

***European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the reconstruction of Ukraine***  
***("The Alliance")***

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is not only an unprovoked attack on a sovereign country, but also an attack on our European values of democracy, freedom and the rule of law. It has shown us that freedom and peace are fragile, and need to be strengthened and defended every day. It has also shown that Ukrainian regions and cities have been a key element of resilience in the face of the brutal war.

Mayors, local and regional officials in Ukraine have been mobilised to fight against Russia's aggression, inspiring not only the citizens of Ukraine, but also Europeans sharing the same values. That is why municipalities, regions and their national and European associations in the EU and beyond have responded quickly to shelter refugees and provide emergency support to their Ukrainian counterparts.

While this emergency aid will continue to be provided, it is also important to join forces to support the recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine, today and in the aftermath of the war.

We have therefore launched the ***European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the reconstruction of Ukraine*** to bring together European associations of local and regional authorities from the EU, Ukrainian associations of local and regional authorities, and associating cities and regions from the EU and Ukraine and their national representative associations:

- to coordinate joint efforts, with European Union cities and regions ready to deploy resources to support an effective and sustainable reconstruction of Ukraine;
- to further facilitate the contacts and cooperation of its core partners with the EU institutions and within the "Ukraine reconstruction platform", as well as between EU and Ukrainian local and regional authorities and associations;
- to provide information and feedback to EU institutions and the "Ukraine reconstruction platform", and foster the political dialogue with the local and regional level accompanying the reconstruction efforts;
- to facilitate providing expertise in capacity building, good governance, and technical assistance to cities and regions in Ukraine.

The Alliance is calling for a sustainable reconstruction of Ukraine that is built around the **following principles**:

- unwavering support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and the right to defend its sovereignty;
- further European integration and access of Ukraine's local and regional authorities to European networks;

- empowering local self-government to take on a leadership role in the recovery and reconstruction, together with Ukraine's central government, the EU and other international partners, in particular in the needs assessment for the reconstruction and the subsequent planning and implementation of strategies;
- a reconstruction strategy built on integrated planning at territorial level, capitalising on systemic approaches for sustainable, green, smart and inclusive territories building on the "build back better" principle;
- building on the principles of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, in line with the (Ukrainian) State Regional Development Strategy 2021-2027 and its planned review and evolution, as well as on the existing decentralisation framework in Ukraine;
- promoting the development and modernization of the Ukrainian countryside as an important component of Ukraine's success;
- a strong focus on improving good local/regional governance, including transparency, fighting corruption, protecting the freedom of local media, and promoting e-government;
- facilitating local and regional business development and innovation.

Pursuing these principles will only be possible if the local and regional levels become the cornerstone of the reconstruction efforts for Ukraine.

That is what the Alliance calls for:

- **an easy engagement mechanism** that would allow EU/European municipalities/regions/associations to help Ukrainian counterparts with their reconstruction efforts;
- a **peer-to-peer and twinning programme** to strengthen capacity building and to facilitate the exchange of know-how on an equal footing;
- **sufficient resources** for promoting cluster twinning partnerships on the EU and Ukrainian side;
- an **inclusive approach**, bringing together cities, towns, villages, communities and regions, preserving coherence with what has been already deployed for Ukraine's sustainable territorial development to date (in Ukraine and in the EU);
- a strong commitment to **promoting local/regional self-government, good governance and local democracy**;
- an effective system of **multi-level governance** based on the **OECD principles of public investment across all levels of government**.

The Alliance welcomes the proposals of the European Commission for a high-level strategic reconstruction plan ("**RebuildUkraine**"), for which the Ukrainian authorities have full ownership, and in which peer-to-peer cooperation and programmes embedded in partnerships between municipalities and regions, together with their representatives – associations in the European Union and those in Ukraine – will play a key role.

The Alliance suggests that it is fully recognised as a key partner in the "**Ukraine reconstruction platform**" to ensure that all its members are properly engaged in the process.

The Alliance invites partners such as the EIB, the EBRD, the OECD and the Council of Europe Development Bank to find solutions on how to work more closely with LRAs to help build a prosperous and sustainable future for Ukraine, and to strengthen local democracy and the EU's shared values.

The Alliance calls for a close cooperation with the upcoming EU presidencies of the Council to ensure the coherent coordination of local and regional actions with the EU Member States.

Please join our efforts in reconstructing Ukraine and building a better future for Europe!

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