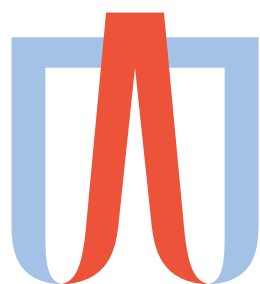


ANNUAL REPORT



**UKRAINIAN HELSINKI
HUMAN RIGHTS UNION**

2023

KYIV



UHHRU Annual Report 2023

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Information on UHHRU's achievements in 2023

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M. Lavrynok, O. Kozorog, O. Semenyuk, O. Komarova,
N. Kozarenko, L. Yelcheva.

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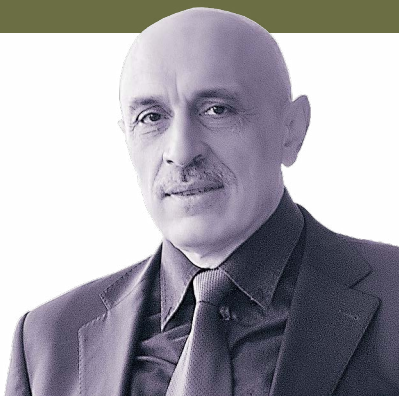
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Introduction



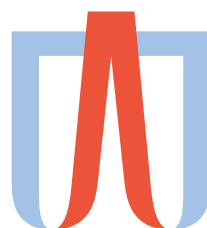
Oleksandr Pavlichenko,
Executive Director
of Ukrainian Helsinki
Human Rights Union

IN 2023, THE UKRAINIAN HELSINKI HUMAN RIGHTS UNION continued its work in the context of the war caused by the aggression and invasion of the Russian Federation.

The human rights defenders mainly focused on documenting war crimes as a result of Russia's full-scale invasion as part of the Tribunal for Putin initiative, assisting victims in restoring their rights, analyzing legislation and preparing legislative changes to protect human rights, speaking at international platforms with research and expert opinions on the situation in Ukraine.

Within the framework of the «Tribunal for Putin» initiative, during December 2023, the documentators of the UHHRU recorded and entered into the database 2,091 episodes of war crimes, and now the total number of such episodes is 40,393 from the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into Ukraine.

The main projects that the UHHRU team worked on were Human Rights in Action Program with the support of USAID, Privacy UA Project supported by the International Renaissance Foundation and the European Union as part of the joint initiative "European Renaissance of Ukraine", project "Development of a Legal Network Protecting the Rights of People Living with HIV/AIDS, Representatives of the Key Communities of PLHIV and People with TB" with the financial support of the All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS, the project 'Justice for People Affected by Russian Aggression' with the support of the Czech organization People in Need.



**UKRAINIAN HELSINKI
HUMAN RIGHTS UNION**

Network of legal aid centers (LACs)



Natala Kozarenko,
Deputy Head of Legal Aid
Department UHHRU

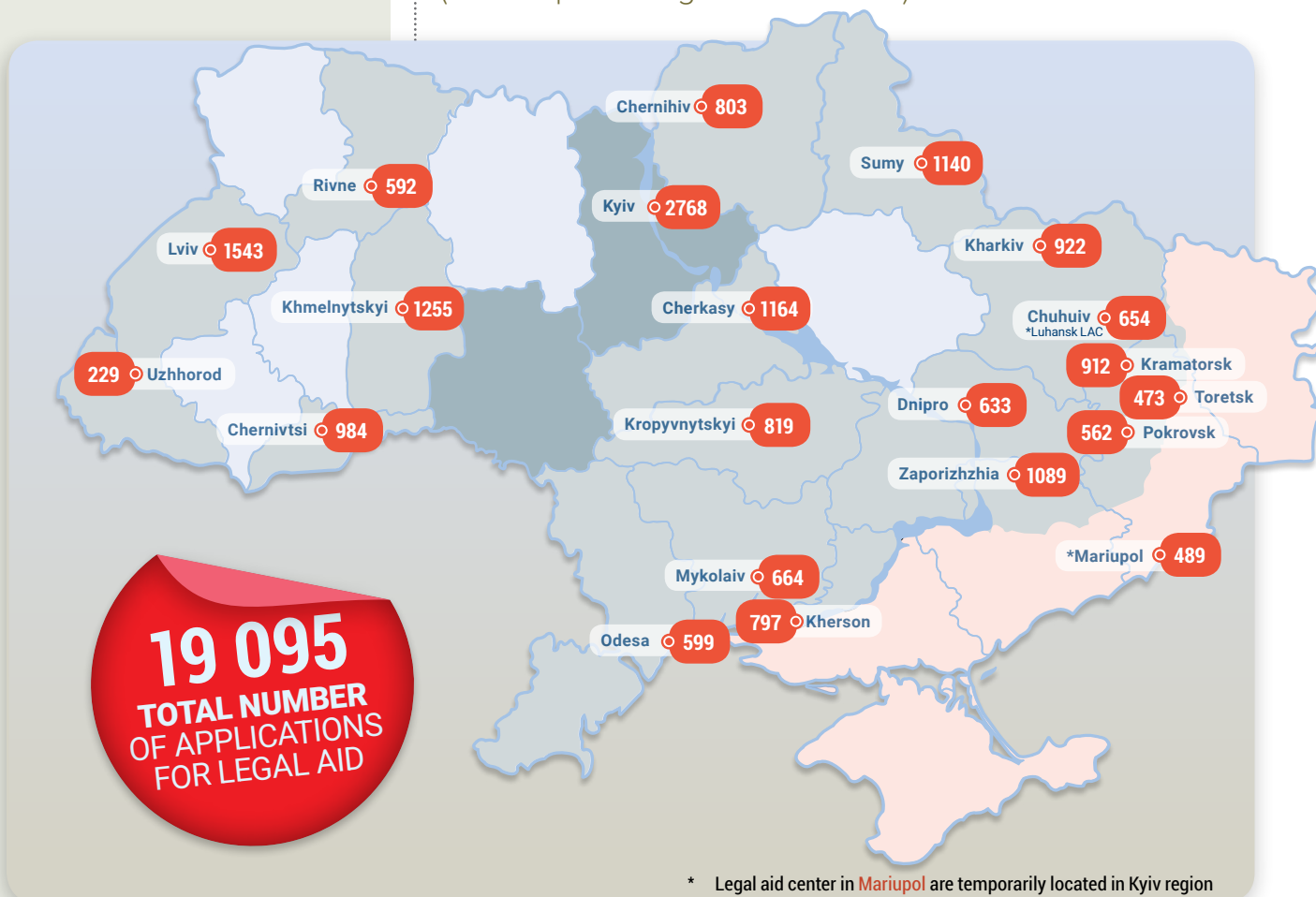
Activities of UHHRU LACs

The UHHRU has a network of legal aid centers (LACs) operating in 18 regions of Ukraine. Today, it is the largest network of human rights organizations in Ukraine, whose activities are aimed at helping people to protect their rights and achieve positive changes in the field of human rights.

The LACs operate according to unified standards of activity in terms of recording appeals and consultations, practices and procedures, and have quality standards for the provision of legal aid in place.

In 2023, the UHHRU LAC lawyers provided **19,092 consultations.**

INFOGRAPHIC: UHHRU LACs in 2023
(LAC map showing their indicators)



LAC human rights advocates prepared **2,714 legal documents**, including inquiries, complaints and procedural documents. In 466 cases, lawyers supported cases in state institutions and courts, and prepared 49 applications to international institutions.

The issues that citizens faced and brought to the UHHRU LACs for assistance in 2023

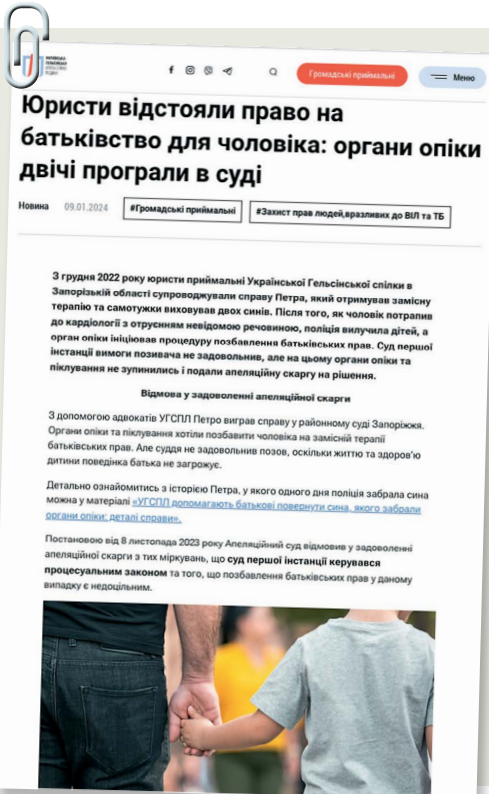


Network of legal aid centers (LACs)



UHHRU supports several chatbots managed by lawyers of the LAC network and the Strategic Litigation Center to provide online legal aid. Such tools become especially relevant when people are unable to visit our LACs in person or contact the relevant authorities due to travel restrictions imposed due to security issues related to the war.

Individual stories of legal aid that ended in a successful outcome for the client often serve as examples for solving similar problems in other cities of Ukraine.



One of such stories ended up with UHHRU lawyers [helping a father to defend his right to be with his children.](#)

Since December 2022, Ukrainian Helsinki Union's LAC lawyers in Zaporizhzhia region have been helping with Mr. Petro's case, who was receiving substitution therapy and raising two sons on his own. After the man was admitted to cardiology department with an unknown substance poisoning, the police seized his children, and the guardianship authority initiated the procedure of deprivation of parental rights. The plaintiff's claims were dismissed by the court of first instance, but the guardianship authorities persisted and appealed the decision. With the help of UHHRU lawyers, Mr. Petro won the case in the Zaporizhzhia District Court. In its ruling of November 8, 2023, the Court of Appeal dismissed the appeal on the grounds that the trial court was guided by the procedural law and that deprivation of parental rights in this case was inappropriate.

In another case, a volunteer proved the fact of being in captivity in order to receive assistance. [UHHRU lawyers intervened and helped to solve the problem.](#)



Serhii Klevets is one of thirty-three volunteer drivers who were held captive by the Russian occupiers for more than two months back in the spring of 2022. They wanted to imprison the man for a term of 5 to 10 years. He, along with other drivers, was charged with "terrorism". Later, Serhii was released, but in Ukraine he faced the need to prove the fact of his captivity, bureaucracy and a long wait for assistance from the state.

The man was not released as part of official exchanges conducted by the Coordination Center. That is why he did not have the status of a prisoner of war and had to prove this status on his own. LAC lawyers helped Serhii with this.

Network of legal aid centers (LACs)

Legal aid is only one of the areas in which the UHHRU LACs work. Legal education, raising awareness among the citizens to overcome legal nihilism is an essential component of the work of the human rights organization. 1,001 events were held by LAC human rights activists in 2023: presentations, training sessions, round tables, webinars, media publications and other activities.

A team of lawyers and human rights defenders of the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union's LACs took part in the [Bridge Forum in Prague](#) (Czech Republic) on November 13-16. The event was organized by CEELI Institute and People in Need and focused on the role of Ukrainian civil society in reporting and documenting war crimes, as well as its anti-corruption work and efforts towards the country's recovery. The forum brought together representatives of civil society and media from Ukraine.

The event began with a discussion of how Ukrainian civil society and media have changed their work since the full-scale invasion, and how they are adapting to the new conditions of constant shelling, blackouts and staff shortages. In addition, Ukrainian representatives shared new tools and methodologies for responding to human rights violations during Russia's armed aggression, threats to activists in Ukraine and the occupied territories, and internal reforms that affect the quality of life in communities.





Myroslav Lavrinok,
Head of the Analytical
Department

Activities of the analytical department

In 2023, UHHRU analysts released 25 publications. On average, the analytical department specialists drew attention to topical issues twice a month: they analyzed the nuances of legislation, analyzed gaps and dangers in the legal field for Ukrainian society, pointed out prospects and ways to correct shortcomings.

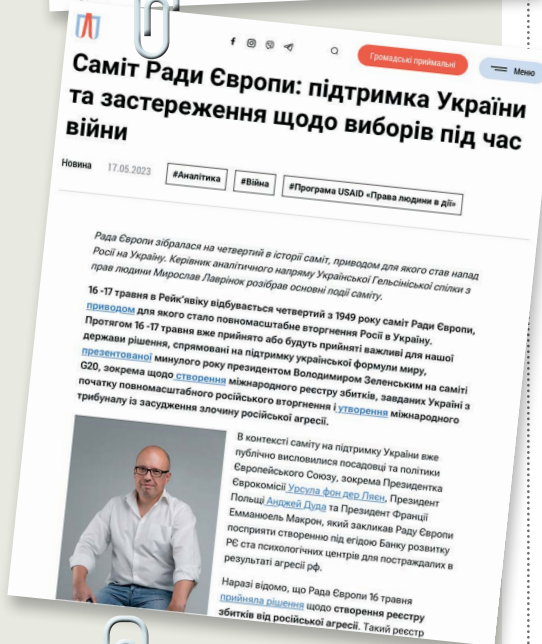
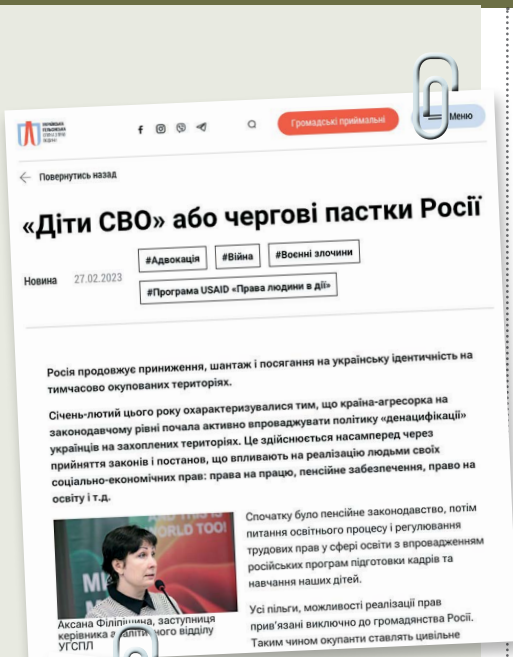
LIST OF PUBLICATIONS BY UHHRU ANALYSTS:

- 1) [A Grown-Up Path to European Integration or the Nuances of Ukrainian Parliamentarism: Analysis of the Draft Law No. 8313](#)
- 2) [SMO Children or Another Russia's Trap](#)
- 3) [Why Should Putin Be Held Accountable for the Abduction of Ukrainian Children](#)
- 4) [Another Decree of the Russian President and Its Impact on the Rights of Ukrainians Living in the Temporarily Occupied Territories](#)
- 5) [The Rights of Ukrainian Children Through the Lens of OSCE Moscow Mechanism Experts](#)
- 6) [Crimeans' Right to Higher Education: A Right Out of Reach](#)
- 7) [How Do We Decolonize Crimea? International Legal Aspect of Restoring the Demographic Composition of the Population](#)
- 8) [Did the Authorities Take into Account the Elements of Transitional Justice in the Plan to Restore the Deoccupied Territories? Analytics](#)
- 9) [Enforced Disappearances on the Territory of Ukraine Since February 24, 2022](#)
- 10) [Changing Demographics of the Occupied Territories of Ukraine in 2022-2023](#)

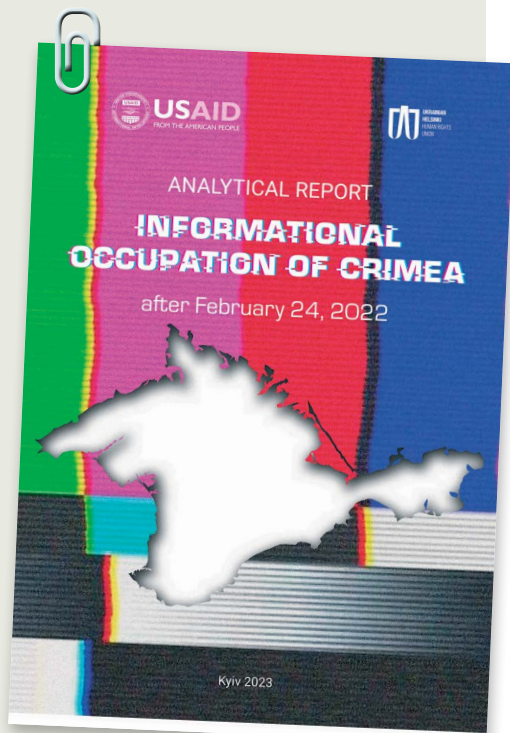


UKRAINIAN HELSINKI
HUMAN RIGHTS UNION

Analytical Department



- 11) [Action Plan for the Implementation of the Crimea Deoccupation and Reintegration Strategy. What Has Changed?](#)
- 12) [How Do We Decolonize Crimea? Exceptions to the Application of the Forced Expulsion Procedure](#)
- 13) [How Do We Decolonize Crimea... Without Violating Human Rights?](#)
- 14) [How Do We Decolonize Crimea? Procedure for the Expulsion of Illegal Migrants](#)
- 15) [Damaged and Destroyed Buildings: Should They Be Restored if Criminal Proceedings Are Ongoing?](#)
- 16) [Council of Europe Summit: Support for Ukraine and Reservations About Elections in Time of War](#)
- 17) [Council of Europe Summit Results: Register of Damage and New Standards for the Protection of Human Rights](#)
- 18) [Reykjavik Declaration: What Did the European Leaders Agree On?](#)
- 19) [Draft Law Simplifying the Legalization of Certain Documents From the Occupied Territories. Initiative Analysis](#)
- 20) [The Role of Professional Communities in Qualifying and Overcoming the Consequences of Genocide in Ukraine](#)
- 21) [Welfare Benefits After the Explosion of the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Station: Will the Government's Decision Help the Affected?](#)
- 22) [What Lustration in Ukraine Can \(and Cannot\) Look Like: Analytics](#)
- 23) [New Rules for Humanitarian Aid Imports Take Effect on December 1: What Will Change?](#)
- 24) [Draft Laws on Lobbying: A Step Towards the EU or Pressure on the Civic Sector?](#)
- 25) [Reports on Property and Income by CSO Leaders: Transparency of Activities or Excessive Government Interference?](#)

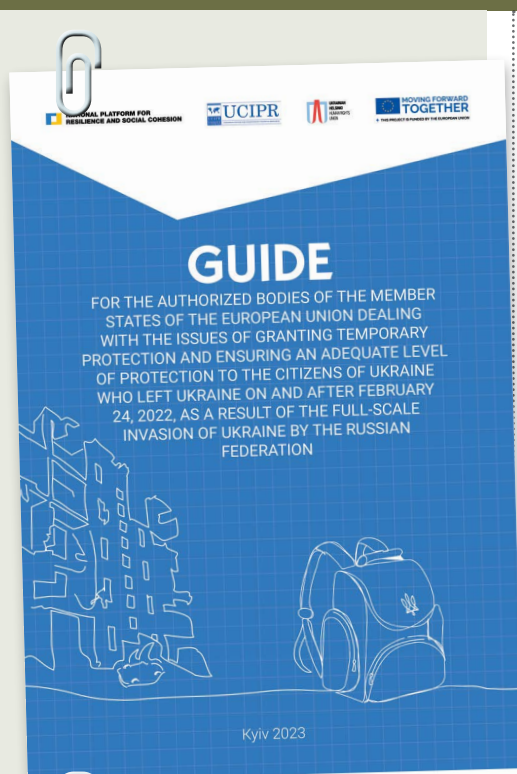


At the same time, analysts worked on legislative research, analytical reports and reviews. They also contributed to updating the methodology for monitoring and evaluating human rights indicators in communities – the Local Human Rights Index.

STUDIES, REPORTS, REVIEWS, POLICY DOCUMENTS, ETC:

1. **Analytical Report** “Legislative Threats to Volunteers, Individual Benefactors, and Civil Society Organizations in 2022”
2. **Analytical Report** [Informational Occupation of Crimea after February 24, 2022](#)
3. **Analytical Study** [Return of Deported Ukrainian Children by Their Parents: Are There Any Risks of Being Accused of Wartime Collaboration?](#)
4. **Sociological Report** based on the results of in-depth interviews with [Ukrainian female citizens who relocated to the European countries in search of temporary protection as a result of Russia’s full-scale war against Ukraine](#)

Analytical Department



5. [Guidelines for the authorized bodies of the Member States of the European Union dealing with the issues of granting temporary protection and ensuring an adequate level of protection to the citizens of Ukraine who left Ukraine on and after February 24, 2022, as a result of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation](#)

6. [Policy Document on assisting Ukrainian citizens who have moved to the EU member states seeking temporary protection as a result of Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine](#)

7. [Review of the practice of Ukrainian communities "Sustainable Practices in Unsustainable Conditions"](#)

8. [Policy Document on Community Experience as a Basis for National Resilience Policy](#)

9. [Policy Document on the Key Challenges of the Legal Dimension in the Deoccupation of the Temporarily Occupied Territories, Defining the Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens](#)

10. **Monthly** reviews of documented war crimes:

- [Overview of documented war crimes for June 2023](#)

- [Overview of documented war crimes for July 2023](#)

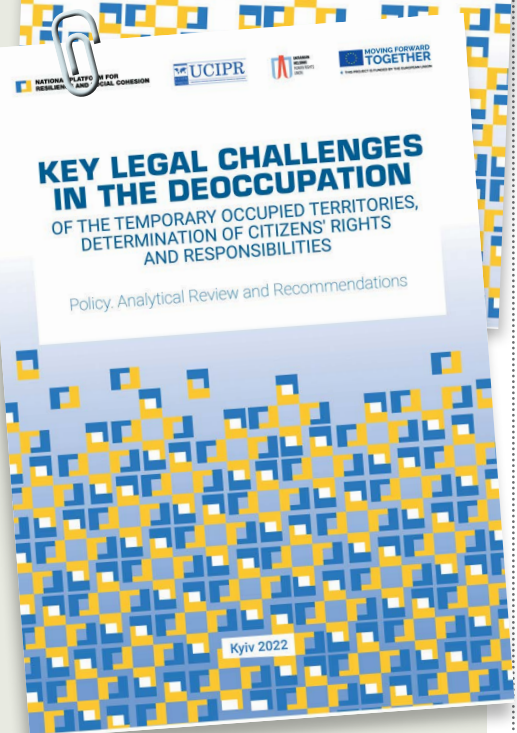
- [Overview of documented war crimes for August 2023](#)

- [Overview of documented war crimes for September 2023](#)

- [Overview of documented war crimes for October 2023](#)

- [Overview of documented war crimes for November 2023](#)

- [Overview of documented war crimes for December 2023](#)





11. Conducting a desk study to selectively assess (measure) community resilience and social cohesion on the example of selected communities in Zaporizhzhia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kyiv, Sumy, Chernihiv, Chernivtsi, Kherson Regions and the city of Kyiv

12. The methodology of the Local Human Rights Index was updated, and the following monitoring was conducted:

- **Together** with local experts, the community of Zvenyhorodka and the community of Trostianets
- **Together** with local organizations that received subgrants – communities of Nikopol, communities of Vatutine, Lysianska Territorial Community
- **Community Safety** (together with local experts): communities of Lviv, Pokrovsk, Toretsk, Zhvanets Territorial Community
- **Decent Living Standards:** Kushuhum Territorial Community (Zaporizhzhia Region), Sumy City Territorial Community, Kramatorsk City Territorial Community, Novhorod-Siverskyi Territorial Community.



One of the important areas of work of the UHHRU Analytical Department is preparation of draft legal acts, opinions on draft laws, resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, participation in the work of parliamentary committees, ministries, advisory and consultative bodies, preparation of opinions and other documents for partners, donors, international organizations, etc:

[As part of the working group of the Government Coordination Headquarters for the Protection of Children's Rights under Martial Law, we:](#)

- [Prepared a Draft Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on the algorithm of interaction between police and guardianship and custody authorities on issuing a missing child alert for an orphan, a child deprived of parental care who remained in the temporarily occupied territories or](#)

Analytical Department



was taken to Russia (Amendments to the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 09/24/2008 No. 866). This work resulted in the Government's adoption of Resolution No. 1310 of 12/15/2023 "On Amendments to Certain Resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Orphans and Children Deprived of Parental Care Who Live and Are Raised in Family-Type Orphanages and Foster Families."

- Developed an opinion on maintaining welfare benefits for orphans and children deprived of parental care who ended up in the temporarily occupied territories and a possible algorithm for returning children to the government-controlled part of Ukraine.
2. **Prepared** materials on the deportation of Ukrainian children at the request of the working group as part of the activities of the OSCE Moscow Mechanism Experts in Ukraine; prepared and sent an appeal to the EU High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Council of Europe Representative in Ukraine on the deportation of Ukrainian children to Russia.
 3. As part of the work of the governmental Coordination Headquarters for the restoration of the deoccupied territories, participated in the development of the "Strategy of the State Policy on the Restoration of Authority and Reintegration of the Population of the Deoccupied Territories of Ukraine".
 4. Participated in the preparation of amendments to the Law of Ukraine "On Protection of Childhood" to protect the rights of deported and forcibly displaced children in terms of defining the concept of "deported child" (registration No. 9495 of 07/17/2023).
 5. Prepared and sent to the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Social Policy and Veterans' Rights an opinion about the draft Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine on the Regulation of Vacation Allocation and Utilization, as well as Other Issues" (registration No. 8313 of 12/27/2022).



6. **Analyzed** the Law of Ukraine “On National Minorities (Communities) of Ukraine” and provided comments to Deutsche Welle.
7. **Participated** in the meetings of the Verkhovna Rada committees and provided positions on the draft laws reg. Nos. 9480, 9495, 8313, 8329, 6146, 9100, 9155, 9318, 8401, 9155, 6393-d, 9400, 9207, 9042, 9042-1, 9160, 9193, 9100, 8416, 8368, 9043, 8181, 9103.
8. **Participated** in 3 round tables of the parliamentary committees on youth policy and sports, as well as humanitarian and information policy.
9. **Prepared** and submitted to the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Legal Policy an opinion on the draft Law of Ukraine “On Amendments to Article 23 of the Law of Ukraine ‘On Public Associations’ on Certain Issues of Ensuring Public Access to Information on Financial Statements of Public Associations” (reg. No. 10035 of 09/11/2023).
10. **Prepared** and sent to the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Education, Science and Innovation an opinion on the draft Law of Ukraine “On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine on Promoting the Development of Volunteering and Recognizing the Results of Volunteer Activities of Participants in the Educational Process” (reg. No. 10026 of 09/11/2023).
11. **Prepared** a conclusion and proposals for the second reading of the draft Law of Ukraine “On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on Regulation of Activities and State Registration of NGOs” (reg. No. 8084 of 9/28/2022).
12. **Participated** in the finalization of the draft Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine “On Approval of the Methodology for Determining the Ultimate Beneficial Owner by a Legal Entity”.
13. **Provided** an opinion on the draft Law of Ukraine “On Amendments to the Tax Code of Ukraine on Peculiarities of Taxation of Charitable Assistance with Housing for Internally Displaced Persons” (reg. No. 10266 of 11/17/2023).

Analytical Department

14. Participated in the preparation of comments and amendments to the draft Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine “On Amendments to the Regulation on the Procedure, Conditions and Criteria for Determining Disability”.



15. Submitted proposals to the draft Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine “On Approval of the State Policy Strategy on Internal Displacement for the Period up to 2025”.

16. Developed draft amendments to the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy for the Deoccupation and Reintegration of the TOT of the AR of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

17. Analyzed the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of December 30, 2022 No. 1219 “On Approval of the Action Plan of Executive Authorities for the Restoration of the Deoccupied Territories of Territorial Communities” in the context of transitional justice.

18. Participated in the development of the draft Law “On Appeals” by the Ministry of Justice.

19. Participated in the development by the Ministry of Justice of a draft act of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on amendments to the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of January 30, 2013 No. 61 “Issues of Anti-Discrimination Expert Evaluation and Public Anti-Discrimination Expert Evaluation of Draft Legal Acts”.

20. Participated in the preparation of the first annual report on Ukraine as an EU candidate (on freedom of speech).

21. Participated in the preparation of proposals of the UHHRU and the Education Ombudsman on the development of state policy on the prevention of wartime collaboration in the field of education and the restoration of education in the deoccupied territories.





Experts of the UHHRU analytical team joined the work of expert groups and took part in public events related to the protection of children's rights in the conditions of war, issues of restoration of the deoccupied territories, monitoring of the human rights situation. These activities include the below:

- 1) **Providing** expert support to the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, which was established by UN Human Rights Council Resolution 49/1 of March 4, 2022, to investigate all alleged human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law in the context of the armed conflict in Ukraine (issues of deportation of children and the educational process in the occupied territories).
- 2) **Participation** in the work of the group on child rights protection at the International Council of Experts of the Prosecutor General's Office.
- 3) **Participation** in the work of the Governmental Coordination Headquarters for the restoration of the deoccupied territories.
- 4) **Participation** in the work of the Coordination Headquarters for the Protection of Children's Rights under Martial Law under the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.
- 5) **Participation** in the forum of family and inheritance law (speech at the session on guardianship, custody, adoption in the context of war).
- 6) **Participation** and presentation at the OSCE conference in Skopje (North Macedonia), presentation of the UHHRU experience in documenting war crimes on the territory of Ukraine and the results of the study of justice for war crimes.
- 7) **Participation** in the parliamentary summit of the Crimean Platform (Prague, Czech Republic).
- 8) **Participation** in the international forum of the Crimean Platform expert network.

Analytical Department



The logo consists of the letters "MI" in a white, bold, sans-serif font, centered within a teal square. The square is set against a white circular background that is partially overlapping a light green vertical bar on the left side of the page.

- 9) **Participation** in the III "Forum of Legal Reforms for Civil Society: Becoming Stronger in Time of War".
- 10) **Participation** in open meetings and other public events of the National Platform for Resilience and Cohesion.
- 11) **An information** session for the partner communities of the USAID HOVERLA Project held by the Local Human Rights Index experts.
- 12) **Participation** in public and non-public events held by the UHHRU and other civic organizations, government agencies, international organizations, etc.



Olexandra Kozorog,
Head of the Educational
Department

Activities of the Educational Department

The main goal of the UHHRU Educational Department specialists in 2023: contribute to the dissemination of knowledge on international humanitarian law (IHL), international human rights law (IHRL), international criminal law (ICL), raising awareness and developing professional competencies in the application of these norms and standards in the context of the armed conflict of the Russian Federation in Ukraine, both among individual professional groups and society as a whole, through educational, awareness-raising and advocacy activities.

The year 2023 was marked by a number of developments and achievements in several areas of cooperation with the state and public sectors.

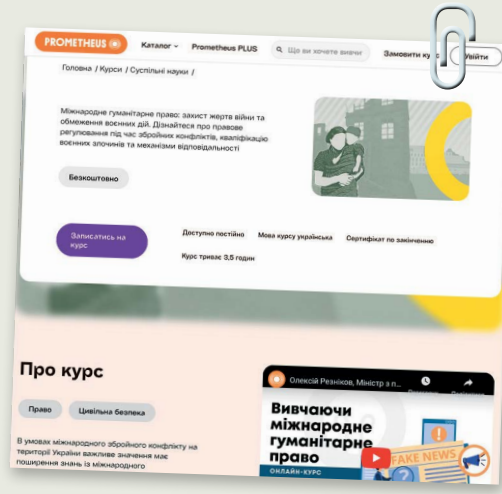
1. COOPERATION WITH THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF UKRAINE.

We continued to raise awareness among educators and create opportunities for quality teaching of IHL and IHRL in educational institutions of various levels in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Science:

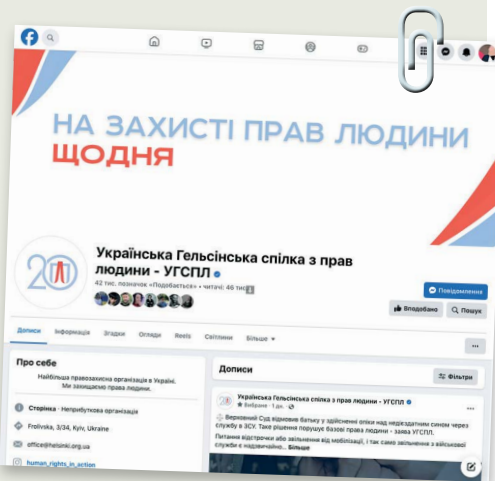
- After the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation, the curriculum of the elective course “Studying International Humanitarian Law” for the grade 10-11 (12) students of general secondary education institutions and the study guide “Studying International Humanitarian Law” was updated in line with the challenges and changes associated with the full-scale aggression of the Russian Federation in Ukraine. In partnership with the Ministry of Education and Science, UHHRU prepared a comprehensive package of educational and methodological materials on IHL, which will allow for both systematic teaching in the form of training courses and individual lessons within various academic subjects: history, law, civic education, defense of Ukraine, educational extracurricular activities.



Educational Department



- Online course “Studying International Humanitarian Law” **is available on the educational platform PROMETHEUS.**
- Guidelines for teachers “How to Teach Issues of International Humanitarian Law as Part of a Course on History, Civic Education and Law Fundamentals” (2022). The materials were prepared in 2022, but they are very actively used and useful this year, as noted by the educators during an expert discussion at the MES. “International Humanitarian Law: State of Affairs and Prospects of Teaching in General Secondary Education Institutions” on December 19, 2023.
- Another 22 trainers were trained to teach IHL in the system of postgraduate pedagogical education – institutes of postgraduate pedagogical education and teacher training centers. The trainers have developed their own educational programs for teaching IHL to be implemented in January 2024.
- A monitoring study “State of Affairs and Prospects of Teaching IHL and Human Rights in General Secondary Education Institutions in the Context of the Full-scale Invasion of the Russian Federation on the Territory of Ukraine” was launched to study the readiness of teachers of general secondary education institutions to teach IHL and HRL in the context of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation.
- Lectures and consultations with experts were held to raise awareness of human rights protection, children’s rights, ensure the rights of participants in the educational process, and familiarize with the novelties of labor and educational legislation during the armed conflict.



In 2023, a total of **13 webinars** were held, attracting active participation from **1,337 educators**, while over **29,000** viewers tuned in to the broadcasts on the UHHRU Facebook page.

The most popular webinars: “Human Rights and Children’s Rights: Correlation, Interconnection, Practical Aspects” (226 attendees and 3.1 thousand views); “Domestic Violence – Human Rights Violation: What Should Educators Know?” (125 attendees and 16.5 thousand views); “A Teacher’s Guide to Addressing Bullying Situations. Responsibility for Bullying and Legal Advice on the Protection of Rights” (307 attendees and 1200 views).

Teachers interested in IHL and IHRL were invited to take part in a competition of educational and methodological developments. The competition received 94 projects, including primary school, middle school and high school teachers of various subjects.

- We developed **comprehensive educational visual materials for students on international humanitarian law**. These are 8 educational modules, each of which consists of a video blog for students, tests for self-checking, an animated poster, and a presentation for teachers on the relevant module topic for use during lessons and extracurricular activities. The videos are created in a question-and-answer format that is interesting for teenagers and presents the material in a way that is accessible and understandable for children. As of today, the videos are posted on the UHHRU resources with further distribution on the website of the Ministry of Education and Science.
- In order to further promote the topic of human and child rights protection in the context of armed conflict, as well as to disseminate information on IHL for students, a competition “Human and Child Rights in the Time of War” was announced in various creative formats – essays, social videos, social posters. As part of the competition, experts held master classes to help students become more interested in the topic and make their project better. A total of 347 student projects were submitted to the competition: 42 videos, 141 social posters and 164 essays.

Activities with educators will continue in 2024.

Educational Department



НАЦІОНАЛЬНЕ АГЕНТСТВО УКРАЇНИ
З ПИТАНЬ ДЕРЖАВНОЇ СЛУЖБИ

2. COOPERATION WITH THE NATIONAL AGENCY OF UKRAINE ON CIVIL SERVICE (NACS)

The events in Ukraine after February 24, 2022 demonstrated serious violations of international humanitarian law by the Russian Federation and the need for the representatives of state and local governments of Ukraine to apply IHL knowledge.

Public servants of various categories face daily decision-making on managing social processes in the context of armed conflict, as the authorities continue to exercise their powers in the context of a full-scale invasion, while in the deoccupied territories they must resume their functions. They must provide services, take measures to protect victims of war, engage in recording the consequences of war crimes, and respond to numerous appeals.





As part of the memorandum of cooperation with the National Agency of Ukraine on Civil Service, the UHHRU prepared a number of educational products and conducted training for public servants, namely:

- [The Model General Short-Term Training Program developed as part of cooperation between the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union and the National Agency of Ukraine on Civil Service was developed and approved \(Order of the NACS of 12/15/2022 No. 133-22\).](#)
- [Course “International Humanitarian Law in the Professional Activity of Public Servants” was developed in cooperation with the NACS.](#) The unique feature of this online course is that it addresses IHL in a non-traditional format, tailored specifically to the needs and responsibilities of civil servants and local self-government officials. Particular attention is paid to the context of IHL application in the activities of state and local self-governments, namely its importance and relevance, the peculiarities of IHL application in the context of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, and also the national legislation containing IHL norms for public authorities is considered in detail. The course includes a program, [an online course on the Prometheus platform](#) (videos, podcasts), teaching materials – a complete package in a convenient format for studying, an optimal combination of theory and practice. In addition, those interested are offered a real-time distance learning module, which already ensures formal advanced training. In 2023, the UHHRU became an official provider of educational services in the system of advanced training for civil servants. The first group (civil servants of categories B, C, representatives of local self-government bodies) has already completed the training. The course proved to be highly in demand, with all 60 available spots filled almost immediately after enrollment opened. Feedback from the participants showed that IHL was initially an entirely «unknown territory» for them. However, by the end of the course, they recognized its significance.

Educational Department

- In order to improve the teaching of IHL in the system of advanced training for civil servants, the NACS providers held a training on teaching IHL for the representatives of regional centers for the advanced training for civil servants and representatives of local self-government bodies. Twenty-seven specialists were trained. It is planned to continue the training and develop specialized short-term courses for certain categories of civil service and local self-government professionals.

3. COOPERATION WITH THE STATE CRIMINAL ENFORCEMENT SERVICE OF UKRAINE (SCES)

In February 2023, the UHHRU signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Department for the Enforcement of Criminal Sentences and the Academy of the State Penitentiary Service of Ukraine to cooperate in the field of **professional training for the staff of the State Criminal Enforcement Service of Ukraine.**



In 2023, we:

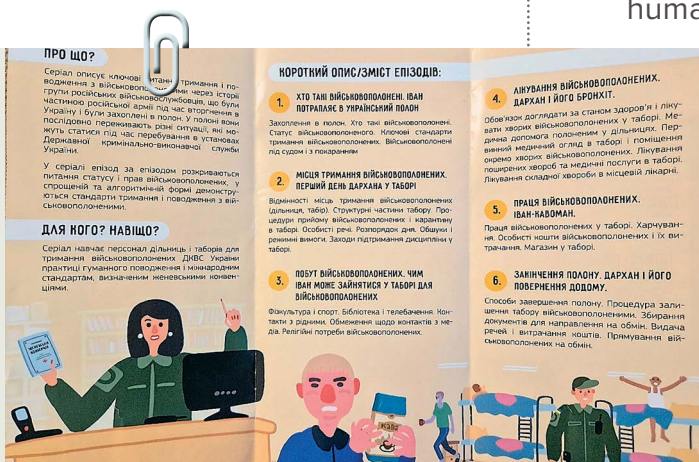
- Developed and approved the Model Program of the discipline **“APPLICATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE STATE CRIMINAL ENFORCEMENT SERVICE OF UKRAINE”**

(Recommended by the Academic Council of the Academy of the State Penitentiary Service of Ukraine, Minutes No. 12 of the Meeting of the Department of Theory and History of State and Law, Constitutional Law of 08/25/2023).

On the basis of this program, the Academy introduced a system of IHL training at the level of initial professional training, as well as for penitentiary service employees as part of their advanced training.

- Based on the program, a specialized **training manual “International Humanitarian Law for SCES Employees”** was prepared. The manual contains the main categories and provisions of the international humanitarian law with a focus on the rules governing the protection and treatment of prisoners of war, and the status of the penitentiary system personnel and facilities. The material is based on the legislation of Ukraine, which ensures the implementation of international humanitarian law on the treatment of prisoners of war and the practice of its application. It is intended for cadets and students of the Penitentiary Academy of Ukraine, employees of the State Criminal Enforcement Service of Ukraine, and persons involved in organizing and maintaining detention of prisoners of war and the implementation of international humanitarian law.

- Developed methodological materials for teaching the course “International Humanitarian Law for SCES Employees”.
- Created an educational animated series on the treatment of prisoners of war in accordance with the IHL standards, “Russian Ivan’s Adventures in Ukrainian Captivity”, for the staff of the SCES of Ukraine POW detention centers and camps.



Educational Department

- Held training on the fundamentals of documenting war crimes for the representatives of the State Department for the Enforcement of Criminal Sentences in their professional activities in the context of the Russian armed aggression.
- Conducted training on teaching and practical application of international humanitarian law for the personnel in the criminal sentences enforcement system.
- On December 21, 2023, we held an **expert discussion on “Detention and Treatment of Prisoners of War in Ukraine: Challenges, Problems and Best Practices”** [with the participation of representatives of government agencies, NGOs and international partners](#). Among the participants were representatives of international organizations, including the Head of the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross, government agencies and law enforcement agencies (Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War, Office of the Prosecutor General, Department for the Enforcement of Criminal Sentences), representatives of state institutions– PoW camps, administrators and teachers of the Penitentiary Academy of Ukraine.



Panel discussions have become an effective platform for voicing different opinions and views on the situation with the detention of prisoners of war in accordance with the international standards. They discussed the factors and challenges that affect the resolution of specific issues and problems. Representatives of international organizations presented the results of their research and observations, identified successful experiences and practices of Ukraine in this regard. At the same time, representatives of authorized state bodies and institutions voiced proposals and requests to international organizations to create a more effective system of detention and exchange of prisoners of war, communication on this issue, and voiced the problems arising from the need to hold an ever-increasing number of prisoners of war in accordance with the international standards. An important stage of this meeting was the presentation of educational tools for raising awareness of SCES employees on international humanitarian law and the treatment of prisoners of war, developed in cooperation with SCES under the USAID Human Rights in Action Program.

4. COOPERATION WITH THE HIGHER SCHOOL OF ADVOCACY (HSA)

A memorandum of cooperation was signed and a plan for the development of partnership cooperation was agreed upon between the Higher School of Advocacy of the Ukrainian National Bar Association and the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union. The purpose of the cooperation is the provision of professional training, in particular the provision of educational services and methodological, consulting, information support for advocates, lawyers, representatives of the education system, other groups of professionals and employees, to improve their professional competence.

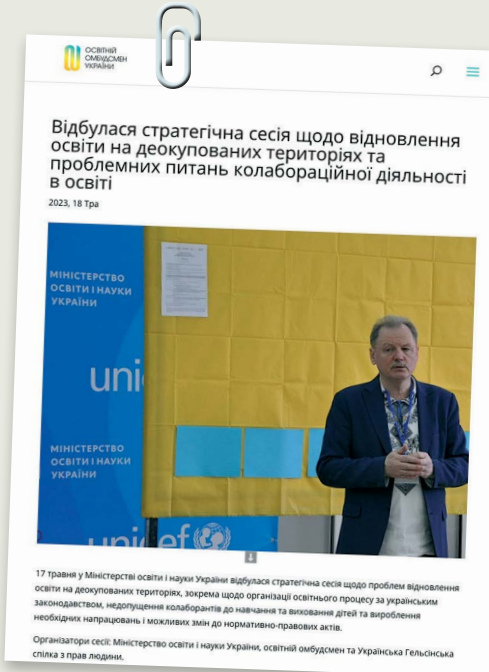
5. COOPERATION WITH THE EDUCATION OMBUDSMAN

We held a number of events related to the topic of wartime collaboration in education, namely:

- **Working meeting – professional discussion** “Collaboration in Education: Challenges and Solutions” (March 23, 2023). The purpose of the professional discussion was to identify a range of issues that require immediate response from the state and society related to the wartime collaboration activities of educators in order to further develop proposals to address them.



Educational Department



- **Strategic session of the Ministry of Education and Science on challenges** of wartime collaboration in education (May 17, 2023)

During the strategic session, two groups of tasks were discussed, namely:

- 1) **Wartime** collaboration in education: problems and challenges in defining, responding to, and prosecuting wartime collaboration.
- 2) **Development** of amendments to the legislation on wartime collaboration in education: conceptual vision and proposals.

- **Working meeting – expert discussion** “Issues Related to Wartime Collaboration in Education: Definition, Responsibility, Response Mechanisms” (May 30, 2023)

The purpose of the discussion was to develop comprehensive guidelines and proposals for legislation based on a combination of professional expertise from the representatives of educational sector, government agencies, local self-governments, lawyers and human rights organizations.





This activity became the basis for the analytical study.

In cooperation with the Educational Ombudsman Service in 2023, the UHHRU prepared a number of publications for participants in the educational process, in particular on the following topics:

- 1) [Labor relations with teachers receiving old-age pensions.](#)
- 2) [Actions of an educational institution when parents do not give consent to the processing of personal data or apply for its withdrawal](#)
- 3) [Processing of personal data in information systems and electronic registers. Rights of participants in the educational process and actions of the educational institution.](#)
- 4) [Processing of personal data in electronic gradebooks and weekly planners.](#)

All of the above activities were implemented under the USAID Human Rights in Action Program.

6. Cooperation with the Ministry of Defense (MoD)

- Developed a training course and methodological materials on IHL (lecture material, presentations, cases on the practical application of IHL norms, divided into modules and a general description of the course standard) for instructors of the Armed Forces training centers.
- Held training for 2 groups of trainers-instructors to raise awareness and develop professional competencies for quality teaching and use of prepared materials for teaching IHL to the rank and file of the Armed Forces of Ukraine during basic military training.

Educational Department



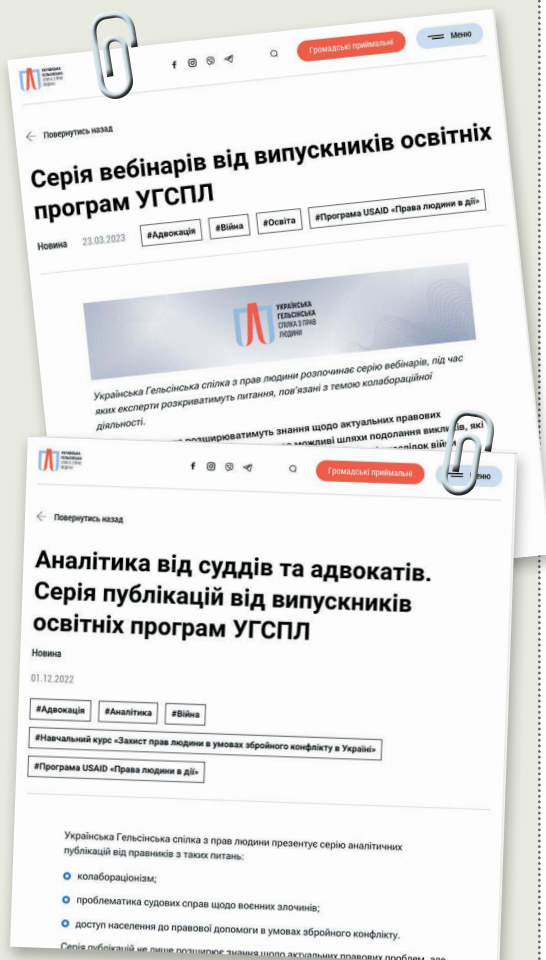
EDUCATION FOR LAWYERS

In 2023, the Education Department continued its work in the field of training lawyers, judges and prosecutors on the protection of human rights in armed conflict. In particular:

- 1) We held [a series of webinars from the graduates of UHHRU educational courses](#) (12 videos)
- 2) We made [a series of publications from the graduates of UHHRU educational courses](#) on the following topics:
 - Wartime collaboration
 - Challenges of court cases on war crimes
 - Access of the population to legal aid in the context of armed conflict

A total of 17 articles.

- 3) **We presented** a series of publications on the elements of transitional justice by the graduates of educational courses of the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union: “Lustration, Amnesty, Forgiveness, and Historical Memory”
- 4) **We held a** training course “Protection of Human Rights in the Context of the Armed Conflict in Ukraine”
- 5) **Launched** two pilot training courses: “IHL: From Theory to Practice” and “Wartime Collaboration: Criminal and Civil Aspects”
- 6) **Presented** an Analytical Study “Return of Deported Ukrainian Children by Their Parents: Are There Any Risks of Being Accused of Wartime Collaboration?”





Mykhailo Tarakhkalo,
Head of the Strategic
Litigation Center

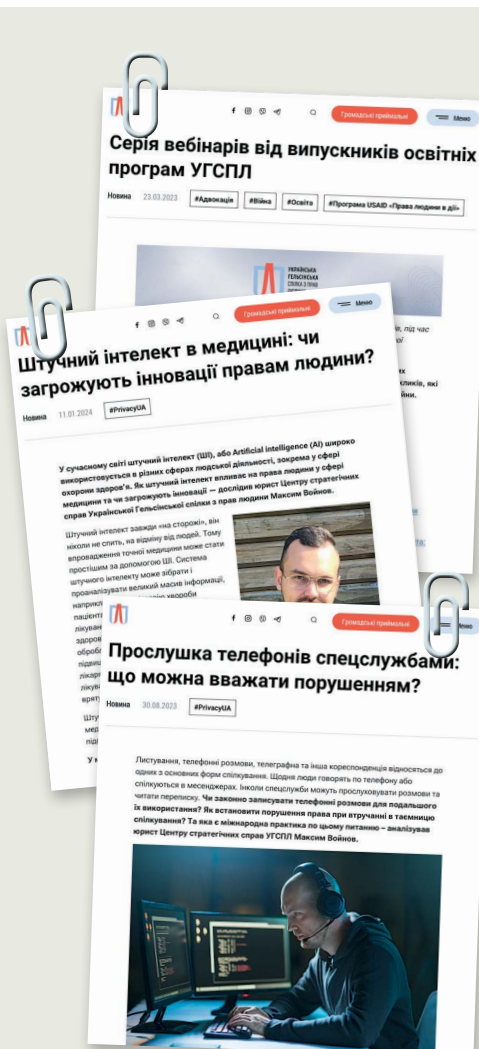
Activities of the Strategic Litigation Center

In 2023, the main activity of the UHHRU Strategic Litigation Center (SLC) was to support more than **300 strategic cases** at the national, European and international levels.

In 2023, more than 30 cases were communicated and 10 cases were won in the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), one of which is the case of **Andrii Maimulakhin and Andrii Markov**. In 2014, the applicants decided to apply to the European Court of Human Rights due to the inability to legalize their relationship in Ukraine. On June 1, 2023, the ECHR issued a judgment ruling that the absence of legislative regulation of same-sex relations in Ukraine was a violation of Articles 8 and 14 of the Convention.

In 2023, UHHRU lawyers actively participated in publications on the organization's website, more than 15 articles were published:

- [Wiretapping by intelligence agencies: What constitutes a violation?](#)
- [Facial recognition system: Legal aspects of use in Ukraine and the EU](#)
- [Data storage in the cloud: What to do in case of confidential information leakage?](#)
- [Artificial intelligence in healthcare: Do innovations threaten human rights?](#)
- [Raising funds using personal bank cards of volunteers: How to avoid problems with the tax authorities](#)
- [Inviolability of housing: How legal is it to enter premises without the owner's consent?](#)
- [Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia: Overview of the judgment from UHHRU lawyers](#)
- [UHHRU, international abduction of a child by a parent in time of war: How to reunite with your own child? and others.](#)



Litigation

The study [“International Crimes in Ukraine: A Review of National Investigation and Case Law”](#) – the first study of its kind in Ukraine – was published, which aroused considerable interest among national and international human rights organizations, media, and law enforcement agencies.



In 2023, SLC lawyers took part in a number of events and presentations organized by the UHHRU: webinar **Protection of Victims of Armed Conflict: ECHR and UNHRC**, **Detention During the Armed Conflict, Criminal Law Novelties: Wartime Collaboration by Prosecutors, Teachers and Other Social Workers**, **Doing Business in the Occupied Territories and Transfer of Resources: Aspect of Wartime Collaboration**, webinar **Detention during the Armed Conflict**, presentation of the Study ‘**International Crimes in Ukraine: A Review of National Investigation and Case Law**’.

Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, there have been deaths of servicemen and servicewomen under unspecified circumstances. In the event of a soldier's death where the body is not found or identified, the deceased's relatives are unable to receive the welfare benefits stipulated in the case of death. In view of the above, the only way to establish the legal fact of death is to apply to the court for the establishment of the legal fact of death. An ordinary citizen is not able to draw up the above application without the help of lawyers. Therefore, the UHHRU SLC lawyers have created a Telegram bot that draws up an application for establishing the legal fact of death of a serviceman/servicewoman. The bot works in the Telegram: @applicationpersondied_bot.



UHHRU together with the NGO “Regional Centre for Human Rights”, NGO “Media Initiative for Human Rights”, NGO “Olenivka Community” made a [submission to the UN Independent International Commission](#) of Inquiry on the investigation of serious violations of the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, concerning the treatment of Ukrainian prisoners of war and the attack on Ukrainian prisoners of war held in the Olenivka Facility on the night of July 28, 2022, as well as establishing the facts, circumstances and root causes of such violations and the attack.

UHHRU also made an independent submission to the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Violations in Ukraine regarding systematic indiscriminate attacks on civilian infrastructure, including port infrastructure and grain terminals in the Odesa Region, in violation of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.



Olga Komarova
Head of the
Communications

Communication

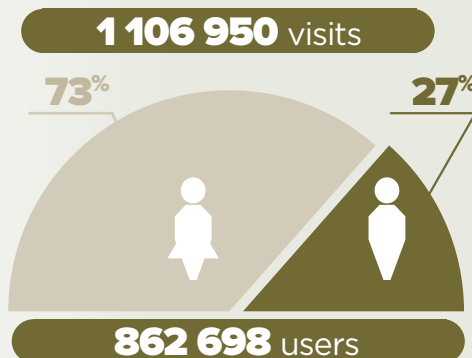
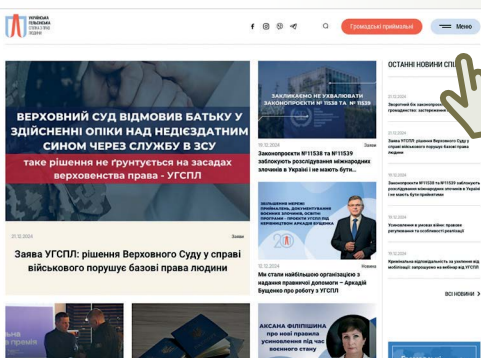
UHHRU uses the following channels and methods of interaction to communicate with its target audiences:

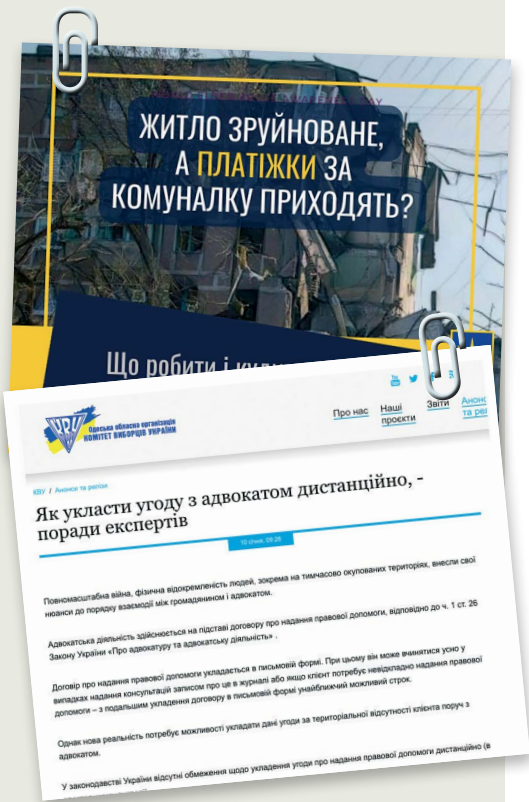


-  UHHRU website
-  Social media: Facebook page, Instagram, Twitter
-  Telegram
-  Mass media
-  Trainings, webinars and seminars



The UHHRU website – <https://www.helsinki.org.ua/> – was visited 1,106,950 times in 2023 by 862,698 users according to Google Analytics. The website’s audience is composed of 73% women and 27% men.





In 2023, the UHHRU Facebook page received a **blue verification badge**, which means that it has high-quality and verified content. The page reached 1,472,234 people over the year, and the number of subscribers increased by 25,000.

Each of the UHHRU LACs also conducts separate communication activities for the project. This is done through their own social media pages. Human right activists inform the community about changes in the law and give recommendations to the population on how to act during martial law.

For example, [the Dnipropetrovsk LAC successfully informed residents](#) about what to do when they are required to pay utility bills for destroyed accommodation, [Sumy LA informed about monetary compensation for temporary accommodation of IDPs on its page](#), advice from lawyers [on concluding a remote agreement with a lawyer was given in the Odesa LAC](#).

An important component of the communication strategy for LACs is the dissemination of information about the success of cases in defending the rights of people who have applied for help to UHHRU. Such stories not only build trust and encourage others to seek help, but also provide a ready algorithm for all human rights defenders and lawyers who work with similar cases.

- A relative died under occupation: [UHHRU helped an applicant obtain a court ruling to establish the fact of death](#) (Chernihiv LAC)
- Children of IDPs should get free meals in schools and daycare. [How they defended this right in Kropyvnytskyi](#) (Kropyvnytskyi LAC)
- Insurance payments through the court: [Why are IDPs who have suffered injuries or occupational illnesses at work forced to sue?](#) (Dnipro LAC)

Communication



In January, we launched [a Telegram channel with training and webinar announcements](#). It is focused exclusively on the audience that is interested in participating in the USAID activities. This community is the first to get notice of a planned event, so it's growing all the time. Subscribers include: judges, lawyers, prosecutors, law enforcement officers, human rights activists, educators, community sector representatives, and public servants.

A practice has already been established, where, on the basis of our materials on the program that are published on the website, journalists from central and local channels make materials for a wider audience.

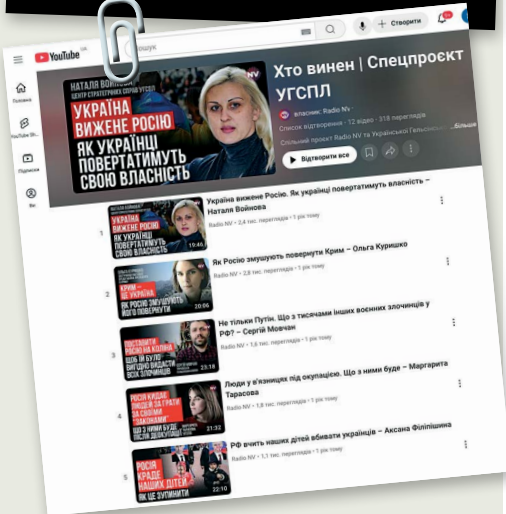
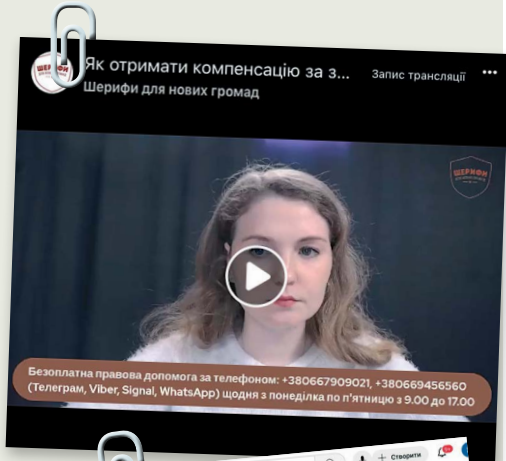
One example is how the central TV channel 1+1 [made a program](#) based on our story about [Oksana Kornieva](#), a healthcare professional from the Donetsk Region.

Also, UHHRU experts provide regular [expert commentary](#) to the media on the importance of documenting war crimes, the Tribunal for Putin Initiative and on controversial issues in legislation that concerns people's rights.

Every month, the organization's communications department and experts receive dozens of inquiries from journalists and cover their activities in media outlets such as: 1+1, Suspilne, TV Channel Kyiv, ICTV, Inter, Rada TV Channel, FREEDOM TV Channel, Channel 5, Ukrainska Pravda, Ukrainskyi Tyzhden, Radio Svoboda, Radio NV, ICTV, as well as other local and foreign publications.

LAC experts also regularly participate in TV and radio broadcasts and give comments to journalists of regional and national media:

- [Receiving monetary compensation due to captivity \(Rivne LAC\)](#)
- [Why is it necessary to document war crimes?](#) How is it done and who to turn to? **(Chernihiv LAC)**
- [Interview about the work of the Tribunal for Putin Initiative \(Cherkasy LAC\)](#)
- [How to get compensation for destroyed housing? Explanations from Kherson LAC lawyer](#)

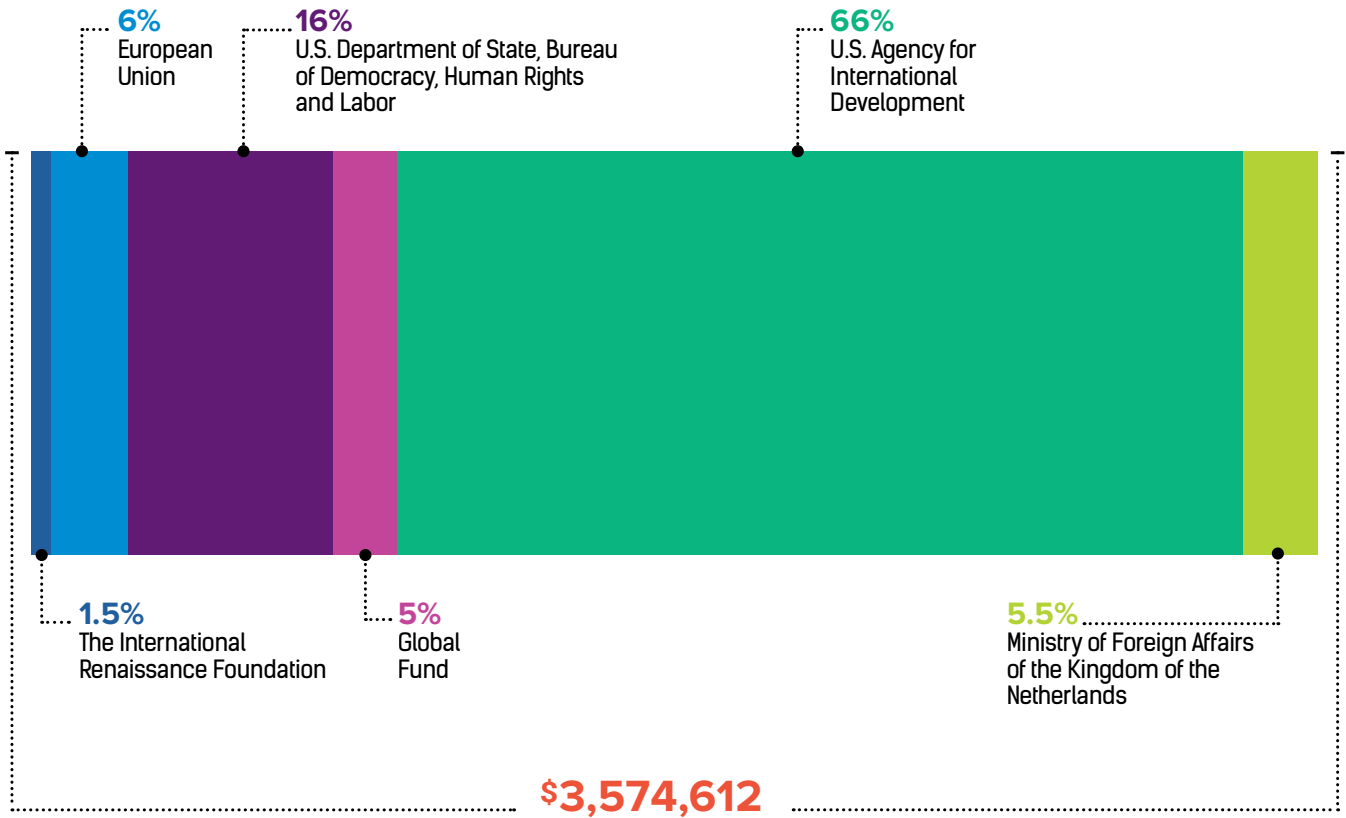


During the reporting period, we managed to implement [a joint project with Radio NV](#): in 12 programs, UHHRU experts revealed the problems of Ukrainian legislation related to prosecution for wartime collaboration with the enemy, as well as provided explanations to the population about their rights and opportunities for assistance and protection. The programs were broadcast on radio and received coverage throughout Ukraine, as well as on YouTube.

Thanks to a successful communication strategy, we were able to attract hundreds of people to offline and online trainings and webinars from UHHRU experts. Participants in the training events included: educators, journalists, community activists, judges, lawyers and prosecutors. Thanks to the promotion of a specially created Telegram channel with announcements of events from UHHRU, we are expanding our loyal audience, which closely follows our announcements and actively shares them with the professional community.

Financial report for 2023

INCOME (BY DONORS)::



SOURCES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT:

Global Fund	\$185,497
U.S. Agency for International Development	\$2,344,000
U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor	\$574,538
European Union	\$209,920
Partnership Fund for a Resilient Ukraine (PFRU)	\$7,930
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands	\$196,883
The International Renaissance Foundation	\$53,681
Other incomes	\$2,163
GRAND TOTAL:	\$3,574,612

Financial report for 2023

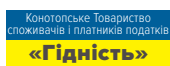
PROGRAM COSTS:

Salary	\$255,190
Support of Public Reception Offices	\$494,277
Fees for lawyers and litigation related costs	\$326,588
Fees for experts	\$266,560
Translations	\$2,963
Publications and promo-materials	\$24,739
Fact-finding mission	\$7,237
Public events	\$60,888
Working meetings	\$17,531
Trainings and other educational activities	\$165,441
Educational events for staff	\$200
Meetings of governing bodies	\$1,553
Participation in national and international events and studies	\$119,115
Maintenance and update web-sites and databases	\$3,362
Travel	\$697
Delivery and postage	\$7,387
Equipment and furniture	\$31,631
Consumables and office supplies	\$12,016
Services, maintenance and upgrade of office equipment	\$53
Books, periodicals and data bases	\$2,510
Communications	\$1,850
Office rent	\$29,250
Subgrants to partner organisations	\$901,088
Contracted personnel	\$400,014
Total for Program Costs	\$3,132,140

ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS:

Salary	\$151,857
External audit	\$20,553
Communications	\$341
Equipment and furniture	\$2,927
Office rent	\$4,375
Delivery and postage	\$1,116
Bank fees	\$7,802
Consumables and office supplies	\$1,795
Contracted personnel	\$41,254
Contingency	\$14,145
Total for Administrative costs II	\$246,165
GRAND TOTAL	\$3,378,305

UHHRU composition:



NGO Dignity –
Konotop, Sumy Oblast



Kirovograd Association “Civic Initiatives” – Kropyvnytskyi



NGO MART – Chernigiv



NGO Public Bureau “Pravozahyst” –
Sumy



NGO Human Rights Protection Group “Veritas” – Odesa



NGO All-Ukrainian Society of Political Prisoners and Victims of Repressions – Kyiv



Civic Committee for the Protection of Constitutional Rights and Civil Liberties – Kyiv



Congress of Ethnic Communities of Ukraine – Kyiv



Center for Legal and Political Studies “SIM” Web: centre7.org.ua – Lviv



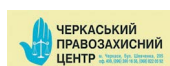
Kherson Regional Branch of the Committee of Voters of Ukraine – Lviv



NGO Docudays – Kherson



Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group – Kharkiv



Cherkasy Human Rights Protection Center – Cherkasy



Chernigiv Public Committee for Human Rights Protection



Chortkiv City NGO “Helsinki Initiative XXI” – Chortkiv



Odesa Regional Branch of the Committee of Voters of Ukraine – Odesa



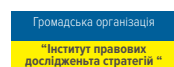
NGO Flora – Kropyvnytskyi



NGO “Territory of Success” –
Kropyvnytskyi



Ecological and Humanitarian Association “Green World” –
Chortkiv



NGO “Institute of Legal Research and Strategies” – Kharkiv



Charitable Organization “Foundation of Mercy and Health” – Kherson



NGO «Eastern Human Rights Center» – Kramatorsk



NGO “Podil Legal League” – Khmelnytskyi



Chuguyiv Human Rights Protection Group – Chuguyiv



NGO Human Rights Group “SICH” – Dnipro



NGO “Center for Community Growth” – Kovel



NGO “Northern Human Rights Protection Group” – Sumy

Leadership

Anatoly Boyko



Chairman of the Board, Kharkiv human rights group

Olexander Stepanenko



Chairman of the NGO «Green World», Chortkiv

Inga Dudnik



Is the executive director NGO «Territory of Success»

Svitlana Smal



Executive Director of Dokudayz NGO

Taras Shcherbatyuk



Head NGO «Cherkassky Human Rights Center»

Andrii Misyats



Candidate of legal sciences, deputy Chairman of the Higher Qualification and Disciplinary Commission of the Bar, head of the NGO «Podilskyi Law League»

Volodymyr Ponomarenko



Head of the Konotop Society «Dignity»

AUDITING COMMISSION

Natalia Yesina is the executive director NGO «Northern Human Rights Protection Group»

Lyudmila Shestakova head of the ecological NGO «Flora»

Лідія Тополевська head of the NGO «Legal Center and political studies «SIM» (Lviv)

SUPERVISORY BOARD

The Supervisory Board consists of well-known human rights defenders and lawyers. The quantitative and personal composition of the Supervisory Board is approved by the General Meeting of the Association.

The Supervisory Board is the advisory and consultative body of the Association.

The Supervisory Board of the Union included well-known figures of the human rights movement of the 60s – 80s:

Myroslav Marynovych

[Yosyf Zisels](#)

Volodymyr Marmus,

Evgeny Zakharov.

Acknowledgments:



U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID))



U.S. State Department. Bureau of Democracy,
Human Rights and Labour



European Union (EU)



Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria



Charles Stewart Mott Foundation



Kingdom of the Netherlands

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands



International Renaissance Foundation

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