

2024



**ANNUAL
REPORT OF
NGO FULCRUM
UA FOR 2024**

2024

2024 in Brief:

15

NGO Fulcrum UA celebrated its **15th anniversary**

5

Hosted the **5th Allies Forum "BAM!"**

12252

Draft law No. 12252 on registered partnerships **was introduced** in the Ukrainian Parliament in Nov 2024

261+

261+ career counseling sessions **for vulnerable groups**

250+

250+ psychological counseling sessions **for youth vulnerable groups**

335+

335+ psychological counseling sessions **for adult vulnerable groups**

150+

150+ career counseling sessions **for vulnerable groups**

4M

More than **4 million views of two videos** on civil partnerships broadcast on national TV

10,050

10,050 users engaged with the **anti-discrimination chatbot CENÉOK**

400K

Over 400,000 people reached through the chatbot's **awareness campaign CENÉOK**

61,5K

61,500 views of panel discussions from the 2024 Allies Forum **"BAM!"**

36,5K

36,500 listens to the podcasts **"iTochka"** and **"Potroshku"**

45,8K

45,800 people **read stories about LGBTQ+ military personnel and their partners**, emphasizing the need for civil partnerships in Ukraine

106

106 companies participated in the **Ukrainian Corporate Equality Index**

600

600 MSM, gay, bi- men, and trans people, incl. IDPs **tested for HIV/STI**

Advocacy Campaign on Registered Partnerships in Ukraine

In 2024, we continued to work on advocating for registered partnerships in Ukraine, in particular through the promotion of Draft Law No. 9103. **March 2024 marked the one-year anniversary of the submission of Draft Law No. 9103 “On the Institute of Registered Partnerships” to the Verkhovna Rada.**

At that time, the Ministry of Justice approved an Analytical Report on the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy. It positively mentioned the registration of draft **law No. 9103** and stated that the adoption of the law would ensure proper protection of the rights of citizens, reduce discrimination against vulnerable groups in Ukraine, reduce segregation on the basis of SOGI and have a positive impact on the image of Ukraine in the international community, in the context of the 9 European integration processes.

President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyi said he would sign the bill on registered partnerships if it is adopted by the Verkhovna Rada. He said this after a meeting with representatives of more than 200 higher education institutions in the country, answering students' questions on November 16, 2024



Draft Law No. 9103 also received support from another committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine — the **Committee on National Health, Medical Assistance and Health Insurance**. That is, as of the end of 2024, Draft Law No. 9103 was supported by five Verkhovna Rada committees (in addition to the aforementioned committee): the Committee on Youth and Sports, the Committee on European Integration, the Committee on Digital Transformation, and the Committee on Social Policy and Veterans' Rights.

In April 2024, **30 Ukrainian human rights NGOs wrote a letter (initiated by our organization) to the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen**, expressing concern about the delay in the adoption of legislation relating to the rights of LGBTQI+ people in Ukraine in the context of its European integration path.

On behalf of Ursula von der Leyen, Wolfgang Nozar, Head of the Rule of Law, Anti-Fraud and Financial Management Division of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Neighborhood and Enlargement Negotiations, responded to our letter.

In the letter, he assured that the **European Commission will insist on ensuring LGBTQI+ equality in political dialogue and support measures aimed at combating violence, hatred and discrimination against LGBTQI+ people in the EU candidate countries:**

"The European Commission will continue to address the issue of fundamental rights during the negotiations on Ukraine's membership in the European Union, as well as in regular discussions on fundamental rights, monitoring legislative measures, implementation and application of national laws. We also stand ready to continue to assist Ukraine in its reform efforts and implementation," the letter reads.



On the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia, a meeting of the Council for Human Rights, Gender Equality and Diversity at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine was held in partnership with the NGO Fulcrum UA and the joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe "Supporting the Implementation of European Standards on Combating Discrimination and National Minority Rights in Ukraine".

The meeting was opened:

- Ambassador-at-Large of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Yevhen Tsymbaliuk,
- Deputy Head of the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine Erlend Falk,
- First Deputy Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Oleksandr Kornienko
- Executive Director of the NGO Fulcrum UA Tetiana Kasian

The US Special Envoy for Human Rights and LGBTQI+ Issues Jessica Stern delivered a separate video message to Ukraine.

Our commitment to upholding equality and respect for the human rights and dignity of all members of society, including LGBTQI+ people, was supported by, among others, the U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Bridget Brink, as well as the Ambassadors and Ambassadors of Spain, Norway and France; the Deputy Heads of Mission of Austria, the United Kingdom and the EU; and representatives of the Embassies of Slovenia, Germany and the Netherlands.

The meeting discussed the importance of adopting draft **laws #9103** on registered partnerships and **#5488** on strengthening responsibility for hate crimes.

In particular, Remi Duflot, Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to Ukraine, emphasized that the adoption of these legislative initiatives brings Ukraine closer to the EU legislation.

MPs Olena Shulyak, Head of the Servant of the People political party, and Inna Sovsun of the Voice faction shared details of the work being done in the Parliament to promote the draft law on registered partnerships **No. 9103**.

Civil society activists and human rights defenders also spoke at the Council meeting.

The US Special Envoy for Human Rights and LGBTQI+ Issues Jessica Stern delivered a separate video message to Ukraine.



As part of our advocacy for registered partnerships and the draft law No. 9103, we have also made several creative collaborations, involving allies among content makers and influencers.

In collaboration with the RCR Khomenko brand, we created a collection of upcycled shirts, shoppers, and stickers that can turn any clothes into a bright statement. We handed these sets to Ukrainian influencers, activists, and activists, adding them to the community of “our own” — those who believe in justice and the right of everyone to be themselves.

“This collection reminds us that equality should not be a privilege. Bill No. 9103 is the first attempt to protect those couples and unions that are not recognized by Ukrainian law, and we wanted this event, these four numbers, to be captured not only in memory, but also on something tangible and eternal. It’s like a symbol that everyone can hold in their hands as a sign of support and hope for change,” says Tetiana Kasian, director of the NGO Fulcrum UA.

This shirt collection is another way to remind us of the importance of equal rights and opportunities for all Ukrainians. Its identity and the definition of registered partnerships on the sleeve serve as a reminder of the importance of this step for society.



A well-known ally and friend of Ukraine, German designer **Frank Peter Wilde**, supported this important bill and wore a 9103 shirt as a sign of solidarity and to emphasize the importance of adopting the Law on Registered Partnerships in Ukraine.



In cooperation with the Starlight Media creative team, **we launched two social videos in support of the introduction of civil partnerships for same-sex and different-sex couples in Ukraine.** The purpose of these videos is to explain the essence of the bill to a wide audience in simple terms, to debunk myths about partnerships and to show why this bill is relevant during the war. **The videos were broadcast in prime time on the top Ukrainian TV channels — Novyi Kanal and STB. In total, these two videos received more than 4 million views!**

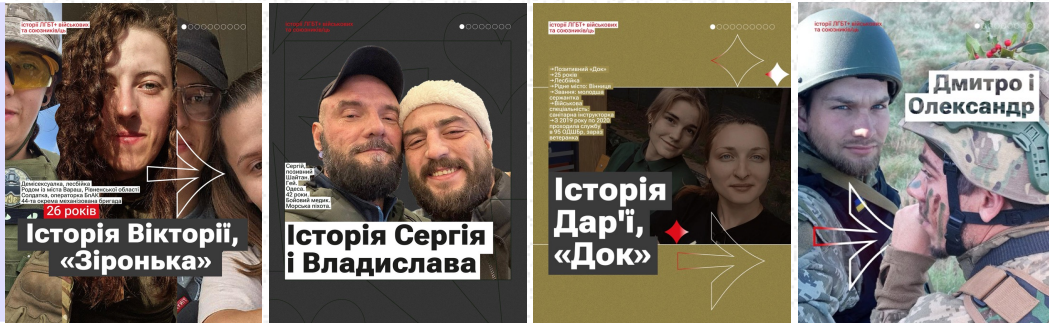
You can watch the videos [here](#) and [here](#).



We also devoted a lot of content on our social media to the issue of the early adoption of the draft law on registered partnerships

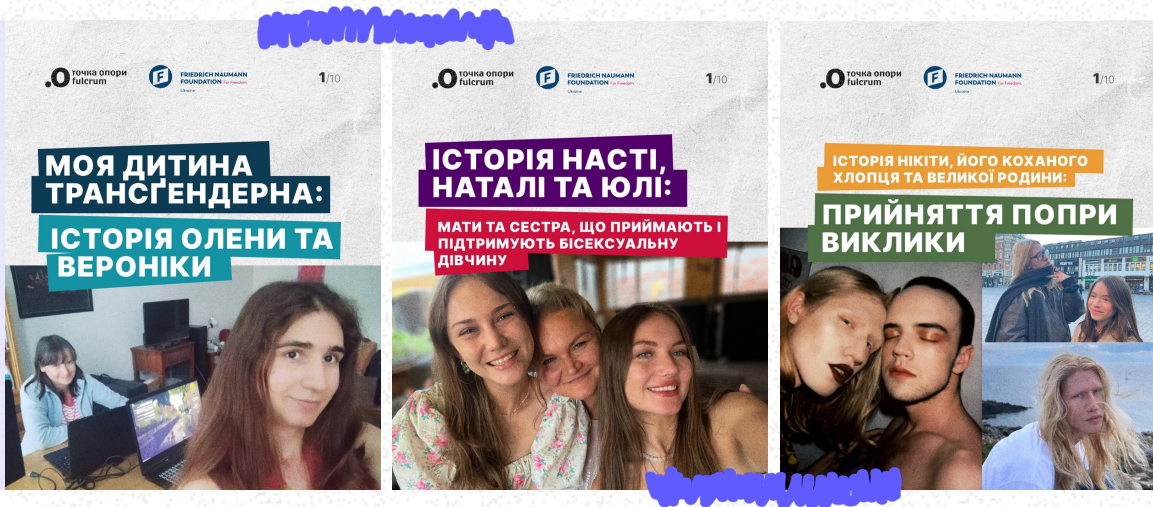
In cooperation with the NGO Ukrainian LGBTQ+ Military and Veterans for Equal Rights, **we created six publications about LGBTQ+ military personnel and their partners, which tell stories about their lives and struggles not only at the front, but also for equality in the legal field of Ukraine.** For them, registered partnerships are not only a step towards European integration, but also an expression of respect for every person who fights for our common freedom.

With these publications, we also called on the government to approve the introduction of registered partnerships in Ukraine as soon as possible. After all, all military personnel are equal on the front line — regardless of sexual orientation, gender or origin, they risk their lives, get wounded and give their lives for victory. So why is this equality still absent in everyday life?



We also told three unique stories about LGBTQ+ people who found acceptance in their families. These stories show how family support helps to overcome social barriers.

The heroes of our materials include mothers who are ready to defend the rights of their children, even if they had to overcome prejudice themselves; families who, through love and care, were able to find understanding with their LGBTQ+ loved ones; transgender people for whom family acceptance was an important step on the way to harmony with themselves.



However, the adoption of draft law No. 9103 was complicated by the fact that the relevant committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Committee on Legal Policy, did not support the draft law. Therefore, we registered a new draft law on registered partnerships, which received the number 12252.

The bill was registered as an alternative to our previous draft law №9103 "On the Institute of Registered Partnerships", which was blocked by the Parliament's Legal Policy Committee (There were not enough votes either to support the draft law or to refer it to another committee.)

Registered Partnership Bill №12252 On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine to Bring Them into Line with the Requirements of Articles 8 and 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Council Regulation (EU) 2016/1104 Implementing Enhanced Cooperation in the Area of Jurisdiction, Applicable Law and the Recognition and Enforcement of Decisions in Matters of the Property Consequences of Registered Partnerships

[Learn more here](#)

Draft law created jointly by the NGO Fulcrum UA with MP Inna Sovsun (Holos — Re/ALDE). Registered in Parliament on 27th of November, 2024. Co-authors of the bill are 4 MP from Holos — Re/ALDE: Sovsun, Tsabal, Yurchyshyn, Stefanyshyna; 22 MP from Servant of the People — Re/ALDE: Mezentseva-Fedorenko, Kravchuk, Shuliak, Hurin, Bezuhla, Podhorna, Bondar, Merezhko, Zhmerenetsky, Tretiakova, Halaychuk, Stefanchuk, Bulakh, Ovchynnykova, Poturaiev, Shvets, Tsyba, Kamelchuk, Radina, Bardina, Pidlasa, Khomenko; and 2 MP from European Solidarity — EPP: Zinkevych, Nykorak. 28 MPs in total (in contrast to 18 MPs in draft law №9103)

The draft law received official positive and neutral comments from all ministries, including key Ministries like Justice, Defense, Veterans, Social policy. **No one ministry objects to bill adoption.** In order for the bill to be put to a vote, it must first be supported by the parliamentary Committees on Humanitarian and Information policy, European integration, Anti Corruption policy.

Also, **NGO Fulcrum UA was included in the working (negotiation) group to prepare Ukraine's negotiating positions during the negotiations with the European Union on the Agreement on Ukraine's Accession to the European Union on Chapter 23 on the Judiciary and Fundamental Rights.** The members of the working groups are representatives of ministries, the Presidential Office, civil society organizations and business associations, as well as members of the Ukrainian Parliament. Only two LGBTQ+ organizations are members of this group — NGO Fulcrum UA and NGO Nash Svit.

The group is working on the preparation of analytical materials, draft legal acts, expert opinions, and other documents on the relevant section of the negotiations.

In the near future, the working (negotiating) groups will focus on preparing roadmaps for reforms for each section of the negotiations, which will subsequently be approved by the Interagency Working Group on Supporting the Negotiations on Ukraine's Accession to the European Union and Adapting Ukrainian Legislation to EU Law and sent to the European Commission for processing and approval.

О
Керівник проєктів та адвокаційний менеджер ГО «Точка Опори ЮА» Олег Максим'як увійшов до робочої групи щодо підготовки переговорних позицій України про вступ в ЄС з питань судової влади та основоположних прав



This is an important step to ensure equal rights and democratic development of Ukraine on its way to the European Union. And we are proud that NGO Fulcrum UA is involved in this process at such a high level.

Ukrainian & international events, in which NGO Fulcrum UA participated and spoke about civil partnerships, activism, and equality for LGBTQ+ people



Executive Director of NGO Fulcrum UA Tetiana Kasian took part in a **conference for civil society representatives**, in a panel discussion **“LGBTIQ+ movement in Ukraine before and during the war”**.

The panel discussion focused on whether there are visible changes in the movement for equal rights for LGBTIQ+ people, public perception and the situation of queer people in Ukraine.

Tetiana Kasian said that we have to join this European field in the context of common values, and most importantly, in the context of the rule of human rights. Ukraine is a country that has signed the European Convention on Human Rights. Therefore, we have no right to violate the conventions to which we have signed. She reminded us of the importance of adopting draft law No. 9103 on civil partnerships.



NGO Fulcrum UA also took part in the roundtable discussion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine **“Harmonization of Ukrainian legislation with European standards in the field of combating discrimination and ensuring diversity”**.

The event was organized in partnership with the joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe **“Supporting the Implementation of European Standards on Anti-Discrimination and National Minority Rights in Ukraine”**.

The participants of the roundtable discussed European experience and possible modern solutions in ensuring diversity and combating discrimination in Ukraine. The importance of cooperation with civil society was emphasized not only at the stage of submitting ideas and proposals for improving legislation, but also at the stage of implementation, in order to ensure its best practical application.

NGO Fulcrum UA also took part in the conference “Regional Exchange on Equality Reforms with a Focus on the LGBTQI+ Community” held in Montenegro. Executive Director Tetiana Kasian spoke at the event on behalf of the organization.



During the discussion on the development and adoption of civil partnership legislation, the participants discussed best practices, the current situation in their countries and the challenges faced by their societies on the way to accepting civil partnerships. The event also highlighted Ukraine's unique experience in the field of human rights protection. In particular, the fact that the war has become a catalyst for some advocacy processes and that Ukrainians are now standing up for the entire free world.



NGO Fulcrum UA took part in a panel discussion during the Human Rights Dialogues “Human Rights Dimension of European Integration” organized by the Center for Civil Liberties. The discussion was devoted to the standards of protection against discrimination in the EU and Ukraine.

The event discussed the necessary legislative changes in the field of combating discrimination and their implementation, which would lead to effective investigation of discrimination and hate crimes. In particular, it was about draft laws No. 5488 and No. 9103.

"We, human rights defenders, need to speak at all international platforms about the need for a systematic dialogue between partner countries and EU institutions and the Office of the President to make changes happen. Only this will give us the result we expect. Without the political will of the country's leadership, even the necessary draft laws, such as No. 5488 or No. 9103, will not be adopted, let alone implemented in a quality manner. This is the challenge we are facing, and we must unite to advocate for these changes," said the advocacy manager of NGO Fulcrum UA.



In honor of Pride Month, the American House in Kyiv hosted a screening of the documentary *The Illusion of Equality*, produced by the Suspilne Broadcasting team. The film is dedicated to the daily struggle of Ukrainian women and men for basic human rights, revealing the illusion of equality due to the loss of partners, the impossibility of civil partnerships, and the condemnation of relatives and society, which force Ukrainian military and volunteers to fight for their right to equality.

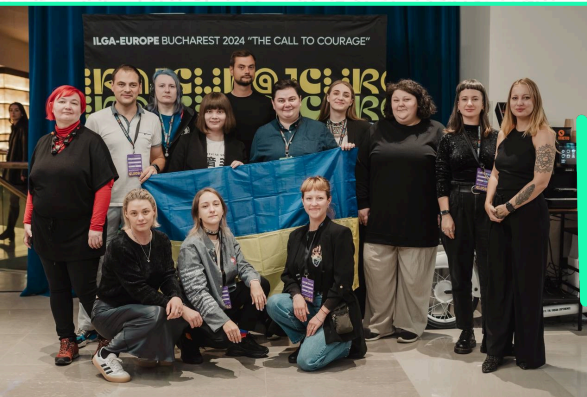
The screening was followed by a discussion on Equal Rights: International Practices and Opportunities for Ukraine. The discussion was attended by Tetiana Kasian, Executive Director of NGO Fulcrum UA, who also appeared in the film as an expert.

Tetiana spoke about how it is time to talk about equality in Ukraine now, when we have to fight at the front: "What are we fighting for then, if not equality and the kind of free and democratic Ukraine we want to be? Indeed, there is a widespread narrative in society that this is not relevant, but human rights are always relevant. For me, the main argument in this is the argument of justice."



In July, the HR Wisdom Summit 2024 conference was held, where representatives of the HR management of Ukrainian companies discussed the best practices for retaining and developing a team, hiring valuable talent, and most importantly, creating a work environment that will support each team member.

Psychologist Maryna Didenko, PhD in Psychology, expert of the Point of Care project, implemented by the NGO Fulcrum UA with the support of the Center for Disaster Philanthropy, joined the conference as a moderator of the discussion panel "Mental Health and Methods of Preserving It"



In the autumn, Romania hosted the international ILGA-Europe conference, which annually brings together LGBTQ+ activists from different countries. The conference participants discussed how the community can stay one step ahead in an environment where LGBTQ+ rights and freedoms and the very foundation of democracy are under threat. The conference called for the courage to seek new strategies for cooperation despite our differences.

NGO Fulcrum UA participated in the conference as a speaker at panel discussions. In particular, we spoke at the discussion “Ukrainian Queer Activism as a Front for Democracy”, which was jointly organized by representatives of Ukrainian NGOs. Together, we discussed the achievements and challenges of LGBTQ+ people in Ukraine during the war, the struggle for equality despite discrimination, limited access to safe spaces, and weak legal protection.

NGO Fulcrum UA also took part in the panel discussion “Artificial Intelligence and the Future of the Movement”. We shared our experience of using AI tools in our work, highlighted the possibilities of integrating AI, in particular in the fight against hate speech and the spread of disinformation online. We also raised the issue of AI's impact on LGBTQ+ rights.

In between discussions, we talked about the progress in advocacy, including civil partnerships in Ukraine, with our partners from the Council of Europe, the US State Department, All Out and Freedom to Marry. During the conference, Freedom to Marry organized a separate discussion where NGO Fulcrum UA shared its experience of (not) accepting civil partnerships in Ukraine, the reasons and prospects for introducing this institution in the near future.

We are grateful to ILGA-Europe and the EVZ Foundation for the opportunity to join this important event in the field of LGBTQ+ activism.

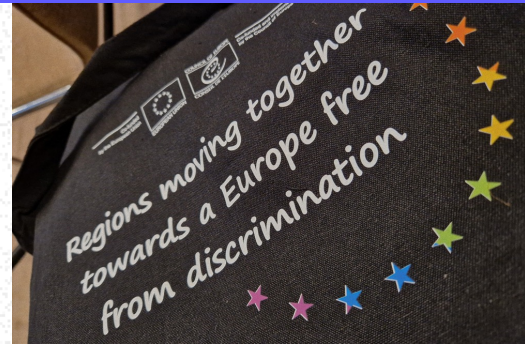
NGO Fulcrum UA took part in the Forum “Combating Discrimination and Hate Crimes: European Standards of Human Rights Protection”, organized by the NGO Gender Stream with the support of the Council of Europe and the Office of the Ombudsperson.



The event became an important platform for discussing the adoption of the draft law No. 5488 aimed at protecting against discrimination and hate crimes.

We spoke at a panel discussion, where we shared our experience of advocating for civil partnerships in Ukraine and emphasized the need to adapt Ukrainian legislation to European standards in the context of European integration. We also spoke about cooperation with allies in Ukraine and international partners, in particular, about the appeal of Ukrainian human rights activists to the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen to speed up the adoption of legislation on LGBTQ+ rights. In response, the European Commission emphasized the importance of ensuring equality for LGBTQI+ people in EU candidate countries.

Executive Director of NGO Fulcrum UA Tetiana Kasian took part in the regional conference “Spaces and Services for the Protection of LGBTQ+ Communities” organized by the Council of Europe.



The conference was organized with the support of the Council of Europe. Participants of the conference discussed issues of observance of LGBTQ+ rights at the local level. Particular attention was paid to the challenges and opportunities for implementing European human rights standards, as well as the importance of strengthening the security of LGBTQ+ people in the context of global change.

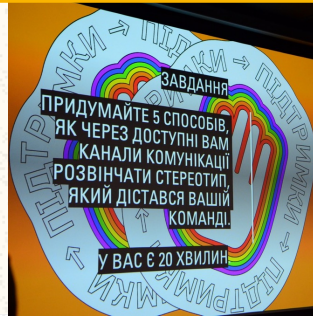


NGO Fulcrum UA took part in the working meeting “Harmonization of Political Communications: Joint Dialogue of LGBTIQ Organizations”.

The event was held within the framework of the EU and Council of Europe project “Supporting the Implementation of European Standards on Combating Discrimination and National Minority Rights in Ukraine” in cooperation with the National LGBTI Consortium.

At the meeting we spoke about the difficulties in promoting draft law No. 9103 “On the Institute of Registered Partnerships.” We also spoke about the updated draft law on registered partnerships, developed jointly with the team of MP Inna Sovsun. We emphasized the need for civil society organizations to work together to promote the new initiative.

NGO Fulcrum UA took part in a training for youth leaders. The organization was represented by the Chairman of the Board Tymur Levchuk, Executive Director of the NGO Fulcrum UA and ally Tetiana Kasian.



The training was held for the participants of the European Youth of Ukraine. The training gathered 16 youth leaders from all over Ukraine who wanted to learn more about LGBTQ+ rights, alliances and effective activism.

Tymur Levchuk spoke about the challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community, the needs of people, the activities of NGOs, and the progress in legislative changes regarding equal rights for LGBTQ+ people. Tetiana Kasian shared her experience of working with allies and spoke about the importance of storytelling in advocating for change and initiatives. She gave examples of successful advocacy campaigns in Ukraine, talked about cooperation with the media, and showed social videos that have become effective in advocacy. Tetiana also spoke about the joint work of the NGO Fulcrum UA with NGO LGBTQ+ military for equal rights and parents of LGBTQ+ children, and outlined how to work with allies to ensure that their assistance is effective and safe.



Executive Director of the Fulcrum UA Tetiana Kasian spoke at the international conference Transphobia & Homophobia as a Political Weapon in Eastern Europe, organized by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom for East and Southeast Europe. The event took place in Sofia and brought together participants from different countries, including Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Turkey, and Ukraine.

Tetiana Kasian spoke about the challenges and achievements in the struggle for LGBTQ+ equality in Ukraine, especially in times of war. She emphasized the importance of legislative implementation of registered partnerships to ensure equality in rights, and shared examples of successful cooperation of the Fulcrum UA NGO with business, media and parliament in this area.

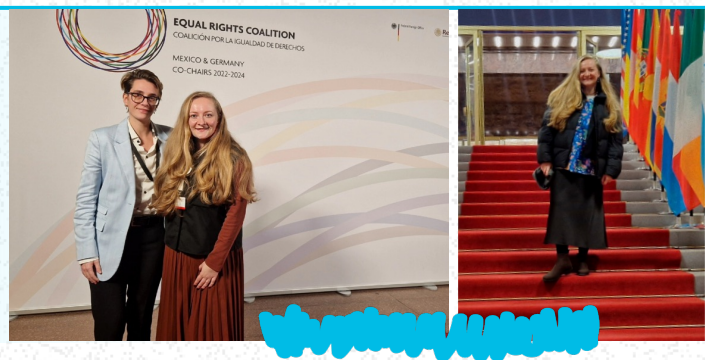
Tetiana also thanked the partners for their contribution to strengthening democracy and protecting human rights in Ukraine, emphasizing the importance of further promoting our country's European integration course.



NGO Fulcrum UA took part in a regular meeting of the Council on Human Rights, Gender Equality and Diversity at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

The meeting was held on the International Human Rights Day. We discussed challenges and opportunities in ensuring equal rights and opportunities, the state of implementation of the Action Plan of Ukraine within the international initiative “Biarritz Partnership”, the main achievements and further ways of implementing the initiative. The event was attended by First Lady Olena Zelenska, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Andriy Sybiga, representatives of state authorities, civil society and international partners.

Tetiana Kasian, Executive Director of NGO Fulcrum UA, took part in the Equal Rights Coalition conference held at the German Foreign Office. The event brought together more than 500 participants from 44 countries — representatives of governments, NGOs and donor organizations.



One of the key topics of the event was the discussion of protecting LGBTQ+ rights in the face of global challenges.

The conference was opened by German Foreign Minister Annalena Burbock, who emphasized the importance of countering Russia's influence and propaganda, starting in 2013, when laws discriminating against the LGBTQ+ community were passed. She also reminded that Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which began with the occupation of Crimea in 2014, is part of a systemic violation of human rights.

Australian Ambassador to Germany Natasha Smith spoke about her own experience of using the rights available to LGBTQ+ couples in her country. And Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Michael O'Flaherty shared how the adoption of same-sex marriage in Ireland in 2015 was an important step towards equality.

Unfortunately, there were no representatives from the Ukrainian government who could commit to supporting LGBTQ+ rights, as their foreign counterparts do.

“I'm glad that our NGO Fulcrum UA was involved in such an important international dialogue. This is another opportunity to draw the world's attention to the challenges Ukraine is facing,” said Tetiana.

NGO Fulcrum UA at Oslo Pride and Stockholm Pride



We would like to highlight the participation of the NGO Fulcrum UA team in the events of Oslo Pride and Stockholm Pride, where we were invited along with other Ukrainian NGOs working in the field of LGBTQ+ rights protection.

At the meeting with Norwegian Secretary of State Eivind Vad Petersson, we discussed the current state of the problems faced by LGBTQ+ people in Ukraine, including transgender people, humanitarian challenges and gaps in Ukrainian legislation.

We reminded them that despite the growing support for equal rights for LGBTQ+ people from the public, Ukraine still lags behind many European countries in terms of legislation. The Verkhovna Rada has not yet adopted draft law No. 9103 on civil partnerships and draft law No. 5488 on combating discrimination and investigating hate crimes.

During Stockholm Pride, we took part in a panel discussion at the Stockholm Pride House, organized by the Nordic Ukraine Forum and the RFSL Ukraine Program.



Together with the LGBT+ Military, Gender Stream, and a representative of the National Police of Ukraine, we discussed important legislative initiatives to be adopted in Ukraine in the context of European integration, support from the international community in this process, and armed assistance to Ukraine in its fight against the aggressor state.

Our team, as part of a delegation of Ukrainian NGOs, also met with the heads of several political parties in the Swedish parliament to discuss the vector of support for Ukraine on its way to approximating Ukrainian legislation to European standards, particularly in the context of human rights.



During Oslo Pride and Stockholm Pride, we thanked our international partners for helping Ukraine, urged them to continue supporting us in the issue of weapons and strengthening our ability to defend ourselves in this war.

We also called on them to continue to persuade Ukrainian parliamentarians to pass draft laws No. 9103 and No. 5488 as soon as possible.

We thank the RFSL Ukraine Program and the Nordic Ukraine Forum for the opportunity to join these important events. We thank Norway and Sweden for their consistent support of Ukraine in a full-scale war.

Strategic Session on Organizational Development

At the end of February, the team of **NGO Fulcrum UA** gathered for a **strategic session** to refine the organization's future vision, set priorities, and determine key directions.

With the help of a professional facilitator, we conducted **a historical scan** of the organization, recalled pivotal moments in our history, analyzed our current state, and defined the kind of organization we aspire to become. This process allowed us to synchronize our efforts, establish a shared vision embraced by the entire team, and strengthen our mutual support.



5th Forum of Allies “BAM!” – Business / Activism / Media



On October 31, 2024, the Fifth BAM! Allies Forum (Business / Activism / Media) took place!

This annual event by NGO Fulcrum UA serves as a platform to discuss diversity, inclusion, and tolerance in society, bringing together representatives from politics, business, civil society, human rights advocacy, and media. What makes BAM! unique among LGBTQ+ events is the presence of speakers from various sectors, ensuring a broad and inclusive dialogue.

Key Topics at the 5th Forum of Allies “BAM!”:

Equality & Inclusion

Business as a driver of social change

Media & Diversity

Approaches to content creation in a modern society

The Power of Unity

LGBTQ+ activism in Ukraine and the role of allies in human rights protection

Mental Well-being

How to care for yourself and support others

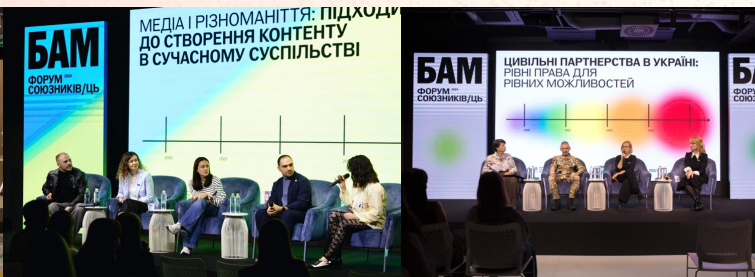
Civil Partnerships in Ukraine

Equal rights for equal opportunities

Memory & Commemoration

Honoring fallen Ukrainians and how to preserve their memory in daily life

The BAM! Forum reaffirmed that **being an ally for equality and inclusion is not just a stance — it’s a choice for the future of Ukraine**, where **everyone is valued and respected**. It’s about the kind of society we want to build — one founded on **freedom, equality, and dignity**.



Ukrainian Corporate Equality Index 2024

A **decade ago**, NGO Fulcrum UA launched **the Ukrainian Corporate Equality Index to integrate human rights and equality principles into business**. Today, the Index serves as a platform that helps companies **foster inclusive environments**, reshape corporate culture, and break stereotypes.

This year, **106 companies** participated in the research, demonstrating their commitment to **supporting employees and implementing inclusive policies** even under challenging conditions.

This year, the **assessment approach was updated**. In addition to traditional criteria on workplace diversity based **on age, gender, nationality, sexual orientation, and disability**, the Index introduced **new indicators**, including:

Hiring and support for veterans

Assistance to internally displaced persons

Alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goals

Key Findings from the 2024 Corporate Equality Index:

International companies lead the rankings, with an **average score of 48/100**, highlighting both the importance of **global best practices** and the **challenges faced by local Ukrainian companies**.

Top 10 Companies in the 2024 Ukrainian Corporate Equality Index – [see here](#)

Age discrimination remains a major challenge: only 5.8% of companies mention **age as a protected characteristic** in their policies, signaling the need for **greater attention to this issue**.

What the Corporate Equality Index 2024 Reveals:

The Index **proves that inclusion is becoming part of the corporate world** — but the **process is just beginning**. There is still **much work ahead**, but initiatives like this demonstrate that business **can be both successful and socially responsible, humane, and open to diversity**.

The Corporate Equality Index 2024 is supported by UNITED NATIONS DEMOCRACY FUND.

The Corporate Equality Index Business Conference

We also held **the first Corporate Equality Index Business Conference** in Kyiv.

The Corporate Equality Index Business Conference brought together Ukrainian companies in one place to share their experience with equality, inclusion and diversity. **At the conference, we raised important topics, including working with veterans and internally displaced persons, ensuring inclusion and diversity in the workplace, and supporting employees' mental health.**

The event included a presentation of the Corporate Equality Index and panel discussions on the topics:



Veterans in Civilian Life:

Peculiarities of Integration into the Labor Market



Psychological Resilience:

How employers can help their employees



Diversity as a competitive advantage:

Inclusive practices in business



Opening new doors:

Retraining and integration of internally displaced persons in the labor market



Advancing LGBTQ+ Workplace Inclusion in Ukraine

In partnership with ILGA-Europe, NGO Fulcrum UA continues to support the LGBTQ+ in Ukraine, promoting workplace inclusivity, especially in times of war.

Key Findings from the 2024 Corporate Equality Index:



Conducted workshops and consultations to combat workplace discrimination



Assisted businesses in implementing LGBTQ+ inclusive policies

Key Project Activities in 2024:

Five workshops for 100 HR managers from 50+ companies on:

- Developing non-discrimination policies
- Using inclusive language
- Creating Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)
- Implementing fair hiring procedures and unconscious bias training

120+ career counseling sessions for vulnerable groups, to help them:

- Find inclusive job opportunities
- Showcase their skills confidently
- Avoid economic vulnerabilities

Research Study: (Non)Discrimination of Vulnerable Groups in the Workplace

- Examined workplace inclusion of veterans, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ employees

Upcoming in 2025:

Roundtable discussions with businesses on workplace inclusivity

Presentation of research findings

This project actively shapes Ukraine's labor policies, ensuring that LGBTQ+ individuals have equal opportunities in the workforce.

Economic Stability & Professional Growth for LGBTQI+ Individuals

The Outright International-supported project was a significant step in advancing economic stability and career opportunities for LGBTQI+ individuals.

Key Outcomes:



Individual career counseling:

90 job search consultations with a professional recruiter for 60 LGBTQI+



5 HR workshops "Career Compass"

with the representatives of businesses and HR consultants designed to empower LGBTQI+ job seekers in their career journey



Direct psychological support to 40 LGBTQ persons



Specialized courses in IT, marketing, and design



42 participants

— including IDPs and people with disabilities — took part in a job fair, securing opportunities in inclusive workplaces



A practical guide for HR managers on inclusive business practices



This project empowered LGBTQI+ individuals to build sustainable careers while supporting diversity in the workforce.

Strengthening Civil Society Resilience

In collaboration with Freedom House and Zmina, NGO Fulcrum UA launched a capacity-building project to strengthen civil society's role in Ukraine's democratic development.

Key Outcomes:



Participation in a strategic session on the Draft law No. 12252 on registered partnerships

- Gathered NGO representatives to discuss the objectives of the draft law
- Presented the current political landscape
- Developed advocacy strategies
- Signed a joint memorandum supporting the bill



Three burnout prevention camps with 45 civil society representatives, including:

- NGO staff, activists, and allies
- Psychological resilience training
- Practical stress-management techniques

This initiative reinforces civil society's resilience, equipping activists with the mental and strategic tools needed to sustain their work.

Coalition for Responsibility and Equality (KVIR) Signs Project Agreement with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

The **Coalition for Responsibility and Equality (KVIR)**, comprising **NGO Fulcrum UA, Ukrainian LGBT+ Military for Equal Rights, and NGO Gender Stream**, has signed a **project agreement with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Ukraine.**

This project aims to **drive socio-political changes** related to the **non-discrimination of LGBTQ+ people** and **raise awareness of LGBTQ+ issues among government officials.**

The agreement was signed with the participation of **H.E. Alle Tammo Sitse Dorhout, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Ukraine.** Representing **NGO Fulcrum UA** were **Board Chair Timur Levchuk and Project Manager Rymma Nikolaienko.**



We are sincerely grateful to **Ambassador Dorhout and the Government of the Netherlands** for supporting this crucial initiative. This joint effort will contribute to the **implementation of equality policies in Ukraine**, laying the foundation for a more inclusive society.

Activist Training and Burnout Prevention

By aligning our **Freedom House burnout prevention camps** with the **RFSL-funded activist school**, we successfully **merged two projects**, enhancing the **impact of both initiatives**.

The combined program included:

- Burnout prevention training
- Gamified skill-building sessions on teamwork, resource management, and project planning

Participants highly rated the balanced schedule, networking opportunities, and effectiveness of the sessions

These efforts strengthened the human rights sector, ensuring that activists remain engaged and resilient.

NGO Fulcrum UA Wins Google.org AI Opportunity Fund Grant

NGO Fulcrum UA has been selected as one of the **winners of the Google.org AI Opportunity Fund**, a program aimed at developing **AI-related skills for vulnerable communities**. The initiative provides **fundamental knowledge and tools** necessary for professional success.

Fulcrum UA's project, selected by the **Centre for Public Impact**, focuses on supporting **LGBTQ+ individuals, internally displaced persons (IDPs), veterans, and people with disabilities**. The goal is to equip participants **with technical skills and confidence** to navigate the Ukrainian job market, particularly in the **rapidly growing tech sector**.

The project includes:

AI skills training tailored for vulnerable groups

Career counselling and psychological support

Resume assistance and job placement support

Crisis support during power outages or emergencies

Out of 400+ organizations from 29 countries, only 80 projects were selected, including 4 from Ukraine.

This initiative represents a major step toward digital inclusion, empowering marginalized groups with AI knowledge and career opportunities.

Podcasts “iTochka” and “Potroshku”

We dedicated the new season of the «iTochka» podcast to civil partnerships. In five episodes, we “traveled” to five European countries and learned about their paths to legalizing civil partnerships.

We talked about Greece, Ireland, France, the Netherlands, Malta:

- How did it happen that Orthodox Greece legalized same-sex marriage?
- Why were same-sex relationships in the Netherlands decriminalized and then banned again?
- How do civil partnerships exist in France on an equal footing with same-sex marriage?
- How did conservative Catholic Ireland, where divorce was banned until 1996, come to accept civil partnerships and same-sex marriage?
- How are political parties in Malta literally fighting for primacy in passing a law on civil partnerships? And why is everything not as “rosy” as it might seem at first glance?

We talked about this and more in the “iTochka” podcast, which you can [listen to here](#).



The podcast “Potroshku” by Tetiana Kasian, executive director of NGO Fulcrum UA and compiler of the Barrier-free Guide, returned in 2024 with a new season. That season was about inclusive language — we learned to speak correctly about people and to people. We learned how to speak in a way that does not stigmatize people. To avoid inconvenience or fear. To show respect.

In that season of the podcast, we talked about the following:

- What is inclusive language and why is inclusion not just about people with disabilities?
- How to speak correctly about people under occupation?
- How to speak about people with addictions without stigma and prejudice?
- What are the key rules that will help you understand how to talk about disorders and diseases and people who have them?
- How to speak correctly about transgender people, and what is the difference between the concepts of “gender” and “sex”?
- How to speak without slurs?
- How to speak correctly about veterans who have returned to civilian life from war and about soldiers who have been wounded in the war?



[Listen to the podcast here](#)



Mental Health in the Workplace

As part of the Point of Care project, supported by Center for Disaster Philanthropy, in partnership with the European Business Association, we:



Surveyed 22 Ukrainian companies with 48,000 employees to assess:

- Workplace mental health challenges
- Effectiveness of employee wellness programs



Conducted Social Media Monitoring

- Analyzed 2.8 million posts to track trends in labor market inclusivity



Work-Care Handbook

- Developed a practical guide for workplace mental health, covering IDPs, veterans, and LGBTQ+ employees
- 500 print copies distributed
- Digital version available online



Online Course & Expanded Content

- Launched an educational course on workplace mental health
- Added five expert-led video modules due to high demand



This initiative fosters a culture of inclusivity and psychological well-being in workplaces across Ukraine.

NGO Fulcrum UA and the Point of Care project were media partners of the Mental Health & Emotional Well-being Conference for Business. This year's conference was dedicated to the topic: "Leaders in Time of War: Impact on the Mental Health of Business and the Country".



The project website is here

Mental Health Project for Vulnerable Youth: “Strengthen” Initiative

NGO Fulcrum UA has launched the “Strengthen” initiative, a mental health support project for young people from vulnerable groups. The initiative provides psychological counseling, stress-management training, and peer support, creating a safe space for emotional well-being.

As a part of the initiative we are working on a chatbot for mental health support for teenagers, that will help them understand their emotions, find effective self-support exercises, and learn to cope with anxious thoughts. All materials we develop together with psychotherapists, and the chatbot will be available 24/7. And for psychologists, social workers and educators working with teens from vulnerable groups (such as LGBTQ+, IDPs, teenagers with disabilities, etc.), we develop an online course on inclusive psychological support. Both the chatbot and the online course will be released next year.

Key Outcomes for 2024:

250+

psychological counseling sessions for teens from vulnerable groups

7

webinars (out of 9) on mental health support were held

20,000+

people have watched the recordings of these webinars on YouTube



The project website is here

The project was created with the support of The King Baudouin Foundation

Interactive anti-discrimination chatbot Ceneok

We launched an interactive chatbot called Ceneok for teens. We created 8 interactive stories about different types of discrimination that a person can experience and offered different options for solving discrimination situations that the chatbot user finds themselves in.

To make sure that these were not just stories, we added expert comments to the chatbot — legal comments from a human rights activist and psychological comments from a psychotherapist — to understand exactly where the roots of such discrimination come from and how to overcome it.

What can the antagonists of the stories be guided by?

How to defend oneself against certain attacks?

What can you change in your behavior to protect yourself from discrimination?

Which of the situations described in each story can lead to a lawsuit?

What legal liability can a person face for certain discriminatory violations?

Key Achievements:

10,050

users engaged with the anti-discrimination chatbot

Over

400,000

people reached through the chatbot's awareness campaign



[Press start to play the bot](#)

We also organized a meeting for chatbot users with Maria Fabrycheva, a psychotherapist and expert on the Ceneok chatbot. At the meeting, we talked about anxiety due to the war and shelling, as well as how discrimination can increase anxiety. And, of course, we did not raise the topic of maintaining emotional stability and self-support in the face of constant stress.



Humanitarian Support Project

As part of the Choose Love initiative, we distributed power banks to those in urgent need. Due to high demand, we received more requests than we could fulfill, ultimately supporting:

33 individuals

33 individuals with power banks

5 Pride Hubs

5 Pride Hubs with additional resources



While further distributions are planned for 2025, our focus remains on providing emergency aid to the most vulnerable and psychological counseling sessions for LGBTQ+ people.

Project “Friendly Doctor” – HIV and STI testing, psychological counseling for LGBTQ+ persons

Throughout the year, thanks to the support of Sidaction, we continued to send out HIV, hepatitis B, C, and syphilis testing kits to Ukrainians, as well as referring them to a friendly doctor who would advise and help them take the test in his friendly office. We also continued to provide personal psychological counseling for LGBTQ+ persons.



Пройди безкоштовне тестування на ВІЛ, гепатити В, С та сифіліс з консультацією Дружнього Лікаря

We thank our partners for their consistent support!

- Center for Disaster Philanthropy
- UNITED NATIONS DEMOCRACY FUND
- OutRight International
- RFSL
- Sidaction
- Freedom House
- Choose Love
- EU Delegation to Ukraine
- International Renaissance Foundation
- The King Baudouin Foundation
- ILGA-Europe
- Global Fund for Children
- Julie Taft Refugee Fund
- Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom
- The Netherlands Helsinki Committee
- Association Network
- Foundation de France
- Centre for Public Impact (Google.org AI Opportunity Fund)
- IREX EUROPE
- Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
- RUSTIN FUND FOR GLOBAL EQUALITY
- UK ONLINE GIVING FOUNDATION
- Front Line Defenders

