



**CENTRE FOR DEMOCRACY
AND RULE OF LAW**



ANNUAL REPORT



**CENTRE FOR DEMOCRACY
AND RULE OF LAW**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	2
Independent Media	5
• Support for the Public Broadcaster	6
• Support for the Key Media Reforms	7
• Promotion of the Lawful Content Creation and Use	7
• Ensuring the Ethical Use of AI	8
• Media Education for Media Professionals and Journalists	9
• Improving Media and Information Literacy and Countering Disinformation	10
• Advocating for Effective Content Moderation on Social Media	12
Civil Society	13
• Advocating for Public Policy in the Field of Volunteer Development in Ukraine	14
• Simplification of Migration Procedures for Foreign Volunteers	16
• Addressing Unforeseen Consequences for CSOs Associated With the Implementation of Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Legislation	18
• Improving Banking Services for CSOs and Avoiding Issues with Determining the Ultimate Beneficial Owner	19
• Participation in Shaping Legislation in the Field of Virtual Assets and Their Use by CSOs	19
• Monitoring Harmful Legislation and Initiatives Affecting CSO Activities and Coordinating Joint Actions	20
• Educational and Advocacy Activities for CSOs: Mentorship Program and the Legal Reform Forum for CSOs	20
• Cooperation among Civil Society, Government and Businesses	21
• Safety of Activists, Volunteers, and CSO Leaders and Their Coalitions	22
• For Safe Roads' Campaign: Advocating for Legislative Changes in Road Safety	23
• Smoke Free Kyiv: Legal Support for Anti-Tobacco Legislative Changes	24
Rule of Law	26
• Participation in European Integration Processes	27
• Advocating for Public Administration Reform	28
• Access to Public Information	28
Communications Report	29
Financial Report	30
Donors and Partners	32



TRANSFORMING TO MOVE FORWARD



OLEZIA KHOLOPIK

CEDEM Director

In 2025, Ukrainian civil society faced yet another challenge: How do we remain effective in a rapidly changing world that is turning futurists' predictions into everyday reality?

The team of the Centre for Democracy and Rule of Law found the answer: changing along with the world while remaining committed to our values and mission – building a society of active and responsible citizens. Thus, over the past 12 months, **CEDEM has complemented its traditional areas with new priorities and focuses.**

The first one of these is Ukraine's European integration. CEDEM has always taken into account the experience of EU countries when proposing and advocating reforms, but the time has come for a broader perspective. After all, Ukraine must align its legal system with EU norms – this is a key condition for accession. So ahead lies work on hundreds of decisions and draft laws.



We believe this can only be accomplished by joining efforts between the state and civil society. Therefore, we engaged as a think-and-act tank: CEDEM experts worked in working and advisory groups under public authorities, and we also monitored EU requirements and Ukraine's progress. We developed proposals and reservations together with our partners in open discussions, and also communicated and explained the course of European integration to society. Because **the goal** is not only to join the EU, but to transform the country.

We have been working in the media sphere for over 20 years, and today the changes here are more visible than ever.

Artificial intelligence is now part of journalists' daily work and at the same time a constant risk. Disinformation has evolved from anonymous comments on social media to convincing deepfakes and clones of well-known media outlets. Audiences are increasingly choosing social media over traditional media.

Under these conditions, it is not enough to react – we must act proactively. Last year, CEDEM not only prepared analytical materials and consultations on pressing issues, but also conducted a series of regional trainings and online programs so that Ukrainian newsrooms would be ready for new realities. They will also be supported by our manuals compiling the experience of leading media outlets during the war.

But 'community immunity' against information threats is created not only by journalists, but by all Ukrainians through joint efforts. To this end, we reached more than one million people through a campaign to develop critical thinking. We also conducted separate professional training for civil servants and educators.

We believe that technologies should be ethical and serve society rather than poison it with manipulation and fraud. Therefore, we continued to warn society about new threats on social media and advocated for fair content moderation. We already have great news from the field of artificial intelligence: with CEDEM's support, the first self-regulatory organization in Ukraine with clear rules for developer companies has been launched.

When it comes to civil society, our priority is to create a 'green corridor' for activists, philanthropists, and volunteers. They should not have to break through barriers and difficulties in order to help the country.

Therefore, throughout the past year, CEDEM advocated for favorable legislative changes for the sector. In particular, thanks to joint efforts with partners, the state recognized the importance of systematic support for volunteering. We identified barriers for foreign volunteers and secured the registration of a draft law to remove them – these changes will be implemented by the parliament in 2026. We also helped organizations develop a culture of safety and protect their rights.

It is the synergy of civil society, government, and businesses that can become one of our country's superpowers. Therefore, CEDEM promoted such cooperation through a storytelling competition showcasing successful projects. We are also developing a culture of mentorship, where experienced organizations help newcomers in their work.

The year 2025 posed another problem: how to maintain attention on topics that many view as 'untimely' because of the war. These include the epidemic of road traffic accidents on Ukrainian roads, which takes lives every day. As part of the 'For Safe Roads' Campaign, we continued to remind society of the need to drive responsibly. After all, it is better to be late than not arrive at all.



But to achieve decisive changes, **we need to update legislation.** A progressive scale of fines, stricter liability for repeat violations, abandoning the 'non-penalized +20 km/h' – these are provisions of draft laws whose registration we have already achieved. The ball is now in the Verkhovna Rada's court. It is the combination of fair rules and information campaigns which produces results – as evidenced by studies on seatbelt use, since more and more Ukrainians buckle up every year.

Tobacco control remains just as relevant, as the industry is seeking new ways to attract children and adolescents to harmful habits. CEDEM continued to advocate for strict compliance with the legislation, and to this end we not only prepared analytics and proposals, but also trained state inspectors and conducted research.



All these areas are united by one approach. We are moving forward together with the world. **But we are not changing our essence.**

CEDEM continues to combine analytics, advocacy, and education to build a country that Ukrainians are dreaming of, both at the front and in the rear.

And we continue to do this together with like-minded people – everyone who is working for a strong, democratic, and responsible Ukraine.



I am grateful to the CEDEM team, partners and donors for another year of joint work. As well as everyone who effects change every day. This is how the country we are fighting for is shaped.



CENTRE FOR DEMOCRACY
AND RULE OF LAW



INDEPENDENT MEDIA

INDEPENDENT MEDIA

PUBLIC BROADCASTING SUPPORT

In 2025, CEDEM continued to support the Public Broadcaster and advocate for its proper funding.

This year, the Public Broadcaster (Suspilne) went through an important stage – the election of the Chair and members of the Board. CEDEM contributed to [covering the election](#) process and also [explained to the public](#) the importance and mechanism of the elections as a component of the Public Broadcasting reform.

We also continued the public dialogue on the importance of proper funding for the broadcaster, especially in the context of the full-scale war.

"According to our calculations, the Public Broadcaster's annual budget for 2025 is what the Russian Federation spends on propaganda and disinformation over two weeks; however, even under such conditions, the Public Broadcaster generates content that counters the enemy's disinformation machine. This is why proper support for the Public Broadcaster is critically important," [CEDEM's statement](#) on the Public Broadcaster as a media key to European integration.

As part of this dialogue, **we held the annual [conference Integrity in the Media: Preserving Democracy in the Digital World](#)**. Thanks to this event, CEDEM succeeded in:

- Bringing together representatives of public authorities, the international community, media organizations, and those working in youth and children's policy on a shared platform. A total of 157 participants joined the conference.
- Raising in the public sphere the issue of content for young audiences as a strategic priority and an investment in the future.
- Preparing [the conference conclusions](#) with a list of steps for government representatives, the Public Broadcaster, civil society, and international partners to ensure stable funding for the Public Broadcaster and enable it to fulfill its mission at a critical time for the country.



This year, CEDEM also responded to security challenges – in particular, the attack on UA:PBC's executive producer Yurii Makarov and the Russian shelling that affected the branches Suspilne Dnipro, Suspilne Donbas, and Suspilne Zaporizhzhia. In support of the broadcaster, CEDEM joined [statements by media organizations](#) and initiated its own (1,2).

SUPPORT FOR THE KEY MEDIA REFORMS

In 2025, advocacy for the effective media legislation implementation remained one of the organization's key priorities.

KEY RESULTS:

-  CEDEM experts prepared 15 [analytical materials](#) and [news items](#) to raise public awareness of the media sector.
-  To prevent additional legal risks for the media, we initiated a [statement](#) by civil society organizations regarding the adopted draft law No. 12320 on ensuring guarantees of legal practice, which was supported by 10 organizations.
-  CEDEM experts participated in developing criteria for the content assessment in the context of protecting minors and classifying content under restrictions related to the propaganda of totalitarianism and 'rashism'.
-  CEDEM experts joined a working group on legislative changes to counter SLAPP lawsuits and participated in discussing proposals.
-  CEDEM [analyzed](#) the provisions of the Law of Ukraine On Media and draft law No. 12111 to assess their compliance with European standards, identify legal gaps and risks in application, and develop recommendations for improving media regulation.



PROMOTION OF THE LAWFUL CONTENT CREATION AND USE

The Centre for Democracy and Rule of Law promotes the lawful creation and use of content by journalists, media, content creators, and the expert community, while preventing copyright infringement and piracy.

To this end, we prepare analytical materials on legislative initiatives and the state of Ukrainian copyright law in the context of [alignment with the EU standards](#), and inform target audiences while providing guidance on practical aspects of copyright compliance. In particular, this includes the use of [derivative works](#), [orphan works](#) and copyrighted materials [in journalistic content](#).

In total, throughout the year, CEDEM prepared 15 analytical materials, news items, and consultations on copyright on the [CEDEM website](#) and social media.



CEDEM's lawyer also [held](#) a meeting with the artists organized by the Nafta Theatre, on how to effectively manage their copyright, protect their works from infringement, resolve disputes amicably, and whether it is always worth going to court. She also held a [discussion](#) with media professionals about copyright and the challenges that artificial intelligence tools bring to the field of copyright.



ENSURING ETHICAL USE OF AI

In 2025, CEDEM continued to promote the proper and ethical functioning of artificial intelligence technologies in Ukraine.

This year, with CEDEM's [support](#), the first self-regulatory organization of AI developer companies in Ukraine was established, whose members signed the relevant [memorandum](#). It is based on the [Voluntary Code of Responsible Artificial Intelligence Use](#), the signing of which had previously been initiated by the Centre for Democracy and Rule of Law together with the Ministry of Digital Transformation and the Expert Committee on AI.

In particular, each signatory company is now required to submit a report once a year or more frequently describing how it integrates ethical principles into the development, implementation, and use of artificial intelligence.

OTHER KEY RESULTS:



Olha Petriv, CEDEM's AI lawyer, [represented](#) Ukraine at the 20th UN Internet Governance Forum (IGF) held in Norway. Together with the experts from other countries, she discussed challenges related to the development of artificial intelligence.



We prepared 32 [news items](#), [consultations](#), and social media posts to inform audiences about the key developments and aspects of responsible and ethical AI use.



Together with the Educational and Scientific Institute of Journalism of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv and the national media literacy project 'Filter' of the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, CEDEM prepared the practical guide [Artificial Intelligence in the Media. A Guide to Responsible Implementation and a Self-Assessment Workbook for Editorial Teams: From Audit to Editorial Policy](#).



We ran three admissions processes as part of the [PROMPTO](#) Academy of Responsible AI Use together with the national media literacy project 'Filter' of the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine. Lectures on prompting, text and visual material creation, AI ethics, and safety reached 369 participants.



In addition, together with the national media literacy project Filter of the Ministry of Culture, CEDEM ran an admissions process for the educational program [AI Youth](#), which provided training in developing projects to promote media and information literacy in the field of AI for 92 participants.

MEDIA EDUCATION FOR MEDIA PROFESSIONALS AND JOURNALISTS

In 2025, we strengthened the media community with practical knowledge – from digital security and law to working with AI and platforms.

Ukraine's media landscape is changing very rapidly: the war, digital threats, new regulations, and the rapid spread of AI are constantly reshaping how editorial teams and journalists work. To keep up with these changes and remain effective, media professionals need continuous development, rapid adoption of new tools, and updated practices. Our organization supports them through accessible learning formats and expert discussions of current challenges.

Together with the International Media Support, CEDEM provided systematic training and professional exchange for the media community through offline training sessions, **two large-scale online courses, and the Media Talks series.**

Participants gained practical knowledge in digital security, media law, copyright, countering disinformation, and the use of AI in content production. Public expert events became a source of high-quality content for a broad audience and attracted tens of thousands of views.



KEY RESULTS:

- ✓ **Offline:** 5 regional trainings, 116 participants;
- ✓ **Two online training sessions:** 307 participants;
- ✓ **Media Talks:** 6 episodes, 21,375 total views;
- ✓ **Educational activities covered the following topics:** access to public information, trust in media in the digital era, AI and copyright, countering disinformation, media sustainability in 2026, and moderation/manipulation on Meta platforms.

IMPROVING MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY AND COUNTERING DISINFORMATION

In 2025, CEDEM, in partnership with UNESCO and with support from Japan, **implemented a large-scale program to strengthen Ukraine’s information resilience**. CEDEM’s efforts focused on three areas: Education for civil servants and youth, support for the media community, and broad public awareness campaigns.

Results:



Information Resilience During Wartime Campaign CEDEM conducted a large-scale awareness-raising campaign aimed at developing Ukrainians’ critical thinking. It reached nearly 1 million users. In total, 20 video reels, 20 expert posts, and 4 social videos were published.

Collection 'Journalistic Activity in Wartime' Over five months, during facilitated sessions, the expert team collected cases, challenges, and dilemmas faced by Ukrainian journalists and editorial teams during the war, as well as practical solutions to these situations. The guide is based on the experience of 1+1 Media (Breakfast with 1+1 program), 5 CHANNEL, GALKA.IF.UA, Leopoldis.news, Thebuchacity, Bakhmut IN.UA, the National Network of Hyperlocal Media Rayon.in.ua, online outlet Pershyi Zaporizkyi, online outlet Pro Rivne, Kyiv TV Company, Ukrainska Pravda, and Fakty ICTV. As a result, editorial teams have already implemented some of the guide’s recommendations in their journalistic work during the project. In particular, they updated editorial policies and approaches to content creation, and integrated recommendations into editorial and training practices.



Practical Guide to Implementing Media and Information Literacy. Recommendations for Media Organizations Based on the Experience of Ukrainian Newsrooms.

CEDEM conducted 12 in-depth online interviews with representatives of Ukrainian media: Galka.if.ua, Leopoldis.news, Rayon.in.ua, Thebuchacity, Bakhmut IN.UA, Gvara Media, Espresso, Kordon Media, Nakypilo, Pershyi Zaporizkyi, Suspilne, Ukrainska Pravda. Based on their experience in implementing and developing media and information literacy (MIL) skills in editorial work, our experts developed practical recommendations. The guide focuses on MIL practices that have proven useful in three key areas: editorial management, content production, and audience engagement. All recommendations are supported by the examples of media products and projects from Ukrainian newsroom experience.



Educational Initiatives to Improve Media and Information Literacy Skills

Throughout 2025, CEDEM provided systematic training for 1,500 Ukrainians, including civil servants, young professionals, students, and educators, through a combination of offline intensives and online courses:

- **3 regional trainings** in Ternopil, Lviv, and Rivne for civil servants Media and Information Literacy in Public Administration: Response, Communication, Resilience
- **4 cohorts of the online course** for civil servants MIL & AI: Modern Skills for Effective Public Service
- **7 regional trainings** for youth and students in Ternopil, Cherkasy, Poltava, Rivne, Lutsk, Lviv, and Khmelnytskyi – MIL Navigator: Practical Offline Intensive Training On Media, Information, and AI Literacy
- **3 cohorts of the online course** for youth MIL Navigator: Online Course On Media, Information, and AI Literacy



Youth MIL and AI Day Ideathon On October 24, 2025, as part of UNESCO's Global Media and Information Literacy Week, the Centre for Democracy and Rule of Law, in partnership with UCU, brought together more than 100 young leaders from across Ukraine for Youth MIL and AI Day.



Study Danger in the Facebook Feed: Clickbait and Targeted Ads as Tools of Manipulation and Fraud.

With the support of the Heinrich Böll Foundation, CEDEM implemented a project to study vulnerabilities in the digital space. CEDEM experts systematized the schemes used by fraudulent pages and developed recommendations for public authorities and users on protecting personal data and countering phishing. As a result, CEDEM published the study and conducted an information campaign to raise awareness among Ukrainians about such threats.



ADVOCATING FOR EFFECTIVE CONTENT MODERATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA



CEDEM focuses its efforts on raising user awareness of moderation rules on social media, as well as protecting socially significant accounts from unfair blocking and algorithmic errors.

- Ihor Rozkladai, Deputy Director and Chief Expert on Media Law and Social Media Content Moderation at CEDEM, contributed to the development of the [Guide for Risk Management in the Context of Emergencies, Armed Conflicts, and Crises for Social Platforms](#) together with IMS (International Media Support), Internews Ukraine, and UNESCO Ukraine.
- CEDEM provided consultations to users on key [aspects](#) and [changes](#) related to the safe use of social media. We prepared 9 social media posts and 3 [consultations](#), including guidance on [how to restore access](#) to a Facebook account and issues related to the [inheritance of a Google account](#).
- We published [recommendations](#) on countering clickbait and fraud in the Ukrainian segment of Facebook. They are based on an analysis of the most widespread digital manipulation tactics that have rapidly proliferated on the platform.
- CEDEM also [developed](#) recommendations for the safe and effective user interaction on social media during fundraising, focusing on proper messaging, avoiding violations of platform rules, protecting pages from blocking and fraud, and maintaining trust.
- In 2025, CEDEM continued its work to reduce risks associated with the use of Telegram by Ukrainians. As part of the TelegramDetox campaign, we published 9 advisory [posts](#) on CEDEM's social media and a consolidated [material](#) where users can find all the necessary information to stop using the messenger. Over the year, it received more than 75,000 views.

V ФОРУМ ПРАВОВИХ РЕФОРМ для громадянського суспільства «ЄДНІСТЬ ДІЙ – СИЛА ЗМІН»

березня 2025 року
в, Україна



CIVIL SOCIETY

CIVIL SOCIETY

ADVOCATING FOR PUBLIC POLICY IN THE FIELD OF VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT IN UKRAINE



In 2025, CEDEM worked on improving legislation for volunteers and organizations that engage volunteers. The main focus of our efforts was advocating for developing and adopting public policy in the field of volunteering.



KEY RESULTS:



CEDEM lawyers participated in 12 working meetings on the development of civil society and the volunteer movement in Ukraine at the Office of the President. Our goal was to shape and advocate for an enabling environment for the volunteer community.



We successfully advocated for legislative changes to formally recognize volunteer experience (personal statements), aimed at supporting the development of volunteering within the education system. The corresponding law On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine to Promote the Development of Volunteering among Students (No. 4186-IX) has already been adopted by the Verkhovna Rada and entered into force. It formalizes the status of volunteers, recognizes competencies acquired through volunteering, and establishes legal grounds for crediting volunteer experience as part of an educational pathway.



We held an [expert discussion](#) with the representatives of the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, civil society and charitable organizations, and individual volunteers on the implementation of Law of Ukraine No. [4186-IX](#) and presented a CEDEM-developed [template](#) document confirming volunteer activity.



The Government approved the [Concept of the State Target Program for the Development of Volunteering in Ukraine for 2025-2030](#) (the Concept), developed with the participation of CSOs coordinated by CEDEM.



CEDEM prepared an [Expert Opinion](#) on the Concept and disseminated it to target audiences.



Together with the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine and the National Social Service of Ukraine, CEDEM [presented](#) the Concept and [began work on the draft State Program](#). For the first time, the state engaged the volunteer community as a full-fledged partner in shaping and implementing public policy in the field of volunteering.



[The Ministry of Social Policy](#) developed and submitted for approval by central executive authorities a draft State Social Target Program for the Development of Volunteering in Ukraine for 2025-2030, developed with the participation of CSOs coordinated by CEDEM.

Thanks to CEDEM's advocacy efforts, the state recognized the importance of developing and adopting a volunteering development program in a number of strategic documents at both national and international levels. In particular: [EU integration roadmap on the functioning of democratic institutions](#) (Section IV.C National legal, regulatory, and policy frameworks for civil society organizations (CSOs)); Action Plan to Implement the National Strategy for Civil Society Development (2025-2026).



CEDEM's communication with international partners has been constructive and focused on protecting the interests of civil society. Its results are reflected in the [EU Enlargement Package Report](#), where the European Commission highlighted not only the importance of launching the State Program but also ensuring adequate funding for its implementation. The report also maintains the recommendation for the state to ensure unhindered access to banking services for CSOs.





PUBLIC APPEARANCES BY TEAM MEMBERS IN SUPPORT OF THE STATE PROGRAM:

<u>July 16, 2025</u>	interview for the YouTube project SPIU Podcast;
<u>October 11, 2025</u>	speech at the forum 'Youth Under the Chestnuts', organized by the Ukrainian Red Cross Society and the Kyiv City Youth Council, which created a live dialogue between volunteers and youth leaders and invited participants to contribute to the Program and become co-implementers;
<u>November 6, 2025</u>	Forum Minimum Duty of Care, organized by Alliance UA CSO, where standards for protecting volunteers and humanitarian workers operating in high-risk environments were discussed;
<u>December 5, 2025</u>	CEDEM's speech at the Civil Society Development Forum in Kyiv on the status of preparation of the State Program and the role and impact of civil society participation in policymaking in Ukraine;
<u>December 19, 2025</u>	CEDEM's speech at the Forum Business! State! Volunteers/CSOs!, Lviv. CEDEM emphasized the importance of adopting the program and called on CSOs to become co-implementers by submitting their proposals.

SIMPLIFICATION OF MIGRATION PROCEDURES FOR FOREIGN VOLUNTEERS



CEDEM continued to advocate for simplifying bureaucratic procedures for foreign volunteers and humanitarian workers who have supported Ukraine since February 24, 2022. In particular, we identified and systematized migration, administrative, and language barriers that complicated or made long-term volunteering by foreigners impossible.

KEY RESULTS:

 CEDEM [published interim results of a study](#) on the challenges faced by foreign volunteers and military personnel in Ukraine, which served as an evidence base for further advocacy efforts. 72.4% of respondents from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Czech Republic, and other countries identified issues with documentation (visas, residence permits, registration of place of residence) as the most critical ones.

 [Draft Law No. 13071](#) was registered, abolishing the requirement to obtain a long-term type D visa for foreign volunteers and humanitarian workers. It incorporates expert input developed by CEDEM together with the Czech organization People in Need and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. On May 15, 2025, the Verkhovna Rada unanimously supported Draft Law No. 13071 in the first reading. Subsequently, we initiated an [urgent statement](#) in support of its adoption as a whole.

 [Interview for the Telethon](#) on legislation for foreign volunteers.

 Thanks to CEDEM's efforts, the issue of foreign volunteers has been included in [Ukraine's EU integration agenda](#) – the Roadmap on the Functioning of Democratic Institutions. At the same time, we launched [public advocacy](#) to protect the key provisions of Draft Law No. 13071 during its preparation for the second reading.

 On December 5, 2025, as part of the 14th Civil Society Forum We Will Stand Firm – (Vy)STOIMO, CEDEM held [a thematic meeting](#) 'Volunteering Without Borders: Challenges and Prospects' in partnership with the National Social Service.

 CEDEM published the final report on the study of challenges faced by foreign volunteers [Through Challenges, Driven by the Call of the Heart](#).



 To promote opportunities for volunteer insurance, CEDEM conducted active advocacy and negotiations with the Ministry of Finance, as well as an information campaign together with the Coordination Humanitarian Center. A series of video clips by CSOs working in frontline areas was disseminated ([one](#), [two](#), [three](#), [four](#)).



ADDRESSING UNFORESEEN CONSEQUENCES FOR CSOS ASSOCIATED WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING AND COUNTER-TERRORIST FINANCING LEGISLATION



To achieve this goal, CEDEM continued cooperation with: the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Finance, the State Financial Monitoring Service, the National Bank of Ukraine, the Ministry of Digital Transformation, the Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, the Office of the Prosecutor General, the Security Service of Ukraine, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and parliamentary committees.

At the same time, we provided consultations for CSOs, activists, and volunteers on issues of banking legislation and services provided by Ukrainian banks and correspondent banks, as well as on identifying UBOs (ultimate beneficial owners) and conducting partner due diligence. We also participated in the Steering Committee meetings of the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine as part of the project Strengthening the Anti-Money Laundering, Counter-Terrorist Financing, and Asset Recovery Regime, of which CEDEM is a member. CEDEM lawyers participated as experts in meetings of the Global NPO Coalition on FATF.

KEY RESULTS:



Publication 'The Importance of Civil Society Organizations' Participation in the National Risk Assessment in the Area of Preventing and Combating Legalization (Laundering) of the Proceeds of Crime, Terrorist Financing and Financing of Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction in 2025' was released to raise awareness within the civil society sector.



Together with the Financial Monitoring Academy and with the support of the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine, CEDEM conducted Ukraine's first training course, Financial Monitoring of the Civil Society Sector, aimed at helping civil society representatives, primary and state financial monitoring entities (reporting entities), as well as all interested stakeholders understand how financial monitoring of nonprofits works and what can and should be improved. The course consisted of four modules, attended by approximately 300 representatives of the civil society sector, the banking and auditing community, public authorities, business, and academia. The course materials were published on the [website of the State Financial Monitoring Service of Ukraine](#);



CEDEM joined the Working Subgroup on assessing the risks of nonprofit sector misuse for ML/TF as part of the National Risk Assessment 2025. The organization also recommended members of the informal CSO coalition coordinated by CEDEM to participate in the subgroup for the purpose of forming a joint civil society position. As part of the subgroup's work, CEDEM experts conducted [a study of ML/TF risks for CSOs that engage volunteers in their activities](#).

KEY RESULTS:

 They held two in-person coordination meetings of the informal coalition of expert CSOs in the field of financial monitoring, anti-money laundering, and counter-terrorist financing.

 The report with the study results was officially submitted to the State Financial Monitoring Service for consideration as part of the National Risk Assessment 2025.

 CEDEM developed a draft template Policy on anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing for a civil society/charitable organization (registered in Ukraine) and submitted it for review to the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine and the European Center for Not-for-Profit Law.

 CEDEM promoted the results of the independent risk assessment conducted in 2024.

IMPROVING BANKING SERVICES FOR CSOS AND AVOIDING ISSUES WITH DETERMINING THE ULTIMATE BENEFICIAL OWNER

Thanks to CEDEM lawyers' advocacy, the importance of ensuring CSOs' access to banking services and financial inclusion was reflected in the European Commission's 2025 EU Enlargement Report.

KEY RESULTS:

 As part of preparing Ukraine's negotiation position under Chapter 4 Free Movement of Capital, CEDEM developed and submitted proposals to the National Bank of Ukraine on amending legislation in the area of banking services for CSOs.

 An expert discussion was held, 'Preparing Ukraine's EU Accession: Changes Needed in the National Legislation on Banking Services and Financial Monitoring of NPOs'.

 Throughout the year, CEDEM promoted the Guide on identifying UBOs of civil society and charitable organizations by disseminating a series of five videos and Facebook posts.

PARTICIPATION IN SHAPING LEGISLATION IN THE FIELD OF VIRTUAL ASSETS AND THEIR USE BY CSOS

The use of virtual assets under wartime currency restrictions has become essential for the uninterrupted operation of many CSOs; however, Ukraine currently lacks a clear framework for launching a transparent virtual assets market. CEDEM is working to improve the legal framework that will ensure free access to such assets for CSOs while mitigating risks.



KEY RESULTS:

 The Verkhovna Rada adopted in principle in the first reading a new (third by registration date) [draft law No. 10225-d](#), aimed at regulating the turnover of virtual assets and introducing amendments to the Tax Code. CEDEM prepared an expert opinion with a set of recommendations and submitted it to the relevant committee.

 [An expert discussion](#) To Be or Not to Be: The Future of the Virtual Assets Market in Ukraine was held, bringing together more than 50 representatives of the government, private sector, and civil society. Following the discussion, CEDEM, together with private sector experts, developed a number of amendments to the draft law and submitted them for consideration by the relevant committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

MONITORING HARMFUL LEGISLATION AND INITIATIVES AFFECTING CSO ACTIVITIES AND COORDINATING JOINT ACTIONS

Throughout the year, CEDEM coordinated and facilitated CSO meetings focused on the new challenges or potentially harmful legislative initiatives. This year, such challenges included the [regulation of lobbying activities](#), draft laws on recodifying the Civil Code, and the threat of undermining the anti-corruption infrastructure.



In each case, CEDEM shaped the discussion agenda and promptly convened coordination meetings of the key civil society organizations engaged in advocacy and reform support in Ukraine. In this format, CSOs developed joint positions and subsequently formulated and implemented action plans to prevent democratic backsliding in the country.

EDUCATIONAL AND ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES FOR CSOS: MENTORSHIP PROGRAM AND THE LEGAL REFORM FORUM FOR CSOS

In 2025, CEDEM continued to develop a culture of mentorship in the civil sector and implemented [Mentorship Program 6.0](#) to strengthen the advocacy and other capacities of civil society organizations from across Ukraine.

- **26 Mentor-Mentee pairs** progressed from building trust to creating and implementing joint advocacy projects.
- **32 CSOs** from different regions of Ukraine participated in the program; 17 advocacy and/or organizational development plans were developed and partially implemented; the program duration was five months; 12 training courses were delivered for mentees; and 7 resource Friday meetings were held.
- **Mentorship Program 6.0 Yearbook** was created.



In September, CEDEM held **the Fifth Annual Civil Society Legal Reform Forum: Unity of Action – Strength of Change**. The event took place as part of Civil Society Week in Ukraine, introduced by the government to implement the National Strategy for Promoting Civil Society Development in Ukraine.

More than 30 speakers contributed to the Forum and its additional online event – **Discussion 'Provision of Social Services in Ukraine through Cooperation between a Coalition of CSOs Providing Social Services and the Ministry of Social Policy'**, attended by over 100 participants in person and more than 100 participants online. Video recordings of the Forum are available in Ukrainian and English.

COOPERATION AMONG CIVIL SOCIETY, GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESSES

CEDEM is a long-standing and consistent advocate for developing dialogue and constructive cooperation between civil society and public authorities, and also coordinates broader CSO engagement in the development and implementation of public policy on civil society development.

KEY RESULTS:



The Cabinet of Ministers took into account CEDEM's proposals for the Action Plan for 2025-2026 to implement the National Strategy for Promoting Civil Society Development. Following the Plan's approval, CEDEM actively implemented the measures stipulated therein.



CEDEM submitted proposals on the need to develop the next National Strategy for Promoting Civil Society Development. We participated in the events organized by the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers to prepare for drafting the next National Strategy for Promoting Civil Society Development of Ukraine.



The fourth annual information campaign promoting best practices of cooperation between civil society, business, and government was completed, and the results of the IV Annual Story Competition 'Civil Society, Businesses and Government: Best Cooperation Practices' were presented. A collection of stories was published based on the results.



The V Annual Story Competition Civil Society, Businesses and Government: Best Cooperation Practices was launched. Partners included the Ministry of Communications and Strategic Communications, the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the National Social Service of Ukraine, and the UN Global Compact. The application collection was completed in November 2025.



SAFETY OF ACTIVISTS, CSO LEADERS, AND VOLUNTEERS, AND THEIR COALITIONS

In 2025, CEDEM continued to develop safety culture in CSOs across five key areas: physical, legal, digital, financial, and mental.

From July 31 to August 2, 2025, CEDEM held a three-day intensive security course as part of the IV Security School 'Inner Shield: Your Resilience Formula' for 25 representatives of civil society organizations and media from different regions of Ukraine. It included 11 training units combining theoretical material and practical tasks. In addition to general training, participants were offered individual consultations on developing their own security protocols, as well as two months of follow-up support to implement the acquired knowledge and practices in their daily work.

Ten organizations requested such individual support, for which experts conducted 28 consultations. As a result, 10 risk maps with mitigation steps were developed. Based on these, organizations began developing internal security policies and protocols with a focus on practical implementation.



From a financial security perspective, an important resource was the consultation 'Checklist for Volunteers, CSOs, and Media on Effective Fundraising in Social Media Without Losing Reach or Risking Account Blocks'.

'FOR SAFE ROADS' CAMPAIGN:

ADVOCATING FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGES IN ROAD SAFETY

The campaign's goal is to reduce the number of casualties on the roads of Ukraine. To this end, we advocate for public policy changes in the field of road safety and conduct awareness-raising campaigns.

The Campaign's goal is to reduce the number of deaths and injuries on Ukraine's roads. In particular, this includes introducing a progressive system of fines and **eliminating the 'non-penalized +20 km/h' threshold to address the epidemic of severe traffic accidents**. After all, speeding has been the leading cause of accidents (over 55% of cases). This is an invisible confrontation in which Ukraine has been losing for many years.

The 'For Safe Roads' Campaign focused its efforts on bringing Ukrainian legislation closer to the EU standards and influencing driver behavior to save lives.

In May 2025, we secured the registration in the Verkhovna Rada of draft law No. 13314, which abolishes the 'non-penalized +20 km/h' threshold and introduces a proportional liability scale for speeding. This is a major step toward the necessary, high-quality changes that will save Ukrainian lives.

ШТРАФИ ЗА ПЕРЕВИЩЕННЯ ШВИДКОСТІ В УКРАЇНІ	
як є сьогодні	
Перевищення	Відповідальність*
21-50 км/год	340 грн
>50 км/год	1700 грн
як пропонує законопроект	
Перевищення	Відповідальність *
10-20 км/год	340 грн
21-30 км/год	680 грн
31-40 км/год	1360 грн
41-60 км/год	1700 грн
61-80 км/год	2720 грн
Понад 80 км/год	3400 грн

*50% від вартості штрафу за умови сплати впродовж 10 днів за порушення, зафіксоване в автоматичному режимі

At the same time, the team conducted another [study on seat belt usage among Ukrainian drivers](#). It showed an increase to a record 48.4%, nearly doubling the rate from five years ago. This result demonstrates that: public policy changes in liability, the removal of unjustified exemptions, and information campaigns lead to positive change, which, in turn, creates a foundation for reducing road fatalities.



The team also continued its active media and public awareness work. In particular, this year it held the first [For Safe Roads in Ukraine Forum](#). The event was organized on the occasion of the 8th UN Global Road Safety Week. The Forum became a platform for dialogue, identifying possible solutions, raising awareness, and returning the issue of road safety and saving lives to the political agenda. The event brought together Members of Parliament of Ukraine, heads of central executive authorities, leaders of civil society and expert organizations, representatives of international organizations, and local government officials – over 90 participants in total.



At the end of 2025, [a nationwide media campaign 'Arrive Late. Arrive Alive' was launched and implemented](#). The campaign aimed to build a habitual choice of safe speed and remove the pressure to 'make it at any cost'. The campaign demonstrated that being late can be a safe choice that saves lives.

«Many people speed not because they want to break the rules, but because they are in a hurry. But it is time to change this approach: your schedule should never be more important than life. That is why our social advertising reminds people of a simple truth: a small delay means nothing – the risk can cost you everything," says Olesia Kholopik, CEDEM Director.

The media campaign covered four cities (Kyiv, Rivne, Khmelnytskyi, and Poltava), where outdoor advertising was placed across 72 locations of various formats. It reached **53,3 thousand** users in the media.



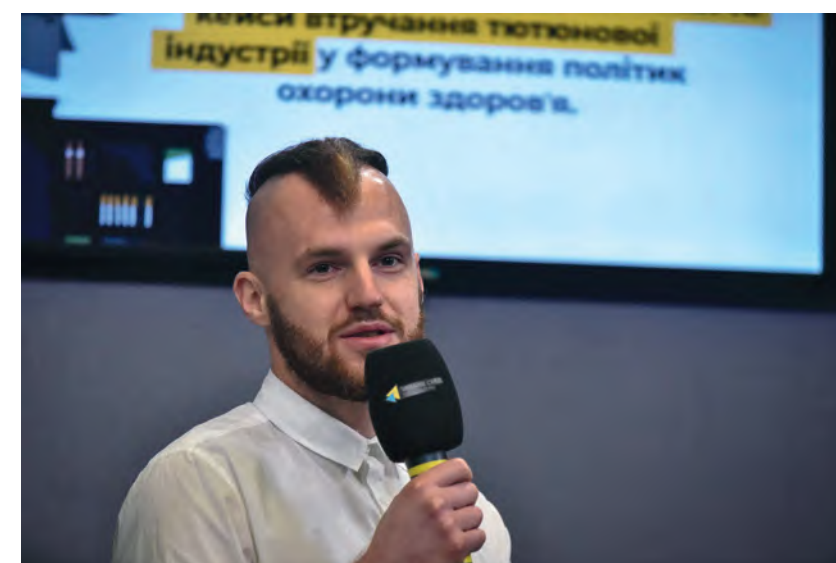
The For Safe Roads Campaign also conducted its [annual public opinion survey with Info Sapiens](#), which confirmed public support for legislative changes. Specifically, 75% of Ukrainians support introducing new fines for speeding by 10-20 km/h in line with the proposals of draft law No. 13314, and another 77% support revoking driver's licenses for those who systematically violate traffic rules.

SMOKE FREE KYIV: LEGAL SUPPORT FOR ANTI-TOBACCO LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

«Protecting public health policies from the influence of the tobacco industry is not only a requirement of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, but also a fundamental feature of a rule-of-law, democratic, and people-centered state," **said Bohdan Kashanyk, CEDEM lawyer.**

CEDEM supports a healthy lifestyle and has been working since 2010 to reduce the use of tobacco and nicotine products in Ukraine. An integral foundation of this process is Ukrainian [tobacco control legislation](#), as well as its enforcement system, which has required bridging the gap between the legislative framework and its implementation.

To this end, working jointly with the Coalition for Tobacco Free Ukraine, in 2025, we developed and secured the registration of two draft laws that will introduce a ban on e-cigarettes and nicotine snus. In addition, in response to an [invitation](#) from the Chair of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Public Health, Medical Care, and Medical Insurance, we joined the development of a revised draft law on regulating nicotine products.



Throughout the year, we [advocated](#) for these draft laws at the meetings of the relevant subcommittees and committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Also, [together with Ukrainian youth](#), we publicly [called on](#) the MPs to adopt the comprehensive draft law No. 12091.



In parallel, after conducting [research](#) on websites for violations of tobacco control legislation and delivering [educational lectures](#), we [trained](#) 28 [inspectors](#) of the State Service of Ukraine on Food Safety and Consumer Protection (who oversee compliance) on specialized skills for monitoring prohibited advertising of tobacco and nicotine products online.

As a result, together with **the NGO Smoke-Free Youth**, we developed a guide for specialists of the above-mentioned authority on the most common types of violations of tobacco control legislation, which will be useful in their daily work. The guide presentation is scheduled for 2026.

- We provided more than 50 legal consultations (written and oral) to the NGO LIFE and the Coalition for Tobacco Free Ukraine!
- We prepared and disseminated 106 legal briefs analyzing regulatory acts in the field of tobacco control for partner organizations.
- Together with civil society, [we presented](#) (during [a press conference organized by NGO LIFE](#)) the updated Tobacco Tactics resource – a database of the most common strategies used by the tobacco industry to interfere in public health policy.

- At the invitation of the WHO Office in Ukraine, CEDEM participated in [a policy dialogue](#) on tobacco taxation together with representatives of international institutions, relevant government authorities, research institutions, and civil society.
- CEDEM lawyers actively participated [in panel discussions](#), [seminars](#), [press conferences](#), [coordination meetings](#), [presentations of research results](#), the announcement of the winners of [the anti-award Golden Scythe 2024](#), [educational lectures](#) for universities, [public discussions](#), and [roundtables](#) on legislative control of the tobacco industry in public health and tax policy.

Traditionally, CEDEM explained to the public the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and [informed](#) people about the legal right of every individual to a space free from tobacco and nicotine, [in particular](#), through [blogs](#) and [its own materials](#).

CEDEM's cooperation with [Ekonomichna Pravda](#), [Vector media](#), and [LIGA.net](#) made it possible to draw public attention during wartime to the need not only to strengthen tobacco control policies but also to eliminate existing legal inconsistencies in the area of advertising and promoting tobacco and nicotine products and devices.





RULE OF LAW

RULE OF LAW

PARTICIPATION IN EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCESSES



For Ukraine to successfully advance toward EU membership, effectively harmonize national legislation with the EU law, and properly implement European standards, systematic and meaningful engagement of civil society is essential.

In 2025, CEDEM consistently contributed as an expert partner of the state to the preparation of Ukraine's negotiation position for EU accession. We ensured continuous participation of our experts in working groups and consultation mechanisms within public authorities, provided well-founded proposals for legislative and policy decisions, prepared analytical materials, analyzed recommendations of EU institutions, and informed the public about the progress and essence of European integration reforms.

Throughout the year, CEDEM experts worked within government negotiation groups on chapters related to the functioning of democratic institutions, the judiciary and fundamental rights, the free movement of capital, digital transformation, and media. We also submitted proposals to transformation roadmaps, as in spring 2025 the government approved [transformation roadmaps in the areas of rule of law, public administration reform, and the functioning of democratic institutions](#).

CEDEM contributed to implementing the provisions of these roadmaps in its areas of expertise and also submitted proposals to the Government during the drafting of the National Program for the Adaptation of Ukrainian Legislation to the EU acquis.

KEY RESULTS:



We prepared analytical reports on references to [civil society organizations](#) and [media](#) in the 2024 Enlargement Package Report and analyzed the 2025 Enlargement Package Report in the areas of [freedom of expression and privacy](#), [public administration reform](#), [civil society](#), and [copyright](#).



Throughout the year, CEDEM actively worked on Ukraine's accession to the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA). This work included analyzing [legislative initiatives](#), [providing expert support for drafting amendments](#), [organizing discussions](#), and [coordinating and communicating](#) with the relevant parliamentary committee and interested civil society organizations.





CEDEM also contributed expert input to the regulation of the virtual assets market in Ukraine, in particular through [professional discussions](#) on launching the market and [analytical assessment](#) of the provisions of draft law No. 10225-d, focusing on their implications for the civil society sector.



In 2025, CEDEM also participated in meetings of working (negotiation) groups preparing Ukraine's negotiation positions as part of the EU accession process. In particular, these covered the functioning of democratic institutions, the judiciary and fundamental rights, and the free movement of capital, in accordance with established schedules and meetings with the government's European integration team.



Throughout the year, we strengthened our coordinating role for civil society organizations in the field of European integration, including by holding [coordination meetings](#) and creating opportunities for CSOs to contribute to responses to European Commission questionnaires.



In addition, CEDEM carried out analytical and explanatory work on the progress of the European integration process, including [key stages of Ukraine's path to the EU](#), the logic of negotiations, and [the current state of commitments implementation](#). Particular attention was paid to the risks of draft laws No. 13653 and No. 13653-1, which introduce [accelerated procedures](#) for reviewing European initiatives. This is because shortened deadlines for submitting alternative drafts and the lack of clearly defined mechanisms for involving civil society may negatively affect the quality and predictability of legislative decisions.



Starting in May, CEDEM [launched](#) a monthly digest of key European integration news, systematically informing audiences about major developments, decisions, and changes in this area.

ADVOCATING FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM

In 2025, CEDEM launched a new line of work – participation in advancing public administration and public service reform. The organization joined the signatories of the [Manifesto for Public Service Reform](#) in Ukraine to emphasize the importance of continuing the reform and to outline key areas for joint action by civil society.

Throughout the year, CEDEM participated in expert discussions and organized two meetings of the expert community to identify priorities for public administration reform. In addition, two CEDEM experts joined the working group of the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine to prepare the Public Service Reform Strategy for 2026-2030.

ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION

In 2025, CEDEM also focused on supporting the proper implementation of the Law of Ukraine On Access to Public Information, in particular through [analytical work](#) on inconsistencies between sectoral legislation and its provisions and explaining the risks of unlawful restrictions on access to public information. We also raised issues related to the application of the three-part test, conflicts with special laws and procedural legislation, and the need to prioritize the Law on Access to Public Information.

In addition, to mark the anniversary of the Tromsø Convention, CEDEM [held a public media discussion](#) dedicated to European standards on access to official documents, their application in Ukraine, and key challenges in ensuring access to public information under martial law and legislative inconsistencies.



COMMUNICATION

In 2025, CEDEM’s communications team covered the organization’s activities, promoted information campaigns, created content, and established partnerships with opinion leaders and media outlets.

COMMUNICATION DIVISION ACHIEVEMENTS:



2.7 M.

VIEWS ACROSS
PAGES



445 TH.

WEBSITE
VIEWS



270+

MENTIONS IN THE MEDIA AND
EXPERT CITATIONS

FINANCIAL REPORT 2025

INCOME	UAH	%
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	4 832 061	17,90
International Media Support (IMS)	4 045 805	14,99
Tobacco-Free Kids Action Fund, CША	3 488 760	12,92
International Organization Global Road Safety Partnership through the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (Switzerland)	2 969 881	11,00
Initiative Center to Support Social Action "Ednannia" NGO	2 788 060	10,33
The European Endowment for Democracy (EED)	2 083 005	7,72
Heinrich Boell Foundation Representative Office in Ukraine	1 138 150	4,22
International Renaissance Foundation	1 125 388	4,17

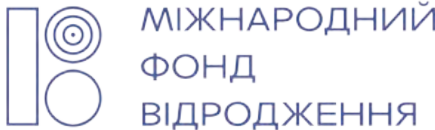
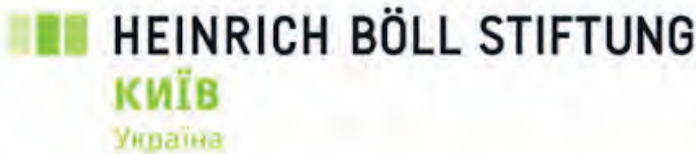
FINANCIAL REPORT 2025

INCOME	UAH	%
Czech Republic - Ministry of Foreign Affairs	950 166	3,52
United Nations Development Programme	922 931	3,42
Internews Network Inc, United (States Agency for International Development (USAID)	892 344	3,31
Contributions to statutory activities	675 464	2,50
Equal Rights and Independent Media (ERIM)	373 924	1,38
European Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ECNL)	356 374	1,32
Zinc Network	251 728	0,93
MHP-Hromadi	10 000	0,37
Global Giving Foundation, USA	4 663	0,02
Total	26 998 703	100,00

ВІТРАТИ

EXPENDITURE	UAH	%
STAFF	9 568 176	31,79
CIVIL SOCIETY	9 281 888	30,84
INDEPENDENT MEDIA	8 868 984	29,47
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	1 640 951	5,45
RULE OF LAW	737 495	2,45
TOTAL	30 097 494	100

DONORS AND PARTNERS



CONTACT INFORMATION

CENTRE FOR DEMOCRACY AND RULE OF LAW

CENTRE FOR DEMOCRACY
AND RULE OF LAW

www.cedem.org.ua
info@cedem.org.ua

