співпраця з німеччиною
DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

Co-funded by
the European Union

Norway

Supporting the Ukrainian economy through EU approximation

Better access to the EU single market supports the country's economy

STEP IN 2 EU (Support for Trade, Economy, Policies, Institutions, Norms)

The challenge: Preparing for EU accession

Russia's war of aggression has a devastating impact on the Ukrainian economy: critical infrastructure has been destroyed, supply chains have been disrupted, potential workers have fled and traditional markets have collapsed. The risks associated with the war have severely limited businesses' options for borrowing. Traditionally strong economic sectors such as heavy industry and agriculture are in decline due to the effects of the war.

Great hopes for economic recovery rest on the country's bid for EU membership. The Ukrainian Government is working on the necessary institutional reforms and economic framework conditions to make the country fit for EU membership. National strategies such as the Strategy for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, the Export Strategy and the Ukraine Plan have already set the course towards the EU. Access to the EU internal market is important for Ukraine. It offers export opportunities for Ukrainian companies and makes the country more attractive as a location for foreign direct investment.

Project title	STEP IN 2 EU (Support for Trade, Economy, Policies, Institutions, Norms)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Cofinancing	European Union – Directorate-General for Enlargement and the Eastern Neighbourhood (EU – DG ENEST), Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad)
Implemented by	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Lead executing agency	Ukrainian Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture
Project area	Ukraine
Overall term	05/2025 to 12/2028
Contact	Hagen Ettner, stepin2eu@giz.de

Implemented by:

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Our approach: Creating favourable economic policy conditions

With the STEP IN 2 EU programme, which is cofinanced by the Norwegian Government and the EU, GIZ works on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) to support the Ukrainian Ministry of Economy, the National Bank and other state institutions in developing and implementing economic policy reforms and national strategies aimed at improving access to the EU internal market. The programme provides advisory services, training and exchange formats to assist the project partners in achieving this objective. Experts from new EU member states share their EU accession experience, while public-private dialogue formats make it possible for the private sector to participate in reform processes.

As with all reforms, the exchange of information and knowledge is essential: Ukrainian companies need to know and understand the opportunities and challenges of EU integration in order to benefit from it.

STEP IN 2 EU therefore supports state institutions, regional economic development institutions and business associations with their communication activities and event organisation. Small and medium-sized enterprises from the food, wood products, textiles, electrical and IT sectors have particularly good prospects for gaining a foothold in the EU. In selected regions, the programme improves location conditions by supporting clusters and industrial parks as well as regional authorities in initiating and implementing local economic development measures.

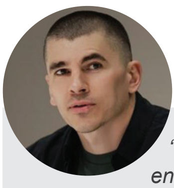
The recovery of Ukrainian companies depends heavily on access to financial services. The programme therefore works with the National Development Institution (NDI), banking associations and Ukrainian partner banks so that they can tailor their offers and services to the needs of companies. The focus is on the further development of the NDI's IT platform for SMEs and advisory services and training for financial institutions in SME financing, investment promotion and risk and credit portfolio management.

SME Resilience Alliance
for Ukraine

STEP IN 2 EU has a secretariat role

The *SME Resilience Alliance* is a coalition of international partners established by the Ukrainian Ministry of Economy and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in mid-2024. It coordinates the activities of international donors in the SME sector and supports the Ukrainian Government in implementing its national SME Strategy. As at March 2026, the *SME Resilience Alliance* has **44** international members and **13** other partners who support the alliance as friends. More than **290,000** Ukrainian SMEs have benefited from the activities of the *SME Resilience Alliance* through **149** projects with a volume of **EUR 8.9 billion** (as at June 2025).

Contact the *SME Resilience Alliance:* sme-alliance@giz.de



'STEP IN 2 EU supports our broader reform efforts and brings EU integration closer to the everyday reality of Ukrainian entrepreneurs. Small and medium-sized enterprises are the backbone of our economy, and this programme supports our efforts to develop digital services that are clear, accessible and trustworthy. Tools such as the Pulse Platform, which gives businesses the opportunity to provide direct feedback to the government, and ePermit, which makes licensing faster and eliminates discretionary decision-making, give businesses a level of predictability and make the state more efficient. This is an important step towards Ukraine's integration into the EU single market.'

Oleksandr Tsybort, Deputy Minister of Economy

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Project **GIZ Ukraine**
STEP IN 2 EU (Support for Trade, Economy, Policies, Institutions, Norms)

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