



Zionist Federation of Ukraine

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# Zionist Federation of Ukraine (ZFU)

## *Report 2024*

Chairman of the Board: Hershon Bilorytskyi

Executive Director: Olena Zaslavska

**With the beginning of the Russian invasion, the ZFU switched to military lines, without stopping its main – educational and educational activities.**

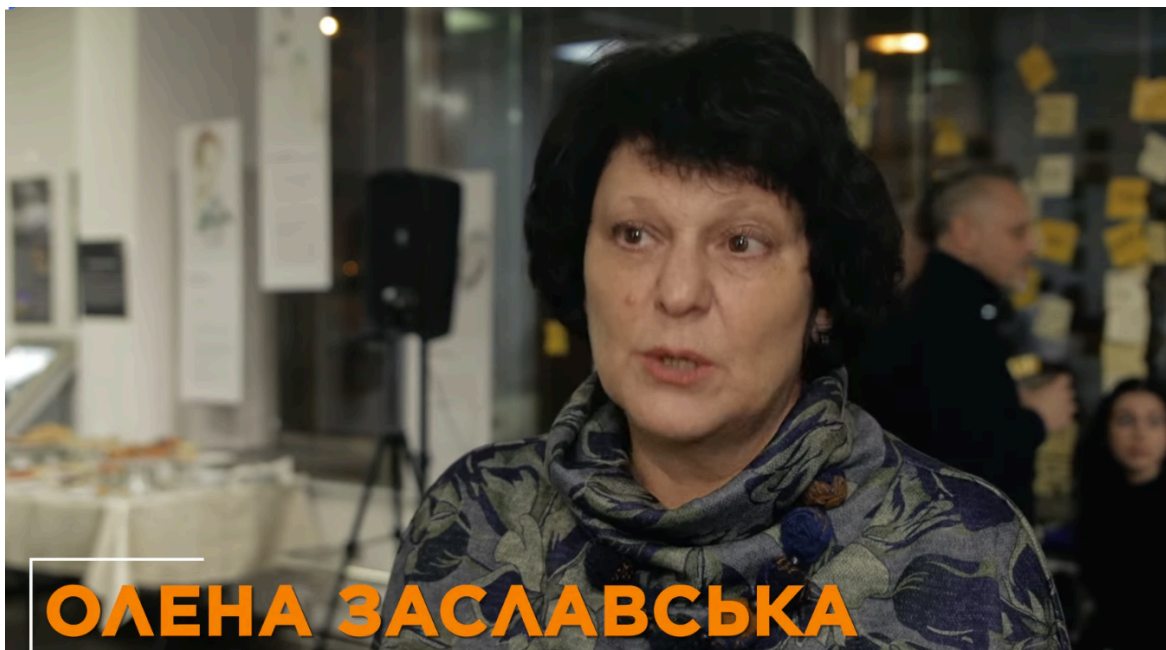
## **Programs and Projects of the Zionist Federation of Ukraine (ZFU) in 2024**

### **1. Political and Public Activities – Statements, Speeches, Meetings**

1.1 In April 2024, ZFU Executive Director Olena Zaslavska held a series of meetings in Jerusalem with leaders of Zionist movements and organizations, including the Head of the Department of Irqoon and Connection with Israelis Abroad of the World Zionist Organization (WZO).

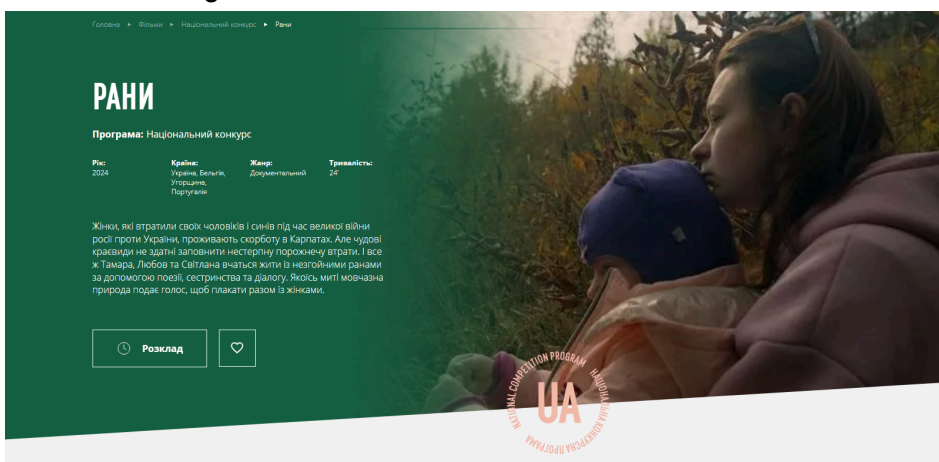
1.2 At the end of November 2024, a regular conference of leaders of Zionist federations from across Europe was held in Sofia, Bulgaria. ZFU Executive Director Olena Zaslavska participated in the meeting and gave a brief speech highlighting the near absence of anti-Semitic incidents in Ukraine.

1.3 On December 25, 2024, Olena Zaslavska also took part in the Hanukkah celebration attended by Israeli Ambassador Michael Brodsky, Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko, and other public figures. The event was organized by the Charitable Fund “To You.”



1.4 Kateryna Malakhova, PhD, was recommended to join the Sholem Aleichem Prize Commission. The Sholem Aleichem Prize is awarded for outstanding literary and artistic works that popularize the spiritual and cultural heritage of the Ukrainian and Jewish peoples and promote a positive image of Ukraine in the world. The recommendation was adopted.

1.5 On October 31, 2024, during the Molodist Film Festival, ZFU Executive Director Olena Zaslavska, presented the documentary *Wounds*. The film was directed by the Ukrainian filmmaker Lesia Diak as part of the ZFU project *CIRCLE OF HOPE*, which took place in the Carpathians in October 2022. The documentary follows women who lost their husbands and sons during Russia’s full-scale war against Ukraine. They carry their grief into the Carpathians, where the breathtaking landscape cannot fill the unbearable void left by their loss. And yet, through poetry, sisterhood, and shared dialogue, Tamara, Liubov, and Svitlana begin to learn how to live with their unhealed wounds.

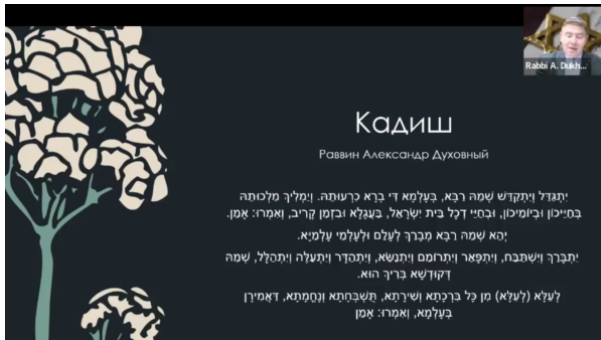


## 2. Countering Anti-Semitism

### 2.1 “There Are No Other People’s Tragedies” – Ceremony of Remembrance for the Victims of the Terrorist Attack on October 7, 2023

“There are no other people's tragedies” was the title under which the Zionist Federation of Ukraine (ZFU), in collaboration with its Israeli counterparts, held an online ceremony on October 6, 2024, to honor the victims of the October 7, 2023, terrorist attack.

On this day a year ago, Hamas terrorists brutally killed approximately 1,200 Israelis and took around 250 hostages, a hundred of whom remain in captivity.



Ukraine became the only country in the world where no pro-Hamas rally or anti-semitic actions took place. On October 8 and 9, 2023, in many cities across Ukraine, the Israeli flag could be seen as a sign of solidarity with Israel.

The memorial ceremony was attended by more than 70 people from Ukraine, Israel, Moldova, and Germany.

The ceremony was hosted by IDF officer Levi Trachtenberg, who honored his fellow officers who were killed by terrorists on October 7. One of them, a citizen of both Ukraine and Israel, is still held captive by Hamas.

“We named this event ‘There Are No Other People’s Tragedies’ because, just like a year ago, Ukraine and Israel share common enemies — Russia and its ally, Iran. The war in Ukraine has been ongoing for over 10 years, and wherever Russian soldiers go, terror follows. Just like the Hamas beasts, these inhumane people are only capable of killing. They destroy everything in their path, leaving ruins and the aftermath of tragedies. A deep bow to every soldier of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the Israel Defense Forces. We will surely defeat our common enemy. Am Yisrael Chai! Glory to Ukraine!” said Olena Zaslavska, Executive Director of the ZFU, in her brief speech.

The memorial prayer was recited during the ceremony by Rabbi Alexander Dukhovny, Chief Rabbi of Kyiv and Ukraine for the Progressive Judaism communities, and spiritual leader of the the Religious Union for Progressive Jewish Congregations of Ukraine.

At the end of the event, participants lit symbolic memorial candles.

A full recording of the ceremony can be viewed via the [link](#).

## **2.2 Anti-Semitism in Russia and Ukraine Amidst the War: Dynamics and Forecast – Presentation of the Monitoring of Anti-Semitism and Xenophobia in Ukraine**

Presenter - Vyacheslav Likhachov - historian, political scientist, member of the Expert Council of the Center for Civil Liberties, head of the monitoring group for manifestations of anti-Semitism and xenophobia in Ukraine. Recording: [https://youtu.be/Lw85h\\_j9kMQ](https://youtu.be/Lw85h_j9kMQ)

For more than 5 years, the ZFU, in cooperation with the Diye-Slovo studio, has provided a platform for presenting the Monitoring of Anti-Semitism and Xenophobia in Ukraine.

For both countries, the full-scale war has served as a catalyst for societal processes that began earlier but were not very visible to outside observers. Ukraine, it seems, has definitively shed its image as an “anti-Semitic country,” even in the eyes of biased commentators. To appreciate the significance of this shift in the mass Jewish consciousness, one does not need to delve into the era of the Shvartsburd trial - just recall the concerns expressed by journalists and even respected researchers after the Revolution of Dignity. The distance our country has traveled is worth reflecting on and evaluating.

In Russia, through the portal that opened on February 24, all the possible demons of the past, including anti-Semitism, have been unleashed, which had been largely forgotten in previous years. At the same time, information about the situation in the country is increasingly filtered through the propaganda cocoon.

The dynamics in both cases are so rapid that it seems justified to not only state the current trends but also think about possible scenarios for the future.

## **2.3 Open Course: “Contemporary Anti-Semitism: Ideas, Trends, and Features”**

Lecturer – Vyacheslav Likhachov – historian, political scientist, member of the Expert Council of the Center for Civil Liberties, head of the monitoring group on anti-Semitism and xenophobia in Ukraine.

Organizers: Zionist Federation of Ukraine (ZFU), in collaboration with the International Interdisciplinary Certificate Program in Jewish Studies under the auspices of the A. Krymskyi Institute of Oriental Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, and the Diye-Slovo studio. February–March 2024.

Contemporary anti-Semitism is a complex phenomenon. It stands on a deep foundation built over two millennia of religious prejudices and two centuries of modern political theories. However, it is fundamentally different from anything that came before. In the West, it learns to speak in progressive language and gains popularity among young people. In the East, it becomes a convenient tool for channeling anti-Western resentment. Governments and international organizations, which decades ago learned to control overtly neo-Nazi sentiments with some degree of effectiveness, are not only powerless in the face of this new form of anti-Semitism, but they are also easily influenced by it.

Throughout the course, the participants explored the fascinating world of ideas, from exotic conspiracy theories to international law, and examined various groups, from religious fanatics to left-wing radical environmentalists, in all corners of the world, from Japan to Argentina.

A total of 5 lecture meetings were held. After completing the course, participants took a special test and received certificates. The course had 132 registrants, and 47 certificates were issued.

Course participants' feedback:

- "The best and most relevant course. The analysis is better than that of professors published in leading Western journals on the subject of modern anti-Semitism."
- "A wonderful course and an excellent lecturer! Plenty of interesting, important, and new information. The lecturer is pragmatic, in my opinion, which adds a unique depth to the lectures."
- "I really enjoyed the course. It provides a clear, structured understanding of the sources and characteristics of contemporary anti-Semitism and encourages independent study of this phenomenon."
- "A professional course from a researcher with his own well-argued theses. The issue is clearly defined, the content is structured, with open questions that encourage reflection. Thank you!"
- "Interesting information and valuable personal observations."
- "Outstanding. Extremely interesting and powerful."
- "A very interesting course. I didn't realize how the pro-Palestinian movement actually influenced global events."

## **2.4 The Project "Conversations with David Fishman"**

David Fishman is a professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (New York). This project is carried out in cooperation with the NGO Jewish Television and the Diye-Slovo studio.

The first two conversations with Mr. Fishman took place in 2024, in January and August. The third conversation was recorded in early 2025.

The discussions covered topics such as anti-Semitism in the United States, the presidential election, the state of the Jewish community in the United States, and more.

1. American Jews, Yiddish, and Ukraine  
[Watch here](#)
2. David Fishman: My Main Feeling is that Ukraine is ALREADY Part of the Western World  
[Watch here](#)
3. Prof. David Fishman: Trump and America, Trump and Ukraine, Trump and the Jews  
[Watch here](#)



### 3. Projects of Public Significance

#### 3.1 Collection of Poems by Yehiel Fishzon “Which World War: Poems of War”

The project manager, artist, and designer: Olena Zaslavska  
The translator of the second part of the book: Larysa Pidhirna

In September 2023, the Diye-Slovo studio published a poetry collection by Israeli-born Kyivan Yehiel (Yevhen) Fishzon, *Which World War: Poems of War*. The collection consists of thirty poems focused on the topic of the war in Ukraine, with the first poem written on February 24, 2022.

In January 2024, a presentation of the book was held at the O. Shvartsman Library in Kyiv.

In April 2024, the book was presented in Haifa.

Project manager Olena Zaslavska participated in both events.



In 2024, work began on the second part of Yehiel Fishzon's poetry collection, *Which World War: Poems of War*. The book is being published by the Zionist Federation of Ukraine (ZFU) in collaboration with the Diye-Slovo studio.

### **3.2 Project: “Psychology of Trauma – Israeli Experience”**

Supported by the JReady platform of the Jewish Agency Sochnut (Israel) and organized by the Zionist Federation of Ukraine with media support from the Diye-Slovo studio, the project is also backed by the Israel Trauma Coalition.

ZFU Executive Director Olena Zaslavska oversees the project, with teachings provided by experts from the Israel Trauma Coalition.

Part 4 of the project has begun.

In 2024, preparation for the fourth part of the project took place, consisting of 32 academic hours of training in two groups, led by psychologists from the Israel Trauma Coalition. A total of 120 people enrolled in the program, with 68 participating in the two groups.

The Psychology of Trauma – Israeli Experience project has been conducted in partnership with the Israel Trauma Coalition since October 2022. The first three parts were held in 2023-2024.

Part 4 includes a series of lectures and seminars focused on presenting Ukrainian psychologists — and anyone interested in the topic — with the achievements of Israeli specialists in dealing with traumatic experiences.

The fourth part featured experts such as Alexander Gershanov, a leading specialist at the Center, as well as psychologists Gila Petrova and Alex Galchinski.

The project saw participation from 68 experienced psychologists (2 groups) from cities including Kyiv and the region, Kharkiv, Dnipro and its surrounding areas, Kryvyi Rih, Ternopil, Odesa, and more. Theoretical meetings were conducted online.

### **3.2 Lecture Project: “Principles of Ukrainian Statehood”**

This project consisted of four meetings and was held in May 2024.  
Project Partner: the Diye-Slovo studio.

The series featured Yulianna Tsvetkova, Doctor of Law and Associate Professor at the Institute of Law at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv.

Topics of the meetings:

- Religion and the State: Allies or rivals in the organization of society? A comparison of Ukraine, Israel, and European countries.
- US Presidential Elections: The role of the president in domestic and foreign policy.
- NATO: The organization, its activities, and the prospects for Ukraine.
- EU: The organization, its activities, and the prospects for Ukraine.

## 4. Educational Projects and Programs

### 4.1 International Interdisciplinary Certificate Program in Jewish Studies (under the auspices of the A. Krymskyi Institute of Oriental Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine).

- Academic Director: Kateryna Malakhova, PhD
- Administrative Director: Olena Zaslavska

This program offers foundational knowledge in Jewish history and culture. Its goal is to foster the development of Jewish studies in Ukraine and to build a future community of scholars in the field.

The program is open to:

- Students in the humanities planning to specialize in Jewish studies
- Individuals with prior education who wish to deepen their knowledge
- Anyone interested in broadening their understanding and skills in this area

More information is available at: <https://cpjudaica.org.ua>

Related materials:

- [Olena Zaslavska: Interest in Jewish Studies in Ukraine is Growing – Interview](#)
- [Olha Mavrina, Olena Zaslavska: The Uniqueness of the First Youth Conference on Jewish Studies Lies in Its Focus on Students](#)

### 4.2 Open Course: “The Dreyfus Case”

Lecturer: Historian Michael Bronstein (Israel)

Project partner: the Diye -Slovo studio

Date: March 2024

Format: 7 sessions

In September 1894, French counterintelligence intercepted a document from the correspondence of a German military attaché. It revealed an offer to hand over a list of five classified documents — one of which had potential strategic significance. This document, later known as the bordereau, became the centerpiece of what would become one of the most infamous political and judicial scandals in modern European history.

The case sparked a rush to identify the traitor, but the investigation had little to go on. Working in utmost secrecy and relying on deduction, investigators narrowed the list of suspects down to six. One of them was Captain Alfred Dreyfus...

### 4.3 Open Course: The Beilis Case: A 21st-Century Perspective

Lecturer: Historian and journalist Yurii Korohodskyi

Project partner: the Diye-Slovo studio

Date: April 2024

Format: 2 sessions

This two-part course examined the phenomenon of blood libel — false accusations against Jews of ritual murder — and its deep historical and religious roots. Using the

infamous Beilis case as a focal point, the course explored how such accusations were weaponized as political propaganda in the Russian Empire.

The blood libel is a biased accusation against Jews, claiming they commit ritual murders and use human organs and blood for sacrifices. The alleged victims were often children. Historically, such accusations have been used as a pretext for massacres of Jews, including pogroms and lynchings. One of the most well-known cases involving blood libel was the Beilis case.

#### **4.4 Open Course “Strategic Bombing of Germany”**

Lecturer: Historian Michael Bronstein (Israel)

Project Partner: the Diye-Slovo studio

The course consisted of four meetings.

This four-lecture series explored the war in the skies over Germany. In these operations, the roles of the attackers and defenders were clearly defined: long-range bombers from the United Kingdom and the United States carried out air raids, while German air defenses sought to protect industrial sites and residential areas.

Both sides demonstrated remarkable perseverance, heroism, and technical innovation.

Ultimately, however, the bombers of the United Kingdom and the United States prevailed.

These topics — along with the broader course of the air war and the painful moral issue of imprecise, so-called “carpet bombing”—are examined across the four lectures.

#### **4.5 The War in Jewish History Lecture Project**

Initiator and project manager: Olena Zaslavska

Lecturers: Beny Yonin (Israel), Dr. Michael Tuval (Israel), Roman Hardashuk (Ukraine), Artem Fedorchuk (Israel)

Project Partners: The International Interdisciplinary Certificate Program in Jewish Studies under the auspices of the A. Krymskyi Institute of Oriental Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, the Diye-Slovo studio, and the International Center for Jewish Education and Field Research. Supported by the Department of Irgoon and Connection with Israelis Abroad of the World Zionist Organization (WZO) and the World Israel Beytenu Movement.

All 13 scheduled lectures of the open course were held.

Renowned researchers and historians from Israel and Ukraine gave lectures:

- Beny Yonin
- Dr. Michael Tuval
- Artem Fedorchuk
- Roman Gardashuk
- Yehiel Fishzon
- David Weinstein

A total of 185 people registered for the course, and 96 attended.

Participant feedback:

- “The course “Wars in Jewish History” made a positive impression thanks to its in-depth analysis of historical events, covering key conflicts from biblical wars to medieval persecution, and explaining their impact on Jewish identity. The lecturers presented the material in an accessible way, referring to sources. The balance between facts and analysis was well-maintained, which is especially useful for someone who is not familiar with the material and is trying to understand it. I was also impressed by the interdisciplinary approach used, incorporating literature, history, etc. Personally, the course helped me better understand the history of the Jewish people through the lens of military conflicts”.
- “The information was very conveniently structured, and it was a pleasure to listen to the teachers. To date, this is one of the best courses I have taken. Thank you for the test at the end of the course. It gave me the opportunity to assess my knowledge and acquire new insights”.
- “Professional lectures, interesting and thorough material, and a sincere atmosphere. I had a great time and gained a deeper understanding of the history of the Jewish people in the context of various epochs”.
- “It was important to understand the historical role of the Jewish people in ancient times, their relationship with the Assyrian state, the influence of Hellenism on Jewish thought, and the foundations of the worldview of that time (because, in those days, political life was inseparable from religious outlook). The history of the Bar Kokhba revolt was also significant. I would like to emphasize that all the material was presented in a way that was accessible even to students without specialized educational training”.

#### **4.3 Educational Project “Polin Museum of Life”**

Project leaders:

- Olena Zaslavska (ZFU)
- Oksana Chala (POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews)

The project partners are the Diye-Slovo studio and the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews. This is the first time the Polin Museum has worked online for the Ukrainian public.

The first meeting of the project took place online at the end of October 2023 as an introduction to the Museum. The project continued in 2024.

On January 21, 2024, the second meeting of the project was held.

Video of the meeting: [https://youtu.be/Dz0B\\_42h2ok](https://youtu.be/Dz0B_42h2ok)

#### **4.3 Lecture Meetings**

Partners: the Diye-Slovo studio and the International Interdisciplinary Certificate Program in Jewish Studies.

- Vyacheslav Likhachov: [The Year of a New Reality in the Middle East](#)
- Ihor Semyvolos: [What Decisions Should We Expect from Tehran and How They May Affect Ukraine](#)
- Tetiana Fedoriv: [\(Un\)forgotten History: How to Work with the City’s Jewish Heritage](#)

- Prof. Zeev Khanin: [From Crimean Aliyah to Military Aliyah: The Community of Immigrants from the USSR in Israel](#)
- Prof. Zeev Khanin: [The Jewish Community in the United States: Structure, Identity, and Political Views](#)
- Heinz Werner Wessler: [Indian Jewry and Indian Jewish Literature](#)
- Artem Kharchenko: [A House That Cannot Be Built in One Day: Jewish Studies in Independent Ukraine](#)

## 5.1 Interviews

EVREI TV

Jewish News

Jewish Organizations of Ukraine | Past, Present, and Future

Olena Zaslavska, Executive Director of the Zionist Federation of Ukraine, has extensive experience in tourism management. She joined the Jewish organization during the challenging 1990s and has been working there ever since. Throughout her career, she has witnessed many personal stories — of fates, opportunities, movements, returns, and families both destroyed and rebuilt. Olena reflects on these experiences and shares some of her stories with us.

How are Jewish organizations in Ukraine structuring their work now? Who do they support, and where do they source their funding? And why are the most talented researchers of Jewish heritage often non-Jews?

<https://www.facebook.com/evreiskie.novosti/videos/352212707643480>

## Contact Details of the ZFU

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Website: [votezion.org.ua](http://votezion.org.ua)

The Zionist Federation of Ukraine (ZFU) was founded in December 2001, based on the principles of the Jerusalem Program of the World Zionist Organization. Since January 2017, the organization has been officially registered in Ukraine, conducting independent programmatic activities. It is now one of the most active federations in Europe.

By recognizing and accepting the Jerusalem Program, the ZFU aligns its activities primarily with the following principles:

- The unity of the Jewish people and the centrality of Israel to Jewish life.
- The reunification of the Jewish people in its historical homeland, Eretz Yisrael.
- Strengthening the State of Israel, based on the prophetic vision of justice and peace.
- Preserving the identity of the Jewish people through the development of Zionist education in Hebrew and Yiddish, as well as Jewish spiritual and cultural values.

The main goals and objectives of the Zionist Federation of Ukraine are to:

- Promote the unity of the Jewish community of Ukraine.
- Affirm and realize the right of Jews—citizens of Ukraine—to identity and their own national culture.

- Improve the image of the Jewish community in Ukrainian society.
- Develop Ukrainian-Jewish and Ukrainian-Israeli relations.

ZFU develops intercommunity youth, educational, and cultural programs.

In 2024, the Zionist Federation of Ukraine continued to strengthen and expand its activities. New programs were launched, and existing ones continued and expanded their work. Since the beginning of the Russian invasion, the ZFU has been on a war footing, all while continuing its core mission of education and outreach without interruption.