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Back in 2020, our team was working on a 5-year strategy of the Centre of United Actions. After long and thorough discussions and sincere reflections, we wrote on a flip chart:

Vision of Ukraine-2025: «The authorities are accountable and work efficiently. Citizens know who is responsible for what and understand their own responsibilities»

In these two short sentences, we managed to formulate not only our dreams and vision of the future Ukraine. In these 22 words, we outlined our further work toward reaching our shared dream. The year 2021 was no exception. All our products and activities were sure steps to this goal.
We monitored government decisions, shared information about them with citizens, and constantly improved our tools. Ukrainians always tried to be engaged in the political processes, following the government work by watching popular political talk shows or by reading unverified information from anonymous Telegram channels. But does this give the citizens a real understanding of processes and phenomena unwinding in our country? The question is, of course, a rhetorical one. To help people not to drown in the information vortex of social and political white noise, we provided them with an opportunity to look at government decisions clearly and dispassionately, in concise and plain words. The increase in the number of consumers of our monitoring results who receive them in convenient formats and attention from editors of the leading media only confirm that we are on the right path.

Government accountability is not just about dignitaries or elected officials sensing that their decisions are daily monitored by competent experts. It is also about creating the environment for substantial discussions about *whether this or that decision actually solves any important social or national problem?* For that to happen, a deep dive into the essence of current state policies and a capacity to evaluate the consequences of particular changes are needed. To analyze government decisions without extremes like “all good” or “all bad” is an indispensable requirement on the way to good governance. In 2021, we took several dozens of important steps to meet this requirement.

Some people said to us, “How can you highlight the deficiencies of government decisions, loudly warn about the potential dangers, and at the same time cooperate with government institutions?” For us, there is no controversy here. Cooperating with authorities and helping government officials to use effective tools for developing state policies is what an analytical and advocacy center is supposed to do. Government is not something alien. It is our government. On the one hand, helping government to consider stakeholders’ positions gives more assurance that its decisions will solve problems and not be rolled back during the implementation. On the other hand, it gives hope that inclusive policy development will become a usual practice for the executive branch. This also takes us closer to good governance.

In 2021, however, cooperation with government institutions was not the sole focus of our work. In everyday life, tens of thousands of citizens are within the gravitational field of interactions between local governments. Policies that affect the quality of life and accessibility of public services are developed and approved at the community level. The decentralization reform was one of the fundamental leaps made by Ukraine since its independence. To make full use of the decentralization results, local councilors and managers need new skills, new procedures for the development and implementation of local policies. That is why we work with territorial communities, help local elected and appointed officials not to be afraid to engage citizens in preparing decisions, use analytical instruments, and base their decisions on solid foundations and not on biases and assumptions. If Ukraine is an embroidered shirt, then territorial communities are seams and stitches. While working with the communities, we saw a “vyshyvanka” of good governance that starts from the lowest level: seam by seam, stitch by stitch.

“What will I gain from this?” This is how Ukrainians measure government decisions in everyday life since we are practical people. Using this approach, we proposed the citizens to look at the work of local governments through a prism of our analysis of how efficiently public funds are used and the financial capacity of territorial communities. There is no ethereal money on the accounts of a local council: this money is taxpayers’ money, the community’s money. It is impossible to set up a money printer in every oblast center. However, it is possible to improve planning, the workings of the local economy, and spend available resources more efficiently. Especially if you learn from the experience of other cities, the ones at the top of the rating prepared by the Centre of United Actions. Good results come not from wonders or magic but from good governance tools that local governments use on a daily basis.

To plan your future and achieve your goals, you have to analyze your past
experiences. A chance to reflect on our past was provided by the thirtieth anniversary of the restoration of Ukrainian independence. That is how #ukrstateunderconstruction was born: a history of Ukraine through a prism of the creation, changes, actions, and inactions of state institutions. We dug through hundreds of documents and asked uncomfortable questions to statespersons who made far-reaching historic decisions. We looked through archives and watched chronicles. #ukrstateunderconstruction is an important foundation for many further discussions about the institutional development of Ukraine. It would be possible to compare every argument or stance with the results of our analysis. Wouldn’t you agree that this is fertile ground for all further discussions about good governance in Ukraine?

We love not only to dream and to act. We urge citizens to do the same and help them present their dreams about the future of Ukraine via art.

In 2021, we launched a nationwide contest “The State Is Not Self-Made to that end. Because dreams about the future of Ukraine will show hundreds of personal perspectives on how citizens of all ages are ready to be engaged in state-building processes, which responsibilities they are ready to take, and how they are ready to act together with others. A dream about the future of your country is always about what each of us is ready to do to achieve this desirable future. That is how we proceed with the implementation of our vision of Ukraine, Ukraine, where citizens feel personally responsible for what their country will be tomorrow, in a year, in a decade, or in a century.

In 2021, as in the previous years, we were often asked by both our friends and haters: “Why don’t you work on this or on that?” Our answer was and is that we are sure that efficient institutions and responsible citizens are two pillars that Ukraine stands on.

An accountable government is an efficient government. Through its work, the Centre of United Actions builds up demand for accountability: by informing Ukrainians about government decisions and the consequences of these decisions. We contribute to the creation of an environment where the country’s leadership and local governments have only one choice: to work honestly, transparently, and within their legal powers. How well they manage to do that, the voters will decide.

Oleh Rybachuk
Head of the Centre of United Actions

Andriy Andrushkiv
Chief executive officer of the Centre of United Actions
professionalism
transparency
responsibility
teamship
respect for people
non-discrimination
personal liberty
honesty
Monitoring of government decisions

The most popular phone apps are weather forecast apps. Before leaving home, we want to know what to expect during the day: whether to bring along an umbrella, maybe not park a car near trees or refrain from planning long walks outside. The same goes for political weather: everyone should know about the changes in powers granted to central executive bodies and local governments, the rules for the next elections, etc. That is why at least once a week we publish a digest about key government decisions and inform Ukrainians about them.

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In 2021, we analyzed over 200 important government decisions. Thanks to our work, thousands of Ukrainians received this information.

**200+ decisions**

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91 analytical digests by the Centre of United Actions in Ukrainian and English in 2021 were viewed.

**115 130 times**

with a 27.4% open rate

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Posts about digests on our Facebook page users viewed:

**337 312 times**

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Our analysts gave commentaries on topics covered in the digests for Ukrainian Radio on a regular basis.

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The outreach of the Chronicles of Turbo-mode, a Telegram channel where we inform our subscribers about important government decisions, increased up to

**114 088 people**

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We also talk about government decisions in the OK, So What? podcast. In 2021, journalists and analysts of the Centre prepared 44 episodes of the podcast. All episodes were hosted at popular platforms Anchor, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, SoundCloud, Pocket Casts, Youtube, and Spotify. In addition, the podcast is hosted by influential online media Ukrayinska Pravda and NV, ABUK audio library. Hromadske Radio aired it live. In 2021, OK, So What? podcast was listened to

**124 712 times**

It kept its 4th position in the News-Politics category at Apple Podcasts for the Ukrainian audience.

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Products based on the monitoring results were seen, listened to, or read at least

**691 242 times**

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Monitoring of government decisions and active dissemination of information about these decisions among citizens helped to promote decisions important for the state and to block some harmful ones, in particular, those violating the Constitution. In our digest, we wrote about the necessity to define the legal status of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau, and the Parliament finally adopted the required law. Emphasizing the importance of the rule of law provisions by the Constitution of Ukraine, the Centre advocated for the adoption of the Law on All-Ukrainian Referendum. In the end, the Verkhovna Rada passed it in January of 2021.
professionalism
transparency
responsibility
teamship
respect for people
non-discrimination
personal liberty
honesty
Decision analysis

It is not enough to know just the fact that some decision exists. This is not as easy as to learn some basic electronic gadgets where you do not need even to read detailed instructions. Ordinances, resolutions, and draft bills have to be thoroughly analyzed since they are virtually the traffic code for the whole country.

In 2021, analysts of the Centre of United Actions prepared over twenty publications for the leading social and political media of Ukraine. We summed up the results of the two years in office of Volodymyr Zelensky by analyzing how he managed to concentrate power in his hands but failed to improve the governance of the state.

We demonstrated how authorities are “praying” to the Constitution and violating it at the same time. We explained in detail the reform of the Security Service of Ukraine as one of the key reforms for state security, and only this prevented the adoption of draft bills that only imitated the reform but introduced no real changes. Another focus of the analysts of the Centre was the Bureau of Economic Security which was supposed to make life easier for businesses and decrease the level of corruption in law enforcement agencies by depriving them of powers to investigate economic crimes.

Analytical materials issued by the Centre were read by

251,179 people

In 2021, the media asked us for commentaries about the results of our analysis and current political events 76 times.
professionalism
transparency
responsibility
teamship
respect for people
non-discrimination
personal liberty
honesty
Decision development

The Centre of United Actions does not just monitor and analyze government decisions. We have sufficient expertise to participate in preparing those decisions.

We prepared an analytical report on the expectations of Ukrainian businesses from the update of the Association Agreement with the EU for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration.

The report covered positions of Ukrainian exporters collected during public consultations, results of the online survey of entrepreneurs, and proposals from business associations. This information laid the foundation for the Ukrainian negotiation position during the negotiation with the EU on updating the Association Agreement.

In addition to working with information already available, we also conducted a series of interviews with exporter companies to know and understand the needs of businesses operating in foreign markets.
professionalism
transparency
responsibility
teamship
respect for people
non-discrimination
personal liberty
honesty
United actions with territorial communities

Thanks to the decentralization reform, territorial communities got more powers and resources. In several years, they significantly increased their capacities and effectiveness thus also making stronger the state as a whole. However, local governments still face multiple problems, and we are helping them to solve those problems using practices of good governance.

In 2021, the Centre of United Actions actively cooperated with five territorial communities in Volyn, Rivne, Ternopil, and Kyiv oblasts.

We cooperated on the renewal of the network of cultural establishments with Bucha and Lyubeshiv territorial communities. Different oblasts, different communities, but very similar problems: it is too expensive for local budgets to maintain the networks inherited from the Soviet times.

For the Lyubeshiv territorial community, our analysts prepared and presented a brief about the problem. Taking this document as a starting point, we prepared a draft ordinance that the local government will consider later. In the Bucha territorial community, we collected data by surveying company heads, educators, and schoolchildren. The data will be analyzed further and used in the search for optimum solutions for the cultural management system of the community.

Our interactions with these territorial communities made it clear that network optimization is impossible without amendments to the legislation on culture, so we started a discussion about this with the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine.

We helped the communities of Velyka Dymera and Rozhyshche to start the work of preparing comprehensive policies on solid municipal waste management aimed to decrease pollution in these communities and make community members care more about the environment.

Experts of the Centre helped the Koretsk community to evaluate the plan for the renewal of the secondary education establishments. Its aim was to improve the quality of education and the ability of local authorities to fund it. In 2021, we collected data in these communities by surveying both community members and particular stakeholder groups — educators, representatives of business, and starostas.

Thanks to the cooperation with the Centre, our partner communities received their first experience with developing public policies based on data analysis and results of surveying community members and representatives of stakeholder groups. We also showed local governments effective practices of interaction with central executive bodies when it is necessary to amend the outdated legislation that stands in the way of better services for community members.

In 2021, we engaged 1339 community members from 6 territorial communities in the evaluation and development of local policies.

Together with the head of the Lyubeshiv community, we shared the experience of our cooperation at the Covenant of Mayors in September of 2021. A new positive approach to local governance should multiply and not remain some exotic success stories.
People and government

Efficiency of the community budget funds spending

To know how efficiently the authorities work, it is necessary, among other things, to analyze how they spend money in between elections. That is why during the first half of 2021 the Centre of United Actions analyzed the dynamics of spending by territorial communities of the oblast centers in 2018–2021.

Our analysts processed information from the State Budget portal by the Ministry of Finance and official sites of local governments to check how the managers of the richest and biggest communities of the country planned their budgets and whether they allocated funding to solve their most pressing problems.

As a result, we prepared a series of materials about the budgets of the communities of the oblast centers. It was published by one of the most influential Ukrainian media — Dzerkalo Tyzhnia. An article about the analysis of big cities’ budgets was published by Ekonomichna Pravda. Over 40 local media wrote about the research. 8 more regional media reprinted blogs and articles by the Centre of United Actions.

Users viewed our analytical materials about big cities’ budgets

84 000 times

We also reached 134 thousand readers via social media and mailing lists.

134 000 readers

There are tens and tens of thousands of people interested in how taxes they pay are spent on community development.

Financial capacity of territorial communities

We did not stop on that and made a research on the financial capacity of territorial communities of oblast centers based on the 2018–2021 budgets’ analysis.

Oblast centers of Ukraine differ significantly: some are million-plus cities like Dnipropetrovsk or Odessa, and also there is Uzhhorod with just slightly more than 100 thousand inhabitants. To compare the communities in question in a meaningful way, we designed a methodology with 10 indicators.

It included, in particular, revenues and spending from a local budget per capita, taxable capacity index, state subsidies to the local budget, capital spending per capita, etc. The Centre of United Actions evaluated the financial capacity of territorial communities both by each indicator separately and by an aggregated rating.

We extensively communicated the results of this research so that as many people as possible learned about them while community managers could learn from the best of their colleagues. The rating of the financial capacity of territorial communities was covered by regional (over 70 materials) and national (8 publications) media.

We managed to inform about the results of the research

100 000+ citizens
Poster contest

Poster contest Power Belongs to You. Know Your Place ended in 2020. However, in 2021 the best works were placed on the streets of Kyiv: in the subway, on city lights, and at bus stops. Thanks to cooperation with the Kyiv City State Administration, we conveyed the ideas of the participants of the contest to a very wide audience: at stations Universytet, Khreshchatyk, Arsenalna, Dorohozhychi, and Zoloti Vorota only, 231 thousand passengers saw our posters over

8 000 000 times

In December 2021, we started a new contest The State Is Not Self-Made, proposing our participants to think about which Ukraine they want to see in 10 years. We managed to engage Ukrainian businesses to help with the prize fund for the winners.

This is our first attempt to establish a new culture of cooperation between the private sector and civic organizations.

Business and authorities

The Centre of United Actions created an educational course Instruments of Public Policy for Business for the Lviv Business School. 22 participants applied, but only 12 students managed to be present during the course due to severe snowfall. All of them gave positive feedback, and the Lviv Business School confirmed that it is ready to continue with this course next year. As a result, businesses will acquire new knowledge and put it into practice.
Thirty years is a time when people look back and draw conclusions. For states, the timeline is a bit different, but it is a good opportunity to recall how Ukrainian institutions formed, what we were doing right during those years and what we were doing wrong. The Centre of United Actions prepared an analytical overview The History of the Balance of Power after the Restoration of Ukrainian Independence. It covers three key state spheres during 30 years: economy, defense, and appointments via a prism of the work of the President, the Cabinet, and the Parliament.

We published 11 interviews with public figures who directly participated in the state building and saw all these processes from inside. Almost 23 thousand users learned how our state was being built by watching our materials on a Youtube channel.

-23 000

Text versions of the interviews on the website and paper edition of the Gazeta.ua were read by over a million people.

1 000 000+

The Centre also prepared video overviews of the presidencies of each president since the independence. They were published on our Youtube channel and aired on Channel 24. They reached an audience of over half a million viewers.

500 000+

Text versions of these overviews on censor.net were read by 24 thousand of Ukrainians.

24 000

In cooperation with public broadcaster Ukrainian Radio, we prepared 8 radio programs about the development of Ukraine during the 30 years of independence. We managed to reach 426 400 listeners in prime time.

426 400

In cooperation with the charitable foundation Enjoying Life, we prepared a printed special edition for 1400 older people with overviews of the presidencies. This was our first attempt to reach older people, a very important audience since they are active during elections and interested in politics.

500 000+
How do people read, hear, and watch us?

6 822 544
The total outreach of our products in 2021 was

In 2021, the subscriber count of our Youtube channel increased by 2 792. We worked on our videos extensively: 96 pieces were produced, 145 885 users were reached.

146 885

We communicated with the English-speaking audience via the Twitter account of the head of the Centre of United Actions. By the end of the year, the outreach was 11 586 users. 398 people subscribed to the channel.

11 586

Another of our important digital instruments was mailing lists. Each month of 2021, we informed our partners, civic organizations, and activists about the most important publications, videos, and news prepared by the Centre.

29 134

We also managed to increase the audience of our Facebook page. By the end of the year, we had 7 813 followers. As a result, more people were able to get the latest and impartial assessment of the important news and our analytical materials. With our posts, we reached 1 979 674 users.

1 979 674

Another of our important digital instruments was mailing lists. Each month of 2021, we informed our partners, civic organizations, and activists about the most important publications, videos, and news prepared by the Centre.

We continued working with radio stations: our analysts participated in a show "Today in the Evening each Thursday in prime time on Ukrainian Radio. Hromadske Radio broadcast live our podcasts."
Spending in 2021 by source

LUMINATE FOUNDATION, INC.  Ε6,004,767.64
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency  Ε5,262,380.32
National Democratic Institute for International Affairs  Ε1,378,213.56
Pact inc.  Ε1,254,900.93
International Renaissance Foundation  Ε267,151.35
Donations from citizens and other sources  Ε267,151.35

Total  Ε14,236,265.22

Financial statements of the Centre of United Actions have been audited by MIK Projects LLC. The audit covered the balance sheet as of 31 December 2021 (Form № 1-MC) and the statement of financial results (Form № 2-MC) of 2021 composed in accordance with the national regulations (standards) of accounting in Ukraine and notes to these documents.

The audit of financial statements has been conducted in accordance with the Law of Ukraine on Audit of Financial Statements and Audit Activities of 21.12.2017 No. 2258-VIII and International Standards of Auditing issued by the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (IAASB) of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC). According to the audit results, no significant deficiencies regarding compliance with the national regulations (standards) of accounting in Ukraine were found.

The audit firm issued an independent auditor’s report with an unmodified opinion that our financial statements of 2021 in all material respects fairly represent our financial position and are compliant with the national regulations (standards) of accounting in Ukraine.
Institutional development

At the beginning of 2021, we received the results of the gender audit of the Centre conducted back in September 2020. As a result, our team developed and implemented the strategy based on diversity, equity, and inclusion principles. All internal policies were updated in accordance with the recommendations and results of the gender audit. Since that time, we pay special attention to the impact on vulnerable groups, in particular, when analyzing government decisions.

Last year we improved and automated our electronic document management system. In addition, the Centre conducted an internal audit of processes and efficiency. As a result, we introduced and piloted a new performance evaluation system.

Our site is our business card where anyone can learn what we are doing and which products we are preparing. We carried out a search engine optimization to reach our target audience even better.

People of the Centre

Andriy Andrushkiv
CEO

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Oleh Rybachuk
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Our co-actors

Donors

Media partners

Government partners

Partner territorial communities

Business partners

Partner communities