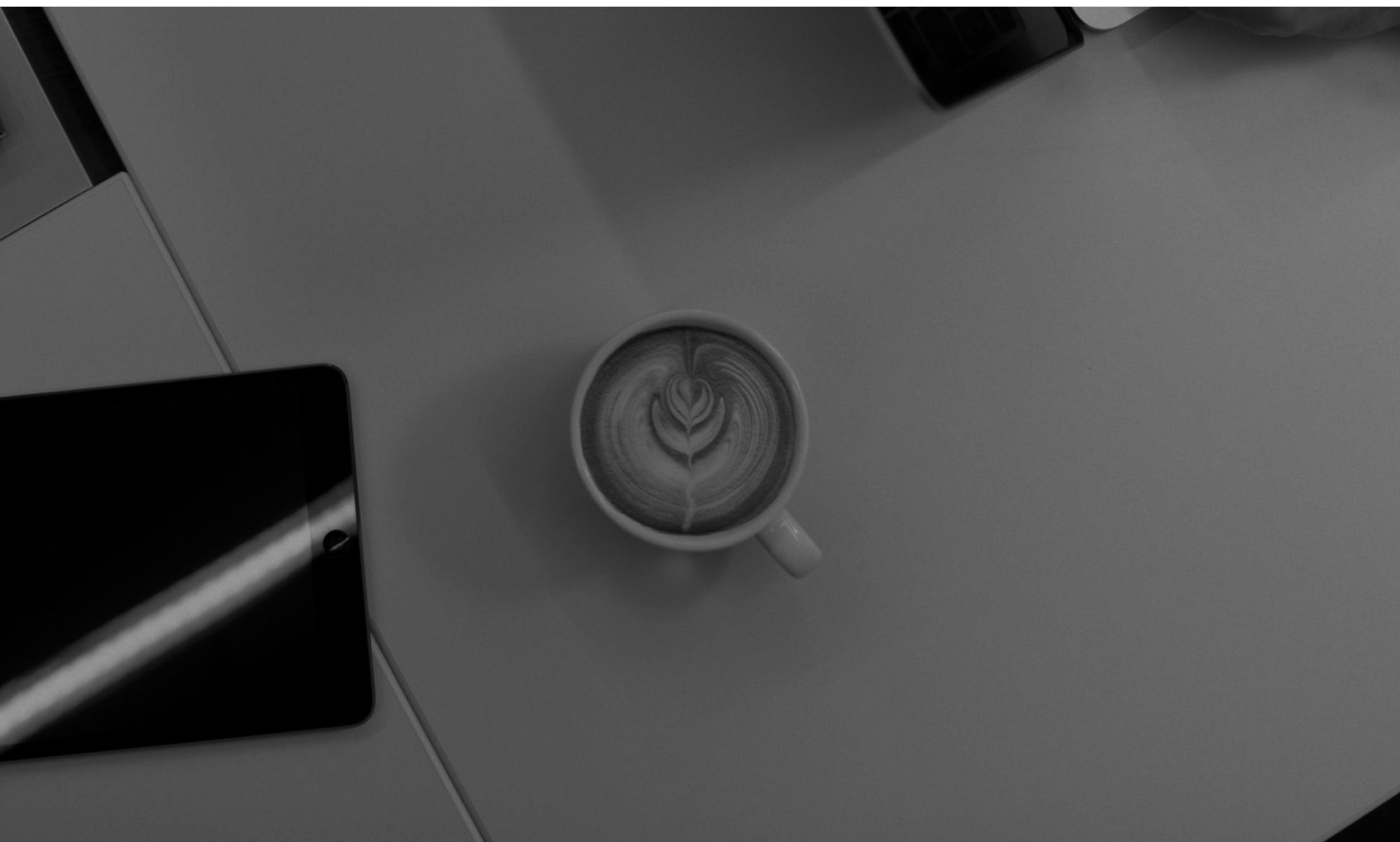




VoxUkraine Report for 2021-2022



Introduction to the report

In almost every annual report, we, the Vox Ukraine team, write that the previous year was difficult and we faced many challenges. However, the last years – 2021 and 2022 – not only showed us new challenges. **They also generally forced us to rethink what real challenges are and what were temporary difficulties.**

Over the past few years, the team has changed and realized that now is the time for complex decisions and non-standard ideas. Because all the standard ideas have already been tried before us and they could have worked better.

In 2021, we began to recover from the COVID-19 crisis and infodemic. We made our plans for future development. During 2021, we analyzed Russian propaganda narratives, produced 24 regular bi-weekly iMoRe releases, four quarterly reform overviews. We wrote several retrospective articles on the reform efforts of the Parliament, the Government, the NBU, and the President. Also, the team continuously supported the healthcare reforms in Ukraine – through articles, events, and fact-checks.

However, 2022 changed everything for us. Vox Ukraine CEO Maksym Skubenko decided to defend Ukraine from the invaders in the first hours of the full-scale war. So, on February 24, the team was forced to adapt quickly to the new conditions, prioritizing the fight against the external enemy. Thus, all of VoxCheck's efforts were directed towards debunking disinformation. The Reform Index project relentlessly monitored the changes that were made in Ukraine, even despite the full-scale war.

During this time, Maksym Skubenko was able not only to defend Ukraine but also to become the Chief Sergeant of the assault platoon and the Instructor of the 5th separate assault brigade of Defense forces of Ukraine. In fact, the head of Vox Ukraine is one of the reasons why all of us, the team of this think tank, can work on reforms from different parts of our country.

And even despite such challenges, **the Vox Ukraine team not only managed to maintain its mental state** but also developed, expanded, and prepared new international projects that will show their results in 2023 and in the following post-war years.

Now, the world is being completely rebuilt. These changes will bring many problems that have not been faced in other countries or, even if they have been faced, not to such an extent. **Right now is the time to reinvent the wheel** because the previous ones just don't roll in the right direction.

As a team, we believe that critical thinking, progress toward reforms, and transparency will be able to change the country in the future. And this is exactly the kind of game-changer we need right now. After all, reforms have never been simple and quick. But now it is important to do everything so that the reforms succeed – quickly, qualitatively, in a new way, as no one has done, and above all – successfully.

Therefore, the Vox Ukraine team continues to work to shape the economic discussion and to pump up the critical thinking of Ukrainians and Europeans because **only dramatic changes will lead us to the main goal – a prosperous Ukraine of the future.**

Key indicators

During 2021-2021, VoxUkraine – despite the challenges associated with the pandemic and full-scale war – could still work effectively and increase key engagement indicators. For example, during this period, over 40 interns completed internships in the organization and managed to organize 14 online and offline discussions, 9 of them were with local media.

Main products	2021	2022
Articles, incl. interviews	215 (260k views)	280 (261k views)
Reform index releases + quarterly overviews	30 (29k views)	32 (35k views)
Chronicles of Liberation		3 (39k views)
Overview of the fakes		57 (56k views)
Video within “Soromno” (“It's a shame”) project	18 (70k views)	5 (47.5k views)
Video explainers	31 (184k views)	11 (126k views)
Video fact-check	55 (505k views)	36 (358k views)
Video briefly	8 (18k views)	0
Videos about war		11 (252k views)
Peremozhenky (“Victories”) podcast		46 (34k views)
What about the economics podcast	56 (150k views)	33 (80k views)

Reforms and state supervision

2021

During 2021, we produced 24 regular bi-weekly releases by the Index of Reforms project, four quarterly reform overviews, and several articles focused on specific legislative issues. Thus, we discussed:

- digitalization of public services and documents available in Diia
- land sales through electronic auctions
- introducing of concession agreements for infrastructure
- energy system issues such as setting the price ceiling for gas for the populace, successes and challenges in the implementation of energy efficiency, implementation of the Green Modernisation Programme for Ukraine
- reform of the social care system
- reform pension system
- Regulation of the gambling business
- restrictions on the tobacco business in Ukraine, like excise taxes on tobacco and a ban on tobacco advertising

We wrote several retrospective articles — the comparison of reform efforts of Verkhovna Rada, the government, the National Band of Ukraine, and the president in 2021 and rating of MP's activity in initiating reformatory laws and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in national and regional sections and debunking of the main fakes and myths related to the Language Law.

We supported the continuation of healthcare reforms and shot three videos on how the second stage of reform (specialized care) is being implemented (Vynnyky, Dnipro, and Mykolaiv). We also wrote several articles on the issues of reform of the national medical system: analysis of main changes in medical reform in 2021, transplantology reform, development of nursing services and broadening nurses' duties, development of efficient healthcare network in Ukrainian local communities (on the example of Ostroh local community).

Also, in 2021, as part of the **Budget Watchdog project**, we worked on raising awareness of MPs, media, and the general population on budget processes and tools to monitor and evaluate budget execution. Increasing transparency of the budgetary process and drawing attention to specific issues via expert discussions of the budget drafting and execution was also our goal.

The total outreach of the project exceeded 170 200 persons. We involved more than 70 experts, 60 public servants, and 44 national and regional media journalists.

Another huge event organized with the active involvement of journalists was the conference "**Modernization 2021: The Role of Governance and Institutions**".

During the virtual conference, we focused on the problems of governance reform. Such as the evaluation of the efficiency of public funds use, factors of strength and sustainability of government institutions, and the role of citizen engagement in governance at the community, regional, and state levels.

28 speakers were engaged in 5 discussions:

- "The future of public service reform in Ukraine"
- "Striving for people: who is the state looking for and whom it finds."
- "From scratch and in the process: creation and transformation of state institutions."
- "Efficiency of public funds use"
- "Engagement of citizens into budget processes at the community level"

As a result, the level of discussion in the field of public finance has increased with experts, government officials, journalists, and the general audience involved in the project activities. Vox readers have developed their knowledge of public finances and the budget process, and a few important issues have become public discussion topics. A greater framework was applied – considering efficient public funds management as an essential element of good governance itself.



2022

During 2022, we produced 19 regular bi-weekly releases by the Index of Reforms project, four quarterly reform overviews, and several articles focused on specific legislative issues. Thus, we discussed 'war legislation' adopted by the parliament, government, and National Bank of Ukraine ([1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#)), and several issues related to the post-war reconstruction. We also published several articles on reform issues

- [Waste management reform](#)
- [The Open Skies agreement](#)
- [Cooperation with the International Criminal Court](#)
- [Law on virtual assets](#)
- [New order declaration and registration of place of residence](#)
- [Liquidation of the District Administrative Court of Kyiv](#)

We wrote several retrospective articles — the [comparison of reform efforts of Verkhovna Rada, the government, the National Bank of Ukraine, and the president in 2022](#) and [rating of MP's activity in initiating reformatory laws, review of sanctions imposed on Russia by world governments](#).

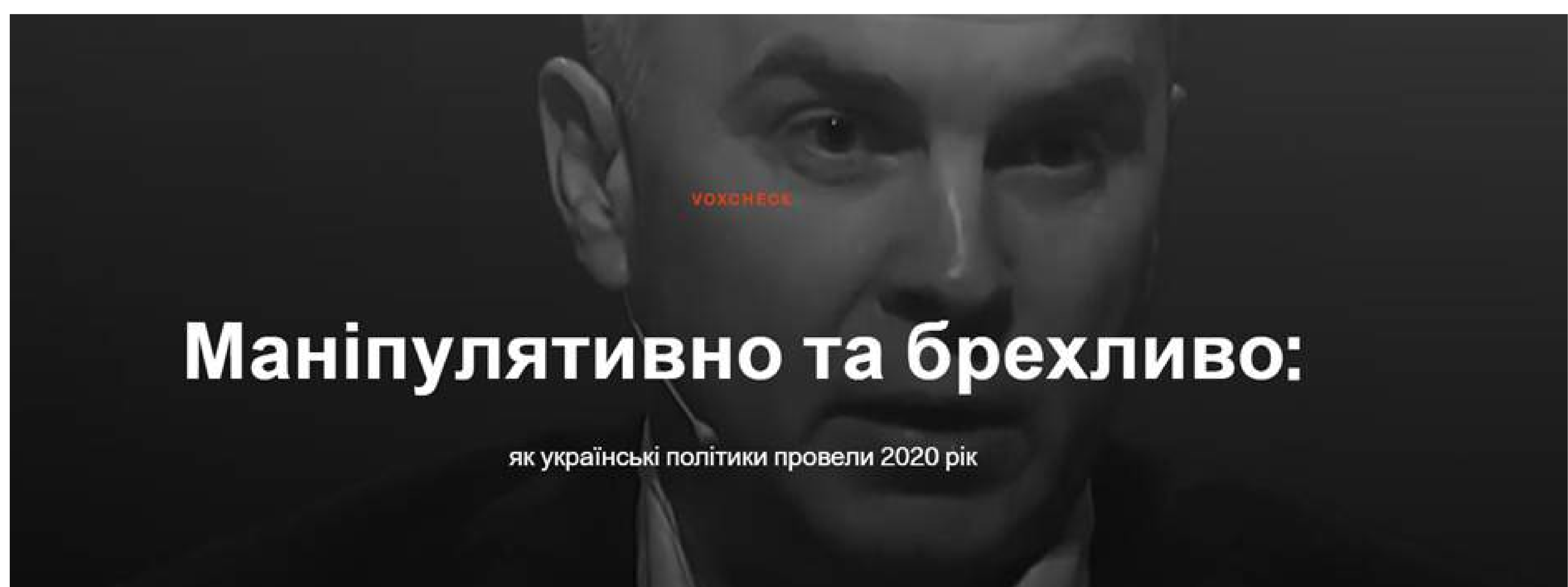
We also organized a conference dedicated to the reform efforts of the Ukrainian government in the first year of the full-scale war. During this conference, experts and government representatives discussed Ukrainian integration into the EU and reforms that are obligatory to conduct in order to join the European Union. We also presented the results of the sociological survey about which reforms Ukrainians consider the most important (they selected army reform and digitalization).

Factcheck

2021

During 2021, the main focus of the VoxCheck team remained on two key topics — factchecking statements of Ukrainian politicians and debunking disinformation in partnership with Meta. In collaboration with Suspilne and Yanina Sokolova's project "Soromno" ("Соромно"), we fact-checked politicians' statements. We also published 81 articles debunking fakes on the most relevant topics. Among the most significant ones was the [analysis of Zelensky's statements at the press conference](#), [debunking myths about the language law](#), and [supervisory boards](#).

The outcome of our work was a [new rating of politicians' lies](#).



In 2021, the first vaccines against COVID-19 appeared, so during the new wave of the infodemic, we actively debunked vaccine-related disinformation. Overall, in partnership with Meta, we debunked 1089 fakes throughout the year.

In order to increase the recognition of VoxCheck and have the ability to influence a large audience, our analysts conducted 68 lectures in 2021 and provided over 120 comments to the media (including radio and television). Among the most notable were the comments for the Poynter Institute and Suspilne. VoxCheck articles were referenced by other media outlets at least 308 times, and 104 individuals successfully completed internships in the project. Our network is expanding, so more and more people are learning about the lies spread online. The project's Facebook page gained 486 new followers, and the Telegram channel — 952 new subscribers. The overall reach of the VoxCheck Facebook page throughout the year was over 74,000.

In 2021, Russia began actively preparing for a full-scale invasion, so Russian propaganda and pro-Russian media became more active. As part of a joint project with the Center for Strategic Communications, VoxCheck started analyzing which Russian narratives were entering the Ukrainian information space. We also monitored Russian propaganda in Germany and Italy.

2022

At the beginning of 2022, the VoxCheck team continued its work on debunking fakes, fact-checking politicians, and monitoring Russian propaganda. However, leading up to the full-scale invasion, fakes began to be spread more actively by representatives of the Russian leadership. Therefore, we fact-checked Putin's statements before and after the full-scale invasion, as well as analyzed statements from the meetings of the Russian Security Council.



On February 24, the team quickly adapted to the new conditions, prioritizing the fight against the external enemy. Thus, all of VoxCheck's efforts were directed towards debunking disinformation. The majority of lies in 2022 were related to two themes: war and medicine. We published the debunking of 1063 fakes as part of our partnership with Meta, 16 articles debunking healthcare-related fakes with the support of the USAID project "Support to Health Reform," and provided assistance to Suspilne.News in verifying videos (such as those showing military equipment in Donetsk and crimes committed by Russia in Bucha).

We also launched a section on our website with a daily overview of Russian disinformation and provocations, where we documented 1066 cases of Russian propaganda since February 24, 2022.

In December 2022, the VoxCheck team presented a study on the results of monitoring Russian and pro-Russian Telegram channels from February 24 to November 15, 2022. In this study, we demonstrate the level of synchronization and coordination of information campaigns conducted by these channels (disseminated in waves at the same intervals), the most intensively promoted messages of Kremlin propaganda, and the tactics they employed for this purpose.

In addition, we collected all the disinformation in the healthcare sector in the "Detox from Propaganda" [database](#) and presented the results of monitoring Russian disinformation in Germany and Italy (from 2014 to February 24, 2022) in the "Propaganda Diary" [database](#). We expanded our monitoring of European media by adding new countries: Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. VoxCheck gathers all cases of disinformation in the "Propaganda Diary" [database](#), and our analysts publish monthly overviews of the most popular narratives in six European countries.

In 2022, VoxCheck continued to collaborate with media outlets, radio stations, and television channels. Representatives of our team provided 126 media comments, including [Forbes](#), [The Washington Post](#), [France24](#), as well as leading Ukrainian media. Other media referenced our articles at least 326 times.

Throughout the year, we actively worked on expanding the reach of our materials, and the coverage of our Facebook page significantly increased. Overall, it reached over 2.8 million users, with 365,000 reached organically. Our Facebook page gained 1,187 new followers, and our Telegram channel gained 166 new subscribers.

In 2022, our analysts conducted 27 lectures highlighting the importance of critical thinking and fact-checking, and a total of 68 individuals successfully completed internships at VoxCheck.

Helping local media

2021

VoxConnector is a project to deliver analytics to hundreds of newsrooms across Ukraine.

During the COVID-19 **VoxConnector** directed our efforts to adapt to new conditions, support the **Editor's Club community**, and hold events in a remote format. We believe that the media should facilitate public discussion in the city, draw attention to important topics, and hold the government accountable. Therefore, we introduced a new project – a series of online discussions of essential urban problems in cooperation with local media. In 2021, we held a series of events regarding the local budget, protection of cultural monuments, local elections, privatization of communal property, and transport strategies in Khmelnytskyi, Kharkiv, Odesa, Ivano-Frankivsk, Cherkasy, and others.

Another direction of the work concerns strengthening the capacity of local media. We held 6 meetings of **VoxConnector Editor's Club** where journalists exchanged their experience and learned from the best experts on the following topics: data journalist, monitoring of road construction, analysis of budget and public finance end, etc. Participants of the meeting highlighted that events were very useful and suggested continuing this practice. The events facilitated the exchange of ideas, cutting-edge research, and evidence-based insights. By bringing together diverse perspectives, we developed actionable recommendations.

In July, we launched the media monitoring tool "[Media Ecosystem](#)." That tool spurred a rich discussion on the relationship between experts and the media and between the media themselves.

During the COVID-19 epidemic, the elderly were most at risk. We wanted to promote their faster vaccination, and for this, we provided refutations of fakes about COVID-19 and vaccination in our project "Anti-fake coronavirus newspaper." We established a cooperation with "[Poradnytsia](#)" ("She-adviser"), "[Silski Visti](#)" ("Rural news"), "[Na Pensii](#)" ("Retired"), a widely

circulated newspaper targeted mainly at the older audience in villages and placed there reliable information related to coronavirus and vaccination. In addition, we also distributed targeted leaflets with refutations of fakes about COVID-19 in 6 regions of Ukraine in towns with the largest number of patients. We reached more than 200,000 target audiences, and we hope it influenced their opinion about the pandemic and vaccination.

2021 was a year of intensive development of our joint project with the Centre of Economic Strategy and Hromadske Radio – podcast “What about the economy?”. We released 54 episodes on different topics, from international trade to renewable energy, public finance, procurement, privatization end, etc.

There was also a place for fruitful cooperation. Yulia Mincheva and Svitlana Slipchenko spoke at the First Ukrainian Solutions Journalism Forum, organized by a member of the Editors' Club “Nakipelo” in Kharkiv on December 3-4. We shared our experience and tips on cooperating with think tanks and other civil society organizations to increase the quality of content and avoid manipulations and disinformation. In December, we became the analytical partner for the U-Lead International Expert Exchange “DEVELOPMENT OF MUNICIPALITIES: Trust, Institutions, Finance and People,” where we recorded podcasts with heads of Slavutych, Berezhan, and Tomakivka communities on inclusiveness and economic development.

2022

The war in Ukraine significantly influenced our activities, leading to a stronger focus on humanitarian initiatives. Yulia Mincheva, project leader, served as the head of the Humanitarian hub in Transnistria at the beginning of the war. This experience of temporary displacement inspired a new project, “Odnakovi Rizni” (“Same but Different”). The objective is to promote better integration of IDPs and combat disinformation through the creation of counter-narratives. This involves developing podcasts and media reports featuring experts and firsthand stories of IDPs. This project VoxUkraine implements in cooperation with two local media – “Varosh” (“City”) and “Skhidny variant” (“Eastern version”).

It was a very hard year for the local media. We were trying to help and consulted several members of the Editor's Club on how to attract external funding or work with fact-checking during the war. We also organized a special VoxConnector meeting in April. Participants raised concerns about verifying videos and facts appearing in Telegram channels, particularly those aligned with Russian narratives. VoxCheck offered consultancy services if needed.

We are proud to continue our Podcast “What about the economy” on Hromadske radio. More than 20 episodes were published on all platforms. These covered topics such as damage assessment, public finance, agriculture, government procurement, petrol market, SMEs, taxes, EU integration, urbanization, local development, electricity shortages, local government and development, agriculture, macroeconomics, trade, and media.

An Editor's Club meeting was held on August 19 to discuss reforms. However, two VoxConnector Editor's Club meetings could not be conducted due to electricity shortages and connectivity problems.

We remain committed to addressing the evolving challenges in front of local media presented by the Russian full-scale invasion and will continue to play an active role in facilitating informed discussions and contributing to positive outcomes.

Multimedia formats

Vox Ukraine's multimedia team is constantly looking for new formats to best reach its audience and attract new viewers and readers to analytics, research, and fact-checking. Thus, we regularly test new formats of video, audio, and infographics and focus on the trends and views of our readers.

2021

In 2021, the main efforts of the team were devoted to the development of new video formats.

During this period, we created 124 videos for YouTube and social media:

- political factcheck (weekly fact check also was provided to Suspilne)
- factcheck in collaboration with “Soromno” (our YouTube, Yanina Sokolova’s YouTube and TV)
- Our video explainers on popular and important topics that concern society

As for static visuals, the team created eye-catching covers for textual materials and infographics.

2022

In 2022, with the start of a full-scale Russian war against Ukraine, the goals of the multimedia team changed. We realized that the audience is important for us not only in Ukraine but also abroad. So, we started creating English-language visual content for social networks. Due to the sufficient expertise in Russian propaganda, our goal was to convey true information, particularly to foreign audiences. The first started making daily infographics with calculations of the losses of the Russian army (March - October 2022)

We created:

- More than 200 videos refuting Russian war fakes aired on regional Suspilne bureaus
- 19 videos refuting medical misinformation
- 23 exclusive videos for YouTube
- 6 videos of a political fact check in collaboration with “Soromno” (before full-scale war)
- 5 videos of a political fact check for our YouTube (before full-scale war)
- 73 episodes of “Peremozhenky” podcast

Thanks to the new formats, the Instagram audience grew from 1,000 to more than 5,000. Some videos reached over 600,000 users.

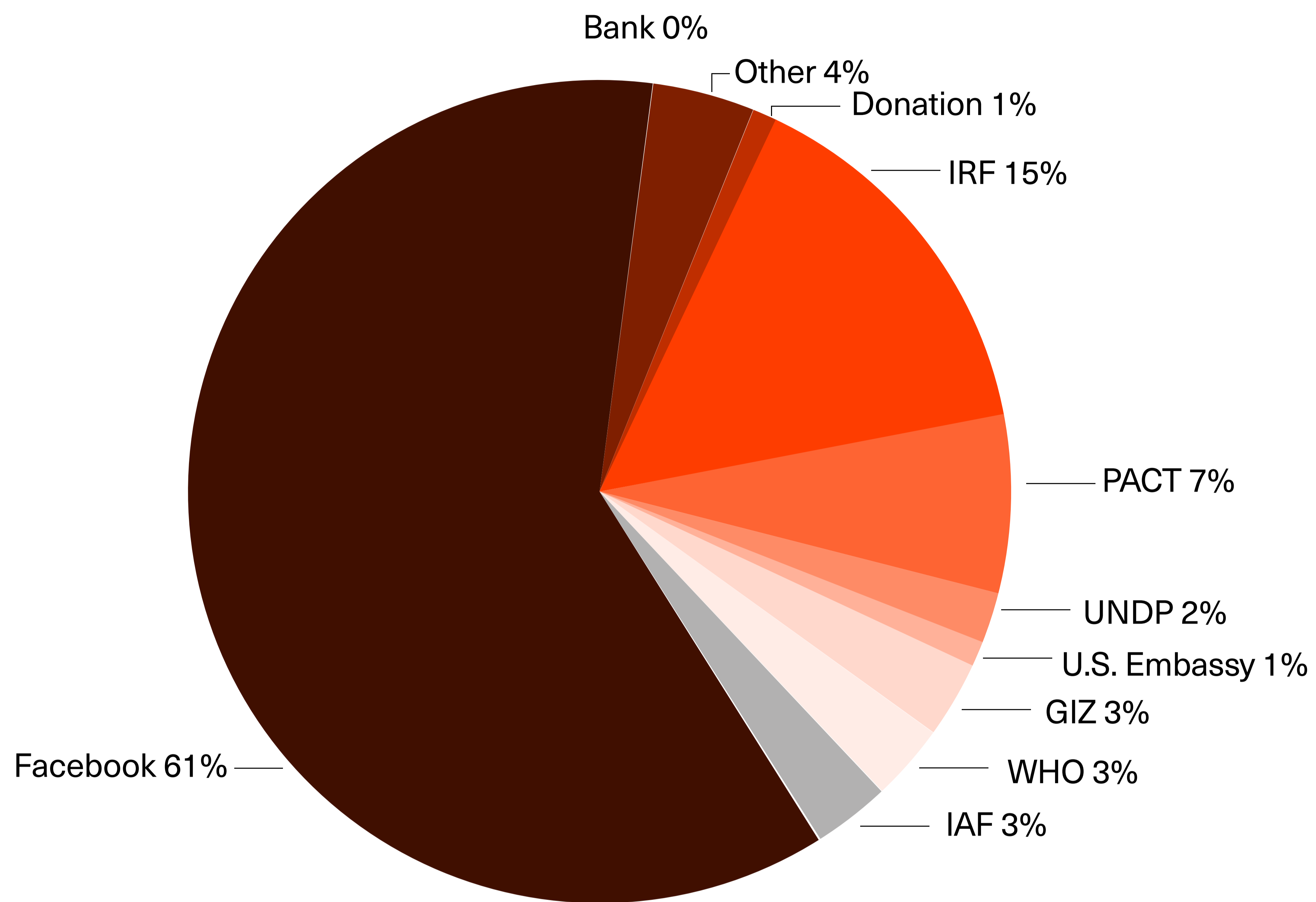
The video about ruscism in Russian organically reached more than 146k views in the Russian segment of YouTube.

Structure of income and expenses

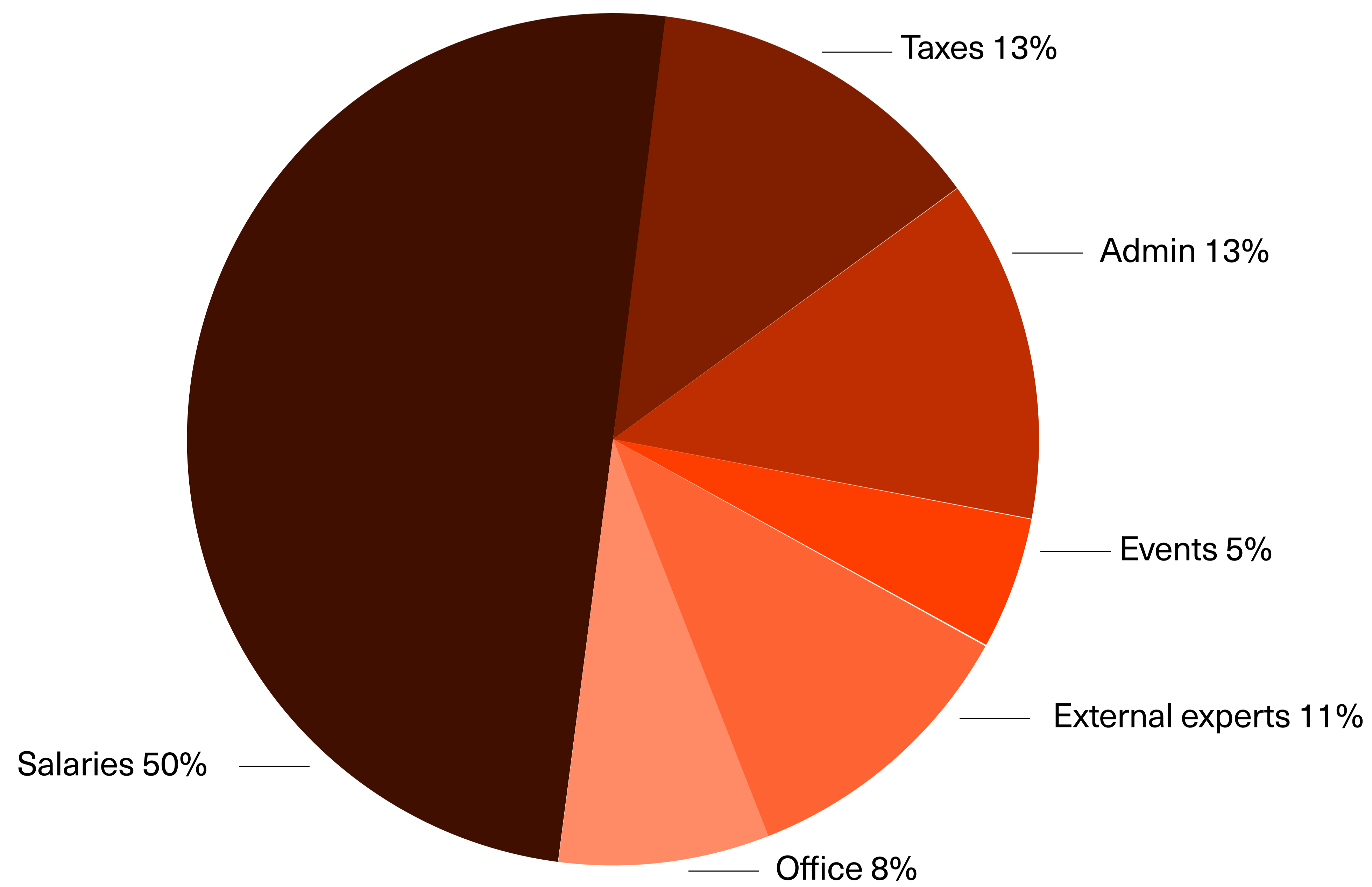
2021

Revenues - 20,8 mln UAH
Expenditures - 15,5 mln UAH

Structure of revenues 2021



Structure of costs 2021

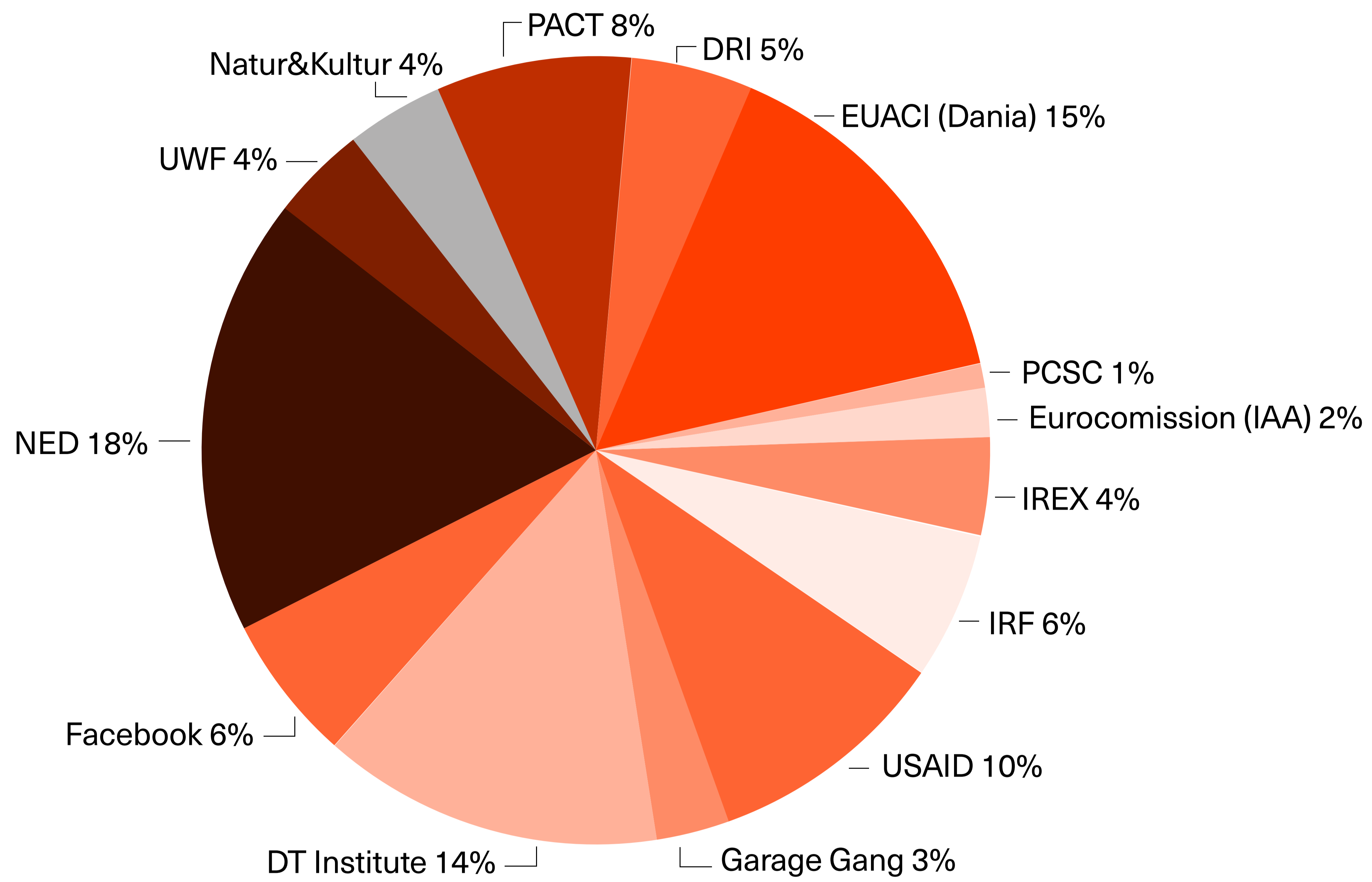


Structure of income and expenses

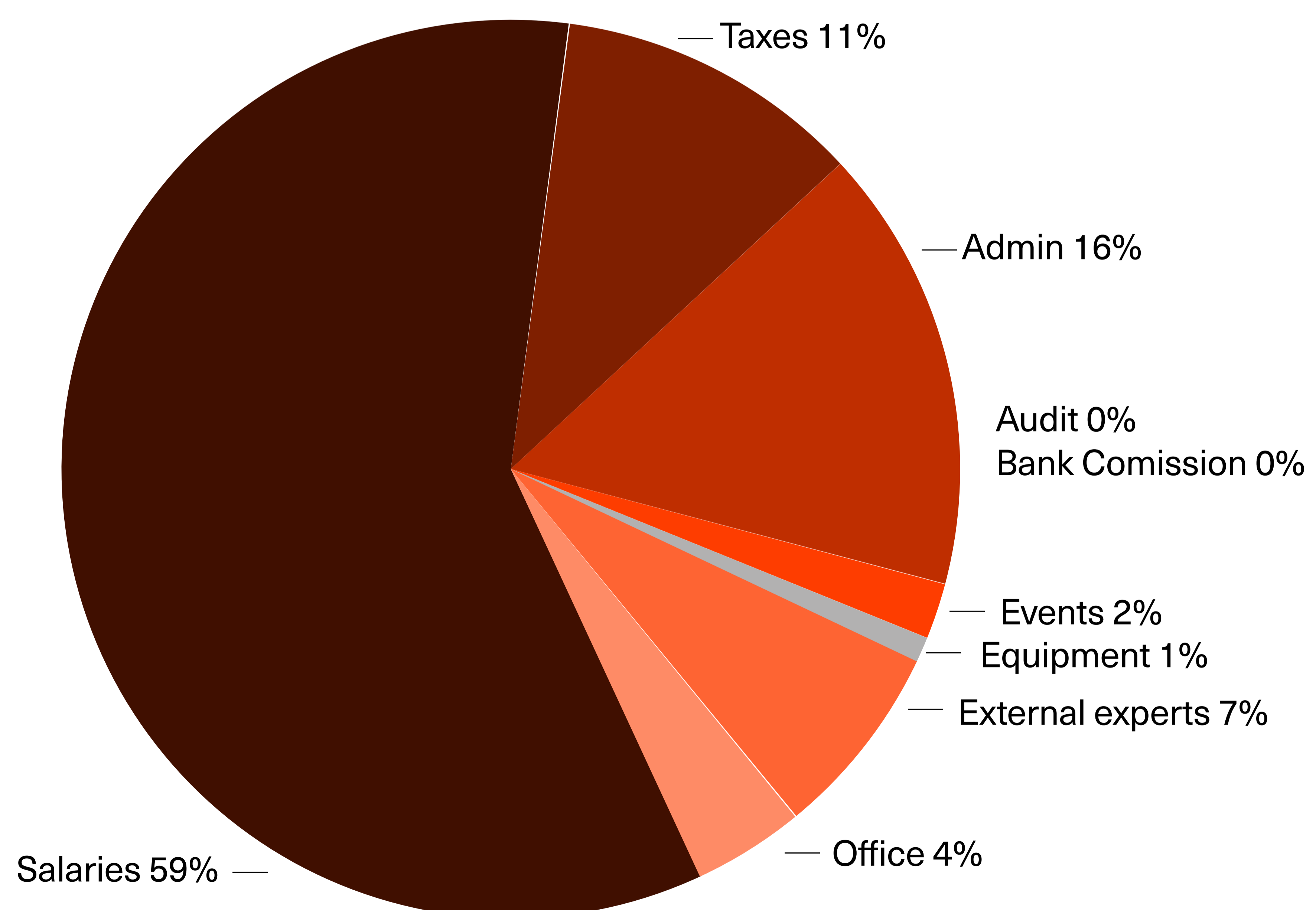
2022

Revenues - 19,6 mln UAH
Expenditures - 18,3 mln UAH

Structure of revenues 2022



Structure of costs 2022



Epilogue

Despite the critical changes in the country, we continue and will continue our work. These changes are exactly what forces us to continue to engage in research and educational work in Ukraine and Europe.

We will continue and extend existing VoxUkraine projects:

- the blog (attract new authors, publish articles on up-to-date economic and political developments leading economic discussion in Ukraine)
- Reform Index continues regular publications on reform progress in a bi-weekly mode. We will also collect and analyze “war laws” and follow up on them - which of them are canceled after the war and which remain;
- VoxCheck continues regular fact-checking publications, debunking fakes and countering Russian disinformation; working on the database of Russian disinformation in foreign media, a database of health care fakes; launching new internship programs for students of Ukrainian universities; extending reach among international audiences and the engagement of foreign fact-checkers in the joint projects and activities with VoxCheck.
- VoxConnector continues communications with the Editors’ Club and regular newsletters to local journalists. We plan to conduct an Editor’s Club meeting devoted to the work of local media at the frontlines and in the recently liberated territories in the next reporting period.

We will continue adhering to established processes that keep the stability of the organization.

We will continue to pay much attention to communications. We regularly communicate on Facebook as well as other social media, such as Twitter, Telegram, and LinkedIn. To reach a younger audience, we launched 3 channels in TikTok (TikTok Vox_UkraineTikTok, VoxCheckTikTok, Vox_Check(reserve channel)).

We will continue raising sustainable, diversified funding.

We will continue our work so that the whole world can say one thing:
“Yes, this is the same Ukraine that not so long ago fought for its legal existence in the war with Russia. And now this is the country from which we want to take an example.”