



European Committee
of the Regions

European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine

Joint Statement

European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine



Joint Statement by the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine

The European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine, consisting of 100 partners, including the main Ukrainian and European associations of local and regional authorities (LRAs), continues to stand in solidarity with Ukraine with a firm commitment to defend a decentralised approach to both the reconstruction of Ukraine and its accession process to the European Union. In view of the URC 2026, the Alliance partners, who came together at political level in Gdańsk:

- 1 Highlight that Ukrainian municipalities and regions are directly confronted with the adverse and differentiated impacts of Russia's ongoing aggression and stand strong in their tireless efforts to balance ongoing emergency response with recovery and EU accession, considering that over 70% of the EU acquis is implemented at local and regional level.
- 2 Call on the institutional partners leading Ukraine's recovery efforts to recognise **municipalities and regions as strategic partners** and **integral decision-makers** in the planning, governance and implementation of reconstruction support that should foster economic, social and territorial cohesion and sustainable development.

Ukrainian Communities – Resilience in Action

- 3 Underline that Ukrainian municipalities and regions have been at the core of **Ukraine's resilience, which should be recognised as a shared European asset**, offering valuable lessons for municipalities and regions in the EU.
- 4 Stress that Ukrainian **LRAs play a decisive role in keeping communities functioning and connected**. They provide emergency response, repair and maintain infrastructure, strengthen energy and water resilience through decentralised solutions and cross-border cooperation, foster innovation in education and health sectors, and pursue logistical connection to EU corridors. Municipalities and regions act as operational hubs for humanitarian assistance, while simultaneously preparing for a sustainable future.
- 5 Advocate, in this context, for **win-win partnerships** through structured peer-to-peer exchanges and communities of practice both at political and technical levels between the Ukrainian and other European municipalities and regions and between the all-Ukrainian and EU association of LRAs.
- 6 Recognise the strong commitment of LRAs to international cooperation and the added value of ongoing initiatives – funded by the EU and/or several Members States – that facilitate partnerships

between the EU and Ukrainian municipalities and regions, as well as highlight the **importance of stronger coordination** and of scaling up best practices.

- 7 Draw attention to the recurrent calls by the Ukrainian associations of LRAs, relayed by the CoR, for **energy-related donations** by European municipalities and regions. Calls on the European Commission to consider appointing a dedicated focal point to better coordinate the needs and supply offers.

Regional Policy and Good Governance: from Strategy to Success

- 8 Stress that **local and regional self-government and decentralisation** are key for Ukraine's resilience and a fundamental pillar of Ukraine's path to recovery and EU accession directly **enhancing the administrative and fiscal capacity of municipalities and regions** and delineating their functions in accordance with the European Charter of Local Self-Government.
- 9 Call on the government of Ukraine to foster **inclusive platforms** for consulting LRAs on the strategic planning of recovery support, both at political and technical levels, building on existing structures such as the Inter-Agency Coordination Commission (ICC) for Regional Development and the upcoming Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) between the European Committee of the Regions and Ukraine.
- 10 Encourage the integration of a territorial dimension in the **governance structures of the Ukraine Relief, Recovery, Reconstruction and Reform Trust Fund** and **Ukraine's State Agency for Restoration and Infrastructure Development** by including LRA representatives.
- 11 Welcome the establishment of the EU-funded **Public Investment Watchdog** and call on donors to integrate a '**localisation marker**' into the planning and impact assessment tools to further enhance the monitoring and traceability of decentralised support.
- 12 Stress that Ukrainian municipalities and regions require **continued effective capacity-building** for sustainable recovery and reconstruction as well as EU accession in order to enable LRAs to comply with EU acquis and access and manage EU funds.
- 13 Recall that the Ukraine Facility Regulation foresees assistance under Pillar III to **strengthen capacities of LRAs** through partnerships and twinning activities; and urge to provide it **to municipalities and regions in a balanced way** that ensures equal support opportunities.
- 14 Call on the EU to allocate additional funding to the European School of Administration and its **Erasmus Programme for Public Administration** that should benefit local public officials from EU candidate countries and create '**local and regional window**' under the **Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX)** instrument.

Connectivity under fire

- 15 Highlight the potential of **cross-border cooperation, transnational and interregional cooperation** to accelerate recovery and foster territorial and socio-economic cohesion through joint projects in infrastructure, public services, crisis and disaster risk preparedness.
- 16 Encourage Ukrainian and EU municipalities and regions to fully **explore funding opportunities** under the EU Interreg programmes, to make use of the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs) tool and to get involved in the European Cross-Border Platform.
- 17 Recognise the need to provide targeted support to the **EU's eastern border regions** with Ukraine in view of their role in supporting Ukraine's military efforts and reconstruction.

- 18 Call on the EU and the government of Ukraine to establish a **revolving fund to help Ukrainian partners to cover project preparedness costs and pre-finance** their activities for Interreg projects.
- 19 Underline the need to create a **dedicated Interreg-type programme for LRAs**, aimed at strengthening cross-border and transnational cooperation through municipal partnerships and twinning activities, covering all Ukrainian regions, including those in North, East, Centre that are not eligible under the existing Interreg programmes.

Post-war horizon: what is needed for recovery?

- 20 Propose to enhance the **local and regional dimension of the World Bank-led annual Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA)** by including a dedicated section on the local and regional needs by partnering with the regional administrations of Ukraine, who already regularly collect input on the needs and damages from the municipalities.
- 21 Reiterate the Alliance's call, now reflected in the OECD recommendations, to establish a structured **dialogue between the LRAs and the Ukraine Donor Platform** that will complement the Platform's ongoing engagement tracks with business and civil society.
- 22 Call on donors to allocate **ring-fenced and transparent support for local and regional development** that should enable direct access to finance, including through targeted investment windows, dedicated technical assistance under Ukraine Facility Pillar III, and facilitate Ukraine's economic and regional integration with the EU.
- 23 Encourage donors to make **better use of the DREAM platform** as a key catalogue of investment projects at local and regional levels and a tool that can support projects' prioritisation and maturity assessment, facilitate donor matching and help them develop operations portfolios that address reconstruction and cohesion-related objectives.
- 24 Call for the creation of an **operational coordination office, ideally as a Team Europe Initiative**, that would aim to reinforce existing coordination structures (e.g. the Alliance itself, Bridges of Trust facilitated by the European Partnerships Hub) and foster links between the local needs, funding opportunities and available tools and mechanisms established to facilitate peer-to-peer partnerships (e.g. Bridges of Trust, TIPS4Ukraine, Cities4Cities, Matchmaking Platform, 'Shoulder to Shoulder' projects etc.), public investment (DREAM platform) and improved monitoring (e.g. Public Investment Watchdog project) at local and regional levels.
- 25 Stress that **human capital is key to a sustainable recovery** and requires more support for physical and mental health; solid youth programmes, including for summer camps, school exchanges, and youth involvement in policy and decision-making. Call for dedicated initiatives to bring abducted children back to safe environments, where the EU LRAs are ready to support the rehabilitation of children and their families.
- 26 Call for stronger collaboration with the **Ukrainian internally displaced persons and diaspora** and continuous investment in community development as prerequisites for voluntary return and reintegration, when conditions allow. Underlines that, for as long as the conflict persists, EU municipalities and regions hosting Ukrainian refugees must be equipped with adequate resources to provide all necessary assistance, notably to support their transition beyond temporary protection, foster sustained socio-economic inclusion and strengthen their capacity to contribute to Ukraine's reconstruction.