



# USAID | UKRAINE

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

## POLITICAL PROCESS AND GOVERNANCE



Interns of the sixteenth Parliamentary Internship Program. (Photo credit: Olha Myrtsalo)

### THE CHALLENGE

Effective governance is critical to ensuring the delivery of basic services in the wake of Ukraine's economic crisis and recent political transition. Legislative action is needed to balance relations between governance institutions and to strengthen the political system. To further consolidate democratic advances, Ukraine needs a pluralistic and open party system accountable to the citizens, a stable electoral system that allows for fair and competitive elections, and an improved legislative process inclusive of civil society participation.

### OVERVIEW

Ukraine has a continued need to develop and consolidate its democratic institutions and processes. USAID strengthens political processes through representative political parties, civic monitoring of political processes and legislative policy development. As a complement to other civil society building activities, USAID assistance also encourages active, informed citizen participation in the political process.

### OUR PROGRAMS

#### Political Process Programs in Ukraine

In 2010, USAID shifted its focus from internal strengthening of political parties to improved representation of citizens' interests. This includes training for political party activists and locally elected officials to interact with civic groups and citizens. The program also conducts an annual public opinion survey to gauge public attitudes on significant socio-political issues. In 2011, USAID concentrated its efforts on advancing reforms in electoral legislation in Ukraine. USAID supports civil society and other stakeholders to advocate for improvements in election legislation and to monitor implementation of the new parliamentary election law during the 2012 parliamentary election season.

#### Parliamentary Development Program (PDP II)

In 2011, USAID continued its assistance to both legislative and national executive structures to improve the legislative process. This approach addresses structural challenges in Ukraine's governance system, derived from its dual executive structure and the complex distribution of policy-making authorities. The program helps to improve the capacity for legislative and policy formulation within government institutions at the national and regional levels – including Parliament (Verkhovna Rada) and the regional Parliament of Crimea, as well as the Cabinet of Ministers and the Presidential Administration. Program activities include: support for more effective and transparent legislative and policy decision making; training in policy analysis; improving legislative policy development by enhancing coordination between and within the executive and legislative branches; and building problem resolution mechanisms within selected ministries. The program also assists in institutionalizing staff development within the Parliament and executive structures and increasing citizen access to, and involvement in, the legislative process.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- To help democratic political parties respond to their constituencies and better represent citizen concerns.
- To build public demand for effective representation by political parties through active engagement of and with civic groups.
- To support more effective and transparent legislative decision making in the Ukrainian Parliament and executive branch of government, and to strengthen inter-branch policy development.
- To increase civil society engagement in the legislative process.

## IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

### Political Process Program in Ukraine:

National Democratic Institute (NDI), International Republican Institute (IRI), International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)

### Parliamentary Development Program (PDP II):

Indiana University/Ohio State University

For more information, please contact **USAID/Ukraine Development Outreach & Communications**, tel. **(+380-44) 537-4600** or visit <http://ukraine.usaid.gov> or <http://www.facebook.com/USAIDUkraine>

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### Political Process Programs in Ukraine

- USAID partners, the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), conducted trainings and seminars for political party activists, youth, civil society leaders and local elected officials. Training increased party capacity in strengthening contact with voters and civic groups, developing issue-based platforms, using new media, and understanding and planning for changes to build closer ties to citizens.
- Since 2004, IRI has conducted *Youth Political Leadership Schools* to increase youth engagement in political processes. Activities involved youth from all major political parties to expand political dialogue, help bridge regional divides and cultivate future political party leaders. In 2011, 125 individuals graduated from IRI's intensive three-month schools.
- NDI provided capacity building training and technical assistance to OPORA, a national network of non-partisan grassroots activists, which has quickly grown to include 45 organizations across Ukraine and plays a critical role in the domestic monitoring of Ukrainian elections and other political processes.
- IFES produced a comprehensive analysis of the draft parliamentary election law, consistent with international standards. It also facilitated dialogue among civil society, opposition parties, the international community and the Government of Ukraine on improving the legislation.

### Parliamentary Development Program (PDP II)

- USAID trained staff from the executive branch agencies in policy analysis, introduced methods and mechanisms to increase public and intra-governmental dialogue, and improved legislative policy development.
- In 2011, Rada committees conducted 109 public fora. Eight Rada committee websites were created in 2011, bringing the total to eighteen. In addition, 305 public libraries (including eleven in Crimea) participate in the [Citizen Access Points](#) network, which increases public access to government information.
- In regional trainings, representatives of 1,464 civil society organizations learned how to work more effectively with the legislature and executive agencies.
- Since its inception in 1995, the USAID-supported parliamentary internship program has provided 1,108 promising university graduates with the opportunity to be directly engaged in parliamentary processes. The program was expanded to central executive authorities in 2008, and to the Crimean legislature in 2010.
- Over 40 percent of former parliamentary interns remain in public service, and many now hold high elected and administrative posts. The [Interns' League](#), an association of program alumni, found sponsors for 14 interns during the 2011-2012 cycle, and has negotiated an agreement with the Verkhovna Rada to ensure the sustainability of this valuable merit-based program.