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Strasbourg, 27 August 2025

### **Supporting Youth Work in Ukraine in Times of War**

**Study visit to the Council of Europe for youth workers and representatives of youth centres from Ukraine**

21-23 October 2025, Strasbourg, France

### **CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS**

This call is launched in the framework of the “Youth for Democracy” programme, in co-operation with the project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase IV”

## CONTEXT

Key actors in youth work in Ukraine, both professionals and volunteers, play an important role in supporting young people living in the context of war through the promotion of a human rights-based approach to youth work, focusing on participation, inclusion and well-being.

War conditions challenge the capacity of stakeholders to address the pressing needs and concerns of young people in Ukraine, whether uprooted or still living in their home communities. The youth work sector was directly affected by the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine. As of August 2025, damage has been recorded to 135 youth infrastructure facilities in Ukraine: 31 youth centres have been completely destroyed, 30 facilities have been damaged, 74 youth facilities remain under occupation, while approximately 10 facilities have been restored<sup>1</sup>. Many youth workers have been displaced, forced to leave the country, or experienced other forms of disruption to their professional activities and personal well-being.

With the war, youth workers' roles and responsibilities have expanded far beyond their usual scope to include providing humanitarian aid and psychological support and have allowed Ukrainian youth work practitioners to develop unique expertise that is being shared with their peers in other Council of Europe member states.

This is particularly important given the impact that the war in Ukraine has on youth work stakeholders and young people throughout Europe who organise and deliver support to refugees from Ukraine, particularly in the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Poland and other countries.

## STUDY VISIT

The [Youth Department of the Council of Europe](#), in cooperation with the [Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine](#) is organising a study visit to the Council of Europe for youth workers and representatives of youth centres from Ukraine who are providing youth work during war time. The study visit takes place on 21 to 23 October 2025 (working days) in Strasbourg, France.

The study visit will bring together up to 30 youth work professional and volunteer practitioners working with young people in Ukraine. The visit will focus on ways to support youth work in Ukraine and strengthen the motivation and competences of specialists who are providing youth work and responding to challenges in their communities caused by the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine.

The participants will meet with Council of Europe officials and experts, explore the educational resources and policy approaches of the youth sector, exchange experiences and

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, as of 14 August 2025, damage has been recorded to 135 youth infrastructure facilities in Ukraine, with an estimated value exceeding 270,028,240.00 Ukrainian Hryvnia (UAH) (some facilities pending valuation), including facilities in temporarily occupied territories: 31 youth centres have been completely destroyed (Donetsk Oblast - 25; Luhansk - 4; Kherson - 1; Chernihiv - 1); 30 facilities have been damaged (Donetsk - 19; Sumy - 2; Kharkiv - 3; Kherson - 3; Chernihiv - 2; Dnipropetrovsk - 1); 74 facilities are under occupation (Donetsk - 44; Zaporizhzhia - 6; Luhansk - 19; Kherson - 5); approximately 10 facilities have been restored.

practices in their youth work, and share aspirations as youth workers committed to human rights-based activities that support young people in times of war.

### ***Objectives of the study visit***

- develop participants' knowledge about the Council of Europe as an international organisation founded to uphold human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe;
- acquaint the participants with the mission and activities of the Council of Europe Youth sector;
- show case youth work practices in Ukraine and map practices of human rights-based youth work that can ensure the participation, inclusion and well-being of young people in Ukraine;
- explore, analyse and reflect on existent forms, tools and methods of youth work at European, national and local levels, on their accessibility, efficiency for diverse environment, conditions and groups of young people in Ukraine;
- explore the role of youth work in Europe in supporting young people experiencing war and its consequence, and in addressing their key needs and challenges, also in the context of the EU accession process of Ukraine.
- provide conclusions on sustaining and improving youth work and youth policy responses to the negative consequences on young people of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine.

The study visit is a follow-up to the seminars on the role of youth work in supporting the mental well-being of young people affected by war and the value-based youth work which took place in 2023, 2024 and 2025 in the European Youth Centre, in Budapest and in Strasbourg.

### **PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS**

This study visit is addressed to youth workers and representatives of youth centres working with young people in Ukraine and providing youth work during war time.

The Council of Europe welcomes applications from all candidates who fulfil the specific criteria of this call irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic or social origin, religion, belief or sexual orientation.

All candidates must apply online at <https://forms.office.com/e/YqdUUAkiQi> before **17 September 2025, 23:59 CET**.

The Council of Europe and the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine will select up to 30 participants on the basis of the profile outlined above.

### **ORGANISERS**

The Council of Europe [Youth Department](#) is co-organising the study visit with the [Ministry of Youth and Sport of Ukraine](#) within the [Framework Programme](#). The project [Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase IV](#) contributes with expertise to this activity.

## **FINANCIAL AND PRACTICAL CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION**

### **Travel expenses**

Travel expenses to and from Strasbourg will be reimbursed according to the rules of the Council of Europe. The participants will be informed in due time regarding travel procedures. Only the participants who attend the entire study visit can be reimbursed.

### **Accommodation**

Board and lodging for the study visit will be provided and paid by the Council of Europe at the [European Youth Centre in Strasbourg](#) from **20 to 24 October 2025**. The venues are accessible to people with disabilities and can take measures to accommodate for any specific needs of participants in this respect. Should you have any specific need please inform the organisers and provide the necessary information in your application form.

### **Working language**

The working language is English, with simultaneous interpretation into and from Ukrainian for all sessions throughout the activity.

### **Security considerations**

By applying to participate in this study visit, applicants acknowledge that they will be travelling within the territory of Ukraine and beyond.

A special insurance will be provided by the Council of Europe to all participants travelling from Ukraine and within its territory, subject to participants' timely submission of the information requested by the Secretariat.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

If you have questions or are in need of further information, please do not hesitate to contact Maja Micic Lazovic, Project Manager at the Education, Training and Cooperation Division of the Council of Europe Youth Department: [maja.micic-lazovic@coe.int](mailto:maja.micic-lazovic@coe.int).

The focal point at the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine is Nataliia Radchuk, Head of International Cooperation and European Integration Department ([natarad@ukr.net](mailto:natarad@ukr.net)).

If you are interested in other training courses for youth workers, youth leaders and trainers that the Youth Department organises click on [this link](#) or the project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine" [website](#).

## **BACKGROUND**

The long-standing co-operation of the Council of Europe and the authorities responsible for youth in Ukraine is being reinforced in the context of a Framework Programme, and the technical assistance project « Youth for Democracy in Ukraine », as part of the [Action Plan for Ukraine](#). It has helped Ukraine to develop a stronger and more inclusive youth policy for, by and with young people based on human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The outcomes of the co-operation with the Council of Europe Youth Sector laid the ground for

Ukraine's reform efforts in view of its EU integration and has been recognised as relevant by the Ukrainian government, also when applying for the EU candidacy in 2022.

With the beginning of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine on 24 February 2022, the Council of Europe adapted and expanded its approach to address the emerging needs of young people in the war and post-war periods.

The series of Council of Europe Youth sector's co-operation activities in support of Ukraine (i.e. roundtables, public discussions, side events to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe), created a space for key youth policy stakeholders and youth workers in Ukraine, to identify needs and actions towards developing inclusive youth policies and anchoring youth perspectives in decision-making processes in the context of Ukraine's recovery efforts. Building democratic societies calls for mainstreaming youth perspective as a cross-cutting issue in all areas, including Roma youth, young veterans and military/service personnel, indigenous people and national minorities, IDPs and refugees, LGBTQI+ youth, young people with disabilities, and young people in occupied and reoccupied territories in the context of the war.

The project Youth for Democracy in Ukraine adapted its activities to respond to the needs of youth workers, youth centres and youth organisations and to support youth policy stakeholders and youth workers in wartime.

In 2023, the first of its kind occupational standard for the profession "Youth specialist (youth worker)" was developed and approved in Ukraine. Ensuring of youth participation has become one of the key competencies. Two specialised training courses were developed and approved as a part of the state programme "Youth worker", focusing on trauma-informed youth work based on the [Guide on Trauma Informed Youth Work](#), and on barrier-free environment in the youth sector.

Additionally, the trauma-informed youth work programme was also presented at the 4th European Youth Work Convention in Malta, the largest and most significant gathering on youth work, which aims to shape the future of youth work by improving standards, recognition, and quality. Furthermore, a research project on young people's mental health and well-being is also being implemented in the framework of the EU-CoE Youth Partnership, with the preparation of a new training kit (T-kit16) underway.

Furthermore, youth workers from youth centres in Ukraine have been trained on practice and approaches of youth centres awarded with the Council of Europe Quality Label for Youth Centres through peer-to-peer visits to the youth centres in the Council of Europe member states.

Deadline for expressing interest in this active:

**17 September 2025, 23:59 CET**

at <https://forms.office.com/e/YqdUUAKiQi>