

2023

Annual Report

Nordic Ukraine Forum



Introduction from the Board

This report was written as russia's¹ genocidal full scale war against Ukraine entered its third year. Russia sends drones and missiles, ordered from Iran and North Korea, daily. Russian citizens largely celebrate the death and destruction they bring to Ukraine. The daily Ukrainian experience is to overcome new obituaries, resist the brutality of the "second army" in the world, continue implementing reforms, and resiliently continue to affirm one's own existence.

Being fully aware that the Russo-Ukrainian war is the major war of our times, the outcomes of which will define the future of the continent, its security and political landscape, we at Nordic Ukraine Forum focus our efforts on strengthening support for Ukraine's victory and protecting the world against further russian aggression.

Throughout the year, Nordic Ukraine Forum actively engaged Swedish politicians and decision-makers, advocating for continued military, economic, and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. We held meetings with ministers in the Swedish government, officials from the Stockholm region, and representatives in the European Parliament to strengthen collaboration and support for Ukraine.

Nordic Ukraine Forum took proactive steps to engage with the wider Swedish community, ensuring that the voices and viewpoints of Ukrainians in Sweden were heard. Through various channels such as Swedish, international, and Ukrainian media, as well as our own social media platforms, we effectively communicated and shared valuable insights with the broader Swedish audience.

The chair and vice-chair were honored with the European of the Year 2023 award for their significant efforts in combating Russia's war on Ukraine. They actively participated in various events organized by civil society, trade organizations, and charities, where they underscored the crucial need for support for Ukraine through presentations, discussions, and speeches. We remained actively involved in important civil society events, playing a role in raising awareness and garnering support for Ukraine in Sweden. Our engagements included organizing meetings, panel discussions, and presentations across different platforms, such as the Almedalen Political Week on the island of Gotland.

In 2023 we continued to organize our weekly demonstrations, participated again in the Stockholm pride parade, and co-organized a celebration of the Independence Day of Ukraine. We also continued our cultural initiatives and advocacy campaigns. Notable achievements include hosting a conference on Ukrainian culture with diverse activities like panel discussions and concerts. The organization also facilitated exhibitions, documentary screenings,

¹ A note on spelling: Ukraine's National Commission for State Language Standards ruled on September 20, 2023 that writing words such as "Russia" and "Moscow" in lowercase letters is no longer considered an error. The ruling was made to take into account the "heroic fight of the Ukrainian people for Ukraine's independence." Therefore, in this report we chose to follow this spelling even though the report is in English. <https://mova.gov.ua/news/napsannia-nazv-rosiiska-federatsiia>

and discussions highlighting Russia's war crimes, especially focusing on the destruction of Ukrainian cultural heritage and forced deportations of children. Additionally, we continued our "Books for Future" project to promote cultural exchange and literacy and participated in the Gothenburg Book Fair once more.

We stepped up our work with the academia and became co-organizing partners for "Hromada," a Nordic-Baltic knowledge-based input network consisting of Nordic and Baltic researchers dedicated to contributing to the rebuilding and sustainable development of Ukraine. We increased our efforts to unite and collaborate with similar advocacy groups in Europe. Alongside participating in European networks, we launched a summit for Nordic-based advocacy organizations centered on Ukraine. Furthermore, we facilitated the gathering of Ukrainian organizations based in Sweden, fostering collaboration and solidarity within the community.

On behalf of the Nordic Ukraine Forum team, I would like to express deep gratitude to all people in Sweden and the Nordic-Baltic region and to our partners and colleagues all over the globe who are unwavering in their support and effort to ensure Ukraine's victory in this unjustified, bloody war.

The Board of Nordic Ukraine Forum



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Nordic Ukraine Forum

Our Work

Engagements with Swedish politicians and decision makers

Nordic Ukraine Forum has maintained active engagement with Swedish politicians and decision makers throughout the year, urging sustained military, economic, and humanitarian support for Ukraine. Meetings were conducted with ministers in the Swedish

government, officials from the Stockholm region, and representatives in the European Parliament in order to foster continued collaboration and support.

Meeting with Johan Pehrson, Minister of Labour in Sweden, February 17th

Vice-chairwoman of Nordic Ukraine Forum Alyona Kashyna took part in a round table discussion organized by the Swedish Minister of Labor Market and Integration Johan Pehrson. The focus of the discussion was on the conditions for Ukrainian refugees within the Swedish labor market. The meeting aimed to gather insights and perspectives from civil society organizations on experiences related to labor market conditions as well as opportunities for Ukrainian refugees to secure employment in Sweden. The discussion also sought to highlight successful examples of local, regional, and national initiatives that facilitated the integration of displaced Ukrainians into the Swedish workforce through internships, job placements, or educational pursuits.²



² DN "Bank-id ett av flera problem för ukrainare som vill jobba i Sverige", 2023-02-21, länk: <https://www.dn.se/sverige/bank-id-ett-av-flera-problem-for-ukrainare-som-vill-jobba-i-sverige/>

Meeting with Maria Malm Stenegaard, Minister of Migration in Sweden, June 29th

Alex Panko, a board member of Nordic Ukraine Forum, took part in a round table discussion addressing the situation of displaced Ukrainians in Sweden. The event, organized by Minister of Migration Maria Malmer Stenegaard, brought together representatives from Swedish civil society. Throughout the discussion participants highlighted various issues, including the need for Ukrainians to have a personal identity number (personnummer). Other topics covered educational opportunities, increased funding for Swedish language courses, improved employment prospects aligned with the skills of immigrants, and the provision of higher daily allowances for displaced individuals.



Meetings between Ukrainian combat medics and Swedish ministers, July 2nd-3rd

In 2023, we established a partnership with the Ukrainian charitable foundation Repower. Their focus lies in delivering vital mental health support for active frontline military medics, doctors, and volunteers, preventing severe and complex psychological conditions, such as post-traumatic stress disorders and the consequences of concussions. The objective is to help these individuals restore their strength and

motivation to continue saving lives on the battlefield and Repower achieves this by organizing rehabilitation trips to Sweden.

In July 2023 approximately 100 military medics and evacuation volunteers dedicated to service on the front line participated in a week-long physical and psychological recovery trip to Stockholm. During their visit, Nordic Ukraine Forum had the privilege





of arranging meetings with Sweden's Minister of Foreign Affairs Tobias Billström and Minister of Defence Pål Jonson. Pål Jonson listened attentively to the experiences and requests of the delegation members, expressing gratitude to these brave individuals. In turn, we conveyed our appreciation for Sweden's unwavering and increased military support to Ukraine.

As a continuation of our partnership with Repower, we collaborated with the restaurant Grodan and Ukrainian

wine importer Racimo AB to organize a charity dinner in November 2023. The event successfully raised 350,000 SEK, with 226,000 SEK to cover hotel expenses for the next group of front-line medics Repower plans to bring to Sweden in January 2024.





Meeting with the representatives of the Stockholm region, June 8th

We were honored to have a meeting with Aida Hadžialić, Chairwoman of the Region Stockholm Assembly, during which Nordic Ukraine Forum presented a letter of gratitude from Valery Zaluzhny, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The diploma served as a token of appreciation for Region Stockholm's proactive stance in supporting Ukraine and its people in the face of Russia's full-scale invasion. Specifically, we

acknowledged the region's commendable efforts, such as sending medical equipment and buses to Ukraine, along with providing support for Ukrainian refugees through initiatives like free public transportation, healthcare assistance, and backing Ukrainian cultural initiatives.

Request to the European Parliament to expand the list of targeted individuals in the EU sanctions list

In collaboration with the Ukrainian Security & Cooperation Center, we submitted individual requests to all 21 Swedish members of the European Parliament and other key EU representatives regarding the expansion of the targeted individuals list in the 12th sanctions package against Russia. The adopted 12th package focused on sanctions for those organizing elections in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. In addition to the organizers of elections, we proposed including sanctions against the so-called "international-

al observers" who participated in these elections. To support our request, we provided a comprehensive list of these pseudo-observers, accompanied by evidence establishing their connections to the Russian propaganda machine. The activity of such individuals poses a substantial threat to the democratic structure of the European Union, and we hope that they will be considered for inclusion in the forthcoming 13th package of sanctions.



EXPRESSEN

Göteborgs-Posten

Nyheter Göteborg Borås Sport Ekonomi Kultur Ledare Debatt



Ukraina har all moralisk rätt att slå tillbaka med klustervapen

Debatt • I den senaste debatten har det uttryckts att Ukraina borde hålla sig med en högre moral än vad angriparen gör. Men Ukrainas, och därmed ukrainarnas beslut, att be om att få klustervapen för att ge moteld mot angriparen bör respekteras, skriver fyra representanter för Nordic Ukraine Forum och Ukrainiska Föreningen Östereötland.

EXPRESSEN.SE

DEBATT: Bojkotta Nobelfesten om ni stöder Ukraina

Nobelstiftelsens beslut att välkomna ryska, belarusiska och iranska ambassadörer är ett hå...

Swedish society advocacy and media outreach

Nordic Ukraine Forum played an active role in connecting with the broader Swedish community, amplifying the voices and perspectives of Ukrainians in Sweden. Utilizing diverse channels, including Swedish, interna-

tional, and Ukrainian media, alongside our own social media platforms, we communicated and shared insights with the wider Swedish public.

Media outreach

We continued to write opinion articles that were published in major Swedish media outlets. One notable example was an article where we advocated for a boycott of the Nobel Foundation due to its decision to invite the Russian ambassador to the Nobel festivities (Expressen, September 1, 2023, "Bojkotta Nobelfesten om ni stöder Ukraina"). Another article aimed to clarify

why Ukraine possesses the moral right to employ cluster munitions in its fight against Russia (Göteborgs-Posten, July 24, 2023, "Ukraina har all moralisk rätt att slå tillbaka med klustervapen").



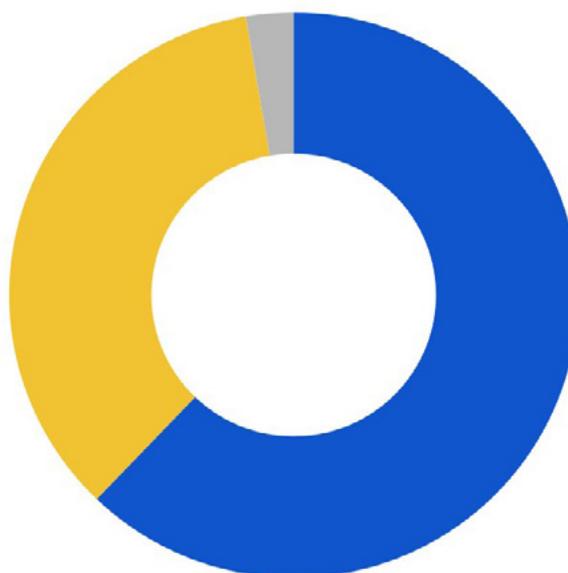
Throughout 2023, we were featured in more than 35 articles³ where we offered insights and comments on our initiatives and events, as well as addressed the situation and needs of Ukrainian refugees in Sweden and other Ukraine-related issues. Our coverage extended across major Swedish media outlets, including Dagens Nyheter, Svenska Dagbladet, SVT, Sveriges Radio, Expressen, Aftonbladet, and TV4. Additionally, Nordic Ukraine Forum was featured in smaller outlets such as Altinget, as well as Ukrainian media platforms like Suspilne, Ukrinform, 24 channel, and Radio Liberty.

We continued to help Swedish journalists with their requests in finding Ukrainian interviewees as well as to help organizations from Ukraine to connect with Swedish journalists.

³ Full list of the articles is available at our website <https://nuforum.se/media-outreach/>

Media outreach 2023

- Swedish 23
- Ukrainian 13
- International 1



Opposing representation of russia's supporters in Sweden

We continued to monitor and actively oppose any representation of russia's supporters in Sweden. In October 2023, we became aware of an upcoming concert featuring a moscow-based comedian who had previously visited russian-occupied Crimea without condemning russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Swiftly, we contacted the venue owner, urg-

ing them to reconsider hosting the concert and presenting compelling arguments as to why allowing such an event would be unacceptable. Consequently, the concert was successfully canceled.

New initiative: Explainers

Acknowledging Swedish society's growing interest in Ukraine, we decided to create informative content in Swedish. In July 2023, we introduced "Nordic Ukraine Forum förklarar" on our social media platforms. The purpose of these explainers is to break down complex subjects into digestible pieces, provide concise summaries on diverse topics, and inspire individuals to delve deeper into learning about Ukraine. Our explanatory content encompasses various formats, including videos and text published on a monthly basis. The following topics were covered by our explainers:

- Ukraine to NATO
- Ukrainian way to Independence from Kyiv Rus until today
- Why Ukraine will not negotiate with russia
- Holodomor: What happened?
- Recognize Holodomor as a genocide
- Ukrainian Christmas traditions

On average, the explainers reached an audience of approximately 1000 to 1500 individuals. Notably, the piece titled "Ukrainian Way to Independence" stood out with a significantly broader impact, engaging around 4500 people. In the upcoming year, our aim is to develop this concept and introduce more captivating themes.





Demonstrations

Demonstrations in support of Ukraine

Our weekly demonstrations, initiated in 2022 at the onset of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, have served as a significant platform for Ukrainian voices. Equally important, they have provided Swedish politicians and public figures an avenue to vocalize their support for Ukraine. These demonstrations serve as a continuous reminder of the ongoing war, allow commentary on recent developments, and bring together individuals eager to express their solidarity with Ukraine and condemn Russia's war of aggression. Additionally, these gatherings play a crucial role in disseminating informa-

tion on how to support Ukraine and promoting various volunteer initiatives that aid Ukrainian refugees in Sweden or send essential supplies to Ukraine.

During 2023, we organized 41 demonstrations in support of Ukraine, hosting over 380 speeches and performances, and gathering about 10 000 participants in total. Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion we have organized 86 demonstrations in support of Ukraine.



41
Demonstrations



380
Speeches and performances



10 000
Participants cumulatively



We maintained our collaborative efforts with Ukrainian communities worldwide, aiming to amplify unified messages during demonstrations. These efforts included commemorating significant events such as the Day of Unity of Ukraine (January 22nd #UkraineUnitedWithTheWorld), condemning violence against children on the International Day of Innocent Children – Victims of Aggression (June 4th #SaveUkrainianChildren), responding to the egregious war crime involving the destruction of the Kakhovka dam (June 11th #StopEcocideUkraine), commemorating the anniversary of the tragedy in Ole-

nivka on July 28-29, 2022, celebrating Ukrainian defenders on the Day of Defenders of Ukraine (October 1st #DefendingUkraine), and honoring the 90th anniversary of the tragedy of Holodomor (November 26th #WeRememberTerrorFamine). Several of our demonstrations were dedicated to raising awareness about Ukrainian prisoners of war and shedding light on the extreme and challenging conditions they face in Russian captivity.



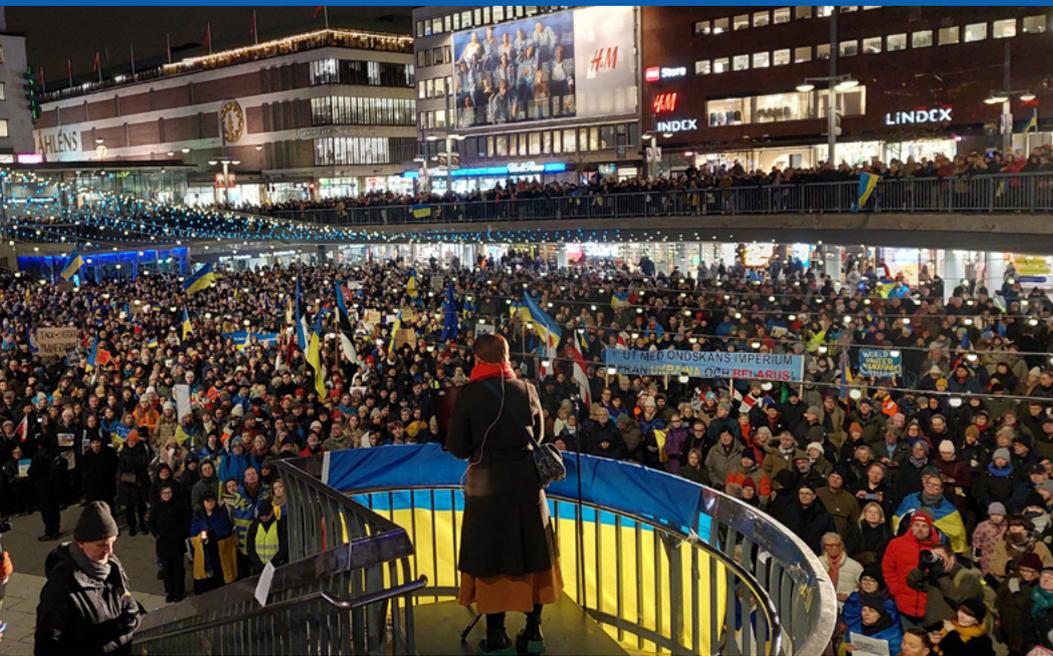


Our board members have been actively engaged as speakers at demonstrations led by the Måndagsrörelsen movement and the activist network "Ryssland ut ur Ukraina." Both initiatives have consistently organized weekly demonstrations in Stockholm since the start of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This collaboration allows us to contribute to these platforms and further amplify our collective voice in support of Ukraine.

In collaboration with the Måndagsrörelsen movement and the activist group "Ryssland ut ur Ukraina," we organized a large rally on February 24, 2023 to mark the one-year anniversary of Russia's full-scale war of invasion in Ukraine. With over 4000 participants gathering

at Sergels torg in Stockholm, and supported by 17 civil society organizations, the manifestation exemplified Sweden's united and unwavering support for Ukraine. Several distinguished speakers joined Ukrainian voices for this event, including Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson, former Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson, Sweden's Minister of Foreign Affairs Tobias Billström, Ukraine's Ambassador to Sweden Andrii Plakhotniuk, writer Peter Englund, journalist and columnist Björn Wiman, and writer and blogger Lars Wilderäng. The live stream on Facebook attracted over 6000 viewers and the recording on Youtube received over 5000 views.





Our demonstrations consistently feature talented Ukrainian singers and musicians. Collaborating with Ukraine-related cultural initiatives in Stockholm, including Kulturforum STHLM, Creative Studio Favorit, and the band "Kvitky," we have enjoyed several impactful performances throughout the year. Poetry readings in Ukrainian, English, and Swedish also play a significant role in our demonstrations, adding a diverse and cultural dimension to the events.

Our larger demonstrations have received coverage from major Swedish media outlets, including Dagens Nyheter, Sveriges Radio, TV4, Aftonbladet, and others. Additionally, our weekly demonstrations consistently garner attention from Ukrainian media outlets, such as Ukrinform, ensuring that our efforts and messages reach both local and international audiences. In 2024, we plan to continue our demonstrations in support of Ukraine, as long as the war continues.





Photo by Martin Jefflén

Ukrainian group at Stockholm Pride Parade

The Stockholm Pride parade, the largest in Scandinavia attracting over 50 000 participants and 500 000 spectators, saw our active participation for the second consecutive year in 2023. In collaboration with KyivPride, we organized a Ukrainian group of approximately 70 participants who marched through the streets of Stockholm proudly waving Ukrainian and LGBTQ+ flags. In total, this marked our third appearance in the Stockholm Pride parade.

Our primary goal was to express solidarity with the Ukrainian LGBTQ+ community and bring attention to Russia's ongoing genocidal war in Ukraine. Amid the vibrant parade, we utilized megaphones to share stories of members from the Ukrainian LGBTQ+ com-

munity who had joined the Ukrainian Defence Forces, risking their lives to defend the freedom of Ukraine and Europe. We also emphasized the legislative changes required to safeguard the rights of LGBTQ+ warriors in Ukraine. Furthermore, we took the opportunity to express gratitude to Sweden for its unwavering support, both in terms of military assistance to Ukraine and advocacy for human rights.

Similar to the year prior, the overwhelming support from the Swedish public lining the streets of Stockholm was remarkable. It was an honor to have the Ambassador of Ukraine to Sweden Andrii Plakhotniuk and other embassy members join us in the parade once again.



Photos by Niklas Storm



Photos by Niklas Storm

During Pride Week in Stockholm, we collaborated with KyivPride to raise funds to purchase an evacuation car for a KyivPride team member who had recently been mobilized as a combat medic. We successfully collected over 8 000 SEK, which was then transferred to KyivPride.

KyivPride's visit to Stockholm during Pride Week was made possible through the collaboration with Stockholm Pride and the Embassy of Sweden in Kyiv. As part of Pride Week, an exhibition titled "Relatives,"

focusing on Ukrainian LGBTQ+ military, was featured at Pride Park. In partnership with KyivPride, we conducted a seminar and discussion at Pride House addressing topics related to Ukrainian LGBTQ+ issues and Ukrainian activism in Sweden.





Independence Day of Ukraine, August 24th

In collaboration with various Ukrainian organizations and initiatives in Stockholm, including Ukrainian Volunteer Hub Stockholm, STFU Tacticats, Creative Studio Favorit, PLAST Sweden, Creative U Are, House of Ukraine, and Ukrainian Women's Association in Sweden, we arranged a vibrant celebration in honor of Ukraine's Independence Day in Stock-

holm. The festivities encompassed a demonstration march under the slogan #IndependenceInMyHeart, followed by a manifestation, concert, and a ceremony to commemorate the fallen Ukrainians. Simultaneously, Sergels torg hosted numerous workshops and activities for both children and adults. Several thousand participants joined the celebration.





Engagements with Swedish civil society

Nordic Ukraine Forum continued to actively participate in key civil society events, contributing to raising awareness and support for Ukraine in Sweden. We arranged meetings, panel discussions, and presentations on various platforms, including the Almedalen Political Week. The chair and vice-chair received the European of the Year 2023 award for their impact-

ful contribution to the fight against Russia's war on Ukraine. Their engagements also extended to presentations, discussions, and speeches at events organized by civil society and trade organizations, as well as charity events, emphasizing the importance of support for Ukraine.





Participation in the Almedalen Political Week, June 27th

Nordic Ukraine Forum played an active role in the official program of Almedalen 2023. We arranged a meeting point titled "The war in Europe – Ukraine's resistance and Sweden's support" and hosted a panel discussion under the theme "What can Sweden learn from the mobilization of the Ukrainian civil society." Our gratitude extends to the U.S. Embassy for inviting our chairwoman, Alina Zubkovych, to speak about the vision of Ukraine. This high-level meeting brought together Ministers, Ambassadors, CEOs, and military officials. It was an esteemed honor to share the stage with the US Ambassador, the Swedish Minister of Civil Defence, and the Ambassadors of Lithuania, Ukraine, and others.

Furthermore, we participated in the demonstration supporting Ukraine organized by the action group Ryssland ut ur Ukraina. Special thanks to Katarina Tracz and Viktor Wallström for inviting us to the SAAB event, which provided us with the opportunity to speak alongside military analyst Oscar Jons-son. Together, we discussed the profound impact of 16 months of war on Ukrainian society and explored the valuable lessons that Sweden could draw from Ukraine's experiences.





European of the Year 2023 (Årets europé) award

Nordic Ukraine Forum's chair Alina Zubkovich and vice-chair Alyona Kashyna were honored to receive the European of the Year 2023 (Årets europé) award for their significant contribution to the fight against Russia's brutal war on Ukraine. This prestigious prize is awarded annually by the Swedish European Movement (Svenska Europarörelsen). Past recipients include prominent Swedish figures such as Cecilia Malmström, Hédi Fried, Carl Bildt, Margot Wallström, Greta Thunberg, and others.

The award announcement took place during the official celebration of Europe Day on May 9th, organized by the representation of the European Commission in Sweden. Nordic Ukraine Forum had a dedicated stand at the event, providing an opportunity to inform visitors and other organizations about the situation in Ukraine, along with details about our organization, activities, and events.





Panel discussion about Ukraine's place in Europe at the European House

Alina Zubkovych and Alyona Kashyna participated in the discussion titled "Ukraine's place in Europe," alongside Jakob Hedenskog, an analyst at the Center for Eastern European Studies (SCEEUS). The conversation was moderated by Lennart Wohlgemuth, a board member of the Swedish European Movement. The seminar focused on the EU's and Sweden's

support for Ukraine, emphasizing Ukraine's role and significance in both Sweden and the EU. This event was collaboratively organized by the Swedish European Movement, The Swedish Institute of International Affairs (Utrikespolitiska Institutet), and the Center for Eastern European Studies.

Panel discussion on women's resistance under russia's war, March 23rd

Alina Zubkovych took part in a discussion centered around women's resistance during russia's war, which was connected to the release of Lisa Bjurwald's book "Slava Ukraini!". The book delves into the experiences of Ukrainian women during the conflict, highlighting

their stories of suffering and resistance. This seminar was organized by the Swedish think tank FORES in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy in Sweden, the Embassy of Ukraine in Sweden, and the publishing house Bite the Bullet Press.

**SLAVA
UKRAINI!!**

Women's Resistance
under Russia's War

march
23rd
16:30-18:00

Tankesmedjan Fores
U.S Embassy Stockholm
Embassy of Ukraine in Sweden
Bite the Bullet Press



Meeting with Marta Chumalo, January 31st

We arranged a meeting with Marta Chumalo, the co-founder of the Women's Perspectives Center in Ukraine. Marta Chumalo is the first Ukrainian woman honored with the Olof Palme Award for her exceptional

contributions to human rights activities. The event was co-organized with the Embassy of Ukraine in Sweden.

Speech at the charity event for Ukrainian children in Dalarna, October 22nd

Alina Zubkovych delivered a speech at the charity event "Manifestation for Ukrainian children" at the Leksand Church in Dalarna, organized by Bo Ekman, Founder and Chairman Emeritus of the Tällberg Foundation. The speech was about Ukraine's resistance during the war and the importance of rebuild-

ing Ukraine. Birgitta Kristersson Ed (wife of Sweden's Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson), who also participated in the event, underscored the crucial importance of supporting Ukrainian children to ensure they have access to a dignified childhood and quality education.





Speech at the Confederation of Trade Employees (Handelsanställdas förbund), March 30th

Alina Zubkovich spoke at the annual meeting of the Stockholm chapter of the Confederation of Trade Employees (Handelsanställdas förbund). In her address, she shared insights into the current situation in Ukraine and discussed ways to support the coun-

try. The audience comprised approximately 65 local union representatives from diverse workplaces in Stockholm County who actively participated in the meeting.

Speech at the Swedish Municipal Workers' Union (Kommunal), April 26th

Alyona Kashyna, vice-chair of Nordic Ukraine Forum, virtually attended the annual meeting of the Bergslagen chapter of the Kommunal trade union. During the online session, she delivered a speech highlight-

ing Nordic Ukraine Forum's activities and discussed various ways to support Ukraine.



Partnerships with academia

Partnership with the Ukraine-focused research network "Hromada"

Nordic Ukraine Forum assumed the role of a co-organizing partner for "Hromada," a Nordic-Baltic knowledge-based input network dedicated to contributing to the rebuilding and sustainable development of Ukraine. This network brings together researchers from universities, research institutions, and think tanks in the Baltic and Nordic countries. Pooling researchers' specific expertise on Ukraine, the overarching goal is to provide policy-relevant knowledge to decision-makers, ranging from the municipal level to the Nordic Council of Ministers, Nordic Council, and Baltic Assembly. Hromada is supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers. Within this network, Nordic Ukraine Forum has a representative in the steering group and leads the working group titled "Nordic- and Baltic-Ukraine Civil Society Initiatives." This working group focuses on cultural, social, economic, and political issues that significantly impact societal development and the rebuilding of Ukraine.

The inaugural conference "Strengthening Ukraine: Sharing Knowledge for a Sustainable Future" took place at OsloMet University in Norway on November 30th. The panels discussed how Nordic and Baltic countries can support Ukraine's sustainable rebuilding, integration dilemmas of Ukrainian refugees in the Nordic and Baltic countries, and securing justice for war crimes committed by Russia in Ukraine. Looking ahead, the next conference is scheduled to take place in Riga, Latvia in the autumn of 2024. For more information, please visit: <https://hromada.network/>



Culture advocacy

Nordic Ukraine Forum actively spearheaded cultural initiatives and advocacy efforts throughout 2023. Key highlights include organizing a successful conference on Ukrainian culture, featuring panel discussions, stand-up comedy, and concerts. Additionally, the organization played a vital role in exhibitions, documentary screenings, and discussions shedding light on Russia's

war crimes, particularly focused on the destruction of Ukraine's cultural heritage and the forced deportation of children. We continued our "Books for Future" project aimed at promoting cultural exchange and literacy and once again participated in the Gothenburg Book Fair.

Conference on Ukrainian culture during the war

In February 2023, we collaborated with various partners to organize a four-day conference dedicated to Ukrainian culture, generously financed by the Stockholm City Council. Hosted at Kulturhuset, the event drew over 600 visitors and featured more than 30 panel participants. The program included nine panel discussions, two conversations, stand-

up comedy, and a concert. The conference received high praise from both attendees and participants, significantly contributing to the strengthening of connections between Swedes and Ukrainians in the cultural sphere. For more details, please refer to our 2022 Annual Report.

Video about Russia's war crimes against the Ukrainian cultural heritage

Board member Ganna Gladkykh actively participated in a project organized by ForumCIV⁴ that addressed the destruction of Ukraine's cultural heritage, one of Russia's many war crimes. Collaborating with ForumCIV's communication team, Ganna created a short video where she prepared borsch, a dish recognized by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage of

Ukraine in 2022. While cooking, Ganna discussed the war crimes committed by Russia in Ukraine, particularly focusing on the destruction of Ukrainian cultural heritage. The video was shared across various platforms, including Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Global Portalen, and ForumCIV's websites.

⁴ <https://globalportalen.org/artiklar/krigsbrott-och-borsjtj-ukrainas-kamp-for-sitt-kulturarv>





Screening of the documentary "20 Days in Mariupol," December 9th

Nordic Ukraine Forum was a co-organizer for an exclusive screening of the documentary "20 Days in Mariupol," followed by a conversation with director and Pulitzer Prize-winning Ukrainian journalist Mstyslav Chernov. Swedish filmmaker Sebastian Lindström moderated the engaging discussion. The event drew a substantial audience of decision-makers, diplomats, representatives from the Swe-

dish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Prime Minister's office, the Swedish Armed Forces, journalists, and volunteers. This collaborative effort was organized in partnership with Sebastian Lindström, the Embassy of Ukraine, and the Swedish Journalist Association. For those who couldn't attend, the recording of the conversation with Mstyslav Chernov is available on our YouTube channel.⁵

Exhibition in Armémuseum "Meanwhile in Mariupol," March 4th

The exhibition "Meanwhile in Mariupol" showcased impactful photographs of a war-ravaged Mariupol captured by photographer Viacheslav Tverdokhlib. It also included recordings detailing the wartime experiences of six women in their occupied hometown. The exhibition was concurrently on display in two cities from March 4th to August 31st, 2023: Stockholm at the Armémuseum and Linköping at the Air

Force Museum. This collaborative project involved the Swedish National Museums of Military History, the National Museum of the History of Ukraine during the Second World War, Nordic Ukraine Forum, the Ukrainian Association of Östergötland, and most importantly, the individuals who shared their first-hand accounts from the siege of Mariupol in 2022.

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VqDXQmll6A>





Screening of the documentary “Uprooted” about forced deportations of children, November 7th

Nordic Ukraine Forum played a key role in organizing an exclusive screening of the documentary “Uprooted: An investigation into Russia’s abduction of Ukrainian children” at Zita Folkets bio. This collaborative effort involved Civil Rights Defenders, Forum-Civ, Swedish UN Association, and Nordic Ukraine Forum, all operating within the Eastern Partnership Network framework. The documentary “Uprooted” was produced by The Kyiv Independent.

Following the screening, a panel discussion was held featuring Olesia Bida, the award-winning reporter behind the documentary, Kateryna Rashevka, lawyer at the Regional Center for Human Rights,

Nadia Volkova, lawyer and director of the Ukrainian Legal Advisory Group (ULAG), and Helen Rask, Head of Civil Rights Defenders Eurasia Department, as moderator.

In addition to the screening, a meeting with members of the Swedish Parliament (Riksdag), including Gustaf Göthberg (M), Magnus Jacobsson (KD), Margareta Cederfelt (M), and Marie-Louise Hänel Sandström (M), was arranged. During this meeting, Ukrainian experts discussed Russian war crimes involving the abductions of Ukrainian children, exploring ways Sweden could provide support to Ukraine in addressing this issue.





Discussion of the documentary film "Erase the Nation," May 2nd

Nordic Ukraine Forum Chairwoman Alina Zubkovich participated in the discussion about the documentary film "Erase the Nation," directed by Tomasz Grzywaczewski. The screening was organized in collaboration between the Polish Institute, the Association

of Swedish Film Photographers, the Ukrainian Institute, and Nordic Ukraine Forum. "Erase the Nation" vividly portrays the destruction of Ukrainian cultural heritage by Russian troops since the onset of the invasion in February 2022.

Lecture about the Carol of the Bells, April 25th

Alina Zubkovich delivered an introductory lecture on the political and cultural life in western Ukrainian territories at the beginning of the 20th century. This lecture preceded the screening of the film "Carol

of the Bells" at the Goethe-Institute. The event was organized collaboratively by the Goethe Institute, Ukrainian Institute, and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung.





Books for Future project

"Books for Future" is our fundraising campaign to buy, bring, and distribute Ukrainian-language books to children in Sweden. Our goal is to foster cultural exchange and support literacy. In 2023 we made a real impact by donating around 1 000 Ukrainian children's books to Swedish libraries. We placed books in libraries in five

new areas and reinforced our presence in four communities we have previously worked with. Our aim is simple: Let young readers in Sweden explore the rich cultural heritage of Ukraine through these books.





Participation in the Gothenburg Book Fair

We joined the Gothenburg Book Fair (Bokmässan) along with representatives from Ukrainian publishing houses visiting from Ukraine to showcase Ukrainian

literature to a Swedish audience. We enhanced the booth by featuring books acquired through our “Books for Future” initiative.





Activities dedicated to the Holodomor and its 90th anniversary

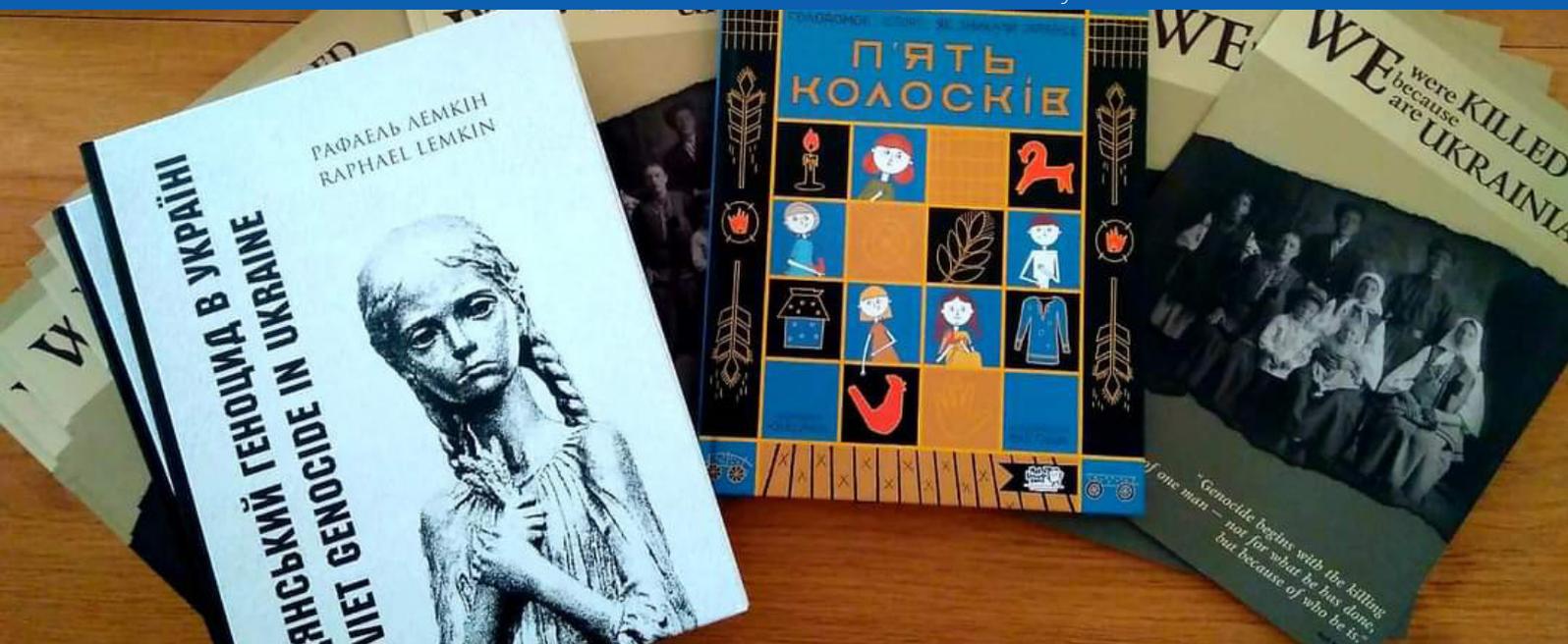
In 2023, we continued our focus on the Holodomor, especially as it marked the 90th anniversary of these tragic events. We actively participated and assisted in organizing several events related to this topic. Collaborating with other Ukrainian organizations, our goal was to raise awareness and knowledge about this dark chapter in Ukrainian history and advocate

for the recognition of the Holodomor as a genocide against Ukrainians. In addition to the events mentioned below, we dedicated two explainers to the Holodomor: "Holodomor: What happened?" and "Recognize Holodomor as a genocide" (refer to the Explainers chapter above).

The Holodomor commemoration at the Swedish Parliament (Riksdag), March 29th

We took part in the Swedish Parliament's commemoration of the Holodomor. The well-attended event included speeches by the Speaker of the Riksdag Andreas Norlén, Ukraine's ambassador to Sweden Andrii Plakhotniuk, as well as members of the Riksdag and the Swedish-Ukrainian parliamentary network Hanna

Westerén (S) and Jan Ericson (M). Alina Zubkovich was invited to deliver a speech in which she discussed the appeal to recognize the Holodomor as genocide against Ukrainians.



Collaboration with the Holodomor Museum in Kyiv

During the year we established a partnership with the Holodomor Museum in Kyiv. The museum generously contributed books and brochures in English, including Raphael Lemkin's article "Soviet Genocide in Ukraine" translated into thirty-three languages and the publication "We were killed because we are Ukrainians" translated into English. These materials were distributed among Ukrainian organizations in Sweden and various libraries. Additionally, we took on the task of translating one of the museum's exhibits into Swedish. "The Uncon-

demned Genocide of Ukrainians Repeats" exhibit sheds light onto the history of the unpunished atrocities, their resurgence today, which echo events from almost a century ago, and recounts the destructive history of Ukrainian-russian relations, its causes, and consequences. Our partners, the Ukrainian Association of Östergötland, organized the exhibit at the Linköping City Library during November. Oksana Dudarko organized the exhibit at the Gottsunda Library in Uppsala.

The Holodomor exhibition at Europahuset, November 20th

We played a role in organizing the exhibition and reception themed "The Holodomor – Soviet Genocide of Ukrainians" held at Europahuset. Developed by the Holodomor Museum in Kyiv, the exhibition aimed to illuminate the atrocities that occurred on Ukrainian

soil in the 1930s. The event was a collaborative effort involving the Ukrainian Institute in Sweden, the European Commission, the Embassy of Ukraine in Sweden, and Nordic Ukraine Forum, with support from the Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung.





Photos by Olha Androsova

Androsova | fb.com/olyocean

Manifestation commemorating Holodomor, November 26th

During one of our weekly demonstrations in support of Ukraine, we marked the 90th anniversary of the Holodomor and condemned Russia's ongoing genocide of the Ukrainian people. Among the speakers at

the manifestation were Ambassador of Ukraine to Sweden Andrii Plakhotniuk and Acting Head of the Embassy of Lithuania in Sweden Donatas Butkus.



Photos by Olha Androsova

Building partnerships with pro-Ukrainian organizations

Building partnerships with other Ukrainian advocacy organizations

In 2023 we stepped up our efforts in uniting and collaborating with similar advocacy groups in Europe. In addition to participating in European networks, we

initiated a summit for Nordic-based advocacy organizations focused on Ukraine.

Nordic Ukraine Advocacy Summit, June 11th

During June 11 - 12th, 2023, Nordic Ukraine Forum hosted the first Nordic Ukraine Advocacy Summit in Stockholm, bringing together Ukrainian advocacy actors in the Nordic countries and Ukraine. The purpose of the Summit was to facilitate introductions, share plans for the near future, establish connections, and discuss opportunities for cooperation. In particular, participants learned about the work being done by organizations in other countries, discussed best practices and challenges, and brainstormed ideas for future cooperation. Many of our summit participants also joined as speakers during our Sunday demonstration in support of Ukraine, condemning the crime of ecocide that resulted from Russia's attack against the Nova Kakhovka dam. In addition, the participants of the summit visited the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and ForumCiv.

The event was organized in collaboration with Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Nordic Countries Project and Stockholm Free World Forum (Frivärld). The event was also attended by Inna Zholtkevych, Press and Culture Attaché at the Embassy of Ukraine in Sweden, who gave a welcome speech.

Organizations that participated in the summit included:

- UAnimals, Kyiv, Ukraine,
- International Centre for Ukrainian Victory (ICUV), Kyiv, Ukraine,
- Ukrainian Dialogues, Copenhagen, Denmark,
- Ukrainian Security and Collaboration Center (USCC), Kyiv, Ukraine,
- Ecoaction Centre for Environmental Initiatives, Kyiv, Ukraine,
- Den ukrainske forening i Norge, Oslo, Norway,
- Ukrainalaisten Yhdistys Suomessa ry, Helsinki, Finland,
- Ukrainian Action in Ireland, Dublin, Ireland,
- UKRAINETT (Bergen branch), Bergen, Norway,
- Ukrainska Föreningen Östergötland, Linköping, Sweden,
- Paws of Peace, Stockholm, Sweden,
- Kalyna - Finland Ukraina Ostrobotniia Kalyna rf, Vöörå, Finland.

The summit's success led to an informal agreement that the event should be held on a yearly basis.





European Advocacy Forum, November 8th

On November 8-9, Nordic Ukraine Forum participated in the European Advocacy Forum 2023 in Brussels. Organized by the Ukrainian advocacy organization Promote Ukraine, the forum took place in the European Parliament and gathered a number of Ukrainian civil society organizations from various countries in Europe. The participants discussed plans for their advocacy work in promoting Ukraine's interests prior to the 2024 European Parliament election.

As a result of the gathering, the organizations signed a joint manifesto⁶ that will anchor the joint vision and lay the foundation of the joint advocacy campaign to support Ukraine and its European aspirations. It will also serve as a symbol of the united Ukrainian civil society in the European Union. The planning work done during the forum and the manifesto serve as the basis for our advocacy campaign for promoting Ukraine's interests in the upcoming European Parliament election in Sweden.

⁶ The text of the Manifesto is available at <https://www.promoteukraine.org/manifesto-of-ukrainian-civil-society-organisationsactions-agenda-in-support-of-ukraine-for-the-european-elections-2024/>





Warsaw Summit, August 11th

We participated in the Activism Summit, uniting Ukrainian activist organizations based in Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Sweden, UK and Ukraine. Through engaging workshops on advocacy campaigns, attendees exchanged strategies, successes, and challenges faced in their

respective regions. This event made it possible for activists to connect and pave the way for future collaboration. The summit was organized by the Ukraine Solidarity Project, a UK-based advocacy organization.





Meetings with Stockholm-based Ukrainian initiatives

We continued cooperation with Ukrainian organizations and initiatives in Stockholm and across Sweden. On January 28th, we organized a meeting with a dozen of Stockholm-based Ukrainian organizations and initiatives in order to get to know each other better, share plans for the near future, establish connec-

tions, and discuss opportunities for cooperation. We organized a follow-up meeting on May 20th. One of the results was a decision to organize a united celebration of the Independence Day of Ukraine.



Partnering with foreign diaspora organizations in Sweden

Foreign diaspora organizations continued to demonstrate strong support for Ukraine and helped us in practical ways with our operations. We maintained good connections with the Baltic associations in Sweden and with the members of the Baltic Cooperation group (Sverigeesternas Riksförbund (ZEL), Estlandssvenskarnas kulturförening SOV, Letternas Riksförbund i Sverige (ZLA), Litauiska Riksförbundet (LBS), and Svensk-Lettiska Föreningen). We are grateful for the substantial support extended by these associations. Members of the Baltic Cooperation Group frequently delivered speeches during our demonstrations and spread information on supporting Ukraine through their channels and events. Moreover, we actively participated in their events, including Black Rib-

bon Day (detailed information below) and Baltic Day. Nordic Ukraine Forum maintained connections with representatives from the People's Embassy of Belarus in Sweden (Belarus Folkambassad i Sverige), the Georgian diaspora, the Chechen diaspora in exile, and the Iranian diaspora – all individuals and organizations committed to democracy and freedom. We designated a speaker for one of the demonstrations supporting those resisting the Iranian regime. Additionally, we backed the Georgian community's demonstration in front of the Georgian embassy, which protested the government's proposed "Foreign Agents" law. Furthermore, we provided support to a Chechen human rights activist facing the risk of deportation to Russia.





Black Ribbon Day, August 24th

Black Ribbon Day is the day of remembrance of the victims of totalitarian and authoritarian regimes. The event was organized by the Baltic Cooperation Group and Nordic Ukraine Forum. During her speech, Alina Zubkovich emphasized the importance of international solidarity against the same destructive force

that keeps the same face and methods. Speeches were also conducted by the Speakers of the Parliaments of Sweden, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, by the representatives of the Baltic Cooperation Group, by Gunnar Hökmark and Ukraine's Ambassador to Sweden.⁷

⁷ <https://sverigeesterna.se/2023/08/22/kohtume-24-augustil-normalmstorgil/>



Nordic Ukraine Forum

Our Organization

The organization was established in November 2013 on the wave of pro-European and anti-dictatorship Euromaidan protests in Ukraine and worldwide. Before 2019, the organization was known as Unga Ukrainare i Sverige. The organization's initial activities were aiming at representing the interests of the Ukrainian youth in Sweden, and act as a bridge bet-

ween Sweden and Ukraine. However, in 2019, the organization decided to target a wider audience than just youth and focus fully on advocacy issues. The corresponding change was made in the statute at the annual meeting, and the organization was reformatted to Nordic Ukraine Forum.

Our purpose, mission, vision and values

Our vision is

Successful and prosperous Ukraine, a member of the EU and NATO, having strong multi-faceted ties with the Nordics, as well as its culture, history and agency unquestionably recognized therein.

Our mission is

With our knowledge and skills, help strengthen the ties between Ukraine and the Nordics, thereby helping Ukraine become a successful European state.

Our values are

- Responsibility,
- Mutual respect,
- Team work,
- Trust,
- Creativity.

Our purpose is to

- Participate in the public debate in order to increase knowledge about Ukraine and its culture as well as raising current issues relating to the political, economic and the general social situation in Ukraine;
- Conduct activities and projects within, among other things, democracy, human rights, culture, education, economic development, sustainable development which involves and represents Ukraine as well as one or more countries within the Nordics and Europe;
- Collaborate with other organizations, authorities and companies that share our association's goals



Board members

The management of Nordic Ukraine Forum is conducted by the Board of the organization. The Board is elected by the members of the association on a yearly basis during the annual meeting.

During 2023 the board of Nordic Ukraine Forum consisted of seven members:

- Alex Panko
- Alina Zubkovich, chair
- Alyona Kashyna, vice-chair
- Anastasiia Galchenko
- Ganna Gladkykh
- Ivan Sivakov
- Maksym Girnyk, spokesperson

Three alternates supported the board:

- Erik Franck
- Martin Jefflén
- Peter Mattisson



Membership and work with members

We are grateful to our members for their engagement and support. Our members allow us to have a stronger voice representing the interests of Ukrainians in Sweden and provide us an opportunity to unite Swedish people who are interested in Ukraine. In addition, through the membership fees our members help us to finance our operations. Finally, many members have become active in our projects in various ways, volunteering their time and energy and sharing contacts that help us scale up our efforts for Ukraine.

Our member base remained fairly the same as during 2022, in total 126 members. Membership fee remained the same in 2023 – standard membership at 250 kr, reduced membership fee at 50 kr for students, displaced and unemployed persons.

In June 2023, we organized a picnic for our members, and in mid-December 2023 we organized a Christmas mingle for our members and partner organizations. The annual meeting in 2023 was held on March 25th, where the report for 2022 and plans for 2023 were presented and the new board of the organization was elected.



Our digital channels

Social media

We manage multiple social media accounts: Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter), Youtube and LinkedIn. Our major tools are Facebook, Instagram and X (Twitter): As of the end of December 2023, our Facebook page had over 9 860 followers; Instagram page almost 2 260 followers; Twitter over 1160 followers. Our social media accounts have the largest number of followers compared to other Ukrainian NGOs in Sweden.

Facebook and Instagram are used to spread our own initiatives and news as well as other organizations' events and initiatives that are relevant for our target audience and our cause. Thanks to our broad outreach, we continue to get many requests from other organizations in Sweden asking to spread their information or to become communications partners of certain Ukraine-related events. On Facebook, we posted 341 posts in 2023, with a total reach amounting almost to 167 000 people;⁸ we have increased our follower base by approximately 1 000 new followers. On Instagram, we made 133 posts and 500 stories with a total reach to over 17 000 people; we have in-

creased our follower base by approximately 760 new followers.

Our target audience on X (Twitter) is primarily Swedish. We use X (Twitter) to spread information about our own initiatives and events as well as to repost major news linked to Ukraine, to share posts and articles which are in line with our advocacy efforts, and occasionally comment on recent developments. During the year, we increased our followers base on X (Twitter) by around 400 followers. The monthly views for our Tweets varied between 6000 and 85 000 views per month. Due to the increased number of issues with X (Twitter), we have also decided to start accounts on similar platforms - Threads (started December 2023, reaching over 600 followers as of end 2023) and Bluesky (start November 2023, reaching 90 followers as of end 2023).

A full list of our social media accounts is available at <https://linktr.ee/NordicUkraineForum>.

Website

We maintained and continuously improved our website www.nuforum.se. During 2023 our website had approximately 55 000 visits in total.

Telegram channel with job and studying opportunities

We continued to administrate a Telegram channel with job vacancies and information on Swedish language courses and other studying opportunities for displaced Ukrainians in the Stockholm area. As

of now, the channel has 2 400 subscribers. About 150 posts were made in the channel with an average of 2000 unique viewings per post.

Newsletter

We launched a weekly newsletter in May 2022 as a means of keeping our members and other interested individuals updated about Ukraine-related events

in Stockholm. We continued preparing weekly newsletters and during 2023, sending out 47 weekly newsletters that had 244 subscribers.

⁸ Based on Meta Business Statistics.