



ASSOCIATION OF UKRAINIAN CITIES
BY JOINT EFFORTS

The Congress

Le Congrès

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

**the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities
of the Council of Europe**

and

the Association of Ukrainian Cities

for the implementation of the
Congress co-operation activities in Ukraine

under the
**Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine
“Resilience, Recovery and Reconstruction” 2023-2026**

Purpose

This Memorandum of Understanding is concluded between the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (hereinafter referred to as “Congress”) and the Association of Ukrainian Cities (hereinafter referred to as “AUC”) with the purpose of establishing a framework for co-operation and partnership between the above-mentioned partners to implement the Congress co-operation activities under the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine “Resilience, Recovery and Reconstruction” 2023-2026.

Rationale

The Congress is supporting Ukraine in local self-government reforms and in the achievement of local democracy standards through its statutory work, and since 2014 through co-operation activities. All Congress projects are based on long-standing co-operation and developed to address the needs voiced by Ukrainian local and regional authorities and their national associations, including the multiple challenges provoked by the Russian Federation’s war against Ukraine.

The Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine “Resilience, Recovery and Reconstruction” 2023-2026, approved by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 14 December 2022, was prepared in close consultation with the Ukrainian authorities. It sets a framework for co-operation with the required flexibility to address emerging needs and priorities of Ukraine in the current context of its European Union candidate status, the recovery process, and high-risk environment.

We, the signatories to this Memorandum, hereby

Acknowledge the principles of the European Charter of Local Self-Government and its Additional Protocol on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority, ratified by Ukraine, in 1997 and in 2014 respectively;

Recognise that national associations of local and regional authorities play a vital role in the advocacy for local self-government and in the dialogue to strengthen local democracy, and are key partners of the Congress, in particular in bringing democratic principles closer to citizens;

Take account of the need for continued local self-government reform and further decentralisation, and acknowledge in this respect the resilience of local authorities and their role in dealing with the consequences of the war against Ukraine;

Bear in mind at the same time the current adaptations of the legislative framework under the Martial law, which should observe the general principles of necessity, proportionality and temporariness;

Express readiness and commitment to

Contribute to building resilient, inclusive, and accountable local authorities that better respond to citizens needs and expectations, and thus increase their trust in public institutions;

Support Ukraine in its accession process to the European Union and reform efforts in this respect.

The signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding commit to:

The Congress

- **Acknowledge** the AUC as the main implementing partner of the Congress activities in Ukraine under the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine “Resilience, Recovery and Reconstruction” 2023-2026;

- **Support** the AUC in improving and providing services to its members through:
 - a) strengthening the dialogue with different levels of government; b) enhancing collaborative governance and citizen engagement in line with the principles of local democracy and open government; c) promoting and guaranteeing the right to equality and non-discrimination; d) development of policies that contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of the United Nations 2030 Agenda;
- **Reinforce** the AUC's prominent advocacy role and lobbying capacities, through expert support in legal reviews of national legislation, as well as assessments of legislative processes developed under the Martial law and in the transition to civil administration in view of the return to the full respect of the principles of the European Charter of Local Self-Government;
- **Ensure** adequate support to local authorities, both directly and through the AUC, to foster transparency, inclusiveness and open governance;
- **Involve** all relevant actors into Congress activities in Ukraine, to promote the integration of human rights standards and practices, as well as gender equality principles in their policies and strategies;

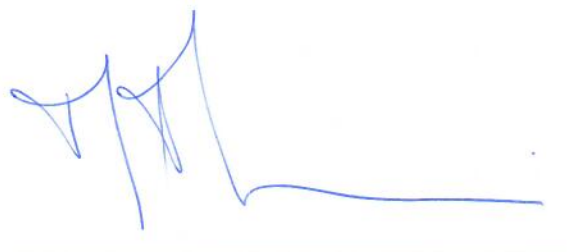
The Association of Ukrainian Cities

- **Promote** and integrate European standards for local democracy in the strategies, activities and services offered to the members of the Association, in particular Council of Europe and Congress recommendations related to a) ethics; b) transparency, c) open, accountable and inclusive government; d) innovative and co-creative citizen participation methods; e) youth engagement; f) human rights implementation at the local level, and g) gender equality;
- **Foster** democratic pluralism and equal representation in AUC's governing bodies, and ensure a participatory approach in the development of new strategies and tools to promote and localise open government principles, gender equality and human rights;
- **Contribute** to the overall implementation of Congress activities, by following up closely and advising on the developments in local democracy and reforms, and by encouraging peer-to-peer exchanges of experiences and knowledge;
- **Provide** support to local authorities in bolstering innovation in their policies and local initiatives, both directly and jointly with the Congress, thereby enhancing the overall resilience of local communities in Ukraine.

Signed in Kyiv, Ukraine, on 19 April 2023, in two copies in English and Ukrainian languages, both texts being equally authentic.



Vitali KLITSCHKO
Chairman
Association of Ukrainian Cities



Mathieu MORI
Secretary General
Congress of Local and Regional
Authorities Council of Europe