



Conference on relief and reconstruction  
of Ukraine and its European perspective  
Konferencja na temat pomocy Ukrainie,  
jej odbudowy oraz europejskiej perspektywy  
Конференція з питань допомоги  
та відбудови України та  
її європейської перспективи

19|07|2022 | 9:30-17:30

Krakow Congress Centre - Marii Konopnickiej 17, 30-302 Krakow, Poland  
Centrum Kongresowe w Krakowie, ul. Marii Konopnickiej 17, 30-302 Kraków  
Краківський конгрес-центр – Марії Конопницької, 17, 30-302 Краків, Польща



## **Conference on relief and reconstruction of Ukraine and its European perspective**

19 July 2022, Krakow, Poland

*Interpreting from/to EN/FR/DE/ES/PL/UA*

### **Background:**

The unprovoked and unjustified Russian aggression in Ukraine has caused the biggest humanitarian crisis in Europe since the Second World War. Civil society organisations (CSOs) in Ukraine, in the EU countries and in Moldova are on the front line to help those affected by the war. In view of this situation, which is unprecedented in recent European history, the EESC is organising a conference to discuss activities supporting people fleeing the war, to look at the role of civil society and to start discussions on how to better support the work of CSOs in the post-war future.

Over 12 million people have been forced to flee their homes - more than a quarter of the population of Ukraine. The EU is providing continuous humanitarian support to both refugees and internally displaced people. It has also activated the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and agreed to activate the Temporary Protection Directive for people arriving from Ukraine.

In this situation, CSOs in Ukraine and in the EU are instrumental in providing support to internally displaced people and to those fleeing outside Ukraine. Civil society organisations are also working to rebuild the socio-economic fabric in Ukraine and to help combat disinformation and propaganda. The unrelenting efforts of civil society from the very first day of the Russian invasion must be praised.

### **Participants:**

- European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)
  - o President
  - o Presidents of the 3 Groups (Employers, Workers and Civil Society Organisations)
  - o Presidents of EESC Sections and Consultative Commission on Industrial Change
  - o Members of EESC's Section for External Relations (REX) and Section Section for Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship (SOC)
  - o Members of the study group on immigration and integration
- Civil society organisations from Poland
- Civil society organisations from Ukraine

- Civil society organisations from Moldova
- Civil society organisations from Slovakia/Romania/Czech Republic

**Venue:** Krakow Congress Centre (<http://icekrakow.com/en/about-ice-krakow>)

### Draft agenda

#### High-level panel

Opening remarks by **Ms Christa SCHWENG**, EESC President and **Prof. Jacek MAJCHROWSKI**, Mayor of Krakow

- **Ms Agnieszka ŚCIGAJ**, Minister-Member of the Council of Ministers, The Chancellery of the Prime Minister of Poland
- **Mr Olivér VÁRHELYI**, European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, European Commission
- **Ms Olha STEFANISHYNA**, Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine
- **Mr Jerzy BUZEK**, MEP, Former President of the European Parliament
- **Mr Andriy SADOVYI**, Mayor of Lviv
- **Mr Wojciech BAKUN**, Mayor of Przemyśl

#### Panel 1: People fleeing the war in Ukraine and civil society support

**Background:** More than 5.6 million refugees from Ukraine have crossed the borders into neighbouring countries since Russia started the war against Ukraine; this has changed the migratory landscape of the EU drastically within a few weeks. As in the 2015/2016 migration crisis, CSOs are playing a crucial role in managing this unprecedented crisis. Solidarity shown by CSOs and their unceasing work from the very first day of the Russian invasion is heartening. There are many CSOs working with incredible energy and efficiency to help refugees by delivering medicine and medical supplies and providing mental health support and other urgent help.

**Objective:** This panel aims to give an overview of the extent and importance of CSOs' work providing immediate support to refugees on their arrival and helping them to begin integrating into European and Moldovan society. Stakeholders will have an opportunity to discuss good practices and to learn from each other's experience of providing aid to Ukrainian refugees and catering for their basic needs while respecting their dignity. It then seeks to identify policy measures required at EU and Member State level to ensure that the CSOs can keep up their vital activities.

#### Panel 2: Helping internally displaced people and supporting the resilience of the Ukrainian economy

**Background:** The panel will focus on internally displaced people and the role of Ukrainian civil society. According to the World Bank, Ukraine's economy is estimated to contract considerably in 2022 as a result of the Russian invasion and the impact of a deep humanitarian crisis. With a blockade of Black Sea ports in the south and the havoc wrought on industry in the east, Ukraine's GDP is projected to shrink by about 45% in 2022. In this difficult situation, business organisations and trade unions are

playing a central role in keeping the country operational and ensuring the functioning of basic services and the economy. Employment conditions have changed to reflect the new situation and have posed new challenges for the social partners. Many NGOs are working tirelessly to provide at least basic conditions for internally displaced people as resources are becoming scarce.

**Objective:** In this panel, the participants will discuss the challenges encountered by Ukrainian CSOs in ensuring that their country continues to function in these extremely challenging times. Employers, workers and NGOs will share their experiences of safeguarding a functioning labour market and providing basic public services to those who stayed in their homes as well as to those who were forced to move to a safer place in Ukraine. The participants will strive to make proposals on how European CSOs could step up their support and timely delivery of aid to their Ukrainian counterparts as part of their tireless efforts to meet the needs of the Ukrainian population.

### **Panel 3: Enhanced support for cooperation between EU and Ukrainian civil society organisations**

**Background:** Despite the fact that Russia continues to wage war on Ukraine, Ukraine's government and civil society have already started to make plans and take steps for the post-war recovery. The EU has reiterated on many occasions that it is ready and willing to support Ukraine in this process, both financially and technically. It is in the EU's own interest that this recovery is successful, while ensuring that EU aid truly delivers for the people of Ukraine and is managed in line with EU rules.

**Objective:** This panel will debate a series of questions in an attempt to pinpoint forward-looking answers. The objective will be to make proposals on how EU civil society can help and support Ukraine's recovery in accordance with EU values and norms, such as the rule of law, democracy and transparency. The participants will consider EU post-war recovery support from the perspective of Ukraine's future within the EU. The role of the EESC in contributing to the economic, social and sustainable recovery of Ukrainian society will be explored. The panel will also be an opportunity for a discussion with CSOs from EU countries which have undergone post-war recovery in their recent history.