

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT CONTEXT AND CIVIL SOCIETY SCENARIOS



Kyiv - June 17, 2025



CIVIL SOCIETY IN UKRAINE: A UNIQUE ROLE BEYOND THE WATCHDOG



- Ukrainian CSOs go beyond the watchdog role - they are implementers, not just advocates
- They deliver humanitarian aid, rebuild infrastructure, support the army, and offer public services
- Over **50%** are involved in social service provision, often without state funding or formal recognition
- ISAR Ednannia contributes to systemic reform, integrating CSOs into the social service system



KEY CHALLENGES FOR CIVIL SOCIETY 2025



War and security risks

- Many CSOs operate on the frontline or in occupied areas – often the only ones present where the state cannot reach

Newcomers without experience

- Many post-2022 CSOs lack capacity. The sector needs to integrate them into the broader ecosystem for sustainable recovery

Limited cooperation with central government

- Engagement is often superficial or tokenistic, with weak access to decision-making

Under-recognition in social services

- Though over half provide social support, only 12% are officially registered as service providers



AFTER THE USAID CUTS – A SECTOR AT RISK



- Over \$3B in aid suspended, affecting civil society, governance, media, and recovery programs
- Many CSOs lost core funding, forcing them to scale down or operate without salaries, logistics, or premises
- Support for independent media and local governance initiatives was sharply reduced
- Critical infrastructure and development programs—including community resilience, health system reform, and local capacity-building—were halted mid-course
- Long-term civil society development efforts have been disrupted, with training, advocacy, and institutional growth paused or cancelled



EU INTEGRATION – UNLOCKING CIVIL SOCIETY POTENTIAL



Ukraine's CSOs are eager to support reforms and EU accession, but many still face capacity gaps in policy engagement, advocacy and fundraising:

- Barriers include: complex procedures, limited awareness of EU tools, and no direct access to EU funds
- Media requires renewed support

What's needed:

- Structured support for CSO capacity-building
- Direct funding mechanisms for local CSOs
- Stronger inclusion in EU-aligned reform and recovery planning



CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHS



- **Unity:** CSOs form networks to mobilize resources and deliver aid, supporting veterans and recovery
- **Resilience:** Operate independently, adapting to crises despite donor exits like USAID
- **Trust:** High public and international confidence due to transparency and alignment with shared values
- **Expertise:** Skilled professionals drive evidence-based advocacy in human rights, education, and health
- **Volunteering:** Volunteers bolster CS efforts, delivering critical services and reforms



CIVIL SOCIETY WEAKNESSES



- **Donor dependency:** Overreliance on foreign funding; weak self-financing limits sustainability
- **Fragmentation:** Competitive culture hinders structured collaboration among CSOs
- **Short-term focus:** Tactical actions overshadow long-term strategic planning
- **Brain drain:** Migration and low youth engagement reduce innovation



FORESIGHT INSIGHTS

Truskavets, April 29-30, 2025

The event Looking into the Future of Ukrainian Democracy

80 participants from all sectors



PESTEL FACTORS

Political: EU integration demands new standards; weak CSO-government dialogue

Economic: Focus on basic needs limits strategic growth; donor dependency risks instability

Sociological: High social cohesion but war fatigue and migration strain resources

Technological: AI boosts efficiency but cybersecurity and digital divide pose challenges

Ecological: War-related contamination poses significant challenges

Legal: Administrative pressures and unclear lobbying laws restrict CSO advocacy



FORESIGHT INSIGHTS: KEY SCENARIOS

1. **Autopilot:** Stable but vulnerable conflict, societal polarisation, growing VPK.
2. **Strength Test:** Escalating combat, stable but tired support, deep societal depression.
3. **Still Alive:** Stable combat, reduced US support, European aid persists.
4. **Cautiously Optimistic:** Declining combat, stable support, gradual recovery.
5. **Early Recovery:** Reduced combat, conditional peace, infrastructure rebuilding.
6. **Geopolitical Solitude:** No external support, economic collapse, authoritarian shift.

Key Uncertainties: Intensity of combat (decline or increase); EU/world support (stable/growing or decreasing/ending).



UKRAINE'S DEMOCRATIC DOCTRINE: SAFEGUARDING GLOBAL FREEDOM



As global democracy faces rising authoritarianism, disinformation, and instability, Ukraine stands not only as a battlefield for sovereignty but as the frontline defender of democratic values.

The Doctrine of Ukrainian Democracy presents a strategic vision positioning Ukraine as a pillar of global democratic resilience, emphasizing:

- Ukraine's fight against Russia is a civilizational struggle—testing whether democracy can endure amidst war, disruption, and authoritarian pressure.
- Ukraine's accession to the EU is key not only for national reform, but also for the future cohesion and credibility of Europe itself.
- Ukraine offers a model for resisting disinformation, fostering post-war renewal, and strengthening social cohesion under extreme conditions.
- Victory and reform in Ukraine are vital for the survival of the global democratic order.



TO SAFEGUARD UKRAINE'S DEMOCRATIC PATH AND CONTRIBUTE TO GLOBAL STABILITY, THE DOCTRINE OUTLINES CLEAR ROLES FOR:



FOR UKRAINIAN STATE

- Ensure transparent, efficient governance
- Advance EU integration reforms
- Embed democratic values into post-war recovery, focusing on citizen participation and equity

FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

- Lead in recovery and reform efforts
- Promote social cohesion and democratic value
- Serve as a watchdog and a bridge between citizens and state institutions

FOR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

- Sustain support for Ukraine as a democracy frontier
- Invest in recovery and EU integration
- Collaborate with Ukraine to counter disinformation, defend human rights, and shape a more resilient global order

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