

# ASKOLD & DIR PROGRAM

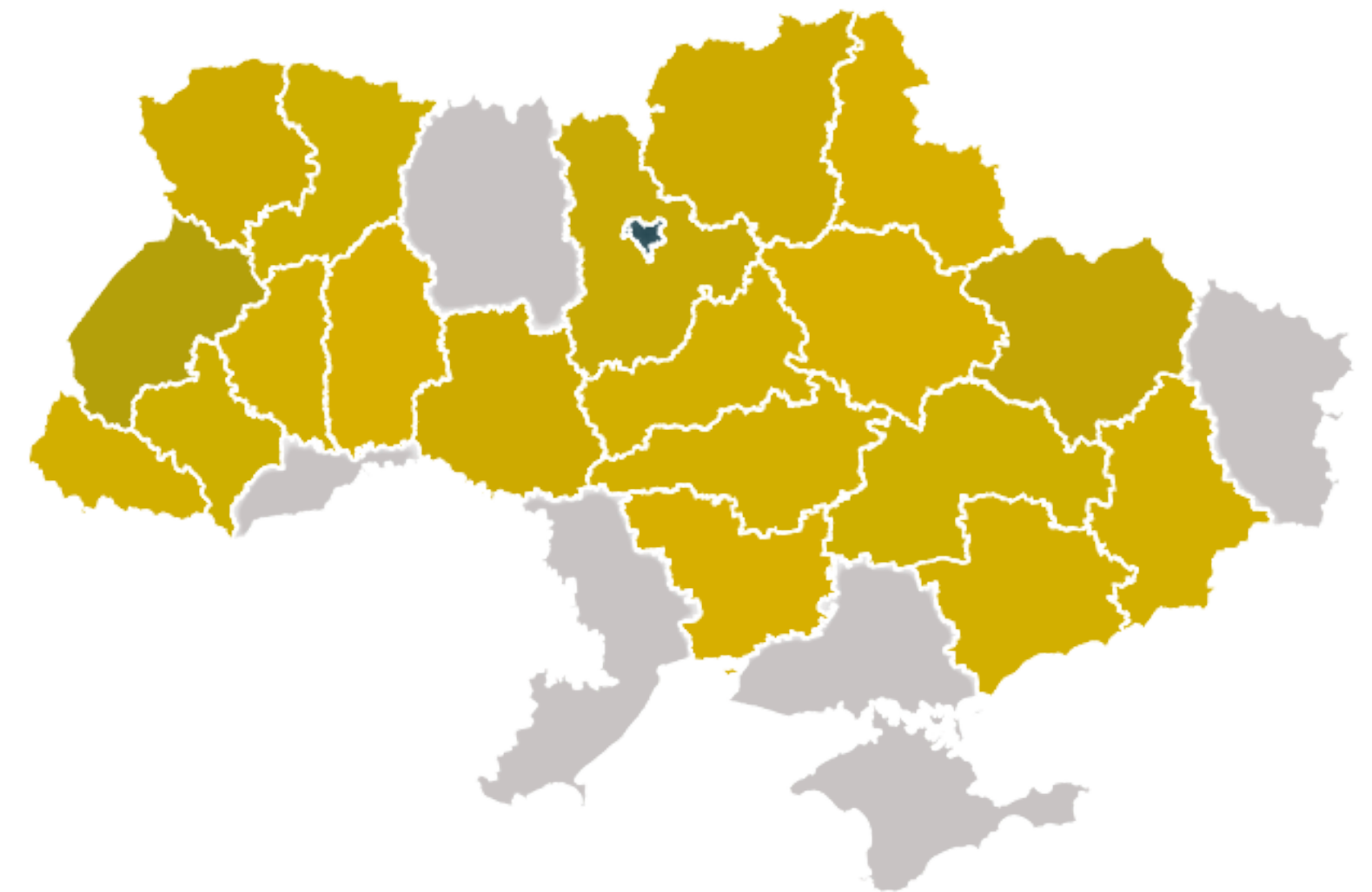
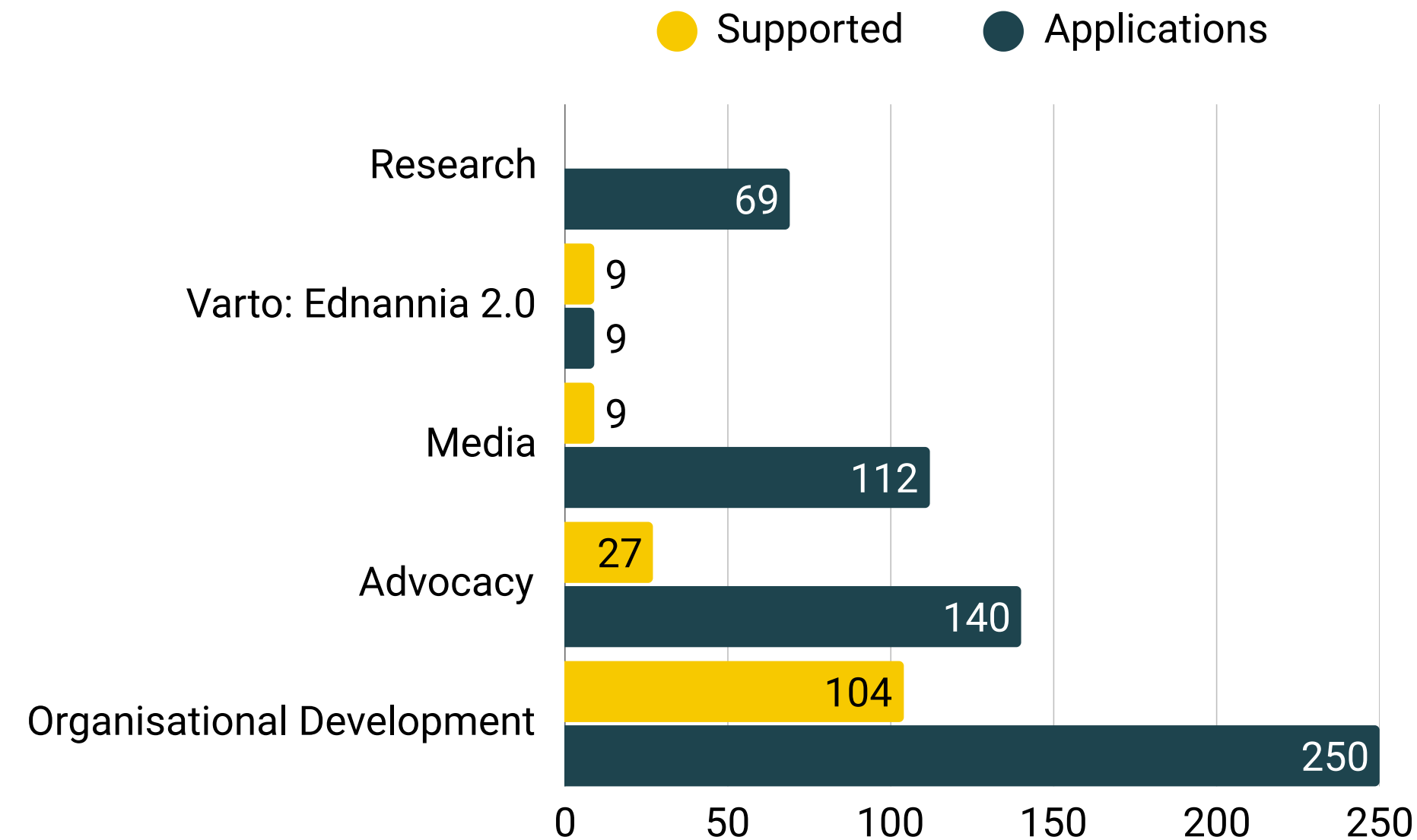


progress  
plans  
lessons learned

# CALLS FOR PROPOSALS & SELECTED GRANTEES

## Grant Applications vs Supported Projects

The results of grant competitions implemented between March and June 2025



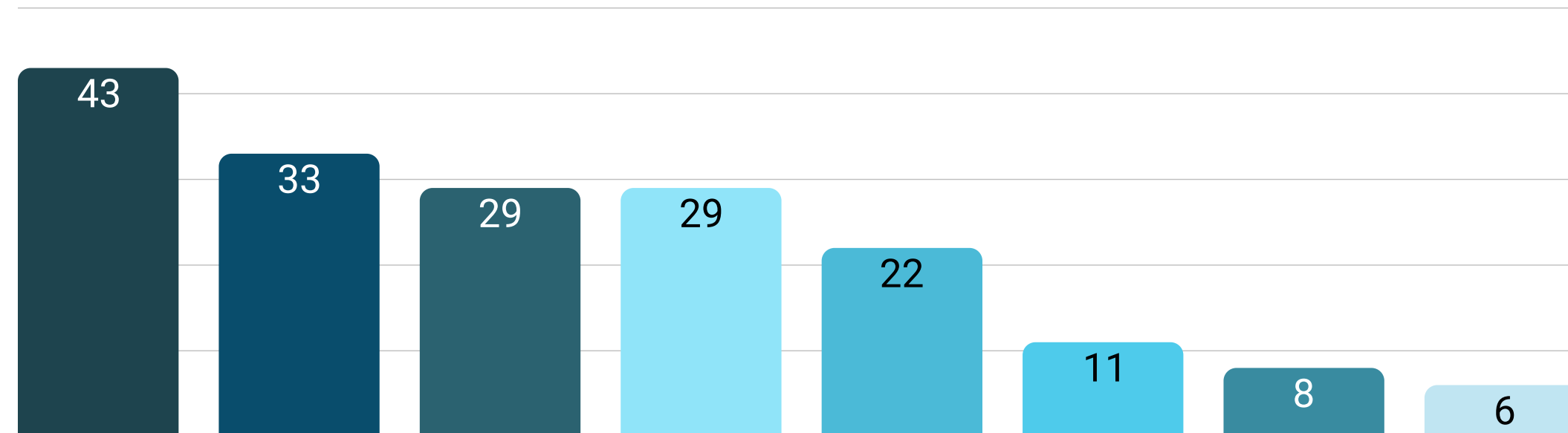
149 CSOs from 19 oblasts and Kyiv City

# TYPES OF ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTED

## Distribution of CSOs Target Groups

% from all supported CSOs (149)

- Education (37%)
- Democracy/Governance Support (28%)
- Community Development (25%)
- Youth & Children (25%)
- Vulnerable Groups (19%)
- Recovery (9,4%)
- European Integration (6,9%)
- Veterans (5%)



Percentage of CSOs meeting  
**Cross-Cutting Issues: 38%**  
from all supported grants

- Anti-Corruption (0,7%)
- Human Rights & Protection (25%)
- Women & Gender Equality (5,4%)
- Climat Change & Environment (7%)

# ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

## Marketplace of OD Services - A Game-Changer for Ukrainian CSOs:

- Demand-Driven and CSO-Led
- Tailored and Flexible
- Boosting Strategic Resilience
- Trusted and Transparent
- National Reach, Local Roots

250

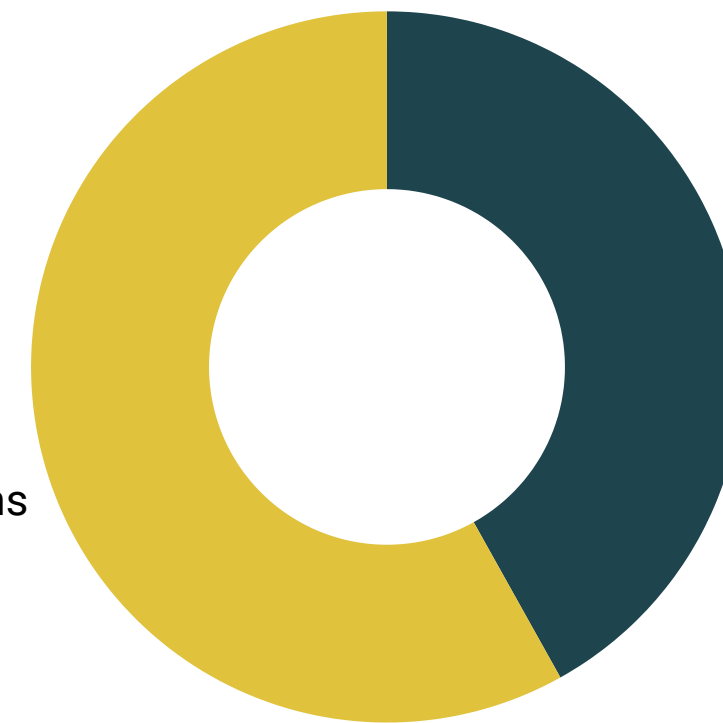
Grant  
Applications

104

CSOs  
Supported

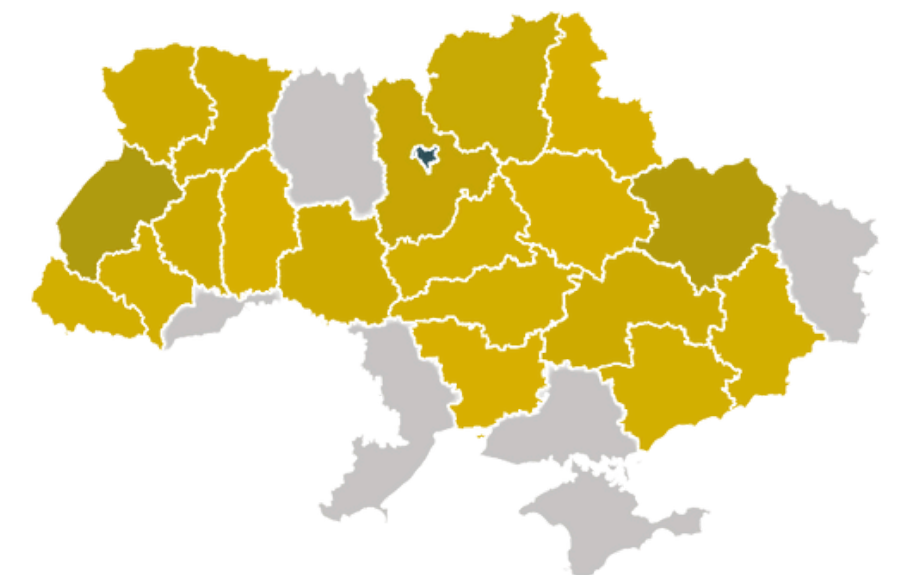
19

Oblasts and  
Kyiv City



Experienced organizations  
58.1%

Newly established CSOs  
41.9%



<https://home.ednannia.ua/en/orgdevelopment>

# OD GRANTS OBSERVATIONS

## Many new CSOs face major challenges:

- Lack of experience receiving grants
- No prior donor experience
- No established policies

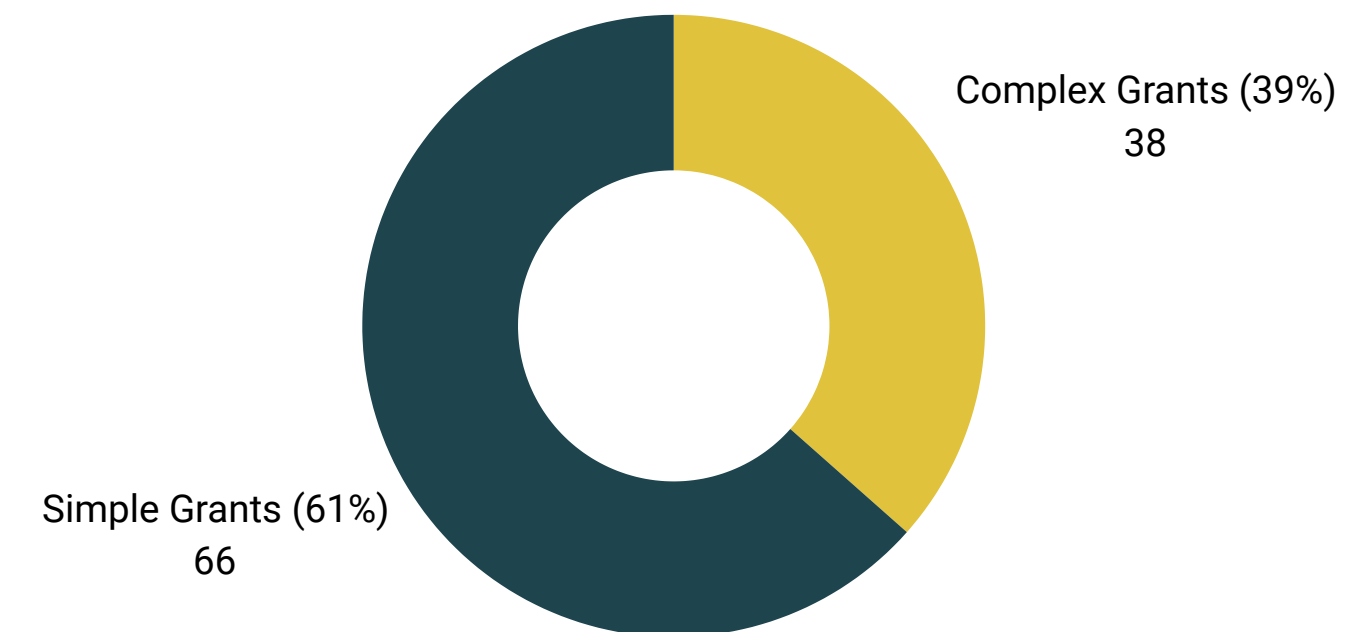
## Growing demand for:

- Digital tools & AI integration
- Subscriptions for accounting, e-documents, cybersecurity
- Web accessibility & inclusion

## Our response:

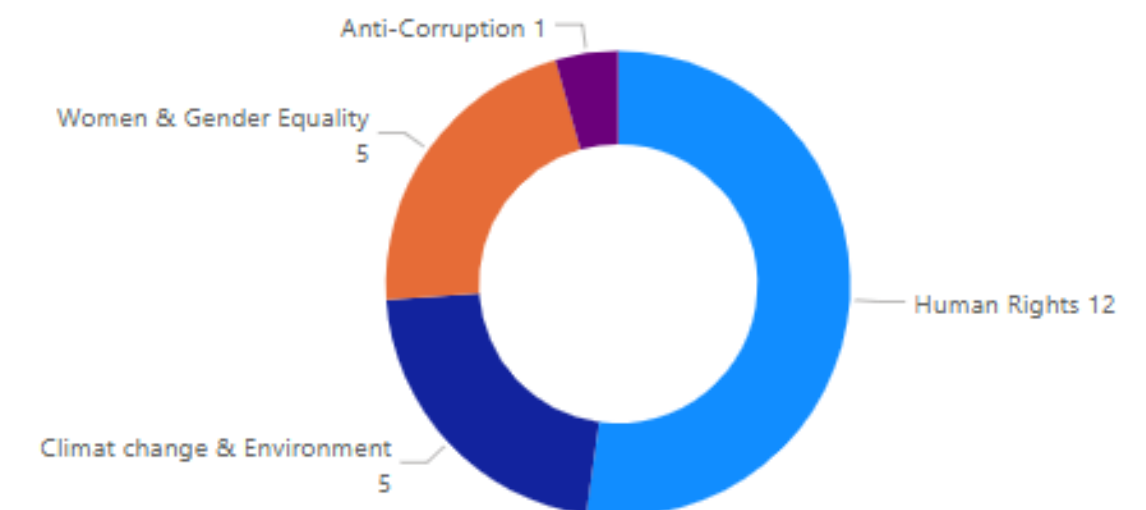
- Monthly onboarding sessions
- Practical templates and instructions
- Plan to adapt the Marketplace platform

## Types of Organisational Development Grants Awarded



Simple Grants include one capacity development service  
Complex Grants include two or more services combined

## Cross-cutting issues



# ADVOCACY GRANTS

**Strengthening Ukrainian CSOs' advocacy to influence decisions, shape policies, and promote democratic governance via local and national campaigns**

## Priorities:

- Improve CSO's legal environment and decision-making role via monitoring and advocacy
- Advocate systemic changes for recovery, democracy, and reforms
- Promote human rights, governance, and inclusive community recovery
- Represent CSO interests internationally and raise awareness of democratic values

**140**

Grant Applications

**27**

CSOs Supported

**5**

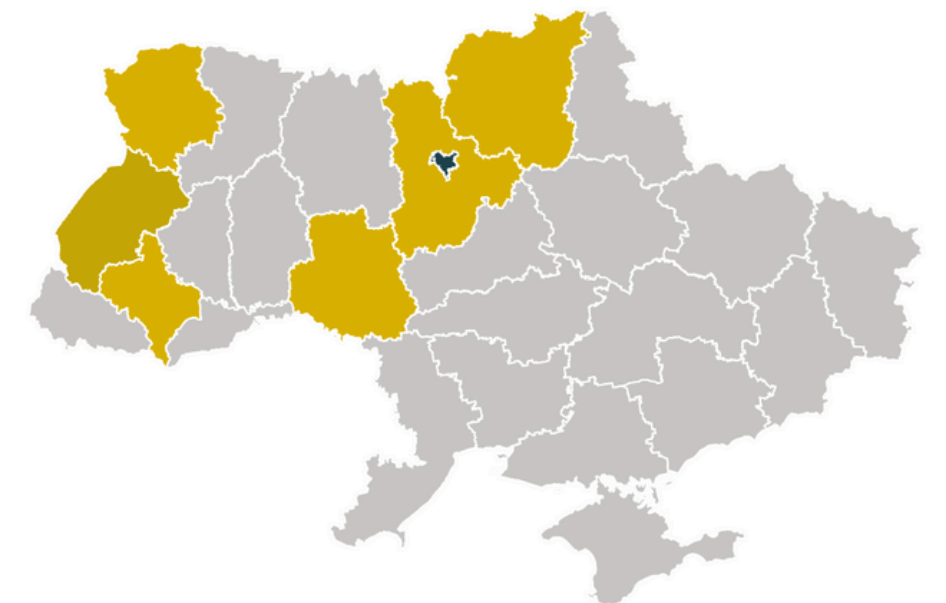
Oblasts and Kyiv City

**16.3**

Mln, NOK

## TOP-5 CSOs Advocacy Topics

- Democracy/Governance
- Reforms
- Recovery
- Local Governance
- Human Rights and Protection



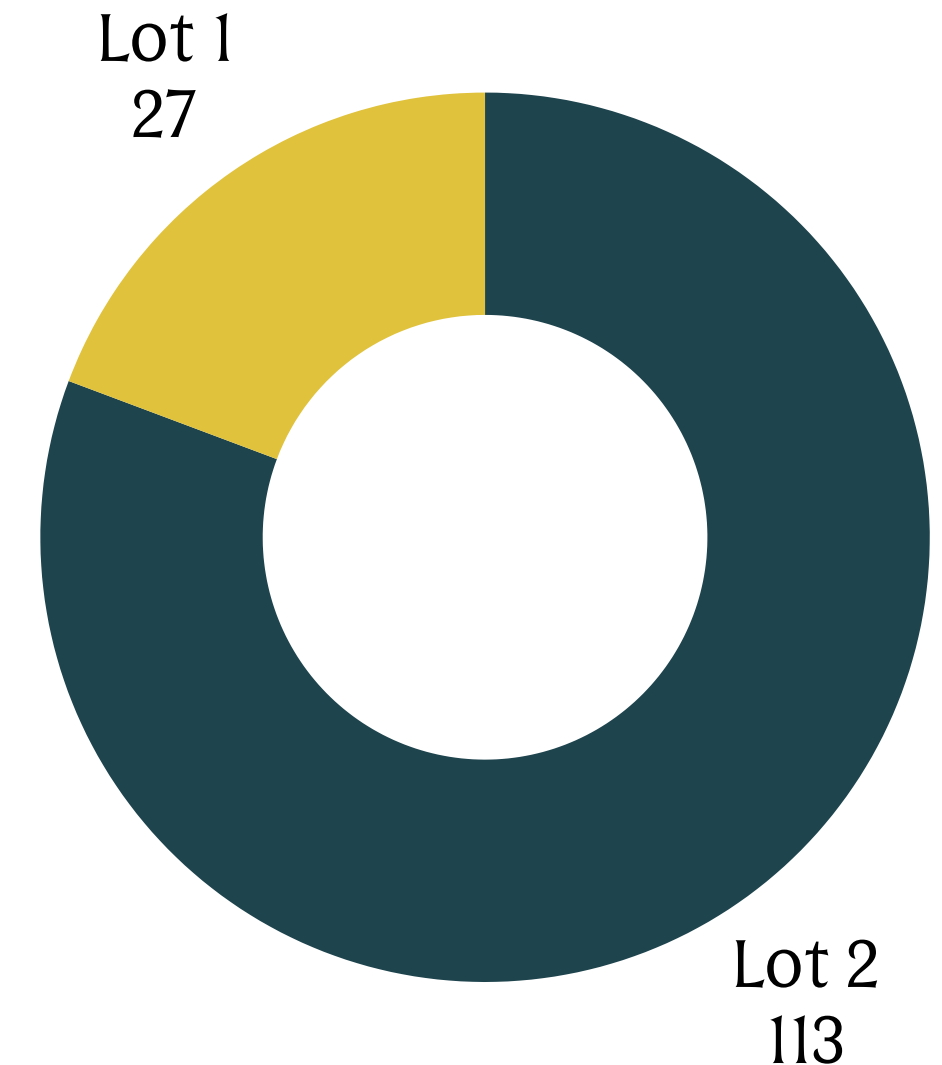
# ADVOCACY GRANTS

## LOT 1. Improving the legal environment for civil society

### Objectives:

- Creating a favorable legal environment for CSO activities through monitoring, analyzing legislation, and advocating for change;
- Strengthening CSO participation in decision-making at the national and local levels;
- Advocating for systemic changes in the interests of society with the participation of CSOs, the state, and communities;
- Representing the interests of Ukrainian CSOs in international advocacy.

7 organizations are supported under Lot 1. The grant winners' state partners include the **Ministry of Social Policy, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Members of Parliament, and local authorities**



# ADVOCACY GRANTS



## Examples of supported CSOs of Lot 1

Support has been provided to civil society organizations with a proven ability to influence public policy at the national level

### CENTRE FOR DEMOCRACY AND RULE OF LAW



#### **Develops the State Target Program for the Development of Volunteering until 2030.**

In partnership with the Ministry of Social Policy and the National Social Service, the government receives advocacy, expert, and informational support

### UKRAINIAN CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT POLITICAL RESEARCH



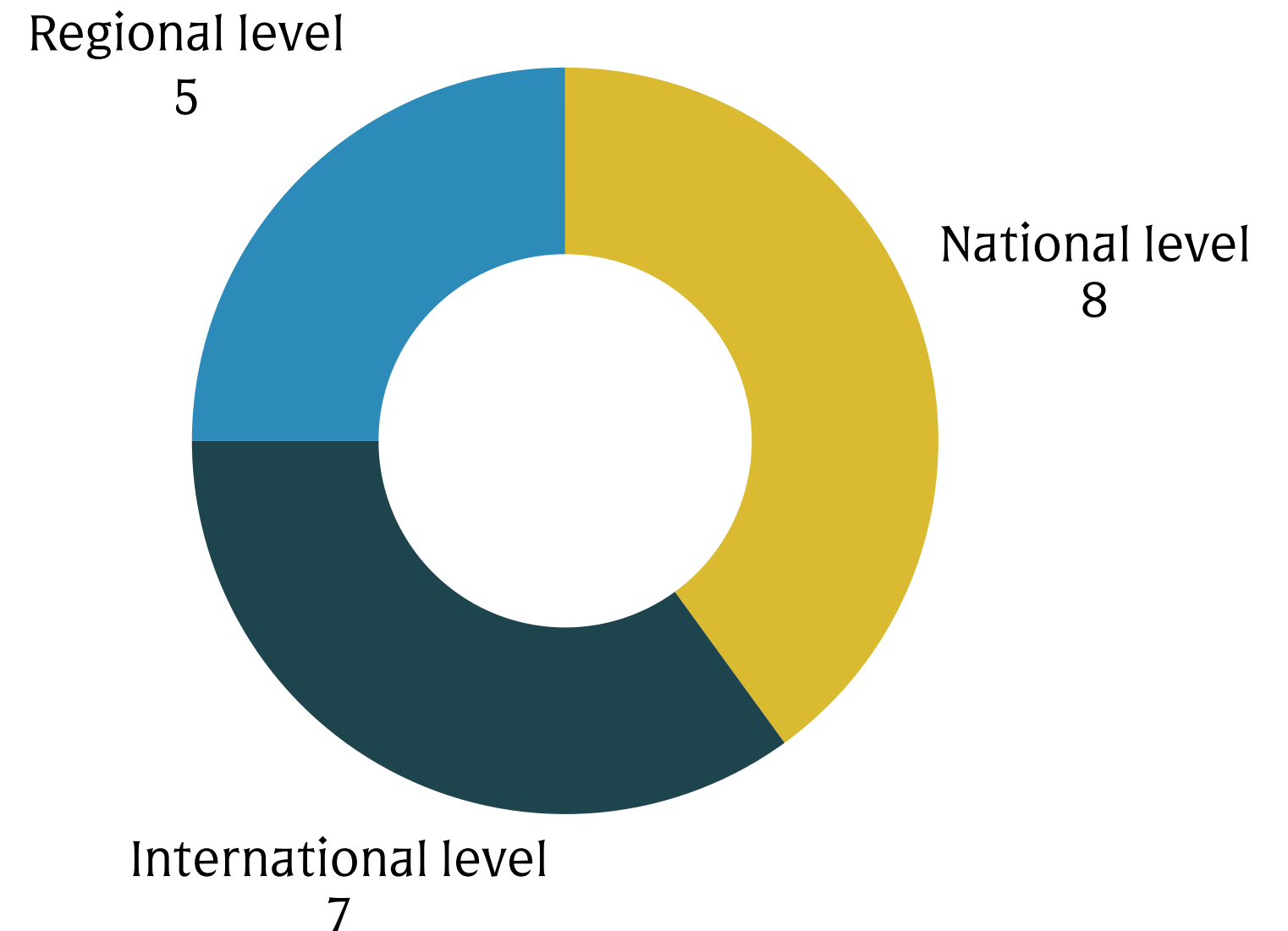
**Introduces online registration of CSOs through “Diia”** and deregulates the sector. The project aims to optimize the state system of CSO registration, abolish VAT on social services, and digitize CSO management

# ADVOCACY GRANTS

## LOT 2. Institutional support for CSOs engaged in advocacy activities in the areas of recovery, democracy, and reforms

### Objectives:

- Strengthening the organizational and operational capacity of CSOs
- Protecting human rights through advocacy
- Implementing democratic practices and engaging citizens
- Advocating for fair community recovery
- Promoting key reforms (justice, anti-corruption, decentralization)
- Strengthening international advocacy



# ADVOCACY GRANTS

## Examples of supported CSOs of Lot 2

### FOREST INITIATIVES AND COMMUNITIES

**Stopping illegal forest logging by updating criminal legislation**, introducing a single reporting form for all forest users, and involving communities in monitoring and controlling the state of forests.

### LA STRADA-UKRAINE

**Supporting women's and feminist organizations in conducting advocacy campaigns on the needs of female military personnel and women from military families**, strengthening their participation in recovery and decision-making at the local and national levels.

### THE LEAGUE OF THE STRONG

**The right to work without restrictions.** Advocacy for the implementation of a new law on the employment of **people with disabilities**: clear rules for employers, standards for reasonable accommodation, and raising public awareness.

# ADVOCACY GRANTS

## Examples of supported CSOs of Lot 2

KATERYNA OSADCHA  
FOUNDATION



**Ukraine Recovery**  
**Conference**  
10-11 July 2025 - Rome, Italy 

- Presentation of a new model for strategic career guidance
- Special Human Capital Booth podcast with key stakeholders
- Policy recommendations for the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Economy, educational platforms, and donors



# MEDIA GRANTS

112

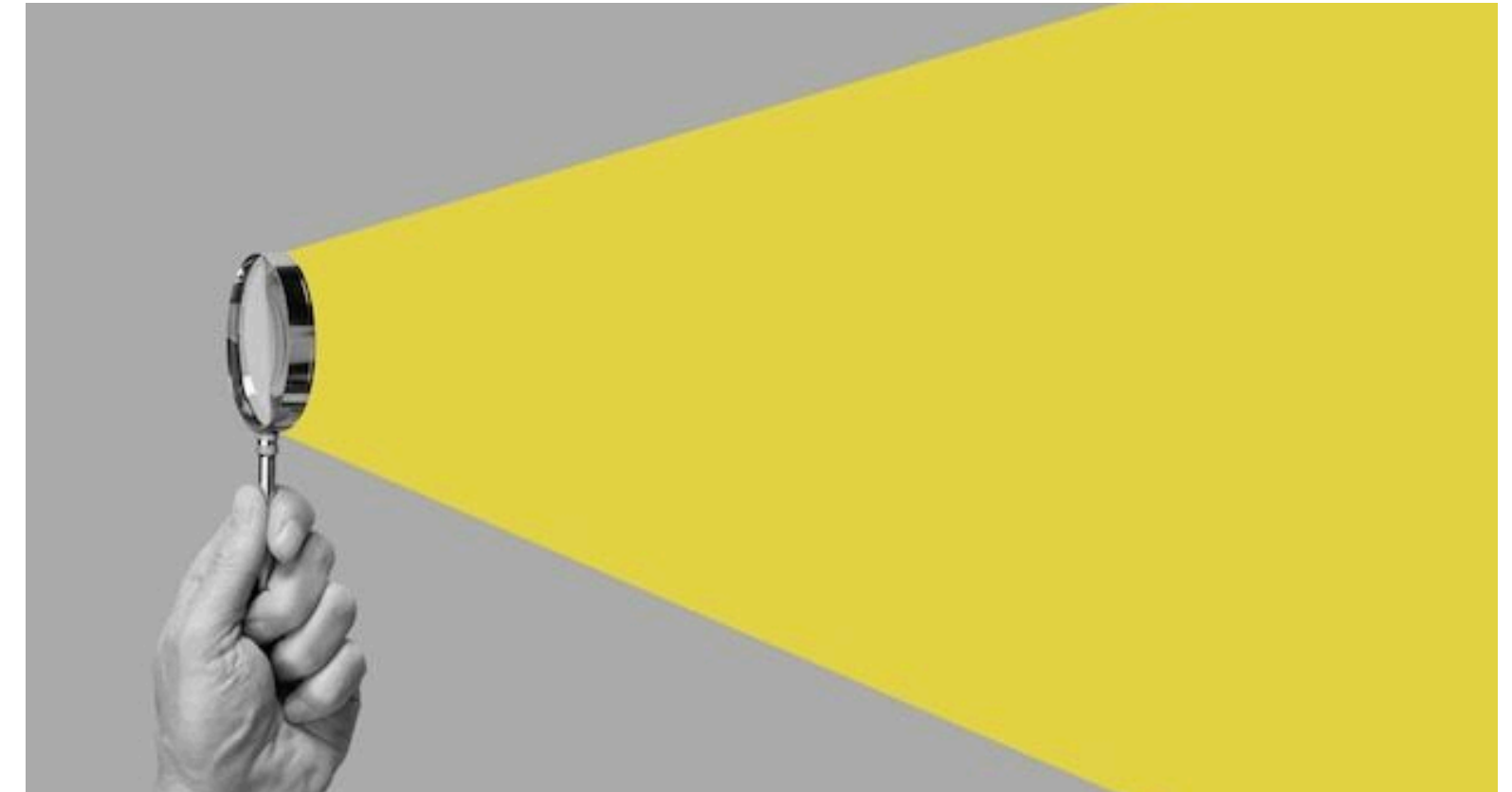
Grant  
Applications

9

CSOs  
Supported

2

Oblasts and  
Kyiv City



## The contest includes two lots:

- Promotion of Ukrainian Civil Society in Ukraine and abroad
- Support for Preserving Ukraine's Democracy and Resilience during wartime

## Challenges identified:

- Many applicants were not media CSOs
- Lot 2 proposals lacked diversity and originality

## Lesson learned:

- Need for clearer guidelines, more examples, and emphasis on creative formats.

# MEDIA GRANTS

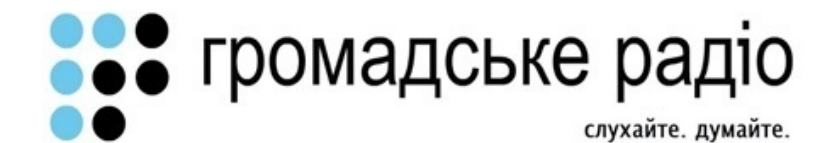
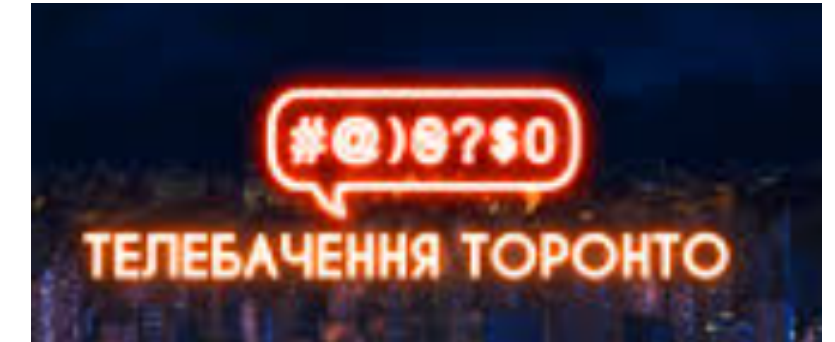
## Grantees Overview

### 9 projects selected:

- 5 under Lot 1, 4 under Lot 2

Implemented by independent media and NGOs with proven content quality, wide reach and public trust

- Mostly **national/inter-regional**; only 1 regional (Zakarpattia)
- 8 projects have already started implementation in June



# MEDIA GRANTS

## Focus of Supported Initiatives

### Projects aim to:

- Build new narratives on civil society,
- Visualize international support,
- Motivate public engagement.

Some focus on covering **the role of specific population groups (veterans, women, adolescents) in Ukrainian society's wartime unity and resilience.**

**2 projects target foreign audiences** to sustain global attention.

**Organizational development:** strategic planning, fundraising, reader communities, English-language website version etc.

**All initiatives promote the Askold & Dîr Fund**



# MEDIA GRANTS

## Interview Stage Insights

Grantees showed strong interest in broader Ukraine–Scandinavia themes



Example of **Ukrainian Witness**, who updated topics for videos within the project:

- the story of allies from Sweden/Norway who are involved in the defence of our country;
- a report on the equipment provided to Ukraine by Sweden and Norway and the specifics of its operation;
- a video study on the use of Scandinavian symbols and rituals by Ukrainian defenders.

## Initial tendency to create separate content sections

ISAR Ednannia recommended to integrate into existing categories for better visibility and reach

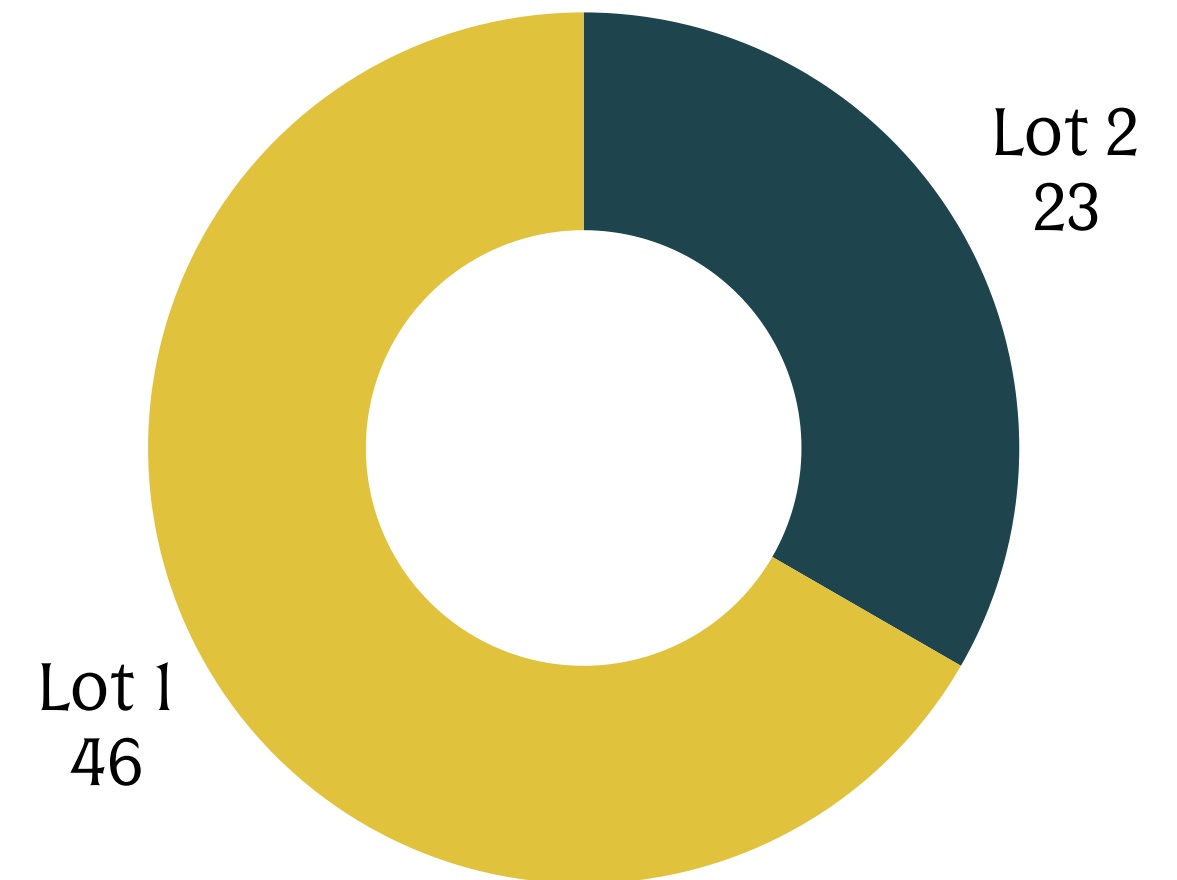
# RESEARCH GRANTS

Grant applications are accepted every 2 months

**Objective:** support research and analytical activities of CSOs to strengthen reforms, recovery, and democratic development in Ukraine amid wartime conditions.

- Lot 1. Research for Reforms, Recovery, and Civil Society
- Lot 2. Strengthening the institutional capacity of CSOs in the field of research and analysis

**69** Grant Applications



# VETERAN CSOs GRANTS

**Varto: Ednannia 2.0 Grants for CSOS is co-funded in partnership with the Ukrainian Veterans Foundation under the Ministry of Veterans Affairs**

## Support includes:

- Organizational development of veteran and pro-veteran CSOs
- Researching the needs of veterans and their families
- Advocating for the rights of veterans and their families
- Promoting veterans' recovery and reintegration into active community life

9

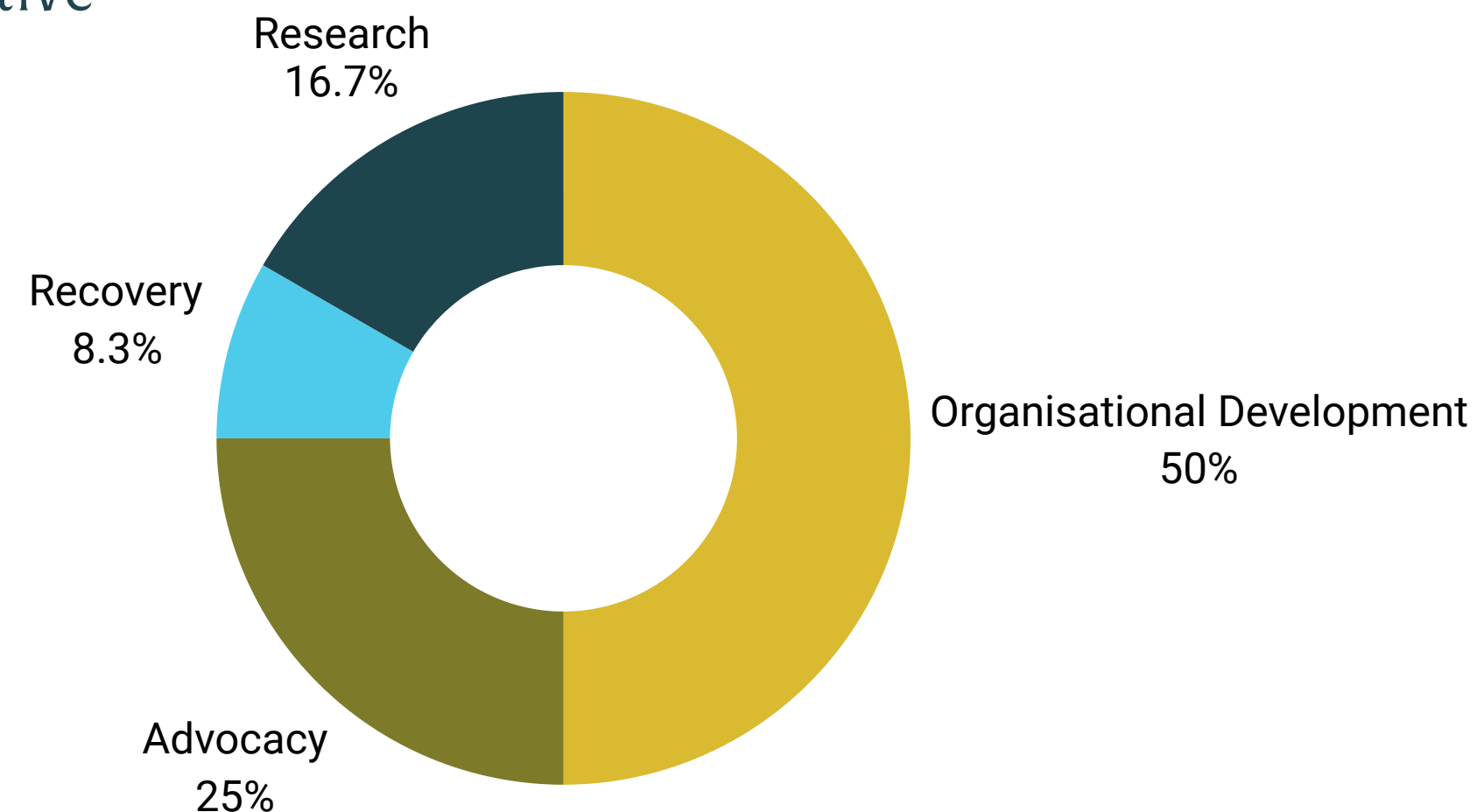
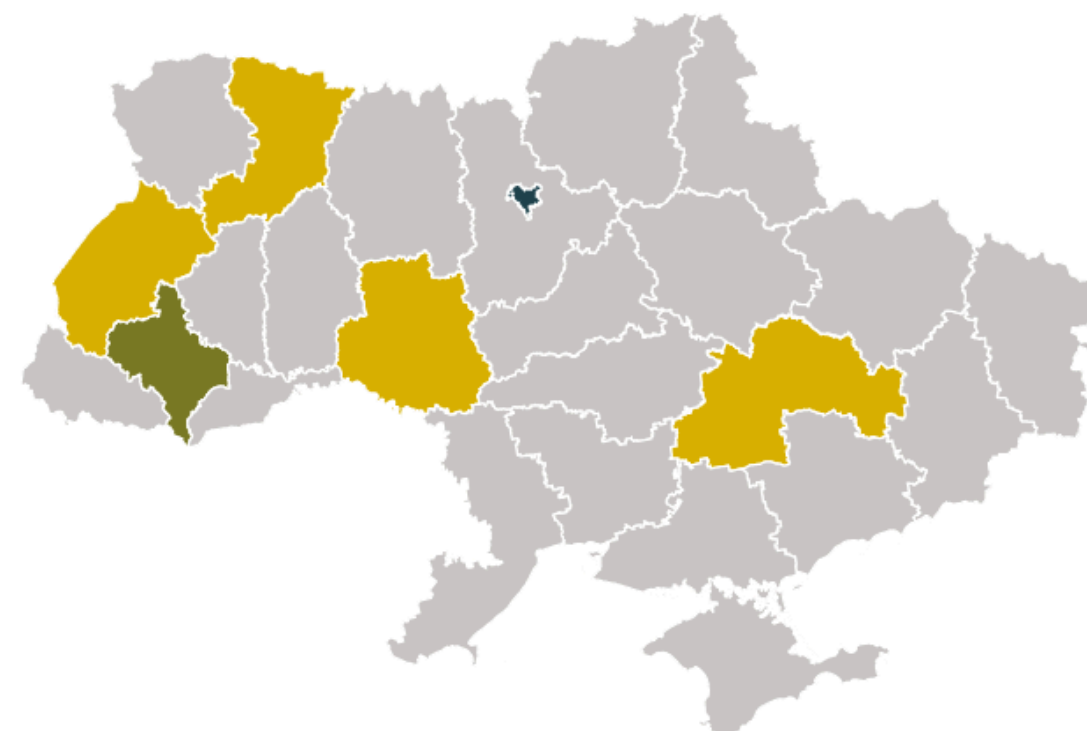
CSOs  
Supported

5

Oblasts and  
Kyiv City

1.8

Mln, NOK



# CONSULTATION WHAT DO WE NEED TO (WITH)STAND?

30-31.01.2025

80+

EXPERTS  
PARTICIPATED

14

TOPICS  
ANALYSED

89

RECOMMENDATIONS  
PREPARED

The event united civil society leaders, visionaries, and experts to discuss Ukraine's challenges, share ideas, and develop strategic directions for civil society's future.

Participants analyzed trends, proposed projects, and outlined paths for resilience and recovery amidst the Russian-Ukrainian war. **The report** captures their discussions, decisions, and plans to strengthen Ukraine's social contract and support its Defense Forces.



STRATEGIC DISCUSSION

13.03.2025

# UKRAINE – SCANDINAVIA: BOUND THROUGH XII CENTURIES

140+ 2 6

## PARTICIPANTS

## LECTURES

## SPEAKERS

- **Oksana Zabuzhko** delivered a keynote speech: Europe at a Turning Point or the Ukrainian Alternative to the Return of Mazepa.
- **Volodymyr Yermolenko** gave a lecture: North-South as the Key Axis of Ukrainian Culture.
- **Marina Tratner** shared unique findings from Swedish archives on historical ties between Ukraine and Scandinavia.
- **Hanna Novosad** discussed Scandinavian education models and their potential for Ukraine.
- **Oleksandra Matviychuk** presented her vision for collaboration in human rights protection.
- **Vladlen Maraiev** outlined the historical context of Ukraine's relations with Northern European countries.



# FORESIGHT FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

29-30.04.2025

80+

EXPERTS  
PARTICIPATED

6

SCENARIOS  
ANALYSED

10

RECOMMENDATIONS  
PREPARED

## Foresight Session Key Topics:

- Strengthening democracy during wartime
- Security, education, culture, social support, and economic development
- Developing an action plan to bolster democracy in the coming years

The **key document** prepared is the **Doctrine of Ukrainian Democracy**. It's a bold strategic vision that positions Ukraine as a pivotal player in the global democratic landscape. This doctrine is a clarion call for unity and responsibility, urging the state, civil society, businesses, and international partners to join forces.



# FUNDRAISING-FOCUSED MEET-UP WITH VASYL BAYDAK

13.05.2025

40+

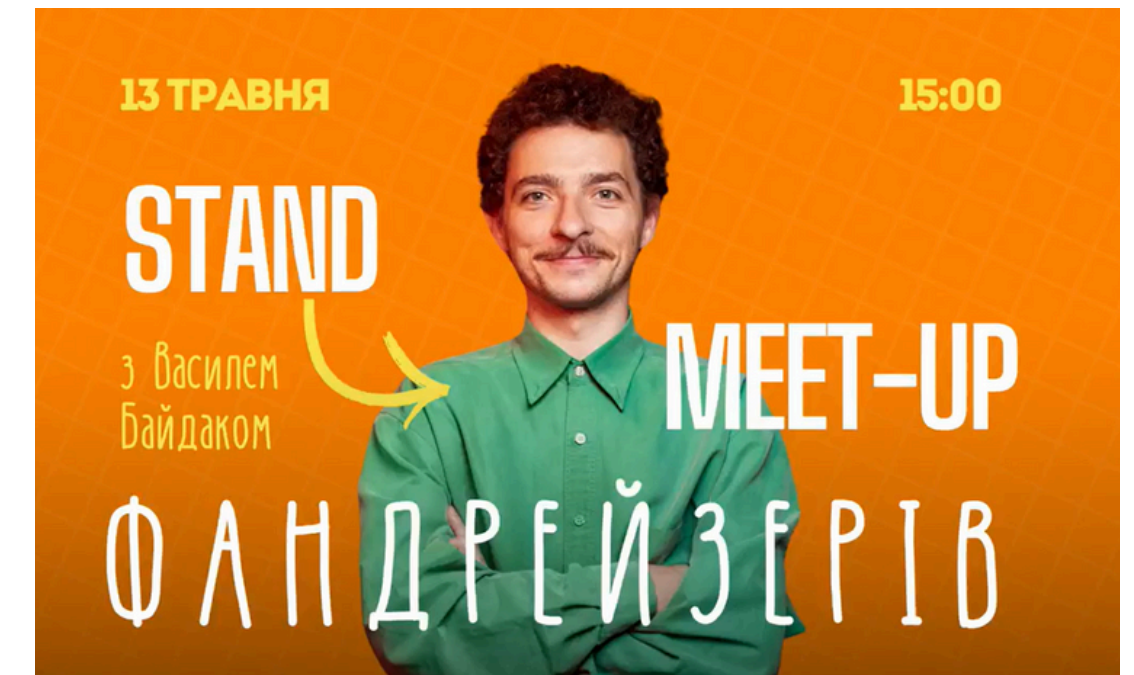
PARTICIPANTS

10+

IDEAS ANALYSED

## Key recommendations from expert:

- **No media presence? Start personal.** Your uncle on the front line is a story. Share it. This could be your first fundraising post.
- **Creativity isn't just memes—it's strategy.** Instagram loves cute content? Drop a parody clip with humor that subtly promotes a drone fundraiser.
- **Auctions aren't sales—they're games.** Gamify donations with a show-like vibe. Start bids at 10 UAH and watch the excitement grow.
- **Trust is everything.** Build it with sincerity, transparent reporting (yes, those “boring” but crucial reports with photos and receipts), and authenticity, not just a polished image.
- **Everyone's tired? Your job is to spark interest.** People are lazy, social media is blind, but humor, honesty, and creativity still work.



# CIVIL SOCIETY HOME WEBINARS

11

WEBINARS

1350+

VIEWS

## The Most Popular Webinar Topics

- Facilitating Strategic Sessions for CSOs and Associations
- AI Tools for Building Effective Communication
- Cybersecurity for CSOs: How to Protect Data, Communication and Finances
- Why strategies do not work?
- Fundraising Secrets – The Mysterious Energy of "Qi"




### Вебінари

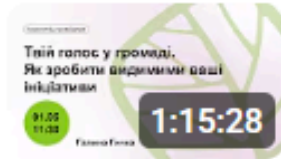
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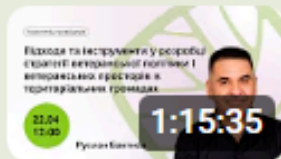
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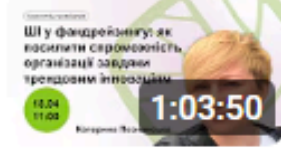
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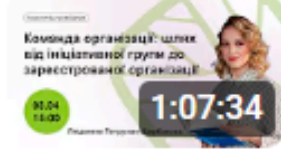
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1 Секрети фандрайзингу - таємнича енергія "Ці" Isar Ednannia 52:00
- 

2 Твій голос у громаді. Як зробити видимими ваші ініціативи Isar Ednannia 1:15:28
- 

▶ Підходи та інструменти у розробці стратегії... Isar Ednannia 1:15:35
- 

4 Чому стратегії не працюють? Isar Ednannia 58:05
- 

5 ШІ у фандрейзингу: як посилити спроможність... Isar Ednannia 1:03:50
- 

6 Команда організації: шлях від ініціативної групи до зареєстрованої організації Isar Ednannia 1:07:34

# OTHER EVENTS

- Ukraine's civil society is thriving, with nearly **126,000 CSOs registered** by May 2025, driving positive change through grassroots initiatives. Experts from the Ministry of Justice shared insights on turning your idea into a successful project and navigating registration at the **webinar Start Confidently: Legal Basics of Registering CSOs**, hosted on **May 23, 2025**.
- **Shifting Landscapes Brunch: Navigating Changes in Civil Society Support.** On **March 19**, twenty CSO leaders, experts, and donors explored Ukraine's civil society resilience amid declining international funding, discussing trends, risks, and solutions for strategic adaptation and cross-sector coordination.
- On **March 31**, ISAR Ednannia and the Ministry of Youth and Sports hosted a webinar, presenting **2025 Ukrainian-Polish and Ukrainian-Lithuanian youth exchange** calls, introducing a fully digital application process and Ukraine's first AI-assisted evaluation feature, with over **2,700 views** on YouTube and Facebook.
- On **April 25**, ISAR Ednannia's **Mentorship School** trained **18 mentors** to support CSO grantees, officially joining the national mentor community and co-developing a self-assessment checklist to enhance mentorship quality for advocacy and recovery grant programs.



# KEY CHALLENGES



- **Funding disruptions:** Abrupt suspension of USAID programs forced CSOs to pause activities, reduce teams, or operate without core funding
- **EU integration readiness:** While CSOs are expected to contribute to accession, many still face structural and administrative barriers to participating in EU-aligned processes and funding
- **Global democratic pushback:** In the face of rising authoritarianism globally, Ukrainian CSOs are called to step into leadership roles—not only defending national resilience, but also shaping regional democratic standards
- **Capacity gaps:** Many newly formed or smaller CSOs lack the skills and resources to sustain long-term programming or engage in policy dialogue

# LESSONS LEARNED



- **Crisis response requires agility:** Rapid support mechanisms (e.g. emergency grants) proved crucial to sustain frontline CSO work
- **Mentorship works:** Pairing experienced CSOs with newcomers boosts resilience, fosters institutional learning, and supports sustainability
- **Flexible instruments matter:** Tailored funding and simplified procedures enable faster, more inclusive responses
- **CSOs are not just implementers—they shape recovery and reforms:** Empowering them as equal partners strengthens ownership and long-term impact

# RISKS ANALYSIS

- **Funding volatility**

Continued delays or shifts in international donor strategies (especially US and transitional EU mechanisms) may disrupt programming and strain operational sustainability

- **Sectoral overextension**

CSOs increasingly take on roles in recovery, reform, and social service delivery—without corresponding institutional or financial support

- **Capacity disparities**

The gap between experienced CSOs and newly formed actors may deepen, limiting collective impact and causing fragmentation across regions and sectors

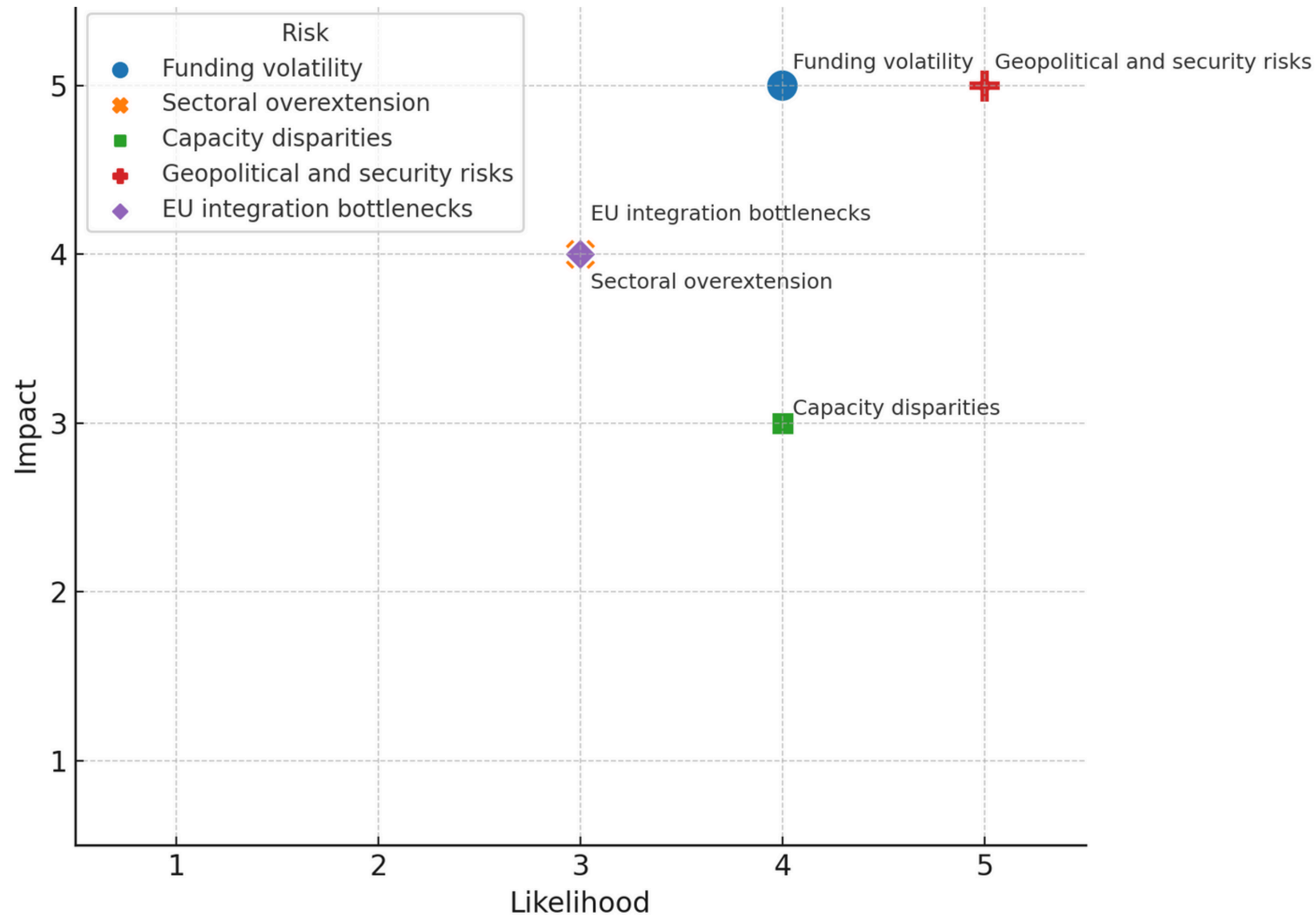
- **Geopolitical and security risks**

Ongoing military threats, especially near frontline regions, endanger CSO teams, beneficiaries, and continuity of service provision

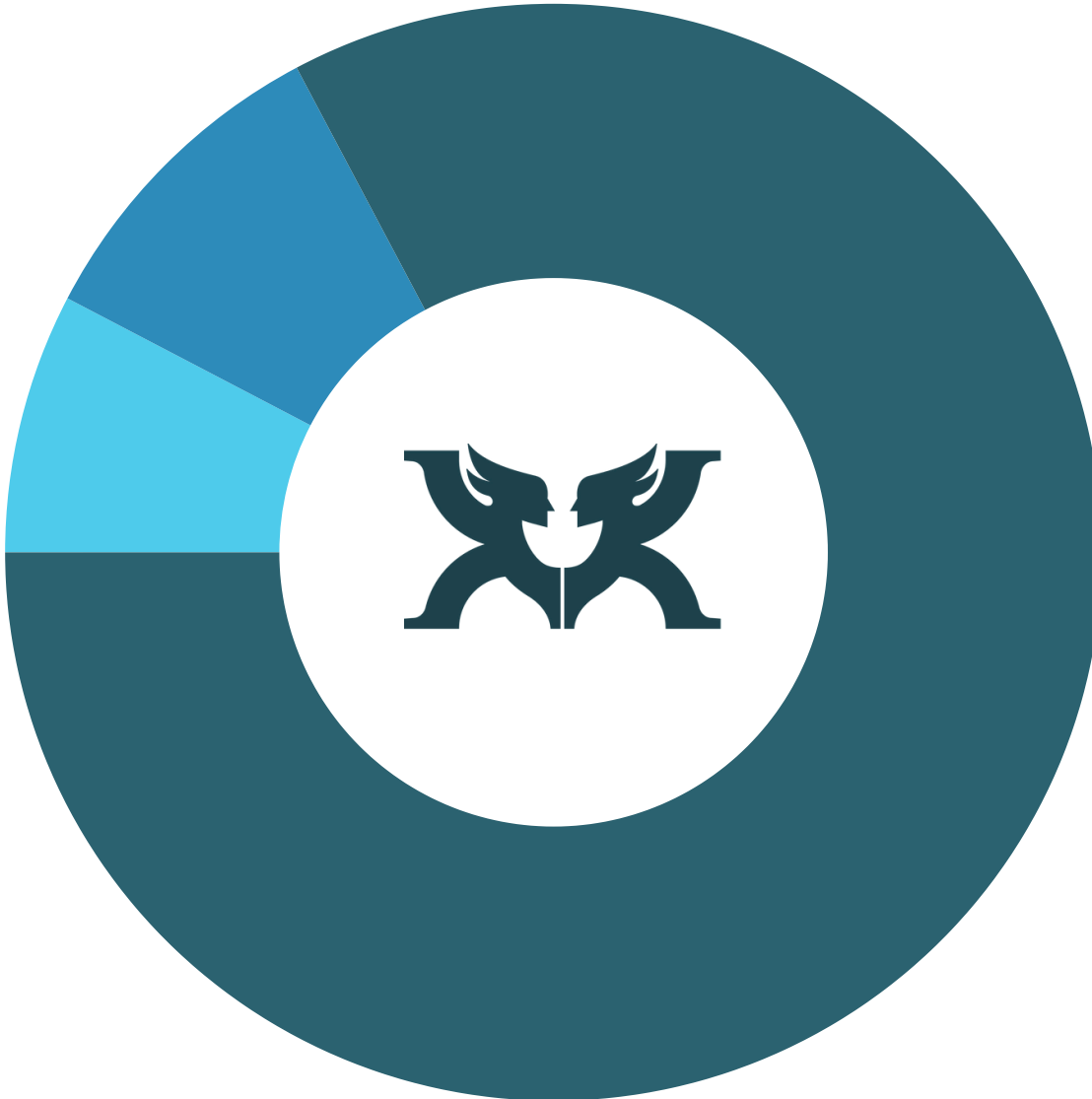
- **EU integration bottlenecks**

Without targeted support, CSOs may remain sidelined in key reform processes, leading to missed opportunities in shaping policy and accessing EU funding

# RISKS MATRIX: 2025-2026



# GRANTS PLANNED FOR DISBURSEMENT IN 2025



**Estimated Number of Grants**  
planned for disbursement in 2025

- 20 Research Grants
- 25 Recovery Grants
- 216 Organisational Development Grants

# PLANS FOR JULY-DECEMBER 2025



- **Recovery Grants**

Launch a new competition on recovery and continue existing grant programs

- **Ukraine Recovery Conference (URC)**

Ensure strong CSO presence and advocacy at URC 2025

- **National Conferences on Recovery, Democracy and Reforms**

Convene platforms for dialogue and visibility of civil society's role

- **Democracy Bootcamps**

Expand hands-on training for civic leaders and activists

- **Educational Programs for New CSOs**

Advocacy schools, fundraising meetups, and learning workshops

- **Peer Mentoring**

Pair experienced and new CSOs for institutional growth

- **Marketplace Development**

Improve the Civil Society Marketplace for better access to expert support

# FIND US HERE

**ASKOLD  
AND DIR**

NORWEGIAN-SWEDISH  
POOLED FUND



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