

Digital innovation for a new Ukraine

A combination of creative ideas and modern technologies is accelerating Ukraine's sustainable reconstruction



The challenge: a long road to reconstruction

The Russian war of aggression is placing a heavy burden on Ukraine's Government and on Ukrainian society. Good governance is more important than ever – to ensure that resources are used efficiently and to balance national priorities and local needs. Ukraine needs to start preparing for sustainable reconstruction right now, but this will take time. Against this background, digitalisation and innovation have a key role to play as they can accelerate the pace of modernisation in the public administration sector, make the reconstruction process more transparent and facilitate the involvement of citizens.

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Ukrainian innovators can help drive reconstruction by scaling up their local approaches. Open-source technologies and digital production methods, such as 3D printers, laser cutters and CNC milling machines, make it possible to develop new, decentralised solutions. The Ukrainian maker movement makes these tools available in open workshops known as 'makerspaces'.

Makers are people who build new things by drawing on their creative and manual skills. Applying a practical and solutions-driven mindset, they design, build, tinker and repair things, often using modern technologies. They share their projects, knowledge and ideas within the making community and develop solutions using a decentralised approach. At present, however, individual makers tend to work in isolation with very few links to each other or to relevant actors from civil society, public administration and the private sector. Their potential remains untapped.



Tolocars: Mobile workshops supporting reconstruction efforts on the ground in Ukraine

Our approach: harnessing the innovative strength of the population

GIZ supports the reconstruction work of public administrations and civil society across the country through a project entitled Good Governance by GovTech and Transparency in Ukraine. To this end, we harness the innovative strength and creative drive of Ukrainians and focus on digital solutions. GIZ has been commissioned to carry out this work by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

To improve the quality of services, we promote the use of innovative digital solutions by public administrations. Digital tools will also contribute to increased transparency in the awarding of reconstruction projects. Training courses will strengthen the level of digital skills in the public sector and civil society.

We help municipalities to implement their own ideas for local reconstruction. That involves bringing makers together with representatives of civil society, public administration and the private sector to help them develop innovative approaches and use digital technologies.

We are strengthening the country's innovation ecosystem at various levels. We are creating an enabling environment that allows makers to develop and scale up local solutions for reconstruction, as well as helping the recently established Ukrainian Maker Association to build up a strong network of members. The project's other activities include facilitating knowledge-sharing between Ukrainian and international makers, supporting the establishment and ongoing development of makerspaces and promoting maker initiatives that contribute in some way to the country's reconstruction.



The Ukrainian Maker Fair in March 2024 brought together 1,500 makers and enthusiastic visitors



Eight innovative Ukrainian making projects each received a Makers Innovation Award

Our results: digital, transparent and networked solutions

- We are helping the Ukrainian Ministry of Digital Transformation to further develop its Diia.Engine platform, which permits the delivery of digital public services. Diia.Engine offers benefits to citizens thanks to the use of modern applications, makes the work of public administrations more transparent and efficient and therefore generates savings.
- We are promoting further development of the digital platform DREAM to make reconstruction processes more transparent. This public sector tool makes it possible to track every stage of a reconstruction project – from damage assessment and funding through to construction and testing. The YouControl platform can be used to screen service providers for potential risks and therefore prevent financial fraud when awarding contracts.
- To help drive the digital transformation, the post of chief digital transformation officer (CDTO) has been created in all Ukrainian ministries and state authorities. The CDTO campus provides training for managers and civil servants to help them manage the digital transformation. Around 200 people have already started the programme.
- We have strengthened the Ukrainian maker community, for example by holding networking events and through newsletters and podcasts. We have initiated seven partnerships between Ukrainian and international makers to test new solutions for reconstruction and helped to open five makerspaces.
- With the help of five mobile workshops ('tolocars'), we have carried out 146 making activities in nine Ukrainian districts, including workshops with children, pupils, students, internally displaced persons and veterans. Together with local people, we've converted three basements in universities and residential buildings for use as air raid shelters and community spaces.



'The foundations of a digital state'

Mykhailo Fedorov, Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine

'It only takes a few clicks to use one of the services available through the Diia app. Behind the scenes, however, there is an extensive network of databases holding a vast amount of data that act as the foundations when it comes to constructing a digital state. Diia.Engine is a tool that makes it possible to rapidly create and manage new databases for a specific objective.'

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