experiment more with the project initiatives and look for their own niche and priorities. Young organizations can be more innovative and unencumbered by tradition. They often seek and test different forms of interaction and communication with stakeholders, and, unlike mature CSOs, can more easily "criticize the authorities". On the other hand, mature organizations can rely on the expert knowledge and experience in their activities.

<sup>6</sup> Quote based on the results of the in-depth interviews with different stakeholders

<sup>7</sup> Quote based on the results of the in-depth interviews with different stakeholders.

Thus, both types of organizations can succeed, but their approaches and strengths may differ.

**Participation in the coalitions is useful for CSOs, but it is rather an additional factor in shaping their success.**



**Figure 3. Respondents' answers about the participation of CSOs in coalitions**

Only 39% of the respondents said that they agreed with the statement "Successful CSOs are active members of one or more networks/coalitions. At the same time, 14% of the respondents actually disagree with this statement. Almost a half of the respondents "Agree more than disagree.

**Successful CSOs are focused on the continuous learning and development. Training is an integral part of the organization's development and ensures sustainability and consistency of its activities.**

Successful CSOs can be considered to be constantly learning. This is important for several reasons. First, rapid changes in the social, economic, and political environment require constant updating of knowledge and skills to respond effectively to new challenges. Secondly, training allows CSOs to improve their strategy, enhance the quality of services

and programs, and provides professional development of their management staff. Training also fosters innovation and the search for the new ways to achieve the goals of the CSO. In this way, continuous learning helps CSOs to remain responsive, adaptive and effective in the face of constant change.

The term "learning organization" (or learning-oriented organization) was coined by Peter Senge (Senge, 1992). "A learning organization is characterized by the certain conditions, climate in which "people are constantly expanding their capacity to create the results they truly want, where new and broader ways of thinking are natural, where there are shared aspirations, and where people are constantly learning to see the whole reality together."<sup>8</sup>

According to the interviewed respondents, the life cycle of a CSO and learning are closely related, as each stage of the organization's development requires constant learning for the adaptation and development process. At the initial stages of establishment, learning is aimed at the developing strategies and gaining experience, during growth - at expanding skills and efficiency, and at the mature stage - at optimizing processes and strengthening positions. This continuous cycle of the learning process helps organizations adapt to changes in their environment and succeed in their operations.



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**For example,**

- The European Dialogue is a successful organization due to its strong and professional team, recognition and close cooperation with the local stakeholders, and ability to clearly adhere to its mission and goals.
  - The effectiveness of the Transparency International Ukraine is based on their ability to effectively fight corruption through a global network of the national departments, a high level of professionalism and independence, as well as a clearly defined mission and strategic management. They actively engage the public, government, and business in anti-corruption activities using the innovative approaches and partnerships, which allows them to ensure transparency and accountability across sectors.
  - The success of Plast-National Scout Organization of Ukraine, is due to its clear focus on educating young people on the principles of patriotism and civic responsibility, effective organizational structure, systematic approach to training and development of participants, strong team spirit and high level of the volunteer involvement, as well as active cooperation with the international scouting organizations and donor support.
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## Conclusions:

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The results of the study confirm Hypothesis 1: There is a clear set of the internal organizational factors/characteristics that determine the success of a civil society organization and Hypothesis 3. Without the attitude to the continuous learning and improvement of its activities, any organization is doomed to the ineffective operation due to the inability to take into account changing needs, new challenges and risks.

- The results of the study indicate that the success of CSOs is a complex concept that includes both internal and external factors. The most important factors of success identified in the study are the ability to adapt to changes, team spirit and professionalism, clearly defined mission and strategic management, as well as partnerships and effective communications. Financial capacity, in comparison to these factors, was assessed as a lower priority, as it is largely derived from them. These aspects emphasize the importance of both internal and external factors in shaping the success of CSOs. In general, the study emphasizes that the success of CSOs is not accidental, but can be achieved through the careful consideration and improvement of all aspects of their activities, taking into account internal and external factors of success;
- according to the study, both mature and young CSOs are able to be successful. At the same time, the factors that influence the achievement of this success may differ. Mature organizations have more experience and access to resources, but may be less flexible in terms of changes, while young organizations are more flexible and innovative, ready for the experiments and challenges. However, both types of organizations have the potential to succeed, taking into consideration their strengths and approaches;
- an important characteristic of the successful CSOs is not only effective leadership, but also team spirit, professionalism and ability to innovate. The results of the survey showed that leadership, although important, is not a decisive factor for the success of CSOs. Successful activity of an organization requires an effective and professional team that the leader can rely on;
- the survey results also confirmed that successful CSOs are mostly active members of one or more coalitions and networks. Such association has a positive impact on achieving the expected results in the sector;
- successful CSOs are organizations that are constantly learning and improving. Learning is necessary to be able to adapt more easily to changes in the social, economic and political environment. Training also allows them to maintain a high level of efficiency, respond more quickly to challenges and continuously improve their work. 96% of the respondents and the results of the interviews indicate that CSOs that learn demonstrate better results and sustainability.

## 2. External factors that influence the success of CSOs

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**Hypothesis 2.** The influence of the external factors is crucial for the termination/decline of CSOs.

The questions to be investigated under this hypothesis include:

- Are there typical external factors that led to the termination/decline of CSOs?
  - Do donors prefer long-term support to effective CSOs? If so, what factors are used to select these CSOs?
  - Does sustained institutional support from donors lead to greater sustainability of CSOs?
  - Is the presence of a regional network/branches a factor of sustainability of the organization?
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*The ability to adapt to the external environment was identified by the respondents of this study as one of the key factors that influence the success of the organization.*

This is confirmed by the results of a study conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology and presented in February 2023: Civil society has experienced two traumatic events one after the other: first, the pandemic hit, and then the war broke out. Only half of CSOs have fully or significantly adapted to both events.<sup>9</sup>

The determining factor in the change of CSOs' priorities was the wartime challenges that led the civil sector to focus on the most pressing issues at the expense of other areas of work or through the extraordinary efforts in combining old and new priorities. In 2023, according to the participants of the expert study "Civil Society in Ukraine in the Context of War," some organizations managed to return to the areas that were envisaged in the CSO charters from the beginning of their founding, while maintaining the humanitarian direction and assistance to the Armed Forces of Ukraine.<sup>10</sup>

Political changes and changes in the leadership of the authorities also have a significant impact on the activities of CSOs. New leadership can change the political course, which can lead to the changes in the sectoral legislation and regulations. Political instability often complicates the work of CSOs, forcing them to adapt their strategies and look for the new sources of support. According to the results of the study "Civil Society of Ukraine in the Context of War", CSOs assess the success of contacts established with local self-government bodies as higher than with the central government. 41% of CSOs noted that in 2023 they received an invitation to cooperate from the central or local authorities.<sup>11</sup>

Donors play an important role in supporting the success of the civil society sector by providing financial support, technical assistance, helping to expand networks and partnerships, raising public awareness, and stimulating innovation and experimentation. Their contributions help civil society organizations fulfill their missions and develop programs and projects aimed at improving society and solving social problems. It is known that before the full-scale invasion, Ukrainian civil society received the largest financial support from the international donors. The

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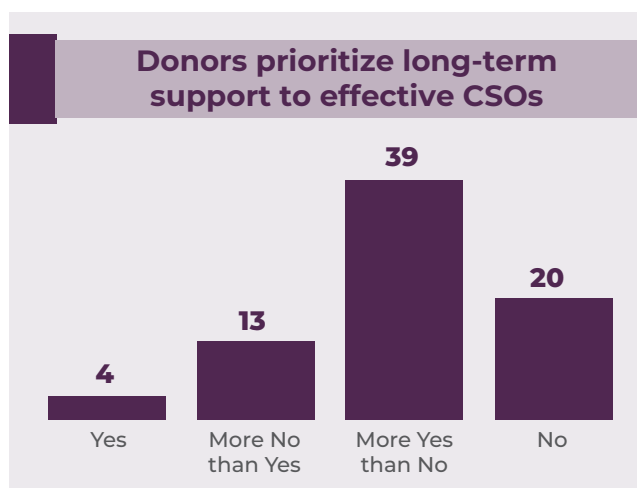
structure of funding for the public sector changed somewhat in 2022, but after a short freeze in activities due to the outbreak of war, in 2023 donors again increased funding, and the number of active donors in Ukraine increased.

The questions analyzed in this study were: “What role do donors play in shaping the success of CSOs? Do they prefer long-term support for organizations that they consider successful?” The results of in-depth interviews with various stakeholders, including donors themselves, confirmed that support of successful CSOs is a fairly typical practice in Ukraine.

***The results of the interviews and the online survey confirmed that donors play an important role in building and supporting successful CSOs. Supporting successful organizations has many benefits: it ensures partnership, success in the sector, and a confident result.***

Analyzing the answers of the respondents to the question about the role of donors in shaping the success of CSOs and their attitude towards the long-term support, several key trends can be identified. Donors consider it important to support both successful CSOs and new ones, while relying on the competitive environment in which CSOs operate. Representatives of CSOs mostly confirmed that donors are looking for the capable organizations that are treated as partners, whose results they can rely on and whose quality they trust. According to CSOs, donors often provide support to the experienced organizations that have already proven themselves and have a well-developed strategy, policies and procedures.

*“Donors do not only provide financial support, they influence the ‘landscape of the public sector in Ukraine’.”<sup>12</sup>*



**Fig. 4. Results of respondents' answers about the long-term support of effective CSOs**

The results of the online survey also showed that 59 (almost 80%) respondents believe that donor organizations prefer the long-term thematic support of effective CSOs in the certain sectors. Such support, as confirmed by the results of in-depth interviews, can be provided in the form of short (six-month or annual) thematic grants over a long period of time, or through support for projects that are designed to be implemented over several years. Only 20% disagreed with this statement more than agreed. It was repeatedly emphasized that each CSO is working on the diversification process of the funding sources to increase its financial stability and reduce dependence on one or two sources of funding.

In addition, all interviewees, representatives of CSOs, donor organizations, and experts, unequivocally mentioned grants and institutional support received by CSOs as one of the indisputable factors in the formation of a stable and successful CSO. Institutional support not only allows CSOs to acquire new competencies and knowledge, but also provides a window of opportunity for the organizational development, staff training, development of procedures and policies, which, among other things, are the basis for sustainability and success.

***The fact that a CSO has a regional network is not necessarily a sign of success or sustainability of the organization's activities, but is more related to the specifics of the organization's activities, its goals and mission.***

The results of the study show that the formation of a regional network by CSOs is usually associated with the “production” need and focus on working with regions and local self-government bodies. This is often connected with the implementation of projects on the location and the need to get closer to the beneficiary. Some organizations use the practice of the

<sup>12</sup> Quote based on the results of the in-depth interviews with different stakeholders

regional coordinators and representatives, which is also due to challenges (COVID-19 coronavirus infection, war) that reduce the mobility and movement of employees of organizations.

According to the results of the online survey, almost half of the respondents do not consider the presence of the regional branches of CSOs to be a factor of the organization's sustainability. Only 16 respondents (21%) fully agreed and answered "Yes" and confirmed this statement.



**Fig. 5. Results of the respondents' answers about the dependence of CSOs' sustainability on the presence of the regional branches**



## Conclusions:

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Based on the results of the analysis of Hypothesis 2. The influence of the external factors is crucial for the termination/decline of CSOs:

- the survey results indicate the importance of CSOs' adaptation to changes in the external environment, which, according to the respondents, play a key role in the stability and success of the public sector. The situation caused by the pandemic and the war has forced many CSOs to rethink their priorities and change their strategies to effectively respond to the needs of society. Political changes and new leadership in the government also affect the activities of CSOs. Political instability complicates their work, forcing them to adapt strategies and revise priorities. Additional research shows that CSOs cooperate better with the local authorities than with central authorities;
- donors play an important role in supporting the success of CSOs by providing financial, technical, and organizational support. Their funding contributes to the development of the programs and projects aimed at solving social problems and improving the lives of citizens. Despite the difficulties caused by Russia's full-scale war invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the following year donors not only continued but also increased their investments in the public sector. This demonstrates the growing trust in the civil society organizations and support for their activities in the face of complexity and instability;
- overall, the survey confirmed the importance of the donor support for CSOs in Ukraine. Donors actively support the development of CSOs by providing financial, technical and institutional support. Their contribution contributes to the institutional sustainability and success of the public sector. The results showed that donors prefer the long-term support to effective CSOs. They prefer experienced organizations that have a clear strategy and a good governance system;
- at the level of the institutional development, the importance of the institutional grants and support for CSOs is noted. This creates opportunities for the development of procedures and policies, which is an additional factor of sustainability and success of CSOs;
- participation in the regional networks and coalitions is also an important condition for the success of CSOs. However, these factors are not determinants of the success of an organization, but rather are determined by its goals and specifics of its activities. Successful CSOs are mostly active participants in the coalitions that create additional opportunities for them and enhance their success.

### 3. Typical factors of slowdown/decline of the CSOs' activities

**Hypothesis 4.** CSOs use different strategies for survival and continuation of their activities.

In particular, the following questions are planned to be studied under this hypothesis:

- What are the typical strategies used by CSOs to continue their activities: «temporary cessation of activities», «restructuring of CSOs - change of name, sphere, mission and goals», «resumption of activities after a pause in work», «stopping activities»?
- How did these strategies affect the behavior of the organization: external communications, human resources management, etc.

According to the results of in-depth interviews, the characteristics of a CSO decline may include loss of financial sustainability and support, a decrease in the number of volunteers and staff, loss of activity and impact on society, insufficient adaptation to changes in the social and technological environment, loss of reputation due to the conflicts or financial difficulties, as well as lack of innovation and strategic vision. These signs often point to the potential problems that an organization must address to avoid further decline and regain its stability and influence.

The majority of respondents stated that “any organization is aimed at the survival, and slowing down is often a part of the life cycle of any organization, including CSOs”.<sup>13</sup>



**Figure 6. Results of the respondents' answers about cases of slowdown/decline in activities of CSOs**

*The results of the survey confirm that the majority of CSOs (at least 84% of respondents) faced periods of the slowdown/decline in their activities that could be a part of the life cycle of the organization or were caused by other factors.*

The results of the survey confirmed that 84% of CSOs represented by the respondents faced periods of slowdown/decline. Only 16% answered negatively, which roughly corresponds to the share of the respondents representing young CSOs (less than 5 years old, which made up 20%).

*The survey confirmed that among the typical “slowdown/decline strategies” CSOs face the following: slowing down/partial curtailment of activities (about 70% of the respondents), changing priorities of activities (10% of respondents) and temporary/complete cessation of activities (10% of respondents).*

According to the respondents, the strategy of slowing down or partially curtailing activities is characterized by the decision to reduce or revise the level and scope of activities in order

<sup>13</sup> Quote based on the results of the in-depth interviews with different stakeholders

to ensure greater efficiency and sustainability in the conditions of the limited resources or changing context. This strategy typically includes elements such as reducing staff, scaling back projects, reallocating resources to the higher priority areas, seeking new sources of funding, or strategic partnerships with other organizations. The main goal of such a strategy is to ensure a balanced and efficient use of resources and to preserve the opportunities for the further development and impact, even in a changing or limited environment.

The strategy of the partial change of priorities of a CSO is characterized by the revision or reorientation of its goals, strategy and projects based on the new conditions or strategic needs. This strategy is characterized by such aspects as changing or expanding the organization's mission, establishing new strategic directions, reorienting projects to more relevant or important issues, and changing the strategy of attracting resources or partnerships. The main goal of this strategy is to ensure that the organization's activities are in line with the changing needs and conditions in society in order to increase its impact and effectiveness in achieving its purpose and goals. Very often, this strategy is a derivative of the previous strategy and is seen as a way to continue operations.

The strategy of temporary or complete termination of CSO activities is characterized by the decision to suspend or close all or part of the projects or activities of the organization related to the defined purpose and goals. This strategy can arise due to various circumstances, such as financial difficulties, significant changes in the strategic priorities, loss of support or the need to reorient, as well as unforeseen circumstances (COVID-19 coronavirus infection, full-scale invasion). The main goal of this strategy is to ensure the rational use of resources and preserve opportunities for the further development or reorganization if the situation changes. This strategic alternative is the least desirable, but as noted in the interviews, some organizations have resorted to this strategy.

*There are a number of typical factors that influence the reduction/decline of CSOs' activities, among which the following are the most important unforeseen circumstances (COVID-19 coronavirus infection and full-scale war invasion), lack of staff, which arose for the various reasons and circumstances. Among other groups of factors, the decline of CSOs' activities is often associated with the financial problems, burnout/fatigue of the team and bureaucratic difficulties/loss of trust.)*

The key factors mentioned by the interviewed respondents that had the greatest impact on the slowdown/decline of activities can be divided into the following groups:

- **War and geopolitical conflicts:** A full-scale war, including the response to missile attacks and evacuation of the personnel, has caused significant difficulties for the organizations;
- **The pandemic (COVID-19 coronavirus infection)** has also affected the activities of the civil society organizations, limiting the ability to implement projects and reducing funding;
- **Financial challenges:** Lack of the financial resources, lack of the sustainable funding, and project cancellations by grantors led to delays and reduced scope of work;
- **Burnout and fatigue of participants:** physical and emotional burnout, as well as the exhaustion of volunteers and activists, affect the productivity and effectiveness of organizations.
- **Staffing problems:** mobilization of the active members of the organization (including moving abroad, moving to work for the government, donor agencies, and in some cases starting a political career), loss of the qualified project managers, and insufficient staffing make it difficult for organizations to operate.
- **Bureaucratic difficulties and loss of trust in management:** Underestimating the importance of systemic support, team conflicts, and loss of trust in management can also lead to a slowdown in activities.
- **Lack of the grant projects and changes in the development strategies:** Lack of funding for the specific areas of activity and the need to change strategies can affect the activities of organizations.

These factors, according to the respondents, may also be interrelated, which further complicates the situation for CSOs, reducing their effectiveness and ability to achieve their goals.

## Conclusions:

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The results of the study confirm Hypothesis 4 that CSOs use different strategies for survival and continuation of their activities. In particular:

- the results of the in-depth interviews confirm that the characteristics of slowdown/decline of a CSO include loss of the financial sustainability, decrease in the number of volunteers and staff, loss of the activity and impact on the society, insufficient adaptation to changes in the social and technological environment, loss of the reputation due to conflicts or financial difficulties, as well as lack of innovation and strategic vision. At the same time, the respondents also noted that the slowdown in activities is a typical stage of the life cycle of CSOs;
- the survey results confirm that at least 84% of the CSOs represented by the respondents faced periods of slowdown/decline. However, the majority of them resumed their activities. There are a number of factors that led to this;
- the study shows that CSOs apply typical «deceleration/decline strategies»: a strategy of the slowing down/partial curtailment of activities (approximately 70% of respondents), a strategy of the changing priorities (10% of respondents) and a strategy of temporary/total cessation of activities (10% of respondents). These strategies are characterized by their own peculiarities and are sometimes interrelated;
- according to the survey results, the key factors that influence the slowdown/decline of CSOs' activities can be summarized into several groups. Among them are the war, the pandemic (COVID-19), financial difficulties, burnout and fatigue of participants, human resources issues, bureaucratic difficulties and loss of trust in the leadership, as well as the lack of grant projects and the need to change development strategies. These factors pose significant challenges for the organizations and may require a comprehensive approach to overcome and restore the sustainability of their activities.

## 4. Successful coalitions — what are they like?

**Hypothesis 5.** Successful CSOs are active and influential members of one or more networks/coalitions.

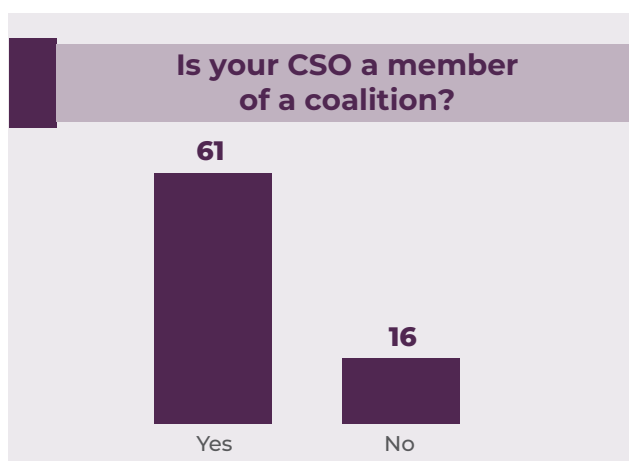
- Can the factors of a successful coalition/network include: creation of more value for the network members and increase of the opportunities and influence on the sector?
- What is the role of the network/coalition leader and organizing committee in ensuring its success?
- What benefits does a CSO get from the participating in networks/coalitions?
- What models of influence on the sector do successful networks/coalitions use to ensure results?
- What factors lead to the decline/termination of a network/coalition?

Over the past decade, Ukrainian civil society has undergone significant transformations, becoming a key catalyst for the change and progress in the country. One of the most important aspects of this influence is the ability to act together in times of crisis and uncertainty to achieve national goals. This is manifested through the active creation of networks and coalitions that have become an integral part of the work of civil society organizations. Coalition building has become particularly common after the Revolution of Dignity. This dynamic process demonstrates the effectiveness of such forms of cooperation in achieving common goals and development of society.

A coalition is an informal contractual association of civil society organizations created to coordinate the activities of CSOs in the process of achieving a certain goal. A coalition does not have the status of a legal entity and does not act as a separate subject of civil or economic relations.<sup>14</sup> At the same time, a coalition can register as a public union, as the RPR (Reanimation Package of Reforms) did in its time.

*The affiliation of CSOs with coalitions is another factor that determines the success of CSOs, as it creates new opportunities for them and helps to ensure influence on the activities of the sector and reputational impact.*

As the figure below shows, 61 CSOs (80%) whose representatives took part in the online survey are members of coalitions. At least a half of the respondents who participated in the in-depth interviews stated that they are actively engaged in coalitions. One third of the respondents indicated that they were active participants in the formation of coalitions. At the same time, representatives of 16 organizations stated that their organizations are not members of associations.

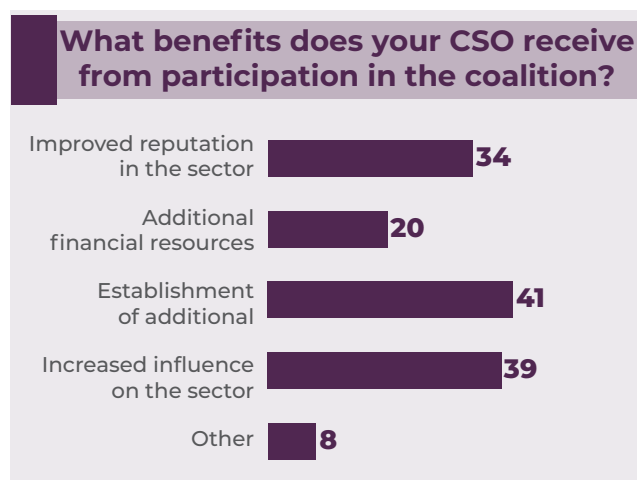


**Figure 7. Answers of the respondents regarding membership of CSOs they represent in coalitions**

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CSOs unite in the coalitions in order to increase their influence and effectiveness in implementing common goals and objectives. This may include uniting around a specific issue or idea, increasing the chances of successful influence on the authorities, pooling resources for joint activities and achieving synergies, as well as improving the exchange of information and experience.



**Figure 8. Respondents' answers about the benefits of CSOs' participation in the coalitions**

The respondents were asked to choose 2 key benefits that their CSO receives from the participation in the coalition. The results of the survey showed that by uniting, coalition members set themselves a number of tasks, among which the most important was the establishment of additional contacts (41 responses). An important advantage of the participation in coalitions, according to the respondents, is the opportunity to exchange experience and skills between participants. This allows organizations to learn from each other and improve their professional competence, which in turn contributes to the growth of their effectiveness and impact.

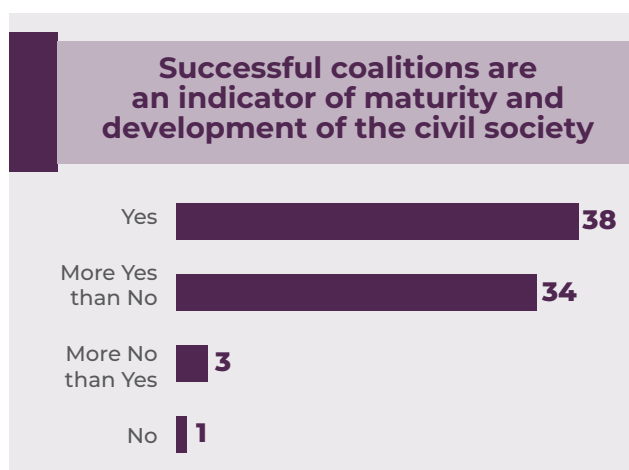
Increased influence on the sector (39 responses) was mentioned by the respondents as the second benefit of the association. Coalitions help CSOs to increase their effectiveness in advocacy and influence on decision-making of local, governmental and legislative bodies. Joint efforts become a more powerful argument in negotiations and contribute to solving important social issues.

Increasing the reputation in the sector (34 responses) and obtaining additional financial resources (20 responses) were mentioned by the respondents as the next benefits of CSOs' participation in coalitions. Through joint actions and initiatives, they can draw more attention to their issues and problems, receiving more support from both the public and the governmental authorities.

**“The existence of successful coalitions/networks in Ukraine that include CSOs is a sign of the maturity of the civil society.”<sup>15</sup>**

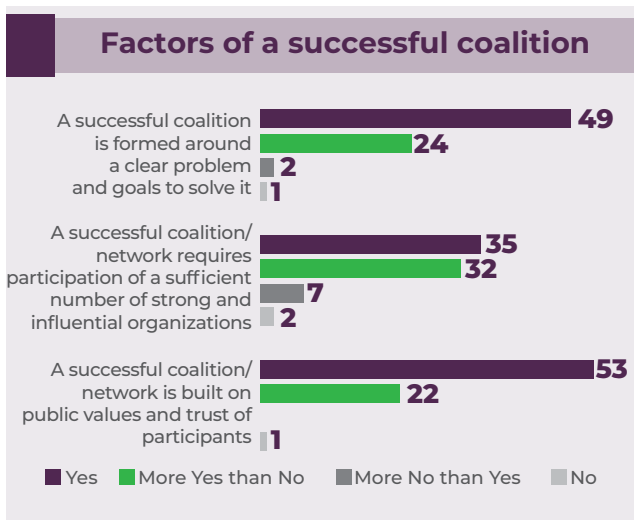
The majority of respondents (72 out of 76) confirmed the statement that the existence of successful coalitions is an indicator of the maturity and development of the civil society. Participation in coalitions allows CSOs to increase their visibility and influence on the public. Through joint actions and initiatives, according to the respondents, they can draw more attention to their issues and problems, receiving more support from both the public and authorities.

**For a coalition to be successful, it should: be based on the common values and trust of its members; be formed around a clear problem and goals of its solution; and require participation of a sufficient number of strong and influential CSOs.**



**Fig. 9. Respondents' answers about the importance of successful coalitions of CSOs**

15 Quote based on the results of the in-depth interviews with different stakeholders



**Figure 10. Respondents' answers about the factors that determine the success of the coalition formation and existence**

According to the survey results, successful operation of CSO coalitions depends on a number of key factors. These include:

- strategic cooperation based on the common values and trust of the participants and partners;
- the presence of a clear problem that unites the coalition members; and
- the ability to unite to achieve a common goal and priorities;
- participation in the coalition of a sufficient number of strong and influential CSOs that are able to attract technical, financial and human resources;
- financial resources and donor support.

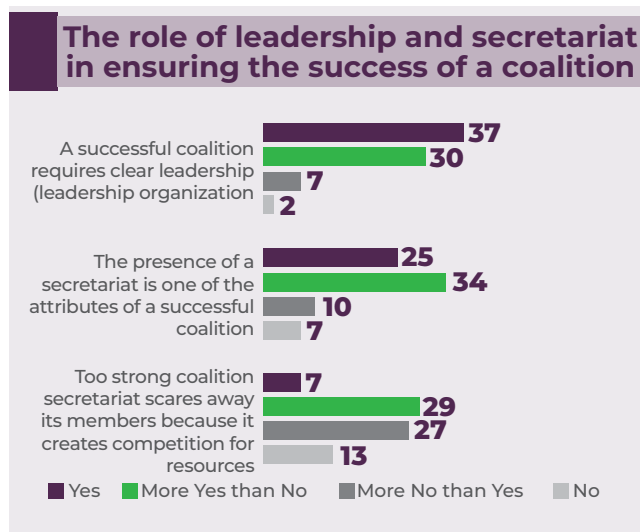
*Clear leadership and a secretariat play a very important role in ensuring the viability of the coalition, its focus and organization. They help to coordinate and direct the activities of the association. At the same time, a person or an organization can play the role of a leader in a coalition. The role of the leader, as well as the secretariat, can change from one CSO to another.*

*"The leader in a coalition plays the role of the front office, and the secretariat plays the role of the back office."<sup>16</sup>*

Strong leadership plays a critical role in the successful and effective work of coalitions of CSOs. Coalition leaders provide direction, coordination and resource mobilization to achieve common goals. They play an important role in uniting different parties, facilitate conflict resolution, stimulate and motivate participants, contributing to the formation of a cohesive and effective team. The majority of the respondents to the online survey largely agree (67 out of 76 responses) that a successful coalition requires clear leadership.

The coalition secretariat plays an important role in ensuring the effective work of the coalition. It is responsible for the organizational and administrative aspects of the activity, including meetings, documentation, communications and information management.

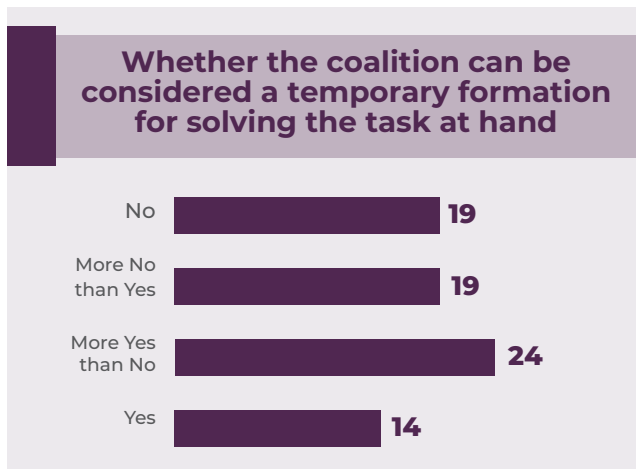
The secretariat coordinates meetings, prepares documents, keeps records and facilitates communication between coalition members. It is also responsible for ensuring access to information, sharing experiences and knowledge, which facilitates effective communication and joint work. Working in the close collaboration with the coalition leadership and members, the secretariat plays an important role in ensuring organizational stability and the successful achievement of the coalition's goals. More than half of the respondents do not consider a strong secretariat to be a risk that it will discourage coalition members by creating competition for resources.



**Fig. 11: Respondents' answers about the role of the leader and the secretariat in ensuring effective work of coalitions**

16 Quote based on the results of the in-depth interviews with different stakeholders

First of all, the coalition is created for a certain period of time (for example, within the framework of a specific project) and has clearly defined goals (expected results) joint activities. However, domestic examples of coalition functioning confirm that a coalition can eventually turn into an institution that will ensure its further development and functioning.



**Figure 12. Respondents' answers to the definition of a coalition as a temporary association**

*The success of the coalition is determined by its ability to adapt to new challenges and problems of the external environment that can unite the participants. There are a number of factors that can lead to the decline/termination of coalitions.*

Coalitions/networks of CSOs can collapse for a variety of reasons, including divergent goals and strategies, insufficient resources, conflicts between members, loss of support from key stakeholders, the need to revise strategies, and loss of leadership. These factors can cause tension in the coalition and lead to its disintegration, especially if not addressed in a timely and effective manner.

After analyzing the factors influencing the decline of coalitions of CSOs mentioned by the survey participants, they can be grouped into the following categories,

- **Financial problems and lack of resources:** lack of or insufficient funding, as well as bureaucratic difficulties and costs.
- **Ambiguity and divergence in the strategies and goals:** unclear purpose and mission, conflicts between actors, different organizational capacities, and divergent visions of goals.
- **Leadership and management problems:** lack of a leader, competition for leadership, lack of a management structure and those responsible for development.
- **Communication and organizational aspects:** insufficient communication, lack of unity and cohesion, lack of clear strategy and planning.
- **Changes in the internal and external environment:** change in the context of activities, change in goals, loss of relevance of the topic and problem that united the coalition members.
- **Human factors:** unwillingness of some members to invest in the development of the coalition, loss of motivation and initiative, personal conflicts and disagreements.

These categories reflect the main factors that contribute to the decline of coalitions of CSOs and can serve as a basis for further analysis and development of management strategies.



## Examples.

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- The success of the RPR (Reanimation Package of Reforms) coalition lies in its ability to bring together various CSOs and experts to work together on reforms, effective leadership, strategic approach to problem solving, active participation in policy-making, high level of professionalism and trust between the participants, as well as support from international partners and donors, which ensures its stability and influence in the process of reforming the country.
- The phenomenon of the Euromaidan SOS civic initiative as a self-organized group of human rights defenders, civic activists, and lawyers was its ability to quickly mobilize a large number of volunteers using innovative approaches to communication and coordination, as well as to maintain broad public support and international attention, which helped to draw attention to the problem of human rights violations and promote democratic change in Ukraine.
- The RISE Ukraine Coalition is an example of a successful union of Ukrainian and international civil society organizations, initiatives, government agencies and activists who use the association as a tool to promote transparency and accountability in the reconstruction and recovery process. The success of the RISE Coalition lies in its ability to effectively bring together diverse organizations and experts to work together on economic reforms, its professional approach to developing and implementing innovative solutions, strategic management, active participation in political processes, and the support of international partners and donors, which ensures the stability and influence of the coalition in implementing economic change.

## Conclusions:

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The results of the study confirmed Hypothesis 5. Successful CSOs are active and influential members of one or more networks/coalitions. Participation of CSOs in coalitions provides them with additional value, reputation and increased influence:

- Joining coalitions is an additional important factor for their successful activities, providing new opportunities and contributing to the influence on the sector and reputation. Information from the survey confirms this fact: 80% of survey participants confirmed that their organizations are members of one or more coalitions;
- CSOs form coalitions to increase their influence and efficiency in achieving common goals and objectives. By joining together, they have an opportunity to strengthen their positions by coordinating actions, sharing resources and skills. The survey results showed that the main benefits of participation in coalitions identified by the respondents are the establishment of additional contacts (41 responses) and the possibility of sharing experience and skills (39 responses). In addition, coalitions help CSOs to increase their influence on the sector (39 responses) by improving their effectiveness in advocacy and decision-making. They also help to increase their reputation in the sector (34 responses) and obtain additional financial resources (20 responses) by drawing more attention to their issues and problems and gaining more support;
- The existence of successful coalitions in the Ukrainian civil society is a sign of its maturity and development. They allow CSOs to increase their visibility and influence on the public, draw attention to important issues and receive support from the public and authorities. For successful coalitions, the following factors are important: shared values and trust of the participants, clear focus on solving a specific problem, and participation of strong and influential CSOs. The results of the study confirm that successful work of coalitions depends on strategic cooperation, clear definition of the problem and participation of key CSOs that can mobilize necessary resources;
- Clear leadership and an effective secretariat play a key role in the viability and organization of the activities of coalitions of CSOs. Coalition leaders provide direction, coordination and mobilization of resources to achieve common goals, while the secretariat is responsible for organizational and administrative aspects of the activities. They help to maintain organizational stability and successfully achieve the goals of the coalitions;
- The success of CSO coalitions depends on their ability to adapt to new challenges and problems in the external environment. Coalitions may wind down or decline for a variety of reasons, including divergent goals and strategies, financial problems, leadership and management issues, communication and organizational aspects, changes in the internal and external environment, and human factors. Timely identification and understanding of these issues can ensure the stability and effectiveness of coalitions in the future. The duration of coalitions' activity and their success are related to the purpose of their activities and their ability to achieve their goals. No typical timeframe for active work of coalitions was identified during the study. Moreover, the functioning of coalitions may evolve into institutional structures (unions, associations) that ensure their further development and functioning.

# Conclusions

The results of the study of the success/decline of CSOs and coalitions allow us to formulate key factors and factors that contribute to this process:

1. The study findings indicate that there is a clear set of internal organizational factors and characteristics that determine the success of civil society organizations (CSOs). The results revealed that CSO success is a complex concept. There is a focused set of factors that determine the success of CSOs. These factors, according to the respondents, include: the ability to adapt to changes, team spirit, professionalism, clearly defined mission and strategic management, partnership and effective communications.
2. An important characteristic of successful CSOs is not only effective leadership, but also team spirit, professionalism and ability to innovate. The results of the survey show that leadership, although important, is not a decisive factor for the success of CSOs. Successful activities of an organization require an effective and professional team that the leader can rely on. In addition, the study confirmed that successful CSOs are mostly active members of one or more coalitions and networks, which contributes to achieving the expected results in the sector.
3. The study also showed that both mature and young CSOs can be successful, although the factors that influence this success may differ. Both types of organizations have the potential to succeed given their strengths and approaches. Successful CSOs are organizations that are constantly learning and improving, which allows them to adapt to changes in the social, economic and political environment. Learning also supports a high level of efficiency, responsiveness to challenges and continuous improvement.
4. When studying the influence of the external factors on the termination or decline of CSOs' activities, it can be noted that adaptation of organizations to changes in the external environment in the current conditions is identified by domestic CSOs as one of the key factors of their stability and success. The pandemic and war, political change of leadership play a significant role in changing the priorities and strategies of many CSOs, which indicates the need for the constant adaptation.
5. Donors have a great influence on supporting the success of CSOs by providing financial, technical and organizational support. Their long-term support to CSOs and institutional programs contribute to the development of organizations, support the sustainability and success of CSOs, and promote the development of policies and procedures. The relations between CSOs and donors are also built on the basis of partnership and mutual interests. Experienced CSOs with a clear strategy and high standards of governance have an advantage in receiving long-term support from donors.
6. Participation in regional networks and coalitions is an important condition for the success of CSOs, but it is not a determinant of success. Active participation in coalitions creates additional opportunities and enhances the success of CSOs, but this is determined by their goals and specifics of their activities.
7. The results of the study underline the need for flexibility, adaptability and strategic leadership in the management of public organizations so that they can effectively respond to changes in the environment and ensure their stability and influence. The majority of CSOs represented in the survey (at least 84% of respondents) are facing periods of slowdown or some decline in activity. This can be part of the life cycle of the organization or could be caused by various factors.
8. The survey results showed that typical factors that influence the slowdown or decline of CSOs' activities include unforeseen circumstances, financial problems, burnout and fatigue of participants, human resources problems, bureaucratic difficulties and loss of trust in the leadership, as well as the lack of grant projects and changes in development strategies. It is important to respond to these challenges in a timely manner and develop strategies for the organization's behavior, depending on the situation. This may

include revising strategies and reprioritizing, seeking new sources of funding, managing volunteers and staff, improving communication and rebuilding trust, and stimulating innovation and strategic vision.

9. Organizations often decide on different strategies for slowing down or changing activities, such as partial curtailment of activities, reprioritization, or temporary/completely ceasing activities. Slowing down CSO activities can also be a part of the life cycle of an organization and therefore requires wise leadership and management.
10. The results of the study show that successful CSOs are actively engaged in coalition work. This is seen as one of the strategic steps aimed at increasing their influence and effectiveness. Joining coalitions allows CSOs to expand their capacities. It creates new ways of cooperation, exchange of resources and skills, which contributes to more successful realization of their missions and goals.
11. Coalitions allow CSOs to strengthen their position in the sector through joint coordination of actions. They become more influential actors, which improves their reputation and opens up new opportunities. Participation in coalitions promotes mutual support and joint work between CSOs. This makes their activities more coordinated and efficient, ensuring more successful solution of common problems.
12. The existence of active and successful coalitions in civil society is a sign of its maturity and development. The study points to several key factors for the success of coalitions, such as shared values and trust between the participants, clear focus on solving specific problems, and active participation of strong and influential CSOs.
13. Effective leadership and an efficient secretariat are key to the viability and success of coalitions. They ensure coordination of actions, mobilize resources and ensure organizational stability.
14. The success of coalitions depends on their ability to adapt to changing conditions and challenges in the external environment. This requires constant analysis and response to new trends and issues. Thus, participation in coalitions becomes a strategic step for CSOs, contributing to their development, strengthening their influence and achieving common goals in the civil society.

## Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, several recommendations can be formulated to support the success and efficiency of CSOs:

### For donors:

1. Continue to support successful and capable CSOs, including through the provision of organizational development grants for both mature and young CSOs. Provide long-term financial, technical and organizational support to CSOs, supporting their success and building an influential civil society sector.
2. Encourage CSOs to participate in the coalitions and networks, especially regional/local ones, by providing funding and support for joint projects. This will help improve coordination and increase the influence of CSOs in local decision-making.
3. Donors should invest in the creation and development of information platforms that will facilitate the exchange of knowledge and best practices among CSOs. This will help organizations learn from each other, implement proven approaches in their activities, and share successful practices.
4. Donors can stimulate the development of networks and platforms for CSOs to interact with government agencies and the private sector, which will strengthen partnerships and increase the effectiveness of addressing social issues.

5. Mentorship programs should also be introduced and supported, where more experienced organizations can share their knowledge and experience with new and young CSOs, contributing to their faster growth and development.

#### **For CSOs:**

1. CSOs should constantly adapt to changes in the external environment. This includes revising strategies, changing priorities and implementing innovative approaches. A dynamic external environment requires constant consideration of its peculiarities and readiness for changes;
2. Invest resources and time in team building and training and building team spirit in organizations. Successful CSOs should have professional teams with a high level of team spirit. Effective leadership should be supported by a strong and competent team.
3. CSOs should be organizations that are constantly learning and improving. This helps them to be more effective, respond to challenges and improve their work. It is also important to develop and implement effective strategies for managing volunteers, including training, motivation and support. It is also important to develop and implement monitoring and evaluation systems that will allow for regular assessment of performance and make necessary adjustments.
4. CSOs should be engaged in coalitions and networks. This creates new opportunities for cooperation, exchange of resources and skills, which contributes to the successful realization of missions and goals.

#### **For coalitions:**

1. Coalitions should clearly define the shared values and goals that unite their members and develop common strategies to achieve them. Effective internal communication between coalition members is key to coordinating actions and ensuring consistency in project implementation. It is important to encourage the active participation of all members in joint activities and projects, ensuring equality and consideration of the interests of all the participants.
2. To be successful, coalitions must have an effective secretariat that coordinates activities, mobilizes resources, and ensures organizational stability. It is important to work on building trust and mutual support among the participants, which will contribute to more effective and coordinated work.
3. Active search for new opportunities for cooperation, both locally and internationally, will also help to expand the impact of coalitions and achieve their goals.
4. Coalitions should work actively to increase their visibility and influence through active communication with the public and media engagement. This will help not only to draw attention to important social issues, but also to build trust in the coalition and its members.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1. Questionnaire

This questionnaire was developed by the expert, Dr. Ruslana Rudnytska, as part of the study of the reasons for the success, decline or termination of the powerful CSOs and networks/coalitions, which is supported by the ISAR Ednannia within the framework of the project “Sectoral Support Initiative for Ukrainian Civil Society”, implemented by the ISAR Ednannia in consortium with the Ukrainian Center of Independent Political Research and Centre for Democracy and Rule of Law thanks to the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Filling out the questionnaire will take no more than 10 minutes of your time. The results will be summarized and presented in an analytical note based on the results of the study.

We thank you in advance for your time and for filling out the questionnaire.

### I. Introductory part of the questionnaire

#### 1. Please indicate the sector that your CSO represents:

- Anti-corruption activities and advocacy .....
  - Strengthening democratic mechanisms .....
  - Charity activities .....
  - Organization dealing with the consequences of war .....
  - Reconstruction and rehabilitation .....
  - Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

#### 2. Please indicate the duration of your CSO's activity:

- Less than 5 years .....
- 5-10 years.....
- More than 10 years.....

#### 3. How many employees are currently working in your CSO?

- Less than 5 people .....
- 5-10 people .....
- More than 10 people .....

## II. Questionnaire on factors of success of CSOs

### 4. Do you consider your organization to be successful?

- Yes .....
- No .....
- More yes than no .....
- More no than yes .....

### 5. Please indicate 3 key factors of organizational development that primarily determine the success of your CSO:

- Clearly defined mission and strategic management.....
- Successful leadership .....
- Ability to adapt.....
- Established partnerships and cooperation with the key players in the sector .....
- Influence and recognized role in the sector .....
- Financial viability and resource mobilization.....
- Effective communication with the stakeholders.....
- Other \_\_\_\_ (please specify) .....

### 6. Has your organization experienced periods of slowdown/decline?

- Yes .....
- No .....
- If Yes \_\_\_\_\_

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### 6a. What factors led to the slowdown/decline of your CSO's activities?

Please provide a brief answer: \_\_\_\_\_

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**7. Please rate the following statement:**

<b>Statement</b> (Do you agree with the statement below?)		<b>No</b>	<b>More No than Yes</b>	<b>More Yes than No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>1</b>	CSOs that are trained demonstrate better results and sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2</b>	The presence of the regional branches of CSOs is a factor of sustainability of the organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3</b>	Donors prefer long-term support to effective CSOs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4</b>	The role of a CSO leader is crucial in maintaining the successful activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>5</b>	Successful CSOs are active and influential members of one or more networks/coalitions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**III. Questionnaire on success factors of networks/coalitions**

**8. Is your CSO a member of a network/coalition?**

Yes .....

No .....

If Yes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**9. What benefits does your CSO receive from participation in the network/coalition (please select 2 key options)?**

Increased reputation in the sector .....

Additional financial resources .....

Establishment of the additional communications/contacts .....

Increased influence on the sector (through participation and engagement) .....

Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



**10. In your opinion, what factors influence the decline of the coalition?**

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**11. Please rate the following statement:**

<b>Statement</b> (Do you agree with the statement below?)		<b>No</b>	<b>More No than Yes</b>	<b>More Yes than No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>1</b>	A successful coalition requires clear leadership (leadership organization)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2</b>	The presence of an organizing committee is one of the attributes of a successful coalition/network	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3</b>	A successful coalition/network is built on the common values and trust of its members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4</b>	A successful coalition/network requires participation of a sufficient number of strong and influential CSOs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>5</b>	A successful coalition is formed around a clear problem and goals to solve it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>6</b>	A coalition/network is a temporary formation for solving a specific problem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>7</b>	The existence of successful coalitions/networks is an indicator of the maturity and development of the civil society	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>8</b>	Too strong a coalition secretariat scares away its members, as it creates competition for resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



The ISAR EDNANIA knowledge clearing house is an online database of research and materials dedicated to civil society in Ukraine. The database is open and contains current, evidence-based data.



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Civil Society in the Context of War:  
Sociological Research 2023-2024



Towards European Integration



CSOs Working in the Veteran Sphere



Challenges and Needs of the Volunteer Sector



