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2 Current political questions

2.5 Council of Europe Action Plan "Democratic Security for Ukraine" 2027-2030

Document prepared by the Directorate of Programme Co-ordination

Item to be considered by the GR-DEM at its meeting on 30 October 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council of Europe Action Plan "Democratic Security for Ukraine" 2027-2030 (the "Action Plan") is a strategic programming instrument that aims to bring Ukraine's legislation, institutions and practice further into line with European standards in the areas of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The Action Plan is intended to support the country's efforts to honour its obligations as a Council of Europe member State and will be implemented as part of the Reykjavík Principles for Democracy whereby member States recommitted to "work together to protect and promote the three fundamental, interdependent and inalienable principles of democracy, rule of law and human rights, as enshrined in the Statute of the Council of Europe and in the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms".[2]

The Action Plan priorities take into account decisions, resolutions, recommendations, findings, conclusions of reports and opinions, notably of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (the Committee of Ministers), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress), the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe (the Commissioner), the European Commission for Democracy through Law (the Venice Commission) and the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), as well as the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (the European Court) regarding Ukraine. It is based on the strategic priorities of the Council of Europe as reflected in the "Reykjavík Declaration – United around our values" and concentrates on areas where the Organisation can offer competitive advantages. Importantly, the initiatives outlined in the Action Plan feed into the New Democratic Pact for Europe, which emphasises and supports the protection of civic space, human rights, innovating for democracy and resilience against polarisation and extremism.

The Action Plan also reflects Ukraine's European Union (EU) accession process, building on the recommendations set out in the European Commission's opinion on Ukraine's application for membership of the European Union (EU) of 17 June 2022, subsequent European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, priority reforms set out in the joint statement between the European Commission and Ukraine in Lviv in December 2025 and the key priorities arising from the accession negotiations and road maps on national minorities, the rule of law, public administration reform and the functioning of democratic institutions, as well as its negotiating position on Cluster 1: the "Fundamentals" of the accession process. In September 2025, Ukraine completed the bilateral screening meetings.

[1] This document has been classified restricted until examination by the Committee of Ministers.
[2] The Reykjavik Principles for Democracy are part of the "Reykjavik Declaration – United around our values", adopted at the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe that took place in Reykjavik on 16 and 17 May 2023.

On 15 June 2026, the European Council opened negotiations on Cluster 1: the “Fundamentals”[3] in Ukraine’s EU accession process. In its common position on Cluster 1: “Fundamentals”, the EU set interim benchmarks at horizontal level and for Chapters 23 and 24, which must be met before the negotiation process can advance further, as well as benchmarks for the provisional closure of Chapters 5, 18 and 32.

Under this Action Plan, the Council of Europe and the Ukrainian authorities have agreed to carry forward jointly, through country-specific and regional co-operation programmes, reforms aimed at contributing to the development of and facilitating the effective implementation of a peace plan for Ukraine, to reinforce Ukraine’s democratic resilience by advancing good governance, the rule of law and human rights and to support Ukraine’s strategic goal of strengthening its security through EU membership by aligning reforms with European standards.

Where appropriate, the Action Plan will include a parliamentary dimension aimed at increasing the impact across actions undertaken by the Parliament of Ukraine and ensuring ownership by its members. Projects that aim for legislative change should benefit from peer-to-peer exchanges between members of the Parliament of Ukraine and members of parliament from other member States on their experience in this regard.

The Congress will support Ukraine’s decentralisation and multilevel governance reforms by assisting with improvements to the legal and institutional framework for local self-government, in accordance with the European Charter of Local Self-Government. It will also strengthen the rule of law and democratic governance supporting the EU accession process, the recovery and reconstruction at local and regional levels and capacity-building and dialogue with Ukrainian authorities.

The implementation of the Action Plan may be complemented by projects from the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB). The CEB can co-finance investment projects with a high social value that have been approved by the CEB’s Administrative Council and the Ukrainian authorities. It has already been providing assistance to Ukraine in the form of grants and loans.

Ukraine continues to face the profound humanitarian, social and economic consequences of the Russian Federation’s ongoing war of aggression, which has caused widespread destruction of infrastructure, mass displacement of civilians and severe disruption to public institutions and essential services. At the same time, deteriorating economic conditions and rising poverty have placed increasing strain on the country’s social protection system, exacerbating vulnerabilities among affected populations. As of December 2025, approximately 3.7 million people remain internally displaced within Ukraine,[4] while more than 5.9 million Ukrainians, 14% of the pre-war population, remain refugees abroad[5] and 4.4 million returnees[6] have come back to the country. According to the World Bank, the poverty rate has reached 37%, up from 20% before the war, leaving approximately 9 million people in urgent need of support.[7] Over 3.4 million Ukrainians live with one or more disabilities,[8] continuously rising due to the war, with approximately 100 000 war-related amputations recorded and the total number of veterans, family members of fallen service members and persons with disabilities as a result of the war exceeding 1.3 million people.[9] According to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF),[10] more than a third of Ukraine’s children, 2 589 900, remain displaced. Some 1 630 cultural heritage sites and 2 437 cultural infrastructure facilities have been destroyed or damaged.[11] Against this background, the war has deepened pre-existing vulnerabilities, disproportionately affecting women, children, older people, veterans, persons with disabilities, persons belonging to national minorities, including Roma, and to indigenous peoples, while generating additional and complicated challenges on human rights, the rule of law and democracy which require sustained and well-co-ordinated support and engagement.

[3] Including the functioning of democratic institutions, public administration reform, chapters 23 - judiciary and fundamental rights, 24 – justice, freedom and security, economic criteria, chapters 5 - public procurement, 18 - statistics, 32 - financial control.
[4] International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2026), “Ukraine internal displacement report: general population survey, round 22, January 2026”, Global Data Institute, Displacement Tracking Matrix.
[5] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (n.d.), “Ukraine refugee situation”, UNHCR Operational Data Portal.
[6] IOM (2026), “Ukraine internal displacement report: general population survey, round 22, January 2026”, Global Data Institute, Displacement Tracking Matrix.
[7] World Bank Group (2026), “Investing in tomorrow: strengthening human development and resilience in Ukraine”.
[8] European Disability Forum (2025), “Disability rights take the stage at Ukraine Recovery Conference 2025”.
[9] Verkhovna Rada (2024), “The veterans policy strategy until 2030”.
[10] UNICEF (2026), “More than a third of Ukraine’s children remain displaced four years into war”.
[11] Ministry of Culture of Ukraine (2025), “1 630 cultural heritage sites and 2 437 cultural infrastructure facilities in Ukraine have been damaged due to Russia’s aggression”.

At the same time, Ukraine continues to demonstrate remarkable resilience and an unwavering commitment to reforms, advancing its EU accession process and maintaining its obligations under Council of Europe standards even in the most challenging wartime circumstances.

Beyond the scope of this Action Plan, the Council of Europe plays a central role in advancing a comprehensive accountability architecture for the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine. As highlighted by the 2026 report "The New Democratic Pact for Europe in Times of Rupture of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, the Council of Europe is helping build accountability for Russian Federation's war of aggression, where none existed before, while placing democratic resilience at the centre of recovery and reconstruction. The establishment of the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine (the Register of Damage for Ukraine), the adoption of the Convention establishing an International Claims Commission for Ukraine, the signing of the Agreement on the Establishment of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine and the adoption of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Management Committee of the Special Tribunal represent historic milestones in the pursuit of accountability and justice. The European Court delivered a landmark judgment in the inter-state case *Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia* in July 2025, holding Russia accountable for widespread and flagrant human rights abuses. Although the Russian Federation ceased to be a High Contracting Party to the European Convention on 16 September 2022, it remains bound by obligations under the Convention, including to implement judgments of the European Court. The Committee of Ministers therefore continues actively to supervise the execution of this judgment.

With this Action Plan, the Council of Europe will contribute to the development of a peace plan for Ukraine and facilitate its effective implementation, reinforce Ukraine's democratic resilience by advancing good governance, the rule of law and human rights and support Ukraine's strategic goal of strengthening its security through European Union membership by aligning reforms with European standards.

The Action Plan has four interconnected priorities. Under Priority I - "Safeguarding human rights and accountability for peace and stability", the Action Plan will strengthen the legal and institutional foundations for justice, reparation and reconciliation, ensuring that victims and survivors have access to effective remedies and that violations of human rights are investigated and prosecuted. Under Priority II - "Fostering social inclusion and protection of minorities, groups at risk, women and children", the Action Plan will address the humanitarian consequences of the war, fostering social cohesion, reducing inequalities and ensuring that no one – whether an internally displaced person, a veteran, a child, a person with a disability or a member of a national minority – is left behind in Ukraine's recovery. Under Priority III - "Reinforcing democratic institutions", free and fair elections and information integrity", the Action Plan will strengthen the civic foundations of Ukraine's democratic security, ensuring that citizens, civil society and local communities, including young people, have a meaningful voice in shaping Ukraine's future and that democratic processes are protected from disinformation and foreign interference, while ensuring that the legal, institutional and democratic security framework strengthens local self-government, advances decentralisation, and is ready for post-war elections. Under Priority IV - "Strengthening independent justice and good governance for democratic resilience", the Action Plan will build the institutional integrity, transparency and accountability that are indispensable for sustainable post-war reconstruction, EU accession and long-term democratic stability. The four priorities are strongly interconnected: progress on human rights and accountability to ensure peace and stability creates the conditions for social inclusion and cohesion, reinforcing democratic institutions and civic participation, all of which must be underpinned by independent justice and good governance to ensure lasting and sustainable change. Together, these four mutually reinforcing priorities will contribute to the democratic security of Ukraine.

The Action Plan builds on the outcomes of the previous Action Plan, which strengthened the protection of fundamental rights in wartime conditions, improved access to justice and remedies for war-affected people and enhanced national authorities' capacity to investigate human rights violations and execute judgments of the European Court. Key achievements include practical legal guides for citizens in wartime situations, improved access to digital services for 14 320 people, of whom 46% were internally displaced persons (IDPs), strengthened mental health and barrier-free policies, improved labour legislation, the establishment of over 1 100 specialised support services for victims of violence, reinforced child-friendly justice mechanisms and the adoption of the Law on Media. Judicial independence was advanced through the Constitutional Court's improved performance and resolution of some structural issues. The preventive remedy framework was adopted and Ukraine's capacity to combat cybercrime, money laundering and economic crime was strengthened.

The Action Plan aims to support Ukraine in its efforts to implement the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially goals 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11 and 16.

The overall financing needs for this Action Plan required to cover the foreseen interventions are preliminarily estimated at €70 million – further developments might change this estimate. While funding to the amount of €9.8 million (14% of the estimated needs) has been secured as of 30 September 2026, additional funding is essential to fully implement the priority actions identified for 2027-2030.

The Council of Europe and Ukraine will continue co-operation to improve existing legislative frameworks, to ensure their effective implementation and to enhance the capacities of national institutions to bring the country's legislation and practice closer to European standards in order to promote human rights, strengthen the rule of law and ensure democratic principles at all levels of governance.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACFC	Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
Action Plan	Council of Europe Action Plan “Democratic Security for Ukraine” 2027-2030
AGE	Advisory Group of Experts
AI	artificial intelligence
AML/CFT	anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism
Barrier-Free Strategy	National Strategy for the Creation of a Barrier-Free Environment in Ukraine for the period until 2030
Budapest Convention	Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime
CCJE	Consultative Council of European Judges
CCU	Constitutional Court of Ukraine
CEB	Council of Europe Development Bank
CEC	Central Election Commission
CEPEJ	European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice
CGU	Consultation Group on the Children of Ukraine
Charter	European Social Charter
CJEU	Court of Justice of the European Union
CM	Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe
COMEX	Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
Commissioner	Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe
Committee of Ministers	Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe
Congress	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
Convention	European Convention on Human Rights
CPF	countering proliferation financing
CPT	European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
CSO	civil society organisation
Cybercrime Convention	Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime
DESS	State Service of Ukraine for Ethnic Affairs and Freedom of Conscience
DGI	Directorate General Human Rights and Rule of Law of the Council of Europe
DPC	Directorate of Programme Co-ordination
EEAS	The European External Action Service
ECRI	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
ECRML	European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
ECSR	European Committee of Social Rights
EDQM	European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines & HealthCare
EPAS	Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport
EU	European Union
EQPR	European Qualifications Passport for Refugees
EUACI	European Union Anti-Corruption Initiative
European Court	European Court of Human Rights
Faro Convention	Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FCNM	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
FIMI	foreign information manipulation and interference
GESC	Gender Equality in Education Scorecard
GR-DEM	Rapporteur Group on Democracy – Council of Europe
Granada Convention	Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe
GRECO	Group of States against Corruption
GRETA	Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings
GREVIO	Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
HCJ	High Council of Justice
HELP	Council of Europe Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals
HQCJ	High Qualification Commission of Judges
HUDERIA	Risk and impact assessment of artificial intelligence systems from the point of view of human rights, democracy and the rule of law
IDP	internally displaced persons

IOM	International Organisation for Migration
Istanbul Convention	Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
Lanzarote Committee	Committee of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse
Lanzarote Convention	Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse
LGBTI	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex
MONEYVAL	Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism
NABU	National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine
NACP	National Agency on Corruption Prevention
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NPM	National Preventive Mechanism
NRA	National Risk Assessment
OB	ordinary budget
ODIHR	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Organisation	Council of Europe
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PACE	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
PMM	Council of Europe Project Management Methodology
QDCP	Qualification and Disciplinary Commission of Public Prosecutors
Register of Damage for Ukraine	Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine
RFCDC	Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture
SAPO	Anti-Corruption Prosecutor’s Office
SEPA	Single Euro Payments Area
SDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
SLAPP	strategic lawsuit against public participation
SoHO	substances of human origin
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
Valletta Convention	European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised)
VC	voluntary contribution
Venice Commission	European Commission for Democracy through Law

PART I – INTRODUCTION

1.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW

1.1.1 UKRAINE AND THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Ukraine became the 37th member State of the Council of Europe on 9 November 1995. Accordingly, it has entered into, and has agreed to honour, a number of specific commitments which are listed in Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe Opinion 190.

Ukraine accepted the obligations incumbent on all member States under Article 3 of the Statute:[12] compliance with the principles of the rule of law as well as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons placed under its jurisdiction. Ukraine is under an ongoing monitoring procedure by PACE with regard to its honouring of commitments and obligations.

To date, the country has signed and ratified 99 conventions and protocols[13] of the Council of Europe and is subject to a number of Council of Europe mechanisms, including those of the European Court of Human Rights (the European Court), the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (the Committee of Ministers), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress), the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe (the Commissioner), the European Commission for Democracy through Law (the Venice Commission), the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT), the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL), the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR), the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ACFC), the Committee of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Committee), the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA), and the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (COMEX).

Ukraine has benefited from country-specific and regional co-operation programmes with the Council of Europe since 2005. Past programmes backed by the European Union (EU) aimed to support the development of constitutional justice, strengthen measures to prevent and combat economic crime, enhance gender equality and violence against women standards, promote efficiency of the justice system, support implementing European standards on anti-discrimination and rights of persons belonging to national minorities, and enhance action on cybercrime and cyber resilience. Similarly, voluntary contributions by Council of Europe member States have made it possible to implement projects in the areas of remedies and housing solutions for war-affected people, rights of internally displaced persons, returnees, veterans and personnel of armed forces, freedom of expression and media, gender equality and combating violence against women, rights of children including child-friendly justice, combating hate speech, social protection, constitutional and legal reforms, judiciary and public prosecution, electronic evidence of war crimes and gross human rights violations, law enforcement, detention conditions, multilevel governance, democracy and human rights at local level, support to preparations for post-war elections and youth. The Action Plans set out to support democratic reforms in Ukraine for the periods 2011-2014, 2015-2017, 2018-2022 and 2023-2026 have provided a more strategic framework for co-operation with the Council of Europe.

On 17 June 2022, the European Commission presented its opinion on Ukraine's membership application. Following this, the European Council recognised Ukraine's European perspective and granted it candidate status on 23 June 2022. In this context, the Council of Europe remains ideally positioned to assist in the implementation of Ukraine's ambitious reform agenda. This agenda is crucial for advancing Ukraine's integration into the EU, as many of the EU's benchmarks align with the values and principles enshrined in the Council of Europe's conventions and recommendations.

[12] Council of Europe (1949), Statute of the Council of Europe, ETS No. 1.
[13] Council of Europe Treaty Office (2026), Treaty list for Ukraine: Signed conventions and protocols with ratification and Signed conventions and protocols without ratification.

Following its application for membership of the European Union on 28 February 2022 and the opening of accession negotiations at the Intergovernmental Conference on 25 June 2024, Ukraine made further progress in 2025 with the adoption of road maps on national minorities, the rule of law, public administration reform and the functioning of democratic institutions, which the European Commission assessed positively. The joint statement between the European Commission and Ukraine in Lviv in December 2025 highlights the completion of the bilateral screening process of all negotiation chapters and the European Commission's assessment that all six clusters are ready to be opened. The joint statement further expresses the expectation of opening the clusters, starting with the fundamentals cluster without delay, followed by further clusters, with the European Council carrying out work with a view to preparing the next steps. On 15 June 2026, the European Council opened negotiations on Cluster 1: the "Fundamentals"[14] in Ukraine's EU accession process. In its common position on Cluster 1: "Fundamentals", the EU set interim benchmarks at horizontal level and for Chapters 23 and 24, which must be met before the negotiation process can advance further, as well as benchmarks for the provisional closure of Chapters 5, 18 and 32.

Ukraine has been a member of the Council of Europe Development Bank since 15 June 2023. Following a member State-driven application process, the CEB can provide a meaningful contribution by financing investment projects with high social added value, fostering inclusion and improving the living conditions of the populations at high risk across Europe. With the Strategic Framework 2023-2027, the CEB has committed to focus increasingly on member States where social needs appear higher, thus maximising its impact. In this context, the CEB mainly part-finances projects (loans and guarantees) in the following lines of action: investing in people and enhancing human capital, promoting inclusive and resilient living environments, and supporting jobs and economic and financial inclusion. The CEB has played an active role in Ukraine, in particular through the implementation of projects aiming to support Ukraine's reconstruction, urgent needs, recovery and long-term social development. The CEB supported projects aimed at restoring damaged health infrastructure, addressing critical needs in mental health and rehabilitation, and projects in the housing sector and for vulnerable displaced people, and microfinance.

1.1.2 Added value of the technical assistance programmes of the Council of Europe

As emphasised in the "Reykjavík Declaration – United around our values", Council of Europe co-operation programmes form an integral part of the unique strategic triangle of standard setting, monitoring and technical co-operation: the development of legally binding standards is linked to their monitoring by independent monitoring bodies and other mechanisms and supplemented by technical co-operation to facilitate their implementation. The Council of Europe's actions are developed and implemented in areas where the Organisation has strong expertise and added value.

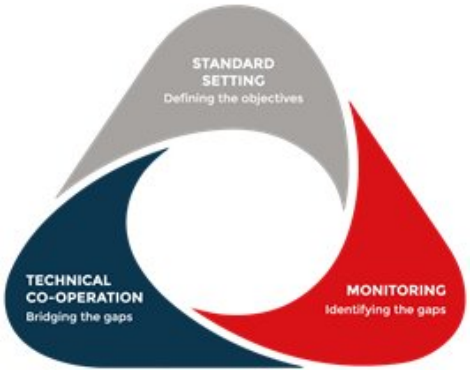


Figure 1: Council of Europe strategic triangle

[14] Including the functioning of democratic institutions, public administration reform, chapters 23 - judiciary and fundamental rights, 24 – justice, freedom and security, economic criteria, chapters 5 - public procurement, 18 - statistics, 32 - financial control.

This Action Plan builds, to a large extent, on the most recent decisions, resolutions, recommendations, findings, conclusions of reports and opinions of the Council of Europe's monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies in respect of the country, as well as the judgments of the European Court regarding Ukraine. It also takes into account the Reykjavík Principles for Democracy and the Secretary General's annual reports. In addition, it is developed on the basis of the results of the previous Action Plan with the Council of Europe and reflects the priorities of the country's reforms following its application for membership of the European Union on 28 February 2022, the opening of accession negotiations at the Intergovernmental Conference on 25 June 2024 and the completion of bilateral screening meetings with the European Commission in September 2025. The Action Plan incorporates the findings and recommendations of the European Commission's annual reports on Ukraine, in particular its 2025 report, as well as the joint statement between the European Commission and Ukraine dated 11 December 2025 and road maps on national minorities, the rule of law, public administration reform and the functioning of democratic institutions,.

In developing the present Action Plan and designing the technical co-operation support given to reforms, the gaps identified by the Council of Europe institutions, monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies have been taken into account, with the relevant source documents being included in Appendix IV.

Relevant Council of Europe conventions and other instruments of the Organisation have also been used as reference material for areas of co-operation included in this Action Plan.

Where appropriate, the Action Plan will include a parliamentary dimension aimed at increasing the impact of the actions of the Parliament of Ukraine and ensuring ownership by its members. Projects that aim for legislative change should benefit from peer-to-peer exchanges between members of parliament of the Parliament of Ukraine and members of parliament from other member States on their experience in this regard. The continued dialogue of the PACE with the Parliament of Ukraine and exchanges with national parliaments will contribute to strengthening democratic resilience, legislative follow-up, accountability and institutional continuity, ensuring that Council of Europe support to Ukraine remains anchored in both technical co-operation and political and parliamentary engagement.

Furthermore, the Action Plan will integrate a local and regional dimension aimed at reinforcing local self-government in Ukraine and ensuring ownership by local and regional elected representatives. The Congress will help facilitate the recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine at local and regional levels, guided by its comprehensive strategy[15] that acknowledges the central role of local and regional authorities. Technical co-operation that supports decentralisation, local democracy, and good governance should benefit from peer-to-peer exchanges between local and regional elected representatives from Ukraine and their counterparts from other member States on their experiences in these fields. The continued dialogue of the Congress with Ukrainian local and regional authorities and their associations will contribute to strengthening local democratic resilience, good governance, accountability and institutional continuity, ensuring that Council of Europe support for Ukraine remains anchored in both technical co-operation and political and local governance engagement. A monitoring visit will also ensure an opportunity to further develop dialogue with the Ukrainian authorities on strengthening local self-government in line with the principles of the European Charter of Local Self-Government.

The Council of Europe Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) will continue to play a significant role in supporting the national capacity of Ukraine to implement the European Convention on Human Rights (the Convention) and other Council of Europe standards as well as the recommendations of Council of Europe institutions and monitoring mechanisms. This will be achieved in partnership with local institutions relying on the expertise developed across various areas of the Organisation. The relevant thematic HELP online courses will be integrated transversally into the capacity-building activities of the Action Plan.

1.1.3 Main results of the previous Action Plan

The present Action Plan takes into account the outcomes of the previous Action Plan for Ukraine "Resilience, Recovery and Reconstruction" 2023-2026[16] as summarised below.

[15] CG(2026)50-10 report "A strategic approach to supporting the recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine at local and regional levels".
[16] CM(2022)187-final – [1452/2.4] Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine – "Resilience, Recovery and Reconstruction" 2023-2026. Document approved by the Committee of Ministers on 14 December 2022.

Human rights

- The protection of fundamental rights in wartime conditions was strengthened and access to justice and remedies for war-affected people was improved; public authorities have a better capacity to investigate and address human rights violations linked to the war through Convention-based guidance and capacity building for the Office of the Prosecutor General, investigators, judges, lawyers and legal aid providers.
- Practical support was provided to people affected by the war by issuing step-by-step legal guides for various life situations.
- Rights of persons and groups at risk of discrimination, exclusion or hatred were better protected, including those of IDPs, returnees, veterans and their families, children affected by the war and persons belonging to national and other minorities.
- Access to housing, social and digital services and remedies for IDPs and returnees was improved; a total of 14 320 people, of whom 46% were IDPs, benefited from digital services, and civil society organisations (CSOs) reached out to 833 IDPs through community-based actions.
- The availability and quality of trauma-sensitive social services for veterans and their families were strengthened across a wider range of territorial communities.
- Child-friendly justice was strengthened.
- Using a monitoring methodology developed by the Council of Europe, the Ombudsperson's Office enhanced its capacity to identify rights violations, assess service accessibility and engage with veterans, civil society and local authorities.
- Ukraine advanced barrier-free policies and strengthened the legal framework for employing persons with disabilities through the Law on Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts to Ensure the Right of Persons with Disabilities to Work.
- Ukrainian institutions strengthened their capacity to implement the standards of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention) by developing improved practices, protocols and co-operation mechanisms adapted to wartime conditions.
- The State Service of Ukraine for Ethnic Affairs and Freedom of Conscience (DESS) enhanced its capacity to monitor the Action Plan on National Minorities.

Rule of law

- Ukraine's judicial reform advanced significantly: to better perform its constitutional mandate, the Constitutional Court of Ukraine (CCU) was strengthened in line with Venice Commission recommendations and European Union accession requirements through key amendments, the operationalisation of the Advisory Group of Experts (AGE) in 2023 (conducting extensive vetting across all three appointment quotas) and the appointment of two new CCU judges in 2025.
- Various structural issues on judicial independence and discipline were addressed, leading to the Committee of Ministers' closure of the *Oleksandr Volkov v. Ukraine* case in December 2025; the outstanding measures continue to be supervised within the *Denisov / Golovchuk* group of cases.
- The Public Prosecution Service Strategy 2025-2028 was developed and, by April 2026, with Council of Europe support, the national register of victims of war crimes had documented 223 546 war crimes.
- Convention-compliant mechanism for the review of life sentences was put in place, addressing a longstanding complex issue of irreducibility of life-sentences in Ukraine, which led to the closure by the Committee of Ministers of the *Petukhov v. Ukraine (No.2)* group of cases in September 2025.
- Draft laws on the penitentiary system and its disciplinary statute were developed.
- Senior prison management increased their awareness of outstanding CPT recommendations. Harm-reduction efforts were expanded in prisons through capacity building, with needle and syringe programmes, positioning Ukraine as a regional leader in prison-based harm reduction.

- Addressing an outstanding MONEYVAL recommendation, law-enforcement agencies and the Office of the Prosecutor General introduced a joint policy mandating investigators and prosecutors to conduct financial investigations in all cases of profit-generating crimes.
- Key institutions, including the Ukrainian Parliament and the Ministry of Justice, enhanced their engagement in developing legislation in compliance with the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention) and its Second Additional Protocol on enhanced co-operation and disclosure of electronic evidence.

Democracy

- Several key laws strengthening local governance, including the Law on Service in Local Self-Government Bodies, the Law on Public Consultations and the Law on Local Democracy, significantly advanced Ukraine's compliance with its obligations under the European Charter of Local Self-Government.
- Ukraine adopted the Law on Media in 2022 and further amended the Law on Advertising in 2023, marking significant progress towards European Union accession; a total of 15 legal opinions were provided on key media issues, guiding the drafting process of media legislation in a timely manner.
- Ukraine piloted its first citizens' assemblies in Zviahel and Slavutych in late 2024, resulting in formal municipal action plans, and expanded deliberative processes in 2026 to Kyiv (Obolon district), Rivne community, and the Lviv Agglomeration.
- With the previous Action Plan's support, youth policy stakeholders and youth workers found space to identify needs and co-design inclusive youth policies, anchoring youth perspectives in recovery decision making. The Council of Europe also helped institutionalise youth participation through inclusive school participatory budgeting, with 11 communities adopting regulations that now empower over 6,200 children – including those with special educational needs – to participate in voting and decision-making processes within their schools.
- The "Trauma-informed youth work" programme was rolled out with a revised human rights and trauma-informed training manual that helps displaced and traumatised young people access their rights, rebuild their lives and participate meaningfully in decision making.

1.1.4 Consultation process

The Action Plan has been prepared following extensive consultations with the Ukrainian authorities and in an inclusive process involving permanent representations of Council of Europe member States. Relevant national strategic documents identifying priorities and/or main lines of action have also been consulted to ensure the Council of Europe's support matches the country's needs and priorities and is coherent with other national initiatives. Any reference in the Action Plan to national legislation, strategies, policies, action plans or any other national document does not represent an endorsement of such documents by the Council of Europe.

On 21 October 2025, the Committee of Ministers examined the progress review report on the implementation of the previous Action Plan, took note of its outcomes and paved the way for the new Action Plan.

Between 24 and 26 February 2026, consultations on the Action Plan were conducted with national authorities at all levels in Kyiv. The consultations were carried out at the strategic level through a high-level brainstorming discussion and at the technical level through four thematic roundtables, each dedicated to a priority area of the Action Plan, as well as a separate session with law-enforcement representatives. Consultations were specifically organised with civil society representatives. In addition, consultations with international partners, especially the European Union, through co-ordination and project steering committee meetings, took place in the preparation of this document. On 5 May 2026, representatives of the Council of Europe Secretariat and the Ukrainian authorities held the fourth and last Steering Committee meeting under the previous Action Plan in Kyiv in order to assess its implementation.

On 11 May 2026, the Secretariat of the Rapporteur Group on Democracy of the Council of Europe (GR-DEM) and the Directorate of Programme Co-ordination of the Council of Europe (DPC), in close co-ordination with the Ukrainian authorities, organised an information meeting with all interested delegations to the Council of Europe in order to discuss and exchange views on the outline of the present Action Plan.

Gender equality was also extensively discussed during the preparation of the Action Plan, benefiting from the expertise of the gender advisers. The advisers ensured that, building on the Council of Europe *acquis* on gender equality and the dual approach of the Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029, the Action Plan advances gender equality through: specific, targeted action addressing gender equality, including positive action where appropriate; gender mainstreaming across all activities; and gender equality-related policy dialogue throughout its preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

An external evaluation of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine "Resilience, Recovery and Reconstruction" 2023-2026 was finalised in May 2026. The evaluation report and the accompanying management response and Action Plan indicates that the interventions in the Action Plan 2023-2026 have been closely aligned with Ukraine's national priorities. and have been demand-driven and highly responsive to both national reform objectives and the urgent needs resulting from the war. According to the external evaluation report, the Action Plan 2023-2026 was also collaboratively developed with key Ukrainian national institutions, including the Ministry of Justice, the Office of the Prosecutor General, the National Police and various parliamentary bodies. The evaluation report noted that the Action Plan 2023-2026 is grounded in the Council of Europe's comparative advantage and that its programmes make good use of the Organisation's normative authority, monitoring mechanisms and advisory capacity. Furthermore, the evaluation underlined that the war context reinforced the relevance of the Action Plan 2023-2026, which demonstrated the capacity to adapt to emerging needs while preserving long-term reform objectives.

1.2 ACTION PLAN GOALS

The Action Plan is a strategic programming instrument for the period 2027-2030. The Action Plan will serve to:

- contribute to the development and facilitate the effective implementation of a peace plan for Ukraine;
- reinforce Ukraine's democratic resilience by advancing good governance, the rule of law and human rights;
- support Ukraine's strategic goal of strengthening its security through European Union membership by aligning reforms with European standards.

The Action Plan will continue supporting Ukraine's efforts to fulfil its obligations as a Council of Europe member State and to bring the country's legislation, institutions and practice further into line with Council of Europe standards in the areas of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. It also contributes to supporting the implementation of key reforms that are paramount for the European Union accession process.

The Action Plan areas for co-operation are described below:

- The Council of Europe will continue to support the authorities of Ukraine in progressing with (and completing where possible) the reforms undertaken in strategic areas, in particular the following:

    - effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights at national level, by notably execution of judgments of the European Court of Human rights;
    - effective implementation of the European Social Charter;
    - rights of internally displaced persons, returnees and other war-affected people;
    - rights of veterans;
    - gender equality – violence against women and domestic violence – human trafficking;
    - anti-discrimination, diversity and inclusion – Roma– national minorities, regional or minority languages – lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex (LGBTI) – migrants;
    - children's rights;
    - freedom of media and information integrity;
    - elections – democratic governance and dialogue – civil society;
    - effective implementation of the European Charter of Local Self-Government;
    - education;

- youth;
- independence and efficiency of justice;
- prisons – police – deprivation of liberty;
- corruption – money laundering – economic crime;
- cybercrime – data protection.

- The Council of Europe and the authorities in Ukraine jointly identified new areas of co-operation on the basis of the more recent work carried out by Council of Europe institutions, monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies, in particular the following:

  - health protection;
  - integrity and governance of sport;
  - culture and cultural heritage;
  - artificial intelligence (AI).

Work undertaken in these areas will be based on the Council of Europe's conventions and/or recommendations by the relevant monitoring and advisory bodies. The Action Plan will provide expert and technical assistance in the practical implementation of the Council of Europe's standards in priority areas and in enhancing the capacity of relevant institutions to function effectively. This will also include measures for enhancing co-ordinated actions between stakeholders, which are a prerequisite for addressing complex governance challenges and for fostering dialogue with civil society.

The Council of Europe applies a human rights approach at all levels and stages of its activities. This approach incorporates human rights norms and processes into project management. At the same time, the human rights approach attempts to avoid any unintentional human rights harm, imbalance or negative impact in its work. This approach is a cross-cutting priority for the Action Plan. As part of the human rights approach, promoting gender equality and therefore gender mainstreaming remains a key component of the present Action Plan. Gender mainstreaming will help to address more effectively the needs of individuals living in Ukraine without discrimination and to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the implementation of the Action Plan.

In meeting its objectives, this Action Plan will support Ukraine in its efforts to implement the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

PART II – PRIORITIES FOR 2027 TO 2030

2.1 PRIORITY I – SAFEGUARDING HUMAN RIGHTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR PEACE AND STABILITY[17]

Human rights protection and accountability for the Russian Federation's war crimes against Ukraine are central to Ukraine's democratic security and post-war recovery. By strengthening legal frameworks, institutional capacities and access to justice, this priority aims to ensure that war crimes and human rights violations are investigated and prosecuted, that victims and survivors have access to effective gender-responsive and age/disability-sensitive remedies and reparation, and that human rights standards are fully implemented, contributing to lasting peace and democratic stability in line with Council of Europe standards and Ukraine's EU accession commitments.

Ukraine has ratified major European and international human rights instruments. The country has signed 124 treaties of the Council of Europe, 99 of which have been ratified.[18] As a High Contracting Party to the Convention, Ukraine is bound to align its domestic framework with the Convention as interpreted by the European Court, bearing in mind the importance of supervision over the execution of judgments concerning Ukraine by the Committee of Ministers.

The Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has created an extremely challenging environment for safeguarding human rights and ensuring accountability. Widespread displacement, civilian casualties and the destruction of critical infrastructure have severely hampered Ukrainian citizens' access to justice and the protection of human rights. The country's legal and judicial systems are under immense strain, making it difficult to document abuses and prosecute war crimes and human rights violations, particularly in areas outside government control. CSOs, including women's rights organisations, which are crucial for monitoring violations and advocating for victims and survivors, often work under the threat of intimidation or violence. Maintaining public trust in institutions and ensuring effective gender-responsive accountability mechanisms remain critical challenges for Ukraine as it seeks lasting peace and stability.

Through this Action Plan, the Council of Europe will support Ukraine in investigating war crimes and human rights violations, supporting the human rights-compliant collection of evidence and the execution of individual and inter-state European Court judgments. The Action Plan will promote a victim/survivor-centred, gender-responsive, age/disability-sensitive and trauma-informed approach, ensuring that victims and survivors have access to justice and compensation. This will contribute to broader efforts to sustain peace and ensure that the wounds of the conflict are addressed and that gender equality is promoted through all actions.

Beyond this Action Plan, the Council of Europe plays a central role in advancing a comprehensive accountability architecture for the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine, in line with the Reykjavík Declaration. As highlighted by the 2026 report "The New Democratic Pact for Europe in Times for Rupture of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, the Council of Europe is helping build accountability for Russian Federation's war of aggression, where none existed before, while placing democratic resilience at the centre of recovery and reconstruction. The Council of Europe's support has contributed to the establishment of an international compensation mechanism. In accordance with the decision taken at the Council of Europe Reykjavík Summit in May 2023, the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine (the Register of Damage for Ukraine)[19] was established as the first component of this mechanism.

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[17] This priority area covers the operational pillar "Securing human rights and fundamental freedoms" of the Council of Europe Programme and Budget.
[18] Council of Europe Treaty Office (2026), Treaty list for Ukraine: Signed conventions and protocols with ratification and Signed conventions and protocols without ratification.
[19] The Register of Damage for Ukraine was created through Resolution CM/Res(2023)3 of the Committee of Ministers of 12 May 2023 establishing the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, amended by Resolution CM/Res(2023)5, as confirmed by Resolution CM/Res(2025)3 of the Committee of Ministers of 9 July 2025. The Register of Damage for Ukraine has its seat in The Hague (the Netherlands), with a satellite office in Ukraine.

The diplomatic conference held in The Hague on 16 December 2025 adopted the Convention establishing an International Claims Commission for Ukraine (CETS No. 229), within the Council of Europe framework, as the second component of the international compensation mechanism. The International Claims Commission will be constituted once 25 ratifications have been deposited and the necessary initial funding is in place. On 25 June 2025, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the President of Ukraine signed the Agreement on the Establishment of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine, to prosecute the crime of aggression against Ukraine, filling a crucial gap left by the jurisdictional limits of the International Criminal Court, ensuring accountability for top decision makers responsible for the aggression. The Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Management Committee of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine was adopted on 15 May 2026 at the 135th Session of the Committee of Ministers in Chișinău by 36 member States and the European Union. As underlined by the Commissioner on 11 December 2025,[20] pursuing accountability is essential for a just and lasting peace. The Special Tribunal and the International Claims Commission for Ukraine will serve to build leverage and diversify avenues for accountability. The Council of Europe will promote coherence, complementarity and interoperability between relevant domestic inventories and the Register of Damage for Ukraine in line with the Riga Principles.[21] In his memorandum on human rights elements for peace in Ukraine, the Commissioner affirmed that human rights must guide any discussion towards peace, as a guiding principle, a position strongly supported by PACE in its Resolution 2605 (2025).[22] On 9 July 2025, the European Court delivered a judgment in the interstate case *Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia*, holding Russia accountable for widespread and flagrant abuses of human rights arising from the conflict in Ukraine since 2014, in breach of the Convention. In December 2025, the Committee of Ministers started its supervision of this judgment and delivered its first decision. It condemned the unlawful military attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure in Ukraine, the conduct of Russian agents in occupied territories and the abduction and unlawful transfer to Russia of Ukrainian children.[23] In June 2026, the Committee of Ministers continued its supervision of this case, focusing on the cluster of unlawful transfer of Ukrainian children to Russia. It condemned in the strongest possible terms the systematic practice of the unlawful transfer by the Russian authorities of Ukrainian children, without any parental or legal consent, from the temporarily occupied territories to Russia and, in many cases, the adoption there of Ukrainian children with the aim of integrating them potentially indefinitely in families or institutions in Russia.

Under this Action Plan, technical co-operation will support victims and survivors of war and help rebuild and maintain trust in democratic and judicial institutions. The effective national implementation of the Convention and the execution of European Court judgments, particularly in relation to systemic and structural human rights problems, remain the principal challenges to securing human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Council of Europe will provide gender-responsive support to the authorities in line with European and international standards, building expertise and enhancing domestic institutional capacities to promote implementation.

To ensure long-term democratic stability, the Council of Europe will support accountability and reparation for war crimes committed by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, including conflict-related violence against women and children. *See Gender equality – violence against women and domestic violence – human trafficking; and Children's rights under Priority II.*

The Action Plan will promote victim/survivor-centred, gender-responsive, age/disability-sensitive and trauma-informed approaches and ensure access to justice and compensation for war victims. *See Rights of internally displaced persons, returnees and other war-affected people; Rights of veterans; and Gender equality – violence against women and domestic violence – human trafficking under Priority II.*

[20] Commissioner (2025), "High-level meeting on human rights and the pathway to peace in Ukraine" (CommHR(2025)67).
[21] Declaration of the Informal Conference of Ministers of Justice of the Council of Europe, on the occasion of the conference entitled "On the path to justice for Ukraine: advancing accountability, reuniting children with their families, and supporting the resilience of its justice system" (11 September 2023, Riga, Latvia).
[22] Resolution 2605 (2025) "Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine".
[23] 1545th meeting (2-4 December 2025) (DH) – H46-34 Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia (Application No. 8019/16) (CM/Del/Dec(2025)1545/H46-34).

Technical co-operation under this priority will contribute to Ukraine's democratic security and the New Democratic Pact for Europe by promoting effective human rights protection mechanisms and ensuring accountability for war crimes committed by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and by building stronger democratic institutions.

The aim of this priority is to strengthen legal provisions and institutional capacities to ensure the observance of the Convention and the execution of the European Court's judgments in individual and inter-state cases, and to further transitional justice and address accountability by supporting evidence-based investigations of war crimes and human rights violations. The priority area will also contribute to the effective advancement of gender equality in line with the Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029, including in relation to European Court case law, implementation of the European Court's judgments and the furthering of transitional justice and accountability.

This priority will also directly support progress towards the relevant interim benchmarks in the EU common position under Cluster 1:"Fundamentals", in particular those concerning the protection of fundamental rights in practice, including through strengthened implementation of the legal and policy framework, enhanced capacity of independent fundamental rights institutions, support for the development and subsequent implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy until 2035 and action plan, and preparation for the restoration of fundamental rights and freedoms following the end of martial law.

The actions will contribute to the implementation by Ukraine of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, in particular goal 3 (good health and well-being - target 3.5), goal 4 (quality education – target 4.7) goal 5 (gender equality – targets 5.1. 5.2 and 5.c),), goal 10 (reduced inequalities – targets 10.2 and 10.3), and goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions – targets 16.1, 16.3,16.6,16.10 and 16.a).

Effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights at national level

The Reykjavík Declaration underlines the primary obligation of all High Contracting Parties to the Convention to secure to everyone within their jurisdiction the rights and freedoms defined therein in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity and the importance of taking into account the case law of the European Court in a way that gives full effect to the Convention. Since 24 February 2022, Ukraine has operated under martial law with notified derogations[24] from certain Convention obligations; a partial withdrawal of the derogation was transmitted on 4 April 2024.[25]

Upholding human rights at the national level is directly linked to the execution of judgments of the European Court. The Reykjavík Declaration further affirms the importance of the full, effective and timely execution of the European Court's judgments and effective supervision of that process, to ensure the long-term sustainability, integrity and credibility of the Convention system. It further underlines that persistent structural and systemic human rights problems require not only legal remedies but also political engagement through a more co-operative, inclusive and dialogue-based supervision process, and highlights the importance of gender equality.

Despite the strain caused by the Russian Federation's war of aggression, Ukraine has made and is continuing to make substantial progress in the execution of European Court judgments. In the Annual Report 2025 "Supervision of the execution of judgments and decisions of the European Court of Human Rights", the Committee of Ministers commended Ukraine's active engagement in the execution process, with significant progress recorded in closing cases under both enhanced and standard supervision procedures.[26]

[24] The Permanent Representation of Ukraine to the Council of Europe conveyed this information to the Secretary General on behalf of the Government of Ukraine on 2 March 2022.
[25] Derogation under the previously defined Articles 3, 8.3, 9, 13, 20, 22, 24, 26 and 27 of the Covenant and Articles 4.3, 9, 13, 14 and 16 of the Convention is withdrawn by the Revised notification on Ukraine's derogation measures under the Convention (Article 15).
[26] In 2025, 97 Ukrainian cases closed, including two leading cases under enhanced supervision and nine leading cases under standard supervision. The two leading cases closed under enhanced supervision were *Oleksandr Volkov v. Ukraine* (structural issues related to judicial independence and discipline, closed in light of the substantial progress made in the execution of the general measures as demonstrated by the functioning of the new framework governing the system of judicial career and discipline following comprehensive constitutional, legislative and institutional reforms since 2016) and *Petukhov v. Ukraine (No.2)* (irreducibility of life sentences, closed following the introduction of a Convention-compliant mechanism for the review of life sentences). On 31 December 2025, 904 cases were pending execution (compared to 842 in 2024 and 766 in 2023), of which 55 were leading cases under enhanced supervision (compared to 48 in 2024 and 50 in 2023) and 59 were leading cases under standard supervision. The number of cases pending supervision as on 28 August 2026 is 955 of which 55 are leading cases under enhanced supervision and 68 are leading cases under standard supervision.

The main outstanding issues under the Committee of Ministers' supervision relate to lengthy judicial proceedings without effective remedies; non-enforcement of domestic court decisions; lack of effective investigations into deaths/ill-treatment; unlawful arrests; unlawful and lengthy detention on remand; poor material conditions of detention, as well as lack of adequate medical treatment in detention and lack of effective preventive and compensatory remedies in this regard; independence and impartiality of the judiciary, as well as independence of the prosecution service; unlawful search, seizure and interception operations; various deficiencies in the procedures related to different aspects of the treatment of asylum seekers; the authorities' failure to provide protection from domestic violence; the return of children under The Hague Convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction and enforcement of domestic judgments on contact arrangements; the absence of legal recognition and protection of same-sex couples, as well as cases related to freedom of assembly and freedom of expression; various problems related to the protection of property rights.[27]

Action Plan support will address both dimensions – national implementation of the Convention and the execution of European Court judgments – as a single continuum. The Action Plan will help align national legislation and institutional frameworks with the Convention; strengthen the national execution system, including the operational capacity of the Government Agent before the European Court and its Secretariat, notably their ability to address long-standing systemic and structural problems pending implementation, and the promotion of knowledge of the European Court's case law via the European Court's Knowledge Sharing Platform translated into Ukrainian; and reinforce interagency co-ordination mechanisms with a view to resolving systematic and structural problems identified in the judgment of the Court and thus contribute to the timely execution of general measures in cases pending supervision before the Committee of Ministers. This will also support Ukraine's European integration by advancing commitments under European Union *acquis* Chapters 23 (judiciary and fundamental rights) and 24 (justice, freedom and security).

The Action Plan will strengthen the capacity of legal professionals including judges, prosecutors and lawyers, as well as civil servants and future legal professionals to effectively apply the standards of the European Court in their daily work and to ensure that the latter are effectively embedded within domestic legal systems through HELP courses. In this regard, HELP courses play a key role in supporting the correct application of the Convention, as interpreted by the European Court, in line with the principle of subsidiarity. Such capacity building for judges, prosecutors, lawyers and public officials is explicitly envisaged under Ukraine's rule of law road map, adopted within the framework of Ukraine's European Union accession negotiations under Chapters 23 and 24.

The Action Plan will strengthen human rights protection and access to justice and information by enhancing judicial and non-judicial remedies, facilitating co-operation among key stakeholders and reinforcing human rights institutions and redress and relief mechanisms during the war and post-war recovery. To this end, the Council of Europe will strengthen the capacity and co-ordination of institutions[28] delivering judicial and non-judicial remedies to war-affected people in Ukraine by operationalising unified and gender-responsive judicial guidance, standardised compensation and redress procedures and accessible legal aid services. This will ensure coherence between policy development, judicial practice and non-judicial mechanisms, particularly in the context of ongoing institutional reforms and post-war recovery planning. The Action Plan will also raise awareness of access to justice, legal services and procedures for claiming war-related damage, with particular attention to persons and groups at high risk. To further operationalise access to effective remedies through an international, victim/survivor-centred approach, the Register of Damage for Ukraine is fully operational, collecting and documenting evidence and claims for damage, loss or injury resulting from the war. The Council of Europe will continue to assist war-affected people in exercising their right to compensation through the Register of Damage for Ukraine and address claimants' diverse needs through gender-responsive documentation, advocacy, practical assistance, capacity building, outreach and awareness raising.

[27] Committee of Ministers (2025), "Annual report – Supervision of the execution of judgments and decisions of the European Court of Human Rights".
[28] Notably the Supreme Court, the Office of the President of Ukraine, the National School of Judges, the Ministry of Justice, the Co-ordination Centre for Legal Aid Provision and the ombudsperson.

The Council of Europe will also support the local level through municipalities and local self-government bodies to expand outreach, counselling and application assistance for individuals, while enhancing the institutional capacity of local and regional authorities to document and submit claims for damage to their property and critical infrastructure in the Register of Damage for Ukraine. *See Rights of internally displaced persons, returnees and other war-affected people under Priority II.*

To guarantee that human rights protections are systematically maintained during war and post-war administration, reconstruction and recovery, the Action Plan will support institutional co-operation between national human rights bodies and local authorities. Through the Centre of Expertise for Multilevel Governance at the Congress, technical assistance will focus on building local-level resilience in delivering rights-based public services, in compliance with the principles of the European Charter of Local Self-Government (ETS No. 122). The general role of local and regional authorities in upholding human rights has been recently underlined by Recommendation 548 (2026) “Implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights by local and regional authorities”.

Building on Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)4 of the Committee of Ministers[29] and Recommendation 1742 (2006)[30] of PACE on human rights of members of the armed forces, the Action Plan will further support Ukraine in its efforts to strengthen human rights protection within the armed forces, including during the military recruitment process.[31] This will include support for the development of legislative and institutional safeguards for women serving in the Ukrainian Defence Forces, including pregnant servicewomen, as well as for all military personnel with children, in line with European standards.

The Action Plan will strengthen the capacity of authorities to investigate and prosecute conflict-related violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, and crimes against women and children and facilitate victims’ access to justice and comprehensive legal support. The Council of Europe will also support authorities in documenting and investigating cases of unlawful deportation and forced transfer of Ukrainian children to the Russian Federation, in line with international humanitarian law and international criminal law standards. *See Gender equality – violence against women and domestic violence – human trafficking; and Children’s rights under Priority II.*

The Action Plan will strengthen institutions for effective protection of human rights and the oversight of human rights implementation. At the national level, the Office of the Prosecutor General investigates war crimes[32] and works towards a victim/survivor-centred and gender-responsive approach to accountability, including through the implementation of a victim and witness support mechanism via the Co-ordination Centre for Support of Victims and Witnesses and the regional prosecutor’s offices' departments for the organisation of victim and witness support. This mechanism provides for comprehensive measures aimed at enhancing the protection of victims and witnesses from psychological or physical harm, improving the effectiveness of their participation in criminal proceedings, raising awareness of their rights, expanding their access to justice and support services, as well as enhancing cooperation and communication between state authorities and non-governmental organisations. The Council of Europe will continue its co-operation with the Prosecutor General's Office on the establishment of the National Register of Victims and Survivors of War Crimes, as envisaged by the rule of law road map. The Council of Europe will continue its support to strengthen the rights of victims and provide them with support through recommendations on the implementation of Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and by building the institutional capacity of specialised prosecution units and courts working with victims.

The Council of Europe has provided Convention-based guidance and targeted capacity building for prosecutors, investigators, judges and lawyers, including legal aid providers, aligned with the standards of international humanitarian and international criminal law. Under this Action Plan, support will continue to strengthen the capacity of investigative and prosecution authorities and the judiciary to address large-scale war-crimes cases.

[29] CM/Rec(2010)4 “Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member States on human rights of members of the armed forces (adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 24 February 2010 at the 1077th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies)”.
[30] Recommendation 1742 (2006) “Human rights of members of the armed forces”.
[31] The Commissioner (2025), “Memorandum on human rights elements for peace in Ukraine”.
[32] Riga Principles.

The PACE, in Resolution 2605 (2025),[33] underlined the ombudsperson's constitutional role in monitoring and documenting gross human rights violations and advocating for redress. The Action Plan will strengthen the Ombudsperson's Office to perform its monitoring role in respect of the rights of war-affected people and enhance its capacity to advocate for remedy and redress mechanisms.

In line with Ukraine's EU integration process, Ukraine has registered a new draft law on[34] the ombudsperson in parliament.[35] The Council of Europe will support Ukraine in aligning its national policy, legal framework and practice relating to the mandate, status and safeguards of the Ombudsperson's Office with the United Nations principles relating to the status of national institutions (the Paris Principles) and the Council of Europe's Venice Principles on the protection and promotion of the Ombudsman Institution.[36] Enhancing the legal and institutional framework of the Ombudsperson's Office and strengthening its National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) function will contribute to the development of an effective and resilient human rights protection system in Ukraine and support the country's European Union integration process. *See Prisons – police – deprivation of liberty under Priority IV.*

In response to Ukraine's unprecedented challenge of rebuilding its economy and institutions during wartime, this Action Plan aims to strengthen human rights, the rule of law and democracy as essential pre-requisites for recovery. Post-war recovery requires a governance environment that safeguards human rights, ensures accountability and promotes responsible business conduct. Ukraine faces challenges in integrating the 2011 United Nations "Guiding principles on business and human rights" and Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on human rights and business amid war-related institutional vulnerabilities that heighten risks across reconstruction-critical sectors. Building on these standards, the Action Plan will support the alignment of legislative and policy frameworks aimed at preventing abuses by business enterprises and providing access to remedy when abuses occur, integrated within the Convention implementation framework.

The technical co-operation under this Action Plan will contribute significantly to broader efforts to sustain peace. By strengthening mechanisms for justice, reparation, gender equality and victim support and addressing the long-term consequences of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine, including in their gendered dimensions, the Council of Europe will lay the foundations for lasting peace, stability and respect for human rights in Ukraine.

Technical co-operation to be implemented in this area has been designed taking into consideration the reports and conclusions of relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies that call on Ukraine to:

- strengthen human rights protection for war-affected people through improvements to the domestic legal and regulatory framework concerning remedies, relief measures and reparations, including the documentation of war-related damage, loss and injury, the development of a victim and witness support mechanism, as well as improved access to gender-responsive judicial and non-judicial remedies;
- harmonise legal and operational frameworks, as well as practice, to strengthen human rights enjoyment, including in the security and defence sector and to identify, prevent, investigate and remedy human rights violations affecting military personnel, veterans, law-enforcement officers and their families, in line with European and international human rights standards and good practices;
- enhance the capacities of national human rights institutions and civil society to effectively identify violations of and protect human rights standards, and provide support services to vulnerable victims, including in the war context;
- align the national policy, legal framework and practice related to the mandate, status and safeguards of the Ombudsperson's Office with the UN Paris Principles and the Council of Europe's Venice Principles on the protection and promotion of the Ombudsman Institution.

[33] Resolution 2605 (2025) "Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine".
[34] The draft law was adopted in the first reading of the Parliament in May 2026.
[35] The European Commission's "Ukraine Report 2025" nonetheless noted that progress remains partial, with the requirement to further align the draft law on the Commissioner. The Action Plan will support the Ombudsperson's Office in aligning its mandate, status and safeguards.
[36] European Commission (2025), "Ukraine Report 2025".

Expected outcomes – Safeguarding human rights and accountability for peace and stability

- National legislation, policies and practices are harmonised with the Convention and related Council of Europe standards, including in areas identified in the European Court's cases under enhanced Committee of Ministers supervision.
- Key national stakeholders (Parliament, Ministry of Justice, judiciary, prosecution, and other relevant institutions) improve their co-ordination on executing European Court judgments, notably with a view to resolving long-standing systemic and structural problems in the legal system of Ukraine.
- War crimes and human rights violations are effectively investigated, prosecuted and adjudicated.
- Victims of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine have improved access to justice, compensation and reparation through strengthened national and international accountability mechanisms.
- A scalable, inclusive, and secure digital system to ensure all those harmed by the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine are better able to assert and document their claims in the Register of Damage for Ukraine.
- The Ombudsperson's Office operates with a strengthened mandate and institutional status aligned with the UN Paris Principles and the Council of Europe's Venice Principles, ensuring its independence, effectiveness and accessibility for rights holders, regardless of their gender.
- Judicial, prosecutorial and law-enforcement authorities, the Ombudsperson's Office (including its NPM function) and the Government Agent before the European Court, as well as other competent authorities, improve capacity and strengthen co-ordination, across all levels of governance, utilising a multilevel approach, to apply human rights standards, execute European Court judgments, conduct investigations into ill-treatment and address violations through victim/survivor-centred, gender-responsive, age/disability-sensitive and trauma-informed approaches.
- Legal professionals, including future legal professionals and civil servants, have access to high-quality education on European human rights standards, EU acquis and enhance their knowledge and skills to address war-related legal issues through HELP courses.
- National training institutions increasingly integrate training on European human rights standards into initial and continuous professional training, including through the integration of relevant HELP courses, in line with Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)5.
- War-affected people, persons and groups at risk effectively access strengthened legal and regulatory frameworks, judicial and non-judicial remedies, and co-ordinated documentation of war-related damages and violations.
- Human rights of military personnel and their family members in Ukraine are protected and promoted, during the war and post-war periods.
- CSOs, including women's rights and women-led organisations and other rights holder organisations, have strengthened capacity to identify, document and report to the authorities on human rights violations in the war context through targeted support.

- Drug and addiction policies, legislation and practices are gender-responsive and aligned with Council of Europe standards, with a view to addressing issues related to transnational organised crimes and to the risks of drug use and behavioural addictions.
- The national regulatory framework is aligned with international human rights and business standards (such as UN Guiding Principles, CM/Rec(2016)3) and businesses are aware of the human rights standards and the link between responsible business conduct, competitiveness and sustainable recovery.

Main national partners: Parliament, Parliamentary Committee on Legal Policy and its Subcommittee on the Execution of Judgments of the European Court, Parliamentary Committee on State Building, Local Governance, Regional and Urban Development, Constitutional Court, Supreme Court, Office of the President of Ukraine, Office of the Government Agent before the European Court, Ombudsperson's Office, Office of the Prosecutor General, High Council of Justice, High Qualification Commission of Judges, Prosecutor's Training Centre, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Security Service, Ministry of Defence, Military Ombudsperson's Office, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity, Ministry of Veterans Affairs, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Digital Transformation, Ministry of Communities, Territories and Internally Displaced Persons, National School of Judges, Co-ordination Centre for Legal Aid Provision, Government Commissioner for Gender Policy, National Police, State Bureau of Investigation, National Health Service, Probation Centre, Co-ordination Centre for Mental Health, High School of Public Governance, High School of Advocacy, local and regional authorities, national associations of local and regional authorities, law universities, CSOs including women's rights and women-led organisations, chambers of commerce and business associations, business enterprises including women-led businesses.

2.2 PRIORITY II – FOSTERING SOCIAL INCLUSION AND PROTECTION OF MINORITIES, GROUPS AT RISK, WOMEN AND CHILDREN[37]

Drawing on the commitments set out in the Reykjavík Declaration, the Council of Europe is dedicated to fostering inclusive societies by strengthening the protection of minorities, persons and groups at risk of discrimination, exclusion or hatred and women, and by upholding equality, non-discrimination and meaningful participation in public life. The Reykjavík Declaration also underlines the importance of social justice for democratic stability and security and reaffirms a full commitment to protecting and implementing social rights under the European Social Charter (the Charter) system.

Social inclusion, the protection of minorities, persons with disabilities and persons and groups at risk and the advancement of gender equality are preconditions for democratic security, social cohesion and sustainable post-war recovery – ensuring that no one is left behind in Ukraine's reconstruction and broader efforts to contribute to peace and that the country emerges from the war with stronger, more equitable and more inclusive social foundations.

As a result of the ongoing war, around 5.9 million Ukrainians remain refugees abroad.[38] As of December 2025, 3.7 million remain internally displaced; 4.4 million returnees resided in Ukraine; and the share of IDPs in the population is 11.9%.[39] The poverty rate for 2025 reached 36.9%, remaining significantly higher than pre-2022 rates, pushing an additional 9 million people into poverty and setting back 15 years of progress. In January 2026, the unemployment rate in Ukraine edged down to 15.8%.[40]

[37] This priority area covers the operational pillars "Securing human rights and fundamental freedoms", "Acting for equality, diversity and respect", "Advancing social justice, good health and a sustainable environment" and "Upholding safety, security and integrity of society and persons" of the Council of Europe Programme and Budget.
[38] UNHCR (n.d.), "Ukraine refugee situation", UNHCR Operational Data Portal.
[39] IOM (2026), "Ukraine internal displacement report: general population survey, round 22, January 2026", Global Data Institute, Displacement Tracking Matrix.
[40] Centre for Economic Strategy (2026), "Ukraine War Economy Tracker".

Ongoing war and protracted displacement have exacerbated underlying vulnerabilities: the United Nations Children's Fund estimates that around 1.5 million children[41] have been severely affected. According to the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity, over 3.4 million Ukrainians have one or more disabilities,[42] and this number is increasing each month, largely due to the ongoing war. Approximately 100 000 war-related amputations have been recorded and the number of war veterans with disabilities continues to increase. According to "The veterans policy strategy until 2030", adopted in November 2024, the total number of veterans, family members of fallen service members and persons with disabilities as a result of the war in Ukraine exceeds 1.3 million people. Ukraine has more than 130 000 veterans with disabilities caused by the war.

As part of the Reykjavík Declaration, the Heads of State and Government adopted a "Declaration on the situation of the children of Ukraine" and launched the Consultation Group on the Children of Ukraine (CGU) in 2023 as an emergency response to the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine. The Secretary General of the Council of Europe has appointed a Special Envoy on the situation of children of Ukraine.

The Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine disrupted the monitoring cycle under ECRI, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML), and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), resulting in the absence of evaluation visits and the adoption of reports, opinions or resolutions until 2025. The monitoring visits of both ECRI and the FCNM resumed in 2025. As part of its sixth country monitoring cycle, ECRI examined its preliminary draft report on Ukraine at its 100th plenary meeting in March 2026, following a delegation visit to Ukraine in 2025. The forthcoming report will set out a new series of recommendations on measures to address racism and intolerance in Ukraine. In September 2025, the monitoring process of the FCNM resumed with the visit of the ACFC; the forthcoming opinion, expected in 2026, will provide renewed guidance for future reforms. The war had also limited the previous recommendations of both ECRI, the Advisory Committee on the FCNM (ACFC) and the Committee of Experts of the ECRML (COMEX). The sixth report submitted by Ukraine pursuant to the FCNM acknowledged that Ukraine could not implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers, including conducting a comprehensive census and reviewing the census methodology in close consultation with minority representatives, due to the ongoing war.

The Commissioner, in his memorandum on human rights elements for peace in Ukraine, stressed that reconstruction and recovery must be embedded in human rights, recognising that victims may experience harm in diverse ways depending on their individual circumstances. To ensure an inclusive and sustainable recovery process, recovery strategies should actively engage affected communities, especially groups at risk such as IDPs, women, families with children, persons with disabilities and older persons, in decision making.

The Council of Europe will support Ukraine in improving access to social rights, strengthening the protection of social and economic rights and fostering the social inclusion of persons and groups at risk and equal participation of persons belonging to national minorities including Roma, indigenous peoples, LGBTI persons and other discriminated against groups. It will also advance gender equality by promoting and safeguarding the rights of women and girls, including those from marginalised groups, and by preventing and combating violence, expanding access to victim/survivor-centred gender-responsive, age/disability-sensitive and trauma-informed services and justice, while ensuring their meaningful participation and leadership in decision making. These efforts will focus on developing sound legal frameworks and building institutional capacities, which will ensure effective protection of human rights and access to social rights, especially for children, women in all their diversity, persons with disabilities, IDPs, war-affected people, veterans and returnees. The Action Plan will place a specific focus on the rehabilitation and reintegration of orphaned, displaced and returned children, ensuring access to education, psychosocial and trauma-informed care, legal protection and child-friendly justice, and the embedding of children's best interests. *For accountability and justice for crimes against children, including unlawful deportation, see Effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights at national level under Priority I.*

[41] UNICEF (2024), "Humanitarian action for children 2025 – Ukraine and refugee response".
[42] European Disability Forum (2025), "Disability rights take the stage at Ukraine Recovery Conference 2025".

In this Action Plan, the Council of Europe will provide expertise and support for the drafting, implementation and monitoring of anti-discrimination legislation, policies and institutional frameworks. These will be aimed at strengthening the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, including Roma, and of LGBTI persons; combating discrimination, hate speech and hate crime; and promoting equality, inclusion and the use of regional or minority languages. The Council of Europe will also support the protection of the rights of victims of human trafficking. The Council of Europe's assistance will be based on the revised Charter, the Istanbul Convention, the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (the Lanzarote Convention), the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, the FCNM and the ECRML, as well as the recommendations of their monitoring bodies, namely the ECSR, the Lanzarote Committee, GREVIO, GRETA, the ACFC, the Committee of Experts of the ECRML and ECRI, as well as the opinions of the Venice Commission. It will further build on the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029 and relevant recommendations adopted by the Committee of Ministers.

This priority will also directly support the implementation of the Action Plan for the Protection of the Rights of National Minorities and progress towards the relevant interim benchmarks in the EU common position under Cluster 1:"Fundamentals", in particular those concerning the rights of persons with disabilities, equality and anti-discrimination, hate crime and hate speech, national minorities, gender equality, combating violence against women and domestic violence and children's rights.

These actions will contribute to the implementation by Ukraine of the SDGs, especially goal 1 (no poverty – targets 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3), goal 3 (good health and well-being – targets 3.4 and 3.8), goal 4 (quality education – targets 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.7), goal 5 (gender equality – targets 5.1,5.2,5.3,5.5, 5.a and 5.c), goal 8 (decent work and economic growth – targets 8.5 and 8.8), goal 10 (reduced inequalities – targets 10.2 and 10.3), goal 11 (sustainable cities and communities – targets 11.1 and 11.3) and goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions – targets 16.1, 16.7,16.a and 16.b).

Effective implementation of the European Social Charter

The Reykjavík Declaration reaffirms the Council of Europe's full commitment to the protection and implementation of social rights as guaranteed by the European Social Charter (Charter) system and highlights the importance of social justice for democratic stability and security. Ukraine ratified the revised Charter in 2006, accepting 76 of its 98 paragraphs but has not accepted the system of collective complaints.

Safeguarding social and labour rights during war has become a vital responsibility for the authorities as the challenges resulting from the war have a direct impact on the implementation of the Charter by Ukraine. Since February 2022, the number of citizens in need of social support has been increasing, placing an additional burden on the State's limited financial resources. However, despite the current crisis caused by the war, the ECSR took note of the legislation regulating labour relations under martial law[43] and underlined in its conclusions of 2025[44] (thematic group "Labour rights") that the rights guaranteed by the Charter must not be diminished. Moreover, the findings of the ECSR from the 2019-2025 monitoring cycles indicate that Ukraine's labour and social legislation and practices face structural challenges requiring profound transformation.

The Action Plan will support the authorities in aligning the relevant national framework with the Charter, based on European Union *acquis* and transposing key European Union directives through legal expertise and facilitation of discussions with key stakeholders. Ukraine advanced the preparation of key reforms: the draft social code; the draft labour code (approved by the Cabinet of Ministers in January 2026 and submitted to parliament); draft laws on social dialogue and collective labour disputes; and the Law Ensuring the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to Work, effective from January 2026. The elaboration of the draft social code, which is crucial for the social protection of Ukrainian citizens, will also contribute to the execution of the European Court judgments, and particularly the pilot judgment in the case of *Yuriy Nikolayevich Ivanov v. Ukraine*, part of the *Ivanov v. Ukraine*, *Burmych and Others v. Ukraine* and *Zhovner v. Ukraine* groups of cases.[45]

[43] Law on the Organisation of Labour Relations under Martial Law.
[44] The ECSR found Ukraine in conformity with Article 2, paragraph 1, "Right to just conditions of work – Reasonable working time" of the Charter, which stems from the fact that according to the Ukrainian legislation, no occupation has regular working hours that exceed 60 hours per week. The ECSR found nine conclusions of non-conformity: Article 3, paragraphs 1, 2 and 3; Article 4, paragraph 3; Article 5; Article 6, paragraphs 1, 2, and 4; and Article 20.
[45] Details of the *Yuriy Nikolayevich Ivanov v. Ukraine* and *Zhovner v. Ukraine* cases, together with their status of execution, can be found under the case of *Burmych and Others v. Ukraine*.

These groups of cases highlight systemic shortcomings in the enforcement of domestic judicial decisions concerning, *inter alia*, obligations related to social payments and the lack of an effective remedy in this respect.[46] By reshaping the State's social policy and improving the effective implementation of domestic judicial decisions, the number of repetitive cases before both national courts and the European Court may be reduced, thereby contributing to an efficient and coherent system of rights protection. *See Effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights at national level under Priority I.*

The reform of the labour code, which envisages the transposition of more than 30 European Union directives, including those related to working time, transparent and predictable working conditions, work-life balance, occupational safety and health, and other key areas of labour regulation, aims to align national labour legislation with European standards, including the Charter, and is consistent with the European Commission's assessment in its 2025 report on Ukraine.

Another humanitarian consequence of the ongoing war is the rising number of persons with disabilities. At the policy level, Ukraine has been implementing the National Strategy for the Creation of a Barrier-Free Environment in Ukraine for the period until 2030 (the Barrier-Free Strategy) with the biannual action plan, supported by the Council of Europe. Local communities have their own local action plans, develop their strategic documents and allocate funding from local budgets to advance the Barrier-Free Strategy. More than 600 local communities have established barrier-free councils as advisory and consultative bodies, ensuring the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in local decision-making processes. The Council of Europe will support the implementation of the Barrier-Free Strategy and the improvement of the legal framework for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities.

At the legislative level, the Law Ensuring the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to Work has established a framework aligned with the Charter and relevant European Union *acquis* on equality and non-discrimination and gender equality in employment; however, further practical measures are needed to ensure effective implementation, as highlighted by the Council of Europe expert assessments. Moreover, work is ongoing on the development of legislation establishing the basic principles of State policy on a barrier-free society. This law aims to eliminate barriers in various areas of public life through the development of inclusive support services, improved accessibility and the participation of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes.

The situation of people with disabilities in detention settings also requires special attention, as the existing barriers exacerbate their vulnerability and limit their access to services and protection. Recognising this, the Council of Europe will support the Ministry of Justice in its efforts to improve the treatment and protection of people with disabilities in prisons, ensuring that the rights and dignity of this group at risk are safeguarded. *See Prisons – police – deprivation of liberty under Priority IV.*

With the adoption of the Law on the Mental Health System in January 2025 aligning Ukrainian legislation with European Union standards on occupational health and safety, Ukraine shifted towards a policy of community-based care, as highlighted by the European Commission in its 2025 report on Ukraine and also noted by the ECSR in its "Conclusions 2025". As the law is particularly relevant in the context of the growing mental health needs, the Council of Europe will support Ukraine in the implementation of the law in line with Charter standards, including by providing legal and policy expertise to align secondary legislation and implementing regulations with Articles 11 (the right to protection of health) and 13 (the right to social and medical assistance) of the Charter. The Council of Europe will support the transition from institutional to community-based mental healthcare by providing guidance on deinstitutionalisation. It will also strengthen the capacity of national and local authorities to co-ordinate, resource and deliver gender-responsive and trauma-informed mental health services. Relevant HELP courses – "Rights of persons with disabilities", "Introduction to the European Social Charter", "Labour rights as human rights", "Mental health and human rights" – will be promoted and integrated into the training of relevant professionals.

The Action Plan will support Ukraine in fulfilling its obligations under the Charter, taking into account the most recent conclusions of the ECSR, by improving labour-market policies and the regulatory framework and by enabling an effective model of social dialogue.

The Council of Europe will promote equal access to the labour market for persons with disabilities[47] and advance equal opportunities and equal treatment in employment, including equal remuneration for women and men without discrimination of any kind.[48]

[46] The updated national strategy and the action plan of January 2025 include (i) the creation of a mechanism for calculating the debt under judicial decisions and for its repayment; (ii) the review of social legislation, including the development of a draft social code; and (iii) the creation of a mechanism for the enforcement of court decisions delivered against State-owned entities now protected by moratoria.

The Council of Europe will support comprehensive gender-responsive reforms in the field of social protection, including social services, social benefits, social housing, social and pension insurance, social security, social dialogue and labour legislation. These reforms will include measures to promote the employment of persons with disabilities. In addition, they will ensure access to social rights for veterans, IDPs and other war-affected people. Further work is needed to introduce transparent and efficient social and pension insurance systems,[49] expand access to social housing[50] and improve the quality of social services for Ukrainian citizens, including older persons, persons with disabilities, children, IDPs and veterans, in line with the Charter. *For housing and reintegration policies for IDPs, see Rights of internally displaced persons, returnees and other war-affected people under Priority II.*

The Action Plan will strengthen the capacity of the Ombudsperson's Office to monitor social and labour rights in line with Charter standards and to enhance the capacity of national authorities to prepare information for statutory reporting to the ECSR.

Overall, the technical co-operation in this area will also contribute to the execution of European Court judgments with social-policy dimensions and support Ukraine in meeting European Union accession commitments under Chapter 19 (Social policy and employment). *See Effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights at national level under Priority I.*

Technical co-operation to be implemented in this area has been designed taking into consideration the reports and conclusions of relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies that call on Ukraine to:[51]

- modernise and strengthen the social protection system in line with the Charter by improving social and pension insurance efficiency, expanding social housing and enhancing targeted social services for older people, persons with disabilities, children, IDPs and veterans, mindful of identifying and removing gender-specific barriers in this context;
- develop and implement the Social Code in line with the Charter and case law of the ECSR;[52]
- develop and implement the gender-responsive Labour Code in line with the Charter and transpose key European Union *acquis* on working time, transparent and predictable working conditions, work-life balance, and occupational safety and health;
- promote disability inclusion and a barrier-free society by implementing the disability employment law, advancing the National Strategy for a Barrier-Free Environment until 2030 and accelerating deinstitutionalisation with community-based support.

HEALTH PROTECTION

The protection of human rights in the health field, including the right to health protection enshrined in Article 11 of the Charter, is an essential element of social life with a direct impact on other fundamental human rights and freedoms. Ukraine has signed the Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine and is actively engaged in the related intergovernmental activities.

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[47] Charter, Article 15.
[48] Charter, Article 1, paragraph 2, "to protect effectively the right of the worker to earn his living in an occupation freely entered upon"; Article 4, paragraph 3, "to recognise the right of men and women workers to equal pay for work of equal value"; Article 20 "The right to equal opportunities and equal treatment in matters of employment and occupation without discrimination on the grounds of sex"; Article 27 "The right of workers with family responsibilities to equal opportunities and equal treatment".
[49] Charter, Article 12 "The right to social security" and Article 23 "The right of elderly persons to social protection".
[50] Charter, Article 31 "The right to housing".
[51] Including the "Conclusions 2025" of the ECSR; *Burmych and Others v. Ukraine*.
[52] *Burmych and Others v. Ukraine*, *Ivanov v. Ukraine* and *Zhovner v. Ukraine* groups of cases.

The protection of health includes addressing criminal activities having a major impact on individual health and health systems. Ukraine is Party to the Council of Europe Convention on the Counterfeiting of Medical Products and Similar Crimes involving Threats to Public Health (the Medicrime Convention, CETS No. 211) and has signed the Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs (CETS No. 216). Ukraine is also a member State of the Council of Europe International Co-operation Group on Drugs and Addictions (the Pompidou Group). Relevant HELP courses – "Mental health and human rights" and "Human rights and drug use" – can serve as a basis for training schemes to be implemented.

The Action Plan will strengthen Ukraine's institutional and professional capacity to ensure respect for human rights in the health field, with a particular focus on mental healthcare, in order to prevent, identify and treat substance-related and digital addictions and associated mental health challenges that have been aggravated in the context of war, as well as to fight against criminal activities in the health field. *See Prisons – police – deprivation of liberty under Priority IV.*

As recent crises have demonstrated, ensuring the availability of and access to good-quality medicines and healthcare remains a challenge for Council of Europe member States. The European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines & HealthCare (EDQM) has supported and will continue to support Ukraine in maintaining the quality and safety of medicines and healthcare during the war, including by providing guidance for Ukrainian health authorities and laboratories on the detection of falsified or substandard medicines, support for laboratory quality assurance, and rapid information sharing through EDQM's alert systems.

The Council of Europe will support co-operation with the Ministry of Health in the field of substances of human origin (SoHO) and support Ukraine in implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1938 on standards of quality and safety for substances of human origin intended for human application, including by strengthening existing national supervisory capacities in the field of SoHO. In its 2025 report on Ukraine, the European Commission encouraged Ukraine to draw up a road map to implement Regulation (EU) 2024/1938 and to strengthen the administrative capacity and oversight to ensure its proper implementation and enforcement.

Technical co-operation to be implemented in this area has been designed to:

- enhance national standards aimed at improving the quality of medicines and healthcare to be aligned with Council of Europe and European standards;
- ensure access to quality medicines and consumer health products on the market;
- support the establishment of a new national control authority in the area of medicine and SoHo;
- ensure the capacity building of national health authorities and other relevant stakeholders through engagement with the EDQM.

RIGHTS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS, RETURNEES AND OTHER WAR-AFFECTED PEOPLE

The Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has resulted in widespread civilian casualties and destruction of infrastructure, leading to massive displacement. Since February 2022, millions have fled abroad or been displaced within the country. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM),[53] as of January 2026, approximately 3.7 million people are internally displaced within Ukraine, while more than 4.4 million people have returned from abroad. Returnees face reintegration challenges on their return, together with continued vulnerability linked to displacement.

At the policy level, Ukraine implemented the Strategy of State Policy on Internal Displacement until 2025, accompanied by an operational plan and delivered support to IDPs through a wide range of programmes, including financial assistance, housing support and compensation schemes, all of which reflect a fragmented policy landscape. This experience has highlighted the need for a more coherent and sustainable human rights approach. Ukraine adopted the new Strategy of State Policy on Internal Displacement for the period until 2030, in June 2026. The Council of Europe will assist Ukraine in implementing the new Strategy of State Policy and in ensuring its coherence with the State Housing Policy Strategy, with particular attention to measures aimed at strengthening the protection of housing rights of IDPs, returnees, other war-affected people and population from the temporarily occupied territories.

[53] IOM (2026), "325 000 Ukrainian returnees risk displacement again as winter energy crisis deepens, IOM Chief".

Following a series of organisational changes initiated in late 2024, including those introduced in August 2026, responsibilities for IDP and reintegration policy are distributed between the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity, and the Ministry for Communities, Territories and Internally Displaced Persons in accordance with their respective mandates. While this reorganisation aimed to streamline efforts and integrate support systems, it created transitional challenges, including capacity gaps and the need for stronger interinstitutional co-ordination between central authorities and local and regional authorities responsible for territorial administration and the protection of displaced populations.

According to the European Commission's 2025 report on Ukraine, persistent difficulties remain in ensuring sufficient budget allocations for social services, while Ukraine continues efforts to improve access to housing for people in need, particularly IDPs. The report also highlights challenges in evacuation, provision of accessible housing for persons and groups at risk and in maintaining the protection of citizens from occupied territories and IDPs as a priority. According to the IOM internal displacement report,[54] women and female-headed IDP households are disproportionately affected by displacement and caregiving responsibilities. The report underlines the importance of gender-responsive and sustainable recovery measures for displaced populations. The road map,[55] presented in February 2026 by Ukrainian CSOs, echoes these issues, highlighting the critical need for sustainable housing solutions, effective gender-responsive human rights protection and strengthened State policy. The road map urges a comprehensive housing policy to enable the gradual and safe transition of IDPs from temporary accommodation to adequate long-term housing, while addressing risks of social isolation, barriers to integration and existing fragmentation of housing support, compensation and recovery measures.

PACE, in its Resolution 2562(2024),[56] urged humanitarian support to ensure the safety and protection of IDPs in Ukraine, emphasising the urgent need to protect persons and groups at high risk among the displaced and war-affected people such as children, older persons and persons with disabilities. The PACE called for strong financial, legal and operational support for Ukraine's displacement policy, improved access to shelter and additional assistance for those most at risk. It also highlighted the necessity of long-term support programmes, including housing aid, restoration of property rights, business start-up funding, and comprehensive mental health and psychosocial services. In his memorandum on human rights elements for peace in Ukraine, the Commissioner highlighted that the war undermined IDPs' human rights, including the right to health, housing, work, private and family life, and access to social services.

Women and girls of all ages face particular risk to violence against women and trafficking. In the context of displacement, the risk is exacerbated, while displaced children require particular attention to ensure access to education, psychosocial support and protection. *See Gender equality – violence against women and domestic violence – human trafficking; and Children's rights under Priority II.*

Under this Action Plan, the Council of Europe will support Ukraine in developing a forward-looking, broader strategic framework on internal displacement to ensure its continuity, coherence and sustainability. National and local authorities will be assisted in developing and implementing sustainable integration and reintegration policies, ensuring a human rights and gender-sensitive approach for IDPs, returnees and war-affected people. National and local capacities to plan, deliver and monitor housing, (re)integration and access to essential services including health, education, social assistance, employment, documentation and mental health and psychosocial support services will be strengthened in line with Council of Europe standards. Relevant HELP courses – "Internal displacement and human rights" and "Transitional justice and human rights" – will be promoted in the training of relevant professionals. *See Effective implementation of the European Social Charter under Priority II.*

[54] IOM (2026), "Ukraine internal displacement report: general population survey, round 22, January 2026", Global Data Institute, Displacement Tracking Matrix.
[55] ZMINA (2026), "17 priority steps in the field of human rights protection in the context of armed aggression against Ukraine in 2026".
[56] Resolution 2562 (2024) "An urgent call to Europe and its partners: envisioning immediate and long-term policy solutions in support of the displaced people of Ukraine".

The Council of Europe will also support the development of information and advisory assistance systems for returnees, as well as for Ukrainians abroad considering a voluntary return, with a view to ensuring safe, dignified and gender-sensitive return. This will include strengthened referral mechanisms to essential services and an enhanced role for territorial communities and civil society organisations in the reception and reintegration of returnees.

The Ombudsperson's Office will be supported in monitoring and protecting the rights of IDPs and returnees, including through systematic gender-responsive monitoring of shelter accessibility and through nationwide information campaigns on available protection mechanisms and remedies. Particular attention will be paid to the protection of the rights of persons who remain in the temporarily occupied territories through providing for measures aimed at monitoring the observance of their rights, documenting violations, ensuring access to administrative, social and other public services, as well as to mechanisms for legal protection and the restoration of violated rights.

Rights of veterans

Based on figures from the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine, as of April 2026, there are 1.8 million veterans in Ukraine.[57] The growing community of veterans and service members transitioning to veteran status in Ukraine and their families calls for a holistic and co-ordinated human rights approach that ensures continuous protection of rights and access to services and integration through the full service-to-civilian pathway – from demobilisation and transition to civilian life – and supports the long-term well-being of veterans and their families.

To address these needs, the Action Plan will support a comprehensive human rights protection and integration framework for veterans and their families. This will include embedding Council of Europe standards into policies and procedures across veteran-related, defence and security institutions. The Council of Europe will strengthen legal and operational safeguards to prevent and address human rights violations in both wartime and post-war contexts and enhance co-operation among national institutions with a focus on the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, the Ombudsperson's Office and civil society.

The Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has led to a growing number of veterans with long-term, war-related injuries and conditions, including physical, sensory, mental health and cognitive ones. In the memorandum on human rights elements for peace in Ukraine, the Commissioner noted that a key part of Ukraine's recovery is the support of veterans, who need vocational training, employment and other social support to reintegrate successfully into civilian life. The Commissioner also underlined the importance of mental health and psychosocial support to address the psychological trauma of veterans. By providing these services, Ukraine can ensure the well-being of veterans and contribute to social stability during the recovery process.

The Council of Europe will assist Ukraine in developing sustainable and systemic reforms to ensure the rights of veterans and their families, consolidating human, social and labour rights guarantees. This will include further strengthening interagency co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms, in particular across the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Security Service, the Ministry of Justice and regional military administrations, to ensure rights are upheld and to prevent and respond to violations at all levels. Technical co-operation will be carried out to support relevant institutions through policy work, legislative updates, operational support and awareness raising. *See Effective implementation of the European Social Charter under Priority II.*

[57] State Tax Service of Ukraine (2026), "State Tax Service, with support of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine, has launched new service – tax support for veteran entrepreneurship".

Continuous capacity building for social workers, veterans' focal points, peer support mechanisms, local and regional authorities and community service providers will be prioritised. Municipal veteran hubs will serve as central points for local reintegration. All services will adopt victim/survivor-centred, trauma-informed and gender-sensitive approaches. Particular attention will be given to the specific needs of women veterans, families of fallen service members and persons with disabilities.

The Council of Europe will support the promotion and dissemination of human rights knowledge among military personnel, veterans, their families and relevant State institutions. The Council of Europe will also reinforce the capacities of the Ombudsperson, the Military Ombudsperson, the Military Law-Enforcement Service, the national police, the State Bureau of Investigation, prosecutors and the judiciary to identify, investigate and remedy violations in the armed forces, including veterans. *See Effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights at national level under Priority I.*

Moreover, the Action Plan will support the authorities in expanding the creation of a barrier-free environment and in providing access to vocational training and employment opportunities for veterans, in investing in digital platforms for information and service delivery, and in establishing robust mechanisms for ongoing consultation with veterans' organisations and civil society. The Council of Europe will support the empowerment of veterans by developing mechanisms and opportunities that enable their meaningful participation in democratic governance, community recovery, and public dialogue, while strengthening the capacity of relevant institutions to formulate and implement veteran-related policies in line with European standards The Council of Europe will continue to support these efforts by providing expertise, policy advice and access to European best practices, in order to ensure that veterans' rights are fully respected and protected as an integral part of Ukraine's recovery and long-term stability. *See Youth under Priority III.*

The growing number of veterans in the criminal justice system, approximately 1 600 on probation as of May 2026, with numbers expected to rise, requires tailored rehabilitation and reintegration programmes. The Council of Europe will support the Ministry of Justice in developing targeted measures, including trauma-informed care, vocational training and psychosocial support, to address their specific needs and promote successful reintegration. *See Prisons – police – deprivation of liberty under Priority IV.*

See Effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights at national level under Priority I; Effective implementation of the European Social Charter; Gender equality – violence against women and domestic violence – human trafficking; and Children's rights under Priority II.

Gender equality – violence against women and domestic violence – human trafficking

The Reykjavík Declaration highlights that gender equality and women's full, equal and effective participation in decision making are essential to the rule of law, democracy and sustainable development, and reaffirms the Council of Europe's pioneering role, including through the Istanbul Convention, in the fight against violence against women and domestic violence. The Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029 further strengthens these commitments and provides the overarching framework for this Action Plan's support to Ukrainian authorities in mainstreaming gender equality across all policies and programmes at both national and local levels, alongside targeted action and policy dialogue to advance gender equality. Advancing gender equality and preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence also contributes to the implementation of the New Democratic Pact for Europe by strengthening democratic resilience, inclusion, participation and the protection of human rights and the rule of law.

Ukraine is implementing the State Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities of Women and Men for the Period up to 2030, which enshrines a zero-tolerance attitude towards domestic and gender-based violence against women. Measures to improve the framework on criminal responsibility for domestic violence are included in the rule of law road map, approved in May 2025.

Since the outset of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine, the risks of violence against women and girls including conflict-related violence have escalated sharply. The war has also significantly increased the risk of trafficking in human beings,[58] particularly affecting women and children, compounding existing vulnerabilities and creating new ones. As highlighted by the Commissioner in the memorandum on human rights elements for peace in Ukraine, women and girls are disproportionately affected by such violence, including its use as a tactic of war, as well as by the destruction of healthcare infrastructure, resulting in a lack of access to essential sexual and reproductive health services. The memorandum further underlined that the conflict exacerbates existing gender inequalities and disrupts women's lives and livelihoods, including due to forced displacement, while increasing risks of trafficking and other forms of violence, especially for older women and women with disabilities. In addition, the meaningful participation of women in processes and decision making towards peace and stability is critical. The central role of local and regional authorities in preventing human trafficking has been underlined by the Congress in its Recommendation 527 (2025) "Empowering cities and regions to combat human trafficking for labour exploitation".

To address these war-related risks, the Action Plan will reinforce a victim-centred and trauma-informed approach, ensuring that victims of conflict-related violence can safely seek recognition, assistance and justice through both national and international avenues, in line with Council of Europe standards. At the policy level, the Action Plan will support the integration of conflict-related violence prevention and victim assistance measures within relevant national frameworks. At the technical level, to address violence against women and domestic violence, particular emphasis will be placed on enhancing investigative and prosecutorial capacity, strengthening co-ordination among national authorities, legal professionals and support services, and improving documentation of violations. The Action Plan will also support efforts aimed at the effective execution of relevant judgments of the European Court related to violence against women, gender equality and protection of victims. *See Effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights at national level under Priority I.*

Awareness of and access to national compensation and support mechanisms will be promoted, including through outreach on the Register of Damage for Ukraine, which began accepting conflict-related sexual violence claims in March 2025. The Action Plan will also expand capacity building for mental health, emergency and legal professionals and provide tools for law enforcement to prevent and address violence against women and domestic violence. The Action Plan will support efforts to prevent and combat technology-facilitated violence against women and girls, including online harassment, abuse and exploitation, in line with relevant Council of Europe standards and the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation on accountability for technology-facilitated violence against women and girls.

The European Commission, in its 2025 report on Ukraine, concluded that the legal and institutional framework on gender equality is broadly in place and noted the steps taken to align with the Istanbul Convention, including a draft law proposing amendments to the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedural Code; it stressed the need for stronger implementation, especially at local level. As a Party to the Istanbul Convention, Ukraine underwent a GREVIO evaluation visit in 2025, and the Action Plan will support national authorities in aligning the legal and policy framework with the Istanbul Convention and in addressing GREVIO's and the Committee of the Parties' forthcoming recommendations. In addition, the Council of Europe will continue to assist authorities in adapting Ukraine's programme for perpetrators, last updated in 2021, to address the surge in violence against women, including conflict-related violence, caused by the ongoing war of aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

In Ukraine, women and girls continue to face barriers to justice, including discriminatory legal provisions, underreporting of violence and gaps in official statistics. The Action Plan will address these challenges through legislative assistance, capacity building of the judiciary and awareness raising. The Council of Europe will prioritise tackling judicial gender bias, strengthening professional networks and engaging young people, particularly through Ukrainian universities and law faculties, to achieve long-term institutional change.

[58] GRETA (2025), "Evaluation report Ukraine – Third evaluation round – Access to justice and effective remedies for victims of trafficking in human beings".

The Council of Europe will further support Ukrainian authorities in promoting safe, dignified and gender-sensitive voluntary return for displaced women and girls, where possible. Building on the publication "Safe and dignified: gender-sensitive voluntary return strategies for Ukraine, anchored in Council of Europe standards" (2026), the Action Plan will contribute to the implementation and dissemination of best practices in line with Council of Europe recommendations, including Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)10 on the role of women and men in conflict prevention and resolution and in peace building; Recommendation CM/Rec(2003)3 on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making; Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)17 on protecting the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls; and Recommendation Rec(2006)6 on internally displaced persons. The Council of Europe's assistance will be aligned with efforts to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and the Women, Peace and Security agenda in Ukraine.

Through tailored guidance and capacity building for both national and local stakeholders, the Action Plan aims to embed a gender-sensitive, human rights and trauma-informed approach in voluntary return procedures. *See Rights of internally displaced persons, returnees and other war-affected people under Priority II.*

The Council of Europe will support the implementation of Ukraine's State Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities of Women and Men for the Period up to 2030[59] through legislative and policy advice, capacity building for public officials and practical tools to ensure gender equality in all spheres of life, including the dissemination of "Gender mainstreaming in action: a handbook for local gender related coordinators in Ukraine". The Action Plan will also work collaboratively with schools and civil society to raise awareness of gender equality, violence against women and domestic violence, and to equip CSOs, including women's rights and women-led organisations, with the tools needed for more effective advocacy and enhanced support for victims of violence.

The Russian Federation's war of aggression has also significantly increased the risk of trafficking in human beings, particularly affecting women and children. GRETA, in its third evaluation report published in July 2025, noted that victim identification has become particularly challenging in the context of the war. Procedures for granting victim status remain administratively complex; many victims lack information on where to submit their applications. GRETA also drew attention to the low number of children granted the status of victims of trafficking between 2018 and 2024, representing 8% of all identified victims. The Action Plan will support Ukraine in implementing GRETA's recommendations by strengthening victim identification mechanisms, simplifying procedures for granting victim status and enhancing the capacity of law enforcement, prosecutors and relevant professionals to detect, investigate and respond to trafficking cases. *See Children's rights under Priority II.*

Technical co-operation to be implemented in this area has been designed taking into consideration the reports[60] and conclusions of relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies that call on Ukraine to:

- prevent and combat violence against women and girls and domestic violence in line with the Istanbul Convention and the upcoming GREVIO report's findings, while contributing to the execution of relevant judgments of the European Court;
- improve policies, legislation and practices to effectively prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence, including finalising the adoption of the legislation ensuring that domestic violence is investigated *ex officio*, in full compliance with the European Court's case law and applicable international standards,[61] and providing continued support on the perpetrator programme;

[59] Available here.
[60] GRETA recommendations from the third evaluation report.
[61] *Levchuk group of cases v. Ukraine*

- increase the capacity of relevant professionals and provide practical tools on the application of the Council of Europe standards on gender equality, primarily, including the Istanbul Convention when dealing with cases of violence against women and domestic violence;
- raise public awareness of the Istanbul Convention and public engagement towards preventing and combating violence against women, engaging with CSOs;
- mainstream victim/survivor-centred, gender-responsive, age-sensitive and trauma-informed responses across all legal, psychological and social service interventions for war-affected populations;
- advance gender equality, including the equal and increased participation of women in decision-making processes at national and local level, including in crisis management, conflict resolution and in broader efforts to sustain peace;
- ensure that all actors involved in the National Mechanism for Interaction of Agents for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings adopt a proactive and harmonised approach to detecting and identifying victims of trafficking with a view to decreasing reliance on self-identification;[62]
- revise the procedures for granting the status of victim of trafficking in human beings to make it possible for local authorities to take decisions on victim status and ensure that the procedures are less bureaucratic;
- improve the identification of, and assistance to, child victims of trafficking, by training a larger number of professionals who may come into contact with children in the use of trafficking indicators and further developing the training and resources of law-enforcement officers and public prosecutors on the identification of child victims of trafficking, including child victims of trafficking recruited and/or exploited online.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION – ROMA– NATIONAL MINORITIES, REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES – LGBTI – MIGRANTS

The Reykjavík Declaration acknowledges the need to ensure equality and combat any kind of discrimination and commits to strengthening work towards inclusive societies without marginalisation, exclusion, racism and intolerance.

Ukraine continues to strengthen its legal, institutional and policy frameworks for promoting non-discrimination and protecting the rights of persons belonging to national and other minorities, including Roma, and to indigenous peoples. With Council of Europe support, the government adopted the Action Plan for the Protection of the Rights of National Minorities[63] in May 2025. Initial results include the development of amendments to the Law on National Minorities (Communities) to clarify the mechanisms for the implementation of rights and to bring the legislation into line with Council of Europe standards, the preparation and launch of a network of advisers on the Roma national minority at the regional and community levels, the start of a working group on the codification of the Romani language and the preparation of a draft order of the government on the approval of the strategy for the preservation and development of endangered languages.

The amendments to the Law on National Minorities (Communities) in 2023[64] introduced adjustments concerning the use of minority languages in gender-responsive education, media and public life, as well as more flexible arrangements for certain language groups. In its follow-up Opinion CDL-AD(2023)028, the Venice Commission welcomed numerous improvements in the revised Law on National Minorities (Communities), and concluded that a number of key recommendations had not been fully followed while expressing the expectation that the legislation would be further improved to take into account the key recommendations made in Opinion CDL-AD(2023)021.[65] Ukraine has further demonstrated progress through institutional reforms, including the expansion of the powers of the DESS and the adoption of measures aimed at preserving and developing minority languages.[66]

[62] GRETA recommendations from the third evaluation report.
[63] English version of the 2025 report.
[64] In addition, amendments were made to the following laws: “On Local Self-Government in Ukraine”, “On Education”, “On Complete General Secondary Education”, “On Higher Education”, “On Ensuring the Functioning of Ukrainian as the State Language” and “On Media”, which mainly relate to certain aspects of the exercise of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities in the areas of education and the use of their native language.
[65] The Venice Commission’s Opinion (CDL-AD(2023)021) on the Law “On National Minorities (Communities)” and the subsequent Opinion (CDL-AD(2023)028) on amendments to that Law, adopted on 6-7 October 2023.
[66] The establishment of the National Commission for the Crimean Tatar Language and the adoption of the Strategy for the Development of the Crimean Tatar Language for 2022-2032.

The Ministry of Education and Science is implementing the Road map for creating conditions for improving the quality of education in the State language and Indigenous peoples' languages in general secondary education institutions for 2023-2027. The Council of Europe will continue to support the introduction of minority language education in schools and assist authorities with legislative and institutional measures aimed at preserving and developing the linguistic and cultural identity of the indigenous peoples of Ukraine, namely Crimean Tatars, Karaites and Krymchaks, taking into account the consequences of temporary occupation and forced displacement.

Despite progress, key challenges remain in ensuring full compliance with the European Union *acquis* on non-discrimination and in combating hatred and racism. A comprehensive system to address discrimination, hate speech and hate crime needs to be in place, encompassing disaggregated data collection and ensuring monitoring, recording and effective investigation and prosecution.[67] Institutional capacities need to be strengthened and access to effective remedies for victims of discrimination, hatred and racism needs improvement. LGBTI persons continue to face discrimination, hatred and gaps in legal protection, while migrants and refugees remain particularly at risk of discrimination and exclusion, especially in the context of the ongoing war. These challenges are further reflected in the findings of relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms.

ECRI, in its 2017 report (ECRI(2017)38)[68] on Ukraine, called for a comprehensive strengthening of Ukraine's legal, institutional and policy framework to combat racism and discrimination in line with European standards. ECRI recommended revising the anti-discrimination law to address gaps such as segregation, discrimination by association, the sharing of the burden of proof and accessible remedies, and emphasised the need to establish comprehensive, disaggregated data collection systems on hate crime, hate speech and discrimination, improve access to identity documents, eliminate segregation and bullying in education, and revise the National Roma Strategy with adequate funding and participation of Roma representatives. In its conclusions (ECRI(2020)28), ECRI reviewed the implementation of two priority recommendations, calling on the authorities: to ensure that sexual orientation and gender identity are fully reflected in the criminal law framework, and to waive court fees in cases of Roma seeking to obtain personal identification documents. As part of its sixth country monitoring cycle, ECRI examined its preliminary draft report on Ukraine at its 100th plenary meeting in March 2026. The forthcoming report will set out a new series of recommendations on measures to address racism and intolerance in Ukraine. Following the ACFC's September 2025 visit under the FCNM, the monitoring process resumed and the ACFC adopted the combined fifth and sixth opinion on 21 May 2026, providing renewed guidance for future reforms.

The European Commission, in its 2025 report on Ukraine, identified key remaining gaps: hate offence legislation is not yet aligned with the European Union *acquis* (notably the 2008 Framework Decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law); systematic hate crime data collection is not yet in place; sexual orientation and gender identity are not covered under criminal legislation; and the non-discrimination framework is still not fully aligned with the Racial Equality Directive and the European Union directives establishing standards for equality bodies. Addressing discrimination, hate speech and hate-motivated incidents, and enhancing interinstitutional co-ordination remain priorities.

The Action Plan will focus on strengthening the legal and policy framework for equality and non-discrimination, the combating of hatred and racism, as well as on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, including further alignment with Council of Europe standards and relevant European Union *acquis*. Particular attention will be given to reinforcing legal equality and addressing hatred and racism in a comprehensive and systemic manner, at both the civil and administrative and criminal levels. The role and effectiveness of national equality bodies will be addressed, including the role of the Ombudsperson's Office as national equality body, and of law enforcement and the judiciary. The Action Plan will also support Ukraine in implementing its commitments under the FCNM and the ECRML, including through follow-up to the recommendations of monitoring mechanisms, participatory approaches involving national minorities and legal and policy reforms protecting the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, including Roma.

[67] *Fedorchenko and Lozenko* / *Karter* group of cases v. Ukraine.
[68] ECRI (2017), "ECRI report on Ukraine (fifth monitoring cycle)", adopted in 2017.

It will also strengthen comprehensive mechanisms for preventing and combating hate speech and hate crime in line with Council of Europe standards. This will involve enhancing interinstitutional co-operation, monitoring and data collection, the capacities of relevant stakeholders, and awareness raising and inclusive public discourse, including online. Particular attention will be given to the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, including Roma, promoting equal access to education, employment, housing, healthcare and public services and addressing discrimination, hatred and racism based on ethnic origin and language.

The Action Plan will further support strengthening of the institutional capacity of DESS[69] and of the role, independence and effectiveness of equality and minority rights participation mechanisms, as well as institutional capacities for inclusive policy making and meaningful participation of representatives of national minorities (communities), including Roma, in public decision-making processes. Efforts will also be made to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of legal and non-legal redress mechanisms, including for groups at risk of discrimination, exclusion and hatred, and to enhance disaggregated data collection, monitoring systems and evidence-based policy making in line with Council of Europe standards on human rights and data protection.

The Council of Europe will support[70] the DESS in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Action Plan on the Protection of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities, in implementing the National Roma Strategy until 2030 and in developing, and, following its approval, implementing a strategy for the preservation and development of endangered languages in Ukraine.[71]

The Action Plan will also assist Ukraine in facilitating the codification of the Roma language in Ukraine and addressing the specific situation of Roma women and girls.[72]. In line with Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)1 on equality of Roma and Traveller women and girls, the Council of Europe will support the Task Force on Promoting the Rights of Roma Women in Ukraine and will continue to co-ordinate policy actions and other relevant initiatives to address discrimination against Roma women.

The Action Plan will maintain a strong focus on persons and groups at risk of discrimination, exclusion or hatred, including persons belonging to national minorities, Roma, indigenous peoples of Ukraine, LGBTI persons and persons with disabilities, in line with Council of Europe standards and principles of equality, diversity and inclusion. It will promote inclusion policies and practices, and support awareness raising and engagement with civil society, local authorities and local communities to combat intolerance, stereotypes and discrimination, hatred, racism and other forms of social exclusion. Particular attention will be paid to preventing and combating antigypsyism, discrimination, including multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination, segregation, hate speech and criminal offences motivated by intolerance against persons belonging to national minorities (communities) of Ukraine, including Roma.

Through a combination of legal and policy support, institutional capacity building and stakeholder engagement, the Council of Europe will contribute to strengthening Ukraine's ability to effectively prevent and combat discrimination, hatred and racism, in line with European standards and in support of its European Union accession process.

[69] DESS is the central executive authority responsible for formulating and implementing state policy in the field of ethnopolitics and for protecting the rights of national minorities (communities) and the indigenous peoples of Ukraine.
[70] This support will include the development of a monitoring and evaluation methodology, relevant indicators, mechanisms for data collection and analysis, and recommendations based on the results of monitoring and evaluation.
[71] In accordance with the recommendation of the Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI), in: Study on certain aspects of regional or minority language protection and identification of good practices in member States, pp. 38-39, taken note of by the Committee of Ministers Decision, CM/Del/Dec(2026)1552/4.2, 4 March 2026.
[72] In accordance with Task 21: "Ensuring the preservation and development of the Roma language, its standardisation and codification" of the Operational Action Plan for 2026-2028 for the implementation of the Strategy for Promoting the Realisation of the Rights and Opportunities of Persons Belonging to the Roma National Minority in Ukrainian Society for the Period until 2030.

Technical co-operation to be implemented in this area has been designed taking into consideration the reports and conclusions of relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies that call on Ukraine to:[73]

- advance legal, policy and institutional reforms for the protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, including Roma, ensuring further alignment with the ACFC, COMEX and ECRI recommendations;
- protect and promote regional and minority languages, including through use in education, media, cultural facilities, administrative authorities and public services in line with the ECRML;
- amend the Criminal Code to ensure the effective criminalisation of hate-motivated offences, with explicit coverage of all relevant protected grounds of discrimination, including race, language, religion, citizenship, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation and gender identity;
- revise the anti-discrimination law to address gaps such as segregation, discrimination by association, multiple discrimination, the sharing of the burden of proof and accessible remedies;
- establish and reinforce mechanisms for the systematic collection of disaggregated data on hate speech, hate crime and discrimination,[74] including bias motivation and follow-up by law enforcement and the judiciary in line with the Committee of Ministers' decisions in the *Fedorchenko and Lozenko v. Ukraine* group of cases;
- grant investigation power to the Ombudsperson and reinforce law-enforcement capacity to tackle hate speech, including online;
- ensure that the investigation and prosecution take into account the potential hate element on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity and that this is fully reflected in the criminal law;
- support co-operation among stakeholders to raise public awareness on equality, prevent hate speech and hate crimes through human rights narratives and promote educational initiatives in this respect;
- improve access of Roma to personal documentation, healthcare, housing, employment and education and support the revision and effective implementation of the National Roma Strategy, and engagement with civil society;
- strengthen implementation of legislation on national minorities (communities), including effective consultation and participation mechanisms for representatives of national minorities including Roma and indigenous peoples at national and local levels, including in recovery and reconstruction processes;
- promote comprehensive inclusion policies, at both the local and national levels, through a multilevel governance approach, addressing discrimination and intolerance affecting all persons and groups at risk of discrimination, exclusion or hatred, including migrants, refugees, IDPs, persons belonging to national minorities, speakers of regional or minority languages and LGBTI persons;
- strengthen institutional capacities for monitoring, implementation and evaluation of equality and minority rights policies at national and local levels including through co-operation with civil society and community-based organisations.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has reshaped childhood in Ukraine as millions of children have been displaced, lost parents or carers, experienced trauma and lost social ties as well as access to basic services. According to UNICEF,[75] more than a third of Ukraine's children, 2 589 900, remain displaced, including more than 791 000 children inside Ukraine and nearly 1 798 900 children living as refugees outside the country.

[73] ECRI (2017), "ECRI report on Ukraine (fifth monitoring cycle)", ECRI(2017)38; ECRI (2020), ECRI conclusions on the implementation of the recommendations in respect of Ukraine subject to interim follow-up", ECRI(2020)28; Resolution CM/ResCMN(2020)13 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Ukraine; ACFC (2018), "Fourth opinion on Ukraine", ACFC/OP/IV(2017)002. COMEX (2017), Third evaluation report on Ukraine, CM(2017)97; Recommendation CM/RecChL(2018)6 on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by Ukraine; COMEX (2023), Statement by the Committee of Experts on the legal framework for the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in Ukraine.

[74] covering manifestations of discrimination, hate speech and intolerance against persons belonging to national minorities including Roma, the indigenous peoples of Ukraine while ensuring appropriate inter-institutional co-operation.

[75] UNICEF (2026), "More than a third of Ukraine's children remain displaced four years into war".

The Consultation Group on the Children of Ukraine, dedicated to enhancing the rights of children affected by the war in Ukraine who have fled to Council of Europe member States, co-ordinates a regional rapid-response mechanism, bringing together member States, the European Union, international organisations, civil society, academia and independent experts. The CGU enables the timely exchange of information and good practices, as well as the provision of expert advice through various tools including a new manual for professionals that supports children's mental health in crisis and emergency situations. It also serves as a platform for sharing best practices, informing Ukraine's child protection reform efforts and helping Ukrainian authorities better understand measures taken by member States concerning children from Ukraine in different contexts.

Ukraine is a party to the Lanzarote Convention and has progressively aligned its legal framework with its standards, notably through the Law "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine on the Implementation of the Lanzarote Convention", which amended the Criminal Code in 2021, and its subsequent amendments, strengthening both the criminalisation of sexual exploitation and abuse of children and the protection of child victims in judicial proceedings.

GRETA, in its third evaluation report published in June 2025, underlined that children from Ukraine, many of whom are separated from their families and social environments, are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking for various exploitative purposes, including forced criminality and illegal adoption. GRETA identified the evacuation of children from institutional facilities and the deportation of children from temporarily occupied territories to the Russian Federation as particular risk factors for trafficking, and provided a number of recommendations to the authorities, including ensuring child-friendly proceedings.

Ukraine adopted the National Strategy for Protecting Children's Rights in the Justice System until 2028 in July 2025, complemented by other strategies such as the Strategy for Ensuring the Right of Every Child in Ukraine to Grow Up in a Family Environment (2024-2028), the National Plan for the Implementation of the European Child Guarantee in Ukraine until 2030,[76] the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Plan for the Implementation of the European Child Guarantee in Ukraine until 2030,[77] Presidential Decree No. 398/2020 on urgent measures to prevent and combat domestic and gender-based violence and Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers No.764 of 25 June 2025 on the procurement of social services for comprehensive development and care for children with disabilities. Collectively, these documents form the policy backbone for advancing children's rights in Ukraine.

In its 2025 report on Ukraine, the European Commission noted the establishment of child-friendly, interdisciplinary and multi-agency centres and the introduction of the Barnahus model, while noting that alternative services ensuring child-friendly justice and free legal aid still require further development.

The Council of Europe will support Ukraine in addressing its obligations under the Lanzarote Convention and the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, guided by relevant standards including the "Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on child-friendly justice", the "Handbook on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in crisis and emergency situations", GRETA's "Guidance note on addressing the risks of trafficking in human beings related to the war in Ukraine and the ensuing humanitarian crisis", and Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)11 on effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration.

While the groundwork for a more robust child protection and child-friendly justice system has been laid with prior Council of Europe support, further work remains to establish a solid legal basis in line with European standards, develop coherent policies, enhance the capacity of professionals and facilitate effective interagency co-operation.

[76] approved by Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 1558 of 19 November 2025.
[77] approved by Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 320-r of 8 April 2026.

The Action Plan will support a strengthened child protection and child-friendly justice with particular attention to children at risk, including children with disabilities, displaced children, unaccompanied children and children deprived of parental care. It will prioritise prevention of and response to all forms of violence, trafficking, exploitation and abuse of children affected by the war, through victim-centred/survivor-centred, gender-responsive and child-friendly approaches across justice, rehabilitation and social services, ensuring that the best interests of children are at the heart of post-war reconstruction policies.

Building on the commitments undertaken under the Reykjavík Declaration and the subsequent establishment of the CGU, the Council of Europe will continue to support Ukraine and member States in addressing legal, policy and protection challenges affecting children in the context of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine through co-ordinated, cross-sectoral, rights-based, child-friendly and trauma-informed approaches. The CGU will continue to support work on pre-conditions for safe, rights-based and sustainable return and reintegration of children, while strengthening trauma-informed psychosocial support and care approaches and family-based care. It will further support rehabilitation and reintegration for children who have been unlawfully deported, displaced, evacuated or otherwise affected by the war, including by addressing the impact of indoctrination, militarisation and re-education. Attention will also be paid to technology-facilitated and AI-enabled violence affecting children. *See Education under Priority III.*

The Action Plan will also strengthen accountability for violations of children's rights in the context of the war, including by supporting alignment with international standards and strengthening safeguards for child victims and witnesses in justice proceedings, in particular in international crime cases.

Technical co-operation to be implemented in this area has been designed taking into consideration the reports and conclusions of relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies that call on Ukraine to:[78]

- ensure child-friendly proceedings in line with the "Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on child-friendly justice", including the adoption of legislation on child-friendly justice;
- provide practical guidelines and training to investigators, prosecutors, judges and lawyers on how to conduct trauma-informed child-friendly and gender-responsive interviews, sensitive to the different needs and perspectives of girls and boys in all their diversity;
- build the capacities of relevant State authorities on child-friendly approaches pertaining to criminal cases involving children recruited or induced to commit crimes against the national security of Ukraine;
- ensure a sufficient number of "green rooms" and/or Barnahus centres nationwide, which are used consistently, and that children are interviewed in a gender-sensitive manner by adequately trained investigators, prosecutors and judges, in the presence of trained child psychologists;
- improve monitoring of the protection of the rights of all children, in particular displaced children, unaccompanied children, children without parental care, children who have left care institutions and children with disabilities;
- provide expertise and support to expand mental health and psychological assistance and gender-responsive and post-traumatic services for children in Ukraine;
- provide strategic advice and legal support to the national authorities on the safety and protection of children's rights, the prevention of juvenile delinquency in post-war conditions and the establishment of mechanisms for the rehabilitation and reintegration of child witnesses;
- strengthen legal and institutional measures for the prevention of and protection against child sexual abuse and exploitation, including support for child-sensitive investigation procedures, victim protection, referral mechanisms, and access to specialised psychosocial and legal assistance for child victims;
- will further strengthen co-operation between Ukraine and Council of Europe member States in addressing the current needs and challenges affecting Ukraine's children.

[78] Including the recommendations of the Lanzarote Committee and GRETA's third evaluation round report on access to justice and effective remedies for victims of trafficking in human beings.

Integrity and governance of sport

Ukraine is a Party to the Council of Europe Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions (CETS No. 215), the European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in particular at Football Matches (ETS No. 120), as well as to the Anti-Doping Convention (ETS No.135) and its Additional Protocol (ETS No. 188). It is also a member of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport.

Ukraine is currently in the process of ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events (CETS No. 218), also known as the Saint-Denis Convention, which should replace ETS No. 120. Meanwhile, Ukraine can continue to participate as an observer on the Committee of the Saint-Denis Convention.

Within the New Democratic Pact for Europe, the Council of Europe promotes ideas and practical solutions to strengthen democratic systems and foster innovative, gender-equal, inclusive and participatory forms of democracy. In Ukraine, strengthening sports and youth participation is recognised as a fundamental component of building inclusive democracy and promoting social cohesion. The ongoing war has deepened structural inequalities, particularly through limited access to sports infrastructure and reduced opportunities for youth engagement. Sport is a powerful tool for resilience, unity and hope among communities most affected by the war. By creating safe and inclusive spaces for all, including women, young people and persons and groups at risk, sports activities can contribute to healing, enhance mental and physical well-being, and help rebuild the social fabric essential for democratic renewal.

The Action Plan will support the authorities in ensuring equitable, inclusive, barrier-free, safe, trauma-informed and gender-responsive access to sports for youth and war-affected persons and groups at risk, strengthening sports integrity and in leveraging sport and physical activity for inclusion, health, psychosocial recovery, rehabilitation, reintegration and civic engagement. The Action Plan will also support the alignment of youth engagement and sport policies with Council of Europe standards, with cross-sectoral policy integration to use youth engagement, physical activity, and sport as instruments of democratic resilience, psychosocial recovery, social cohesion, rehabilitation and post-war recovery.

In addition, the authorities will be assisted with the promotion and implementation of the Revised European Sports Charter during the war and in the post-war context. The HELP course “Human rights in sports”, which includes a new module “Child safeguarding in sports”, will be integrated into training programmes of relevant professionals.

Support by the Council of Europe Development Bank

The CEB[79] is committed to supporting Ukraine’s reconstruction, recovery and long-term social development, which is one of the three overarching goals of the CEB’s Strategic Framework 2023-2027. This gradual expansion of activities in Ukraine, developed in close co-operation with the country’s authorities, also aligns with the commitment of the Heads of State and Government at the Council of Europe’s Reykjavík Summit in May 2023 urging the Bank to support Ukraine’s reconstruction.

Ukraine has been a member of the CEB since 2023. The CEB invests in projects with high social added value that have been approved by the CEB’s Administrative Council and member State concerned, following a member State-driven application process. Such projects foster inclusion and contribute to improving the living conditions of populations at high risk across Europe. With the Strategic Framework 2023-2027, the CEB has committed to strengthening its focus on projects in areas where social needs tend to be higher. The CEB part-finances projects (loans and guarantees) in the following lines of action: investing in people and enhancing human capital; promoting inclusive and resilient living environments; and supporting jobs and economic and financial inclusion. The CEB advances gender equality as a cross-cutting theme in alignment and dialogue with the broader Council of Europe gender mainstreaming efforts.

[79] For more information about the CEB, please visit: https://coebank.org/en/.

To date, the conflict in Ukraine has caused significant damage to the health sector, severely restricting access to medical services, including sexual and reproductive health services, especially in conflict-affected areas. Housing is set to be one of the most daunting challenges facing Ukraine in the coming years, with immense needs for high-quality, long-term housing solutions in the recovery phase. In addition, the extremely challenging environment of the war has created considerable constraints on access to finance for micro-enterprises operating in the country.

The CEB continues to play an important complementary role in supporting Ukraine's recovery and long-term development, including in healthcare, housing, social inclusion and access to finance.

Expected outcomes – Fostering social inclusion and protection of minorities, groups at risk, women and children

- Ukraine aligns its policy and legislative framework on social rights with the Charter, the ECSR case law and relevant EU acquis.
- National and local authorities implement gender-responsive, high-quality social policies in accordance with Council of Europe standards, supported by increased awareness of Charter standards and ECSR case-law.
- A barrier-free environment is promoted, and inclusive community-based services are strengthened, ensuring meaningful participation and social inclusion of persons and groups at risk of discrimination, exclusion or hatred.
- Ukraine's institutional capacity to uphold human rights in the health field is strengthened, resulting in improved mental healthcare standards, more effective prevention and treatment of substance-related and digital addictions aggravated by the war.
- Authorities implement a coherent, sustainable and long-term State policy framework on displacement that embeds a human rights and gender-responsive approach.
- IDPs, returnees and other war-affected people benefit from improved access to services, social and mental health support, and adequate long-term housing solutions co-designed by central and local authorities.
- Veterans and service members successfully reintegrate into civilian life through gender-responsive, disability-inclusive rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, including through sport, supported by strengthened legal frameworks and institutional capacity.
- Legal and policy frameworks as well as practice are aligned with the Istanbul Convention, the European Court case-law and Council of Europe gender equality standards.
- Authorities and professionals, including justice professionals, apply victim/survivor centred, gender responsive, age/disability-sensitive and trauma-informed practices and tackle judicial gender bias in preventing and responding to violence against women and domestic violence.
- Legal and policy frameworks for national minorities, including Roma, regional or minority languages, and other persons and groups at risk are further harmonised with Council of Europe standards, ECRI, ACFC and COMEX recommendations, the obligations arising from the *Fedorchenko and Lozenko/Karter v. Ukraine* group of cases and relevant EU acquis in the field of equality and non-discrimination with strengthened implementation and monitoring of measures.

- The National Roma Strategy and inclusion mechanisms are effectively implemented through strengthened institutional capacities, co-ordinated responses to discrimination and hate speech, improved co-ordination and effective Roma participation, with the measures identified for co-operation under the 2026–2028 Operational Plan implemented with Council of Europe support.
- The linguistic and cultural identity of the indigenous peoples of Ukraine, namely the Crimean Tatars, Karaites and Krymchaks, is better protected, preserved and promoted.
- Child protection systems are strengthened to uphold children's rights regarding return and reintegration, trauma-informed psychosocial support and care, family-based care and protection of children at risk.
- Child-friendly justice approaches are implemented for child victims, witnesses and those in conflict with the law, with a particular focus on children at risk.
- The availability of child-friendly spaces and Barnahus centres for children affected by violence is increased.
- Accountability and child-sensitive justice responses are strengthened in relation to violations of children's rights in the context of the war, including conflict-related sexual violence.
- Authorities enhance their capacity to identify, prevent and respond to risks affecting children, including indoctrination, militarisation, re-education and technology-facilitated and AI-enabled violence.
- Child participation is strengthened, ensuring that children's voices inform both policy development and protection responses.
- Victims of trafficking in human beings, in particular children, benefit from enhanced protection.
- Inclusive, barrier-free, safe and trauma-informed and gender-responsive access to sport is enhanced, with particular attention to youth and war-affected people and groups at risk.

Main national partners: Parliament, Parliamentary Committee on Social Policy, Parliament Committee on Human Rights, Parliamentary Committee on Youth and Sport, Office of the President of Ukraine, Commissioner of the President of Ukraine on Children's Rights and Rehabilitation, Cabinet of Ministers, Office of Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, Government Office for European Integration, Ombudsperson's Office, Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Veterans Affairs, Ministry of Digital Transformation, Ministry of Communities, Territories and Internally Displaced Persons , Ministry of Youth and Sports ,Office of the Prosecutor General, Supreme Court, National School of Judges, National Police, National Bar Association, National Social Services, National Agency on Civil Service, Prosecutors Training Centre, National Commission on Mental Health, National Mediation and Conciliation Service, State Migration Service, State Border Guard Service, State Fund for Support of Youth Housing Construction, State Service on Ethnic Affairs and Freedom of Conscience, Probation Service, Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy, Office of the Government's Envoy on Gender Equality, local and regional authorities, national associations of local and regional authorities, State Service on Medicines and Drugs Control, relevant regulatory and technical institutions in the pharmaceutical and SoHO fields, municipalities, CSOs including women's rights and women-led organisations, specialised CSOs, lawyers.

2.3 PRIORITY III – REINFORCING DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS, FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS AND INFORMATION INTEGRITY[80]

This priority advances democratic security for Ukraine through three mutually reinforcing elements: strong and accountable institutions, a free and trustworthy information environment, and an engaged and informed citizenry. By strengthening all three simultaneously through support for elections, multilevel governance, youth engagement, civil society, media freedom, education and cultural heritage, the Action Plan aims to ensure that Ukraine not only preserves its democratic foundations during the war but emerges from the post-war period with stronger, more inclusive, more gender-equal and more trusted democratic institutions, fully aligned with Council of Europe and EU standards.

In May 2025, Ukraine adopted the road map on the functioning of democratic institutions in the context of the EU accession process. The road map covers four main chapters, namely: “General framework of democracy”, “Electoral process”, “Functioning of parliaments in a democratic system” and “Role of civil society”.

Functioning democratic institutions, free and fair elections, strong local self-government, access to quality information, free media, information integrity, youth and gender-equal civic participation are fundamental for a resilient democracy. In addition, in the 135th session, the Committee of Ministers recognised that foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI) poses serious threats to human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and requires further action building on the findings of the feasibility study,[81] and grounded in evidence, inclusive consultation and international co-operation.[82]

In this context, the High-Level Dialogue on Good Democratic Governance in Ukraine, conducted with the support of PACE, the Congress and the Venice Commission, will remain an important format for bringing together key Ukrainian stakeholders in the fields of multilevel governance and elections. Building on the broad agreement reached on decentralisation reform, the transition from military to civilian local and regional governance, and the preparation of post-war elections, this format will continue to support Ukraine in advancing reforms in line with Council of Europe standards, good democratic practice and its European path.

To support the organisation of free and fair elections when conditions permit, the Council of Europe, throughout all phases of its Electoral Cycle, will provide authorities with gender-responsive capacity building and expertise on the preparation of elections, electoral reforms, voter education and the establishment of transparent electoral processes, ensuring fair regulation of media as well as professional and balanced media coverage of elections. The PACE and its Parliamentary Alliance for Free and Fair Elections will provide advice and capacity support to the Parliament to strengthen legislative work and parliamentary oversight.

To reinforce the decentralisation of power and the multilevel governance system, the Council of Europe will assist Ukraine in improving the legal and institutional framework on local self-government and public administration, enhancing the capacity of local governments in line with the European Charter of Local Self-Government as well as local State authorities in order to ensure that they are democratically accountable to their citizens.

Through this, the Council of Europe can help to create a foundation for political stability. Particular attention will also be paid to promoting gender equality and ensuring the equal participation of women and men in local decision-making processes and public life.

The Congress will facilitate the recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine at local and regional levels, guided by its comprehensive strategy that acknowledges the central role of local and regional authorities. This strategy identifies key challenges and priorities in relation to the competencies of local and regional authorities, reflecting decentralisation reforms.

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[80] This priority area covers the operational pillar “Anchoring democratic values in European societies” of the Council of Europe Programme and Budget.
[81] CM/Inf(2026)18.
[82] CM/Del/Dec(2026)135/3b - 135th Session of the Committee of Ministers (Chişinău, 15 May 2026) - 3. New Democratic Pact for Europe - b. Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference

Based on this, the Congress will prepare thematically focused reports. The first report will provide practical guidance to local and regional authorities on fostering modern, inclusive, and sustainable economies, including revitalising rural and war-affected areas. The “build back better” principle will inform efforts to establish infrastructure that is energy-efficient, climate-adapted, disaster-resilient, and accessible. Local and regional authorities, in co-ordination with national bodies, will align these initiatives with Ukraine’s recovery and EU accession strategies.

Furthermore, local authorities’ awareness of the practical application of the principle of the rule of law and its significance for building resilient democratic societies will be promoted. Particular attention will be paid to strengthening the role of local and regional authorities in upholding the rule of law, including by enhancing their capacities as part of a system of checks and balances that is essential to healthy and efficient democratic governance. As stressed in Congress Resolution 517 (2025), “Congress Strategy on the Rule of Law at local and regional levels (2025-2028)”, genuine democracy cannot be achieved or preserved without the effective implementation of the rule of law at all levels of public authority.

The Congress in its Recommendation 544 (2026), “Preserving grassroots democracy – Tackling violence against local and regional elected representatives” highlighted that violence against local and regional elected representatives is a serious threat to democracy and may undermine democratic values. Support will therefore be provided to efforts aimed at protecting local and regional elected representatives, in particular mayors, from different forms of violence, that have arisen as a result of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine.

Enhancing a strong independent media sector, ethical journalism and an open, diverse and critical public discourse, as well as information integrity will be key objectives of the Action Plan. Through its Platform for the Safety of Journalists, the Council of Europe can also provide vital guidance on protecting media freedom, ensuring that journalists can operate without fear of persecution or intimidation. The Action Plan will address disinformation and technology-facilitated violence affecting journalists, including in their gendered forms and when directly attacking women journalists.

Young people’s participation in democratic life is essential to the recovery and democratic security of Ukraine; to foster youth engagement in building a peaceful and democratic future, the Council of Europe will support authorities in enhancing participatory youth policies, integrating youth perspectives in decision making and reinforcing youth work. This includes supporting youth centres and youth organisations as platforms for civic engagement and democratic participation and using transnational voluntary services as an important instrument to support youth engagement in solidarity and reconstruction efforts.

To foster gender-responsive civic participation and dialogue and thereby reinforce among citizens the feeling that they have a stake in Ukraine’s future, the Council of Europe will promote education for democratic citizenship based on its Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) and other Council of Europe education standards, including in history education.

Culture and cultural heritage are essential components of democratic identity and civic life. The deliberate damage caused to Ukraine’s cultural heritage by the Russian Federation’s war of aggression directly threatens democratic resilience, historical memory and information integrity. The Council of Europe will therefore also support Ukraine in protecting and promoting its cultural heritage as part of its broader commitment to reinforcing democratic institutions and information integrity.

This priority will also directly support the implementation of the road map on the functioning of democratic institutions and progress towards the relevant interim benchmarks in the EU common position under Cluster 1:”Fundamentals”, in particular those concerning freedom of expression and media freedom and pluralism through reinforcing the independence and institutional capacity of public service media and the media regulator, safeguards for the protection of journalists.

These actions will contribute to the implementation by Ukraine of the SDGs, especially goal 4 (quality education – target 4.1,4.3,4.4,4.5,4.7 and 4.c), goal 5 (gender equality – targets 5.1) and goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions – targets 16.10).

FREEDOM OF MEDIA AND INFORMATION INTEGRITY

The right to freedom of expression and information is an essential foundation of democratic society. In conflict situations and wars, the role of the media is critical in providing the public with accurate and timely information and in countering disinformation and propaganda. As highlighted in the 2026 report "The New Democratic Pact for Europe in Times of Rupture of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, strengthening the information space and countering disinformation remain central priorities. In the 2025 report "Towards a New Democratic Pact for Europe", the Secretary General of the Council of Europe underlined that Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has severely affected freedom of expression, with journalists facing physical threats and targeted attacks in occupied and conflict areas. Ukrainian journalists operate under extreme risk and face threats that include killings, kidnappings and intimidation". In its Resolution 2618 (2025),[83] the Parliamentary Assembly also noted that over 800 crimes against media and media personnel as committed by the Russian Federation have been documented since the start of the Russian Federation's war of aggression in February 2022.

The Law on Media adopted in 2022 and further amendments to the Law on Advertising in 2023, both with the legal support of the Council of Europe, addressing all areas of media regulation and operations, have been significant steps towards Ukraine's European Union accession goals, confirmed by the European Commission as the completion of Step 6 – "tackle the influence of vested interests by adopting a media law that aligns Ukraine's legislation with the EU Audiovisual Media Services Directive (Directive 2010/13/EU) and empowers the independent media regulator" in its "Ukraine 2023 report".

In its 2025 report on Ukraine, the European Commission underlined that the draft law aiming to regulate legal relations in advertising would further align Ukraine with the EU Audiovisual Media Services Directive and other EU *acquis* and recommended that Ukraine continue efforts to advance legislative reforms and avoid delays.

The Council of Europe will prioritise supporting Ukraine in aligning its legal framework with key European and international standards in the areas of media freedom and digital regulation. The Council of Europe will assist in harmonising Ukrainian legislation with the EU Digital Services Act package, the European Media Freedom Act, Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)2 on countering the use of strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs), EU Directive (EU)2024/1069 on protecting persons who engage in public participation from manifestly unfounded claims or abusive court proceedings, and Recommendation (EU) 2022/758 on protecting journalists and human rights defenders who engage in public participation from manifestly unfounded or abusive court proceedings, as well as the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, emphasising the gender dynamics in these areas and the need to support women journalists and women human rights defenders. Special attention will be paid to the assessment and ongoing revision of key laws, including on media and advertising, to ensure conformity with these important frameworks. In parallel, the Council of Europe will monitor the implementation of media-related laws in Ukraine and provide continuous expert, legal and technical co-operation as needed. Regular follow-up will ensure that legal reforms achieve their intended results and contribute to an improved media environment. The Council of Europe will also support quality journalism, the ethical use of AI by journalists and AI applications in journalism.

Free, fair and transparent access to information for journalists remains a key issue in the media landscape in Ukraine. Ukraine is a Party to the Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents (CETS No. 205), also known as the Tromsø Convention. In January 2025, the Ukrainian Parliament adopted the Law No. 11 321 on amendments to certain laws in Ukraine to enhance certain guarantees for media activities, journalists and citizens' access to information. Since the start of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine, access to information and physical access to public institutions for media at local and State levels have remained challenging. From the onset of the war and the introduction of martial law with associated security restrictions, constraints on access to information were imposed to ensure national security.

[83] Resolution 2618 (2025) "Journalists matter: the need to step up efforts to liberate Ukrainian journalists held in captivity by the Russian Federation".

The Council of Europe will continue to support better understanding of the right to access public information, including the specificities of the environment under martial law and security restrictions.

The Action Plan will support the authorities in addressing war-related challenges and threats to the media community and other key actors, applying a human rights and gender-responsive approach and integrating European best practices. The Council of Europe will also support newsrooms, journalists and media actors, including local and hyperlocal media in the regions, by addressing their specific needs, including capacity-building programmes, and reflecting Ukraine's priorities in its EU accession process with the aim of strengthening the independence and resilience of Ukraine's media sector. The Action Plan will place particular emphasis on journalists' safety and upholding freedom of expression. In 2024, Ukraine became the first Council of Europe member State to launch the National Chapter of the five-year "Journalists Matter" Campaign for the Safety of Journalists; the Council of Europe will continue to support the campaign's national implementation. Support for the national stakeholders in countering the use of SLAPPs, abusive litigation, intimidation and other actions causing chilling effects on media freedom will be provided. In addition, support will be provided for the teaching of university-level modules on media law and the safety of journalists based on Council of Europe standards, as well as capacity building for law-enforcement agencies on safeguarding journalists' rights and professional activities.

As the principles of independence, good governance and accountability of public service media are fundamental to democratic societies, the Action Plan will strengthen public service media – the National Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine (UA:PBC) – to support effective policy implementation and institutional capacity building, strengthen its internal governance and editorial resilience, enhance operational efficiency and long-term sustainability in line with CM/Rec(2012)1 on public service media governance and CM/Rec(2018)1 on media pluralism and transparency of media ownership.

The Action Plan will support the Ukrainian audiovisual regulator, the National Council on Television and Radio Broadcasting, to strengthen regulatory and co-regulatory capacities and align policy frameworks with the Council of Europe and European practices and requirements of the digital age. In this context, the Council of Europe will also focus on countering and building resilience to disinformation, strengthening media literacy, enhancing information integrity and ensuring fair media coverage of elections, in line with European standards. *For foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI), see Elections - democratic governance and dialogue - civil society under Priority III.*

Advocacy and international awareness-raising campaigns aimed at better understanding the situation in Ukraine, communicating violations committed against journalists in Russian captivity, unlawful detention and non-compliance with the Geneva Convention, including documenting crimes, will also be supported.

Technical co-operation to be implemented in this area has been designed taking into consideration the reports and conclusions of relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies that call on Ukraine to:[84]

- align Ukraine's legal and institutional framework for media freedom with European standards, notably with case-law of the European Court of Human Rights;
- strengthen the protection and safety of journalists, with a particular emphasis on women journalists;
- promote media independence, pluralism and sustainability;
- strengthen the capacity of public service media, regional and local media outlets in professional reporting and quality journalism;
- support capacity building for the audiovisual regulator in implementing the laws on media and on advertising, media coverage of elections, countering disinformation, regulating digital platforms and other areas;
- counter and build resilience to disinformation and strengthen media literacy through national strategies;
- prepare fair and balanced regulation of media during elections and media coverage of elections;
- ensure continuous training and capacity building for the judiciary and law-enforcement bodies covering various aspects of freedom of expression and media;

[84] Including ECRI's fifth report on Ukraine; *Shvydka v. Ukraine* group of cases.

- contribute to the institutional capacity of the law-enforcement bodies to ensure safety of journalists and effective investigation of crimes against journalists and other media actors, facilitating full implementation of general measures regarding the execution of the *Gongadze v. Ukraine* judgment;
- promote reliable reporting on Ukraine and international advocacy and awareness raising on war crimes against journalists.

ELECTIONS – DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND DIALOGUE – CIVIL SOCIETY

Regarding elections, the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has undermined the essential conditions for democratic processes. According to the Constitution of Ukraine and current legislation on martial law,[85] elections and referendums are not held while martial law is in force. Since February 2022, all scheduled elections (presidential, parliamentary and local) have been postponed until the end of martial law.

The needs assessment report "Organisation and holding of elections in post-war Ukraine. Pre-requisites and challenges" (English; Ukrainian) commissioned by the Council of Europe in May 2022 and updated in December 2023, outlined a number of issues arising from the war, which will impair the democratic environment needed for elections. These include large-scale displacement of Ukrainians within and beyond the country, widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure, post-war security threats as well as the need for the development and implementation of a transitional justice policy.

The Parliamentary Assembly noted, in its Resolution 2605 (2025) "Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine", that, in accordance with international democratic standards, elections cannot be held under martial law. The Parliamentary Assembly also stressed in its Resolution 2636 (2026) "Elections in times of crisis" that safeguarding electoral integrity in times of crisis requires a comprehensive approach. This encompasses clear legal and procedural measures to regulate emergencies, operational adaptation and strengthened co-operation among State institutions, enhanced societal resilience to crisis situations and threats of foreign interference, robust and adaptable election observation methodologies, innovation and preparedness for digital and technical challenges, and specific strategies for elections held in prolonged emergencies or post-conflict settings. The PACE underlined the need for legal and institutional frameworks to provide clear, proportionate and transparent mechanisms for holding or postponing elections in emergencies, in line with European and international standards. In its Recommendation 2301 (2026) "Elections in times of crisis", PACE also called for continued support to Ukraine to enable secure, inclusive and credible elections to be conducted in line with European and international standards as soon as conditions permit.

The last local and regional elections were held in 2020 and observed following a remote procedure by the Congress. In Recommendation 444(2020) "Local and regional elections in major crisis situations", the Congress acknowledged the risks associated with elections in armed conflicts. The Congress President also highly condemned the organisation of pseudo elections/referendums in temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine in 2022 and 2023 noting that "holding local elections in occupied territories only creates an illusion of democracy but clearly violates the right of citizens to participate in the conduct of local public affairs". The subsequent Congress report CG(2026)50-12 "Free Elections at local and regional levels: A fundamental right to strengthen grassroots democracy" noted that violations to the right to free elections had climaxed in these cases.

Congress report CG(2026)50-13 "Tackling violence against local and regional elected representatives" also highlighted the impact of the war on local and regional politicians. It noted that "since the beginning of the war of aggression, local politicians have been targets of physical violence, abductions and murders, and local administrative buildings such as town halls have been frequently targeted by aerial and missile strikes."

In alignment with the New Democratic Pact for Europe and based on the Council of Europe electoral co-operation and support provided since 2022, the Action Plan will play a pivotal role in revitalising democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine, with particular emphasis on supporting the Ukrainian authorities in preparation for the post-war elections and safeguarding electoral and voting rights for Ukrainian citizens both within Ukraine and abroad.

[85] Article 19 of the Law on the Legal Regime of Martial Law.

The Council of Europe will remain flexible in responding to the adjustments necessary to support the Ukrainian authorities in the organisation and conduct of elections as soon as conditions permit.

In its 2025 report on Ukraine, the European Commission stated that the existing framework is generally suitable for holding democratic elections once martial law is lifted and conditions permit, noting progress on recent Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) election observation reports; however, further electoral reforms are required to address outstanding recommendations and prepare for possible post-war elections.
In anticipation of the post-war period, the Parliament established a dedicated working group[86] tasked with developing comprehensive legislative proposals for the organisation and conduct of post-war elections, which reflects an inclusive and transparent approach to ensuring legal and institutional preparedness for the post-war elections, in line with the PACE Resolution 2636 (2026). Respective legislative work on post-war elections in Ukraine is being pursued covering the issues of election administration and infrastructure, security criteria for elections, electoral rights of military personnel, IDPs, occupied and frontline territories, out-of-country voting, information security and pre-election campaigning, as well as Ukraine's international commitments. The measures to be adopted as regards restricting participation of individuals linked to banned political parties – once martial law has been lifted – were recommended by the Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR joint Opinion CDL-AD(2023)025 and by a number of Council of Europe commissioned studies and research.[87] In the joint Opinion CDL-AD(2023)025, the Venice Commission recommended that any disqualification of members of prohibited parties be based on adequate criteria and effective individual assessment, limited to those whose activities have endangered national security or the integrity of the democratic State, with restrictions applying for the shortest possible period once martial law is lifted. Integration of IDPs into local and regional political life, by granting them access to elections at these levels without undue obstacles, had been highlighted in Congress and could serve to inform post-war integration of IDPs.

This electoral preparedness work is further supported through the High-Level Dialogue on Good Democratic Governance in Ukraine, conducted with the support of the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress and the Venice Commission. Launched at the Council of Europe in November 2022 at the initiative of the Parliament of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Government and the Central Election Commission (CEC), and held annually at the request of the Ukrainian side, the Dialogue provides a structured forum for aligning legislative, institutional and governance-related preparations for the post-war period with Council of Europe standards and Ukraine's European path.

The Council of Europe will continue providing its legal and policy advice to the Ukrainian authorities, including through the facilitation of the High-Level Dialogue[88] exchanges, expert support to relevant parliamentary committees and working structures engaged in electoral reform and democratic governance, as well as facilitation of peer-to-peer exchanges to support the elaboration of a viable legal framework and the necessary practical arrangements for the post-war elections in Ukraine to be held in line with European electoral standards and good practices. This action will also be informed by the ongoing and future thematic reports,[89] resolutions and recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly, particularly with regard to out-of-country voting, as well as the work of the Venice Commission, the case law of the European Court, the activities of the Congress and the Council for Democratic Elections through the Council of Europe Electoral Cycle as a comprehensive tool covering all phases of the electoral process.

[86] Working group on the preparation of comprehensive legislative proposals on the specifics of the procedure for organising and holding elections during a special period and/or post-war elections in Ukraine.
[87] Council of Europe (2023), "Organisation and holding of elections in post-war Ukraine. Prerequisites and challenges. Needs assessment report" (Ukrainian; English); Council of Europe (2024), "Risk assessment and feasibility study on alternative forms of voting in post-war elections in Ukraine with a focus on internet voting" (Ukrainian; English); Council of Europe (2023), "Croatian experience in the conduct of elections from post-war challenges to recent crises. Lessons learned and perspectives. Analytical overview" (Ukrainian; English); and Council of Europe (2023), "Organisation and conduct of first post-war elections. Experience of Bosnia and Herzegovina and lessons learned for Ukraine" (Ukrainian; English).
[88] In continuation of and follow-up to the previous rounds of the High-Level Dialogue held in 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026. The High-Level Dialogue on Good Democratic Governance in Ukraine, launched as a joint initiative of the Ukrainian authorities with the support of the Council of Europe in 2022 in response to the unprecedented challenges Ukraine faced as a result of the war of aggression by the Russian Federation, serves as a platform that brings together representatives of national authorities, including the leadership and senior officials of the Ukrainian Parliament, members of the Parliamentary Committee on Organisation of State Power, Local Self-Government, Regional Development and Urban Planning, including representatives from different parliamentary factions, the Ministry of Communities, Territories and Infrastructure Development, the CEC, representatives of local authorities, all-Ukrainian associations of local self-government bodies and the expert community.
[89] Parliamentary Assembly reports under preparation.

Following the Reykjavík Principles for Democracy, endorsed by the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe's member States in May 2023, a shared determination was expressed to counter disinformation that poses a threat to democracy and peace, as well as to take all appropriate measures against any interference in electoral systems and processes. PACE in its Resolution 2593 (2025) "Foreign interference: a threat to democratic security in Europe", stressed the need for comprehensive and holistic strategies to combat the use of multiform foreign interference tactics. A whole-of-society approach that includes parliaments, governments, government agencies, local authorities, private enterprises, journalists, civil society and citizens is encouraged so as to foster societal resilience and counter foreign interference operations. The Congress, in its Recommendation 525 (2025), also pointed out that local and regional elections are not immune to these threats, which are often under-researched and called for capacity-building of local and regional authorities, political parties and voters alike. It noted that information manipulation also targeted countries strongly supporting Ukraine. In the explanatory memorandum, the Congress also noted Ukraine's preparedness against cyberattacks on voter registers. According to the "4th EEAS (The European External Action Service) report on foreign information manipulation and interference threats", Ukraine remained the primary target in 2025, with 540 incidents detected and analysed.

As noted in the Council of Europe feasibility study on the possible elaboration of a legal instrument on foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI), including disinformation (CM/Inf(2026)18), in periods of heightened vulnerability, including electoral processes, certain responses may require particular co-ordination, visibility or timely activation. Democratic processes and public debate increasingly rely on the secure and reliable functioning of digital infrastructures and information systems. The protection of these systems against cyberattacks, sabotage or other forms of malicious interference contributes to broader democratic resilience. Strengthening preparedness, risk management and response capacities in this field may therefore complement efforts aimed at reinforcing the integrity of the information environment.[90] In this regard, the Council of Europe will reinforce its support to the election administration and other Ukrainian authorities concerned (i) to ensure institutional preparedness through sustained interagency and cross-sectoral co-operation to counter disinformation and foreign interference in elections; (ii) to strengthen the cyberresilience of the electoral infrastructure; and (iii) to enhance the legal framework governing financial contributions to political parties, advertising and electoral campaigns to mitigate the risk of inappropriate or illicit foreign financial interference. This action will be complemented by support for comprehensive voters' awareness raising and implementation of the CEC communication strategy for the post-war elections in Ukraine, which was elaborated with the Council of Europe's support.[91]

Building on the Council of Europe and PACE support to electoral reform and democratic governance in Ukraine, the Action Plan will ensure continuity of assistance to electoral stakeholders in preparation for post-war democratic processes.

The Action Plan will facilitate peer-to-peer exchanges between Ukrainian and international stakeholders to devise resilient electoral solutions and practices and will ensure the CEC and related bodies are better equipped to manage post-war electoral processes through capacity building in election administration, cybersecurity, crisis communication and implementing an inclusive communication strategy.

In the absence of an electoral cycle during martial law, continued support to the Parliament remains essential to ensure democratic security and continuity, institutional resilience, effective checks and balances, and preparedness for the full restoration of democratic processes in the post-war period.

Following the recent PACE Monitoring Committee visit to Kyiv in October 2025, PACE urged the Ukrainian authorities to strengthen parliamentary oversight of the executive and to ensure that legislative processes are transparent and inclusive, in Resolution 2635 (2026) "Progress of the Assembly's monitoring procedure (January-December 2025)". In line with Resolution 2655 (2026) "Updating the Venice Commission's Rule of Law Checklist: a contribution by PACE, the Action Plan will also ensure legal and policy advice, as well as expert and technical support to the Ukrainian Parliament in integrating the updated Venice Commission Rule of Law Checklist into its legislative processes.

[90] Regulation (EU) 2024/2847 on horizontal cybersecurity requirements for products with digital elements (Cyber Resilience Act); the notion of "cyberresilience" generally refers to risk assessment, prevention, preparedness, response and recovery capacities in relation to digital infrastructures and information systems.
[91] CEC Resolution No. 70, adopted on 23 December 2025.

It will also facilitate structured interparliamentary dialogue and peer-to-peer exchanges on democratic resilience, parliamentary oversight, rule of law safeguards and post-war democratic recovery in line with Council of Europe standards.

These efforts will also contribute to the implementation of measures envisaged in Ukraine's institutions, adopted in May 2025, within the framework of Ukraine's EU accession process.
Regarding multilevel governance and local democracy, Ukraine's local and regional authorities play a significant role in resisting the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine, bearing the brunt of its impact and leading a multilevel response to the harm and damage caused by the war, while continuing to deliver governance and essential public services often in the most difficult circumstances, as highlighted by the Congress in its CG(2026)50-10 report "A strategic approach to supporting the recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine at local and regional levels".

The Government updated the Decentralisation Reform Concept[92] via resolution in December 2025. The Congress contributed to its elaboration and by holding open, inclusive public consultations and therefore welcomed[93] as a strong step towards advancing this fundamental reform and achieving a balanced multilevel governance system in Ukraine. This concept establishes a coherent, strategic vision for local self-government reform and decentralisation, mindful of the EU accession process, and prepares for post-war recovery. Under the Action Plan, the Congress will help the government to implement a dedicated action plan to ensure irreversibility of the decentralisation reform.

Ukraine has adopted several key laws strengthening local governance and broadening opportunities for citizens' meaningful and direct engagement in decision-making processes, including the Law on Service in Local Self-Government Bodies, the Law on Public Consultations and the Law on Local Democracy. These laws were developed with the support of the Council of Europe and improved in line with its legal opinions, contributing to the implementation of Ukraine's obligations under the European Charter of Local Self-Government (ETS No. 122). The European Commission, in its 2025 report on Ukraine, highlighted that the Law on Public Consultations created a formal framework for stakeholder engagement in policy making, aimed at improving transparency, accountability and regulatory quality. Synergies were also reinforced with the Register of Damage for Ukraine through joint engagement with national associations of local and regional authorities and other stakeholders to strengthen the understanding of accountability mechanisms and the role of local and regional authorities in informing communities and supporting access to remedies.

The Council of Europe will promote inclusive policy making at all levels. Technical co-operation will take into account the needs of communities – women and men in all their diversity, with a particular focus on those at risk including IDPs, veterans, returnees, women, children and persons with disabilities.

See Rights of internally displaced persons, returnees and other war-affected people; Rights of veterans; Gender equality – violence against women and domestic violence – human trafficking; Children's rights; and Effective implementation of the European Social Charter under Priority II.

The Council of Europe through its Congress will continue to facilitate policy development dialogue among national stakeholders and provide delivery of policy advice, legal expertise and peer reviews on a wide thematic scope, upon request of Ukrainian partners.

The Action Plan will assist Ukraine in improving the legal framework on the division of competences between local self-government and the State, including guarantees that local and regional authorities are free to exercise their competences and have resources which are commensurate with their responsibilities, legality supervision over local authorities' acts, local public service, public ethics, status and accountability of local and regional elected representatives, metropolitan governance and many others. The Council of Europe will stand ready to help Ukraine in elaborating constitutional amendments on decentralisation.

Special attention will be paid to designing a legal framework for the transition from military to regular (civilian) local and regional governance, and reinstating State and local self-government functions after de-occupation.

[92] Updated approaches to the implementation of the local self-government concept: adapting the reform to the challenges of war and recovery.
[93] Congress (2025), "Congress welcomes the update of Ukraine's Decentralisation Reform Concept".

Additionally, the Council of Europe will empower municipalities to carry out community-based initiatives focused on transparency, accountability, participation, gender equality and human rights. It will also strengthen their capacity in policy making and service delivery, while promoting collaboration between local authorities, national oversight institutions and international accountability mechanisms.

The European Commission also highlighted that CSOs operate in an overall enabling environment in the 2025 report and referred to the adoption of the above-mentioned three laws to strengthen the engagement and consultation of the public and CSOs in policy-making and decision-making processes at the central and sub-national government levels, and urged authorities to take steps to implement the laws once martial law ends.

The Action Plan will support Ukraine in advancing inclusive and gender-balanced decision making, civic engagement and transparent governance at all levels, even amid wartime challenges, including strengthening the legal framework for civic participation, advancing participatory and gender-balanced decision making across communities, and building the capacities of public officials, civil society representatives, volunteers and residents to engage effectively in democratic processes. The support will ensure alignment with the "Guidelines for civil participation in political decision making", Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)11 on the need to strengthen the protection and promotion of civil society space in Europe, Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)4 on the participation of citizens in local public life, and Recommendation CM/Rec(2003)3 on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making, as well as the Code of good practice for civil participation in the decision-making process, adopted by the Conference of International non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

To embed democratic innovations at the local level, the Action Plan will promote deliberative democracy mechanisms, including citizens' assemblies, enabling local authorities to co-design complex post-war recovery priorities with representative groups of residents. Additionally, the Council of Europe will support the expansion of school participatory budgeting across Ukrainian municipalities, utilising it as a practical form of democratic education that empowers students, parents and teachers to directly manage public resources and develop long-term civic skills.

Furthermore, the deployment of the updated CivicLab toolkit – for development, analysis and forecasting of options in the decision-making process – will enable civil servants at all levels of government to independently design and conduct digital consultations with citizens. By embedding this standard-setting methodology within institutional workflows, public authorities will improve the efficiency, inclusiveness and transparency of policy making, while significantly reducing administrative burdens during the recovery phase.

Technical co-operation to be implemented in this area has been designed taking into consideration the reports and conclusions of relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies as well as the follow-up to the High-Level Dialogue on Good Democratic Governance in Ukraine that call on Ukraine to:[94]

- reinforce the legal, institutional and security pre-conditions necessary for calling, organising and conducting secure, free, fair and credible post-war elections in line with European and international standards;
- strengthen oversight of transparency and accountability of political party financing and pre-election campaign funding, including for online political advertising;
- develop legal and practical arrangements for out-of-country voting to facilitate secure and accessible voting for Ukrainian citizens residing or staying abroad, ensuring their electoral rights are fully protected;
- strengthen legal and practical instruments for parliamentary oversight of electoral rights, including through the mandate of the Ombudsperson's Office and its network of representatives in more than 30 countries, with particular attention to ensuring the electoral rights of Ukrainian citizens both within Ukraine and abroad;
- elaborate and establish effective legal and operational mechanisms to counter election-related foreign information manipulation and interference during wartime, the post-war period and throughout the electoral cycle; strengthen cross-institutional and interagency co-operation; reinforce cross-institutional capacities to detect, analyse and respond to co-ordinated election-related manipulation campaigns;
- refine the current legal framework on media coverage of elections, drawing on lessons learned from previous electoral cycles and recently emerged challenges;

[94] Congress (2020), "Information report on the elections in Ukraine", CG-BUR(2020)35-37; Congress (2026), "A strategic approach to supporting the recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine at local and regional levels", CG(2026)50-10; and Resolution 519 (2026) "A strategic approach to supporting the recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine at local and regional levels".

- strengthen domestic election observation with due regard to the post-war election-related challenges;
- implement a large-scale public awareness and communication campaign on post-war elections, electoral rights and voting procedures, including through the existing awareness-raising online platform and available communication tools;
- strengthen the institutional and operational capacity of the Ukrainian Parliament in integrating Council of Europe standards, including the updated Venice Commission Rule of Law Checklist, into legislative processes, as well as in improving legislative oversight in line with Council of Europe standards;
- enhance the alignment of parliamentary rules and procedures with Council of Europe standards and European Union accession requirements, including in areas related to democratic security and crisis governance;
- carry out decentralisation reforms as quickly as possible, with the aim of achieving greater efficiency through the clear division of competencies between tiers of government;
- ensure that local and regional authorities in Ukraine fully exercise their competencies to advance gender-responsive recovery and reconstruction in their communities;
- facilitate meaningful and systematic consultations with civil society, including women's rights and women-led organisations, as part of an inclusive dialogue and an enabling environment for civil society;
- strengthen democratic processes, in particular the openness, transparency and gender-responsiveness of public authorities;
- facilitate the balanced participation of citizens, CSOs and stakeholders in the formulation of policies, action plans and decisions which will help the authorities to respond to real needs and improve the quality, relevance and impact of services;
- improve and enforce the regulatory and policy framework on gender-responsive civic participation, civil society development and volunteerism.

Education

The Council of Europe considers education, including the right to quality education for all, within a broader human rights context, as a driving force for democratic culture and mutual understanding, combating intolerance and stereotyping, promoting inclusion and equality, including gender equality, at all levels, and fostering respect for diversity.

One of the key pillars of the New Democratic Pact for Europe is learning and practising democracy by supporting formal and non-formal education initiatives that equip European citizens, especially young people, with the values, skills, attitudes and knowledge and critical understanding necessary for engaged citizenship. In his 2026 report "The New Democratic Pact for Europe in Times of Rupture" , the Secretary General of the Council of Europe noted that Ukraine participates in Council of Europe initiatives supporting access to education for displaced persons, including through the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees while work on history teaching, language education and education in crisis contexts strengthens resilience and the continuity of learning

The Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has brought to light the necessity to dedicate further efforts to ensure the right to education for all. According to the Ukraine Education Cluster Strategy 2025-2026, major challenges remain in ensuring access to quality education for displaced children, addressing gaps in mental health and psychosocial support, overcoming barriers to the integration of internally displaced children in host community schools, and supporting children with disabilities and special education needs. These challenges are exacerbated by the ongoing war, increasing displacement and the prevalence of online learning from pre-displacement locations. *See Children's rights under Priority II.*

The European Commission, in Chapter 26 (Education and culture) of its 2025 report on Ukraine, underlined the need to ensure quality education for all children, particularly those living near the front line, in temporarily occupied territories, Roma children and displaced children. The report specifically highlighted, regarding the reintegration of children from temporarily occupied territories, the importance of recognition of their acquired education and support for their psychosocial adaptation. The European Commission also acknowledged efforts to improve education quality through the New Ukrainian School Reform, enhancements to curricula and pedagogical approaches, and legislative steps to recognise studies completed by Ukrainian children abroad or during displacement. Additionally, the Law on Preschool Education, effective from January 2025, aims to improve quality and inclusivity, particularly for children with disabilities and other children at risk.

The Council of Europe will assist Ukraine in educational reforms focusing on democratic culture in schools in line with the RFCDC. Particular focus will be placed on ensuring access to quality education for all children affected by war, and on developing further measures to support inclusive teaching practices and fostering psychosocial resilience among students. The Council of Europe will support the development of a culture of democracy in schools by providing technical expertise, capacity building and resources to enable schools to foster democratic values and practices effectively. Technical co-operation will also aim to enhance educators' professional competences and skills to promote democratic citizenship, gender equality and respect for diversity. *See Children's rights under Priority II.*

According to the "General report on the state of history teaching in Europe", developed by the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe, the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has brought to the fore its destructive capabilities, including through manufacturing an alternative history denying Ukraine's existence to legitimise the war of aggression.

The Action Plan will contribute to countering such narratives by promoting quality history education to enhance the critical understanding of history, based on reliable data, from the perspective of democracy and human rights. The Council of Europe will also encourage peer learning and the exchange of innovative practices in history education to foster historical thinking, critical analysis and competences for democratic culture among learners – skills that are vital to the fight against disinformation and the strengthening of democratic resilience in society. These efforts will also promote greater inclusivity, gender-responsiveness, representation of minorities and the European dimension in school curricula, while supporting teachers' ongoing professional development. In this regard, the Council of Europe's approach will be informed by gender perspectives in education policy and in the classroom, as set out in the Gender Equality in Education Scorecard developed by the Council of Europe Steering Committee for Education.[95]

In the field of higher education, the Council of Europe will continue supporting Ukraine in strengthening the role of higher education institutions as spaces for democratic participation, academic freedom, ethical governance, critical thinking and social responsibility, particularly in the context of war and recovery. Efforts will focus on supporting inclusive and transparent institutional governance, student participation and the resilience of higher education communities. The Council of Europe will further support Ukraine's participation in the Council of Europe Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education to promote integrity, transparency and anti-corruption in higher education governance and academic processes. In addition, support will continue for the implementation of the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (EQPR), facilitating the recognition of qualifications of refugees, including those from Ukraine, thereby improving access to higher education and employment opportunities across Europe.

Through these actions, the Council of Europe will promote the inclusion of democratic citizenship and human rights education across curricula, ensuring alignment with European standards and contributing to social cohesion. The impact of these initiatives will be monitored and evaluated to support continuous improvement and sustainability.

[95] Steering Committee for Education (2025), "Terms of reference", CM(2025)131-addfinal.

Technical co-operation to be implemented in this area has been designed taking into consideration the reports and conclusions of relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies that call on Ukraine to:

- strengthen the capacity of education decision makers at the national, local and institutional levels to ensure a participatory and inclusive system of education governance and provision, guaranteeing equal access to quality education for all, including learners in underground schools;
- further support the integration of Council of Europe education standards and principles in the education policies and practice of Ukraine, including with regard to the education of children with special education needs;
- support the development and implementation of inclusive, multiperspective history curriculum resources and pedagogical approaches that enhance learners' understanding of complex historical processes and their capacity to critically address the manipulation and misuse of history today, as well as teacher training with a focus on historical thinking and active teaching methods, in line with Council of Europe standards;
- support the creation of safe learning environments that promote dialogue, inclusiveness and social cohesion and improve the capacity of education professionals to address potentially sensitive and controversial issues;
- support higher education institutions in promoting democratic participation, academic freedom, ethical governance and inclusive learning environments, including for displaced students and academics affected by war;
- support the recognition of qualifications of refugees, including those from Ukraine, by becoming a partner of and through the implementation of the EQPR, facilitating access to higher education and employment opportunities;
- improve access to diverse educational resources and promote innovative assessment practices that foster competences for democratic culture, critical thinking and historical empathy, and advance gender equality and non-gender-biased education policies, resources and environments.

YOUTH

Supporting young people's participation in democratic life is essential for a democratic future, as stressed in the Reykjavík Principles for Democracy. This includes education about human rights and core democratic values such as pluralism, inclusion, gender equality, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability. The Reykjavík Declaration calls for "a youth perspective in the Organisation's intergovernmental and other deliberations as youth participation in decision-making processes improves the effectiveness of public policies and strengthens democratic institutions through open dialogue". This stance is also reflected in PACE Resolution 2553 (2024) "Strengthening the youth perspective in the work of the Parliamentary Assembly", which encourages the national parliaments of member States to create conditions for the widest possible participation of young people, with particular emphasis on young women, as well as PACE Resolution 2639 (2026) "Strengthening democracies with young people: from participation to shared responsibility", that stresses that Europe's future depends on societies "in which young people are recognised as equal partners in shaping political, social, economic and cultural life", and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities Resolution 516 (2025) and Recommendation 537 (2025) "European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life" which subsequently, on 12 March 2026, the Committee of Ministers adopted Recommendation CM/Rec(2026)3 endorsing the Charter. The Council of Europe Reference Framework for a Youth Perspective sets an innovative and high standard for the integration of young people's views in decision making in all policy areas, not only in the youth sector.[96] The New Democratic Pact for Europe also aims at elevating youth leadership and participation, fostering civic engagement through innovative tools and inclusive narratives that connect new generations to democratic life. The Council of Europe's action in the youth sector is guided by a comprehensive Youth Sector Strategy 2030, engaging young people with the Organisation's values.

[96] Council of Europe (2025), "10th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth – Resolution on the Council of Europe Reference Framework on a Youth Perspective".

As reaffirmed by ministers of youth from across the 46 Council of Europe member States in the Final Declaration of the 10th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for youth, the Council of Europe's support for Ukraine in the field of youth remains a priority, which includes solidarity, co-operation with non-governmental youth organisations and networks that foster young people's participation in democratic life and contribute to Ukraine's recovery, including Ukraine's youth infrastructure and the reintegration of young veterans.

The "European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life",[97] provides a framework for local and regional authorities to create conditions that enable young people to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes, public life and community development and is a landmark reference for youth participation.

Ukraine participates in the Council of Europe youth sector's co-management system through governmental representation in the European Steering Committee for Youth. Ukrainian youth organisations and young people also engage with the Council of Europe youth sector through its programmes and activities.

In line with its EU accession path, Ukraine is aligning its legislation and practice with the youth work development standards adopted by the EU through the European Youth Work Agenda and the European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027. In its 2025 report on Ukraine, the European Commission noted the adoption of the Law on the Basic Principles of Youth Policy, the National Youth Council of Ukraine, and designation of Lviv as European Youth Capital for 2025, a major European youth civil society initiative, also supported by the Council of Europe, in Chapter 26 (Education and culture).

The National Youth Council under the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, established in March 2026 by the government, aims to serve as a permanent dialogue platform between government and young people. The Council forms part of a broader youth ecosystem, which includes youth councils under central executive authorities, regional and local youth councils, youth and children's CSOs, student self-government bodies and other consultative formats, designed to provide a foundation for young people's participation in policy-making and decision-making processes.

Ukraine has undergone youth policy reforms and the implementation of relevant strategic programmes, notably the National Youth Strategy 2030, State Targeted Social Programme "Youth of Ukraine: Generation of Resilience - 2030", and new legislation in the field of youth policy and youth work in Ukraine. The priorities and modes of intervention reflect the orientations of the Council of Europe Youth Sector Strategy 2030.

The Council of Europe and the Ministry of Youth and Sports have signed a five-year Framework Programme[98] for co-operation in the field of youth policy (2026-2030). It focuses on promoting education for democratic citizenship and human rights education, strengthening youth work through the implementation of the national "youth specialist" (youth worker) professional standard, and enhancing civic engagement by supporting the All-Ukrainian Youth Centre, the Ukrainian Youth Foundation, youth centres and diverse youth organisations. The Framework Programme addresses cross-cutting priorities during war and in the post-war period, including creating barrier-free environments, building resilience among war-affected youth, fostering belonging to Ukrainian and European communities, and supporting the reintegration of displaced persons, young military personnel and veterans. The Action Plan will also promote the civic engagement and democratic participation of young veterans and veteran-led civil society organisations, including through mechanisms for their meaningful participation in local self-government and community recovery processes. *See Effective implementation of the European Social Charter; Rights of internally displaced persons, returnees and other war-affected people; Rights of veterans; and Integrity and governance of sport under Priority II; and Education under Priority III.*

[97] CM/Rec(2026)3 - Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life

[98] Council of Europe (2025), "Round table on youth policy and youth work in Ukraine's resilience and reconstruction".

The Action Plan will continue to support Ukraine in gender-responsive participatory youth policies and reinforced youth work, taking into account the specific needs of young people in the war and post-war context, including young people from temporarily occupied territories. Further co-operation with the authorities and youth stakeholders will focus on strengthening national and local youth participation mechanisms, integrating youth perspectives in decision-making processes and enabling access to rights for young people, notably in the context of Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction and European integration efforts. Special attention is also needed for youth in rural areas, as underlined in Recommendation CM/Rec(2025)3 on the social, economic, and political participation of rural youth and by the Congress in its Recommendation 473 (2022) "The future of youth in rural areas: responsibilities of local and regional authorities".

Technical co-operation to be implemented in this area has been designed taking into consideration the reports and conclusions of relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies that call on Ukraine to:

- adjust priorities and means of youth policies and programmes, taking into account the war and post-war realities of young people, applying the policy-setting documents of the Council of Europe;
- strengthen gender-balanced national and local youth participation mechanisms and processes, including the National Youth Council under the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, youth councils under central executive authorities and local youth councils, associating young people with reconstruction efforts, European integration-related and inclusive local policy making;
- ensure responses to emerging challenges facing young people through an intersectional perspective, by strengthening youth work and youth centres that provide services including mental health and psychosocial support for youth, particularly those at risk such as IDPs, returnees, the war-affected young people:
- support gender-responsive youth policies and programmes at national and regional levels so as to enable access to rights for young people;
- provide institutional support to youth organisations as platforms of civic engagement and democratic participation, strengthen their organisational capacity and support measures aimed at mitigating the effects of the war;
- promote transnational voluntary services as an important instrument to support youth engagement in solidarity and reconstruction efforts, including with the participation of young Ukrainians abroad, in particular young refugees and students, and with a view to maintaining their connection with Ukraine's democratic life and future return and reintegration processes.

Culture and cultural heritage

The Reykjavík Declaration reaffirms the commitment "to developing mutual understanding among the peoples of Europe and reciprocal appreciation of our cultural diversity and heritage".

Ukraine is a Party to the European Cultural Convention (ETS No. 018), the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada Convention) (ETS No. 121), the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta Convention, revised) (ETS No. 143) and the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention) (CETS No. 199). Since 2021, Ukraine has also been a member of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes and has signed the Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property (CETS No. 221). The Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes focuses on development and social cohesion, with a particular focus on themes of symbolic importance for European unity, history, culture and values.

The protection of cultural heritage is linked to democratic resilience, historical memory and information integrity. According to the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy, as of December 2025,[99] 1 630 cultural heritage sites and 2 437 cultural infrastructure facilities were destroyed or damaged as a result of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine. The Ukrainian authorities and the international community are making efforts to address the consequences of the destruction and to restore Ukraine's cultural potential, including through the creation of a national database of cultural artefacts, raising awareness about the importance of cultural heritage and international co-operation to prevent the illicit trade in stolen artefacts.

[99] Ministry of Culture of Ukraine (2025), "1 630 cultural heritage sites and 2 437 cultural infrastructure facilities in Ukraine have been damaged due to Russia's aggression".

However, the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine poses significant challenges to the protection and preservation of Ukraine's cultural heritage.

The Action Plan will support Ukraine in strengthening its legislative and policy framework for the protection and preservation of culture and cultural heritage, and in building national stakeholders' understanding of existing European standards in these areas. The Council of Europe will provide legal expertise and support for the protection and rehabilitation of cultural heritage, drawing on the relevant conventions to which Ukraine is a party.

Technical co-operation to be implemented in this area has been designed taking into consideration the reports and conclusions of relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies that call on Ukraine to:

- promote cultural heritage and education as a vehicle for better civic and youth participation, in particular in the fields of the environment and community-led social issues, including those related to gender equality, in line with Council of Europe standards;
- improve legislation and policy in line with the European standards on the preservation and protection of culture and cultural heritage in Ukraine;
- raise awareness of the Council of Europe conventions and European standards on legislation and policy to protect culture and cultural heritage;
- support cultural routes in Ukraine and put into place mechanisms for co-operation between the culture and tourism sectors.

Expected outcomes – Reinforcing democratic institutions, free and fair elections and information integrity

- Ukraine's media and freedom of expression framework is further aligned with Council of Europe and EU standards, with strengthened capacity of national authorities, an empowered media community and improved access to public information.
- The safety of journalists, particularly in the context of war-related challenges, is better ensured by applying a human rights approach and integrating best European practices.
- The legal, institutional and democratic security framework for post-war elections is strengthened, consistent with European and international standards and Ukraine's EU accession commitments.
- Electoral rights of Ukrainian citizens are effectively protected through strengthened oversight, upheld healthy information environment and increased level of public and voters' awareness.
- Interparliamentary dialogue and peer learning are strengthened, with increased uptake of Council of Europe standards by members and staff of Parliament through engagement with institutions and structures of PACE.
- The legal and institutional framework for multilevel governance is improved, reflecting European standards and tailored to Ukraine's post-war needs.
- Local policies are more equitable and inclusive, integrating human rights and gender responsive approach and fostering social cohesion.
- The regulatory and policy framework on civic participation is improved, ensuring inclusive and meaningful engagement of citizens in democratic processes, including through deliberative democracy mechanisms and civic participation toolkits,
- National, regional and local authorities have strengthened capacity to advance democratic processes in an open and transparent manner, including through training on relevant HELP courses.
- The education system of Ukraine actively contributes to a culture of democracy, democratic resilience and an inclusive and cohesive society in Ukraine through the integration of Council of Europe standards and principles in education for democratic citizenship, human rights education and history education in Ukraine's education policies and practice.
- Young people meaningfully participate in policymaking in areas which concern them, in line with the Council of Europe standards.

- Policies, programmes and institutions in areas concerning young people, at national and local levels are strengthened to support democratic participation, access to rights, civic engagement and the psychosocial recovery of young people.
- Youth workers, youth centres, and youth organisations in Ukraine provide quality, gender-responsive services, addressing the needs of young people, including mental health and psychosocial support, with particular attention to groups at risk such as IDPs, returnees, veterans and war-affected young people, in line with Council of Europe standards and approaches.
- National legislation and policies are aligned with Council of Europe standards on the protection and preservation of culture and cultural heritage, including effective implementation of the European Cultural Convention, the Granada Convention, the Valletta Convention and the Faro Convention.

Main national partners: Office of the President of Ukraine, Parliament, Parliament Specialised Committee on State Power, Parliamentary Committee on Humanitarian and Information Policy, Parliamentary Committee on Freedom of Speech, Parliamentary Committee on State Building, Local Governance, Regional and Urban Development, Parliamentary Committee on Youth and Sport, CEC, Secretariat of the CEC, Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers, Ombudsperson's Office, Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications, Ministry of Culture and Information Policy, Ministry of Communities, Territories and Internally Displaced Persons, Ministry for Recovery, Infrastructure and Transport, Ministry of Digital Transformation, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Youth and Sports, National Agency of Ukraine on Civil Service, National Agency on Prevention of Corruption, National Council on Television and Radio Broadcasting, National Public Broadcasting Company (UA:PBC), All-Ukrainian Youth Centre, Ukrainian Youth Foundation, Office of the Prosecutor General, State Customs Service, enforcement cybersecurity and information security agencies, regional, subregional and local military administrations, local and regional authorities and their national associations, local education authorities, Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe in Ukraine, professional associations of journalists and other media actors, educational institutions, educational professionals and associations, National Youth Council of Ukraine, youth CSOs, women's rights and women-led organisations, parent and student organisations, political parties, CSOs, media community.

2.4 PRIORITY IV – STRENGTHENING INDEPENDENT JUSTICE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE[100]

Strengthening independent justice and good governance is essential to Ukraine's democratic security and post-war recovery. Independent, efficient and trusted justice systems, combined with effective anti-corruption mechanisms, robust digital governance and integrity in public life, are indispensable foundations of a resilient democratic State and a precondition for Ukraine's successful post-war reconstruction and its path towards European integration.

The Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has placed Ukraine's justice and governance systems under extraordinary pressure, disrupting court operations, depleting institutional capacity and creating new challenges for anti-corruption efforts and digital governance. At the same time, the war has underscored the critical importance of maintaining and strengthening these systems as pillars of democratic security.

[100] This priority area covers the operational pillars "Upholding safety, security and integrity of society and persons" and "Building trust in public institutions" of the Council of Europe Programme and Budget.

Ukraine adopted the rule of law road map[101] in May 2025. It outlines the key pre-accession reforms, explicitly referring to Council of Europe standards and Venice Commission recommendations, within the framework of Ukraine's EU accession process, notably under Chapter 23 (judiciary and fundamental rights) and Chapter 24 (justice, freedom and security) of the EU *acquis*. The technical co-operation under this priority will directly support Ukraine's European Union accession commitments in these chapters and complement Priority I of the Action Plan by strengthening the institutional foundations required for the effective implementation of human rights standards and the execution of European Court judgments. Building on the 10 priority reforms set out in the joint statement between the European Commission and Ukraine in Lviv in December 2025, which set out specific steps in the areas of criminal justice, judicial careers and the disciplinary framework, prosecutorial reform, anti-corruption and internal control systems, the Action Plan will consolidate and deepen progress in these areas, providing sustained technical co-operation to ensure that reforms are effectively institutionalised and aligned with Council of Europe standards.

The Venice Commission has played an active role in Ukraine's judicial reform process, issuing numerous opinions.[102] The Venice Commission has continually emphasised the importance of adopting a holistic, consistent and sustainable approach to the implementation of reforms.

The Action Plan will support Ukraine in further enhancing the independence of the judiciary, its professionalism and transparency, by strengthening the implementation of the gender-responsive justice reform in line with Venice Commission recommendations, GRECO compliance reports and other Council of Europe standards, including those of the Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE).[103]

The efficiency of the judicial and prosecution systems, the modernisation of justice administration and the quality of judicial services will be improved through the application and further dissemination of the guidelines and tools of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ). Additionally, the role of lawyers for the good functioning of justice systems, in contributing to better access to justice and to fair trials, has been acknowledged and standards on their independence and protection are set out in the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer (CETS No. 226), adopted on 13 May 2025 and signed by Ukraine on 9 March 2026.

In line with the findings and recommendations of the CPT, relevant European Court judgments, the Committee of Ministers' decisions and the dedicated set of standards, such as the European Prison Rules and European Probation Rules, the Council of Europe will address the systemic issues related to the conditions and treatment of people deprived of their liberty. This will include enhancing safeguards against ill-treatment and improving the efficiency of prison management and healthcare (including mental healthcare) provided to detainees. The interventions will foster the shift from punitive to rehabilitative approaches to detainees, those on probation and persons treated in other closed institutions, from admission through to their reintegration upon release, in line with best international practices and Council of Europe standards. Particular attention will also be given to strengthening the capacity of police services to prevent ill-treatment, ensure accountability and apply human rights-compliant practices during arrest, custody and interviewing procedures.

[101] The road map foresees strengthening the independence and institutional capacity of the Constitutional Court, ensuring guarantees of the independence and impartiality of judges, prosecutors and members of judicial governance bodies, as well as promoting competitive selection and career advancement. As regards accountability and integrity, the road map provides for strengthening disciplinary liability and accountability mechanisms, reinforcing asset declaration systems and promoting ethical standards for judges and prosecutors. As regards efficiency and access to justice, the road map commits to improving access to justice and the efficiency of judicial proceedings, optimising the court system, reducing case backlogs and delays, advancing the digitalisation of justice and promoting alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. These steps are tied to a broader reform of the courts and prosecution systems to strengthen the institutional capacity of judicial governance and self-governance bodies, as well as prosecution self-governance bodies.

[102] Venice Commission, "Opinion search".

[103] See CCJE Opinions, most of which are available in Ukrainian.

Based on the recommendations of GRECO and MONEYVAL, the Council of Europe will provide advice and build institutional capacity to effectively fight corruption and money laundering, address economic crime and increase financial integrity, including from the perspective of gender-related risks. These efforts will contribute to the development of a sound business environment and public administration reform, ensuring that government institutions are transparent, efficient and free from corruption and political influence, and fostering partnerships to counter current and emerging risks (including technological) associated with illicit financial flows, organised and transnational crime and to support post-war recovery.

Given the increasing importance of cybersecurity and digital governance, the Action Plan will assist Ukraine in preserving its critical infrastructure and developing a robust cybercrime framework in line with the Cybercrime Convention, as well as in building regulatory frameworks for emerging technologies such as AI and data protection, ensuring that digital transformation in Ukraine respects human rights and gender equality and contributes to overall democratic security.

In addition, support will be provided to strengthen integrity, transparency and good governance in sport, including through the prevention of corruption, manipulation of sports competitions, doping, violence and discrimination in sport, including on the basis of gender, in line with relevant Council of Europe conventions and standards.

The capacities of legal professionals to address issues listed under the present priority will be improved with relevant HELP courses (such as “Introduction to corruption prevention”, “Cybercrime and electronic evidence”, “Artificial intelligence and human rights”, “Human rights in sports”, “Business and human rights”, “Quality of justice – the work of the CEPEJ”, “Judges upholding the rule of law”, “Human rights and drug use”, etc.).

This priority will also directly support the implementation of the rule of law road map and progress towards the relevant interim benchmarks in the EU common position under Cluster 1:”Fundamentals”, in particular those concerning comprehensive justice reform, anti-corruption, anti-money laundering, prison and detention reform and personal data protection.

These actions will contribute to the implementation by Ukraine of the SDGs, especially goal 3 (good health and well-being- target 3.4, goal 4 (quality education – target 4.7), goal 5 (gender equality – target 5.1) and goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions – targets 16.1, 16.3, 16.4, 16.5, 16.6).

Independence and efficiency of justice

Strengthening constitutional justice and aligning judicial reforms with Council of Europe and EU standards remain critical to Ukraine’s EU accession and democratic security.

The Venice Commission noted that the Ukrainian authorities and civil society have shown an exemplary willingness to move forward with the reforms and to implement the Venice Commission recommendations, in its follow-up Opinion CDL-AD(2023)022.[104] However, recognising that there are pressing issues facing Ukraine as well as its existing commitments and conditionalities, the joint Opinion CDL-AD(2025)044[105] of the Venice Commission and the Directorate General Human Rights and Rule of Law (DGI) of the Council of Europe underlined that substantial changes to the framework governing the judiciary should follow a comprehensive and coherent approach with due regard to the stability of the judicial system, prioritising the effective enforcement of existing judicial accountability tools and avoiding an overly complex legislative framework that would impose excessive administrative burdens on judges. These recommendations are also reflected in the Committee of Ministers’ decisions on the execution of the judgments in the *Denisov v. UkraineDenisov / Golovchuk group v. Ukraine* , which urge the authorities to take full account of the Venice Commission and DGI joint opinion and GRECO recommendations while moving forward with any further changes to the legal framework on the judiciary.

[104] Follow-up opinion to the opinion on the draft law on amendments to certain legislative acts of Ukraine on improving the procedure for the selection of candidates for the position of judge of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine on a competitive basis.
[105] Joint opinion of the Venice Commission and DGI on draft amendments on disciplinary procedures against judges, declarations of integrity, and other procedures.

The Council of Europe will support the implementation of the rule of law road map, advancing judicial independence, accountability, integrity and efficiency, including through standards and tools developed by GRECO, CEPEJ, and the CCJE. Under the Action Plan, technical co-operation will address the judiciary as a whole, supporting gender-responsive reforms designed to enhance the independence, efficiency and integrity of judges and courts across all levels. This will include promoting transparent and merit based procedures for the selection of candidates for judicial office including competitions for vacant judicial positions in local courts, as well as procedures for judicial transfer, strengthening disciplinary frameworks within the competences of the relevant judicial governance bodies, and supporting the consistent application of ethical and integrity standards. Strengthening judicial self-governance, ensuring continuity of operation of the judicial self-governance bodies and accountability of judges will be priorities, helping to maintain public trust and reinforce the rule of law in Ukraine In line with the New Democratic Pact for Europe, the Action Plan will accelerate ongoing judicial reforms, strengthen judicial independence and ensure the effective functioning of justice in Ukraine.

Following a series of Venice Commission opinions adopted in 2022 and 2023,[106] Law No. 3 277 amending the Law on the Constitutional Court of Ukraine was adopted in July 2023. It established AGE, an extraordinary mechanism to assist the Ukrainian authorities in assessing the moral qualities and professional competence of candidates for judicial office at the CCU. With the publicity of integrity interviews and the overall transparency of its work, based on the highest standards of integrity and professional competence, AGE set a completely new standard in Ukraine, which became a reference point and paved the way for active discussions among different actors in Ukrainian society. In 2024 and 2025, four new CCU judges were appointed from AGE lists of successful candidates selected through such competitive procedures. At the same time, certain challenges remain, notably delays in appointing new CCU judges after AGE has transmitted the lists of successful candidates to the relevant appointing bodies: the President of Ukraine, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the Council of Judges of Ukraine. In its 2025 report on Ukraine, the European Commission recommended that the remaining CCU vacancies be filled without delay and that the relevant procedures be further improved in line with Venice Commission recommendations. While the CCU's quorum has now been restored,[107] the timely completion of appointments remains important to fully consolidate the CCU's capacity.

GRECO acknowledged notable progress with the appointment of members of the High Council of Justice (HCJ) and of the High Qualification Commission of Judges (HQCJ), enabling the HQCJ to resume its work as a collegial body, and noted the appointment of the full composition of the Public Integrity Council in its addendum to the second compliance report.[108] The Public Integrity Council, as provided for under Ukrainian law assists the HQCJ in establishing the compliance of judges and candidates for judicial office with the criteria of professional ethics and integrity. In carrying out this function, members of the Public Integrity Council have full access to judicial dossiers and candidate dossiers, in accordance with the law and the relevant internal acts of the HQCJ. By March 2026, the HCJ[109] had exceeded the minimum quorum, though not yet reached a full composition.

[106] The Venice Commission, in its follow-up Opinion CDL-AD(2023)042, issued in September 2023, concluded with satisfaction that the key recommendations it had formulated in its previous opinions have been followed in the law adopted on 27 July 2023.
[107] Twelve out of 18 CCU judges constitute the quorum.
[108] GRECO (2025), "Fourth evaluation round: corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors, Ukraine, Addendum to the second compliance report", GrecoRC4(2024)15.
[109] Following the Venice Commission opinion concerning the HCJ, HCJ started working with a new composition of vetted members in 2023.

Regarding disciplinary procedures for judges, national authorities have developed draft laws[110] to bring Ukraine's judicial discipline system closer to European standards, addressing gaps and strengthening independence and accountability The draft laws on amendments to the Law on the judiciary and the status of judges and certain legislative acts on improving disciplinary and other procedures (No. 13137 and No. 13137-1 of 26 March 2025 and 7 April 2025 respectively have been under consideration by the Parliament The joint Opinion CDL-AD(2025)044 of the Venice Commission and the DGI provided key recommendations on draft amendments on disciplinary procedures against judges, declarations of integrity and other procedures, with a view to a necessary reform of the judiciary. GRECO assessed that its recommendation to define disciplinary offences relating to judges more precisely has been partly implemented. It also welcomed efforts by the HCJ to compile disciplinary case law and legislative proposals, as well as measures[111] set out under the 2023-2025 State Anti-Corruption Programme.[112] The draft amendments, though requiring further refinement, represent concrete steps towards bringing disciplinary proceedings in line with Council of Europe standards, including those of the CCJE,[113] and GRECO recommendations. The European Commission also highlighted the need for a precise definition of disciplinary offences relating to judges' conduct, in line with the GRECO recommendations, and recommended the adoption of legislation to improve judges' declarations of integrity and their verification, in its 2025 report on Ukraine. The draft law on amendments to the Law "On the Judiciary and the Status of Judges" and the Law "On the High Council of Justice" regarding declarations of integrity of judges and judges' family ties were adopted by the Parliament on 9 June 2026 as Law of Ukraine No. 4905-IX, entering into force on 25 June 2026.

Based on legislative and institutional reforms, including constitutional amendments carried out since 2016, the Committee of Ministers[114] noted with satisfaction the substantial progress made in the execution of the general measures as demonstrated by the functioning of the reformed framework governing the system of judicial careers and discipline and closed the supervision of the *Oleksandr Volkov v. Ukraine* case in December 2025. However, the Committee of Ministers will continue the supervision of the outstanding measures, notably the coherent operation of the new disciplinary system and consolidation of the disciplinary practice, the application of the Unified Indicators for Assessing Judicial Integrity and Professional Ethics of a Judge, and further improvement of the legal and institutional framework within *Denisov v. Ukraine / Golovchuk group v. Ukraine* group of cases, with a focus on judicial independence and impartiality in the context of disciplinary proceedings and the principle of irremovability of judges.

The efficiency of the justice system continues to be hampered by serious shortages in human, financial and technical resources, which have been further exacerbated by the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine. The issue of judicial well-being has become particularly important for maintaining effective functioning of justice. In the CCJE Opinion No. 28 (2025), the CCJE has stressed that adequate funding of the judiciary is closely linked to judicial independence, access to justice and the right to a fair hearing within a reasonable time and that underfunding and inadequate judicial remuneration can contribute to judicial vacancies, recruitment and retention challenges, staff shortages and increased case backlogs, with potential consequences for the quality of judicial decision-making. The Council of Europe will provide analytical, methodological and expert support to assist Ukraine in strengthening the financing of the justice system, in line with relevant European standards and principles. The judiciary has to adapt its processes due to staff shortages and the damage to its courthouses. As noted in the CEPEJ Eastern Partnership 2024 data collection results,[115] staffing shortages limited the comprehensive collection and analysis of judicial data in Ukraine. GRECO also called for further steps to ensure random case allocation based on objective criteria. The CM noted that there are still no electronic tools for systematic data collection as regards the length of civil and criminal proceedings at all levels of jurisdiction and encouraged the authorities to continue to give the necessary priority to the issue of ensuring efficient administration of justice in *Merit v. Ukraine* *Merit / Svetlana Naumenko groups v. Ukraine*.

[110] The development of the draft laws on amendments to the law on the judiciary and the status of judges and certain legislative acts on improving disciplinary and other procedures (No. 13137 and No. 13137-1 of 26 March 2025 and 7 April 2025 respectively) and draft Law on amendments to the Law of Ukraine "On the judiciary and the status of judges" and certain legislative acts on improving declarations of integrity of judges and judges' family relations (No. 13165-2 of 25 April 2025).
[111] To clarify grounds for judicial liability and improve disciplinary procedures.
[112] In its addendum to the second compliance report.
[113] Opinion No. 27 (2024) on the disciplinary liability of judges.
[114] Department for the Execution of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (2025), "Ukraine: important milestone in implementing judgments concerning the independence and impartiality of the judiciary".
[115] CEPEJ (2025), "Support for a better evaluation of the results of judicial reform efforts in the Eastern Partnership "Justice Dashboard EaP" action – Beneficiary profile – Ukraine".

The European Commission recommended further improving the efficiency of justice through expanding simplified proceedings, introducing alternative dispute resolution, reducing procedural delays and abuses, further streamlining procedural codes in line with EU standards, as well as modernising digitalisation, including case management, and improving enforcement of court decisions, in its 2025 report on Ukraine.[116]

One of the long-standing issues in the judiciary in Ukraine is the incomplete implementation of the qualification assessment procedures for judges. The procedures were introduced in 2015 by the Law "On ensuring the right to a fair trial" through an initial qualification assessment. Following the termination of the HQCJ in 2019, these qualification assessments were effectively suspended until the Commission was re-established in 2023. Since then, the HQCJ has been implementing qualification assessment procedures in the context of a significantly expanded institutional workload., The HQCJ is carrying out in parallel the full range of procedures provided for by the Law of Ukraine "On the Judiciary and the Status of Judges". Given the scale and complexity of these processes, their effective implementation requires substantial organisational, analytical and administrative support, as well as further strengthening of the HQCJ's institutional capacity, including that of its Secretariat.

According to the 2025 annual report of the High Council of Justice, 1,346 judges, which is approximately 30% of all serving judges in Ukraine, have yet to complete the qualification assessment procedure, based on information provided by the HQCJ.[117] These judges serve in the courts of first and second instances. Without having successfully passed the qualification assessment, they are subject to significant restrictions on being transferred to another court in the event of liquidation or reorganisation of the court in which they hold judicial office.

Regarding the quality of justice, the European Commission, in its 2025 report on Ukraine, highlighted the need to further improve the quality of, and ensure the uniformity of, court practice at the first, appeal and cassation instances, as well as to introduce periodic performance evaluations of judges, based on objective rules and assessment criteria, in line with GRECO recommendations and European standards.

The prosecutorial system requires further support to strengthen its independence and effectiveness. In particular, GRECO identified shortcomings in the existing two-tier evaluation system, which combined annual individual and performance evaluations without the involvement of prosecutorial self-governing bodies. Draft legislation has been developed to replace this model with a single, comprehensive evaluation system conducted every three years. GRECO noted these developments in its addendum to the second compliance report, while underlining that concrete results are yet to be achieved.

Regarding prosecutors, GRECO recognised significant progress, including through a draft law to improve disciplinary procedures, widen the scope for submitting complaints and extend limitation periods; however, a comprehensive framework for performance evaluations is still needed.[118] GRECO also draws attention to the need to introduce a system for the random allocation of cases to individual prosecutors, noting the extensive and long-standing work carried out on this issue; though the recommendation has remained unimplemented. The standards of the Consultative Council of European Prosecutors (CCPE) provide useful guidance in this respect.[119] The European Commission also recommended adopting legislation to improve the disciplinary system for prosecutors and strengthen the institutional capacity of the Qualification and Disciplinary Commission of Public Prosecutors (QDCP) in line with GRECO recommendations in its 2025 report on Ukraine. In its latest decision of March 2025 in the *Lutsenko v. Ukraine* case, the Committee of Ministers noted with interest the authorities' work on the respective draft legislation, as well as the deadlines to which the authorities had committed for its enactment, and invited them to inform it of the progress achieved.

[116] The Parliament registered draft law No.8358 of January 13, 2023 "On Amendments to the Code of Administrative Procedure of Ukraine, the Civil Procedure Code of Ukraine, the Economic Procedure Code of Ukraine and other legislative acts on the administration of justice during martial law or a state of emergency and the resolution of disputes with the participation of a judge".
[117] Qualification assessment is conducted by the HQCJ in order to determine the ability of a judge (candidate for the position of judge) to administer justice in the relevant court according to the criteria established by law.
[118] In its addendum to the second compliance report.
[119] See, for instance, Opinion No. 19 (2024) on managing prosecution services to ensure their independence and impartiality, available in Ukrainian as most CCPE opinions.

The draft law amending the Law of Ukraine "On the Prosecution Service"[120] and a further draft law on strengthening the institutional capacity of the QDCP and the Council of Prosecutors, including vetting of candidates for professional competence and integrity and the establishment of autonomous secretariats, were forwarded to the Cabinet of Ministers on 4 March 2026 and 12 June 2026 respectively for subsequent submission to the Parliament.

The Action Plan will enhance Ukraine's alignment with European standards in strengthening the independence and impartiality of the judiciary and will support the Constitutional Court in performing its mandate in accordance with Council of Europe standards and European Union accession requirements. This will include providing gender-responsive legal expertise and technical assistance on complaint-screening procedures, improving procedural efficiency and enhancing transparency and public awareness of the constitutional complaint mechanism among legal professionals, civil society including women's rights and women-led organisations and the broader public.

The Action Plan will further assist Ukraine in strengthening judicial governance, transparency and integrity by providing legal expertise and capacity building to the HCJ and HQCJ within their respective statutory mandates, including practical support to the HQCJ in improving procedures for the selection of candidates for judicial office, competitions for vacant judicial positions, qualification assessment and transfer of judges; strengthening methodologies for assessing professional competence, professional ethics and integrity; enhancing judicial and candidate dossiers, including through digital tools; and reinforcing the analytical, legal and institutional capacity of the HQCJ Secretariat. The Action Plan will also support the development and implementation of judicial discipline legislation in line with Venice Commission and DGI recommendations, and assisting in the design of a comprehensive performance evaluation system for judges, taking into account the competence of the HCJ in disciplinary proceedings and the role of the HQCJ in related judicial career procedures, including qualification assessment, competitions, transfers and the use of information contained in judicial and candidate dossiers, where provided by law. It will further assist in the further development of statutory tools for qualification assessment and regular assessment of judges.

The Council of Europe will continue its support to further strengthen the institutional capacity and independence of prosecutorial self-governance bodies as an important element of prosecutorial reform and support prosecutorial services in implementing the rule of law road map, the Public Prosecution Service Development Strategy (2025-2028) and the recently adopted Functional Audit of Prosecutorial Self-Government Bodies, conducted jointly by the Council of Europe and the EU project Pravo-Justice.[121] The Council of Europe will continue providing expert support for the implementation of recommendations aimed at strengthening the institutional capacity and effectiveness of these bodies. It will also support Ukraine's EU accession agenda and relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies, with focus on the following:

- improving the selection, appointment, transfer and dismissal procedures for the Prosecutor General and prosecutors, including those in managerial positions, in line with European standards and best practices and in consultation with the Venice Commission;
- strengthening the institutional capacity, independence and effectiveness of prosecutorial self-governing bodies, including through improvements to the system of disciplinary liability of prosecutors in line with GRECO fourth evaluation round recommendations;
- introducing a system for the random allocation of cases among prosecutors in accordance with GRECO recommendations;
- developing and adopting legislative safeguards ensuring the possibility to appeal decisions on the reassignment or replacement of prosecutors.

[120] with a view to implementing GRECO recommendations regarding the performance evaluation of prosecutors and the selection of prosecutors for leadership (administrative) positions, as well as the improvement of the disciplinary procedure for prosecutors, extending the statute of limitations in disciplinary proceedings, expanding the list of available disciplinary sanctions, and providing clearer definitions of disciplinary offenses concerning the conduct of prosecutors.
[121] Council of Europe Office in Ukraine (2026), "Functional audit of prosecutorial self-governance bodies: presentation of the recommendations by the Council of Europe and the European Union project "Pravo-Justice".

The Action Plan will continue to support the judicial system in Ukraine, enhancing the effectiveness and quality of justice in line with Council of Europe standards. Through CEPEJ, further support will focus on improving the efficiency, accessibility and quality of justice, including by reducing case backlogs and delays, optimising the organisation and functioning of the court system and making it user-centred while improving the working conditions for justice professionals, advancing the digitalisation of justice and accompanying the use of AI in the judicial environment and contributing to further improving random case allocation, and promoting the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

Technical co-operation to be implemented in this area has been designed taking into consideration the reports and conclusions of relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies that call on Ukraine to:

- ensure transparent, merit-based and integrity-driven procedures for the selection and appointment of judges, including to the Constitutional Court, and of members of the prosecutorial service;
- strengthen guarantees of judicial independence and impartiality and prevent undue interference, also as regards the operation of the HCJ and HQCJ;
- enhance the functioning and independence of judicial governance bodies;
- reinforce accountability, integrity and disciplinary mechanisms;
- align judicial disciplinary procedures with Venice Commission and DGI recommendations by ensuring clearer definitions of misconduct, fair complaint mechanisms and robust legal safeguards for judges;
- strengthen the institutional capacity and independence of prosecutorial self-governance bodies as an important element of prosecutorial reform;
- improve efficiency, including through the reduction of case backlogs and delays and improve accessibility and quality of justice;
- optimise the organisation and functioning of the court system and make it user-centred while improving the working conditions of justice professionals;
- further advance the digitalisation of justice and accompany the use of AI in judicial environment, including from a gender perspective;
- promote the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

PRISONS – POLICE – DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTY

The prison system in Ukraine has been severely affected by the ongoing Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine. This includes damage to numerous detention facilities, loss of control over some institutions, evacuation of detainees from endangered areas and the need to allocate space for prisoners of war. These war-related disruptions have aggravated pre-existing challenges within the prison system, further complicating effective management and reform efforts.[122] In September 2025,[123] the Committee of Ministers acknowledged ongoing efforts to improve material conditions in detention. However, it noted that poor conditions remain widespread across the majority of detention facilities. The Committee of Ministers therefore invited the authorities to further intensify and reinforce their work in this area and reiterated the need for the adoption of Convention-compliant alternatives for financing improvements to detention conditions.

Regarding preventive remedies, Law No. 4093-IX, adopted in November 2024, introduced commissions for complaints about inadequate conditions of detention.[124] The Committee of Ministers highlighted the importance of the effectiveness of prison administration and addressing the shortcomings established by these commissions through concrete actions, in its examination of the *Sukachov v. Ukraine* group of cases. The Committee of Ministers further encouraged the authorities to bring the legal mechanism introduced by Law No. 4093-IX, and intended to serve as the compensatory remedy, in line with the European Court's case law and the committee of Ministers' practice.

[122] *Nevmerzhitsky v. Ukraine* group of cases, *Sukachov v. Ukraine* group of cases.
[123] The Committee of Ministers examined the execution of the *Nevmerzhitsky v. Ukraine* group of cases and *Sukachov v. Ukraine group of cases* during its 1537th human rights meeting (15-17 September 2025).
[124] In the pilot judgment in the *Sukachov v. Ukraine* groups of cases, which became final on 30 May 2020, the European Court indicated under Article 46 that Ukraine must introduce preventive and compensatory remedies by 30 November 2021.

The Law on Amendments to the Criminal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and Other Legislative Acts on Improvement of Types of Criminal Punishment (No. 3342-IX), effective as of March 2024, introduced the new non-custodial criminal sanction of "probation supervision". This development has contributed to further decrease of the prison population. In its 2025 report on Ukraine, the European Commission also underlined that the number of court verdicts applying probation supervision has been steadily increasing.

The European Commission also underlined that the system for the execution of criminal sanctions, including probation, needs to be further improved and acknowledged the adoption of two laws aimed at protecting the rights of convicts, which provide for the possibility to serve sentences in the form of community service and fines, as well as compensatory mechanism for poor conditions in prison. It also noted that although commissions for complaints on inadequate detention conditions were introduced in January 2025, the right to appeal a commission's decision has not been implemented and requires amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedure.

The CPT carried out two visits to Ukraine, in October 2023 and May 2025, following the start of the Russian Federation's war of aggression in February 2022.

According to the CPT,[125] Ukrainian authorities have made considerable efforts to ensure adequate conditions for persons deprived of their liberty in difficult circumstances. While the great majority of persons held in police custody reported correct treatment, the CPT nevertheless received allegations of ill-treatment and stressed the need to pursue a policy of "zero tolerance". The CPT further noted that in military detention facilities, no ill-treatment by staff was reported and material conditions were generally acceptable; however, the lack of organised activities for servicemen on remand remains a concern. In prison establishments, despite long-standing efforts to reduce the prison population, the proportion of remand prisoners remains high, with many held in overcrowded conditions and poor material environments. The CPT called upon the Ukrainian authorities to take further measures to improve conditions of detention and ensure full compliance with fundamental rights and European standards.

The CPT's ad hoc visit from 26 May to 6 June 2025 also examined the treatment and conditions of persons hospitalised involuntarily in psychiatric hospitals and those accommodated in social care homes for persons with disabilities and older persons. The CPT[126] recommended that authorities step up efforts towards community-based social care, refurbish establishments, hire more sociotherapeutic staff, expand non-pharmacological treatments and phase out restraint in social care homes, while ensuring genuinely free and informed consent for all formally voluntary patients and residents. The CPT also observed that legislation on involuntary psychiatric hospitalisation and treatment was being duly followed in practice, with all patients having access to legal assistance and a court hearing.

In June 2026, the Committee of Ministers adopted decisions in the *Kaverzin group of cases, Afanasyev group of cases and Belousov v. Ukraine* cases, noting that problems are reported to persist regarding the proper registration and effective, prompt and thorough investigation and prosecution of ill-treatment allegations (including following the European Court's judgments[127]), as well as victim involvement in investigations. The Committee of Ministers strongly urged the authorities to redouble their efforts in these areas, including by strengthening the role of the State Bureau of Investigation, and noted that ensuring effective investigation and prevention of ill-treatment remains a requirement for Ukraine's European Union integration.

According to the European Commission's 2025 report, Ukraine's legislation provides certain safeguards to prevent torture and ill-treatment; however, further alignment with international standards and more effective criminal investigations are required to ensure accountability. While progress has been noted, including improved legal safeguards, better material conditions in some facilities and strengthened capacity of the State Bureau of Investigation, the lack of prompt and effective documentation, investigation and prosecution of torture and ill-treatment remains an area of concern.

[125] The CPT report on Ukraine, 26 April 2024.
[126] CPT (2026), "Visit report Ukraine – May-June 2025", CPT/Inf (2026) 11.
[127] See *Beley v. Ukraine.*

In the area of prisons, despite the significant challenges caused by the war, Ukraine remains committed to advancing penitentiary reform and laying the foundations for European Union accession. Technical co-operation will support legislative amendments, the development of the Penitentiary Reform Strategy and other necessary policy and regulatory frameworks.

The Action Plan will promote rehabilitative, gender-responsive and evidence-based approaches, expanding access to vocational training, education, employment and targeted rehabilitation programmes. Particular attention will be dedicated to persons and groups at risk of discrimination, exclusion or hatred, including persons with disabilities, war veterans, women and juveniles. Through these efforts, the Council of Europe will assist Ukraine in building inclusive and effective correctional and probation systems, ensuring that rehabilitation and reintegration are prioritised and that the rights and dignity of all individuals are respected. This approach will contribute to reducing recidivism, strengthening social cohesion and advancing Ukraine's progress towards European democratic standards.

As one of its main priorities, the Action Plan will also support prison healthcare reform to facilitate the transfer of responsibility from the Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of Health.[128]

The Action Plan will provide targeted support for the ongoing development of Ukraine's probation system, focusing on enhancing professional standards, operational effectiveness and institutional capacity. Technical co-operation will facilitate the introduction of innovative supervision methods, digital case management and community-based alternatives to detention, while prioritising the reintegration of individuals under probation. Special emphasis will be placed on expanding access to services for groups at risk, including war veterans and persons with disabilities, and strengthening interagency collaboration to ensure seamless support across the justice and social protection sectors. By advancing probation reform, the Council of Europe will help Ukraine create fairer, more rehabilitative justice processes, reduce reoffending and increase the use of alternatives to detention.

In the area of policing, the Action Plan will advance police reform by prioritising the improvement of temporary detention facilities, with particular focus on healthcare provision and mandatory medical examinations upon admission. Addressing the shortage of medical staff and the gaps in services not covered by the National Health Service of Ukraine will be essential to prevent rights violations. Technical co-operation will support updating the regulatory framework governing temporary detention facilities, implementing CPT recommendations and establishing effective complaint mechanisms. The Action Plan will also promote ethical and human rights-compliant policing. Human rights principles will be further integrated into police training curricula, with targeted expert support in developing assessment tools for human rights inspections, as well as updated guidance on the policing of public gatherings and use of force appropriate to the Ukrainian context. Strengthening accountability will be a core priority through enhanced internal and external oversight, including improved mechanisms for investigating complaints of ill-treatment.

Staff development, well-being and human resources policy will be reinforced across all three dimensions (prisons, probation and police) as a cross-cutting issue through continued capacity building for practitioners and policy makers, including relevant HELP courses ("CPT standards", "Prohibition of ill-treatment", "Assessing conditions of detention complaints", "Radicalisation prevention", etc.).

The Action Plan will further promote probation service accessibility in remote areas through outreach and mobile solutions and introduce evidence-based rehabilitation for those affected by war-related trauma.

The Council of Europe will also assist authorities in aligning police detention with CPT and Council of Europe standards, strengthening accountability and public trust, and advancing probation and penitentiary reform in collaboration with local authorities and CSOs.

The Action Plan will strengthen the efficiency of the NPM, considering its specific mandate, mode of operation and role in torture and ill-treatment prevention and monitoring. *See Effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights at national level under Priority I.*

[107] *Logvinenko v. Ukraine* groups of cases

Technical co-operation in this area has been designed in accordance with the reports and conclusions of Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies, notably the CPT and the Committee of Ministers, which call on Ukraine to:

- strengthen documentation and effectiveness of investigation into deaths and torture, and ill-treatment occurring in custody, in line with the Istanbul Protocol[129] and other relevant standards;
- further improve material conditions in detention facilities, including from gender-related perspectives on safety and sanitation;
- strengthen the protection of human rights for persons deprived of liberty, including through training of relevant authorities based on relevant HELP courses;
- enhance legal safeguards and effective remedy mechanisms, including for complaints on detention conditions;
- align prison and probation management and practices with European standards;
- reduce overcrowding and support the reintegration of offenders through non-custodial sanctions and rehabilitation programmes;
- ensure gender-aware access to adequate healthcare services for detainees;
- further promote human rights;
- strengthen the efficiency of the NPM, considering its specific mandate, mode of operation and role in torture, and ill-treatment prevention and monitoring.

CORRUPTION – MONEY LAUNDERING – ECONOMIC CRIME

According to Transparency International's 2025 Corruption Perceptions Index, Ukraine scores 36, ranking 104th out of 182 countries.[130] According to the study "Corruption in Ukraine 2025: understanding, perception and prevalence", conducted on behalf of the National Agency on Corruption Prevention (NACP) with support from the EU Anti-Corruption Initiative (EUACI),[131] corruption remains the second most significant concern for Ukrainian citizens following the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine, with 72.2% of citizens identifying it as a "very serious" problem. The study also notes a decrease in the perceived prevalence of corruption in Ukraine in 2025, following an increasing trend in 2023 and 2024. Willingness to report corruption remained at 12.4%, whereas the actual reporting rate was 7.3% among the population.

Against this background, Ukraine's rule of law road map commits to a comprehensive anti-corruption and anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) framework by strengthening specialised bodies and the High Anti-Corruption Court, improving prevention, enforcement and confiscation, and targeting high-risk sectors to deliver credible investigations, prosecutions, convictions and asset recovery. It envisages an evidence-based policy cycle with a new Anti-Corruption Strategy and State Programme, as well as reinforcement of the NACP's independence and capacity and open statistics. The road map foresees upgrades to prevention regimes on conflicts of interest, asset declarations, transparency, lobbying and whistle-blower protection, aligned with European Union standards. Regarding AML/CFT, the road map provides for alignment with European Union law and institutionalised financial investigations, the launching of a unified register of accounts and reform of the Asset Recovery and Management Agency.

Ukraine has been a member of GRECO since 2006 and has undergone four evaluation rounds focusing on the prevention of and fight against corruption. In its addendum to the second compliance report[132] in the fourth evaluation round on prevention of corruption in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors,[133] GRECO commended the Ukrainian authorities for striving to maintain and increase the country's resilience in the fight against corruption amid the Russian Federation's war of aggression.

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[129] Istanbul Protocol: Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (2022 edition)
[130] Transparency International (n.d.)., "Our work in Ukraine".
[131] The seventh national survey of population and business representatives, providing a comprehensive assessment of the corruption situation in Ukraine, was conducted in late 2025 and January 2026. The study was commissioned by the NACP with the support of EUACI, which is funded by the European Union and co-funded and implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.
[132] GRECO (2025), "Fourth evaluation round: corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors, Ukraine, Addendum to the second compliance report", GrecoRC4(2024)15.
[133] *See Independence and efficiency of justice for GRECO's recommendations on judges and prosecutors.*

GRECO welcomed the adoption of Law No. 3384-IX (in force since October 2023), reinstating mandatory asset declarations and strengthening the NACP's financial control powers, as well as the introduction of risk-based and automated verification and pre-filled declaration forms. GRECO also noted positive steps on parliamentary transparency, including the Law on Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine Regarding the Work of Committees of the Parliament, reforms to enhance public engagement and ongoing legislative initiatives to improve accountability and openness. Ukraine's evaluation by GRECO under the fifth evaluation round related to preventing corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law-enforcement agencies will be undertaken during the period of this Action Plan.

In 2023, Ukraine amended its political party legislation to improve State funding rules and reinstated party reporting requirements to the NACP, though further steps to increase accountability for financing violations remain necessary. In 2024, Ukraine introduced comprehensive lobbying regulations through the Law on Lobbying and related amendments to the Code on Administrative Offences, aligning with international standards and implementing GRECO recommendations while assigning enforcement to the NACP.

One of Ukraine's priorities remains the adoption of the new Anti-Corruption Strategy, prepared by the NACP, and the State Anti-Corruption Programme, following up on robust implementation of anti-corruption action.[134] Ukraine's Anti-Corruption Strategy (2021-2025) and the State Anti-Corruption Programme (2023-2025) formed the main components of the existing anti-corruption framework, ensuring measures to prevent and combat corruption are efficient, effective and co-ordinated. In January 2026, the government adopted a resolution extending the implementation period of the State Anti-Corruption Programme for 2023-2025 until the date of entry into force of the new programme. In May 2026, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved and submitted the draft Law "On the Principles of State Anti-Corruption Policy for 2026–2030" to the Parliament.[135]

The "National report on the effectiveness of implementing State anti-corruption policy in 2021-2025", published by the NACP in 2025, found moderate yet steady progress across performance indicators of the Anti-Corruption Strategy, while recording limited progress in implementing the State Anti-Corruption Programme and highlighting ongoing challenges. A key conclusion is the need to strengthen NACP's capacities in monitoring, co-ordination and evaluation of the strategy and programme implementation.

Further improvements to the asset declaration oversight system are needed to ensure thorough analysis and effective enforcement, including criminal proceedings when warranted. The legal framework on whistle-blower protection remains to be aligned with the European Union *acquis*, and revision of national criminal legislation on the statute of limitations and plea bargaining is needed.

The European Commission, in its 2024 and 2025 reports on Ukraine, acknowledged progress in strengthening the anti-corruption institutional framework and the gradual building of a track record in investigating, prosecuting and adjudicating high-level corruption cases. It called for further strengthening of the anti-corruption legal framework; the transparent, inclusive and timely adoption of a new Anti-Corruption Strategy and State Anti-Corruption Programme; and the preservation of the independence of anti-corruption institutions.

It also highlighted operational priorities – expanding jurisdiction to cover all high-risk public positions, introducing robust safeguards against interference with the work of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU) and the Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office (SAPO), and reinforcing SAPO's autonomy. The report noted concerns regarding the impartiality and effectiveness of the NACP and recommended expanding the personal scope of asset-declaration obligations and simplifying verification procedures. In addition, it recommended that the NACP strengthen quality control of anti-corruption programmes of public authorities.

[134] In 2025, the "National report on the effectiveness of implementing State anti-corruption policy in 2021-2025" of the NACP found that each performance indicator for implementing the Anti-Corruption Strategy showed moderate yet steady progress. At the same time, it recorded limited progress in implementing the measures of the State Anti-Corruption Programme and highlighted ongoing challenges in addressing the problems identified in the strategy. One of the key conclusions is the need to strengthen NACP's capacities in monitoring, co-ordination and evaluation of the implementation of the Anti-Corruption Strategy and the State Anti-Corruption Programme.

[135] https://nazk.gov.ua/en/news/anti-corruption-strategy-2026-2030-moves-to-parliamentary-stage/

Ukraine is taking steps to strengthen its co-operation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Working Group on Bribery and to align its criminal legislation on corporate liability for foreign bribery with the standards of the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions. Amendments to tax and criminal legislation have brought the national framework in line with the convention's basic requirements, resulting in an invitation from the OECD Working Group on Bribery to accede to the convention. Further changes to legislation on corporate liability will be required, taking into account the working group's evaluation findings, alongside the development of consistent law-enforcement practice regarding corporate criminal liability.

In the AML/CFT area, MONEYVAL adopted the fifth round mutual evaluation report of Ukraine in December 2017, and its "1st enhanced follow-up report & technical compliance re-rating" in July 2019 and "2nd enhanced follow-up report & technical compliance re-rating" in July 2020. While Ukraine has made progress in addressing technical compliance deficiencies, it remains in enhanced follow-up. MONEYVAL[136] is closely following developments in Ukraine with a view to (i) continuing enhanced follow-up reporting; and (ii) confirming the timetable for the sixth round mutual evaluation, as soon as the necessary conditions for its organisation are met.

The most recent national AML/CFT action plan, which provided a strategic framework for addressing anti-money laundering, countering the financing of terrorism and countering proliferation financing (AML/CFT/CPF) risks at the national level, covered the period up to 2025. The new action plan should be developed based on the findings of the National Risk Assessment (NRA) to form a basis for effective design and further implementation of AML/CFT/CPF policies. Although the new NRA cycle commenced in 2024 with the adoption of the NRA methodology, it has yet to be completed. Once finalised, it will provide the impetus for the development, adoption and subsequent implementation of key documents – the AML/CFT strategy and action plan – that form a coherent national strategic framework. The new strategic framework should respond to the elevated risks related to the accelerated technological change, including the proliferation of virtual assets and unregulated service providers, the expansion of digital payment instruments and the evolution of fraud typologies enabled by technological advancements, such as large-scale telecommunications fraud networks generating substantial illicit proceeds. Equally, the framework should promote the adoption of a systematic data-driven approach by competent authorities, enabling more effective use of financial intelligence, advanced analytics and interagency data sharing for both preventing and combatting illicit financial flows.

With Council of Europe support, a draft legislative package addressing outstanding AML/CFT gaps has been developed and registered in parliament, as acknowledged in the European Commission's 2025 report on Ukraine. When adopted, it is expected to address gaps identified in the MONEYVAL mutual evaluation and follow-up reports, including beneficial ownership transparency for trusts and similar legal arrangements, whistle-blower protection in the AML/CFT field, beneficial ownership reporting obligations and the establishment of a Register of Accounts and Individual Bank Safes of Individuals.[137] However, some outstanding gaps remained outside this legislative initiative, including those related to targeted financial sanctions. Furthermore, additional efforts will be needed to implement the updated legal provisions. The AML/CFT-related interim benchmarks under the rule of law road map assess not only transposition of the *acquis* but also the building of a credible track record in financial investigations, asset freezing and confiscation, and ultimately countering corruption.

Further efforts to ensure financial inclusion and address unintended consequences of the undue application of AML/CFT rules will contribute to the resilience and integrity of the financial system. CSOs – which have expanded dramatically in scale and volume of financial flows in the context of the war and international assistance – face de-risking by financial institutions. Although this trend is reported by civil society actors, it remains unacknowledged and unaddressed at the policy level.

[136] Although the country shall continue to report to MONEYVAL, the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine prompted MONEYVAL to temporarily suspend Ukraine's reporting under the enhanced follow-up procedure. In addition, MONEYVAL postponed the commencement of Ukraine's sixth round mutual evaluation, which had initially been scheduled to commence in 2027.
[137] Draft Law No. 14327-d of 6 April 2026 "On amendments to certain legislative acts of Ukraine regarding ensuring compliance with EU legal acts and the relevant criteria established by the European Payments Council for the purpose of Ukraine's accession to the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA)".

Streamlining efforts of State and non-state actors in Ukraine to prevent financial exclusion and unintended consequences should contribute to sustainable development and compliance with human rights standards, in particular the principles of equality, non-discrimination and proportionality, which require that AML/CFT measures should not create undue barriers to accessing financial services for legitimate actors. In the context of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine, IDPs, predominantly women and children, face heightened dependence on financial services and humanitarian assistance channels. While AML/CFT requirements apply uniformly, their unintended consequences, including de-risking and disproportionate compliance burdens, may affect women and men differently, restricting access to financial services and resources for those already at risk. Financial literacy measures, supervisory guidance and policy design should account for these differential impacts, ensuring that ostensibly neutral controls do not deepen existing inequalities in access to services for war-affected populations, consistent with Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Recommendation 8 and the Council of Europe's gender mainstreaming guidelines.

Drawing on MONEYVAL's typologies report on conflict-linked money laundering, terrorist financing and proliferation financing,[138] the Council of Europe will prioritise legislative alignment, beneficial ownership transparency, AML/CFT whistle-blower protections and risk-based supervision, including embedding war-related risks into supervisory practice. Furthermore, virtual assets represent a critical regulatory gap in Ukraine's AML/CFT framework. Despite FATF Recommendation 15 requirements and the EU's Markets in Crypto-Assets Regulation – which Ukraine needs to align with as part of its EU accession commitments – effective supervision of virtual asset service providers remains nascent.

Organised crime in Ukraine presents challenges to criminal justice and financial integrity, with links to corruption requiring continued attention. Ukraine's Strategy on Combating Organised Crime to 2030 and Financial Investigations Strategy to 2028 are designed to address these overlapping challenges. However, their effective implementation will require co-ordination. Closing this gap requires establishing financial investigation as a mandatory parallel track from the initiation of proceedings and ensuring that financial intelligence units systematically feed into organised crime investigations. This is essential to moving from nominal to effective asset recovery, as required under Directive (EU) 2024/1260 on asset recovery and confiscation, and FATF standards. In addition, the Action Plan will also support the further development of international cooperation between Ukraine and Council of Europe member States in countering cross-border threats, including through strengthened information exchange and operational cooperation among competent authorities, in line with Council of Europe standards

Financial investigations remain one of the most effective instruments for tackling all forms of proceed-generating crime. While Ukraine has recently made notable progress in introducing the concept of financial investigations into the legal framework, additional work is needed to ensure that they become a routinely used instrument for addressing not only economic crime, but all forms of profit-generating criminal activity. In this context, the adoption and effective implementation of the Strategy on Financial Investigations will be pivotal. Further strengthening the capacities of the national authorities, particularly the Economic Security Bureau, through expert support, capacity building and policy advice will help Ukraine to comply with the relevant requirements of the rule of law road map and the recommendations of the European Commission's 2025 report on Ukraine.

The ongoing reform of the Asset Recovery and Management Agency, which was launched in 2025, has not been finalised yet. Furthermore, new policy documents, namely an Asset Recovery Strategy 2026-2030 and action plan, need to be adopted. Additionally, the effectiveness of criminal asset confiscation may require further amendments to the national legislation to ensure the availability of tools for extended confiscation. In this regard, Ukraine should consider becoming a party to the newly adopted Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism (CETS No. 198), as its requirements in this area could usefully inform the process.

[138] MONEYVAL (2025), "Money laundering, terrorism financing and proliferation financing risks and trends linked to proceeds obtained from conflicts – Typologies report", MONEYVAL(2025)27.

Effective anti-corruption and AML/CFT policies and tools are critical to national security and economic performance by promoting fair competition, supporting recovery, reducing the shadow economy, attracting investment and improving the business environment. Furthermore, the gender aspects of corruption and their societal impact need to be addressed. The Action Plan will support Ukraine in strengthening its national anti-corruption and AML/CFT legal and policy framework, reinforcing the country's democratic security and public integrity. The Action Plan will also help the authorities assess, mitigate and manage corruption risks, including gendered risks, at both strategic and operational levels, with a dedicated focus on localising integrity tools in the management of reconstruction funds, including those arising from institutional weaknesses, limited absorption capacity and large inflows of external assistance.

Recognising that local self-governments are on the frontline of managing reconstruction resources, the Action Plan will actively support the vertical integration of anti-corruption and integrity policies across all levels of government. Technical co-operation will focus on strengthening local authorities' capacity, building to turn local authorities' capacity, accountability, and resilience into an integral part of Ukraine's national integrity and anti-corruption framework.

The Council of Europe will strengthen the legal framework and enhance the capacity of key stakeholders, including policy-making and supervisory authorities, law-enforcement agencies, prosecutors and the judiciary, with due consideration of EU accession requirements and GRECO recommendations.

Furthermore, the Council of Europe will support Ukraine in aligning the national anti-corruption framework with Council of Europe standards and GRECO recommendations through legislative gap analyses and expertise on conflicts of interest, asset declarations and verification, whistle-blower protection, lobbying transparency, political finance and liability of legal persons. The Council of Europe will also assist in designing, implementing and evaluating a time-bound State Anti-Corruption Programme with clear responsibilities, indicators and public reporting, while taking into consideration the gendered aspects.

In parallel, the Council of Europe will strengthen the effectiveness of the NACP and the enforcement chain.[139] Assistance will include legal opinions aimed at addressing impediments to their independence and effectiveness, capacity building on complex financial investigations and case management, and enhanced co-operation on asset recovery. This work will draw on the expertise of GRECO, the Venice Commission and, where relevant, MONEYVAL. All assistance will be co-ordinated with the rule of law road map and EU accession benchmarks to maximise its impact and avoid duplication. Relevant HELP courses - including "Introduction to corruption prevention" and "Ethics for judges, prosecutors and lawyers"- will be integrated into the training of legal professionals.

Technical co-operation to be implemented in this area has been designed taking into consideration the reports and conclusions of relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies that call on Ukraine to:

- improve the national anti-corruption, anti-money laundering and asset recovery legislative frameworks in line with international standards and recommendations;
- adopt a new gender-responsive Anti-Corruption Strategy in line with Council of Europe standards and EU *acquis*;
- adopt a State Anti-corruption Programme to achieve the objectives set by the Anti-Corruption Strategy and ensure its impactful implementations;
- address shortcomings in the functioning of the NACP identified by the Council of Europe and the EU;
- address legislative and institutional impediments to the independence of competent authorities and effective investigation and prosecution of corruption;
- address key outstanding technical compliance and effectiveness deficiencies identified in MONEYVAL's fifth mutual evaluation of Ukraine;
- complete the national risk assessment cycle and on its basis adopt a comprehensive AML/CFT/CPF Strategy and action plan that accounts for current, war-related and emerging risks, including those related to abuse of technology;
- enhance the prevention and detection of illicit financial flows, including through strengthening risk-based supervision across all categories of obliged entities, while promoting financial inclusion and preventing undue de-risking;

[139] NABU, SAPO and the High Anti-Corruption Court.

- advance combating illicit financial flows, enhancing the effectiveness of financial investigations, prosecutions and asset recovery, and ensuring systematic use of financial intelligence throughout criminal proceedings;
- enhance the asset recovery framework through the adoption and implementation of the Asset Recovery Strategy and action plan, improving legal tools and developing relevant capacities.

DIGITAL CHALLENGES: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE – CYBERCRIME – DATA PROTECTION

The Reykjavík Declaration reaffirmed the Council of Europe's commitment to supporting Ukraine's resilience, institutional stability and democratic reform efforts. Ukraine's rapid digital transformation, accelerated by the demands of wartime governance and EU accession commitments, creates both opportunities and challenges in ensuring that emerging technologies are developed and used in a manner consistent with human rights, democracy and the rule of law. In the digital sphere, the Council of Europe will assist Ukraine in aligning its national governance frameworks with European standards and strengthening institutional capacities for the safe, transparent and accountable use of digital technologies.

Regarding AI, in May 2025 Ukraine signed the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law (CETS No. 225). Ukraine's rapid digital transformation and its establishment of a national sandbox for AI and blockchain startups create a uniquely relevant environment for piloting practical tools linked to the Framework Convention, within both national and sub-national administrative workflows.

Under the Action Plan, technical and legal expertise will be provided to support ratification and effective implementation of the Framework Convention. In addition, capacity building will be carried out on the basis of the Methodology for the risk and impact assessment of artificial intelligence systems from the point of view of human rights, democracy and the rule of law (HUDERIA methodology), which provides guidance and a structured approach to carrying out risk and impact assessments for AI systems in line with Council of Europe standards. Strengthening the uptake, operationalisation and national-level integration of HUDERIA will make practical implementation of the Framework Convention possible. The national sandbox for AI and blockchain startups, run by the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, will be further supported.

The Congress report (CG(2026)50-17) "Strengthening the capacities of local and regional authorities in the use of artificial intelligence", complements the Action Plan by providing relevant guidance, practical approaches and opportunities for exchange on responsible AI governance and use at the local and regional levels, which can support Ukrainian authorities in translating European standards into practice in public administration.

Regarding cybercrime, Ukraine is a Party to the Cybercrime Convention (ETS No.185). In November 2022, Ukraine signed the Second Additional Protocol to the Cybercrime Convention on enhanced co-operation and disclosure of electronic evidence (CETS No. 224). The European Commission, in its 2025 report on Ukraine, recommended that Ukraine ratify and implement the Second Additional Protocol to the Cybercrime Convention and consider lifting its reservations to the convention.

The Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine highlighted the essential role of electronic evidence, not only in the prosecution of cybercrime and cyberattacks but also in pursuing justice for war crimes and gross human rights violations. Strengthening the capacities of Ukrainian law-enforcement and judicial bodies to gather, secure and present electronic evidence regarding war crimes and gross human rights violations is a fundamental step in ensuring accountability and justice.
Many war crimes are financed via virtual assets and targeted capacity building in this area is required.

While the status and use of electronic evidence in criminal proceedings are accepted practices in Ukraine's criminal justice system, important challenges remain regarding the admissibility of evidence originating from sources and information that cannot be easily verified through domestic investigative procedures. Procedural powers to collect electronic evidence that should be fully established in domestic law, aided by the availability and application of standard operating procedures for open-source intelligence and e-evidence. There are also new trends emerging, such as the use of AI in open-source intelligence and the use of AI tools in the collection and presentation of e-evidence in criminal proceedings. Continuous capacity building is required for justice authorities to use such evidence effectively in proceedings before domestic and international courts, and for improving channels, competencies and capacities for co-operation with other Parties to the Cybercrime Convention, especially regarding the investigation and sharing of electronic evidence relating to war crimes and gross human rights violations. Additionally, increased awareness and practical skills are needed to identify and qualify serious cyberattacks against civilian targets and critical infrastructure not only as cybercrime but also as potential war crimes or violations of international humanitarian law.

The Council of Europe will support Ukraine in addressing these challenges by strengthening the legislative and procedural framework for cybercrime and electronic evidence, improving the practical application of international co-operation mechanisms under the Cybercrime Convention and supporting ratification and implementation of the Second Additional Protocol. The Council of Europe will assist authorities in developing standardised operating procedures for handling open-source intelligence (OSINT) and e-evidence, tailored to the context of war crimes and gross human rights violations, and will provide guidance on the collection, preservation and admissibility of such evidence to ensure that justice authorities can build reliable cases for both domestic and international courts. Capacity building will be provided to law enforcement, prosecutors and the judiciary to investigate and prosecute war crimes and gross human rights violations facilitated or documented through digital means, and to identify serious cyberattacks as potential violations of international humanitarian law.

The Action Plan will also support the strengthening of Ukraine's capacities to protect critical information infrastructure, respond to cyber incidents and implement modern European approaches to cyber resilience, in line with relevant Council of Europe standards.

Regarding personal data protection, Ukraine has been a Party to the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (ETS No.108) since 2011. The country has not yet signed the Protocol amending the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (CETS No. 223).

The European Commission, in its 2025 report on Ukraine, stated that the legal framework for the protection of personal data is not aligned with the European Union *acquis*[140] and the capacities of the data protection authority are not sufficient.

The Action Plan will provide assistance to support Ukraine in aligning its data protection legislative framework with the requirements of CETS No. 223 in order to enable Ukraine's signature and ratification of that instrument and alignment with the European Union *acquis*. The Council of Europe will also strengthen the institutional capacity of the data protection authority to develop, implement and enforce the national data protection legislation effectively.

[140] General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data); Law Enforcement Directive (Directive (EU) 2016/680 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by competent authorities for the purposes of the prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offences or the execution of criminal penalties, and on the free movement of such data).

Expected outcomes – Strengthening independent justice and good governance for democratic resilience

- The quality and consistency of the CCU's judicial practice is improved in line with European standards.
- Access to constitutional justice is improved for individuals and legal professionals through increased awareness and understanding of constitutional rights, including through the constitutional complaint mechanism.
- Judicial self-governing bodies function more effectively, with coherent and harmonised practices in line with Council of Europe standards.
- The independence, efficiency and functioning of prosecution self-governing bodies are enhanced through reforms in line with European standards.
- The efficiency and quality of justice are enhanced, reflected in reduced case backlogs, shorter processing times and user-oriented justice system.
- Conditions, treatment and healthcare in prisons are improved in line with Council of Europe standards, with reinforced safeguards against the ill-treatment, gender-responsive prison management, and expanded evidence-based rehabilitation opportunities for women and persons and groups at risk of discrimination, exclusion or hatred, including juveniles, war veterans and persons with disabilities, including those who may be at risk.
- The probation system is strengthened through the enhanced use of community-based and gender-responsive supervision and rehabilitation measures, professional standards and digital case management, and support for persons and groups at risk, including war veterans.
- Safeguards in police custody are further enhanced, and policing regulations and practices are more gender-responsive and compliant through strengthened ethical framework, integration of gender mainstreaming and human rights approach into training and oversight, and the establishment of effective accountability and complaint mechanisms.
- The NPM operates with increased efficiency in fulfilling its mandate to prevent and monitor torture and ill-treatment and prison staff have strengthened capacity to deliver rights-compliant services.
- The national anti-corruption legislative framework is aligned with GRECO recommendations and EU acquis and is effectively institutionalised at the sub-national level.
- The 2026-2030 Anti-Corruption Strategy and State Anti-Corruption Programme are effectively implemented.
- The capacities of Ukraine's anti-corruption authorities to mitigate and manage corruption risks at both strategic and operational levels, to conduct effective pre-trial investigations and judicial proceedings in corruption cases, including high-level corruption, and to apply and enforce corporate liability standards for corruption, are strengthened.
- The national AML/CFT legal framework is aligned with international standards and MONEYVAL recommendations, and measures to prevent and counter illicit financial flows are applied effectively and proportionately, in close partnership with the private sector and civil society.
- Financial investigations are conducted in profit-generating crimes, leading to effective tracing, seizure of illicit proceeds and asset recovery.
- The national legal and governance framework for the development and use of AI is strengthened and aligned with the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law and related standards, including non-discrimination, transparency, accountability and data protection.
- The consistency of risk and impact assessment of AI tools in respect of actual and potential impacts on human rights, democracy and the rule of law is improved in line with European standards.
- Ukraine will ratify the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law.
- A resilient and citizen-centric digital public administration in Ukraine will enable national authorities and public services to operate efficiently, transparently, securely and in an interoperable manner.
- Ukraine will ratify the Second Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime.

- The regulatory framework for the use of electronic evidence and open-source intelligence in criminal proceedings related to war crimes and gross human rights violations is improved, in compliance with the Budapest Convention standards.
- Ukraine will sign and ratify Convention 108+; the data protection legal framework will be aligned and modernised in compliance with both Convention 108+ and relevant EU acquis.

Main national partners: Parliament, Parliamentary Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Parliamentary Committee on Sports, Parliamentary Committee on Legal Policy, Parliamentary Committee on Anti-Corruption Policy, Parliamentary Committee on Finance, Tax, and Customs Policy, Constitutional Court, Supreme Court, High Council of Justice, High Qualification Commission of Judges, High Anti-Corruption Court, Office of the Prosecutor General, Council of Prosecutors of Ukraine, QDCP, National Security and Defence Council, Ombudsperson's Office –Department for Monitoring Information Rights, National School of Judges, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Digital Transformation, Ministry of Finance, National Agency on Corruption Prevention, NABU, Specialised Anti-Corruption Prosecutors Office, Security Service, Economic Security Bureau, State Bureau of Investigation, National Bank of Ukraine, State Service of Special Communications and Information Protection, Government Committee on National Security Defence and Intelligence – Communication and Cryptographic Information Protection, State Financial Monitoring Service, National Police, National Commission for State Regulation of Electronic Communications, National Olympic Committee, National Anti-Doping Agency, National Academy of Internal Affairs, Prosecutors Training Centre, National Securities and Stock Market Commission, , National Academy of Security Service, National Agency of Ukraine for Finding, Tracing and Management of Assets Derived from Corruption and Other Crimes, Department for Execution of Criminal Sanctions, Health Centre of the State Criminal Executive Service, General Directorate of the State Criminal Executive Service, local and regional authorities, national associations of local and regional authorities, sports federations and associations, centres for social services, universities and academic institutions with sport-related programmes, information and technology sector, CSOs active in sports and youth work, professional associations of reporting entities, CSO working in the area of economic crime.

PART III – IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 METHODOLOGY

The overall co-ordination of technical co-operation carried out by the Council of Europe falls within the remit of the Directorate of Programme Co-ordination of the Council of Europe (DPC, which steers programming of and fundraising for co-operation actions while ensuring the proper functioning of Council of Europe offices in the field.

Substantial responsibility for co-operation projects lies with the Council of Europe "major administrative entities" that have the relevant expertise. In accordance with the Organisation's decentralised implementation of technical assistance and co-operation, the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine ensures project implementation in the field. As of 1 June 2026, 88 staff members were working in the Office in Ukraine.

To be closer to its beneficiaries, the Council of Europe aims to expand its field presence beyond Kyiv.

The implementation methodology of the Action Plan, in line with the Council of Europe Project Management Methodology (PMM), reinforces ownership by national stakeholders and ensures the sustainability of the outcomes. The PMM enhances the quality of project implementation in terms of planning and monitoring, cost efficiency and effectiveness. It improves risk assessment, transversally incorporates a human rights approach and integrates gender perspectives into co-operation activities.

In addition, the co-operation developed by the Council of Europe follows a "multi-institutional approach", which allows different Council of Europe institutions and bodies to reach out to governmental stakeholders, parliaments, civil society, independent governance or oversight institutions, such as the Ombudsperson's Office, and local and regional authorities. This creates unique leverage for comprehensive, inclusive and successful reforms that lead to stability and sustainable growth in the country.

Where appropriate, the present Action Plan will include a parliamentary dimension aimed at increasing the impact of actions undertaken by the Parliament of Ukraine and ensuring ownership by its members. Projects that aim for legislative change should benefit from peer-to-peer exchanges between members of parliament of the Parliament of Ukraine and members of parliament from other member States on their experience in this regard.

HELP will continue to play a significant role in supporting Ukraine's national capacity to implement the Convention, the case law of the European Court, other Council of Europe standards, and recommendations of Council of Europe institutions and monitoring mechanisms. This will be achieved in partnership with local institutions, relying on the expertise developed across various areas of the Organisation. The relevant thematic HELP online courses will be integrated transversally into the capacity-building activities of the Action Plan. Additional support will be given to the institutionalisation of HELP courses and training methodology in national training institutions for current and future legal professionals and civil servants.

The implementation of the Action Plan may be complemented by projects from the CEB. The CEB can co-finance investment projects with high social value that have been approved by the CEB's Administrative Council and the Ukrainian authorities.

3.1.1 HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH

The Council of Europe prioritises a human rights approach at all levels and stages of its activities, integrating human rights principles into its policies and programmes, empowering rights holders to exercise their rights and strengthening duty bearers to fulfil their human rights obligations and duties in all thematic areas of intervention. Its *acquis*, including Council of Europe legal instruments and institutions, combined with the principles of participation and inclusion; equality and non-discrimination; accountability; and transparency and access to information, brings further added value to the Council of Europe activities. Together with its governmental and non-governmental partners, the Council of Europe integrates human rights principles into the main phases and processes of the management of its programmes and projects (initiating and planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, closing and reporting).

The “Council of Europe human rights approach – Practical guide for co-operation projects” enhances the understanding of the realisation of human rights as the ultimate objective of the Council of Europe’s co-operation activities and contributes to the incorporation of the human rights approach principles into all interventions of the Council of Europe as part of the project management cycle and strategic orientation.

As a core component of this human rights approach, the Council of Europe emphasises that gender equality is a prerequisite for a functioning democracy, in which all women and men, all girls and boys, in all their diversity, enjoy their human rights in law and in practice. The Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029 provides a framework for the Council of Europe’s work on gender equality and women’s rights and sets out strategic policy and operational objectives and key actions. Building on the strategy’s dual approach to advancing gender equality, this Action Plan will advance gender equality through specific, targeted action addressing gender equality, including positive action where appropriate; gender mainstreaming across all activities; and gender equality-related policy dialogue.

Gender mainstreaming is an approach to policy making and programming that aims at better designed policies and programmes and better use of public resources and that takes into account the interests and concerns of women and men in all their diversity, including the power structures that underpin gender-based violence against women. Gender mainstreaming refers to the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes and programmes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated into all policies and programmes at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy making and programming.

The Council of Europe Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit for Co-operation Projects provides practical guidance on the implementation of the gender dimension in co-operation activities within the Organisation, as well as by national partners and other stakeholders. It assists the Council of Europe in identifying the priorities, key objectives and actions of the Action Plan, and supports the national authorities of Ukraine in mainstreaming gender into reforms in order to maximise efforts to achieve gender equality. This toolkit is complemented by gender equality and gender mainstreaming training courses provided by the Organisation to all staff working on co-operation activities as well as to national partners and other stakeholders. The gender mainstreaming approach will be applied to actions regardless of the field of co-operation. The advancement of gender equality and women’s rights standards will be taken into account when revising national laws and frameworks in the light of European standards. Gender equality will also be included in training activities and programmes. Additionally, an intersectional perspective will be applied to the extent possible to take into account how gender intersects with other identity factors such as ethnicity, disability, socio-economic status, sexual orientation and age.

During the design and the implementation of the Action Plan, project teams will rely on the expertise of the gender advisers. The advisers will ensure that gender equality aspects are mainstreamed in all projects within the Action Plan by promoting usage of tools such as gender analysis and gender impact assessments and subsequently advising on implementing relevant recommendations to further integrate the gender dimension. The advisers will contribute to developing tools and mechanisms aimed at this purpose and to building the capacity of Council of Europe project staff in the region to adopt a gender-sensitive approach within the projects of the Action Plan.

The Action Plan will ensure that the Council of Europe’s communication and visibility products such as videos and online posts are designed with consideration for the principles of non-discrimination and gender equality. Gender-responsive communication will be implemented through multiple channels, and gender-inclusive language will be used as per Council of Europe guidance on this matter in all project publications, information and awareness-raising materials.

The Action Plan will prioritise a gender-responsive approach throughout its implementation, with dedicated efforts to promote gender equality and gender mainstreaming. The Action Plan will ensure that content and outputs – whether analytical, in data collection, public-awareness initiatives, knowledge sharing, capacity building or advocacy – are consistently gender-responsive and supportive of gender equality. A conscious commitment to gender balance is reflected in the composition of implementation teams and in the selection process for participants in project activities and steering committee meetings.

Moreover, gender equality is systematically integrated into monitoring, evaluation and reporting, ensuring a robust and transparent reflection of gender equality considerations at every stage of the Action Plan.

As part of its long-standing commitment to putting the child at the centre of its work, the Council of Europe is committed to advancing the protection and promotion of the rights of the child in its member States, in line with its Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2022-2027, which was developed within the framework of the programme Building a Europe for and with Children launched in 2006. The strategy includes, *inter alia*, a focus on the rights of the child in the digital environment, which is reinforced by Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment.

Similarly, the Council of Europe promotes a civil society-inclusive approach to the implementation of the Action Plan in accordance with the Guidelines on civil society organisations' participation in Council of Europe's co-operation activities. The online resource for civil society gives easy access to its handbook entitled "Working with the Council of Europe: a practical guide for civil society", which provides in-depth information on the different forms of access, co-operation, input, participation and/or partnership that are possible and relevant for CSOs.

The Council of Europe will continue to promote a civil society-inclusive approach in the implementation of the Action Plan, ensuring the meaningful participation of CSOs in legislative and policy discussions, as well as project activities as and when appropriate. Beyond their engagement as implementing partners or consultants, and/or their inclusion as one of or the main target group in projects, CSOs will play an important role in promoting accountability and service delivery with a human rights approach. Their expertise remains a key component across priorities and areas of work in Ukraine in accordance with the Guidelines on civil society organisations' participation in Council of Europe's co-operation activities. Civil society will continue to play a direct role in the implementation of Council of Europe projects in Ukraine through the provision of services, thematic expertise, grant implementation, monitoring of reforms and the preparation of analytical reports, thus contributing to ensuring the protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in the country. In this context, the Action Plan furthermore strengthens civic space by promoting structured dialogue between CSOs and public institutions, enhancing participatory governance and supporting CSO capacities in policy advocacy. Through inclusive and intersectional engagement, the Action Plan ensures that civil society contributes to systemic change while benefiting from an improved enabling environment. Actions aimed at ensuring a civil society-inclusive approach in the implementation of the Action Plan will include, *inter alia*, the participation of CSOs in future programme and project steering committee meetings and project activities, as and when necessary, and/or their inclusion as the main target group.

The Council of Europe "Speak Up" policy on reporting wrongdoing and protection from retaliation forms an essential part of the Organisation's ethical framework.

The "Reykjavík Declaration – United around our values" commits to strengthening the work on the human rights aspects of the environment and underlines the "urgency of taking co-ordinated action to protect the environment by countering the triple planetary crisis of pollution, climate change and loss of biodiversity". Consequently, the Committee of Ministers at its 134th Session (Luxembourg, 13 and 14 May 2025) adopted the Council of Europe Strategy on the Environment and a related action plan.

The Council of Europe's co-operation dimension has the potential to introduce climate and environmental perspectives in areas and among stakeholders that are not traditionally accustomed to considering these issues. In doing so it can rely on the Council of Europe's binding commitments and treaties directly or indirectly addressing environmental concerns, its well-established working methods that include intergovernmental dialogue and co-operation, and its extensive and diverse networks of expertise across Europe.

Within this context, the Council of Europe's co-operation dimension aims to make the fight against climate change and environmental degradation a more integral and explicit part of its action. This can be done through (i) mainstreaming environment protection and climate change considerations at the level of action plans and strategic co-operation documents and projects; (ii) conceiving and designing action plans and similar documents and projects with environment-specific objectives; and (iii) improving the working methods and practices of the Council of Europe to make them more environmentally sound and low-emission.

The Council of Europe has maintained its leading role in developing standards in the digital age to protect human rights both online and offline and in many contexts. With AI being the most compelling technology of our time, the adoption in May 2024 of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, based on Council of Europe and other relevant international standards and with potential global application, was a major achievement of the Organisation. The framework convention was opened for signature on 5 September 2024. The Council of Europe recognises the positive impact and opportunities created by new and emerging digital technologies while also recognising the need to mitigate the risk of the negative consequences of their use for human rights, democracy and the rule of law, including new forms of violence against women and groups at risk generated and amplified by modern technologies. This first global legally binding instrument aims to ensure that AI respects common standards of human rights, democracy and the rule of law and minimises the risk of undermining them. The treaty and its implementation framework also provide new opportunities for co-operation with States and will be taken into account, as appropriate, throughout the implementation of the Action Plan.

3.1.2 Lessons learned

The present Action Plan also takes into account the lessons learned during the implementation of the Action Plan for Ukraine “Resilience, Recovery and Reconstruction” 2023-2026, including the following:

- Linking Action Plan interventions clearly to European Union accession benchmarks through leveraging the link between Council of Europe standards and European Union standards enhances political will and the sustainability of reforms.
- Stronger co-ordination among international partners enhances efficiency. Thematic partner and donor mapping contributes to improving complementarity and strategic alignment among international partners in the field.
- In the context of the Russian Federation’s ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine, the implementation of the Action Plan requires greater adaptability and risk-awareness planning. Frequent institutional changes, wartime security constraints and evolving reform priorities in line with the country’s European accession process highlight the need for adaptive programming and risk-mitigating measures that address funding gaps, institutional fragmentation, legislative delays and staff turnover.
- Wartime conditions in Ukraine, including frequent electricity outages, air raid alerts, absence of heating and disruptions to transport and communications, created operational challenges for the Council of Europe Office staff. Ensuring flexible working arrangements, back-up power solutions and remote working proved essential for maintaining the continuity of the support in the field and engagement with national stakeholders despite these disruptions.
- Effective national co-ordination is key to ensuring the execution of European Court judgments and enhances the impact of technical co-operation.
- CSOs proved crucial in preserving institutional memory and continuity. CSOs continue to play a key role in prevention, provision of services and protection. Co-operation and co-ordination between authorities in Ukraine and international and local organisations strengthens the response to addressing the needs of the persons and groups at high risk.
- Integrating open government and human rights into recovery policies, combined with training-of-trainers models and co-operation with national partners and civil society, enhanced scalability, ownership and gender equality in participation.
- Many Ukrainian professionals working in justice, law enforcement, the media, social services and local government operate under prolonged stress, and capacity-building activities are more effective when they incorporate resilience and trauma-informed approaches.
- Security risks related to the war prevented international experts from conducting on-site assessments in Ukraine. Facilitating the participation of national stakeholders in international events proved an effective way to ensure knowledge exchange and access to expertise, and this practice should be maintained and expanded if the security situation allows.
- While hybrid delivery increases reach and efficiency, reform depth still depends on trust-based engagement. When security allows, strategic in-person interaction is a more appropriate choice for sensitive and complex reforms.

- The gender mainstreaming approach should be further strengthened through the more systematic promotion and integration of gender equality (practical information technology tools, training, indicators) in projects and programmes, complementing the work done in priority areas of co-operation.
- High turnover of staff and loss of institutional memory within partner institutions is a significant barrier to the achievement and sustainability of results. Project designs should incorporate support to partner institutions for developing institutional memory safeguards.
- Individual interventions benefit from incorporating explicit theories of change articulating the causal links and assumptions between Council of Europe activities and intended outcomes. This provides a basis for periodic reflection on whether activities need to be adjusted and ensures that dependencies on action by others are made explicit and regularly reviewed.
- Effectiveness is strongest where Council of Europe standards are translated into operational mechanisms such as procedural tools, institutional protocols and decision-making templates that support the implementation of new laws and policies. Programmes relying solely on policy dialogue or training are less likely to lead to visible changes in organisational practice.

3.1.3 Risk management and sustainability

Owing to the nature of its mandate, the Council of Europe operates in complex and unstable environments that expose it to risks. The risk analysis of the Action Plan and possible mitigation strategies are identified in Appendix II of the present Action Plan on the basis of the Council of Europe's Risk Management Policy[141] and Risk Management Guidelines. All projects implemented within the Action Plan have their own risk assessment and mitigation strategies. The risks identified within the co-operation activities feed into the organisational risk register, which is periodically brought to the attention of the Secretary General and the Senior Management Group of the Council of Europe. Internal audit, external audit and the Oversight Advisory Committee analyse the results.

The Council of Europe mitigates funding risks through ongoing fundraising activities with donors, the inclusion of funding for Action Plans within the ordinary budget, diligent strategic planning and continuous communication with all stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Action Plan.

The entire Council of Europe approach to co-operation is geared towards sustainability. This concept is embedded in the Council of Europe Project Management Methodology, the human rights approach and the Council of Europe Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit for Co-operation Projects. These tools ensure that a results-oriented and inclusive approach is adopted in the planning and management of the Action Plan, with the aim of fostering conditions conducive to the sustainability of outcomes through a shared understanding and ownership of the stakeholders.[142]

The Russian Federation's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine remains the main source of risk for co-operation in the country, creating a highly volatile environment and significant challenges to both safety and operational effectiveness. This risk will be addressed through rigorous monitoring of the evolution of the security situation and a proactive management approach to adapt the Council of Europe's activities, work plans and implementation methods, and through flexible adaptation to the evolving needs of the Action Plan beneficiaries. A creative approach to the implementation of activities, including their format and methods and use of modern information technologies, will continue to be applied in the light of the unstable security situation in the country.

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[141] The revised Risk Management Policy was adopted by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on 15 December 2023 and came into force immediately. To foster a pragmatic, consistent and transparent approach to risk management at the Council of Europe, this version updates the provisions of the previous policy (adopted in 2016) by: placing risk management in a wider institutional perspective; ensuring complementarity with the other components of the Organisation's governance system (such as internal control, data protection, ethics, crisis management and business continuity); implementing recommendations from the Directorate of Internal Oversight and the Oversight Advisory Committee of the Council of Europe; and clarifying roles and responsibilities throughout the Organisation. By contributing to a greater maturity in managing risks that may affect the Council of Europe, the revised policy will also strengthen the Organisation's governance system.

142. The activities implemented seek to establish the necessary conditions for sustainable results, improved frameworks, strengthened institutions and enhanced capacities – enabling national bodies to continue promoting and upholding results achieved well beyond the lifetime of the Action Plan.

The Council of Europe will remain a valuable partner for supporting the different national partners and stakeholders to implement the new Action Plan effectively. The national partners have already shown strong commitment, engagement and flexibility while contributing to the implementation of the previous Action Plan despite serious disruptions in operations caused by air raid alerts, lack of heating, electricity shortages and problems with internet connection. The Council of Europe will continue supporting Ukraine within the framework of the new Action Plan to ensure sustainable and long-term progress.

Furthermore, the implementation of the Action Plan aims to reinforce the ownership by national stakeholders and ensure sustainability by using existing tools such as those developed by CEPEJ or the HELP training methodology.

Sustainability of the Action Plan is further enhanced by the fact that the foreseen actions will contribute to fulfilling Ukraine's commitments and conditionalities for the European Union accession process, while taking into account the challenges and needs of Ukraine and tailoring the Action Plan accordingly. Through the new Action Plan, the values, standards and tools of the Council of Europe will strengthen and contribute to sustainable outcomes in Ukraine by fostering institutional resilience and promoting enduring respect for democratic principles, the rule of law and human rights.

3.2 CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Council of Europe has long been committed to promoting the domestic implementation of the SDGs. In addition, the "Reykjavík Declaration – United around our values", adopted at the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe, calls for increased co-operation and the development of further synergies with the United Nations, notably when it comes to the implementation of the SDGs. Against this background, the implementation of the Action Plan will sustain the efforts of the Ukrainian authorities in achieving the following SDGs, especially goals 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11 and 16.

- **Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere**

The fight against poverty is not only a direct goal but also requires an indirect, multipronged approach. While the Council of Europe in most cases cannot directly provide resources alleviating poverty (grants), the Council of Europe's actions to be implemented in Ukraine under Priority II, in particular in social rights, health protection and anti-discrimination, diversity and inclusion will contribute to the achievement of Goal 1, notably targets 1.1,[143] 1.2,[144] 1.3.[145]

- **Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages**

Under Priority I, efforts to address drugs and addictions through improved policies, legislation and practices, based on human rights standards, will directly contribute to target efforts to address risks and expand access to efficient prevention, harm reduction and addiction treatment and recovery programmes will directly contribute to the achievement of target 5.[146]

The promotion of mental health support, particularly for groups at risk such as internally displaced persons, returnees and other war-affected populations as well as veterans, under Priority II directly contributes to the achievement of target 4.[147] In addition, under Priority II, the Council of Europe's actions to improve access to quality essential health-care services directly contributes to target 8.[148]

[143] Goal 1, target 1: By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than $1.25 a day.
[144] Goal 1, target 2: By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions.
[145] Goal 1,target **3:**Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.
[146] Goal 3, target 5: Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.
[147] Goal 3, target 4: By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being.
[148] Goal 3, target 8: Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.

By improving prison healthcare, including mental healthcare, and by promoting human rights approaches to treatment and recovery for persons deprived of their liberty in prison setting, probationers and persons in other closed institutions under Priority IV, the Action Plan will contribute to target 3.4.

Together, these actions contribute significantly to the broader objective of ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all, as outlined in SDG 3.

- **Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**

Initiatives under the Priority III will pay specific attention to engaging youth in democracy, by strengthening the Ukrainian youth sector and embedding Council of Europe standards and principles into national and local youth policy and practices, ensuring sustainable impact beyond direct Council of Europe support. In addition, under Priority III, efforts supporting inclusive quality education, promoting gender equality and combating hate speech, discrimination and violence will contribute to the achievement of targets 1,[149] 3,[150] 4,[151] 5[152] and c.[153] Across all priorities of the Action Plan, HELP will continue to support the integration of human rights education into various curricula, promoting lifelong learning and training for legal professionals and these actions will contribute to the achievement target 7.[154]. Collectively, these measures will contribute to the achievement of SDG 4.

- **Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

Several Council of Europe instruments, including the Istanbul Convention, the Lanzarote Convention and the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, underpin efforts to promote gender equality and combat violence against women and girls.

Technical co-operation under Priority II will support the effective implementation of these conventions and strengthen institutional capacities to prevent and respond to gender-based violence and discrimination against women, and address harmful gender stereotypes, thus contributing to SDG 5, particularly targets 1,[155] 2,[156], 3,[157] a[158] and c.[159] At the same time, the promotion of women's participation in decision making, inclusive democratic processes and leadership will contribute to target 5.[160]

Technical co-operation under Priority I will complement these efforts by promoting a victim/survivor-centred, gender-responsive, age/disability-sensitive and trauma-informed approach in enhancing access to justice and supporting accountability and reparation for war crimes committed by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, including conflict-related violence against women and children. These actions will contribute to targets 5.1, 5.2 and 5.c.

[149] Goal 4, target 1: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes
[150] Goal 4, target 3: By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.
[151] Goal 4, target 4: By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
[152] Goal 4, target 5: By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations
[153] Goal 4 target 4.c: By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States.
[154] Goal 4, target 7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.
[155] Goal 5, target 1: End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.
[156] Goal 5, target 2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
[157] Goal 5, target 3: Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation
[158] Goal 5, target a: Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.
[159] Goal 5, target c: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.
[160] Goal 5, target 5: Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

Gender mainstreaming furthermore remains a cross-cutting priority, encompassing the consistent use of sex-disaggregated data and the promotion of gender-balanced participation. Therefore, gender-mainstreaming across all Priorities will contribute target 1.

- **Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**

Under Priority II, the Council of Europe will continue to support the authorities of Ukraine in initiatives promoting the implementation of the Charter which guarantees the rights to decent, safe and fairly remunerated work – thus directly supporting target 8.[161] Moreover, the Action Plan will continue to support fair working conditions, non-discrimination and resilient labour market institutions, thus contributing to goal 8 and specifically target 5.[162]

- **Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries**

Under Priority II, Council of Europe's actions to empower persons and groups at risk of discrimination, exclusion or hatred and reduce inequalities by building institutional capacity to combat discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes will directly support Ukraine's progress towards achieving targets 2[163] and 3.[164] The Action Plan will continue to contribute to reducing inequalities and advancing social inclusion by supporting policy dialogue on social justice and fair social distribution of resources, promoting barrier-free policies and advancing inclusive labour market legislation, further contributing to target 3.

Technical co-operation under Priority I will further contribute to targets 2 and 3 by supporting inclusive, non-discriminatory and age/disability-sensitive access to justice, remedies, compensation and reparation for victims and survivors of war crimes and human rights violations, particularly those at risk.

- **Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable**

Under Priority II, the Action Plan will continue to support the housing policy for IDPs and war-affected people, in line with goal 11, target 1[165] and target 3.[166]

Under Priority III, promoting good governance through strengthened local self-government is a key objective of the Action Plan and supports the achievement of target 3.[167] The Action Plan will continue to strengthen multilevel co-operation as a key precondition for sustainable recovery and long-term development of Ukrainian communities by facilitating dialogue among municipalities, associations of local authorities and national institutions.

- **Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels**

Considering its mandate and the nature of its technical co-operation activities, the Council of Europe will make a meaningful contribution to achieving SDG 16. Indeed, all actions undertaken with Ukrainian authorities under all priorities will cover a wide range of areas related to many of SDG 16's targets.

[161] Goal 8, target 8: Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.
[162] Goal 8, target 5: By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.
[163] Goal 10, target 2: By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.
[164] Goal 10, target 3: Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.
[165] Goal 11, target 1: By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.
[166] Goal 11, target 3: By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.
[167] Goal 11, target 3: By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.

Under Priority I, technical co-operation will support the investigation and prosecution of war crimes and human rights violations, thereby contributing to target 3[168] on access to justice for all. Support for the human rights-compliant collection of evidence, the effective national implementation of the Convention and the execution of European Court judgments will strengthen the capacity, effectiveness and accountability of public and judicial institutions, contributing to targets 6[169] and a.[170] By promoting the protection of human rights and compliance with European human rights standards, the Action Plan will also contribute to target 10.[171] Taken together, these efforts will help enhance public trust, advance accountability and support the conditions for lasting peace and democratic stability, thereby also contributing to target 1.[172]

Under Priority II, efforts to prevent and combat violence against children will contribute directly to target 1. Efforts to promote inclusive and participatory governance under Priority II are closely tied to target 7.[173] These include advancing local self-governance, encouraging civil participation – especially of women and persons belonging to minorities – and fostering dialogue across government levels and with civil society. Support for aligning electoral legislation with international standards and the case law of the European Court further reinforces this aim.

In support of target 10, the Action Plan promotes freedom of expression, media freedom and public access to information under Priority III, while initiatives to tackle discrimination, hate crime and hate speech under Priority II contribute to target a, by strengthening institutional responses to extremism and crime. Support for the development and implementation of non-discriminatory policies contributes to target b,[174] reinforcing Ukraine's commitment to justice, inclusion and equality.

Under Priority IV, Council of Europe actions to reduce ill-treatment in detention and to build the capacities of law enforcement and health services working with inmates will contribute directly to target 1 while the promotion of the rule of law and equal access to justice underpins tangible contributions to target 3. Through the HELP programme and targeted capacity building for legal professionals, the Action Plan fosters the application of European standards and legal certainty. Efforts to enhance women's access to justice are also embedded within this target. Work on countering economic and cybercrime reinforces target 4[175] by promoting the implementation of the Cybercrime Convention, improving stakeholder co-operation and supporting efforts to trace illicit financial flows and fight organised crime. Complementary actions to prevent and address corruption, in line with GRECO recommendations, contribute to the achievement of target 5.[176] The Action Plan invests in strengthening institutional effectiveness, transparency and accountability in line with target 6 by improving the operational capacity of public, judicial and law-enforcement bodies and ensuring coherent implementation of reforms.

3.3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REYKJAVÍK PRINCIPLES FOR DEMOCRACY

The Reykjavík Principles for Democracy, endorsed by the Committee of Ministers in 2023 and elaborated through the Parameters for their application and implementation (CM(2025)194-add), provide a comprehensive normative framework for sustaining and strengthening democratic life across Council of Europe member states.

[168] Goal 16, target 3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.
[169] Goal 16, target 6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.
[170] Goal 16, target a: Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international co-operation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.
[171] Goal 16, target 10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.
[172] Goal 16, target 1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.
[173] Goal 16, target 7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.
[174] Goal 16, target b: Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.
[175] Goal 16, target 4: By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime.
[176] Goal 16, target 5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.

Developed within the framework of the New Democratic Pact for Europe, the Reykjavík Parameters translate Europe's shared standards on democracy into concrete, practical criteria for a well-functioning democratic system.

The Parameters are structured around five interdependent pillars: democratic participation; democratic institutions; democratic governance and integrity; democratic freedoms, inclusion, and civil society and democratic future. Three cross-cutting Guiding Principles which are participation and inclusion; equality and non-discrimination; and accountability, transparency and access to information, run through all five Pillars and inform the Council of Europe's approach to programming.

This Action Plan contributes directly and substantially to the implementation of the Reykjavik Principles for Democracy across all five Pillars and all 16 Parameters. Given Ukraine's context of democratic resilience under the conditions of war, recovery and European integration, the Action Plan operationalises the Reykjavík framework in a setting of exceptional importance for the future of democracy on the European continent.

Pillar I — Democratic Participation (Parameters 1–4)

- **Parameter 1 — Free, fair and resilient elections**

The Council of Europe's support under Priority III of the Action Plan, will contribute to achievement of Parameter 1, notably 1.1[177], 1.2[178], 1.3[179], 1.5[180], 1.6[181] and 1.7.[182] The Action Plan will pursue the goal set by this Parameter in the area of elections, democratic governance and dialogue and civil society under Priority III through a coordinated set of initiatives to support the organisation of free and fair elections when conditions permit: capacity building of and provision of expertise on the preparation of elections to, in particular the Central Election Commission, electoral reforms in line with Venice Commission recommendations, voter education and the establishment of transparent electoral processes, ensuring fair regulation of media as well as professional and balanced media coverage of elections. Given that, in accordance with the Constitution of Ukraine and current legislation on martial law, all scheduled elections have been postponed since February 2022, the Action Plan places particular emphasis on supporting the Ukrainian authorities in preparation for post-war elections and safeguarding electoral and voting rights for Ukrainian citizens both within Ukraine and abroad.

- **Parameter 2 — Freedoms of assembly and association**

The Council of Europe's support under Priority I and Priority III of the Action Plan will contribute to the achievement of the Parameter 2, more specifically 2.1[183], 2.2. [184] Under Priority I, in the area of the effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights at national level, the Action Plan will support authorities in enhancing the legal and institutional framework within which these freedoms are guaranteed and enforced including through the execution of European Court judgments, among which cases related to freedom of assembly and freedom of expression are explicitly identified as areas of outstanding concern under the CM supervision. Under Priority III, the Action Plan will strengthen civic space and an enabling environment for CSOs, promote structured dialogue between CSOs and public institutions, enhancing participatory enhancing participatory governance, and supporting CSO capacities in policy advocacy.

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[177] 1.1. **Legal framework:** The electoral framework ensures free and fair elections, safeguarding electoral rights, legal stability and the integrity of the democratic process.
[178] 1.2. **Universal and equal suffrage:** All citizens of voting age have the right to vote and stand for election subject to objective and proportionate conditions.
[179] 1.3. **Free, secret and direct suffrage :** Voters can freely form and express their opinions and cast their ballots in a secret and direct electoral process.
[180]1.5. Management and oversight: Election management and oversight are conducted with impartiality, transparency and independence from politically motivated manipulation.
[181]1.6. **Electoral communication and campaigning :** Electoral communication and campaigning, both offline and online, adhere to principles of transparency, fairness and integrity.
[182]1.7. **Media coverage of electoral campaigns :** Media independence and pluralism are protected and fair and balanced electoral coverage free from interference is ensured.
[183]2.1. **Freedom of assembly:** Freedom of peaceful assembly, including online, is guaranteed without excessive procedural conditions,
and those exercising this right are protected from undue interference.
[184] 2.2. **Freedom of association:** Freedom of association, including online, is guaranteed, with safeguards ensuring the full exercise of associations' rights, access to funding and their transparent operation.

- **Parameter 3 — Civil participation in decision-making**

The Council of Europe's support under Priority III and Priority IV of the Action Plan, will contribute to the achievement of the Parameter 3.[185] Under Priority III, in the area of elections, democratic governance and dialogue and civil society, the Action Plan will support national partners through assistance in strengthening of the legal framework for civic participation, advancing participatory and gender-balanced decision making across communities, and building the capacities of public officials, civil society representatives and residents to engage effectively in democratic processes. Under Priority IV, work in the areas of corruption, money laundering and economic crime as well as digital challenges promotes transparent, accountable and accessible administrative processes, including through support for a resilient and citizen-centric digital public administration.

- **Parameter 4 — Democracy at all levels**

The Council of Europe's support under Priority III of the Action Plan will contribute to the achievement of the Parameter 4, more specially 4.1[186] and 4.2[187]. The Action Plan supports Ukraine's ongoing decentralisation reform, including through the implementation of a dedicated action plan to ensure irreversibility of the decentralisation reform and strengthens the legal and institutional framework of local self-government in line with the European Charter of Local Self-Government.

Pillar II — Independent and Effective Democratic Institutions (Parameters 5–7)

- **Parameter 5 — Separation of powers**

The Council of Europe's support under Priorities III and IV of the Action Plan will contribute to the achievement of Parameter 5, more specially 5.1[188], 5.2[189] and 5.3.[190] Under Priority III, the Action Plan will support to the Parliament in exercising its legislative and oversight functions effectively, including in the context of martial law, recognising that continued parliamentary support is essential to ensure democratic security and continuity, institutional resilience, and effective checks and balances. This includes strengthening parliamentary oversight of the executive and ensuring that legislative processes are transparent and inclusive. Under Priority IV, the Action Plan will strengthen judicial independence and impartiality and the prevention of undue interference, as required by this Parameter.

- **Parameter 6 — Independent and effective parliaments**

The Council of Europe's support under the Priority III of the Action Plan will contribute to the achievement of Parameter 6, more specially 6.1[191], 6.2[192], 6.3[193] and 6.4[194]. This includes strengthening the institutional and operational capacity of the Ukrainian Parliament in integrating Council of Europe standards, including the updated Venice Commission Rule of Law Checklist, into legislative processes and facilitating structured interparliamentary dialogue and peer-to-peer exchanges on democratic resilience, parliamentary oversight and rule of law safeguards

[185] 3. **Civil Participation in Decision-making**: Policymaking is centred around people's legitimate needs and expectations, and citizens and civil society can effectively participate in decision-making including through deliberative processes as appropriate.
[186] 4.1. **Local and regional competences:** In line with the principle of local self-government, local and regional authorities are mandated and resourced to manage a significant part of public affairs and consulted on all matters which concern them directly.
[187] 4.2. **Multi-level governance:** Any formal mechanisms for co-ordination and cooperation between different levels of government adhere to principles of good democratic governance.
[188] 5.1. **Checks and balances:** The legislative, executive and judicial branches operate independently and without excessive concentration of powers.
[189] 5.2. **Parliamentary oversight and control:** Parliaments exercise oversight and control over the executive, including its power to legislate, with clearly defined and strictly limited exceptions.
[190] 5.3. **Transparency, accountability and oversight of the executive power:** Government actions are transparent, accountable, and oversight is ensured.
[191] 6.1. **Pluralist democratic process**: A pluralist political system allows the representation of diverse interests, with law-making and decision-making processes that are transparent and inclusive.
[192] 6.2. **Parliamentary ethics and conduct:** Integrity frameworks and the regulation of financing ensure effective functioning of parliaments.
[193] 6.3. **Role of the parliamentary opposition:** The role and participation of the parliamentary opposition is regulated, enabled and respected.
[194] 6.4. **Parliamentary immunity and inviolability:** Parliamentary immunity guarantees that members of parliament can fulfil their democratic mandate.

- **Parameter 7 — Independent, impartial and effective judiciaries**

The Council of Europe's support under Priorities I and IV will contribute to the achievement of Parameter 7, more specifically 7.1,[195] 7.2,[196] 7.3,[197] and 7.4[198]. Under Priority I, in the area of the effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights at national level, the Action Plan will address both the national implementation of the Convention and the execution of European Court judgments as a single continuum, strengthening the national execution system and reinforcing interagency mechanisms for systematic and timely execution. Under Priority IV, in the area of independence and efficiency of justice, the Action Plan will support judicial governance reform, strengthen judicial self-governing bodies, and assist in the design of comprehensive performance evaluation systems for judges, directly contributing to the independence, accountability and effectiveness of the judiciary as required by this Parameter.

Pillar III — Democratic Governance and Integrity (Parameters 8–10)

- **Parameter 8 — Fight against corruption and organised crime**

The Council of Europe's support under Priority IV of the Action Plan, will support the implementation of the Parameter 8, in particular 8.1[199], 8.2,[200] and 8.3[201]. In the area of corruption, money laundering and economic crime under Priority IV, The Council of Europe will support authorities in strengthening the national anti-corruption legislative framework in line with GRECO recommendations and EU acquis, reinforcing the capacity of key anti-corruption authorities, and supporting efforts to recover assets linked to corruption.

- **Parameter 9 — Political integrity: party funding and lobbying practices**

The Council of Europe's support under the Priority IV of the Action Plan, will contribute to the achievement of this Parameter, more specifically 9.1[202] and 9.2[203]. In the area of corruption, money laundering and economic crime of Priority IV, the Action Plan will support Ukraine in enhancing oversight of transparency and accountability of political party financing and pre-election campaign funding, and in aligning the national anti-corruption framework with Council of Europe standards and GRECO recommendations through expertise on lobbying transparency and political finance.

- **Parameter 10 — Good democratic governance**

The Council of Europe's support under the Priorities III and IV of the Action Plan will contribute to the achievement of this Parameter, more specially 10.1[204] and 10.2[205] . The Action Plan, within area of corruption, money laundering and economic crime of the Priority IV, will support authorities in aligning the national anti-corruption framework with Council of Europe standards and GRECO recommendations and empowering municipalities to carry out community-based initiatives focused on transparency, accountability, participation, gender equality and human rights at local level. Regarding good administration, the Action Plan will contribute to this Parameter in the area of digital challenges under Priority IV, through supporting a resilient and citizen-centric digital public administration that enables national authorities and public services to operate efficiently, transparently, securely and in an interoperable manner.

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[195] 7.1. **Independence and impartiality:** Judicial independence and impartiality are guaranteed, allowing every person to have confidence in the justice system.
[196] 7.2. **Accountability:** Judicial transparency and disciplinary liability of judges ensure the accountability of the judiciary.
[197] 7.3. **Prosecutorial objectivity, impartiality and accountability:** Prosecutorial objectivity and impartiality are protected, contributing to a fair, impartial and efficient administration of justice.
[198] 7.4. **Access to justice:** The organisation of the justice system allows for practical and effective access to court for all.
[199] 8.1. **Prevention:** Integrity frameworks apply for all public officials to prevent corruption.
[200] 8.2. **Deterrence:** A deterrent legal framework enables relevant authorities to effectively fight corruption and money laundering.
[201] 8.3. **Anti-corruption and anti-money laundering authorities:** Anti-corruption and anti-money laundering authorities act with the necessary independence and integrity and can operate without undue influence.
[202] 9.1. **Financing of political parties, campaigns and candidates:** Political parties have access to donations and, where applicable, public funding based on objective, fair and reasonable criteria, and the funding is independently monitored.
[203] 9.2. **Lobbying regulation:** Lobbying activities, including of consultant lobbyists, in-house lobbyists, and interest organisations, are regulated to ensure transparency.
[204] 10.1. **Transparency and accountability:** Public institutions and administrations are transparent, accountable and serve the public good.
[205] 10.2. **Good administration:** Public institutions and interventions are designed and implemented to effectively meet clearly set objectives, efficiently allocating and using available resources to respond to citizens' legitimate needs and expectations without discrimination.

Under Priority III, support to decentralisation reforms will pursue this goal set by this Parameter through advancing the clear division of competencies between tiers of government and ensuring that local and regional authorities fully exercise their competencies to advance gender-responsive recovery and reconstruction in their communities. In the area of Prisons - police - deprivation of liberty under Priority IV, the Action Plan will further contribute to this Parameter by strengthening the compliance of custodial and law enforcement institutions with democratic governance and human rights standards

Pillar IV — Democratic Freedoms, Inclusion and Civil Society (Parameters 11–13)

- **Parameter 11 — Freedom of expression**

The Council of Europe's support to Ukraine, under Priorities III and IV will contribute to the achievement of Parameter 11, more particularly 11.1,[206] 11.2,[207] 11.3,[208] 11.4,[209] 11.5[210] and 11.6[211]. In the area of freedom of media and information integrity under Priority III, the Action Plan will assist in enhancing media legislation reform, protection of journalists, public service media independence, pluralism and sustainability, and counter-disinformation and media literacy frameworks, all aligned with Council of Europe standards. In the area of the culture and cultural heritage under Priority III, the Action Plan will further contribute to the achievement of the Parameter through supporting the protection and preservation of Ukraine's cultural heritage. In the area of the digital challenges: artificial intelligence - cybercrime - data protection under Priority IV, the Action Plan will contribute to this Parameter through supporting governance frameworks for AI systems aligned with the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law.

- **Parameter 12 — Equality, diversity and inclusion**

The Council of Europe's support under Priority II of the Action Plan will contribute to the achievement of the goals set by this Parameter, more specifically 12.1,[212]12.2,[213] 12.3[214] and 12.4[215]. Under Priority II, the Action Plan will pursue the goal set by this Parameter through technical co-operation in the areas covering rights of internally displaced persons, returnees and other war-affected people, rights of veterans, gender equality, combating violence against women and domestic violence, anti-discrimination, diversity and inclusion, national minorities, regional or minority languages, Roma and travellers, children's rights, and social rights and health protection. The cross-cutting integration of gender equality and non-discrimination across all four Priorities of the Action Plan further reflects the centrality of Parameter 12 to the Action Plan.

- **Parameter 13 — Protected civic space**

The Council of Europe's support under Priorities I and III will contribute to the implementation of Parameter 13.[216] In the area of effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights at national level under Priority I, the Action Plan will further contribute to the achievement of this Parameter through strengthening the capacity of CSOs, including women's rights and women-led organisations, to identify, document and report on human rights violations in the war context.

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[206] 11.1. **Legal safeguards:** Freedom of expression and information is guaranteed, and its exercise protected by the authorities.
[207] 11.2. **Media freedom**: The media operates within a framework that ensures its freedom and independence while safeguarding media professionals from political and other undue interference.
[208] 11.3. **Media pluralism and cultural diversity:** Media pluralism and cultural diversity ensure that a variety of voices and opinions are available to the public.
[209] 11.4. **Safety of journalists:** Journalists and others who speak out on issues of public interest are protected from intimidation, threats and violence offline and online.
[210] 11.5. **Algorithmic decisions and online risks**: The use of algorithms and AI systems in managing online content respects human rights and is guided by the principles of transparency, accountability and non-discrimination.
[211] 11.6. **Media, information and digital literacy:** Media, information and digital literacy initiatives empower individuals of all age groups and with diverse backgrounds to navigate the (digital) media environment responsibly and critically.
[212] 12.1. **Prohibition of discrimination and combatting hate speech and hate crime:** Effective protection is ensured against all forms of discrimination, online and offline hate speech and hate crime.
[213] 12.2. **Equal access to and enjoyment of rights:** Safeguards ensure equal access to and enjoyment of rights for all individuals and promote their active and safe participation in public and political life.
[214] 12.3. **Full, equal and meaningful participation and empowerment of women and girls:** Gender-based violence against women and girls as well as sexism are effectively combatted, and gender equality is promoted.
[215] 12.4. **Social protection and welfare:** Minimum levels of welfare are ensured to promote economic security, social inclusion, environmental sustainability, and the participation of everyone.
[216] 13. **Protected civic space**: Civil society actors and human rights defenders operate in a safe and enabling environment, within frameworks that uphold fundamental freedoms, facilitate participation and ensure protection from undue restrictions or threats.

In the area of the elections, democratic governance and dialogue and civil society area under Priority III, the Action Plan will pursue the goal set by this Parameter through strengthening civic space, promoting structured dialogue between CSOs and public institutions, enhancing participatory governance, and supporting CSO capacities in policy advocacy.

Pillar V — Democratic Future (Parameters 14–16)

- **Parameter 14 — Empowerment of young people and children**

The Council of Europe's support under Priorities II and III of the Action Plan will contribute to the achievement of Parameter 14.[217] In the area of children's rights under Priority II, the Action Plan will contribute to this Parameter by addressing the rights and welfare of children, including those affected by the war, with particular attention to child protection, child-friendly justice and trauma-informed psychosocial support. In the area of youth under Priority III, the Action Plan will pursue the goal set by this Parameter through targeted support to participatory youth policies, reinforced youth work, and youth perspectives in decision-making processes.

- **Parameter 15 — Education for democracy**

The Council of Europe's support under the Priority III of the Action Plan will contribute to the achievement of Parameter 15.[218] In the area of education under Priority III, the Action Plan will pursue the goal set by this Parameter through supporting the alignment of Ukraine's education policy and curricula with Council of Europe standards, including education for democratic citizenship based on the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture. In the area of culture and cultural Heritage under Priority III, the Action Plan will further contribute to this Parameter by preserving and transmitting the democratic values and shared memory embedded in Ukraine's cultural heritage

- **Parameter 16 — Sustainable and innovative democratic life**

The Council of Europe's support under Priority II, III and IV of the Action Plan will contribute to the achievement of Parameter 16, more specifically 16.1,[219] 16.2,[220] 16.3[221] and 16.4.[222] In the area of the effective implementation of the European Social Charter and health protection under Priority II, the Action Plan will contribute to the social infrastructure that sustains resilient and inclusive democratic communities, while the Integrity and governance of sport sub-area will leverage sport as a tool for resilience, inclusion and democratic renewal. In the area of the Culture and Cultural Heritage Under Priority III, the Action Plan will reinforce the democratic renewal and social cohesion that underpin this Parameter. In the area of the digital challenges: artificial intelligence - cybercrime - data protection under Priority IV, the Action Plan will pursue the goal set by this Parameter through supporting Ukraine's capacity to govern digital technologies in ways that uphold democratic values and fundamental rights, including through the implementation of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law. Ukraine's active fulfilment of its obligations as a Council of Europe member State, its engagement with Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and its pursuit of EU membership through alignment of national reforms with European standards directly contribute to sub-parameter 16.4 on international co-operation for democracy.

3.4 CO-ORDINATION

Co-ordination to ensure efficient use of resources and the relevance of the Council of Europe's actions is carried out at various levels and forums, including the Committee of Ministers.

[217] 14. Young people and children have equal access to and can fully exercise their rights and freedoms and have the right to participate in matters affecting them.
[218] 15. Formal, non-formal and informal education prepares learners for life as active citizens in diverse democratic societies.
[219] 16.1. **Sustainability of public policy**: Decisions and actions of public institutions focus on the long-term sustainable goals and impacts of their actions rather than on short-term policies.
[220] 16.2. **Openness to change and innovation**: Public institutions foster an environment conducive to change and innovation.
[221] 16.3. **Impact of ai and emergent technologies on democratic processes:** Safeguards protect democratic institutions and processes and the rights of individuals in contexts where AI systems and other digital technologies are employed.
[222] 16.4. **International co-operation for democracy:** International co-operation for democracy ensures the protection and promotion of democratic principles and practices through adherence to international law, mutual accountability, and support for democratic governance globally.

The Council of Europe's activities are determined and implemented in such a way as to focus on areas where the Organisation has strong expertise and added value. Co-operation with the Ukrainian authorities is developed on the basis of a thorough analysis of the objectives pursued by other international organisations and partners in the field and of their activities undertaken and/or planned to achieve these objectives.

To ensure the relevance of its actions, the Council of Europe works in close co-ordination with relevant national and international stakeholders, notably the European Union and in particular the EU Delegation to Ukraine. The present Action Plan will also be implemented in the context of the government programme geared towards Ukraine's EU integration and accession process and in support of the reforms required to advance alignment with the EU *acquis*.

Co-ordination is also ensured with other international partners, including the United Nations and OSCE. Furthermore, the Council of Europe liaises with international organisations, including the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Women, UNICEF, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the International Monetary Fund's resident representative office in Ukraine, as well as non-governmental organisations. To ensure efficiency and synergies, the Council of Europe also co-ordinates with member States' development agencies.

Whenever appropriate, co-ordination platforms with other international organisations are set up and joint activities undertaken. Accordingly, the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine has actively participated in a series of thematic donor co-ordination groups in the following areas:

- national minorities;
- child-friendly justice;
- anti-corruption;
- decentralisation;
- elections;
- the media and civil society;
- the judiciary and the rule of law;
- law enforcement (this particular group has established a number of sub-groups on issues concerning the penal system, the police and public prosecution reform)

The Council of Europe has taken up the initiative of enhancing donor-government co-ordination related to child-friendly justice and national minorities.

In addition, the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine has become a member of the Inter-Governmental Sectoral Working Group on Social Policy. In this framework, the Office has co-operated with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which also participates in the working group, particularly on issues related to the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities.

In the area of the penal system, the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine works closely with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the European Union Advisory Mission in Ukraine, the EU project Pravo-Justice and the International Committee of the Red Cross through joint initiatives, participation in co-ordination platforms and a Working Group on Torture Prevention (led by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime). In the field of youth, the Office has maintained both bilateral and multilateral co-operation with the UNDP, including through the joint organisation of national annual events such as Youth Day at the Ukraine-Denmark Youth House and the Youth Work Forum.

The Council of Europe also plays an active role in the implementers' co-ordination meetings in the field of elections (with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems Ukraine, International IDEA, OSCE/ODIHR and Democracy Reporting International), ensuring that its interventions are strategically aligned and avoid overlapping with those of other key international bodies.

To ensure efficiency and synergies, the Council of Europe co-ordinates its work with its member and observer States' diplomatic missions and development agencies active in Ukraine.

3.5 FUNDING

The overall financing needs for the Action Plan are preliminary estimated at €70 million. While funding to the amount of €9.8 million (14% of the estimated needs) has been secured as of 30 September 2026, additional funding is essential to fully implement the priority actions identified for 2027-2030.

As a direct result of the "Reykjavík Declaration – United around our values" which further recognised the importance of the Council of Europe's co-operation dimension, the Committee of Ministers decided in November 2023 to include, for the first time, in its ordinary budget 2024-2027 a contribution for the co-operation dimension. Providing a more stable and predictable source of funding for co-operation activities ensures a more effective and efficient implementation of action plans. Moreover, this approach ensures that co-operation projects can be designed, implemented and evaluated for their impact over the long term without interruptions. Notably in its first year, 2027, the present Action Plan will benefit from a strong injection from this contribution to enable a timely and sustained start to its projects.

The co-ordination of the implementation of the Action Plan incurs general management costs amounting to not more than 7% of the Action Plan's direct costs.

In line with the resource mobilisation strategy of the Council of Europe, fundraising efforts under the co-ordination of the DPC are concentrated on the Action Plan as a whole. Non-earmarked funding, in particular, allows flexibility in allocating funds where they are most needed (such as when addressing emerging co-operation needs) and where they are most likely to contribute to the sustainability of key policy and institutional reforms. The Council of Europe also promotes longer-term framework co-operation agreements and multi-annual contracts with key partners and donors to facilitate strategic and effective partnerships and ensure predictable and flexible targeted funding.

Strong financial support for the present Action Plan will allow the Organisation to build on and create activities that support the principles of the Convention and other legal instruments and Council of Europe standards. The Council of Europe seeks to deliver on agreed strategic priorities rather than on individual projects and activities.

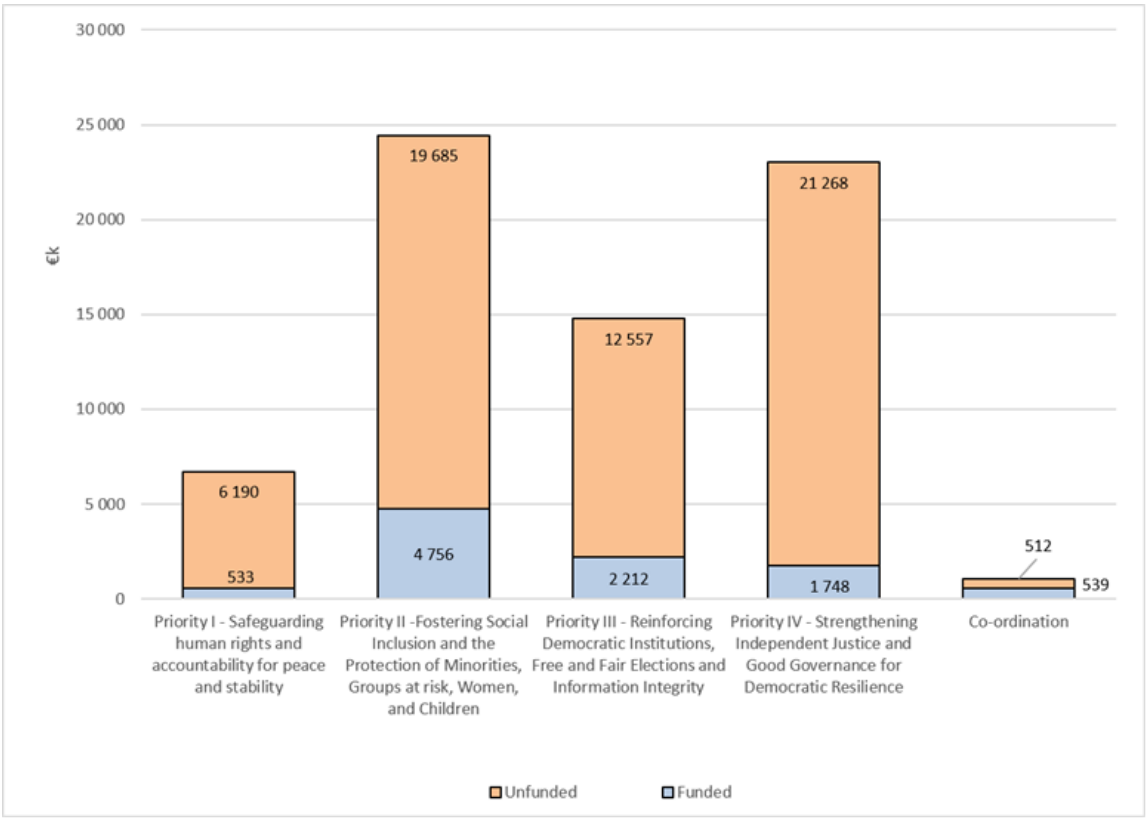


Figure 2: *Estimated financing needs per priority of the Council of Europe Action Plan "Democratic Security for Ukraine" 2027-2030 as of 30 September 2026 (in millions of euros)*

3.6 GOVERNANCE

The Committee of Ministers assesses the overall results of the implementation of the Action Plan through its GR-DEM.

The Council of Europe will provide regular updates on the progress and outcomes of the Action Plan. To this end, the DPC will report to the Committee of Ministers as follows:

- annual written reports on the progress of the implementation of the Action Plan;
- a written final report upon completion of the implementation of the Action Plan.

In addition, the Secretariat of the GR-DEM and the DPC in close co-ordination with the Ukrainian authorities, will organise, as appropriate, information meetings with all interested delegations to the Council of Europe. These meetings will provide an opportunity for exchange and discussion on the progress of the implementation of the Action Plan on the one hand, and on planning for its successor action plan on the other.

Progress made under the Action Plan will also be jointly assessed by the Council of Europe and the Ukrainian authorities. For this purpose, an Action Plan Steering Committee is to be established, composed of the representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other national stakeholders, including civil society, involved in the implementation of the Action Plan, as well as Council of Europe representatives.

This Steering Committee will review the implementation of approved projects, discuss challenges and proposals for future co-operation, and if appropriate, recommend measures to improve the effectiveness of the Action Plan. At a minimum, the meetings will take place within 24 months of the start date of the implementation of the Action Plan, to assess the mid-term implementation, and before the end of the Action Plan, to assess the overall implementation.

In addition, the DPC will send annual Action Plan reports to those donors contributing to the funding at the level of the Action Plan, in line with reporting requirements.

Action Plan contacts

Directorate of Programme Co-ordination (DPC)
Council of Europe
F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel: + 33 (0)3 90 21 56 54
E-mail to: dpc@coe.int
www.coe.int/programmes

Council of Europe Office in Ukraine
8, Illinska str., 7 entrance, 6 floor
Kyiv 04070, Ukraine

E-mail to: kyiv@coe.int
Council of Europe Office in Ukraine

APPENDIX I: LOGFRAME

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
PRIORITY I - SAFEGUARDING HUMAN RIGHTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR PEACE AND STABILITY				
National legislation, policies and practices are harmonised with the Convention and related Council of Europe standards, including in areas identified in the European Court's cases under enhanced Committee of Ministers supervision.	1. Number of action plan(s), action reports and communications submitted to the CM 2. Number of national laws, policies, and practices revised or adopted in compliance with the Convention and relevant Council of Europe standards, including specifically addressing areas highlighted in European Court cases including under enhanced CM supervision.	1. 40 action plans, 33 action reports and 26 communications in 2025. 2. Low	1. Increasing on annual basis 2. At least 4 national laws, policies, and practices revised or adopted in compliance with the Convention and relevant Council of Europe standards, including specifically addressing areas highlighted in European Court cases under enhanced CM supervision	CM Annual Report - Supervision of the Execution of Judgments and Decisions of the European Court, CM decisions, Parliament, project-level reports, reports of CSOs and international organisations.
Key national stakeholders (Parliament, Ministry of Justice, judiciary, prosecution, and other relevant institutions) improve their co-ordination on executing European Court judgments, notably with a view to resolving long-standing systemic and structural problems in the legal system of Ukraine.	1. Number of European Court cases concerning Ukraine closed under the CM supervisions (total, leading) 2. Number of action plan(s), action reports and communications submitted to the CM 3. Regularity of inter-agency meetings conducted on the improvement of the execution of European Court judgments	1. 97 Ukrainian cases closed, including 11 leading cases in 2025. 2. 40 action plans, 33 action reports and 26 communications in 2025. 3. Meetings held irregularly with limited participation	1. Increasing on annual basis 2. Increasing trend on annual basis 3. Regular inter-agency meetings with the participation of all relevant institutions.	CM Annual Report - Supervision of the Execution of Judgments and Decisions of the European Court of Human Rights, CM Decisions, project-level reports on assessment of level of effectiveness on the inter-agency national mechanisms
War crimes and human rights violations are effectively investigated, prosecuted and adjudicated.	1. Number of war-related criminal proceedings referred to court. 2. Number of convictions in war-related criminal proceedings	1. 846 cases referred to court (Prosecutor General statistics, 2026 2. 306 convictions Prosecutor General statistics, 2026)	1. Increased war-related criminal proceedings referred to court. 2. Increased convictions in war-related criminal proceedings.	Prosecutor General's Office reports, European Court case law, CM decisions, relevant Venice Commission

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
				Opinions, GRECO reports for Ukraine, public opinion studies, expert reports and other relevant thematic surveys by group of end beneficiaries, evaluations of international organisations, project-level reports, national statistics.
Victims of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine have improved access to justice, compensation and reparation through strengthened national and international accountability mechanisms.	1. Number of victims submitting claims through compensation and accountability mechanisms 2. Level of application of gender-sensitive approaches to war-crime related to human rights violations 3. The percentage of regions in Ukraine where a comprehensive support system for victims of war crimes and other international crimes is in place 4. Number of victims from groups at risk who are being assisted by the Victims and Witnesses Support Co-ordination Centre of the Office of the Prosecutor General and the victim and witness support departments of regional prosecutor’s offices	1. 150,000+ claims registered with the Register of Damage for Ukraine 2. No data available -to be specified 3. 44% (currently,12 victim and witness support departments operate in regional prosecutor’s offices) 4. Over 7,000 victims are currently supported by the relevant units of the prosecution authorities	1. Increased 2. Substantial application 3. 100% 4. Increased	Prosecutor General's Office reports, public opinion studies, expert reports and other relevant thematic surveys by group of end beneficiaries, Register of Damages for Ukraine; Reports and evaluations of international organisations, project-level reports, national statistics.
A scalable, inclusive, and secure digital system to ensure all those harmed by the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine are better able to assert and document their	1. Number of claims received by the Register 2. Level of engagement of relevant authorities and CSOs in awareness raising initiatives aimed at increasing potential claimants' knowledge on the role, mandate	1. 150,000 claims received by the RD4U (as of May 2026) 2. Some engagement but largely ad hoc and geographically limited	1. Significant and measurable increase in number of claims received, reflecting improved accessibility, awareness, and functionality of the digital system 2. Sustained engagement	Register of Damage for Ukraine, CSO reports, project-level reports.

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
claims in the Register of Damage for Ukraine.	and impact of the RD4U and the claims submission procedure both in Ukraine and in countries with a large number of Ukrainian refugees.		across all key locations and target groups	
The Ombudsperson's Office operates with a strengthened mandate and institutional status aligned with the UN Paris Principles and the Council of Europe's Venice Principles, ensuring its independence, effectiveness and accessibility for rights holders, regardless of their gender.	Extent to which legislative amendments adopted to strengthen the independence, mandate and accessibility of the Ombudsperson's Office are assessed as compliant with the UN Paris Principles and the Council of Europe's Venice Principles.	Ukraine has registered a new draft law on the Ombudsperson in Parliament (adopted in the first reading on 26 May 2026). The European Commission 2025 Report on Ukraine noted that progress remains partial, with the requirement to further align the draft law.	Legislative framework assessed by the Venice Commission and/or European Commission as improved	Venice Commission opinions, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, project-level reports.
Judicial, prosecutorial and law enforcement authorities, the Ombudsperson's Office (including its NPM function) and the Government Agent before the European Court, as well as other competent authorities improve capacity and strengthen co-ordination, across all levels of governance, utilising a multilevel approach, to apply human rights standards, execute European Court judgments, conduct investigations into the ill-treatment and address violations through victim/survivor-centred, gender-sensitive, gender-responsive age/disability sensitive and trauma-informed approaches.	Number of joint or co-ordinated actions (e.g., case conferences, training sessions, investigations, monitoring visits, policy reviews) conducted by judicial, prosecutorial, law enforcement, Ombudsperson's Office/NPM, Government Agent, and other competent authorities to apply human rights standards and execute European Court judgments using victim/survivor-centred, gender-, age-, and disability-sensitive, and trauma-informed approaches.	Limited number of joint or co-ordinated actions.	Increased number of joint or co-ordinated actions.	Project-level reports on assessment of level of effectiveness on the inter-agency national mechanisms, expert assessments, reports of the Government Agent's Office. .

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
Legal professionals including future legal professionals and civil servants have access to high quality education on European human rights standards and EU acquis and enhance their knowledge and skills to address war-related legal issues through HELP courses.	1. Number of relevant stakeholders (judges, prosecutors, lawyers, court staff, civil servants, law students) who have completed the HELP courses in self-learning and tutored formats. 2. Level of knowledge among relevant stakeholders (judges, prosecutors, lawyers, court staff, civil servants and law students) on European human rights standards, EU acquis and war-related legal issues.	1. 16,000 (in self-learning) and 4,000 (in tutored format) relevant stakeholders (judges, prosecutors, lawyers, court staff, civil servants, law students) who have completed the HELP courses 2. Moderate level of knowledge of the topics related to European human rights standards, EU acquis and war-related legal issues.	1. At least 20% of increase in number of relevant stakeholders (judges, prosecutors, lawyers, court staff, civil servants, law students) who have completed the HELP courses 2. Increased level of knowledge among relevant stakeholders demonstrated through pre- and post-training assessments	Relevant reports on assessment of level of knowledge of the participants to the trainings, HELP e-learning platform data, Tutors' reports.
National training institutions increasingly integrate training on European human rights standards into initial and continuous professional training, including through the integration of relevant HELP courses, in line with Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)5.	1. Number of national training institutions and universities which integrated HELP courses in the initial and continuous training curricula in a systematic manner 2. Number of HELP courses integrated in regular training curricula of justice professionals by national training institutions and universities 3. Number of HELP certified tutors who are able to support implementation of HELP courses 4. Number of references to the use of HELP courses in the execution of the European court judgements	1. 3 national training institutions and universities integrated HELP courses in their curricula 2. 6 HELP courses by institutional partners 3. 250 4. References to the use of HELP courses in the execution of the European Court judgements	1. 2 national training institutions and universities integrated HELP courses in their curricula. 2. Increase by 20% in the number of courses integrated by institutional partners 3. Increase by 20% in the number of new certified HELP tutors 4. Increased references to the use of HELP courses by the authorities in the context of the execution of the European Court judgements	Relevant reports listing the number of institutions and courses integrated in the curricula, reports from national training institutions, References to the use of HELP courses in the action plans and reports related to the execution of the European Court judgements.

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
War-affected people, persons and groups at risk effectively access strengthened legal and regulatory frameworks, judicial and non-judicial remedies, and co-ordinated documentation of war related damages and violations.	1. Number of legal and regulatory frameworks on war-related damages supported by the Council of Europe 2. Number of people who have access to information on judicial and non-judicial remedy mechanisms for war-affected people, groups at risk, and service members 3. Number of war-affected people, persons and groups at risk, and service members who have successfully submitted or benefited from the documentation of war-related damages and violations through relevant co-ordination mechanisms 4. Number of co-ordination protocols concerning documentation of war-related damages developed.	1. 4 2. 70,000 informed people 3. 72,000 people 4. 0	1. 6 2. At least 30% increase in the number of individuals receiving information on, judicial or non-judicial remedy mechanisms, disaggregated by sex 3. At least 90 000 people 4. 3 protocols	Co-ordination Centre for Legal Aid Provision reports, Ombudsperson's Office, Commissioner for the Rights of Citizens Affected by Armed Aggression reports, Register of Damages, project-level reports
Human rights of military personnel and their family members in Ukraine are protected and promoted, during war as well as post-war period.	1. Extent to which project-supported recommendations are reflected in relevant laws, policies, strategies, or institutional regulations concerning the rights of military personnel and their family members 2. Extent to which relevant institutions strengthen mechanisms, procedures, and practices for the prevention, identification, investigation, and response to human rights violations affecting military personnel and their family members 3. Extent to which co-ordination, information-sharing, and	1. Significant gaps in policies, laws and bylaws in relation to human rights of members of the armed forces 2. Existing institutional mechanisms and practices remain fragmented and lacking a human rights-centred approach 3. Existing co-ordination and awareness mechanisms are sporadic	1. Project-supported recommendations reflected in relevant legal, policy, or regulatory documents 2. Relevant institutions adopt or strengthen procedures, mechanisms, or practices to prevent, promote and protect human rights in the army and address rights violations. 3. New or strengthened co-ordination, communication, or awareness-raising mechanisms established and functioning	Laws, policies, strategies, parliamentary and governmental decisions, policy analyses, project-level reports, institutional regulations, standard operating procedures, training surveys, Ombudsperson reports, monitoring reports, meeting minutes, co-ordination platform records, communication

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
	awareness-raising mechanisms related to the rights of military personnel and their family members are strengthened and operational			materials, awareness campaign reports, project-level reports and documentation
CSOs, including women's rights and women-led organisations and other rights holder organisations, have strengthened capacity to identify, document and report to the authorities on human rights violations in the war context through targeted support.	Level of capacity of CSOs to identify, document and report to the authorities on human rights violations in the war context, in line with the Council of Europe standards	CSO capacity to systematically document human rights violations in the war context is uneven.	Demonstrated and documented improvement in the level of capacity of CSOs to identify, document and report to the authorities on human rights violations in the war context.	Project-level monitoring reports; Venice Commission opinions for an enabling environment; Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights country visit reports
Drug and addiction policies, legislation and practices are gender-responsive and aligned with Council of Europe standards, with a view to addressing issues related to transnational organised crimes and to the risks of drug use and behavioural addictions.	Number of addictions prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery programmes implemented in accordance with Council of Europe standards, with specific components addressing both transnational organised crime and behavioural addictions	Low	Increased number of prevention of addictions, harm reduction, treatment and recovery programmes	Pompidou Group, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Interior records, WHO Ukraine, project-level reports.
The national regulatory framework is aligned with international human rights and business standards (such as 2011 United Nations "Guiding principles on business and human rights", CM/Rec(2016)3) and businesses are aware of the human rights standards and the link between responsible business conduct, competitiveness and sustainable recovery.	1. Number of national laws, policies, or regulations adopted or revised to align with international business and human rights standards (including UN Guiding Principles and CM/Rec(2016)3) 2. Level of awareness of businesses on human rights standards and the link between responsible business conduct, competitiveness and sustainable recovery 3. Level of understanding among judiciary, respective state institutions and other stakeholders	1. Limited number of national laws, policies, or regulations aligned with international business and human rights standards (including UN Guiding Principles and CM/Rec(2016)3) 2. Low level of awareness on human rights standards and the link between responsible business conduct, competitiveness and	1. At least 2 of key laws, regulations and policy frameworks governing post-war reconstruction and recovery aligned with Council of Europe and international standards on business and human rights 2. Increased level of awareness on human rights standards and the link between responsible business conduct, competitiveness, and sustainable recovery	Official legislation, regulations and policy documents, Government gazettes and parliamentary records, record of expert contributions, official correspondence or acknowledgment from relevant national authorities, analytics reports (website traffic, social media

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
	on identification and application of relevant international standards and European Court jurisprudence to adjudicate business-related human rights cases and provide effective remedies.	sustainable recovery 3. Low level of understanding on international standards relevant to adjudicating business-related human rights cases	3. High level of understanding on international standards relevant to adjudicating business-related human rights cases	reach, engagement metrics),event reports, list of participants, feedback forms, interviews, focus group discussions, project-level reports.
PRIORITY II - FOSTERING SOCIAL INCLUSION AND PROTECTION OF MINORITIES, GROUPS AT RISK, WOMEN AND CHILDREN				
Ukraine aligns its policy and legislative framework on social rights with the Charter, the ECSR case law and relevant EU acquis.	1. Number of provisions of the Charter, accepted by Ukraine 2. Number of conclusions of conformity adopted by the ECSR regarding Ukraine's compliance with the Charter 3. Level of compliance of policy and legislative framework with the ESC standards on protection of social and labour right aligned with Charter and EU acquis	1. 76 of 98 paragraphs of the Charter 2. 9 conclusions of conformity across labour right; health, social security and social protection; employment, training, equal opportunities; children, families and migrants 3. Limited approximation of Chapter on social policy and employment to the EU acquis (Four draft legislative/policy initiatives prepared or submitted (draft social code; the draft labour code-approved by the Cabinet of Ministers in January 2026 and submitted to Parliament;	1. Increase in the number of provisions of the Charter accepted by Ukraine 2. Increased number of conclusions of conformity adopted by the ECSR Improved level of policy and legislative changes made in compliance with the Charter standards and EU acquis. 3. At least four legislative/policy initiatives developed, adopted or enacted in line with the Charter and EU acquis.	Conclusions of ECSR, Webpage of the Charter, country profile Ukraine, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, HUDOC-ESC, the expert opinions, project-level reports.

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
		draft laws on social dialogue and collective labour disputes)		
National and local authorities implement gender-responsive, high-quality social policies in accordance with Council of Europe standards, supported by increased awareness of Charter standards and ECSR case-law.	Number of national and local authorities implementing gender-responsive, high-quality social policies in in line with Council of Europe standards	Low	High	National and local authorities implement gender-responsive, high-quality social policies and deliver improved social services in accordance with Council of Europe standards, supported by increased awareness of Charter standards and ECSR case-law.
A barrier-free environment is promoted, and inclusive community-based services are strengthened, ensuring meaningful participation and social inclusion of persons and groups at risk of discrimination, exclusion or hatred.	Availability of community-based social services for people in groups at risk in Ukraine	Limited implementation of the Barrier-Free Strategy and limited availability community-based services	Increased level of implementation of the Barrier-Free Strategy; expanded availability of community-based services for groups at risk	Parliament, Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity, Barrier-Free Council meeting records, National Social Service of Ukraine annual reports, national legislation website, project-level expert reports
Ukraine's institutional capacity to uphold human rights in the health field is strengthened, resulting in improved mental healthcare standards, more effective prevention and treatment of substance-related and digital	1. Level of knowledge of professionals on mental health professionals on human rights approach to mental healthcare, in line with Council of Europe standards 2. Number of health institutions or service providers that have	1. Limited 2. Limited 3. 0	1. Substantial increase 2. At least 2 institutions or service providers 3. At least 2 new or expanded mental health and addiction prevention/treatment programmes for war-	Ministry of Health of Ukraine, Pompidou Group reports, WHO Ukraine health reports project-level reports,

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
addictions aggravated by the war.	adopted and implemented updated protocols, guidelines, or standards on mental healthcare and the prevention/treatment of substance-related and digital addictions in line with Council of Europe 3. Number of new or expanded mental health and addiction prevention/treatment programmes, including those specifically targeting war-affected people established and operational		affected people established and operational	
Authorities implement a coherent, sustainable and long-term State policy framework on displacement that embeds a human rights and gender-responsive approach.	Number of legal and regulatory acts adopted in furtherance of the State Policy Strategy on Internal Displacement for the Period until 2030 and its operational action plan for implementation	1 - State Policy Strategy on Internal Displacement for the Period until 2030 and its operational action plan for Implementation in 2026–2028, approved on 10 June 2026.	3 - Legal and regulatory acts necessary for the implementation of the State Policy Strategy on Internal Displacement for the Period until 2030 and its operational action plan for implementation have been adopted	Cabinet of Ministers, Ministry of Social, Family and Unity, project-level reports.
IDPs, returnees and other war-affected people benefit from improved access to services, social and mental health support, and adequate long-term housing solutions co-designed by central and local authorities.	1. Number of IDPs, returnees, and war-affected people who benefitted from services provided by national and local authorities and CSOs with the Council of Europe support 2. Number of national policies on durable housing solutions for IDPs, returnees, and other war-affected people adopted with Council of Europe support 3. Number of housing programmes available for IDPs, returnees and	1. 14,000 (under the previous Action Plan for Ukraine “Resilience, Recovery and Reconstruction” 2022-2026) 2. 12 3. 1 programme 4. 0 5. 0	1. 20,000 2. 14 3. 3 programmes 4. 5 5. 30	Government’s official policy documents and decrees, Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity reports, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, Council of Europe advisory and monitoring reports, Ombudsperson's

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
	war-affected people 4. Number of territorial communities supported in developing reintegration and referral mechanisms for returnees; 5. Number of professionals trained in counselling on voluntary return and reintegration, disaggregated by sex			Office monitoring reports, IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Ukraine, WHO Ukraine mental health reports
Veterans and service members successfully reintegrate into civilian life through gender-responsive, disability-inclusive rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, including through sport, supported by strengthened legal frameworks and institutional capacity.	1. Extent to which project-supported recommendations are reflected in laws, policies, strategies, programmes, or standards related to rehabilitation and reintegration. 2. Extent to which relevant institutions strengthen procedures, service delivery models, and capacities to provide gender-responsive and disability-inclusive rehabilitation and reintegration support, including through sport 3. Extent to which co-ordination, referral, information-sharing, and awareness-raising mechanisms among institutions and stakeholders involved in veterans' rehabilitation and reintegration are strengthened and operational	1. Fragmented and limited; significant gaps in gender-responsive and disability-inclusive approaches 2. Insufficient capacity with services mostly concentrated in urban areas; gaps for women veterans and those with disabilities 3. Existing co-ordination and communication mechanisms are very fragmented and sporadic	1. Project-supported recommendations reflected in relevant laws, policies, strategies, or programmes 2. Relevant institutions adopt or strengthen procedures, standards, tools, or service delivery practices supporting rehabilitation and reintegration, including in the area of sport. 3. New or strengthened co-ordination, referral, communication, or awareness-raising mechanisms established and functioning.	Laws, policies, strategies, government decisions, policy briefs, projects repots and analytical notes, institutional regulations, protocols, guidelines, official reports, training records, institutional procedures, guidelines, project-level reports; inter-agency agreements, co-ordination meeting records, referral protocols, communication products, project-level reports.
Legal and policy frameworks, as well as practice, are aligned with the Istanbul Convention, the European Court case-law and Council of Europe gender equality standards.	Number of national laws, policies, or regulations adopted or revised in alignment with the Istanbul Convention, the European Court case-law and Council of Europe gender equality standards.	Limited number of national laws, policies, or regulations adopted or revised in alignment with the Istanbul Convention	At least 3 national laws, policies, or regulations adopted or revised in alignment with the Istanbul Convention	Parliament, GREVIO findings, CMDH decisions, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, Ombudsperson reports, CSO shadow

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
				reports, project-level reports
Authorities and professionals, including justice professionals, apply victim/survivor centred, gender responsive, age/disability-sensitive and trauma-informed practices and tackle judicial gender bias in preventing and responding to violence against women and domestic violence.	1. Level of knowledge among legal professionals (judges, prosecutors, and lawyers) and law enforcement on victim/survivor centred and gender responsive, age/disability-sensitive trauma-informed practices in preventing and responding to violence against women, domestic violence and conflict-related violence. 2. Number of institutions (e.g., police stations, shelters, courts, clinics) that have adopted and operationalised standard operating procedures or guidelines on victim/survivor-centred and gender responsive, age/disability-sensitive and trauma-informed responses to violence against women and related forms of violence.	1. Low 2. Limited number of institutions - to be specified	1. High 2. At least 5 institutions	GREVIO reports, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, project-level reports
Legal and policy frameworks for national minorities, including Roma, regional and minority languages, and other persons and groups at risk of discrimination, exclusion or hatred are further harmonised with Council of Europe standards, ECRI, ACFC and COMEX recommendations,, the obligations arising from the *Fedorchenko and Lozenko/Karter v. Ukraine*and relevant EU acquis in the field of equality and non-discrimination, with	Level of harmonisation of national legislation and policies with Council of Europe standards, ECRI, ACFC and COMEX recommendations, and relevant EU acquis in the field of equality and non-discrimination including on Roma, and other groups at risk.	Partial harmonisation	Substantial harmonisation	ECRI reports, CM decisions, ACFC opinions, COMEX reports, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, Ombudsperson's Office reports, CSO reports, project-level reports

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
strengthened implementation and monitoring of measures.				
The National Roma Strategy and inclusion mechanisms are effectively implemented through strengthened institutional capacities, co-ordinated responses to discrimination and hate speech, improved co-ordination and effective Roma participation, with the measures identified for co-operation under the 2026–2028 Operational Plan implemented with Council of Europe support.	Level of effective implementation of the Roma National Strategy and inclusion mechanisms in Ukraine.	Limited implementation of Roma National Strategy with low level of monitoring, limited data collection and reporting and inadequate co-ordinated responses. An inter-agency composition of implementing bodies, their tasks and a reporting procedure providing for consolidation of results at the national level established on the basis of the Operational Action Plan for 2026-2028 for the Implementation of the Strategy for Promoting the Realisation of the Rights and Opportunities of Persons Belonging to the Roma National Minority in Ukrainian Society for the Period until 2030.	Substantial implementation with robust monitoring, risk assessment mechanisms operational, coordinated, effective, and timely responses to discrimination and hate speech targeting Roma	ECRI reports, ACFC opinions, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, reports by the responsible implementing bodies and consolidated DESS reports, National Police and Prosecutor General hate crime statistics and Ombudsperson's Office reports.
The linguistic and cultural identity of the indigenous peoples of Ukraine, namely the Crimean Tatars, Karaites and Krymchaks, is better protected, preserved and promoted.	Extent to which the legal, policy and institutional framework and relevant measures for the preservation and development of the linguistic and cultural identity of the indigenous peoples of Ukraine are strengthened and implemented, in line with Council of Europe standards.	Limited implementation and institutional capacities to preserve and develop linguistic and cultural identity of the indigenous peoples of Ukraine.	Substantial implementation and strengthened institutional capacities to preserve and develop linguistic and cultural identity of the indigenous peoples of Ukraine	ECRI Reports, ACFC opinions, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, reports by the responsible implementing bodies and consolidated DESS reports
Child protection systems are strengthened to uphold children's rights regarding	Number of laws, policies and regulations enacted or amended to strengthen child protection systems in	Significant gaps in alignment	2+ laws/policies revised in line with Council of Europe Standards	Parliament, Reporting of the Prosecutor General's Office,

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
return and reintegration, trauma-informed psychosocial support and care, family-based care and protection of children at risk.	line with Council of Europe standards.			project-level reports
Child-friendly justice approaches are implemented for child victims, witnesses and those in conflict with the law, with a particular focus on children at risk.	Number of justice and protection institutions that have adopted and implemented child-friendly procedures and standards, with a focus on vulnerable children, during the reporting period. Introduction of a mandatory risk and needs assessment: provide for the mandatory involvement of social services for each child at risk in justice procedures even before the case is sent to court, so that the prosecutor can choose the most child-centred response measure.	Low	High	Parliament, project-level reports
The availability of child-friendly spaces and Barnahus centres for children affected by violence is increased.	Number of child-friendly spaces and Barnahus centres for children affected by violence.	17	22	Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity, European Commission annual reports, project-level reports
Accountability and child-sensitive justice responses are strengthened in relation to violations of children's rights in the context of the war, including conflict-related sexual violence.	1. Number of investigation methodologies, prosecutorial guidelines, judicial procedures or institutional protocols strengthened and operationalised to ensure child-sensitive, victim-centred and trauma-informed responses to violations of children's rights in the context of the war, including conflict-related sexual violence 2. Number of prosecutions, indictments or judicial proceedings concerning violations of children's	Limited number of child-sensitive investigation, prosecutorial and judicial tools addressing grave crimes against children in the context of the war.	1. Measurable increase in the number of investigation methodologies, prosecutorial guidelines, judicial procedures or institutional protocols strengthened and operationalised to ensure child-sensitive/victim-centred/trauma-informed responses to crimes against children in the context of the war, including conflict-related sexual violence.	Prosecutor General's Office, CSOs' reports and other publicly available credible sources, project-level reports

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
	rights in the context of the war, including conflict-related sexual violence, supported by strengthened child-sensitive investigative and prosecutorial methodologies.		2. 50% of detected and registered facts of war crimes against children are investigated using updated child-sensitive and trauma-informed methods	
Authorities have enhanced their capacity to identify, prevent and respond to risks affecting children, including indoctrination, militarisation, re-education and technology-facilitated and AI-enabled violence.	Number of policies, protocols, guidance tools, referral mechanisms or institutional response measures developed, revised or implemented by authorities to identify, prevent and respond to emerging risks affecting children of Ukraine, including trafficking, unlawful deportation, online recruitment to commit crimes against the nation, indoctrination and militarisation, technology-facilitated and AI-enabled violence, discrimination, and risks to children's mental health, psychosocial well-being and development.	Limited policy and institutional responses	At least 8 policies, guidelines, protocols or institutional response mechanisms developed, adopted or strengthened Joint interdepartmental instructions (the Prosecutor General's Office, the Security Service of Ukraine, the Ministry of Internal Affairs) introduced on the collection and legalisation of digital evidence (OSINT data, materials using AI) in criminal proceedings regarding crimes of this category committed by children and against them Specialised training programs for prosecutors and investigators on recording crimes of online recruitment and cyberviolence against minors in place	Expert assessments, project reports, institutional procedures, national strategies, policies, protocols, guidelines
Child participation is strengthened, ensuring that children's voices inform both policy development and protection responses.	Number of mechanisms established or strengthened to ensure meaningful child participation in policy development and protection responses for Ukraine.	Low	Medium- At least 3 formal child participation mechanisms established or strengthened at national or local level	Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity, project-level reports
Victims of trafficking in human beings, in particular children, benefit from enhanced protection.	1. Number of persons granted formal status of victim of human trafficking, disaggregated by age, sex and type of exploitation.	1. 925 (43% women, 57% men) including 72 children (8% of all victims) in 2018-2024	1. Measurable increase (at least +30%) in the number of victims identified, reflecting improved detection and	National statistics (national referral mechanism), GRETA evaluation reports,

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
	2. Number of victims having received assistance in line with national procedures and Council of Europe standards	2. 180 in 2018, 160 in 2019, 88 in 2020, 36 in 2021 and 47 in 2022 (These figures do not include data from Donetsk Oblast Military Administration)", according to statistics provided by the Ukrainian authorities in the third evaluation report of GRETA	referral mechanisms, with at least 90% of identified victims receiving protection and assistance services in line with national procedures and Council of Europe standards. 2. Measurable increase (at least +30%) in the number of identified victims receiving protection and assistance services, in line with standards	administrative data from service providers and project-level reports
Inclusive, barrier-free, safe and trauma-informed and gender-responsive access to sport is enhanced, access to sport is enhanced, with particular attention to youth and war-affected people and groups at risk.	1. Level of inclusive, barrier-free, gender-responsive, fair and safe access to sport for youth and war-affected people and groups at risk 2. Extent to which sport integrity and good governance measures are developed and implemented in line with Council of Europe standards	1. Limited gender-responsive access 2. No data available-to be specified.	1. Increased gender-responsive access 2. Strengthened sport integrity and good governance measures and their effective implementation line with Council of Europe standards	Ministry of Youth and Sports, EPAS reports, project-level reports
PRIORITY III - REINFORCING DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS, FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS AND INFORMATION INTEGRITY				

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
Ukraine's media and freedom of expression framework is further aligned with Council of Europe and EU standards, with strengthened capacity of national authorities, an empowered media community and improved access to public information.	Extent of alignment of legal and policy frameworks on media and freedom of expression with European standards and the EU law	Partial alignment with European standards and the EU law in the field of freedom of expression	Substantial alignment with European standards and EU law in the field of freedom of expression for Ukraine's accession to the EU	Venice Commission opinions, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, Sos' reports, project-level reports
The safety of journalists, particularly in the context of war-related challenges, is better ensured by applying a human rights approach and integrating best European practices.	1. Number of investigations for the crimes against journalists. 2. Ukraine ranking in the Reporters Without Borders annual Press Freedom Index	1. 8 proceedings received in 2025; 39 proceedings under review in total (including from previous years) 2. Ukraine ranks 55th out of 180 countries in the 2026 in the Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index (7 points higher than in 2025)	1. Effective monitoring of investigations into crimes against journalists, at least 90% of reports submitted through the Council of Europe Platform for the Safety of Journalists receiving an official response. 2. Improved ranking of Ukraine in the Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index by at least 5 points, particularly in part on safety of journalists, by 2030.	Data from the Office of Prosecutor General's Office, Reporters Without Border Annual Press Freedom Index, CSOs' reports, project-level reports
The legal, institutional and democratic security framework for post-war elections is strengthened, consistent with European and international standards and Ukraine's EU accession commitments.	1. Status of the legal framework for the post-war elections 2. Level of alignment of the electoral legal, institutional and security framework with European and international standards and Ukraine's EU accession commitments. 3. Extent to which interventions to counter election-related disinformation and FIMI are timely, comprehensive, and actionable	1. Draft legislation for the post-war elections is being elaborated by the national authorities. 2. Partial alignment of the existing electoral legal framework 3. Limited inter-agency co-operation and co-ordination to prevent, to detect and to counter election-related disinformation and FIMI (540 incidents-not limited to elections- detected and analysed in 2025	1. Legal framework for the post-war elections, which is in line with European and international standards 2. Substantial alignment of the existing electoral legal framework 3. Efficient inter-agency co-operation and co-ordination to prevent, to detect and to counter election-related disinformation and FIMI	PACE reports, Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR joint opinions, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, reports of international and domestic election observation missions EEAS Reports on Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference Threats)

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
		according to the 4th EEAS Report on Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference Threats)		
Electoral rights of Ukrainian citizens are effectively protected through strengthened election administration, effective oversight, upheld healthy information environment and increased level of public and voters' awareness.	1. Availability of legal oversight and monitoring mechanisms and tools, as well as remedies for effective protection of electoral rights of Ukrainian citizens 2. Level of implementation of CEC Communication Strategy for the Post-War Elections in Ukraine 3. Extent to which interventions to counter election-related disinformation and FIMI are timely, comprehensive, and actionable 4. Level of public and voters' awareness	1. Legal oversight and monitoring mechanisms, as well as remedies exists, but needs to checked/verified/updated to be coherent with the post-war electoral legal framework 2. CEC Communication Strategy for the Post-War Elections in Ukraine adopted in December 2025 3. Limited inter-agency co-operation and co-ordination to prevent, to detect and to counter election-related disinformation and FIMI (540 incidents-not limited to elections- detected and analysed in 2025 according to the 4th EEAS Report on Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference Threats) 4. No data available-to be specified	1. Available legal oversight and monitoring mechanisms and tools as well as remedies are operational. 2. Full implementation of the of CEC Communication Strategy for the Post-War Elections in Ukraine 3. Efficient inter-agency co-operation and co-ordination to prevent, to detect and to counter election-related disinformation and FIMI 4. Increased level of public and voters' awareness	Election related reports produced by electoral authorities, other competent national authorities or independent bodies, reports of international and domestic election observation missions, CEC official data and reports, decisions of national courts, Ombudsperson's Office monitoring reports, European Commission annual reports, EEAS Reports on Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference Threats)
Inter-parliamentary dialogue and peer learning are strengthened, with increased uptake of Council of Europe standards by members and staff of the Parliament	1. Level of knowledge of elected members and Secretariat staff of the Parliament on good parliamentary practices and standards on parliamentary democracy.	1. Limited knowledge of Council of Europe's principles and standards on parliamentary democracy. 2. Limited, largely ad hoc	1. Regular peer exchanges established and integrated into parliamentary co-operation practices. 2. Measurable improvement; regular and structured	PACE, Parliament, project-level reports.

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
through engagement with institutions and structures of PACE.	2. Extent to which Council of Europe standards and good parliamentary practices are taken up and applied by the Ukrainian Parliament through engagement with PACE and its structures		engagement	
The legal and institutional framework for multilevel governance is improved, reflecting European standards and tailored to Ukraine's post-war needs.	Number of new legislative and policy documents aligned with the European Charter of Local Self-Government and Council of Europe standards	A number of shortcomings, as documented by recent Council of Europe monitoring missions and reports as well as by the Ukraine Facility Plan	At least five new or amended laws/policies/strategies adopted on key reform issues and aligned with Council of Europe standards	Council of Europe monitoring reports, Congress reports and resolutions on Ukraine, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, Parliament, line Ministry, project-level reports
Local policies are more equitable and inclusive, integrating human rights and gender responsive approach and fostering social cohesion.	Extent to which local policies integrate a human rights approach and foster social cohesion and equity, particularly for groups at risk in post-war Ukraine	Insufficiently integrated human rights approaches and equity considerations, with limited mechanisms for addressing needs of people and groups at risk	Measurable improvement in the extent to which local policies integrate human rights approaches and equity considerations	Congress resolutions on Ukraine, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights reports, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, Parliament, line Ministry, Ombudsperson's reports, CSO monitoring reports, project-level reports and assessments
The regulatory and policy framework on civic participation is improved, ensuring inclusive and meaningful engagement of citizens in democratic processes, including through	1. Number of participatory processes conducted by regional and local authorities in line with the adopted legislative framework (chiefly, the three landmark laws “On Public Consultation”, “On People's Power at the Level of Local Self-	1. 0 2. 0	1. At least 60% of targeted regional and local authorities conduct fully compliant civic participation processes 2. More than 60% of key new policies and regulations	Congress reports and resolutions, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, Parliament, municipalities, associations, and

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
deliberative democracy mechanisms and civic participation toolkits.	Government", and "On Ensuring Transparency of Local Self-Government") 2. Number of instances where CSO or citizen input is formally referenced in adopted national or local policies or regulations			project-level reports
National, regional, and local authorities have strengthened capacity to advance democratic processes in an open and transparent manner, including through training on relevant HELP courses.	1. Number of communities using innovative participatory decision-making processes (such as public consultations, participatory budgeting, Civic Labs, citizens' assemblies or other deliberative democracy mechanisms) 2. Number of local authorities that integrated openness, transparency, democratic participation and accountability principles into their local policies and strategies	1. 17 communities implementing inclusive School participatory budgeting 2. 5 citizens' assemblies in the period 2024-2026. 3. 30% of local authorities that integrated openness, transparency, democratic participation and accountability principles into their local policies and strategies.	1. 37 communities implementing inclusive School participatory budgeting 2. 5 new communities implementing innovative deliberative democracy mechanisms (citizens' assemblies, citizens' juries) 3. 50% of local authorities that integrated openness transparency, democratic participation and accountability principles into their local policies and strategies	Congress reports and resolutions, Parliament, municipalities, associations, and project-level reports
The education system of Ukraine actively contributes to a culture of democracy, democratic resilience and an inclusive and cohesive society in Ukraine through the integration of Council of Europe standards and principles in education for democratic citizenship, human rights education and history education in Ukraine's education policies and practice.	Level of integration of Council of Europe standards and principles on education for democratic citizenship, human rights education and history education in Ukraine's national education policies and curricula.	Some integration, significant gaps remain in policies and curricula	Substantial integration	Parliament, Ministry of Education and Science, project-level reports
Young people meaningfully participate in policymaking in areas which concern them, in	Number of young people, including minority, rural youth and young veterans, participating in policy	Between 200 and 350 young people participated in large-scale events (e.g., the Youth	500+ young people	Council of Europe reports (including decisions of the

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
line with the Council of Europe standards.	deliberation at different stages, through different mechanism such as youth consultations, forums, youth councils and advisory groups,	Forum) as part of platforms contributing to the State Target Social Programme “Youth of Ukraine: Generation of Resilience 2026-2030.”		Youth Sector statutory bodies), reports of authorities, and of youth and CSOs, and international organisations; project level reports, studies surveys.
Policies, programmes and institutions in areas concerning young people, at national and local levels are strengthened to support democratic participation, access to rights, civic engagement and the psychosocial recovery of young people.	1. Number of policies and programmes in areas concerning young people, which are gender-responsive, adopted or amended at national and local levels integrating youth perspectives and Council of Europe standards on democratic youth participation, civic engagement and psychosocial recovery 2. Number of authorities exercising mechanisms to integrate youth perspectives in policy deliberation at different stages, such as youth consultations, forums, youth councils, advisory groups	1. 1 programme- State Target Social Programme "Youth of Ukraine: Generation of Resilience 2026 – 2030" 2. 0	1. At least 3 policies or programmes 2. At least 10 authorities	Council of Europe reports (including decisions of the Youth Sector statutory bodies), reports of authorities, and of youth and CSOs and international organisations, project level reports.
Youth workers, youth centres, and youth organisations in Ukraine provide quality, gender-responsive services, addressing the needs of young people, including mental health and psychosocial support, with particular attention to persons and groups at risk of discrimination, exclusion or hatred such as IDPs,	1. Number of programmes, or measures initiated and or implemented to respond to the needs of young people, including mental health and psychosocial support, aligned with Council of Europe standards, including the Quality Label for Youth Centres 2. Number of youth workers, and multipliers, equipped with competences to deliver quality services 3. Number of young people	1. 2 programmes on trauma-informed youth- work and barrier-free environment" 2. Limited- to be specified 3. 400 young people benefitted	1. At least 4 programmes, or measures initiated and or implemented to respond to needs of young people. 2. At least 250 youth workers, and multipliers with strengthened competences to deliver quality service 3. At least 900 young people benefiting from quality youth work services.	Council of Europe reports (including decisions of the Youth statutory bodies), reports of authorities, and of youth and CSOs, and international organisations; project- level reports

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
returnees, veterans and war-affected young people, in line with Council of Europe standards and approaches.	benefiting from quality youth work services			
National legislation and policies are aligned with Council of Europe standards on the protection and preservation of culture and cultural heritage, including effective implementation of the European Cultural Convention, the Granada Convention, the Valletta Convention and the Faro Convention.	Level of alignment of national legislation and policies with Council of Europe standards on the protection and preservation of culture and cultural heritage, including the European Cultural Convention, the Valletta Convention and the Faro Convention.	Partial - significant gaps remain particularly regarding community participation in heritage management as required by the Faro Convention, archaeological heritage protection in war-affected areas, and documentation of war-damaged cultural heritage	Substantial integration	Follow-up of Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape on activities related to culture, heritage and landscape, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine; Parliament, Ministry of Culture and Information Policy, UNESCO cultural heritage reports,
PRIORITY IV- STRENGTHENING INDEPENDENT JUSTICE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE				
The quality and consistency of the CCU's judicial practice is improved in line with European standards.	1. Percentage of CCU decisions referencing European Court case-law and/or Convention provisions. 2. Percentage of CCU decisions referencing CJEU case-law or EU law. 3. Number of decisions monitored annually by CCU	1. 70% of CCU decisions referencing European Court case-law and/or Convention provisions 2. 4% CCU decisions referencing CJEU case-law or EU law 3. -	1. 80% of CCU decisions referencing European Court case-law and/or Convention provisions 2. 15% CCU decisions referencing CJEU case-law or EU law 3. At least 10 key CCU decisions are regularly monitored per year	CCU jurisprudence analysis, project-level reports.

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
Access to constitutional justice is improved for individuals and legal professionals through increased awareness and understanding of constitutional rights, including through the constitutional complaint mechanism.	1. Percentage of properly substantiated constitutional complaints. 2. Level of public awareness regarding the CCU role and constitutional complaint mechanism	1. Limited public understanding of constitutional complaint procedure 2. No data available	1. 10% increase in properly substantiated constitutional complaints 2. 15% increase in public awareness of the CCU role.	CCU statistics; public perception surveys.
Judicial self-governing bodies function more effectively with coherent and harmonised practices in line with Council of Europe standards.	1. Level of compliance with Council of Europe standards of procedures of selection, appointment and accountability of judges 2. Level of satisfaction of the judiciary concerning the functioning of judicial self-governing bodies	1. Partial compliance 2. HCJ independence score 5.5/10 (ENCJ Survey among Judges , Figure 5 page 14 2025)	1. Substantial compliance with Council of Europe standards and consistently applied in practice, ensuring an independent, impartial, accountable, and professional judiciary 2. The organisation of judicial self-governing bodies modified to meet the needs of the Ukrainian justice properly and in line with Council of Europe standards.	Official documentation, feedback from national partners, assessments of Council of Europe bodies and international organisations, public surveys, project-level reports.
The independence, efficiency, and functioning of prosecution self-governing bodies are enhanced through reforms in line with European standards.	Number of laws, policies and regulations enacted or amended to strengthen the independence, efficiency and functioning of prosecution self-governing bodies in line with Council of Europe and European standards	Insufficiently aligned with European standards	Laws, policies or regulations enacted or amended to strengthen prosecution self-governing bodies in line with European standards	Parliament, Venice Commission, GRECO, Annual CEPEJ Evaluation/Eastern Partnership reports, European Commission Annual Reports on Ukraine, project-level reports,
The efficiency and quality of justice are enhanced, reflected in reduced case backlogs, shorter processing times and user-oriented	1. Level of integration of measures on reduction of backlog by the justice institutions 2. Level of integration of measures on shortening disposition time by	Low level	1. At least medium level of measures on reduction of backlog by the justice institutions 2. At least medium level of	CMDH decisions, CEPEJ data (Evaluation and Eastern Partnership country profile for

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
justice system.	the justice institutions 3. Level of integration of user feedback for improving the services by justice institutions		integration of measures on shortening disposition time by the justice institutions 3. At least medium level of integration of user feedback for improving the services by justice institutions	Ukraine and annual statistics), project-level reports
Conditions, treatment and healthcare in prisons are improved in line with Council of Europe standards, with reinforced safeguards against the ill-treatment, gender-responsive prison management, and expanded evidence-based rehabilitation opportunities for women, persons and groups at risk of discrimination, exclusion or hatred, including juveniles, war veterans and persons with disabilities, including those who may be at risk.	1. Level of compliance of prisons conditions, treatment and healthcare with Council of Europe standards (CPT/European Court judgments, European Prison Rules etc.) 2. Number of targeted programmes and measures introduced for prisoners from groups at risk (women, juveniles, veterans, persons with disabilities)	1. Partially compliant 2. Baseline assessment is required.	1. Progressive improvements in conditions, treatment and healthcare across prisons, with documented evidence of compliance with CPT/European Court judgments and other Council of Europe standards 2. At least two per category	CPT reports and government responses, CM examinations of execution of relevant European Court judgments, monitoring reports of NPM, national and international NGOs, Statistics and data of the Department of Execution of Criminal Sanctions and Ministry of Justice, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, Action Plan and/or programme level evaluation reports, assessment missions' reports; etc.
The probation system is strengthened through the enhanced use of community-based and gender-responsive supervision and rehabilitation measures, professional standards and digital case management,	1. Level of compliance of probation practices and rehabilitation measures with Council of Europe Probation Rules 2. Number of targeted programmes and measures introduced for war veterans and other groups at risk, with evidence of implementation in	1. Partial compliance 2. Limited number of programmes and measures available	1. Progressive improvement in compliance reflected in adoption and integration of evidence-based supervision and reintegration approaches by probation services 2. At least two per category	Data from the Ministry of Justice and the State Establishment "Centre of Probation of Ukraine", expert reviews, CSO reports, project-level reports, assessment missions

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
and support for persons and groups at risk, including war veterans.	policy or practice			reports etc.
Safeguards in police custody are further enhanced, and policing regulations and practices are more gender-responsive and compliant through strengthened ethical framework, integration of gender mainstreaming and human rights approach into training and oversight, and the establishment of effective accountability and complaint mechanisms.	1. Level of compliance of police practices—including safeguards in temporary detention—with Council of Europe human rights standards (CPT, European Court judgments, Council of Europe ethical and operational recommendations etc.) 2. Degree of effectiveness of internal and external accountability mechanisms for complaints of ill-treatment or abuse by police	1. Partial compliance 2. Limited effectiveness	1. Measurable and documented progress towards full alignment with Council of Europe standards in at least three priority areas (e.g., police ethics, peaceful demonstrations, and the use of force), with no systemic issues of non-compliance remaining in temporary detention facilities. 2. Operational and transparent accountability mechanisms in the police system	CPT reports, national monitoring bodies reports, CSO reports; data of Ministry of Internal Affairs and National Police, project-level reports, assessment missions' reports
The NPM operates with increased efficiency in fulfilling its mandate to prevent and monitor torture and ill-treatment, and prison staff have strengthened capacity to deliver rights-compliant services.	Percentage of NPM recommendations that result in documented remedial actions by authorities.	2025 NPM Performance Assessment Report, only 11% of 2022 recommendations were implemented, 45% in process, 44% not implemented.	An increase with at least 20% of recommendations that result in documented remedial actions by authorities.	CPT visit reports, European Commission annual reports; Sub-Committee on Prevention of Torture (SPT) reports, Special Ombudsperson's report on NPM implementation, Annual Ombudsperson reports, NPM performance assessment report,

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
				assessments of leading human rights CSOs, project-level reports.
The national anti-corruption legislative framework is aligned with GRECO recommendations and EU acquis and is effectively institutionalised at the sub-national level.	Number of GRECO recommendations and related EU acquis requirements implemented through the update of the national legal framework	0	At least three GRECO recommendations and EU acquis requirements implemented	GRECO evaluation and compliance reports on Ukraine, Venice Commission opinions, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, Parliament, National Agency on Corruption Prevention (NACP), project-level reports.
The 2026 – 2030 Anti-Corruption Strategy and State Anti-Corruption Programme are effectively implemented.	Number of measures of the 2026 – 2030 State Anti-Corruption Programme implemented taking into account Council of Europe advice	0	At least ten measures from State Anti-Corruption Programme implemented	MONEYVAL evaluation and progress reports on Ukraine, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, project-level reports.
The capacities of Ukraine's anti-corruption authorities to mitigate and manage corruption risks at both strategic and operational levels, to conduct effective pre-trial investigations and judicial proceedings in corruption cases, including high-level corruption, and to apply and enforce corporate liability standards for corruption are strengthened.	Number of anti-corruption policies and practices developed in line with Council of Europe standards and GRECO recommendations	0	At least five policies and practices developed	GRECO evaluation reports, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, Council of Europe

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
The national AML/CFT legal framework is aligned with international standards and MONEYVAL recommendations and measures to prevent and counter illicit financial flows are applied effectively and proportionately in close partnership with private sector and civil society.	Level of alignment of the national AML/CFT legal framework with FATF standards, international standards and MONEYVAL recommendations	Partial alignment	Substantial alignment	MONEYVAL evaluation and progress reports on Ukraine, European Commission annual reports, Parliament, Financial Monitoring Service Ukraine, project-level reports
Financial investigations are conducted in profit-generating crimes, leading to effective tracing, seizure of illicit proceeds and asset recovery.	1. Number of financial investigations conducted by the law enforcement agencies 2. Amount of recovered assets 3. Number of law enforcement professionals trained on financial investigations	Low	Medium	Statistical data on criminal proceedings by the Prosecutor General's Office. Annual reports of the law enforcement agencies. Reports by the training institutions. MONEYVAL reports. Reports by the EU and international organisations
The national legal and governance framework for the development and use of AI is strengthened and aligned with the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law. and related standards, including non-discrimination, transparency, accountability and data protection.	Number of policy or regulatory documents (draft laws, regulations, strategies, guidelines) that explicitly cite and apply Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law and/or HUDERIA findings	No policy or regulatory documents (draft laws, regulations, strategies, guidelines) that explicitly cite and apply the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law and/or HUDERIA findings	More than one policy or regulatory document (draft laws, regulations, strategies, guidelines) that explicitly cite and apply Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law and/or HUDERIA findings	Sandbox documentation and case files, project-level reports

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
The consistency of risk and impact assessment of AI-tools in respect of actual and potential impacts on human rights, democracy and the rule of law is improved in line with European standards.	Number of laws, policies and regulations enacted or amended to establish consistent risk and impact assessment frameworks for AI tools in line with Council of Europe and European standards on human rights, democracy and the rule of law	Very limited	At least 2 laws, policies or regulations enacted or amended to establish consistent AI risk and impact assessment frameworks in line with European standards by 2026	Ministry of Digital Transformation, Council of Europe reports; European Commission annual reports on Ukraine, project-level reports
Ukraine will ratify the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law.	Ratification of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law	Not ratified	Ratified	Council of Europe Treaty Office records, Parliament
A resilient and citizen-centric digital public administration in Ukraine enables national authorities and public services to operate efficiently, transparently, securely, and in an interoperable manner.	Number of public services delivered digitally in an efficient, transparent and citizen-centric manner through national digital platforms in Ukraine	A significant number of public services through the Diia platform with over 100 services available	At least 20% increase in public services delivered digitally in an efficient, transparent and citizen-centric manner	Ministry of Digital Transformation Diia platform reports, project-level reports
Ukraine will ratify the Second Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime.	Status of Ukraine's ratification of the Second Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime	Ukraine signed the Second Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime on 30 November 2022	The Second Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime is ratified by Ukraine	Council of Europe Treaty Office records, Parliament
The regulatory framework for the use of electronic evidence and open-source intelligence in criminal proceedings related to war crimes and gross human rights violations is improved, in compliance with the Budapest Convention standards.	Level of alignment of the legal and regulatory framework governing electronic evidence and open-source intelligence with the Budapest Convention and related standards	Ukraine is a Party to the Budapest Convention and has signed the Second Additional Protocol (30 November 2022), full implementation of both remains pending	Laws, regulations, or official procedures governing the use of electronic evidence and open-source intelligence in war crimes and gross human rights violations cases adopted or amended in compliance with the Budapest Convention and related standards	Council of Europe Treaty Office, Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY), Parliament, European Commission reports on Ukraine

Expected Outcomes	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source and means of verification
Ukraine will sign and ratify Convention 108+, the data protection legal framework will be aligned and modernised in compliance with Convention 108+ and relevant EU acquis.	Level of alignment of Ukraine's data protection legal framework with Convention 108+, relevant EU acquis.	Low - Not yet signed Protocol amending the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (CETS No. 223).	Substantial alignment with Convention 108+, relevant EU acquis.	Council of Europe Treaty Office, Parliament, European Commission annual reports on Ukraine

APPENDIX II: RISK REGISTER

Context

The Russian Federation's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine has created an exceptionally volatile and unpredictable environment, marked by escalating security threats and widespread damage to critical infrastructure. Therefore, the Action Plan has been designed to operate in a high-risk context, with a fundamental emphasis on flexibility, enabling swift adaptation to the changing wartime conditions and the possibility of abrupt changes. Security and life support measures are being constantly monitored and adapted as needed.

As a consequence, and in the recognition of the need for agility, the Action Plan prioritises dynamic responses, allowing for timely adjustments to the Council of Europe interventions and operational approaches in light of emerging needs and challenges on the ground. The Council of Europe remains committed to leveraging available resources efficiently to ensure the effective implementation of the Action Plan.

The staff of the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine continue to operate with exceptional dedication and professionalism despite the challenging and unpredictable conditions, including air raids, the lack of electricity and heating during parts of the winter. Their work requires constant vigilance, adaptability, and close co-ordination with national and international partners while maintaining uninterrupted support to project activities and engagement with various Ukrainian authorities and civil society. Their commitment is vital to the successful implementation of the Action Plan over the foreseen period.

Risks and mitigation strategies are being continuously reviewed, co-ordinated, and discussed both internally within the Council of Europe and in close co-operation with Ukrainian authorities and relevant stakeholders. The Directorate of Programme Co-ordination in co-ordination with the Security Management Team and the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine, will proactively communicate with all relevant Council of Europe entities and Ukrainian partners to assess the situation, understand the implications, and collaboratively identify alternative solutions to ensure implementation.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation actions
Political and governance risks			
1. Acute escalation of hostilities: emergency response and staff safety: A sudden, significant escalation of hostilities - including intensified aerial bombardment, ground offensive expansion towards Kyiv, or targeted attacks on civilian infrastructure - could require the immediate suspension of Council of Europe Office operations, emergency evacuation of staff and an abrupt halt to all in-person activities. This risk focuses specifically on acute, sudden-onset scenarios demanding emergency response within hours or days.	**Likely**	**Severe**	• Activate the plans for evacuation and temporary location in place, alongside secure, remote data storage systems, ensuring both the safety and duty of care for staff and the capacity to restore operations quickly when conditions improve. • Switch all activities to remote modalities within 48 hours. • Maintain continuous and close monitoring of the security situation to enable the timely continuation of activities on the ground as soon as conditions allow. • Ensure that all activities that remain feasible proceed under the co-ordination of DPC headquarters, supported by the Security Management Team. • Conduct annual hostile environment awareness (HEAT) training and bi-annual refreshers for all staff. • Maintain and test Business Continuity Plan quarterly. • Conduct quarterly security briefings with updated threat assessments • Make use of emergency communication channels as necessary (through satellite phone, very high frequency).
2. Continuation of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine: The ongoing war may continue to undermine the capacity of national stakeholders to advance reform processes and to adversely affect the planning and implementation of Council of Europe activities under the Action Plan. Disruption of institutional functioning, displacement of partners, infrastructure damage, and heightened security threats may all negatively affect project implementation.	**Likely**	**Major**	• Maintain close co-ordination with Ukrainian authorities and international partners to ensure alignment, responsiveness, and flexibility in projects' implementation. • Ensure the Security Management Team reassesses risk assessments periodically, in consultation with the DPC and the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine. • Adapt working methods dynamically based on the evolving security context to enable for activities to: o be carried out in premises equipped with bomb shelters or other secure shelters. o be relocated to safer regions less affected by hostilities or neighbouring countries. o be carried out online using a range of digital tools, platforms, and remote collaboration methods.

			• Adjust project budgets annually for rising, changing operational costs, including enhanced insurance coverage, secure travel and logistical contingencies. • Reinforce the operational resilience and security of the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine through armoured vehicles, personal protective equipment, satellite phones, power banks and the proper outfitting of shelter facilities within the Office premises. • Provide bi-annual training to staff on hostile environment awareness (HEAT) and first aid.
3. **Shift in the priorities of the Ukrainian Government and/ or Parliament resulting in a decrease in national support and/or implementation of key reforms:** Ongoing military threats, increased security and defence expenditures, and wartime exigencies may result in delays, blockades, deprioritisation or suspension of planned reform activities. This risk is particularly acute in areas requiring legislative action or sustained inter-institutional cooperation.	**Likely**	**Major**	• Ensure sustained political support for Ukraine through visible and regular engagement by the leadership of the Council of Europe and its statutory bodies to reaffirm reform commitments. This includes statements, visits, and public diplomacy demonstrating continued commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty, democratic resilience and reform agenda. • Deepen strategic communication and co-ordination with the European Union and other key international partners to ensure coherent support aligned with Ukraine's European Union accession path and reform road map. • Continue promoting and facilitating inclusive dialogue between Ukrainian authorities and civil society on the implementation of Council of Europe standards, ensuring that democratic participation and accountability remain central even during wartime. • Adapt the Council of Europe's support to remain relevant under changing conditions, with the flexibility to prioritise critical sectors (e.g. rule of law, anti-corruption, human rights protection in wartime, democratic governance) in co-ordination with Ukrainian counterparts. • Maintain active engagement with parliamentary committees responsible for reform areas to provide early warning of priority shifts.

4. **Lack of co-ordination between national, regional, and local levels due to the war situation:** This risk may cause delays or disruptions in the timely implementation of projects and weaken the effectiveness of support measures, particularly in areas heavily affected by the war.	**Likely**	**Moderate**	• Establish a structured inter-level co-ordination mechanism for key co-operation areas, including a defined meeting schedule (minimum quarterly) with national, regional, and local stakeholders. • Develop and maintain an up-to-date stakeholder mapping, identifying functional contacts at all governance levels and flagging gaps. • Create simplified information-sharing protocols adapted for low-connectivity environments (e.g. SMS updates, offline-compatible tools) • Support civil society organisations in advocating for necessary reforms in the national legal framework and judicial practices by actively involving them in donor-government co-ordination platforms, dialogue forums, and thematic inter-agency working groups. • Enhance the advocacy capacities of local and regional authorities and their national associations to effectively represent and protect the interests of local self-government during the war and in the post-war recovery.
5. **Increased polarisation of society amid ongoing war and political pressures:** This risk may create an unsupportive environment vis-à-vis reforms and lead to mixed or sceptical perceptions among citizens and civil society about the Council of Europe's role and mandate in Ukraine.	**Unlikely**	**Major**	• Raise awareness among target groups to sensitise them as to the importance of upholding Council of Europe standards as a foundation for peace, democracy and human rights. • Prioritise the protection and promotion of groups at risk to foster social cohesion and reduce tensions. • Develop a targeted communications strategy addressing potential misperceptions about the Organisation's role, with differentiated messaging for government, civil society and public audiences. • Proactively engage Ukrainian media with human-interest stories demonstrating Council of Europe's practical impact on citizens lives. • Conduct annual perception surveys among key stakeholder groups to monitor shifts in attitudes toward the Organisation's activities. • Ensure all public-facing materials clearly articulate the link between Council of Europe standards and Ukraine's sovereignty, democratic resilience and European Union accession • Engage senior Council of Europe leadership to make public statements reaffirming commitment to Ukrainian sovereignty and democratic values.

			• Convene a roundtable with civil society representatives to address concerns directly.
6. Change in donor priorities: A reorientation of donor funding priorities- driven by competing global crises, domestic political changes in donor countries or shifting strategic assessments of Ukraine - could reduce voluntary contributions to the Action Plan. This risk is heightened by the long duration of the conflict and potential donor fatigue, as well as by budget pressures in key contributing countries.	**Unlikely**	**Moderate**	• Maintain regular, transparent communication with donors to keep them informed about the evolving priorities, progress and tangible results of the Action Plan's implementation. • Present Action Plan results at relevant international conferences and ministerial meetings. • Highlight the ongoing needs and impact of the Council of Europe's work in Ukraine to reinforce donor confidence and commitment. Link Action Plan results explicitly to donors own foreign policy priorities (e.g. European Union enlargement, rule of law promotion, human rights) • Explore opportunities to diversify the donor base and engage new partners to mitigate risks related to shifting donor priorities. • Prepare and actively implement a resource mobilisation plan.
Project and programme delivery related risks			

7. Limited access to, or lack of, energy supply and/or equipment: Ongoing military actions continue to cause damage to critical infrastructure, leading to frequent energy outages and limited access to essential communication tools. This can severely disrupt communication channels across Ukraine, and in the capital, hamper co-ordination, project implementation and timely response.	**Likely**	**Major**	• Implement multi-channel communication strategies within project teams and with national partners, including SMS messaging, daily check-ins and loss of contact protocols. • Adjust workplans and modalities proactively to accommodate disruptions, including flexible deadlines and remote work options. Schedule energy-intensive activities (e.g. video conferences, data uploads) during periods of scheduled power availability. • Procure and distribute external batteries, power banks and 4G routers to staff and partners to maintain connectivity during power outages. • Install reliable generators and uninterruptible power supply (UPS) systems at the Council of Europe Office to ensure essential operations can continue during blackouts. • Engage with local energy suppliers and telecom operators to stay informed about outages and restoration timelines, enabling proactive mitigation and contingency planning. • Regularly train staff on the use of backup communication tools and protocols to ensure readiness and reduce downtime during disruptions.
8. Limited possibilities to ship equipment to Ukraine given that transport companies no longer accept deliveries in a war zone: Commercial logistics companies refusal to deliver to Ukraine, combined with Council of Europe procedures requiring equipment configuration in Strasbourg, creates significant delays in supplying critical information technologies and operational equipment to the Kyiv Office. Customs procedures, border crossing delays and security risks along land routes add further complexity. Equipment shortages could disrupt core operations and project delivery.	**Likely**	**Major**	• Organise transport of equipment via the Council of Europe's own or trusted transport means from Strasbourg to secure border points (e.g. Poland or the Republic of Moldova), where staff or drivers of the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine take over the delivery into Ukraine. • Ensure that the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine has an appropriate stock of spare equipment (minimum three month' operational buffer for critical information technology equipment). • Identify alternative regional suppliers for standard equipment categories located closer to Ukraine to reduce dependency on Strasbourg deliveries. • Leverage co-operation with international organisations and diplomatic missions to facilitate secure transport and customs clearance where possible. • Develop detailed contingency plans for equipment failure or loss, including rapid response teams and technical support to minimise operational downtime. • Initiate procurement procedures at least three months in advance of anticipated needs to allow for transport delays.

9. Funding constraints on implementing the Action Plan: Insufficient mobilisation of voluntary contributions- due to donor fatigue, shifting priorities or global competition for humanitarian and development funding -could create budget gaps that force the suspension of activities in key thematic areas, reduce staffing capacity, or delay critical deliverables.	**Likely**	**Moderate**	• Ensure effective resource mobilisation efforts in co-ordination with headquarters and the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine. • Maintain maximum communication channels with all existing donors and explore new funding sources. Organise regular dedicated donor events. • Devise a revised resource allocation strategy taking into account the potential for synergies and overall effectiveness. • Continue to address feedback from partners and donors to improve project design, implementation, results-based monitoring and reporting practices to attract and retain donors. • Develop implementation scenario plans (full, reduced, minimum) to guide activity prioritisation under different funding levels. • Explore emergency bridge-funding mechanisms within the Council of Europe's budgetary rules.

10. **Lack of co-ordination with national and international partners**: In the complex and evolving context of Ukraine's ongoing recovery and European Union accession efforts, a lack of effective co-ordination can lead to overlaps, missed opportunities for synergy, inefficient use of resources and potential reputational risks for the Council of Europe.	**Likely**	**Low**	• Actively engage in various thematic donor-government co-ordination platforms and working groups to ensure alignment and complementarity and avoid duplication of efforts. • Maintain regular (minimum quarterly), detailed collaboration with the European Union and other key international partners through bilateral channels, ensuring Council of Europe activities align with Ukraine's European Union accession and reform agenda. • Use internal discussion forums and networks, project level and Action Plan-level steering committees and briefings for donors to promote co-ordination, share best practices and ensure the support provided remains relevant and impactful. • Foster timely, regular and clear communication among all stakeholders about planning and implementation to maintain trust, clarify roles and harmonise actions where appropriate. • Develop and maintain a partner mapping matrix identifying all international actors by thematic area, with regular updates (minimum quarterly). • If co-ordination failure or duplication is identified, convene a joint problem-solving meeting with relevant partners.
11. **Loss of productivity, motivation, and well-being among local staff:** Sustained exposure to conflict-related stress, trauma, physical insecurity and chronic hardship (power outages, heating failures, displacement) creates significant risks to the well-being, motivation and productivity of staff of the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine. Cumulative burnout, secondary trauma and reduced morale can severely impair operational capacity and increase turnover, particularly among experienced national staff who are central to programme delivery.	**Possible**	**High**	• Conduct regular staff meetings and one-on-one sessions to monitor mental health, workload and morale, ensuring early identification of stress or burnout. • Promote and facilitate confidential access to professional psychological counselling and support services, including trauma-informed care tailored to conflict-related stress. • Establish a minimum rest and recovery protocol with Human Resources: for instance no staff member should work more than six consecutive days without a rest day; annual leave entitlement to be actively monitored and enforced. • Organise periodic retreats or offsite team-building events to provide a safe space for relaxation, strengthen team cohesion and boost morale away from the pressures of daily work. • Offer flexible working hours, remote work options or reduced workloads, when possible, to help staff manage personal challenges and reduce burnout. • Provide training sessions focused on building personal resilience, coping mechanisms, and stress management techniques. • Provide access to necessary tools and resources to reduce work-related frustrations, helping staff feel supported and equipped to do their work effectively. • Maintain emergency funds for crisis support (evacuation costs, emergency medical care, etc.).

12. **High turnover of governmental and non-governmental staff and other key partners:** This risk can lead to the loss of know-how, institutional memory and networking contacts, as well as disruption to Action Plan implementation.	**Possible**	**Low**	• Develop and maintain stakeholder contact matrices for all key partners, updated monthly, identifying primary and backup contacts at each institution. • Closely monitor staff changes and promptly re-establish contacts with new counterparts at different levels of the governance system. • Support partner institutions in strengthening long-term institutional memory, including through peer-learning and mentoring schemes for sustainable knowledge management. • Promote shared leadership and collaborative project ownership to maintain continuity and commitment despite staff changes. • Maintain an archive of all training materials, meeting records, and technical outputs in an easily accessible, searchable formats for the rapid induction of new counterparts.
Lack of capacities and failure to apply a human rights approach, notably gender mainstreaming and a gender-responsive approach among beneficiary institutions and partners: This can reduce the impact of the Action Plan.	**Unlikely**	**Moderate**	• Continue integrating a gender-sensitive approach in all projects and at all phases of the implementation of the Action Plan, with the support of the regional Gender Adviser. • Provide regular training for project staff to further increase their knowledge on gender mainstreaming and gender equality in the implementation of the Action Plan. • Ensure all communication are gender-sensitive and inclusive.

APPENDIX III: FINANCIAL TABLE AS OF 30 SEPTEMBER 2026

Priorities	Estimated needs in euros
PRIORITY I- Safeguarding Human Rights and Accountability for Peace and Stability	6 723 333
PRIORITY II - Fostering Social Inclusion and the Protection of Minorities, Groups at Risk, Women and Children	24 440 833
PRIORITY III - Reinforcing Democratic Institutions, Free and Fair Elections and Information Integrity	14 768 966
PRIORITY IV- Strengthening Independent Justice and Good Governance for Democratic Resilience	23 016 407
Supporting action in the field	1 050 461
TOTAL	**70 000 000**

APPENDIX IV: SOURCES/RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Council of Europe documents

1. Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Report of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe 2026- The New Democratic Pact for Europe in Times of Rupture
Report of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe 2025 – Towards a new Democratic Pact for Europe
Annual report of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe 2024 – Our rights, our future
Report of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe - 2023 – State of democracy, human rights and the rule of law
Secretary General's Roadmap on the Council of Europe's engagement with civil society 2024-2027

2. Technical co-operation with Ukraine

Action Plan for Ukraine "Resilience, Recovery and Reconstruction" 2023-2026
Progress Report 2023-2026
Annual progress report – Year 2024
Priority adjustments to the Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2022
Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2022
Final Report 2018-2022
Progress report 2018-2021
Action Plan for Ukraine 2011-2014
Final Report 2011-2014
Progress Report 2011-2014
Co-operation with Ukraine – Immediate Measures Package
Final Report (April-December 2014)
Progress Report (April-August 2014)

3. European Court of Human Rights

European Court of Human Rights case law in relation to Ukraine
European Court of Human Rights Country Profile Ukraine

4. Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe

(CommHR(2025)67) High-Level Meeting on Human Rights and the Pathway to Peace in Ukraine Prepared by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights 2025
Memorandum on human rights elements for peace in Ukraine (2025)

5. Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Resolution 2637 (2026) on Supporting the commitment to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace for Ukraine and the security of the European continent
Resolution 2636 (2026) on Elections in times of crisis
Resolution 2635 (2026) on Progress of the Assembly's monitoring procedure (January-December 2025)
Resolution 2655 (2026) Updating the Venice Commission's Rule of Law Checklist: a contribution by the Assembly
Resolution 2639(2026) on Strengthening democracies with young people: from participation to shared responsibility
Resolution 2593 (2025) on Foreign interference: a threat to democratic security in Europe
Resolution 2588 (2025) on the European commitment to a just and lasting peace in Ukraine
Resolution 2598 (2025) on Russian war of aggression against Ukraine: the need to ensure accountability and avoid impunity
Resolution 2605 (2025) on Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine
Resolution 2618 (2025) on Journalists matter: the need to step up efforts to liberate Ukrainian journalists held in captivity by the Russian Federation
Resolution 2562 (2024) on an urgent call to Europe and its partners: envisioning immediate and long-term policy solutions in support of the displaced people of Ukraine
Resolution 2553 (2024) on Strengthening the youth perspective in the work of the Parliamentary Assembly
Recommendation 1742 (2006) on Human rights of members of the armed forces

Recommendation 2301 (2026) Elections in times of crisis

6. Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

CG(2026)50-12 “Free Elections at local and regional levels: A fundamental right to strengthen grassroots democracy”
CG-BUR(2020)35-37 Information report on the elections in Ukraine (25 October 2020)
CG(2026)50-10 Report: A strategic approach to supporting the recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine at local and regional levels
CG(2026)50-17 report “Strengthening the capacities of local and regional authorities in the use of artificial intelligence”
CG(2026)50-13 report “Tackling violence against local and regional elected representatives”
CG (2025)49-14 report European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life
Resolution 517 (2025) “Congress Strategy on the Rule of Law at local and regional levels (2025-2028)”
Resolution 516 (2025) European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life
Recommendation 544 (2026), “Preserving grassroots democracy – Tackling violence against local and regional elected representatives”
Recommendation 537 (2025) European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life
Recommendation 527 (2025) Empowering cities and regions to combat human trafficking for labour exploitation
Recommendation 525 (2025) "Foreign interference in electoral processes at local and regional levels"
Recommendation 473 (2022) “The future of youth in rural areas: responsibilities of local and regional authorities”
Recommendation 444(2020) “Local and regional elections in major crisis situations”
Recommendation 419(2018) "Voting rights at local level as an element of successful long-term integration of migrants and IDPs in Europe’s municipalities and regions"

7. Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

Reykjavík Declaration – United around our values
Annual report 2025 of the Committee of Ministers-Supervision of the Execution of Judgments and Decisions of the European Court of Human Rights
CM/Res(2026)5 - Resolution establishing the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Management Committee of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine
CM/Del/Dec(2026)135/3b - 135th Session of the Committee of Ministers (Chişinău, 15 May 2026) - 3. New Democratic Pact for Europe - b. Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference
CM/Res(2026)2 - Resolution on the creation of the Preparatory Committee for the International Claims Commission for Ukraine
CM/Inf(2026)18- Feasibility study on the possible elaboration of a legal instrument on foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI), including disinformation
CM(2025)104 Consequences of the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine - Agreement between the Council of Europe and Ukraine on the Establishment of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine
Resolution CM/Res(2023)5 amending Resolution CM/Res(2023)3 establishing the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine
Resolution CM/Res(2023)3 on establishing the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine
Declaration of the Informal Conference of Ministers of Justice of the Council of Europe, the Conference “On the Path to Justice for Ukraine: Advancing Accountability, Reuniting Children with their Families, and Supporting the Resilience of its Justice System” (11 September 2023, Riga, Latvia).
Resolution CM/Res(2023)5 amending Resolution CM/Res(2023)3 establishing the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine
Recommendation CM/Rec(2025)3 on the social, economic and political participation of rural youth
Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)2 on countering SLAPPs
Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)1 on equality of Roma and Traveller women and girls
Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)17 on the protection of the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

Resolution CM/ResCMN(2020)13 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Ukraine
CM/Rec(2019)5 - Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the system of the European Convention on Human Rights in university education and professional training
Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)11 on effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children
Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)7 on Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment
Recommendation CM/RecChL(2018)6 on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by Ukraine
Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)3 on human rights and business
Recommendation Rec(2006)6 on internally displaced persons
Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)1 on public service media governance
Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)11 on the need to strengthen the protection and promotion of civil society space in Europe
Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)4 on the participation of citizens in local public life
Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)1 on media pluralism and transparency of media ownership
Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)4 - Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on human rights of members of the armed forces (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 24 February 2010 at the 1077th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)
Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)10 on the role of women and men in conflict prevention and resolution and in peace building
Recommendation CM/Rec(2003)3 on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making and public decision making
Final Declaration of the 10th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth

8. Monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies

European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission)
Venice Principles on the Protection and Promotion of the Ombudsman Institution
CDL-AD(2023)028 Ukraine - Follow-up opinion to the opinion on the law on national minorities (communities) (draft law 9610)
CDL-AD(2023)025 Joint opinion of the Venice Commission and ODIHR on the draft law amending certain legislative acts of Ukraine which restrict the participation in the state power of persons associated with political parties whose activities are prohibited by law
CDL-AD(2023)021 Ukraine - Opinion on the Law on national minorities (communities)
CDL-AD(2023)022 Follow-up Opinion to the opinion on the draft Law on amendments to certain legislative acts of Ukraine on improving the procedure for the selection of candidates for the position of judge of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine on a competitive basis
CDL-AD(2025)044 Joint Opinion of the Venice Commission and the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law (DGI) of the Council of Europe on Draft Amendments on Disciplinary Procedures Against Judges, Declarations of Integrity, and Other Procedures

European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)
ECRI Report on Ukraine (fifth monitoring cycle)
ECRI Conclusions on Ukraine (adopted on 7 April 2020 / published on 2 June 2020)
CRI(2020)28 ECRI Conclusions on the Implementation of the Recommendations in Respect of Ukraine Subject to Interim Follow-Up

Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ACFC)
Third Opinion ACFC/OP/III(2012)002 on Ukraine
Fourth Opinion ACFC/OP/IV(2017)002 on Ukraine

Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (COMEX)
Third Evaluation Report in respect of Ukraine, CM(2017)97
Statement by the Committee of Experts on the legal framework for the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in Ukraine, 2023

Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)
15th General Report of GRETA
GRETA(2025)08 Evaluation Report, Ukraine, Third evaluation round
GRETA(2022)09 Guidance Note on addressing the risks of trafficking in human beings related to the war in Ukraine and the ensuing humanitarian crisis

Recommendation CP/Rec(2025)02 on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Ukraine

European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR)
3rd Report on non-accepted provisions of the European Social Charter by Ukraine
4th Report on non-accepted provisions of the European Social Charter by Ukraine
European Social Charter (revised), European Committee of Social Rights Conclusions 2025 Ukraine
Ad hoc Report on the on the cost-of-living crisis submitted by Ukraine

European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)
CPT/Inf (2024) 20 Report to the Ukrainian Government on the visit to Ukraine carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)
CPT/Inf (2026) 11 Visit Report Ukraine 2025

Group of States against Corruption (GRECO)
GrecoRC4(2023)2 GRECO Fourth Evaluation Round : Interim Compliance Report Ukraine
GrecoRC4(2024)15 GRECO, Fourth Evaluation Round: Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors, Ukraine, Addendum to the Second Compliance Report

Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL)
MONEYVAL(2017)20 Anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing measures Ukraine Fifth Round Mutual Evaluation Report
MONEYVAL(2020)9 Anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing measures Ukraine 2nd Enhanced Follow-up Report & Technical Compliance Re-Rating

Tromsø Convention
Baseline Evaluation Report on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on access to official documents (CETS No. 205 –Tromsø Convention)

Other
CCJE Opinion No. 28 (2025) on the importance of judicial well-being for the delivery of justice
Protection of Children Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Child-Friendly, Multidisciplinary and Interagency Response Inspired by the Barnahus Model
Review of the Implementation of the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) in 2023
OHTE General Report on the State of History Teaching in Europe 2023

9. Guidelines

Council of Europe Project Management Methodology
Council of Europe Human Rights Approach – Practical Guide for Co-operation Projects
Council of Europe Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit for Co-operation Projects
Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on child-friendly justice, the handbook
Guidelines on civil society organisations participation in Council of Europe’s co-operation activities
Online resource for civil society
Working with the Council of Europe: a practical guide for civil society
Guidelines for civil participation in political decision-making
Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029
Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2022-2027
Council of Europe "Speak Up" policy on reporting wrongdoing and protection from retaliation
UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process
Youth Sector Strategy 2030

European Union documents

EU common position on Cluster 1: Fundamentals
The Joint Statement between Commissioner Marta Kos and Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine Taras Kachka
European Commission 2025 Report on Ukraine
European Commission 2024 Report on Ukraine
European Commission 2023 Report on Ukraine
European Commission's Opinion on Ukraine's application for EU membership of 17 June 2022

United Nations documents

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
UN principles relating to the status of national institutions (the Paris Principles)
2011 United Nations “Guiding principles on business and human rights”
Istanbul Protocol: Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (2022 edition)

National policy documents of Ukraine[223]

Rule of Law Roadmap
Roadmap on the functioning of democratic institutions
Action Plan for the Protection of Rights of National Minorities
Roadmap on public administration reform
Anti-Corruption Strategy (2021 – 2025)
State Anti-Corruption Programme (2023 – 2025)
Strategy of State Policy on Internal Displacement for the period until 2030
Strategy for Veterans Policy until 2030
National Strategy on Child Justice and its Operational Plan for 2025-2028
National Strategy for Creating a Barrier-free Space in Ukraine for the period until 2030
Ukraine’s Programme for Perpetrators
National Roma Strategy until 2030
Operational Action Plan for 2026-2028 for the implementation of the Strategy for Promoting the Realisation of the Rights and Opportunities of Persons Belonging to the Roma National Minority in Ukrainian Society for the Period until 2030
Strategy for the Development of the Crimean Tatar Language for 2022–2032.
Roadmap for Creating Conditions for Improving the Quality of Education in the State Language and Languages of Indigenous Peoples and National Minorities (Communities) in General Secondary Education Institutions for 2023-2027
National Strategy for Protecting Children’s Rights in the Justice System until 2028
Strategy for Ensuring the Right of Every Child to Grow Up in a Family Environment (2024–2028)
The National Plan for the Implementation of the European Child Guarantee in Ukraine until 2030
Presidential Decree No. 398/2020 on urgent measures to prevent and combat domestic and gender-based violence
National Youth Strategy 2030
State Targeted Social Programme “Youth of Ukraine: Generation of Resilience - 2030"
Public Prosecution Service Development Strategy (2025-2028)
Resolution on procurement of social services for comprehensive development and care for children with disabilities.
Unified Indicators for Assessing Judicial Integrity and Professional Ethics of a Judge

[223]. Relevant national strategic documents identifying priorities and/or main lines of action have been consulted to ensure the Council of Europe support matches the country’s needs and priorities and is coherent with other national initiatives. Any reference, in the current Action Plan, to national legislation, strategies, policies, action plans or any other national document does not represent an endorsement of such documents by the Council of Europe.