

U-LEAD with Europe’s contribution to a transparent, accountable and responsive multi-level governance in Ukraine

Partner: Ministry for Communities and Territories Development of Ukraine (MinRegion)

Supported by: European Union, and its member states Germany, Sweden, Poland, Denmark, Estonia and Slovenia

Duration, Budget: 2016-2023, EUR 152.3 million

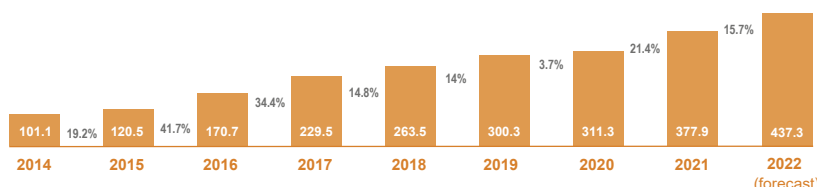
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Current Status of the Decentralisation Reform

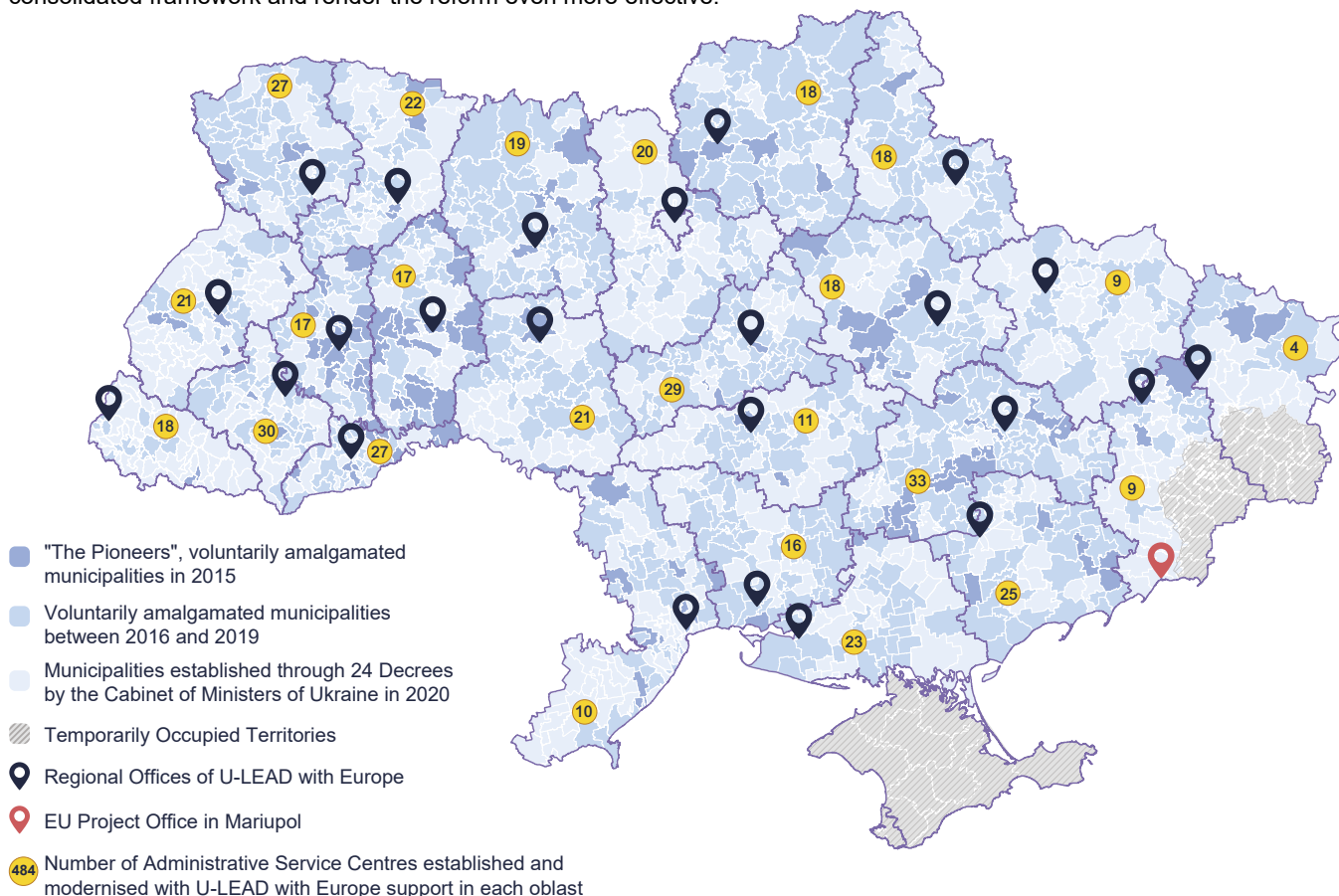
The decentralisation of power to municipalities in Ukraine began in April 2014. The objective is to bring public services closer to the citizens and thus increase the effectiveness of their provision. Through the reform, smaller municipalities (hromadas) that merge together into larger municipalities receive more responsibilities, powers and corresponding financial resources. This process of territorial reorganisation reached an important milestone through nationwide local elections in October 2020.

Since the local elections of 25 October 2020 and in line with the Cabinet of Ministers decisions, Ukraine consists of **1,470 municipalities**.

Own revenues of local budgets increased (UAH bln)



For the decentralisation reform to be successful, further legislative steps are required in line with the principles of the European Charter of Local Self-Government. If adopted through an inclusive consultative process, they will allow for a coherent and consolidated framework and render the reform even more effective.



U-LEAD's contributions since 2016

Thematic Priorities and Implementation Structure

- U-LEAD improves the capacities of municipalities to carry out the newly assigned tasks and promotes citizen and private sector engagement in local affairs.
- U-LEAD provides advice on strengthening local self-government (LSG) and regional development to the national level, improving coordination between different ministries and levels of government.
- U-LEAD has its regional offices in all 24 oblasts of Ukraine, and co-founded the EU Project Office in Mariupol, Donetsk Oblast, to support the Sea of Azov region.
- U-LEAD has developed a powerful network of long- and short-term experts, who provide training and consultations on topics related to LSG and regional development to local government and state bodies, primarily to municipalities.

Capacity Development of Municipalities

U-LEAD with Europe puts strong emphasis on capacity development of elected officials and public servants in municipalities, enabling them to better fulfil their new roles and responsibilities. U-LEAD with Europe:

- Since 2016, has conducted over 10,000 events (excluding consultations) of various formats with over 274,000 participants from the national, regional and local levels. Over 66% of the participants were women.
- Is pioneering the concept of Thematic Support Packages (TSPs) to build up expertise in all key dimensions that municipalities need to tackle. The TSPs are a mix of training and other learning instruments, e.g. study tours, e-learning, peer-to-peer exchange and on-the-job consultations to develop municipalities' capabilities.
- Since the local elections in October 2020 has conducted 826 "First Steps" events for newly created municipalities (5,287 participants from 1,160 municipalities), 52 "Steps for Leaders" seminars for leaders of 162 municipalities, and 2,332 "Steps for Specialists" events for 1,377 municipalities (22,751 participants), offering in-depth expertise to local government officials.
- Trained 225 municipalities under a comprehensive training programme Steps for Specialists "Spatial Planning And Natural Resources". 46 of them received support in the preparation of land audits and Terms of References for integrated spatial development plans.
- Trained 192 municipalities under the training programme Steps for Specialists "Business-Friendly Municipality". As a result, 24 municipalities will receive further support in the development of business support instruments.
- Provided a comprehensive training programme for deputies of 37 village, settlement and city councils, as well as meetings to share experience with deputies of other councils.
- Supports municipalities in the field of anti-corruption policy and integrity through cooperation with the National Agency on Corruption Prevention. In 2021, more than 500 participants from 355 municipalities took part in trainings on conflict of interest.
- Is managing She-LEADs, a leadership network of female leaders in local self-government as a platform of exchange and joint learning.
- In 2019, conducted the country-wide campaign "I am hromada" to accelerate municipalities' amalgamation and promote decentralisation. It covered 39 districts (rayons) with no amalgamated municipalities and reached 6,000 people with a roadshow and 500,000 in social media.

Support to Regional and Local Development

U-LEAD facilitates knowledge from EU member states to promote regional and local development:

- Support was provided to municipalities in preparation of 99 local and regional development projects submitted to various competition programmes.
- Since 2016, 309 municipalities have received support in elaboration of local development strategies.
- 10 projects received funding in the context of the "Business-Friendly Municipality" competition and were implemented by municipalities to develop a favourable business environment.
- In 2021, U-LEAD launched a cooperation between 3 business associations and municipalities to promote business-municipal partnerships.
- Since 2016, over 430 citizens have been trained to become voluntary firefighters. 36 voluntary fire brigades were formed. Currently, 20 municipalities are being supported by Solidarity Fund PL.
- 453 municipalities benefited from the seminars on the topic of public safety and security.
- 12 municipalities are receiving support in developing cycling mobility programmes.
- The Programme cooperates with the European Platform of Local and Regional Authorities for Development resulting in 10 partnerships between Ukrainian and EU municipalities. The Programme facilitated municipal partnerships with counterparts from Germany, Slovenia, Latvia, Poland, Lithuania, Slovakia, Denmark and Estonia.
- U-LEAD supports the Association of Ukrainian Cities by

strengthening its Analytical Centre, the functioning of sectoral networks in maintaining regular dialogue and exchange with the central government, and the development of **10 intermunicipal cooperation projects**.

- Out of **130 pre-selected concepts** representing partnerships of **310 municipalities** from all over Ukraine, **32 projects** of regional significance are being supported to become fully-fledged proposals ready for financing.
- U-LEAD supported the development and modernisation of the **State Fund for Regional Development** platform since 2019. In 2021, this process was completed and now MinRegion administers a fully modernised system. This ensures transparency of the application process. Moreover, U-LEAD

supports MinRegion in the elaboration of modern **GIS system** to be used for regional policy monitoring purposes.

- In a cooperation with the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, a **map of business support infrastructure** objects was launched.
- 694 municipalities** benefited from the activities in the field of communication and citizen engagement.
- Since 2016, almost **400 municipalities** with a total of **5.4 mln population** directly benefited from complex training programmes in the field of mobility, spatial planning, social services, business support, digitalisation, civil protection, waste management, energy efficiency, etc. These capacity development activities resulted in the development of **110 strategic documents** (excluding local development strategies).

Sector Reform Support

U-LEAD supports sector decentralisation in the areas of healthcare, education and social services. It also provides municipalities with guidance and consultations on local finance and human resources management:

- Since 2016, trainings and consultations have been implemented in over **1,330 municipalities** to support strategic planning and the creation of capable education and healthcare networks.
- U-LEAD organised a series of open trainings on how to develop the sector of public health in municipalities for representatives of **241 municipalities**. **12 of them** took part in the subsequent mentorship programme 'Public Health for Municipalities'.
- U-LEAD experts provided **740 municipalities** with guidance on establishing and developing Teachers' Professional Development Centres at the local level.
- 2,730 municipal** representatives took part in seminars and consultations on better social service delivery, while
- 320 participants** joined **10 seminars** on human resources management and teamwork.
- Since 2020, more than **1,000 municipalities** acquired necessary skills on budget planning, gender balanced budgeting, open budget and budget analysis tools.
- 200 municipalities** learned how to lease state and communal property.
- 500 municipalities** learned about legislation innovations in public procurement including an electronic public procurement system.
- 126 municipalities** got acquainted with the peculiarities of the organisation of accounting and the specifics of financial reporting.

U-LEAD on Its Way to Becoming a Digital Operation

U-LEAD keeps its activities relevant and accessible throughout Ukraine, using digital opportunities, combining formats, creating a smart mix of virtual and offline elements of capacity development, and working on a large-scale solution for e-learning:

- U-LEAD piloted **7 online study visits** to Ukrainian municipalities. More than **1,000 participants** learned from first-hand experience about cooperation with a large foreign investor, infrastructure of festival brands, implementation of sports and youth projects, formation of an educational and primary healthcare network, implementation of local development strategies, financial management, amongst others.
- U-LEAD developed the e-learning platform **u-learn.org.ua** as an integral part of its TSPs. **1,278 certificates** have already been issued to online learners.
- The online Municipal Financing and Investments Conference co-organised by MinRegion on 8 July 2021 brought together **551 participants** from **325 municipalities**.

Through a cooperation between **9 Ukrainian municipalities** and the municipality of Guldborgsund online visits were held to acquaint Ukrainian



municipalities with the best practices of local self-government in Denmark, and vice versa.

- On 19 October 2021, U-LEAD signed a **Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Digital Transformation** to support digital transformation of municipalities.
- On 7-8 December 2021, U-LEAD organised the third virtual **International Expert Exchange "Partnership for Development"** bringing together **27 speakers** from **5 countries** and **323 participants**.



U-LEAD's Support to Municipalities in Combatting the COVID-19 Pandemic

In order to support municipalities in their activities to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, U-LEAD:

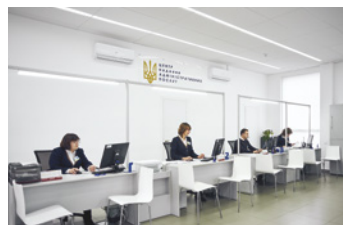
- In cooperation with the Centre for Public Health in Ukraine developed and distributed **500,000 newspapers, 100,000 leaflets and 45,000 posters** among over **800 rural municipalities** to raise citizens' awareness on COVID-19.
- With EU support and in cooperation with Caritas Ukraine procured and delivered **protective kits** with medical masks, hand and surface disinfectants, protective gowns, contactless thermometers, protective glasses, and respirators to over **900 rural municipalities** and municipalities of small cities in need.
- Supported **11 regional manufacturers** who produced over **300,000** face masks for over 900 municipalities.
- Provided **1,169 municipalities** with over **67,000 posters** and over **22,000 instructions** on anti-COVID measures during the local elections. The materials were developed in cooperation with the Centre for Public Health in Ukraine. **250 municipalities** received guidance on anti-pandemic measures during the preparation and conducting of the local elections.
- Conducted **21 online fora** on various issues of combatting the COVID-19 pandemic and municipal management, having engaged **2,254 municipal representatives** from Ukraine, Slovenia, Slovakia, Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, Italy, Germany, Denmark, France, Greece, Sweden, Switzerland.
- Conducted the "Volunteering on the Local Level" competition that resulted in **17 projects** funded by U-LEAD and implemented by municipalities to address the pressing challenges of COVID-19.



Administrative Service Delivery and E-Governance

During 2016 and 2021, U-LEAD with Europe has achieved important impacts in establishing and strengthening Administrative Service Centres (ASCs). The major achievements of this cooperation, which was supported by Sweden and Estonia, are:

- 484 proper ASCs** and an additional **816 access points** and remote workplaces have been created or modernised. **11 mobile ASCs** were handed over to municipalities.
- 11.9 million residents** received access to high-quality administrative services.
- More than **11,000 ASCs** and **municipal employees** passed through advanced training.
- 562 municipalities** became participants of the Programme on ASC establishment.
- 39 study visits** to well-functioning ASCs were conducted for **789 participants** from **403 municipalities**.
- A support package of **9 manuals** was developed to endorse municipalities to establish their ASCs and make them a place free from all types of discrimination.
- The U-LEAD support project **EGOV4UKRAINE** made public service provision more transparent and effective by developing and implementing the **secure data exchange system (Trembita)** and the **information system for ASCs (Vulyk)** that were transferred to the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine.
- 233 local self-governments** received the institutional support from the Expert Help Desk for ASCs.



Since 15 March 2020, U-LEAD delivers its services through digital means



* Number of events (trainings, consultations, dialogue events, fora, etc.) conducted by U-LEAD