PRESS RELEASE

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Online Training Workshops

Policymaking in the context of European Integration: Current Approaches, Instruments and Standards of the European Union

On 5 November 2026, the **International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)** completed successfully the organisation of a series of online training workshops on **"Policymaking in the context of European Integration: Current approaches, instruments and standards of the European Union"**, held in the period 20 October – 5 November 2026, as part of the **Knowledge and Development Training Programme**, a tailored capacity building initiative designed by the ICBSS in cooperation with the Research Service of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

In total, 25 professionals from the Research Service, the Secretariat, and the Committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, participated in the online training workshops, which provided an integrated learning approach, exploring practical methodologies that connect knowledge generation with policy design, implementation, communication, and long-term impact.

Developed in six thematic modules, the online workshops addressed core institutional and individual capacities needed for effective reform design and implementation: **Knowledge to Policy**, **Evidence-informed Policymaking**, **Stakeholder Engagement and Living Labs**, **Advocacy and Communication**, **Project Development and Management**, and **Knowledge Transfer and Foresight**. Together, these modules provided participants with tools and approaches to generate and use evidence, co-create solutions, build support for reforms, implement projects effectively, and sustain policy impact over time.

A central objective of the trainings was to support capacities relevant to the EU accession process by linking training content to practical reform challenges faced by EU candidate countries. Participants had the opportunity to examine how evidence can support policy development, how stakeholder engagement can improve governance outcomes, and how strategic communication and project management can facilitate the successful implementation of reforms aligned with EU standards. The online training workshops were facilitated by **Ms. Georgia Chantzi, ICBSS Research and Policy Development Manager** and were moderated by **Ms. Natalia Bartosh, Head of the Training Centre of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine**.

The successful completion of these online trainings marks an important milestone in the cooperation between the ICBSS and the Research Service of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Launching the online trainings on behalf of the organisers, **Dr. Lesia A. Vaolevska, Head of the Research Service of the Verkhovna Rada** and **Mr. Georgios Mitrakos, ICBSS Director General**, highlighted the importance of investing in skills that enable professionals to move from evidence generation to reform implementation and long-term impact.

The **Knowledge and Development Training Programme** is a capacity building initiative launched in 2026 by ICBSS, with the aim to support the upskilling of professionals, whether scientists or policymakers, through a series of tailored training activities. The programme is designed to strengthen the abilities of professionals to effectively navigate the complexities of their respective fields, integrating research, policymaking, management, and communication skills, to enhance the relevance and applicability of evidence in policy development. The programme's integrated framework supports a holistic approach to policymaking, equipping participants with practical knowledge that can be applied across policy areas, including governance, digital transformation, environmental compliance, social inclusion, and regional development.

About the ICBSS: The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) was founded in 1998 as a non-profit organisation. It has since fulfilled a dual function. On the one hand, it is an independent research and training institution focusing on the wider Black Sea region. On the other hand, it is a related body of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), and its think-tank. Thus, the ICBSS pursues applied, policy-oriented research, promotes knowledge on the Black Sea region both within and outside its boundaries, and offers policy advice with the aim of fostering multilateral cooperation among the BSEC member states as well as with their international partners.