





# Policy Brief

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New Europe Center, 2020



*This policy brief was conducted by the New Europe Center in the framework of the USAID/ENGAGE activity, which is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by Pact. The contents of this policy brief are the sole responsibility of the New Europe Center and its implementing partners and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).*

## UKRAINIAN DETROIT OR A CITY OF OPPORTUNITIES:

### HOW ZAPORIZHZHIA INTEGRATES INTO EUROPE<sup>1</sup>

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**For some people, Zaporizhzhia is the birthplace of Ukrainian Cossacks. For others, it is an industrial city, shrouded in the “factory spirit” of the Soviet era, in the center of which stands a monument to the metallurgist from the movie “Spring on Zarechnaya Street.” The combination of these two images, “a Cossack standing next to a blast furnace,” is the most vivid response of local residents to the question “What is your association with Zaporizhzhia?” posed by the analysts of the New Europe Center. However, in the shadow of these ghosts of the past, the factory city is actually gradually declining and turning into a city of lost opportunities, a sort of Ukrainian Detroit<sup>2</sup>, according to residents of Zaporizhzhia. European integration could be one of the options for the future development of the city and the region. However, are the locals ready for the European development vector?**

<sup>1</sup> This policy brief was prepared on the basis of a public discussion in Zaporozhzhia on February 11, 2020, as well as a series of interviews with representatives of the local community.

<sup>2</sup> Detroit is an American city in Michigan state that used to be the automotive industry hub of the country and then became a ghost city that went bankrupt, lost its population, and virtually collapsed.

## 1. OBSTACLES TO THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

### “FACTORY MAYOR” FOREVER?

Historically, Zaporizhzhia and the region have been dominated by socio-economic agenda. The powerful industrial lobby and enterprises have a significant impact on the political and economic life of the city (for instance, Zaporizhstal and Motor Sich). These enterprises, in one way or another, also finance the majority of civic organizations. Thus, it is logical that in their conversations, the analysts of the New Europe Center have repeatedly heard statements about “**factory city,**” “**factory mayor,**” and “**factory clock house.**”

For the last ten years, elections in Zaporizhzhia have been won by representatives of political groups affiliated with major enterprises. Currently, it is the city government represented by the acting Mayor Volodymyr Buryak (the former chief engineer of the Zaporizhstal plant owned by Rinat Akhmetov), the Secretary of the City Council (a former employee of the Motor Sich enterprise), and the largest deputy factions.

The events of the Maidan have brought changes to the political landscape of the region, but not as large as one would like. New faces have emerged, and dialogue has begun between the public and the authorities. It was a time when local civic activists, who were the drivers of change during the Maidan, became able to hold positions in the City Council, participate in any cadre commissions, but this surge of public activism could not radically change the local government system.

According to an opinion poll conducted at the end of January by the sociological company IRG, the policies of Volodymyr Buryak were fully

approved by 28% of citizens<sup>3</sup>. To a large extent, this support is driven by the influence of the business group represented by the incumbent Mayor. Their resources and management methods (financial influence, controlled media, and administrative leverage) reflect the experience that has been implemented before in Donetsk.

Another reason for this level of support for the Mayor is the lack of alternative candidates for his position. Long tenure in local political circles and recognizability are important factors that ensure support for certain politicians and/or parties. As an example, we could mention the Kaltsev brothers who lead the Opposition Platform – For Life party in the region, and one of them is a Member of Parliament.

**The lack of recognizable and strong leaders among the representatives of the pro-European vector** is perhaps the major obstacle to spreading the idea of European integration in the region. At the same time, an audience that could potentially become adherents of this idea actually exists. For instance, during the discussion organized by the New Europe Center, it has been noted that 41% of the residents of Zaporizhzhia support the movement towards the EU, and another 38% support the independent development and neutral status of Ukraine<sup>4</sup>. With proper communication, this niche could be filled with European narratives. It is also worth noting that numerous European projects are implemented in the region, but they work fragmentarily, without a single consolidated window.

<sup>3</sup> *Evaluation of the Socio-Political Situation in the City of Zaporizhzhia, January 2020. Independent Research Group: <https://www.facebook.com/askad.ashurbekov/posts/2723837844363584>*

<sup>4</sup> *The European Map of Ukraine Was Presented in Zaporizhzhia! New Europe Center: <http://neweurope.org.ua/en/yevromapu-prezentovano-v-zaporizhzhii/>*



“A city of lost opportunities” is how residents of Zaporizhzhia characterize it. Although five years ago, there were talks of Zaporizhzhia as a new center of the Southeast of Ukraine, based on available logistical, economic, and intellectual resources. However, the canned, Soviet management system made it impossible to make it a reality.

#### BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE: SECURITY OF THE REGION

The strategically important location of Zaporizhzhia between the war zone in the East and the annexed Crimea in the South with access to the Sea of Azov makes this region potentially vulnerable to possible further **aggression by the Russian Federation**. This threat is one of the key obstacles to the European integration of the Zaporizhzhia region.

**The sentiments of the population** also contribute to favorable conditions for destabilization of the region. The region that cast 71% of the votes for Viktor Yanukovich in 2010<sup>5</sup> and had a large percentage of those who advocated rapprochement with the Russian Federation (41%) in 2013<sup>6</sup> has become less loyal to the Russian authorities after the Revolution of Dignity. As of February 2020, only about 13%

spoke in favor of rapprochement with Russia<sup>7</sup>; however, this decline in sympathies with the Russian Federation does not prevent the local population from voting for pro-Russian forces. In 2015, a third of the seats in the City Council have been won by representatives of the political faction Opposition Bloc<sup>8</sup>, and in the local elections of 2020, opposition pro-Russian forces are predicted to get high results as well. Thus, the rest of Russia’s former sympathizers have become more silent “neutrals” than hardcore Euro-Atlanticists. As local sociologist Askad Ashurbekov noted, *“the niche that could be filled with European narratives remained in fact in a neutral, mobile state.”*

Berdyansk and the villages of the Azov region are also potentially vulnerable to separatist and/or pro-Russian sentiments. The electoral preferences of the population are partly affected by internally displaced persons from Donetsk and Luhansk regions (more inclined to support politicians who promise a swift end to the war with Russia<sup>9</sup>): more than 55,000 displaced persons are registered in the region<sup>10</sup>. However, most of them do not reside in the region, but simply register for certain government-issued payments.

<sup>5</sup> Yanukovich Has Won in 10 Regions, Tymoshenko in 17. TSN: <https://tsn.ua/ukrayina/yanukovich-peremig-u-10-regionah-tymoshenko-u-17.html>

<sup>6</sup> European choice: Zaporizhzhia 2013. Independent Research Group: <https://bit.ly/39wltbP>

<sup>7</sup> The European Map of Ukraine Was Presented in Zaporizhzhia! New Europe Center: <http://neweurope.org.ua/en/yevromapu-prezentovano-v-zaporizhzhzi/> or Evaluation of the Socio-Political Situation in the City of Zaporizhzhia, January 2020. Independent Research Group: <https://www.facebook.com/askad.ashurbekov/posts/2723837844363584>

<sup>8</sup> Members of the City Council. Zaporizhzhia City Council: <https://zp.gov.ua/uk/persons/category/deputati-miskoi-radi/>.

<sup>9</sup> Security Passport of Ukraine 2018: Results and Recommendations. Centre for International Security: [https://intsecurity.org/Security\\_%20passport\\_of\\_Ukraine\\_2018.pdf](https://intsecurity.org/Security_%20passport_of_Ukraine_2018.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Dynamics of Migration in Ukraine: Where are the Most Internally Displaced Persons Registered. Slovo i Dilo: <https://www.slovoidilo.ua/2019/10/31/infografika/suspilstvo/dynamika-mihracziyi-ukrayini-zareyestrovano-najbilshe-pereselenciv>

**Information (in)security** is another problem in the region. The lack of independent media (for example, the city's TV channels belong to Zaporizhstal (TV5), Motor Sich (TRC Alex), Mayor's Office (Z Channel)) and, accordingly, high-quality Ukrainian information content does not contribute to the spread of European integration sentiments among the population. Russian television broadcasting also shows significant influence: after disconnection of Ukrainian channels on satellite television in many cities, towns, and villages, especially on the shores of the Azov Sea (Berdyansk or Primorsk), there is no other alternative than to consume Russian information content, which was quite popular in the region even before that. In addition to the media, the pro-Russian messages are also spread among the population by the UOC of the MP. The activities of paramilitary Orthodox non-governmental organizations, such as Radomir, which include former Berkut officers and other anti-state elements, are also able to exert their destructive influence on the locals<sup>11</sup>.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the **Chinese factor** in Zaporizhzhia's regional security. Last year, Chinese investors received a majority stake in the Zaporizhzhia company Motor Sich, which began producing aircraft engines during World War I and is now one of the largest aviation industry enterprises in the post-Soviet space. The purchase of Motor Sich by China is one of the most sensitive challenges for Ukraine's foreign policy in recent years and could seriously damage Ukraine's relations with Japan and even the United States (confirmed by John Bolton's special visit to Ukraine in 2019, specifically for

this reason)<sup>12</sup>. At the same time, the case of the Motor Sich demonstrates that the EU does not necessarily come to the industries vacated by Russia.

#### STRUCTURE OF THE ECONOMY OF THE FACTORY CITY

As noted above, Zaporizhzhia **is run by powerful economic groups**. Closely linked to the industrial structures, the governing ones prevent the city from developing, canning it at the level of 50s-60s. It concerns, first of all, the structure of the economy (the majority of the population is factory workers, and the level of self-employment is low), which determines the population's way of thinking. City-forming enterprises and existing power hierarchies influence what people do and what resources they have. For example, Motor Sich and Zaporizhstal are among the top 100 largest employers in Ukraine<sup>13</sup>.

As Oleksandr Dynnyk, the head of the independent cultural and artistic platform Mlyn, made a good point about the traditional industrial city, *"the post-industrial development period has not yet arrived in Zaporizhzhia."*<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, as of today, the dynamics of industrial growth is slowing. Certain companies, such as Zaporizhtransformator, are in a state of bankruptcy, Zaporizhstal is not in the best of times, AvtoZAZ is in a state of stagnation.

<sup>11</sup> *Security Passport of Ukraine 2018: Results and Recommendations. Centre for International Security: [https://intsecurity.org/Security\\_%20passport\\_of\\_Ukraine\\_2018.pdf](https://intsecurity.org/Security_%20passport_of_Ukraine_2018.pdf)*

<sup>12</sup> *The Sale of the Motor Sich: Why Is China Interested in Ukrainian Technology. Deutsche Welle: <https://bit.ly/2WTnqwg>*

<sup>13</sup> *TOP 200 Largest Employers in Ukraine. Rating. Business in Official Figures: <https://rating.zone/top-100-najbilshykh-robotodavtsiv-ukrainy/>*

<sup>14</sup> *People. City. Factory: Zaporizhzhia through the Eyes of Local Activists. MistoSite: <https://mistosite.org.ua/articles/liudy-misto-zavod-zaporizhzhia-ochyma-mistsevykh-aktyvistok-i-aktyvistiv>*



**Factories fail to adapt** to the new realities, there is a need for businesses that would upgrade them. Production volumes declined substantially: this was partly due to the loss of Russian markets after 2014, as earlier, industrial products of the region were exported mainly to the Russian Federation. A large share of the population lost their jobs. For many people, this has become the European integration “to the touch” and has affected their attitude towards the EU from a negative point of view.

*“People who have been making steel their entire lives cannot go to work in the IT the next day, just as those who have been assembling Lanos all their lives cannot start assembling Tesla,”* said one of the local interlocutors of the New Europe Center. Lack of jobs and/or poor wages cause people to relocate to other regions or abroad. In order for the human resources to remain in the region, it needs to be retrained to a minimum (how to work in factories with new equipment) or partially.

In the city of workers, few people develop their own businesses: historically, dynasties have worked in factories (this applies not only to Zaporizhzhia, but also to other factory cities, such as Energodar). However, the reason for the poor development of small and medium-sized businesses (hereinafter, SMEs) is the fact that the authorities are interested only in large enterprises, which shapes the demand of the population. A large number of small and medium-sized businesses depend on the purchasing power of the population, which in turn depends on the salaries of factory workers. Therefore, SMEs in a Zaporizhzhia are in fact businesses that are attached to large enterprises and actually serve them.

## ENVIRONMENT: A CRITICAL SITUATION?

The most dangerous threat to the region is the poor state of the environment caused by the high concentration of industrial pollutants (metallurgical plants, thermal power plants, production plants with outdated equipment). **Zaporizhzhia is among the five most polluted regions of Ukraine<sup>15</sup>, and according to the rating by the New Europe Center, has 1 point out of 7 in terms of environmental situation<sup>16</sup>.** However, it should be noted that these issues are not dominant on the agenda of the entire region, as the city of Zaporizhzhia remains the most vulnerable.

To confirm this notion, residents of Zaporizhzhia consider the environmental situation a top problem of their city (37%)<sup>17</sup>, but the authorities, apparently, do not fully understand the extent of the threat. According to the locals, only civic organizations take care of environmental issues in Zaporizhzhia.

At the same time, Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment procedures have already been put in place to address the environmental problem at the local level. However, there’s an urgent need to reform state-level environmental laws in order to adapt them to the EU standards. Some laws and regulations have already been adopted in accordance with European directives, but they do not work due to the lack of the required by-laws.

<sup>15</sup> Working Subgroup on Elaboration of the Ecology and Environmental Protection Direction. Strategic Analysis. Zaporizhzhia Regional State Administration: <https://www.zoda.gov.ua/news/45643/strategichniy-analiz.html>

<sup>16</sup> The European map of Ukraine. Rating of European Integration of Regions. New Europe Center: <http://neweurope.org.ua/en/analytics/yevromapa-ukrayiny-rejtyng-yevrointegratsiyi-oblastej/>

<sup>17</sup> Social and Political Sentiments of Residents of Zaporizhzhia: October 2019. Independent Research Group: <http://www.irg.org.ua/analytics/zhovten2019.html>

## 2. REGIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

### ENERGY HEART OF UKRAINE

One of Ukraine's commitments under the Association Agreement with the EU is to develop and support renewable energy, which guarantees environmental security and energy independence. According to the European Map of Ukraine study, in 2018, Zaporizhzhia region became the undisputed leader in the amount of kW of electricity produced from renewable sources<sup>18</sup>. Two of the most powerful wind power plants in Ukraine, Botiyeve and Primorsk wind farms are located on the territory of the region. Moreover, numerous investment projects for the construction of wind and solar power parks are being implemented in the region. For example, the Norwegian company NBT is investing 1 billion USD in the construction of wind power plants in Zaporizhzhia region within the framework of the Zofia project<sup>19</sup>.

At the same time, the largest in Europe and the sixth largest nuclear power plant in the world, the Zaporizhzhia NPP, is also located in Zaporizhzhia region. Overall, every fourth kilowatt of electricity in Ukraine is produced in this region.

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Thus, locals logically call their region the “energy heart of Ukraine,” but the reason for such success is the combination of companies that produce energy from both traditional and alternative sources.

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### CITY OF INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

According to a research by the New Europe Center, the region was ranked fourth in terms of the number of urban infrastructure modernization projects implemented via the State Regional Development Fund and the volume of their funding (in 2015-2019)<sup>20</sup>. The region also ranks fourth in terms of the number of projects **funded by the European Investment Bank (hereinafter, the EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (hereinafter, the EBRD), and the volume of their funding**<sup>21</sup>. According to Artur Boyko, Head of the Department of External Relations and Foreign Economic Activity of Zaporizhzhia Regional State Administration (hereinafter, the RSA), “no one invests as much as the European institutions invest in real infrastructure and social projects in the region.”<sup>22</sup> As of today, the EIB is implementing over 30 projects in Zaporizhzhia region for a total amount of about 992 million UAH<sup>23</sup> (some of them being the first major projects in the last 25 years,

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<sup>18</sup> *The European map of Ukraine. Rating of European Integration of Regions.* New Europe Center: <http://neweurope.org.ua/en/analytcs/yevromapa-ukrayiny-rejtyng-yevrointegratsiyi-oblastej/>

<sup>19</sup> *Norwegian Company NBT Purchased 82% of the Capital of the Company that Invests 1 Billion USD in Zaporizhzhia Region.* Mind: <https://mind.ua/news/20193774-norvezka-nbt-kupila-82-kapitalu-kompaniyi-shcho-investue-1-mlrd-v-zaporizku-oblast>

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<sup>20</sup> *The European map of Ukraine. Rating of European Integration of Regions.* New Europe Center: <http://neweurope.org.ua/en/analytcs/yevromapa-ukrayiny-rejtyng-yevrointegratsiyi-oblastej/>

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *The European Map of Ukraine Was Presented in Zaporizhzhia!* New Europe Center: <http://neweurope.org.ua/en/yevromapu-prezentovano-v-zaporizhzhii/>

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*



for example, the construction of a clinic in Primorsk). The emergence of new or refurbished infrastructural objects affects the perception of European integration by the population, as they can “touch” it, as well as alters the mentality of people, as communities begin planning quality infrastructure projects and receiving funding for their implementation. Describing Melitopol, local activists noted that “the city is the most Europeanly integrated in the region because it attracts the largest number of European grants.”

At the same time, apart from the available EU investment assistance, there are other potentially promising areas for cooperation. First, the entry of businesses from Zaporizhzhia into the **EU markets**. Although exports of goods from enterprises to the EU markets are now twice as high as exports to the Russian Federation (28% and 13% respectively in the first half of 2019), not everyone has been able to enter the EU market. One of the interlocutors of the New Europe Center from Melitopol noted in her interview that *“even those who hoped to return to the Russian markets will not do so; they are actively seeking and ready for alternatives.”*

Second, **small and medium-sized businesses require investments** in their own development. On the one hand, this need is particularly urgent in Zaporizhzhia, where SMEs are poorly developed, unlike other cities in the region. For example, the “cherry land” of Melitopol, according to one of the interlocutors of the New Europe Center, has a very strong and promising medium-sized business, *“looking for opportunities and seeking to develop; already exporting and able to export even more.”*

**Tourism** could be a potential area for boosting the SME development in the region. Having Khortytsia, the Sea of Azov, and Berdyansk, the region could become a *“tourist mecca of Ukraine.”*

However, nowadays, potential tourist locations have **infrastructure** problems and require the necessary conditions for their businesses to be more profitable. The local population expects such investments in infrastructure from the EU. For instance, Khortytsia needs to develop hiking trails, create bike lanes, etc. The new seaside resort of Kyrylivka, where approximately 1.5 million Ukrainian citizens come every year after the occupation of Crimea, needs 30-32 million euros of investments in the construction of the water supply and sewerage system<sup>24</sup>. According to the Director General of Zaporizhzhia Vodokanal Serhiy Basansky, the city is currently awaiting ratification of the agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark to attract financial resources through the Danida Business Finance program; however, this document has not been yet ratified at the time of the preparation of this paper<sup>25</sup>.

Zaporizhzhia International **Airport** could become another opportunity for European integration of the city, which would give a significant momentum to the development of both the city and the region, serving Zaporizhzhia and partially Donetsk and Kherson regions (currently, the largest closest airport is located in Kharkiv).

Another infrastructure project at the “dream level” of the local authorities is the restoration of the functioning of Berdyansk Airport. Zaporizhzhia might also become an important transit hub between many regions of Ukraine due to the

<sup>24</sup> Kyrylivka: A Resort of an Environmental Disaster Area. Informator: <https://dengi.informator.ua/2018/05/29/kirillovka-kurort-ili-zona-ekologicheskogo-bedstviya/>

<sup>25</sup> Why Can't Water Prices Be Low? Or Call Center, Accounting, and Control: How the Vodokanal Has Changed in Two Years. Zaporizka Pravda, #3 (January 2020): [https://issuu.com/377083/docs/zp\\_30-01-2020\\_web](https://issuu.com/377083/docs/zp_30-01-2020_web)

development of **road infrastructure** that is currently in a state of neglect: according to an opinion poll conducted by the New Europe Center, Zaporizhzhia region is among the five outsiders in Ukraine in terms of the number of repaired roads<sup>26</sup>. The EU has already made some investments in this area: as of today, Zaporizhzhia Regional State Administration has submitted a request to design the M14 route of international importance with the EIB loan to the Cabinet of Ministers.

#### DECENTRALIZATION: EUROPEAN INTEGRATION TO THE TOUCH

Decentralization is considered to be one of the most successful reforms in Ukraine. The amalgamated territorial communities (hereinafter, ATCs) have got not only increased local budgets, but also additional opportunities to attract investments, establish partnerships, and exchange experience with the EU countries, improve social and transport infrastructure. In fact, most things that Ukrainians associate with improving of the living standards and with European integration, such as repaired roads or jobs, are related to decentralization reform<sup>27</sup>.

The **communities of Zaporizhzhia region** are no exception; our interlocutors consider them to be **more mobile and Europeanly integrated** than Zaporizhzhia. For example, Shyroke ATC has its own Development Agency and Youth

Council, organizes business dialogues, and is a leader in the implementation of medical reform in Zaporizhzhia region. Vesele ATC built a solar power plant on the site of an abandoned landfill and purchased the first mobile waste sorting line in Ukraine.

**Small cities also demonstrate successful examples of European integration.** For instance, according to local residents, Melitopol is the most integrated city of Zaporizhzhia region. To a larger extent, this is ensured by proper communication between the population and the authorities, as well as by the development of small and medium-sized businesses. For example, a Youth Parliament has been established in Melitopol, which includes representatives of all educational institutions of the city and local businesses, as well as a Young Politician's School. Moreover, the city has adopted the European Charter for Equality between Men and Women and plans to create a concept for the development of bicycle infrastructure.

<sup>26</sup> *The European map of Ukraine. Rating of European Integration of Regions.* New Europe Center: <http://neweurope.org.ua/en/analytics/yevromapa-ukrayiny-rejtyng-yevrointegratsiyi-oblastej/>

<sup>27</sup> *New Europe: What Do Ukrainians Think?* New Europe Center: <http://neweurope.org.ua/en/visual-materials/nova-yevropa-yak-yiyi-bachat-ukrayintsi-3/>





## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 **Support for the businesses.** It would be useful to organize business visits of local entrepreneurs to the EU countries, to help promote their interests, to continue communicating opportunities that exist for SMEs in the region. In addition, EU states have many interesting case studies for developing social and women's entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurs are interested in this, especially in such cities as Melitopol.
- 2 **Industrial sites.** Large enterprises are gradually closing down in the region, and there are many industrial sites (for example, non-functioning S.M. Kirov Diesel Engine Manufacturing Plant in Tokmak) that could be used to develop new projects, such as construction design offices or IT clusters.
- 3 **Agricultural sector.** In 2019, Zaporizhzhia region was the first among the steppe regions in terms of the harvest of early cereals and legume crops, winter wheat, and peas<sup>28</sup>. Thus, programs aimed at developing the agricultural sector and exchange of experience with European counterparts should be promoted.
- 4 **Support for communities and small cities.** Donor organizations should continue organizing study visits for ATC representatives across Ukraine and the EU states should assist them in creating development projects, as well as facilitate the signing of memoranda of cooperation between cities and communities of Zaporizhzhia region and the European countries.
- 5 **Information campaigns.** It would be worthwhile to conduct more focused information campaigns dedicated to "success stories" related to the EU in both Zaporizhzhia and small towns of the region: from entrepreneurial cases to stories of young people who, after studying in the European Union, have started their own business or implemented a certain initiative in Ukraine. Furthermore, these campaigns could be dedicated to specific things that have changed locally, and this has become noticeable in the daily lives of residents (available services, transparency of the authorities, etc.).
- 6 **Visualization of cooperation with the EU.** Certainly, it is worth continuing to label objects that have been constructed or reconstructed with the EU funds. Moreover, if a hospital has been renovated, for example, in Primorsk, it should be demonstrated at the regional level.
- 7 **Environmental protection.** It is important for Zaporizhzhia to support civic organizations involved in environmental protection. It is extremely necessary to construct waste treatment facilities at factories, as well as to promote, at the national level, amendments to the "environmental" legislation of Ukraine in accordance with the EU regulatory framework.
- 8 **Consolidation of structures representing the EU.** Establishing a consolidating center for organizations and foundations representing the EU would increase their effectiveness

<sup>28</sup> Zaporizhzhia Region Became the Leader in Ukraine in Terms of Yield. *Zavzhdy Novyny*: <https://ztn.zp.ua/zaporizka-oblast-stala-liderom-v-ukrayini-za-obsyagom-vrozhayu/>

(expand the geography of projects and beneficiaries). Projects of these structures, which sometimes duplicate each other, should also be monitored.

9 **Transparency of the authorities.** European Union's support to projects promoting transparency, accountability, and improved interaction of local authorities with the population, for example, in the area of environmental protection, would be useful.

10 **European lessons at schools.** Communication of European integration to young people, who represent the most mobile part of the population, is critically important. With this in mind, European lessons should be introduced on a regular basis at schools in the region.