

UAExperts

Соціально-правовий
дискурс



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**SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE –
ONE OF THE TOP PRIORITIES
DURING CYPRUS PRESIDENCY
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EU 2026**

«UA Experts: Соціально-правовий дискурс»

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РОЗПОВСЮДЖУЄТЬСЯ НА БЕЗКОШТОВНІЙ ОСНОВІ

У номері:



Visit of the President of the Republic of Cyprus Nikos Christodoulides to Ukraine



Ukraine in Cyprus: An Evening of Music, Diplomacy, and Mutual Support



Sergiy Nizhynskyi

We must not appear to be a nation that only complains about the presence of Russians



Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU 2026



Taras Kachka

Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence: Global Solidarity and the Path to Justice



Yevgeniia Lukianchenko

Strengthening Partnerships for Survivor-Centred CRSV Response in Ukraine



Valerii Kopyika

Why it is important to develop research cooperation between Ukraine and Cyprus and support student competitions



Mariia Lazareva

Cyprus presidency of the council of the EU and the new stage of Ukraine's European integration



Snizhana Kushch

Strategic Planning Towards 2030: How Ukraine Shapes State Policy for Combating Violence

News



FORUM

Ukrainian Forum of Social Change Leaders: Shaping the Future of Social Policy Amidst Wartime and Post-War Recovery

On November 7, 2025, the Ukrainian Forum of Social Change Leaders took place, organized by the Ministry of Social Policy, Family, and Unity of Ukraine. The forum served as a strategic platform to address the complex challenges and identify the key priorities of the social sphere during the ongoing full-scale war and the anticipated period of post-war reconstruction.

The forum's agenda focused on several critical pillars of national resilience. Participants engaged in deep discussions regarding the integration of internally displaced persons (IDPs), the comprehensive support of families and children, and the advancement of the state's rehabilitation and prosthetics systems. Furthermore, a significant portion of the dialogue was dedicated to maintaining strong ties with the millions of Ukrainians currently abroad and establishing the necessary conditions to facilitate their voluntary return. The event underscored that social policy is not merely a service sector but a cornerstone of national security and demographic sustainability.

A momentous highlight of the forum was the official recognition of the NGO "UA Experts." The organization was honored with a formal Letter of Gratitude from Denys Ulyutin, the Minister of Social Policy, Family, and Unity of Ukraine. The award was presented in recognition of the organization's fruitful cooperation, active civic stance, and significant contribution to the implementation of Ukraine's state social policy.

This prestigious commendation reflects the impactful work "UA Experts" has performed in bridging the gap between civil society and government initiatives. The organization expressed its profound gratitude for this recognition, reaffirming its commitment to the partnership. "UA Experts" remains convinced that continued collaboration with the Ministry will yield even more significant results, ultimately strengthening the social fabric of Ukraine and ensuring that support reaches those who need it most during these historic times.



EXPERIENCE

Gender Equality on the Move: Cyprus Introduces Female Silhouettes to Pedestrian Signals

The NGO "UA Experts" would like to highlight a remarkable initiative recently implemented in Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus. In a symbolic yet powerful move toward inclusivity, the Republic of Cyprus has updated its urban infrastructure to better reflect the diversity of its citizens.

Minister of Transport, Communications, and Works Alexis Vafeades, alongside the Commissioner for Gender Equality Josie Christodoulou, officially unveiled new female silhouettes on pedestrian traffic lights. These figures, which appear alongside or in place of traditional male silhouettes, are a key component of the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2024–2026 and the government's broader program for inclusive public spaces.

Minister Vafeades explained that this project seamlessly bridges urban safety with social awareness. By implementing this change, Cyprus joins several other European nations—including Germany, Spain, and Austria—that have already adopted gender-inclusive pedestrian signals to promote visibility and representation in the public eye.

This initiative serves as a reminder that equality is a shared journey. At "UA Experts," we are inspired by this example and remain committed to ensuring that the principles of equality and inclusivity are woven into every sphere of public and private life.

Equality is progress! Let us take inspiration from this step forward and continue working toward a world where representation is visible at every turn.

Photo: Cyprus Mail



News



COOPERATION

Strengthening the Capacity of Communities and Families to Prevent and Combat Gender-Based and Domestic Violence Through Empathetic Communication, Care, and Inter-Agency Cooperation

On November 5, 2025, a landmark strategic coordination session for the "Power of Care" (Syla Turboty) initiative took place in Kyiv, initiated by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration in close partnership with UNFPA Ukraine and the NGO UA Experts. This high-level gathering was designed to forge a comprehensive, unified, and harmonized governmental vision to address the most pressing social challenges facing Ukraine today, specifically aimed at bolstering the capacity, resilience, and cohesion of Ukrainian communities and families amidst ongoing national trials.

The session opened with powerful welcoming remarks from key state and international figures who set the tone for a policy of integrated human security. Taras Kachka, Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine, delivered a keynote address entitled "A Unified Vision of Care: State Policy for Supporting Families and Communities." During his speech, he underscored a fundamental shift in governance, stating that for the administration, it is crucial that every policy—be it social, economic, or security-related—creates tangible opportunities for individual development. He emphasized that "care" is fundamentally about two pillars: providing immediate assistance to those in need and proactively preventing potential risks before they escalate into crises.

Complementing this national perspective Jacqueline Mahon, UNFPA Representative, presented the organization's strategic priorities and key areas of support for the Ukrainian government and local communities under their new program cycle. The international commitment was further solidified by Katarína Mathernová, the Ambassador of the European Union to Ukraine, who highlighted the alignment of these efforts with European standards of human rights and social protection. Kateryna Levchenko, the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy, further detailed the critical need for "Coordinated



Actions to Overcome Gender-Based Violence," emphasizing that structural change requires synchronized efforts across all branches of power.

The session transitioned into a dynamic panel discussion involving representatives from various line ministries focused on "Priorities of State and International Partners in Supporting Families and Communities for 2025–2026." This dialogue facilitated a transparent exchange on how the state plans to allocate resources and implement legal frameworks to ensure that the "Power of Care" initiative translates into grassroots impact. The discussion moved beyond theoretical concepts, focusing on the practical integration of services to ensure no family falls through the cracks of the social safety net.

Central to the session's success was its participatory format. Following the high-level discussions, participants divided into specialized working groups to develop a concrete joint action plan across four thematic pillars. The first group focused on "Social Services and Local Policing," seeking to improve the synergy between law enforcement and social workers to ensure a sensitive, victim-centered response to domestic violence. The second group addressed the specific needs of "Supporting Families of Veterans and Military Personnel," recognizing the unique psychological and social pressures faced by those returning from the front and their loved ones. The third group explored "Communities as Hubs of Care," brainstorming ways to transform local administrative centers into multifaceted support zones. Finally, the fourth group tackled "Economic Capacity and Sustainable Development of Families," identifying economic stability as a primary preventative measure against social instability and violence. This collaborative effort ensured that the resulting strategy is not only ambitious but also practically grounded in the inter-agency cooperation required to build a safer, more resilient Ukraine.



Visit of the President of the Republic of Cyprus Nikos Christodoulides to Ukraine

President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy received the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Nikos Christodoulides, in Kyiv.

This marks the first visit by a Cypriot head of state since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion and the first in ten years.

"We perceive today's visit as a sign of support for Ukraine and as a symbol of our continued readiness to work together for the benefit of both our nations and all of Europe,"

Volodymyr Zelenskyy noted.



The President provided an update on the situation in Ukraine, particularly on the front lines, as well as the priorities and efforts of the Ukrainian team in the negotiation process with international partners.

Nikos Christodoulides commended the resilience of the Ukrainian people against Russia's criminal invasion. He emphasized that any peace agreement must be based on UN principles and full respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The leaders devoted special attention to Ukraine's European integration. Kyiv anticipates that historic decisions—specifically the opening of new negotiation clusters for Ukraine—will be adopted during the Cypriot Presidency of the Council of the EU in the first half of 2026.

"Ukraine has provided Europe with a significant unifying impulse, and this energy strengthens European power. We expect the European community to stand with Ukraine as necessary to achieve peace and guarantee reliable security,"

the President of Ukraine emphasized.





The meeting also addressed the intensification of sanctions pressure on Russia. Zelenskyy stressed that the new, finalized EU sanctions package must deliver a tangible blow to the Russian Federation's energy sector and other sources of war financing.

Furthermore, Ukraine counts on Cyprus's support for collective European decisions regarding Russian assets.

"Russia must pay for the war it started and continues to wage. It is only fair that the funds needed for defense and recovery after Russian strikes be drawn from the assets the aggressor left in the hands of the free world,"

Volodymyr Zelenskyy stated.

The President of Ukraine specifically thanked Cyprus for its recent vote in favor of the UN General Assembly resolution regarding Ukrainian children abducted by Russia and expressed hope for continued humanitarian cooperation.

Sergiy Nizhynskyi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the Republic of Cyprus, also participated in the meeting. The President of Cyprus noted the active role and dedication of the NGO "UA Experts" in its cooperation with the Government of Ukraine and UN agencies. He highlighted the involvement of the youth from the UA Experts Leadership Club as being particularly valuable.

Source: Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Cyprus



Ukraine in Cyprus: An Evening of Music, Diplomacy, and Mutual Support

The diplomatic reception hosted by the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Cyprus in honor of the Day of Dignity and Freedom facilitated effective negotiations and agreements between the two countries regarding security, logistics, transportation, and postal communications. The event, held at the Hilton Hotel in Nicosia, brought together approximately 350 representatives from diplomatic, governmental, and business circles, as well as civic and cultural figures from various nations.

The official representative of Cyprus for the evening was the Minister of Interior of the Republic, Constantinos Ioannou. The Minister expressed his admiration for the willpower and resilience of the Ukrainian people. Following the concert portion of the event, he noted that Ukrainian music had left a particularly profound impression on him.



Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Cyprus Constantinos Ioannou



Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the Republic of Cyprus Sergiy Nyzhynskyi

Among the attendees were representatives of various national communities in Cyprus, including the Italian, Lithuanian, Greek, and Georgian diasporas.

Diplomatic respect was also shown by the embassies of Poland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Romania, the United Kingdom, the United States, Egypt, Israel, and Georgia.

In his address to the audience, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine in the Republic of Cyprus, Sergiy Nizhynskyi, emphasized the daily challenges faced by Ukrainians living under the conditions of the full-scale war with Russia. The Ambassador appealed to the international audience, creating a foundation for strengthening support for Ukraine in Cyprus.

The entire event was organized to ensure guests immediately felt the Ukrainian style and spirit. The entrance was illuminated with blue and yellow lighting.





Delegation of the Federation of Greek Societies of Ukraine

The foyer featured an exhibition of unique icons by artists Sofia Atlantova, Oleksandr Klymenko, and Herman Klymenko. Guests were greeted by young women in traditional Ukrainian costumes (the Slava Tribe dance ensemble, Nicosia).

Inside the hall, several screens displayed videos from Ukraine, accompanied by modern Ukrainian background music. These elements were personally curated by the Ambassador's wife, Yuliia Nizhynska, who is the head of the NGO "UA Experts."





Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the Republic of Cyprus Sergiy Nizhynskyi, Yuliia Nizhynska, and Lithuanian guests

The evening was hosted by Yuliia Vertova and Mykola Serga. Mykola presented performances by "Cultural Forces"—a collective of veterans who have already graced stages worldwide. The audience greeted the songs with standing ovations; international guests enthusiastically filmed performances of Ukrainian folk songs and global hits.

Special admiration was garnered by bandurist Inna Ishchenko, whose voice in Cyprus is now associated with soulful Ukrainian music.

The very next day, Ambassador Sergiy Nizhynskyi, alongside a group of Ukrainian Members of Parliament, held negotiations with Cypriot parliamentarians regarding decisions vital to Ukraine, achieving tangible results in their mission.





What is Ukraine like? Who are its people, what is its culture, and what is its potential? In answering these questions, Cyprus is showing increasing sympathy toward Ukraine, opening new opportunities for both Ukrainian diplomacy and the Ukrainians living on the island. This was the impact of the Embassy's two official events — the Holodomor Memorial Day and the Day of Dignity and Freedom.

The organization of the Day of Dignity was made possible through the support of partners: Dragon Capital, MHP, Federation of Greek Societies of Ukraine, UA Experts, UKRCY. news, Swarmly, Help Heroes of Ukraine, 24Print, FLORI, and Hilton Park Nicosia.

Photos by Anna Lipieieva and Oleksii Nazarov

Source: <https://ukrcy.news/2025/11/28/ukrayina-na-kipri-vechir-muzyky-dyplomatiyi-ta-vzayemnoyi-pidtrymky/>

We must not appear to be a nation that only complains about the presence of Russians

For Ukraine today, Cyprus is not just a popular resort and financial center, but a strategic point on the geopolitical map where the interests of Europe, the Middle East, and Russia intersect. Amidst a massive Russian presence and Moscow's long-standing attempts to gain a foothold on the island, Kyiv is building a new partnership model with Nicosia through drones, security, sanctions pressure, and engagement with the Ukrainian community.

In a conversation with Ukrinform, Ukraine's Ambassador Sergiy Nizhynskyi explained why Cyprus is becoming an EU security platform in the region, how Ukrainians on the island resist Russia's hybrid influence, and why today, flag and language are not just symbols, but elements of defense.

DUE TO GEOGRAPHY, CYPRUS POSSESSES UNIQUE STRATEGIC POTENTIAL

— Mr. Ambassador, during the meeting between the Presidents of Ukraine and Cyprus in early October, defense cooperation and the implementation of joint infrastructure projects were discussed. Can we expect the implementation of these agreements to begin following Nikos Christodoulides' visit to Ukraine?

— I consider this visit of the President of Cyprus to Ukraine truly historic, as the previous one took place back in 2015. As you can see, there was a significant pause in top-level contacts.

I am confident that defense and security will be priority topics during the discussions. This includes cooperation in the field of drones, as well as conducting joint exercises that have already



Sergiy Nizhynskyi,
Ambassador of Ukraine to Cyprus

proven effective, particularly between the national guards of both countries. Issues regarding IT and cybersecurity will also likely be raised.

At the same time, what is most important is that both sides desire to implement these initiatives specifically on the island. Cyprus well understands the importance of cooperating with Ukraine, which is a pioneer in the drone industry—both in production and in training and operations under real modern warfare conditions. Thus, Ukraine is a key partner for Cyprus in matters of defense, security, and emergency response.

— In the context of drone cooperation, are we talking about the localization of production in Cyprus?

— As Ambassador, I constantly emphasize that Cyprus is a unique platform, both in terms of its tax system and its training opportunities. This makes it possible to open European representative offices on the island and establish joint Ukrainian-Cypriot production of not only drones but other equipment as well.

The geographical location of Cyprus is also very important: only 65 km from Syria and about 140 km from Israel. As the only EU state in the Middle East region, Cyprus possesses

unique strategic potential and can become a key venue for making important decisions at the regional and European levels.

I HOPE FOR GOOD NEWS REGARDING DEFENSE COOPERATION IN THE NEAR FUTURE

— In Ukraine, media reports that Cyprus plans to reduce focus on defense issues during its Presidency of the Council of the EU from January to July were received with some concern. Do you see risks here for Europe's continued defense support for Ukraine?

— I believe that journalists slightly misinterpreted this information. Recently, I attended a military parade on Cyprus Independence Day, which featured various armaments, including those from Israel and Germany. In my opinion, among these defense systems are those that Cyprus could transfer to Ukraine while receiving more modern ones from partners. This is one of the issues that may be raised during negotiations between our countries. I hope for good news regarding defense cooperation in the near future.

— The President of Cyprus recently announced an intention to create a regional security organization in the Middle East modeled after NATO or the OSCE. How realistic do you think this idea is? Could Ukraine be involved as a partner or observer?

— Creating something like NATO is currently impossible. There are certain associations that strengthen security and improve bilateral or trilateral relations between countries within the framework of European strategy. They always operate in the context of a general security strategy aimed at protecting Europe and Ukraine.

At the same time, such initiatives are interesting from a communication standpoint, as they improve Cyprus's bilateral relations with states it seeks to cooperate with. I think it is less about creating a new military block and more about developing dialogue and partnership in the region.

THERE IS LITTLE POSITIVE IN THE CYPRIOT EXPERIENCE OF CONFLICT SETTLEMENT

— In the context of the peace process, parallels are sometimes drawn with the Cypriot model. Your colleague, the Ambassador of Cyprus, noted that it cannot serve as an example for Ukraine because the conflict on the island remains unresolved. What conclusions could Ukraine draw from the Cypriot experience?

— I fully agree with my colleague Michalis Firillas — there is little positive here, as Cyprus has remained divided for over 50 years. The only plus is that there are no active hostilities now, but the sense of a constant threat among citizens has not disappeared. There is a buffer zone — essentially empty territory with abandoned houses. Meanwhile, life continues on both sides of it.

People in Cyprus left their homes much like our citizens are doing in the Donetsk or Luhansk regions. But legally, their property rights have not been settled. Currently, a variant is being discussed where the leaders of Turkey and Cyprus could

raise the issue of temporary residency for Ukrainian refugees in these abandoned houses. Theoretically, they could live there for free in exchange for maintaining these properties. Legal services are currently working on this, as it is important that everything is coordinated to avoid future ownership problems or lawsuits.

But returning to your question, I want to emphasize that Ukraine also has experience to share with Cyprus: primarily in the protection of children, support for military families, and people who have suffered from conflict-related sexual violence. We see that Cyprus is only now, 51 years after the events of 1974, beginning to raise the topic of rapes committed by the military. In Ukraine, in the fourth year of the full-scale war, these issues are already being addressed at a high level. We have prepared a series of draft laws to protect survivors, providing for compensation and the legal status of children born as a result of such crimes. We can transfer this experience to our partners.



RUSSIA IS BUILDING A STRATEGIC BRIDGEHEAD OF INFLUENCE IN CYPRUS

— How does Ukraine assess Cyprus's position on sanctions against the Russian "shadow fleet"? Is the Ukrainian side engaging in dialogue with Nicosia regarding increased control over shipping operations related to the Russian Federation?

— We record facts where operations of ship-to-ship transfers of Russian oil occur in the Limassol area. The Embassy has sent notes and informed the Cypriot side about such cases several times. We hope for an appropriate response from the government, as these are very serious matters. For example, when a tanker leaves Tuapse ostensibly for Israel, but suspicious operations occur near Cyprus along the way, it is recorded not only by us — journalists, satellite systems, and analytical platforms see it too. All this information is in the public domain. The key question, besides recording, is the response to such actions, which directly violate sanctions policy and must have appropriate consequences.

— Russians make up almost a tenth of the population of Cyprus. By various estimates, there are over 100,000 of them. You have been working on the island for nearly three months. How perceptible is the Russian presence?



— According to our data, about 143,000 registered citizens of the Russian Federation live in Cyprus, and this does not include those with dual citizenship. According to my estimates, 10-13% of Russian citizens have naturalized and are already present in government bodies at various levels — not in top positions, but the influence is noticeable. The Russian embassy is the largest in Cyprus, essentially a "city within a city." It employs nearly 300 diplomatic and administrative staff. For comparison, the US embassy has 173.

— And how many in the Ukrainian embassy?

— Only five employees. This clearly demonstrates why Cyprus requires increased attention from our side. For Russia, Cyprus is a strategic platform — essentially their "Crimea in the Middle East." This is why they try to integrate as much as possible: individuals like Primakov and Surkov, and high-ranking FSB representatives, have permanent residency on the island.

The Russian Ambassador to Cyprus is FSB General Murat Zyazikov, who was the president of Ingushetia during the Beslan tragedy and remains an advisor to Putin. His staff is effectively based in the occupied part of the island and moves freely across both parts of Cyprus, which raises many questions for both us and the Cypriots.

Russian influence there is immense: real estate, business, shopping centers, cultural projects, and media. In hotels, you can see three or four Russian TV channels, even though some of them are under sanctions and broadcast blatant propaganda. This is why we initiated the creation of a Ukrainian broadcaster in Cyprus. During the visit of MPs, I asked for support for this idea. We have already agreed with the MEGOGO network, which will launch the option to subscribe to a Ukrainian channel package in Cyprus. This is a small but important victory, as the Ukrainian community must have access to its own information space. We also sent several notes regarding Russian channels in Cypriot hotels and are confident that the hotel and restaurant associations will support us in this.

I TELL UKRAINIANS: "IF YOU SEE A RUSSIAN FLAG— PLACE TWO UKRAINIAN ONES OPPOSITE IT"

— Mr. Sergiy, I wanted to ask about your personal impression. Does the Russian presence in Cyprus stand out? How demonstrative is it?

— In Limassol, it is extremely noticeable and, in some places, demonstrative. For example, sanctioned companies operate there, specifically the structure of Dmitry Punin, who is under sanctions, yet his name still graces the signs of shops and brand outlets. You hear a lot of Russian language.

I am a Kyivite myself and used Russian in everyday life in the past, but now I fundamentally speak only Ukrainian and ask our community to do the same. When the Russian language dominates, a person often automatically switches to it because, after living there for 10–15 years, they no longer realize how important it is to preserve their identity. Therefore, for me, the main thing is not only to consolidate the community but also to explain why this is necessary.

Let me give an example. An Ukrainian House was recently opened in Paphos, opposite which is the Russian consulate with a Russian flag. I told our people: "Do not pay attention. If you see a Russian flag — place two Ukrainian ones opposite it." We must confidently and culturally demonstrate our presence using the tools of cultural diplomacy. We should not look like a nation that only complains about the presence of Russians. Cyprus has the right to host whoever it wants; that is its choice. But equally, we have the right to demand space for our citizens and our identity.

Today, according to the Minister of Interior of Cyprus, there are 24,000 Ukrainians with temporary protection status on the island, compared to about 4,000 before the war. According to our estimates, there are approximately 33,000 Ukrainians in total, which is 2.6% of the population of Cyprus. This is a share that gives the moral and political right to ask for support for the Ukrainian community and its integration initiatives.

Ukrainians actually integrate well — this is evident across all of Europe. In Cyprus, specifically, there are many people from Greek villages near Mariupol; for example, the village of Sartana has moved almost entirely. For them, the Greek language is familiar, and the climate reminds them of home. Ukrainians do not stand with an outstretched hand — they quickly find work and apply their skills, participating in public life. Therefore, for Cyprus, which is interested in labor migration and a peaceful society like the Ukrainians, it is very important to provide them with these opportunities.

MULTI-ENTRY VISA BAN FOR RUSSIANS WAS MET CALMLY AND PRAGMATICALLY

— How was the EU decision to ban multi-entry Schengen visas for Russian citizens perceived in Cyprus, given the strategic role of tourism for the island's economy?

— I did not see any "tragedy". On the contrary, this decision was communicated as an EU requirement, and the Cypriot side treated it calmly and pragmatically: essentially, let's focus on legal tourists and transparent flows, bringing everything out of the shadows — and this is a perfectly normal approach.

The Minister of Tourism voiced updated statistics for 2025: the UK ranks first in tourist flow, Israel second, and Poland third. At the same time, Poland's figure is, of course, formed not only by Polish tourists but also by Ukrainians, Russians, Belarusians, and citizens of other countries traveling through Polish airports.

We also raised an important issue during a meeting with the Minister of Social Welfare. Having conducted an analysis, we saw that from November to April, there is effectively no tourist season in Cyprus, and many hotels stand idle. So we proposed: why not provide Ukrainians with the opportunity to stay during this period at cost price? This would allow for the health recovery of children and support for military families who could spend at least a few days without the threat of missiles. And, importantly, it would be no more expensive than a vacation in Ukraine. The Cypriot side showed significant interest in this idea. We are working on it, and I hope it will yield concrete results in the near future.

UKRAINIAN-CYPRIOT RELATIONS MUST REMAIN CRYSTAL CLEAR AT THE HONORARY CONSUL LEVEL

— Mr. Ambassador, after your arrival in Cyprus, it turned out that some individuals had been posing as honorary consuls of Ukraine for years. How was it possible for people without any mandate to use this status?

— When we systematically updated the embassy website, which had not been edited for 5–6 years, five "honorary consuls" were listed. After verification, it turned out that only one — in Paphos — was actually active. But the Ukrainian community had never seen him or his help. Furthermore, he appears in registries as a person in bankruptcy proceedings. We officially informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about this and expect an appropriate response.

During the data update, we also discovered another situation. A citizen was submitted for the position of honorary consul in 2023 during Minister Dmytro Kuleba's tenure,



but the procedure was never completed. The reason was discovered circumstances that required additional verification. Specifically, it became known that he has a prior conviction in Greece. This was grounds for an in-depth check of his integrity both in Cyprus and in Ukraine. Despite the lack of a mandate, he handed out business cards indicating the status of honorary consul, which he had no right to do.

However, another story struck me most. The head of the "Plast" branch in Cyprus contacted us, stating that the so-called honorary consul in Larnaca did not let the scouts into the church to pass the Bethlehem Light of Peace simply because they were Catholics. This is absolutely unacceptable. We reacted promptly to this appeal as well. Currently, the embassy is under significant pressure regarding this situation, but I want to emphasize: we will act only within the framework of the law. Ukrainian-Cypriot relations must remain transparent and crystal clear at the honorary consul level. I am certain that the MFA of Ukraine will support the decision to withdraw the candidacy, as the information has already become public and has led to numerous journalistic inquiries.

— Cyprus has supported Ukraine since the beginning of the full-scale invasion. What dynamics of public sentiment do you observe on the island?

— The level of public support in Cyprus largely depends on the Ukrainians themselves. If they respect themselves and clearly identify as Ukrainians—through participation in events, cultural initiatives, clothing, symbols, and unity with the embassy — then the attitude towards them will correspond. This is key, as our embassy of five people cannot compete with the Russian embassy of over 300. Likewise, a community of 33,000 Ukrainians cannot compete with a 143,000-strong Russian community. Therefore, our path is to remain ourselves and do what we do best: engage in cultural diplomacy, social assistance, identity preservation, and joint active work. Believe me, cohesion produces an incredible effect. We all need it — both in Kyiv and in Nicosia.

Source: Ukrinform, Nadiya Yurchenko, Kyiv (<https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-world/4065535-sergij-nizhynskij-posol-ukraini-na-kipri.html>)

Photos from the archives of the Ukrainian Embassy in Cyprus and Facebook/Sergiy Nizhynskiy

Consular Services at the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Cyprus



The services are provided for a citizen of Ukraine by appointment only: <https://online.mfa.gov.ua/>

Citizens of Ukraine apply to the Embassy in person, without lawyers and third parties. For your enquiries, please email consul_cy@mfa.gov.ua

Apostilization

Since Ukraine and Cyprus are parties to the Hague "Apostille" Convention, authentication of all public documents issued in one country must be apostilled there to be accepted as authentic in the other. Information on how to obtain a Hague apostille on public documents issued in Ukraine is available at the MFA website. The Apostille stamp cannot be affixed to the Embassy.

Acquisition of Ukrainian Citizenship

The key legal instruments that regulate Ukrainian citizenship are the Law of Ukraine on the Ukrainian Citizenship and the Presidential Decree of 27 March 2001 No. 215 on some aspects of implementation of the Law on the Ukrainian Citizenship, namely the Procedure regulating proceedings on applications and submissions related to citizenship and execution of adopted decisions.



Acquisition of Ukrainian citizenship can be initiated only by individuals. Such request may be submitted not only by a stateless person, but also by a foreigner who pledges to terminate his/her foreign citizenship within 2 years of his/her registration as a citizen of Ukraine.

Certificate for return to Ukraine

The Certificate for return to Ukraine is an identity document that confirms the citizenship of Ukraine who can enter Ukraine. It is issued by foreign diplomatic missions of Ukraine. This document only gives the right to return to Ukraine (not travel)

The Certificate is issued in the case of:

1. loss or theft of an identity document confirming the citizenship of Ukraine and / or giving the right to leave Ukraine and enter Ukraine;
2. when the validity of the identity document confirming the citizenship of Ukraine and giving the right to leave Ukraine and enter Ukraine has expired;
3. when it is established that the identity document confirms the citizenship of Ukraine and gives the right to leave Ukraine and enter Ukraine, is invalid for other reasons;
4. when a citizen of Ukraine has not drawn up identity documents confirming the citizenship of Ukraine and / or giving the right to leave Ukraine and enter Ukraine.

Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Office

The Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Office monitors incidents nationwide, maintaining an electronic registry and providing statistics for legal and public oversight. In collaboration with government agencies and the Attorney General, the Office ensures effective case handling and reviews criminal files to provide expert opinions. Specially trained members conduct video-recorded interviews with minor victims and witnesses while promoting professional training and public awareness campaigns. To support victims, the Office works alongside the SPAVO Association, which offers professional counseling and psychological aid to those affected by domestic abuse. Individuals can access immediate assistance, legal information, and support via the free, 24/7 helpline 1440.

Certificate of the validity of a Ukrainian driver's license

To obtain a Certificate of validity for a Ukrainian driver's license, applicants must personally submit their foreign passport (original and copy), a double-sided copy of their license, a completed application form, and a payment receipt. The consular fee is €28, payable at the Bank of Cyprus after receiving an invoice from the Embassy. The processing time for the request is approximately 10 days. Upon completion, the applicant receives a certificate regardless of whether the inspection results are positive or negative.



Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Cyprus

Address: Nicosia, Engomi, 2415, Makedonitissa, 10
Andrea Miauli St. 35.155981, 33.314643.

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Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU 2026



*An Autonomous Union. Open to the World.
The European Union must be autonomous.*

A more autonomous Union will demonstrate the necessary internal strength to cooperate with external partners whenever possible, while also acting independently when necessary.

European autonomy is layered and multifaceted: from security and defence, to energy and trade, to competitiveness with green transition, to digital innovation with social cohesion. This is Europe's moment to define and reshape its future through an assertive autonomy trajectory. This is what is expected from a global leader and a stable, predictable partner that is firmly anchored to multilateralism and fully committed to the UN Charter, international law, including international law of the sea. These are the guiding principles for building strength through robust partnerships from a principled starting point.

Against this backdrop, the Cyprus Presidency will pursue an ambitious and results-oriented approach, through the following 5 overarching priorities:

- Autonomy through Security, Defence Readiness and Preparedness
- Autonomy through Competitiveness
- Open to the World, Autonomous
- An Autonomous Union of Values that Leaves No One Behind
- A long-term budget for an autonomous Union



Cyprus at the Helm: 265 Moments of Leadership

The Republic of Cyprus is gearing up for an ambitious Presidency of the Council of the EU, with **265 scheduled meetings** designed to drive the European agenda forward.

27 High-Level Meetings:

- **1 Informal Meeting of Heads of State or Government**
- **19 Informal Ministerial Councils**
- **4 Informal Ministerial Meetings / Conferences**
- **3 other HL Meetings:** Including the Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament, the Opening Ceremony, and the Visit of the College of Commissioners

238 Other Meetings:

- Nicosia (Filoxenia Conference Centre): 82 meetings
- Limassol: 35 meetings
- Larnaca: 33 meetings
- Paphos: 33 meetings
- Ammochostos: 31 meetings
- Other Venues: 24 meetings (including Nicosia Municipality, Joint Rescue Coordination Centre, University of Cyprus, etc.)

From the capital to the coastal regions, Cyprus is ready to lead with precision, unity, and a shared vision for Europe.

Logo and visual identity

The visual identity of the Cyprus presidency of the Council of the European Union draws inspiration from one of the island's most distinctive symbols of cultural heritage: the embroidery of Lefkara.

Recognised by UNESCO as intangible cultural heritage, this centuries-old lace-making tradition from the village of Lefkara has been shaped by local craftsmanship, as well as by Venetian influences, and by ancient Greek and Byzantine geometric motifs.

More than just an art form, it reflects the creativity, resilience and enduring spirit of Cyprus, the essence of an island at the crossroads between three continents: A country deeply

rooted in Europe, at its southeastern edge, “weaving” bridges between people, regions and cultures throughout its long history.

At the heart of the logo lies the idea of thread: fragile on its own, yet strong and cohesive when woven together. This serves as a metaphor for the strength that stems from unity, from coming together as a single, harmonious and resilient whole: the European project itself.

For Cyprus, this vision of unity holds particular significance. As the last divided and the only occupied member state of the EU, Cyprus looks to the unifying power of the European project as a source of strength and inspiration for its own reunification, which is an indispensable component of European integration.

Being at the helm of the Council for six months, Cyprus features a logo composed of 27 components, each representing a member state, coming together to form a stronger and more united Union that advances with solidarity and shared purpose.

The design evokes the radiant Cypriot sun, a source of life, light, energy, renewal and hope, for a shared, sustainable and brighter European future.

The colour palette reinforces this narrative. Warm shades of orange reflect the copper hue of the Cypriot flag and the glow of the sun, symbolising warmth, openness and collaboration. Meanwhile, the deep blue of the EU in the background emphasises Cyprus’ identity as an integral part of the EU, distinct in character yet seamlessly interwoven into the European tapestry.

The logo conveys the idea that the Union’s strength lies in what unites it: cooperation, solidarity, stability and deeper integration. Guided by these values, the Cyprus presidency of the Council of the EU is committed to steering the Union forward, with a vision of a Europe that is strong, resilient and centred on its citizens.

A Europe capable of addressing today’s challenges in security and defence, competitiveness, economic stability, energy, the green and digital transitions, social cohesion and regional cooperation in a rapidly changing and increasingly unpredictable world.

In a time that calls for vision, leadership and collective strength, the Cyprus presidency logo symbolises its commitment to working towards a truly autonomous Union that is outward looking and open to the world.

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Source: <https://cyprus-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/en/>



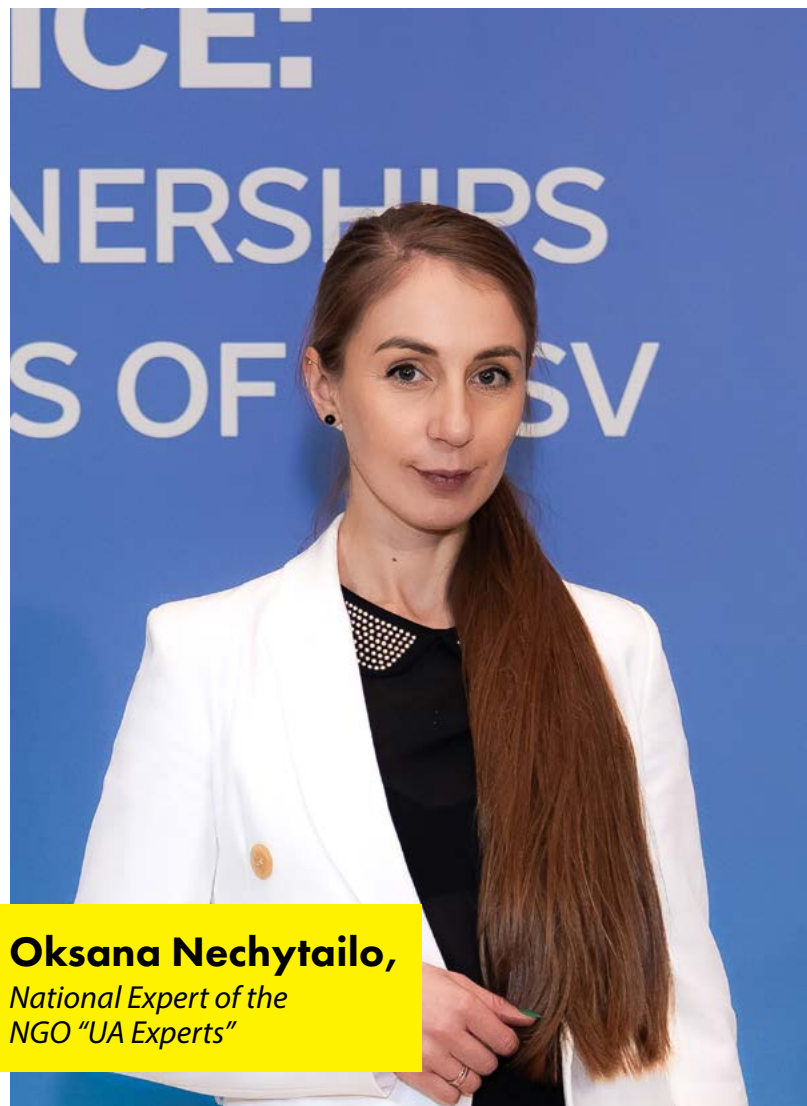
United for Justice: Ukraine's Landmark Presidency of the Global Alliance for the Prevention of Sexual Violence in Conflict

On November 25–26, 2025, Kyiv hosted two pivotal international events that served as a symbolic and substantive conclusion to Ukraine's Presidency of the Global Alliance for the Prevention of Sexual Violence in Conflict (PSVI Alliance). Held within the framework of the annual "16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence," these events demonstrated a strengthened global unity focused on survivor support, the restoration of justice, and the pursuit of accountability for perpetrators.

The Transition of Leadership

On November 25, the high-level meeting "Strengthening Partnerships for Survivor Support" marked the transition of the Alliance presidency from Ukraine to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The venue — the National Museum of the History of Ukraine in the Second World War — lent the proceedings profound moral and historical gravity, as the "Mother Ukraine" monument stood as a testament to resilience and the struggle for human dignity.

The event gathered delegations from member states, including the United Kingdom, France, Japan, Spain, Australia, the United States, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Colombia, Timor-Leste, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Malta, and Switzerland, alongside representatives of the Ukrainian government, civil society, and international organizations. This diverse geographical participation reaffirmed that combating



Oksana Nechytailo,
National Expert of the
NGO "UA Experts"

Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) is a global challenge requiring a unified response.

Taras Kachka, Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, emphasized the crucial role of shared knowledge and best practices in shaping effective international policies. He underscored that any conflict must conclude not only with the cessation of hostilities but with the restoration of justice through the recognition of crimes, comprehensive aid to survivors, and the establishment of robust response mechanisms.

United for Justice: The International Conference

The following day, November 26, featured the international conference "United for Justice: Strengthening Partnerships to Support Survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence," serving as the centerpiece of Ukraine's presidency year.

Welcoming remarks were delivered by Deputy Prime Minister Taras Kachka, UK Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office Chris Elmore, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Ukraine Masashi Nakagome, and Deputy Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Olena Kondratiuk. The speakers highlighted Ukraine's leadership role amidst full-scale war and its ability to not only respond to domestic crises but to actively shape the international human rights agenda.

Key Achievements of the Presidency

During the conference, significant outcomes were announced: under Ukraine's leadership, the Alliance expanded to 33 participants, welcoming five new members, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNFPA, and the NGO "UA Experts." Special attention was devoted to strengthening cooperation regarding reparations, holistic survivor support, and international advocacy.

The conference program featured three panel discussions focused on enhancing the collective response to sexual violence, achieving justice, and exchanging global best practices. These dialogues united government officials, international organizations, legal experts, and civil society, effectively bridging high-level policy with practical field experience.



High-Level Advocacy and Future Steps

The significance of the events was further elevated by the participation of special guests: First Lady of Ukraine Olena Zelenska, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict Pramila Patten, and the EU Ambassador for Equality Aude Maio-Coliche. In her address, Olena Zelenska noted that with international support, Ukraine has managed to scale assistance services, expand the network of mobile teams and survivor relief centers, and invest in specialist training for non-traumatic communication. However, she emphasized that the fundamental demand of survivors remains unchanged: beyond safety and respect, they seek the punishment of criminals and the restoration of justice.



The events were organized by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration in cooperation with the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy, with the support of UNFPA Ukraine, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict network, in partnership with NGO "UA Experts".

The high-level meeting and international conference not only summarized Ukraine's achievements within the Global Alliance but also established a foundation for intensified international cooperation. The Ukrainian experience, forged under the harrowing conditions of war, has become a vital contribution to the global dialogue on how the world can more effectively protect survivors, ensure justice, and prevent impunity for crimes of sexual violence in conflict.



Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence: Global Solidarity and the Path to Justice

It is a great honor for me to inherit this initiative and to join the efforts of so many people in Ukraine and around the world who are addressing the harrowing issue of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), as well as the mechanisms for its prevention and mitigation.

Over the past year, this global initiative has expanded significantly – the PSVI Alliance now includes five new members and a total of 33 participants.

It is evident that CRSV is not a new phenomenon; unfortunately, it has existed in virtually all conflicts throughout history. It is imperative that we consolidate our efforts to the greatest extent in order to prevent such atrocities and to respond effectively to the consequences.

“*A significant milestone this year has been our close cooperation with the Global Survivors Fund to implement a pilot project on urgent interim reparations in Ukraine. This is a bold and forward-looking undertaking which has, understandably, highlighted certain sensitive and nuanced aspects regarding the functioning of such mechanisms.*

Through today's event, we are symbolically and formally handing over the presidency of the Alliance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This serves as a vital bridge, demonstrating that there is no room for bureaucracy when addressing sexual violence during war and conflict.



Taras Kachka,
Deputy Prime Minister for European
and Euro-Atlantic Integration

Addressing sexual violence is an exceptionally complex task. As we engage with this issue, we recognize that the elements of fear, social stigma, and the highly specific nature of the trauma inflicted require a particularly careful, thorough, and balanced approach.

I am grateful for the existence of the Alliance, which assists us in developing our national policy in this field. At the same time, we acknowledge that the scars of this violence will remain within our society for many years to come. Consequently, we are faced with the necessity for specialized, long-term, and dedicated institutional efforts.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to everyone actively working on this front. Thank you very much.



Strengthening Partnerships for Survivor-Centred CRSV Response in Ukraine

Today's discussion takes place at a critical moment for Ukraine's recovery and for the global fight against conflict-related sexual violence. Our institutions work every day to ensure survivors can access justice, services, and reparations.

Funding for CRSV response cannot be paused. Not now. Not at any point.

A pause in funding is not an administrative delay. It is an interruption of safety. A disruption of healing. A barrier to justice.

Ukraine's entire CRSV response is built on a multi-sectoral model developed jointly with the UN under the Framework of Cooperation. This model works only when **every link in the chain remains intact**.

“Among the most affected by funding instability are the Survivor Rescue Centres — frontline spaces where survivors receive immediate, confidential, trauma-informed support.



Yevgeniia Lukianchenko,
Advisor to the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration

Yet in the last year, due to cuts, **several Rescue Centres have been forced to scale down** — just when escalated hostilities and new displacement increased demand.

Every disrupted centre means hundreds of survivors who cannot access help.

When funding stops, the consequences are immediate and severe:

1. Interrupted emergency support
2. Disrupted psychosocial assistance
3. Breakdown of referral pathways
4. Delays in justice
5. Loss of specialised staff, rebuilding capacity can take years.

In simple terms: **Funding interruptions translate into interrupted lives.**

This is not charity. This is not optional humanitarian assistance.

This is a **pillar of Ukraine's recovery, rule-of-law reform, and EU integration pathway**.

Long-term, stable funding is required to:

- implement the reparations programme linked to the new law;
- ensure compliance with international standards, including the Istanbul Convention;



- maintain access to justice for CRSV survivors, including detained Ukrainian POWs and civilians;
- support safe reintegration into communities;
- prevent re-victimisation and reduce trafficking risks;
- uphold EU-aligned, survivor-centred approaches demanded under accession benchmarks.

Cutting or pausing funding now would reverse precisely the progress donors have invested in since 2022.

Ukraine is committed to doing its part — legally, institutionally, politically.

But without **predictable, continuous funding**, the system will not function.

CRSV response is not a humanitarian add-on. It is a core component of Ukraine's rule-of-law reforms, justice sector development, and EU integration efforts.

Stable funding directly supports:

- Implementation of reparations programmes, including interim payments and long-term rehabilitation.
- Documentation for future accountability.
- Guarantees of non-repetition.

Moreover, as Ukraine advances along the EU path, the expectation for aligned, survivor-centred, gender-responsive justice policies grows.

Cutting funding now would slow reforms that form part of accession benchmarks — a counterproductive outcome for donors and Ukraine alike.

You are not funding “activities”. You are funding **safety, dignity, and justice.**

Let me close with this:

Survivors of sexual violence do not choose when they need help.

Therefore, we cannot choose when to help them.

Every day that a Rescue Centre closes its doors, justice becomes more distant.

Every disruption in services increases the risk of retraumatisation.

Every pause in funding breaks the trust we have worked so hard to build.

Ukraine is committed. Our institutions are committed.

But we need you — our partners — to ensure that **survivor services remain uninterrupted, stable, and protected from financial uncertainty.**

There can be no pause.

Not for survivors.

Not for justice.

From Civil Society to Systemic Change: Ukraine's Experience in Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence

On November 26, 2025, in Kyiv, within the framework of the International Conference marking Ukraine's Presidency of the Global Alliance for the Prevention of Sexual Violence in Conflict (PSVI Alliance), a special side event was held to present the activities of Ukrainian civil society organizations (CSOs) to international donors and United Nations agencies.

This session focused on the pivotal role of civil society in shaping an effective, survivor-centered response to sexual violence perpetrated during the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. Representatives of Ukrainian CSOs presented key achievements, outlined existing challenges, and formulated priority needs for continued international support.

An effective response to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) is only possible through close cooperation between international donors, the government, and civil society. CSOs perform a significant volume of work at the intersection of policy and practice — providing expert guidance, piloting new approaches, supporting survivors, and filling gaps where the state objectively requires additional resources, time, or specialized expertise. In the crisis conditions of war, it is precisely this partnership that ensures the sustainability and effectiveness of the CRSV response.

At the side event, the NGO “UA Experts” was represented by expert and National Project Coordinator Snizhana Kushch. In her speech, she thanked international donors for their consistent support in forming a survivor-centered response to CRSV in Ukraine. She also expressed special gratitude to other panelists—representatives of NGOs working directly with



Snizhana Kushch,
Chief National Coordinator
of the NGO “UA Experts”

survivors to provide consultations, psychological, legal, and social support during their most difficult moments. This daily, often invisible work is a major contribution to restoring dignity, trust, and justice for survivors.

During the presentation, when addressed with the question:

“ Which approaches to cooperation with national and international partners have yielded the most tangible results in the CRSV response, and which innovations should be prioritized moving forward? ”

— Snizhana Kushch emphasized that the key success factors were:

- Sustainable institutional interaction between state authorities, CSOs, and international partners;
- Technical and expert support for reforms, rather than solely project-based activities;
- Engagement of independent civil society experts in working groups, law-making processes, and inter-agency coordination.

NGO “UA Experts” plays a vital role in this specific area—acting as an organization that provides expert support to the Alliance’s activities and participates in the development of legislation, analytical materials, and policies regarding CRSV prevention and response.

Legislative Breakthrough: Recognizing the Rights of Survivors

The expert devoted particular attention to the significance of the adoption of Law of Ukraine No. 4067-IX "On the Legal and Social Protection of Persons Affected by Sexual Violence Related to the Armed Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and the Provision of Urgent Interim Reparations."

This law is unprecedented for the Ukrainian legal system, as it provides the first legislative definition of sexual violence related to armed aggression in an extremely broad and comprehensive sense — ranging from rape to sexual slavery, human trafficking for sexual exploitation, forced reproductive practices, sexual coercion, and threats or attempts of such acts.

The law establishes a mechanism for granting survivor status and paying urgent interim reparations. Furthermore, for the first time in the history of Ukrainian legislation, it recognizes a distinct legal status for children born as a result of conflict-related sexual violence. Ms. Snizhana emphasized that the passage of this law was made possible by years of advocacy, analytical work, and the expert participation of CSOs supported by international partners.

Reparations as an Element of Justice, Not Humanitarian Aid

The importance of continuing and scaling the reparations project was highlighted separately. Reparations must be viewed not as a social welfare payment, but as an element of restorative justice, an acknowledgment of the harm caused, and a fulfillment of the state's responsibility toward survivors. To achieve this, stable funding, the development of administrative procedures, and expert support for necessary legislative initiatives are critically required.

International Law and Unfinished Reforms

The expert also emphasized the importance of the ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. At the same time, she noted that the implementing changes to the Criminal Code of Ukraine, while important, are compensatory and temporary in nature.

The section of the Criminal Code of Ukraine dedicated to war crimes remains conceptually outdated and does not account



for the realities of full-scale war, particularly the specifics of investigating and qualifying CRSV crimes. Further amendments to the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine are inevitable and require profound expert support.

Why Donor Support Must Be Long-Term

Concluding her speech, Snizhana Kushch emphasized the critical role of donors in supporting civil society experts who work systematically within working groups and participate in the preparation of legislative changes, policies, and standards.

Long-term, predictable support allows for the preservation of institutional memory, ensures the sustainability of reforms, and enables a transition from crisis response to a systemic, fair, and survivor-centered model of accountability for CRSV.

“ *Ukraine's experience convincingly demonstrates that an effective response to sexual violence in conflict is only possible when civil society is a full partner to the state and the international community, rather than merely an implementer of individual projects.*

Ukraine's journey proves that the state and civil society are not just subjects of international law seeking protection and justice. In the face of full-scale war, Ukraine, along with its civil society organizations, has become an active creator of modern international legal norms—filling them with practical substance, initiating new approaches to accountability for international crimes, and making a significant contribution to the development of a survivor-centered model of justice on a global level.



National Monitoring of Specialized Services: A Step Toward a Professional and Effective Survivor Support System

*On December 17, the **National Report on the Monitoring of Specialized Support Services for Survivors of Domestic and/or Gender-Based Violence** was presented in Kyiv.*

This event served as the definitive expert milestone of 2025 in the field of combating gender-based violence (GBV). For the first time, it provided a **comprehensive picture of the national network of specialized services**, evaluating them not merely by their existence, but by their quality, efficiency, and compliance with international standards.

Why National Monitoring Became a Necessity

The full-scale war has radically altered Ukraine's social landscape. Massive internal displacement, economic instability, heightened psychological tension, the loss of social ties, and prolonged stress have significantly increased the risks of domestic and gender-based violence. Simultaneously, the state has made significant strides in **expanding the network of specialized support services**, which has grown from a few dozen to over a thousand in recent years.

However, this quantitative growth exposed a critical gap: the **lack of a systemic understanding of how these services function in reality**. Key questions remained regarding their accessibility for survivors, the quality of aid



Snizhana Kushch,
Chief National Coordinator
of the NGO "UA Experts"

provided, and their capacity to operate under wartime conditions and emergencies. This necessitated the first **national monitoring**, initiated by the Ministry of Social Policy and the National Social Service of Ukraine, supported by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and prepared in partnership with the NGO "UA Experts."

The monitoring was designed not as an inspection, but as an analytical tool. It covered all types of specialized services—mobile social and psychological assistance teams, shelters, crisis rooms, day centers, primary counseling services, and hotlines—utilizing a unified methodology across three key dimensions:

- **Capacity** (staffing, financial, and material-technical resources);
- **Efficiency** (operational organization, inter-agency cooperation, and referral pathways);
- **Service Quality** (survivor-centered approach, confidentiality, accessibility, and safety).

Key Findings and Positive Trends

The National Report highlights several significant positive outcomes:

1. **Extensive Network Infrastructure:** The creation of a widespread network of specialized services is a definitive achievement of state policy, ensuring survivors can receive primary assistance within their own communities.
2. **Successful Local Models:** The monitoring identified hromadas (communities) that successfully built full assistance pathways—from crisis intervention to long-term psychological, social, and legal support.

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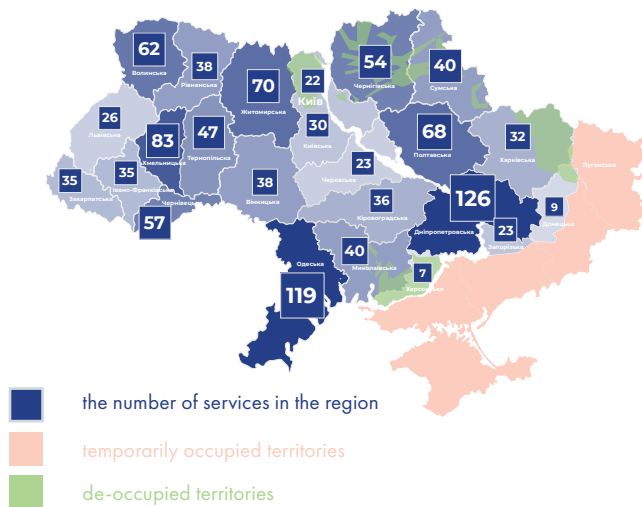
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- 3. Survivor-Centered Culture:** Many services have successfully institutionalized confidentiality, voluntary participation, and respect for the survivor's decisions, fostering trust in the overall assistance system.

Overall network of services to support persons affected by DV/CRSV



Despite these achievements, the network remains **uneven**. Key challenges include regional imbalances, staff shortages and burnout, unstable funding (particularly in frontline communities), and weak inter-agency coordination.

Expert Perspectives and Presentation Highlights

The presentation was opened by **Liudmyla Shemelynets**, First Deputy Minister of Social Policy, Family, and Unity of Ukraine. She emphasized that responding to violence must go beyond working with the survivor; it requires a comprehensive approach that includes working with the perpetrator, identifying root causes, and implementing preventative measures.



Olena Vysotska, Acting Head of the National Social Service of Ukraine, noted that their mission focuses on guidance, training, and supporting social service providers to increase the prestige of the social work profession. **Kateryna Levchenko**, Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy, underscored the indispensable role of specialized services in survivor support.



Akiko Sakae, UNFPA GBV Advisor, thanked Ukrainian state institutions and civil society for their systemic work under the extremely difficult conditions of war, expressing UNFPA's continued support for building a resilient, survivor-oriented system.

A detailed presentation of the monitoring results was delivered by **Olesia Kompaniiets**, who developed the methodology and data analysis approaches. Her report outlined both systemic bottlenecks and growth points for future policy improvement.



Legal Analysis and European Integration

A major focus of the presentation was the regulatory framework governing specialized services. **Snizhana Kushch**, expert and National Project Coordinator for NGO "UA Experts", presented an **analysis of current Ukrainian legislation for compliance with the Istanbul Convention and European Union directives**.



She emphasized that service effectiveness depends directly on the quality of legal regulation. The analysis revealed that while Ukraine has a formal regulatory basis, several gaps remain:

- **Lack of Mandatory Requirements:** There are no imperative requirements for mandatory service availability in every hromada or minimum standards for service coverage.
- **Unstable Financial Models:** Legislation does not guarantee basic, stable funding for specialized services as a permanent state or municipal function, leading to a heavy reliance on donor support.
- **Prevention and Information Gaps:** Current laws focus on crisis response rather than primary prevention and public awareness.
- **New Forms of Violence:** The regulatory framework is not yet fully prepared to address cyber-violence and digital harassment.



Best Practices and Scaling Success

Oleksandra Khamulenko, Head of the Equality Standards Compliance Department of the National Social Service, presented successful national models.



- **The Khotyn City Hromada:** A small community that, despite limited resources, built a highly effective system that now serves several neighboring hromadas.
- **Kyiv City Center for Gender Equality, Prevention, and Combating Violence:** Represented by Director **Tetiana Zotova**, this case demonstrated how stable funding and integrated city-wide systems can provide a seamless survivor-centered support pathway.

The presentation of the National Report confirmed that Ukraine is entering a new stage in its fight against domestic and gender-based violence—an era based on data, analytics, and strong partnerships between the state, international organizations, and civil society.

Strategic Planning Towards 2030: How Ukraine Shapes State Policy for Combating Violence

*On December 18, 2025, a landmark Strategic Session was held in Kyiv to develop the **State Social Program for the Prevention of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence** for the period until 2030. This event marked a critical milestone in establishing long-term state policy regarding security, social protection, and human rights within the context of Ukraine's European integration.*

The State Program as a Comprehensive Framework

The future State Social Program is envisioned not merely as a set of isolated tools, but as a **comprehensive framework document**. It covers the entire cycle of state policy — from primary prevention and dismantling stereotypes to effective response, access to justice, perpetrator accountability, and the protection of survivor rights. A key focus is aligning national legislation with international standards, particularly the Istanbul Convention and EU directives.

Strategic Session Format and Key Highlights

The event was opened by **Liudmyla Shemelynets**, First Deputy Minister of Social Policy, Family, and Unity of Ukraine. She emphasized the necessity of a holistic policy where prevention, response, and protection function as interconnected elements of a unified system.



Snizhana Kushch,
*Chief National Coordinator
of the NGO "UA Experts"*





Olena Kharytonova, a member of **GREVIO** (the monitoring body of the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention), joined the session online. She stressed that the 2030 Program must ensure cross-sectoral cooperation and clearly define state responsibility in protecting survivor rights.

The session was moderated by **Snizhana Kushch**, expert and National Project Coordinator for **NGO "UA Experts"**. The methodology was designed to ensure genuine strategic planning rather than a formal review. Participants utilized a "World Cafe" format to refine the Program's Concept, accounting for the drastically changed social context following the full-scale invasion, which has fundamentally shifted security risks and response requirements.



Thematic Working Groups: Bridging Policy and Practice

The most intensive phase involved **six thematic working groups**, uniting representatives from state authorities, civil society, and international partners:

- 1. Prevention and Overcoming Gender Stereotypes:** Focused on the role of education and information campaigns in achieving long-term societal shifts.
- 2. Developing the Response System:** Experts from the National Social Service and training centers emphasized the need for mandatory, standardized training and professional support for social workers.

- 3. Ensuring Accessibility and Quality of Support:** Focused on moving from the "formal existence" of services to ensuring real access and high-quality care regardless of geographic location.
- 4. Access to Justice and Legal Protection:** Discussed removing barriers within the legal system and ensuring seamless coordination between social and judicial institutions.
- 5. Investigation and Perpetrator Accountability:** Representatives from the Prosecutor General's Office and law enforcement focused on investigation efficiency and aligning procedures with international standards.
- 6. Legislative Alignment with EU Norms:** Experts worked on harmonizing national laws with European standards, eliminating declarative norms in favor of functional legal mechanisms.



Looking Toward 2030

The session concluded with a summary by **Nataliia Bohdanova**, Head of the Expert Group at the Ministry of Social Policy, Family, and Unity. She confirmed that the proposals and measurable indicators developed during the groups' work would form the foundation of the final State Social Program project.

The Strategic Session of December 18 demonstrated a shared understanding that combating violence requires a **systemic, long-term, and multi-sectoral state policy**. This logic is central to the new program — positioning it as a vital component of Ukraine's broader course toward European integration and the reinforcement of social security.



Why it is important to develop research cooperation between Ukraine and Cyprus and support student competitions

European integration is Ukraine's main development strategy in the 21st century, determining the direction of reforms in the political, economic, and legal spheres. Against the backdrop of large-scale transformations taking place in the context of war and reconstruction, there is a particularly acute need to study the experience of countries that have already undergone the process of adaptation and membership in the European Union. One such valuable example is Cyprus, a country that has managed to achieve EU membership despite internal political, territorial, and security challenges.

Research on cooperation between Ukraine and Cyprus and analysis of Cyprus' integration experience have academic and practical value. They contribute to a deeper understanding of the paths of European modernisation, tools for adapting legislation, diplomatic strategies and institutional reforms. At the same time, student competitions and research projects play an important role in developing a new generation of experts capable of working with European issues at a high professional level.

Such activities lay the foundation for the formation of a professional community that will determine Ukraine's future course in Europe.

1. The significance of Cyprus' experience for Ukraine

Cyprus occupies a special place among the countries that joined the EU in the 21st century. Its success demonstrates that even states facing long-standing political and territorial problems are capable of carrying out large-scale institutional reforms and achieving membership if they take consistent steps



Valerii Kopiika,

Director of the Educational and Scientific Institute of International Relations, Doctor of Political Studies, Professor

in the areas of legislative adaptation, diplomatic communication, and economic modernization. For Ukraine, which is undergoing the process of European integration in the context of war, this experience is particularly valuable. It shows that complex internal circumstances are not an obstacle if the country demonstrates strategic consistency, transparency of reforms, and trust on the part of its European partners.

“ *The Cypriot model of adaptation to the **acquis communautaire**, modernisation of the judicial system, improvement of the quality of public administration and renewal of the regulatory environment are examples of how reforms can be structured and implemented in stages.*

It is also important that Cyprus has been active in the diplomatic arena, providing its European partners with comprehensive information about its own political context. This allowed it to maintain EU support even during internal crises and delays in the negotiation process. Ukraine is already applying similar approaches, but further study of the Cypriot experience could deepen the effectiveness of foreign policy communications, especially on issues of security, regional stability, and the potential for future membership.

In addition, analysis of the Cypriot case allows Ukraine to better understand how to combine internal reforms with international advocacy and how to adapt European standards to the specific conditions of a country in a state of prolonged conflict. Cyprus shows that flexibility in European integration is possible if the state demonstrates political will and a long-term vision.

2. The role of student competitions in shaping the expert environment

In parallel with institutional reforms, it is important to develop human capital capable of providing high-quality expert assessments, strategic planning, and communication with the European Union. Student competitions for articles and theses create the conditions for shaping such an environment. They allow young researchers to work on real problems of European integration, apply their knowledge in practice, and develop the skills necessary for modern analytical and diplomatic work.

The students' responses clearly show that they understand that European integration is not just a political course of the state, but a process that will affect their lives, educational opportunities, career prospects, and professional environment.

“That is why young people are eager to participate in research initiatives: they enable them to understand the institutional architecture of the EU, grasp the mechanisms of decision-making, and see the practical dimension of the reforms being implemented by Ukraine.”

Students emphasize that competitions allow them to go beyond traditional lecture courses. They create space for critical thinking, intellectual discussion, and the development of analytical skills. For many, this is their first experience working with cases from other EU member states, including Cyprus, which helps develop comparative analysis skills—one of the key elements of modern political science and international relations.

Finally, student competitions have a significant communicative and social effect: they form communities of young researchers, create networks of contacts, strengthen interest in the topic of European integration, and encourage professional growth. Such initiatives effectively form a “talent pool” for public administration, think tanks, analytical institutions, and the diplomatic service.

3. Prospects for the development of Ukrainian-Cypriot studies and their significance for post-war Ukraine

The development of cooperation between Ukraine and Cyprus in the field of research opens up a wide range of opportunities for both sides. Cyprus' experience in the modernisation of public administration, regulatory policy, economic reforms and the development of a service economy can form the basis for joint academic projects, analytical research and international educational programmes. Such cooperation contributes not only to a deeper scientific understanding of European integration processes, but also to the formation of practical recommendations that can be taken into account when planning reforms in Ukraine.

“In the context of the country's reconstruction, it is particularly important to develop specialists who are knowledgeable about EU institutional standards, reform implementation mechanisms, and European policies in the areas of economy, justice, security, energy, and digital transformation. Student competitions and research initiatives are already training such specialists today, allowing young people to gain practical experience in cooperation with foreign experts and universities.”

Ukrainian-Cypriot studies, in turn, contribute to the formation of academic partnerships, joint publications, student and teacher exchanges, and the deepening of international dialogue on the future expansion of the EU. This creates not only scientific but also institutional value that works in the long term.

Research on Ukraine-Cyprus cooperation and analysis of Cyprus's experience of European integration are of strategic importance for both Ukrainian science and public policy. They allow Ukraine to study specific mechanisms of institutional reform, legislative adaptation, and diplomatic interaction with the European Union, as well as to assess the possibilities of applying this experience in its own context.

Student competitions play an equally important role in shaping the country's future expert community. They help young researchers not only to master the theoretical foundations of European integration, but also to develop the analytical skills necessary for working in international organizations, government institutions, and research centers. Such initiatives contribute to deepening Ukrainian-European academic cooperation and strengthening Ukraine's position as a state that is systematically moving towards European integration.

For partners and competition organizers, supporting such projects is an investment in Ukraine's future — an investment in a generation of professionals who will determine the success of reforms, the quality of integration into the European Union, and the strengthening of international ties in the coming decades.



Cyprus presidency of the council of the EU and the new stage of Ukraine's European integration

1. Introduction: European Integration as an Internal Choice and State Transformation

Ukraine's European integration is increasingly moving beyond formal negotiation procedures and transforming into a profound internal process of state transformation. This is not merely about compliance with the "acquis communautaire" or opening negotiation clusters; it is about changing the rules of life within the country—rules that directly determine the welfare, security, and trust of Ukrainian citizens in the state.

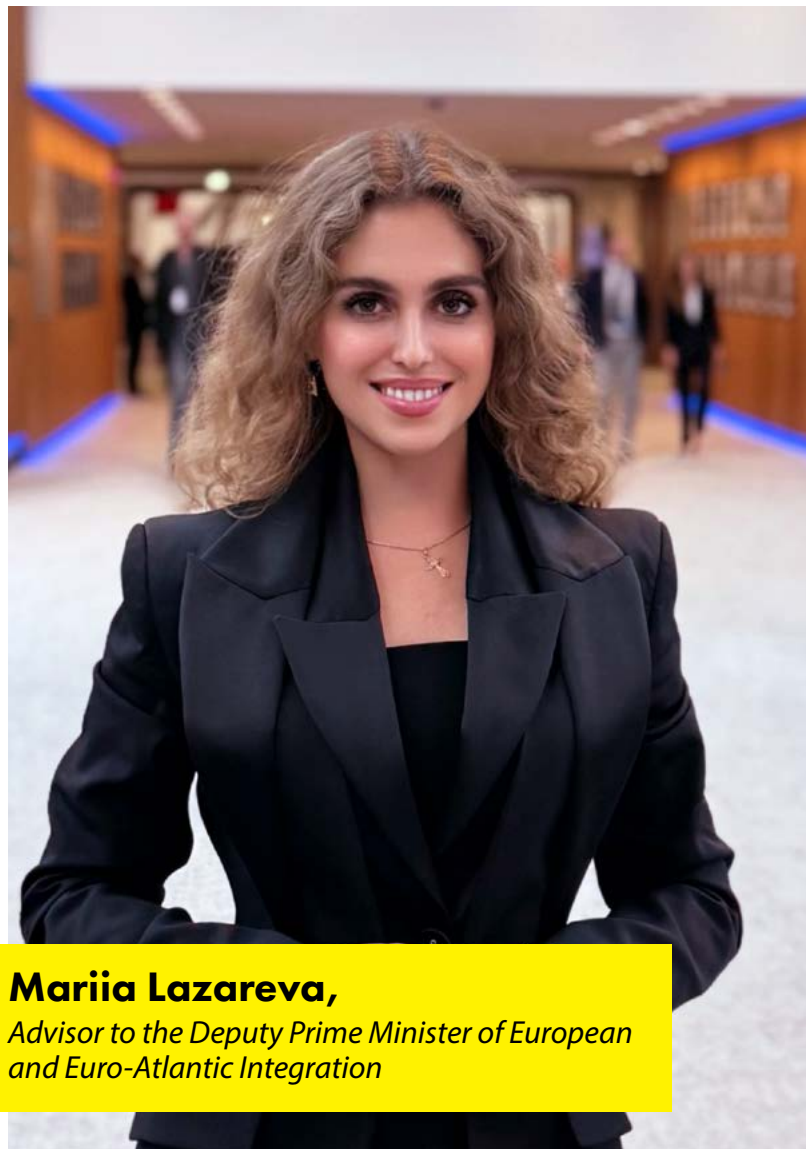
The transition to European standards is primarily a matter of:

- The quality of institutions, integrity, and predictability of state decisions;
- The protection of competition and the functioning of energy markets;
- Food safety, environmental responsibility, and the rule of law.

It is in these areas that citizens experience the real meaning of the European course—not as a geopolitical slogan, but as a practical choice. Therefore, the reforms Ukraine implements today are not "reforms for the sake of membership." They are reforms for the sake of Ukraine itself—its resilience, justice, and European quality of life.

2. Context of Decisions: Ukraine's Progress and the Challenges of Responsibility

This approach fully correlates with the recently released joint communique of the European Commission and Ukraine, adopted in Lviv. The document records Ukraine's unprecedented progress — the completion of the bilateral screening of all negotiation chapters and the readiness of all six clusters for opening. At the same time, the European Commission clearly outlined the next stage: accelerating reforms in the areas of:



Mariia Lazareva,
Advisor to the Deputy Prime Minister of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration

- The rule of law;
- The functioning of democratic institutions;
- Anti-corruption policy and public administration.

This confirms a fundamental truth: European integration is a process that does not stop due to political fluctuations or attempts at blocking; on the contrary, it requires even greater internal discipline and responsibility. Ukraine cannot afford to put its own renewal on pause. Every step forward brings us closer not only to formal membership but also to European standards of living within the country.

3. The Significance of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU for Ukraine

This process gains particular weight on the eve of the Republic of Cyprus's upcoming Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The EU institutional cycle is always significant for candidate countries, as this period shapes the political agenda and determines the priorities and pace of decision-making.

Cyprus enters the Presidency as a member state that understands the complexity of transformational processes well. Its path to EU membership occurred under conditions of a long-standing security conflict, political sensitivity, and

structural challenges. However, strategic consistency and investment in human capital, education, and the legal system allowed Cyprus not only to become an EU member but also to take responsibility for shaping the Union's agenda today.

For Ukraine, this context is practical rather than symbolic. Member states that have themselves walked the difficult path of adapting to European rules often have a better understanding of the logic and real challenges of the enlargement process.



4. The Competition as an Element of the European Integration Ecosystem

With this understanding, the All-Ukrainian Research Article Competition "Lessons from Cyprus for Ukraine's Path to the European Union" was launched. The competition was initiated by the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Cyprus in partnership with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine, the Educational and Scientific Institute of International Relations (ESIIR) of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, and the NGO "UA Experts."

For the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, participation in the competition was a deliberate component of a broader policy to cultivate an expert environment around the negotiation process. As negotiations move into a practical phase, there is a growing need for specialists capable of thinking within the logic of the European Union, working with European law, and conducting professional dialogue in English. The competition served as an example of how the academic community can be integrated into state European integration policy — substantially rather than formally.

An Academic Event in a Moment of Strategic Change

On October 7, 2025, an award ceremony for the winners and participants was held at the Educational and Scientific Institute of International Relations. The event brought together students, faculty, diplomats, and government representatives at a moment when Ukraine's European agenda is gaining particular specificity. This event once again demonstrated the continuity of generations and the responsibility of the academic community in shaping future participants in the European process.

Competition Results and Analytical Quality

Based on the evaluation by the competition committee, the winners were:

- 1st Place – **Yelyzaveta Gorai**, 2nd-year student of "International Law," ESIIR;
- 2nd Place – **Vladyslav Spivak**, Master's student of "International Law," ESIIR;
- 3rd Place – **Yevheniia Shevchenko**, student of "International Relations," NTU "Dnipro Polytechnic."

The participants' works demonstrated a high level of analytical culture, critical reflection on Cyprus's experience, and an understanding of the modern logic of EU enlargement. The position of the winner was telling: she emphasized that while Cyprus's experience is not a universal template, it proves the possibility of moving toward Europe even under the conditions of long-term challenges.

Will the ideas be taken into account?

The findings of these young researchers hold real value for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as part of the broader expert ecosystem of European integration. The best works can be used as an analytical base for further discussions, public debates, and expert events, as well as an example of high-quality Ukrainian analytics for international partners. This is how trust is built—through arguments, knowledge, and professionalism.

5. Conclusions: Reforms as an Investment in Ukraine

On the eve of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU, Ukraine enters a new phase of its European path — a phase where declarations are secondary to the ability to consistently implement rules and ensure their effective application in practice.

European integration for Ukraine is not an external demand or a political formality. It is an internal choice in favor of strong institutions, fair rules, and a dignified quality of life. Therefore, reforms must continue regardless of external circumstances — and this is why investment in knowledge, youth, and expert reflection on the experience of EU member states is strategically vital.

Ukraine is moving toward the European Union not only as a candidate but as a state that is already implementing European standards in its own home today.



Lessons from Cyprus for Ukraine's path to the European Union

I. Introduction

Ukraine's accession to the European Union is a cornerstone of its national identity that signals a commitment to democratic values and fundamental freedoms. This path is not only vital for Ukraine's internal stability but also promises to enhance Europe's geopolitical position and security. With one of the world's strongest armies and invaluable resources, Ukraine's timely accession could significantly benefit the entire bloc. However, Russia's repeated aggression, mirroring historical challenges faced by other aspirants like Cyprus, has complicated this journey.

While Ukraine's case is unique, history offers valuable lessons. The EU has previously admitted member states with contested borders, such as Estonia and Germany [1]. However, Ukraine's situation is unprecedented; it is a country in the midst of a major interstate war seeking EU membership without NATO security guarantees. This makes the experience of Cyprus, which joined the EU despite being a divided island, particularly relevant.

II. Governance, Human Capital, and Leadership

Both Ukraine and Cyprus have struggled with weak oversight cultures and systemic vulnerabilities, which have created risks that local governments alone cannot fix. Ukraine faces deep-seated corruption, while Cyprus grappled with a fragile banking sector. The lesson from Cyprus is that without investing in human capital – including a skilled civil service, judiciary, and regulators – and establishing accountable leadership, the accession process remains fragile [4].

Cyprus's experience demonstrates that EU accession pressure can professionalize public administration and strengthen leadership capacity, but only if reforms are seriously implemented rather than being merely symbolic. Ukraine's challenge is to move beyond 'declarative Europeanization' – the habit of proclaiming a 'European choice' without implementing deep, tangible reforms. The credibility of Ukraine's leadership and its commitment to anti-corruption measures will determine EU trust, not just the laws written on paper.



Yelyzaveta Gorai,
*UA Experts Leadership Club member,
Winner of the Research Article Competition*

For Ukraine, the societal demand for anti-corruption reforms is strong, with nearly 34% of Ukrainians considering government corruption a significant security threat [3]. The Cypriot banking crisis of 2013 serves as a cautionary tale of how corruption and weak oversight can undermine EU confidence. Therefore, building transparent institutions and merit-based leadership is as vital as military resilience.

III. The Challenge of Territorial Division

The Cypriot precedent demonstrates that unresolved territorial disputes do not necessarily preclude EU accession. Cyprus became an EU member in 2004 as a divided island. The solution for Cyprus was the adoption of Protocol No. 10, which suspended the application of the *acquis* (the body of EU law) in the northern areas not under the Republic of Cyprus's effective control [3]. This protocol provides a potential model for Ukraine, allowing the occupied territories to be considered EU territory with EU citizens, but with the application of EU law temporarily suspended.

However, the situations are not identical. Unlike the Cyprus-Türkiye dynamic, where Türkiye was an EU aspirant and NATO ally, Russia is a hostile actor with no intention of joining the EU. Furthermore, Ukraine's occupied territories are not divided along ethnic and religious lines like Cyprus. Most Ukrainians view

these lands as an integral part of their national identity, and any partition would likely face fierce internal resistance [1].

The lesson for Ukraine is that while accession with a frozen conflict is possible, it creates significant complications. The Cypriot case shows that such arrangements can complicate governance and entrench political fragmentation. Ukraine must understand that its path to accession, especially in the event of a frozen conflict, requires not only institutional readiness but also the capacity to manage the legal and political complexities of contested territories.



IV. The Role of the EU

The accession process itself is not a conflict-resolution mechanism. Rather, it is an opportunity for Ukraine to build a stronger state under the EU's aegis. The EU can act as an external disciplinarian, using conditionality to push for reforms. Just as the prospect of membership helped Cyprus modernize its institutions despite its frozen conflict, it can provide the necessary leverage for Ukraine to move beyond 'declarative Europeanization' and undertake deep domestic reforms [2].

Cyprus's support for Ukraine is clear and consistent. It has backed Ukraine's reforms, enforced EU sanctions, and endorsed the use of frozen Russian assets for reconstruction. This partnership highlights the importance of solidarity within the EU to advance Ukraine's integration.



V. Conclusion

Cyprus's accession journey offers a pragmatic, if complex, roadmap for Ukraine. The central lesson is that EU membership is achievable even with unresolved territorial disputes, but it requires a strategic and sustained effort to build credible institutions and capable human capital. The challenge for Ukraine is not merely to meet the technical criteria but to undergo a fundamental transformation that addresses its systemic vulnerabilities. The path forward demands a shift from rhetorical declarations to tangible reforms, ensuring that the state is prepared not only for integration but also for managing the enduring complexities of its territorial integrity. The EU, in turn, can use the prospect of membership as a powerful tool to catalyze this transformation, just as it did with Cyprus.

This journey requires broad societal ownership of the integration project, not just elite declarations. By investing in administrative training, developing a skilled bureaucracy, and fostering ethical leadership, Ukraine can ensure that its path to the EU is not just a dream but a well-managed reality, ultimately leading to a more stable, prosperous, and secure future.

Ultimately, the most important lesson for Ukraine is that a successful accession process hinges on its ability to build a resilient state from within. This means moving beyond foreign policy declarations and committing to deep institutional changes. As Cyprus has shown, EU accession can be a powerful catalyst for institutional modernization, but only if a nation's leaders and society are prepared to use that leverage to make tangible, lasting change.

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UA Experts Inspires a New Generation of European Integrators

The NGO “UA Experts” continues its vital mission of disseminating knowledge and engaging youth in active civic participation. As part of a series of introductory presentations across Ukraine’s leading higher education institutions, the organization visited the Faculty of International Trade and Law at the State University of Trade and Economics (SUTE) on November 3, 2025.

This event served not only as an information session but also as a genuine catalyst for forming a new pool of conscious, competent, and determined Ukrainian European integrators. The unique value of these presentations lies in their ability to unite students from diverse educational programs and academic years.

The meeting with “UA Experts” was attended by future specialists in international law, international relations, international economic relations, and political science. This fosters a unique multidisciplinary environment where students—regardless of their specialization — gain a holistic understanding of the NGO’s work and its contribution to societal processes. Modern challenges — be it European integration, combating violence, or human capital development — demand precisely this type of integrated approach and cross-sectoral expert collaboration.



Such initiatives are critical to modern education as they bridge the gap between theory and practice. They allow students to hear about real-world projects and the mechanisms of their implementation, expand career horizons by highlighting opportunities for practical experience during their studies, and cultivate an active civic stance by inspiring youth to take responsibility for the future of their country.

By engaging students from various institutions, a network of young leaders is established — one that will enable future collaboration on national projects through the exchange of experiences gained in their respective alma maters. National coordinators and experts from “UA Experts” provided a comprehensive overview of their key areas of work.

Snizhana Kushch, the Chief National Coordinator, focused on activities within strategic projects such as “Response and Prevention: Acting for Survivors,” “Mentorship for Leaders,” and the highly relevant “Implementing the European Child Guarantee in Ukraine.” These initiatives demonstrate both a commitment to human capital and active advocacy for socially significant reforms.

National Coordinator Oksana Nechytailo shared insights from the successful implementation of the national communication campaign “Sensitivity Defeats Violence: Take a Step” and the project “Strengthening Ukraine’s Demographic Resilience.” Her presentation was particularly valuable for its focus on the nuances of working with international partners and the government sector — a key skill for any future specialist in international relations and law.

The discussion covered cross-cutting issues such as human capital, combating CRSV (Conflict-Related Sexual Violence), domestic and gender-based violence, European integration, and anti-corruption efforts.

One of the most anticipated segments of the meeting was the presentation by Anna Kryzhanivska, Expert at “UA Experts” and Head of the UA Experts Leadership Club. She elaborated



on the club's activities, opportunities, and benefits for students. Membership in the club offers a direct path to gaining practical experience and joining the next generation of European integrators. The club provides an environment where youth can develop leadership qualities, participate in real projects, and receive mentorship from seasoned professionals. This initiative embodies the core philosophy of "UA Experts": investing in youth by providing them not just with knowledge, but with tools of influence and a platform for their own ideas.

The students' reaction reflected the deep resonance of such events. As participant Mariia Kovalenko noted: "The event made a profound impression—especially the openness of the speakers and the chance to hear real stories from their professional experience. It was fascinating to learn how young leaders influence social processes and implement changes in practice. I was pleasantly surprised to learn about so many large-scale projects that have extraordinary significance for the development of our state and society."

The sincerity of the experts, who openly share both the challenges and successes of their work, serves as a powerful motivator. They transform abstract concepts of international policy and law into vivid, relatable examples of effective civic action.

"UA Experts" expresses its sincere gratitude to the proactive and engaged students of the Faculty of International Trade and Law at SUTE. This meeting confirmed that a strong, conscious generation is rising in Ukraine, ready to build a European future. We invite everyone who wishes not only to observe changes but to actively create them to join "UA Experts" and the UA Experts Leadership Club!

UA Experts Team is the Winner of the All-Ukrainian Competition on International Humanitarian Law

When Anna Kryzhanivska, Kateryna Opanasenko, and I set out for the competition in late November, I could not have predicted how profoundly those three days would reshape my understanding of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). From November 28 to 30, 2025, the All-Ukrainian Competition on International Humanitarian Law took place, organised by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Ukraine and the Ukrainian Red Cross Society.

The event followed the Jean-Pictet Competition format, which differs radically from traditional moot courts. Instead of a classic courtroom trial, we were immersed in a simulated armed conflict. For three days, we stepped into diverse roles: legal advisors, ICRC staff, representatives of conflicting parties, and journalists. Every round brought a new persona, a new context, and new challenges. Such a dynamic format requires more than just a vast legal knowledge base; it demands instantaneous adaptation, as every decision can have life-altering consequences for people.

The atmosphere was simultaneously tense and inspiring. Eight teams from various Ukrainian universities demonstrated an exceptionally high level of preparation and vastly different approaches to problem-solving. I must also mention the judges. They came from diverse backgrounds: ICRC representatives, scholars dedicated to IHL research, practicing lawyers, and military advisors. Each brought a unique perspective and emphasis. One judge might focus on the ethical dimensions of a decision, another on procedural matters, and a third on the practical feasibility of the proposed approach. This diversity of perspectives made every round an invaluable learning experience, forcing us to think multidimensionally.

During our team presentation, our team explained the activities of the NGO "UA Experts," of which we are members. It was



crucial for us to show that the study of IHL is inseparable from practical human rights work. We spoke about the rapeseed flower — a symbol of solidarity with survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). This symbol serves as a reminder that behind every IHL norm are real people, real stories, and real trauma. By wearing the rapeseed flower, we demonstrate that we remember those who have endured unimaginable grief and that our legal work aims to protect their dignity and rights. Interestingly, in one of the rounds, the issue of CRSV emerged as part of the case itself.

In the context of Ukraine, which is currently enduring a full-scale war, knowledge of International Humanitarian Law takes on a special weight. Each of us studying IHL today could potentially be the one documenting war crimes, defending the rights of survivors, working on accountability mechanisms, or helping to rebuild the country on the principles of justice and the rule of law. To all students interested in IHL, I sincerely recommend participating in this competition next year. It is an experience that cannot be gained in a classroom. However, believe me, it shapes professionals ready to defend humanity even in the darkest of times.

Alisa Mazurenko,
Junior Expert at the NGO "UA Experts"



"UA Experts" Among the Winners of the All-Ukrainian Competition of Research Papers

Experts of the NGO "UA Experts" have secured prestigious positions among the winners of the All-Ukrainian Competition of Student Research Papers in the specialty of "International Law." This competition, held among higher education institutions across Ukraine, was organized with the support of the "Leonid Kuchma Ukraine Presidential Foundation" and the Educational and Scientific Institute of International Relations (ESIIR) of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. The competition is a long-standing tradition, engaging students from all regions of Ukraine annually to address the most pressing legal issues of our time.

Anna Kryzhanivska, an expert at NGO "UA Experts" and the Head of the UA Experts Leadership Club, was awarded the III Prize for her research titled "The Future of International Human Rights Law: Structural Challenges and Legal Innovations Amidst the Russian–Ukrainian War." Regarding her work, Anna noted: "I chose the topic of researching the future of human rights because it is the most important branch of international law from the perspective of guaranteeing standards by states for individuals. I focused on conducting a two-component analysis: first, evaluating theoretical discussions regarding the structural crisis of International Human Rights Law (IHRL) and the necessity of its transformation into a decentralized 'human rights ecosystem,' and second, analyzing how the Russian–Ukrainian war, acting as a critical catalyst, stimulates legal innovation, especially in the sphere of international criminal responsibility and the law of state responsibility."

In her research, Anna Kryzhanivska argues that International Human Rights Law (IHRL) at the beginning of the 21st century



faced an unprecedented structural crisis that undermines its universalist foundations and effectiveness. This crisis is caused by four key transformations: the rise of a multipolar world, the emergence of new actors and strategies, the challenges of information and communication technologies (ICT), and the existential threat of extreme environmental degradation.

Alisa Mazurenko, a member of the UA Experts Leadership Club and a junior expert at the NGO, was awarded an encouragement prize for her research on "Development of Regional Security Alliances as a Challenge to the Global Security System and Integration Unions." Regarding her choice of topic, Alisa Mazurenko stated: "The choice of this theme was entirely conscious and dictated by the realities of the modern world. We live in an era of rapid transformation of the international security system, where global institutions often prove incapable of effectively responding to crises. The aggressive war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine became a point of no return, which highlighted that large alliances are increasingly limited by their own bureaucracy, veto powers, and the divergence of member states' interests. Against this background, regional security alliances are becoming the tool that countries choose primarily for survival rather than for abstract integration. The awareness of this trend became the main impetus for analyzing new security configurations."



Young Diplomat Award 2025

Youth diplomacy is an integral component of national resilience, and the active engagement of young professionals is a key factor in Ukraine's success on the international stage.

Receiving the Young Diplomat Award 2025 and the Young European Integration Leader 2025 is, for me, more than just personal recognition; it is a testament to the significance of the proactive, competent, and consistent efforts of Ukrainian youth who take responsibility for shaping the state's foreign policy course.

This initiative, organized by the NGO "United Youth" in collaboration with the "Young European Ambassadors" initiative, strengthens Ukraine's image and its European integration ambitions by emphasizing the importance of cross-sectoral dialogue. Our work, spanning a wide field of international relations—from human rights advocacy to the promotion of European standards—serves as a holistic contribution to achieving the state's foreign policy goals.

My work at the NGO "UA Experts" has shown me how effective communication and interaction with the Government of Ukraine and international partners lead to the best results in implementing significant national and international projects. This enables Ukrainian representatives to deliver powerful messages on critical issues and garner support; in my view, the essence of communication lies in sincerity, openness, and precision. These aspects are the prerequisites for the success of any communication campaign. The founding of the UA Experts Leadership Club in April 2024 provided a major impetus for developing a community of young people interested in European integration and aspiring to careers in public service and the international arena. Through this, we actively contribute to the development of youth diplomacy.

Furthermore, our Ukrainian translation of the book "Beyond Pain – Towards Courage", completed by members of the UA Experts Leadership Club in cooperation with UNFPA Ukraine, facilitated the dissemination of critical information regarding Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) among government officials and national and international partners.

The All-Ukrainian Research Article Competition "Lessons from Cyprus for Ukraine's Path to the EU," organized jointly with the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Cyprus, deepened intercultural understanding of European integration processes



Anna Kryzhanivska,
Expert at NGO "UA Experts" and
Head of the UA Experts Leadership Club

by utilizing the academic sphere as a tool of diplomacy. I am extremely pleased to have had the opportunity to bring this idea to life with the support of the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Cyprus.

Establishing institutional ties remains a priority, as evidenced by my internship at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, where I conducted analytical research on transitional justice and the fight against CRSV in post-conflict countries.

Since August 2023, I have been a member of the UNICEF Ukraine Young People Advisory Board, and in February 2025, I was appointed Secretary of the Board. This is not a traditional youth council in the conventional sense, but rather a genuine consultative and advisory body that provides UNICEF Ukraine with expert perspectives from young people across various regions and backgrounds regarding projects where children and youth are the primary beneficiaries. This ensures that the voices and needs of young people are integrated, notably even during the creation of essential strategic documents such as the UNICEF Ukraine Country Programme Document.

In my application, I presented the case: "Regional Youth Diplomacy: Strengthening the Voice of Ukrainian Youth in Europe and Central Asia." The primary objective of this initiative is to ensure an authentic Ukrainian youth presence

in international dialogue, particularly amidst the full-scale war, and to counter any forms of “Ukraine fatigue” within the international community.

I utilize the UNICEF ECARO Co-Creators Group platform to regularly produce high-quality video content that strategically highlights global issues—such as children’s rights, mental health support, combating gender-based violence, and even the impact of war on climate change—from the perspective of Ukrainian youth. This approach allows us to transform our unique national experience, which encompasses both profound pain and incredible resilience, into a tool of influence, fostering awareness and empathy among youth in Europe and Central Asia. As a result of these efforts, the cumulative video content on the official platforms of the UNICEF Regional Office has reached over 500,000 views, a significant indicator of scaled impact and the formation of strong international solidarity and a deeper understanding of Ukrainian realities among our peers abroad.



Our achievements underscore the importance of youth diplomacy in modern conditions. This field is critical as it allows for the formation of an authentic narrative, serving as the most credible and uncensored source of information about the realities of life in Ukraine during the war, effectively countering disinformation and global “fatigue.”

We ensure a presence on the international stage through active participation in high-level events, guaranteeing that the Ukrainian position, our pain, and our ambitions are not ignored, and that the Ukrainian voice is represented with dignity and professionalism.

Through joint projects and initiatives, we establish strong, horizontal ties with foreign youth, transforming the abstract concept of “solidarity” into concrete, empathetic understanding. These connections form the foundation for future political, economic, and cultural cooperation. Moreover, we directly advocate for European integration by deepening the understanding of EU institutions, values, and the legal system, which is a necessary prerequisite for Ukraine’s successful accession.

Advice for Youth:

1. Do not be afraid to try, even if you initially doubt your own success. Receiving this award was a great surprise to me; I never considered myself a diplomat in the traditional sense, as I study international law and work in human rights. Sometimes, you need to look at the whole picture from a different perspective to see what truly lies within.



2. Seek opportunities and exchange experiences — whether through local events or international programs, the key is to be at the epicenter of events and strive both to gain more knowledge and to share your own. This is how strong bonds and collaborations are built.
3. Learn foreign languages beyond English to remain in demand in any field. Today, English is a “bare minimum” that is often considered a default requirement rather than a special advantage. Depending on your interests, aim to learn one or two additional languages. For example, I speak German and French, which allows me to participate in EU-led training programs, and I am studying Korean to broaden my competencies and horizons.
4. Be confident in yourself regardless of the outcome, as every experience is, first and foremost, an experience — whether positive or negative. View it as another step toward success and treat failures as tools for self-improvement.

I am deeply convinced that every young Ukrainian working in international relations is a thought leader and a direct agent of change. We do not wait for the future; we create it today through every organized event, every presentation, and every scientific publication. Our collective activity is an indispensable contribution to realizing Ukraine’s foreign policy goals, strengthening its resilience, and securing its place within the European family. We will continue this work with even greater dedication and professionalism, realizing that we hold not just a career, but the fate of our country in our hands.



The Voice of Ukrainian Youth at the Council of Europe

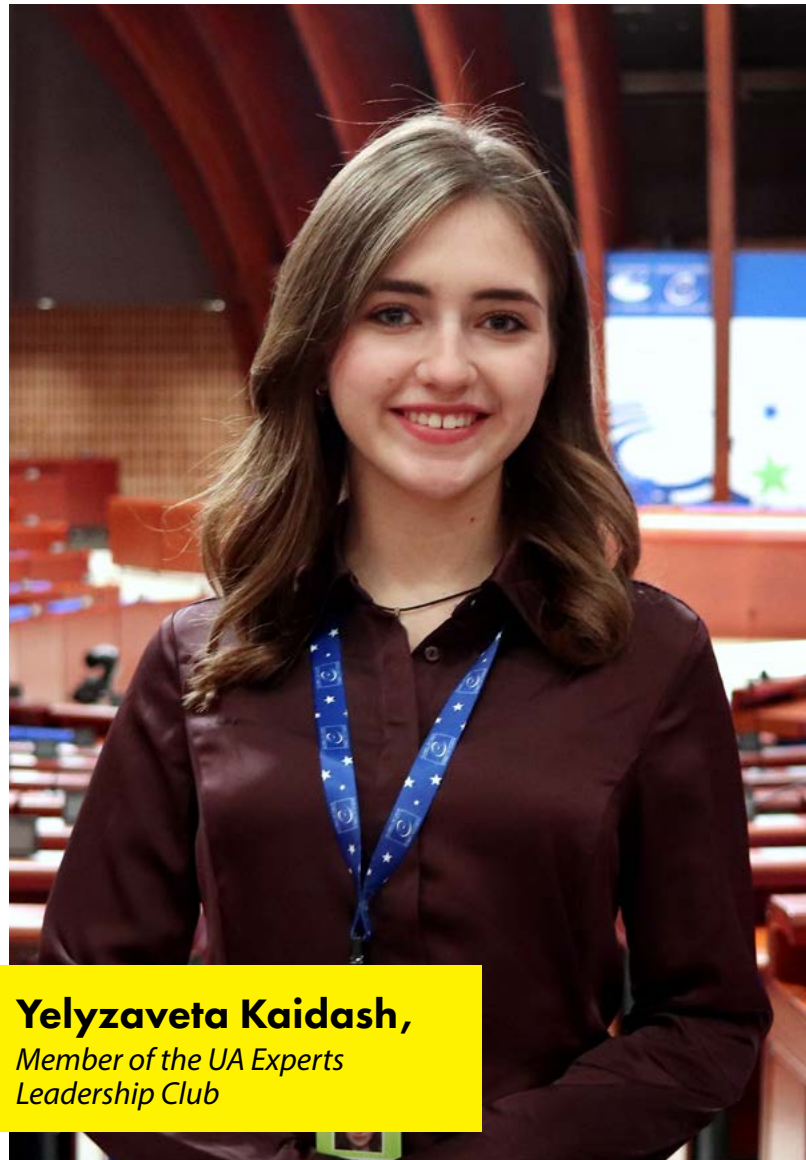
In October, I participated in the 48th and 49th sessions of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg as a youth delegate from Ukraine, representing the interests of Ukrainian youth and my country on the international stage.

During the plenary sessions, I addressed critical issues such as freedom of speech in Crimea, the fate of political prisoners — including the youngest, Appaz Kurtamet — the abduction of Ukrainian children by Russia, and the pursuit of a just peace for Ukraine. I called upon European states to prevent the normalization of borders changed by force, to maintain sanction pressure, and to strive for the return of deported children. In my speech, I honored the memory of Daria Lopatina, a 19-year-old student who died defending Ukraine, stating: "I am alive because someone my age gave their life for the possibility of peace in Ukraine and Europe."

“Alongside regional leaders and experts, I also addressed the Congress's Chamber of Regions twice, delivering speeches on the role of sub-regional authorities and the challenges faced by Ukrainian regions during the war. In my remarks, I emphasized that true resilience is born locally — in communities where young people are not only volunteering but are actively involved in reconstruction, planning, and decision-making.

I advocated for a transition from youth "engagement" to youth "co-management," emphasizing that the Ukrainian experience proves that effective local self-government and youth participation are the foundations for reconstruction and trust in government.

As part of my initiatives, I successfully implemented a local project titled "My City – My Europe" in Fastiv. This project was



Yelyzaveta Kaidash,
Member of the UA Experts
Leadership Club

dedicated to highlighting opportunities for youth provided by the Council of Europe and the EU, as well as the importance of participating in local decision-making processes.

Together with the Ukrainian delegation, I was invited to the Permanent Representation of Ukraine to the Council of Europe. During this visit, we discussed Ukraine's participation in the Congress, future priorities, and the expansion of the youth dimension in international cooperation.



Visit of the UA Experts Leadership Club to the Constitutional Court of Ukraine

When you study to become a lawyer, especially in the field of International Law, most of your time is spent with textbooks, analyzing international treaties, statutes, and judicial precedents on paper.

However, a true understanding of the profession only comes when you cross the threshold of an institution where law is crafted and protected. For me, such a turning point occurred on November 5, 2025, when I, along with fellow students and our professor from the Educational and Scientific Institute of International Relations, Olha Shpakovych, attended the plenary sessions of the Second Senate of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine.

We attended the open part of the plenary sessions conducted via written proceedings. Observing the judges at work, I found myself reflecting on how complex and responsible their mission is—seeking a balance between state interests, human rights, and the letter of the law. Perhaps the greatest revelation, however, was the atmosphere of transparency. Following the conclusion of the official session, we had the opportunity to speak personally with Judges Oleksandr Vodiannikov, Viktor Horodovenko, and Vasyl Lemak. In addition to the conversation, we were given a fascinating mini-tour; we saw the Grand Chamber and visited the Court's library and museum, where the history of Ukrainian constitutionalism unfolds in vivid detail.

As for the cases considered that day, I was struck by their relevance and diversity. For instance, the hearing of a case based on a complaint by "Merista" LLC stood out, involving the so-called "anti-Kolomoisky" law and the protection of bank shareholders' rights. The essence of the conflict lay in the applicant challenging norms that permit only monetary compensation for the removal of a bank from the market —



Roman Karmazin,
*member of the UA Experts
Leadership Club*

even if the regulator's decision is found illegal — and prohibit the restitution of shares. Listening to the report by Judge Oleh Pervomaiskyi, I realized that the Court faces a profound dilemma: how to protect the inviolable right to property without undermining the financial stability of the state. This is exactly where constitutional law intersects with economic security. The Court adjourned the final decision to the closed session to obtain academic expert opinions, emphasizing the complexity of the matter.

For me, this was not just a visit, but an opportunity to see firsthand how abstract constitutional norms are tested by real-life conflicts. We are used to perceiving law as a set of rules, but here, you see it as a living instrument that affects people's destinies.



Inter-Municipal Cooperation as a Tool for Strengthening the System for Preventing and Combating Domestic and Gender-Based Violence

The NGO "UA Experts," in cooperation with the National Social Service of Ukraine and supported by the United Nations Population Fund in Ukraine (UNFPA), has implemented a series of initiatives within the framework of an inter-municipal cooperation project focused on preventing and combating domestic and gender-based violence (GBV).

The project aims to establish sustainable cooperation practices among hromadas to ensure survivors' access to specialized support services, regardless of their place of residence, through the procurement of services from these specialized providers.

Advocacy Visits: From Dialogue to Decisions

The first stage of the project involved a series of advocacy visits to pilot hromadas that demonstrated a readiness to develop partnerships and share resources.

On December 1, 2025, an advocacy visit was paid to the **Chernivtsi hromada**. The event was attended by representatives of regional and local authorities, as well as 13 neighboring hromadas. During the meeting, participants discussed opportunities for procuring specialized services at the inter-municipal level. Following the visit, the Chernivtsi hromada announced its readiness to cooperate with five neighboring hromadas, and the process of signing a memorandum of intent has already begun with one of them. The relevance of such solutions is underscored by statistics: in the Chernivtsi region alone, over 2,000 cases of domestic violence were recorded in a year, including serious criminal offenses.



The following day, December 2, an advocacy visit took place in the **Ternopil hromada**. The community already possesses an efficiently functioning support infrastructure, including a day center, a crisis room, and a regional shelter that currently serves all communities in the region. During the meeting, representatives of the Ternopil City Council expressed their readiness to provide services to neighboring hromadas through inter-municipal cooperation. Representatives of neighboring hromadas joined the discussion online and were provided with templates for memorandums and cooperation agreements. A critical context of this stage is the communities' budget planning for the coming year, which opens opportunities to secure funding for such services for 2026.

On December 3, 2025, an advocacy visit was paid to the **Khmelnyskyi hromada**, involving representatives of the City Council, the Social Services Center, and the Regional Military Administration. Representatives from nine neighboring hromadas also participated. Following the meeting, held jointly with NGO "UA Experts," representatives of these hromadas expressed interest in signing cooperation memorandums. The Khmelnytskyi hromada already has practical experience in inter-municipal cooperation, having concluded agreements with three hromadas for the procurement of specialized services.

On December 4, 2025, an advocacy visit took place in **Rivne**. This meeting held strategic importance for the region, as a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between NGO "UA Experts," the Rivne Regional Military Administration, and the Rivne Regional Council. A distinctive feature of this stage was the regional government's assumption of a coordinating role in project implementation at the regional level. Together with the National Social Service of Ukraine, six hromadas in the region were identified as having effective systems for combating violence and being ready to act as

base hromadas for further cooperation with neighboring territories. This approach allows specialized services to cover virtually the entire region.

Within the project framework, an advocacy visit to **Kropyvnytskyi** was also conducted on December 15. The city is unique as it is effectively the only one in Ukraine with a comprehensive system for the prevention and response to domestic and gender-based violence. During the meeting with city leaders and their deputies, participants discussed cooperation opportunities and the operation of services that are most in demand for the needs of neighboring communities.

Training as a Condition for Sustainable Cooperation

A logical continuation of the advocacy work was the provision of training for local stakeholders. On December 11–12, 2025, a two-day training session was held in Rivne, dedicated to improving the efficiency of inter-agency and inter-municipal interaction in the field of combating domestic and gender-based violence.

Participants included representatives from hromadas already implementing or planning to cooperate on the procurement of specialized services. The training program focused on practical aspects: working through real-life cases, establishing clear interaction algorithms, analyzing wartime challenges, and finding survivor-centered solutions. This approach allowed for a transition from declarative agreements to concrete management and practical decisions at the community level.

The initiatives implemented under the inter-municipal cooperation project have demonstrated that such collaboration is an effective tool for expanding access to specialized services for survivors of domestic and gender-based violence. The combination of advocacy, regulatory

support, training, and leadership creates the necessary conditions for a sustainable support system in the regions.

The project is ongoing and envisions further deepening of cooperation between hromadas, the conclusion of new agreements, and the strengthening of the professional capacity of all involved stakeholders. The experience of the pilot regions can serve as a foundation for scaling inter-municipal cooperation models across other regions of Ukraine.

Oksana Nechytailo,
National Coordinator of the NGO “UA Experts”



Training as a Foundation for Effective Support for Survivors of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence

In December 2025, the NGO "UA Experts," in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Ukraine, conducted specialized training for case managers who will work within hromadas (communities) as part of support programs for survivors of domestic and gender-based violence (GBV). The event, held on December 10–12, 2025, represents a significant step in strengthening the capacity of local-level assistance systems.



Oksana Nechytailo,
*National Coordinator of the
NGO "UA Experts"*

Case management in the field of combating domestic and gender-based violence is a pivotal tool for ensuring comprehensive, safe, and survivor-centered assistance. Its core purpose is to organize a holistic support pathway for the survivor — from the initial request for help to the stabilization of the situation and eventual recovery.

Despite the availability of specialized services in many communities, assistance for survivors often remains fragmented. Survivors are frequently forced to navigate various institutions independently, repeatedly relive traumatic experiences, and coordinate actions between different services themselves. In this context, the case manager emerges as the central figure of the support system — a specialist who not only possesses information regarding available services but also ensures their coordinated and timely interaction.



In handling cases of violence, the case manager acts as an advocate for the survivor's interests. Their task is to ensure that assistance is systemic and safe rather than disjointed. Specifically, the case manager facilitates the coordination of social, medical, psychological, and legal services; prevents the duplication of efforts or gaps in support; and develops an individual assistance plan tailored to the actual needs and resources of the specific individual.

Particular emphasis in the case manager's work is placed on survivor safety, adherence to the principles of confidentiality and voluntary participation, and the application of a trauma-informed approach. When necessary, specialists provide informational and organizational support regarding legal documentation, engagement with law enforcement, or guidance through judicial proceedings, provided the survivor chooses to pursue such a course of action.

The training program, implemented by NGO "UA Experts" in partnership with UNFPA, was designed to equip case managers with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills for handling cases of domestic and gender-based violence. The curriculum focused on the role of case management within the inter-agency interaction system, case monitoring algorithms, engagement with vulnerable groups, and professional boundaries of specialists.

The preparation of case managers is a vital element in building a sustainable system for combating violence within communities, as these specialists provide the link between the survivor and all available support services. Their work contributes to higher service quality, reduced risks of re-traumatization, and increased trust in the overall assistance system.

The training sessions confirmed the importance of investing in human capital within the system of combating domestic and gender-based violence. Preparing professional case managers makes assistance more accessible, better coordinated, and focused on long-term outcomes.

The project is implemented by the NGO "UA Experts" in cooperation with the National Social Service of Ukraine and with the support of the United Nations Population Fund in Ukraine (UNFPA). It stands as a significant milestone in strengthening the protection of rights and the safety of survivors of violence at the community level.



Створюючи нове майбутнє разом: як ВБО "Даун Синдром" формує нову культуру суспільства

В Україні, де цінність соціальної відповідальності бізнесу та держави зростає, існують організації, що змінюють суспільство не гаслами, а щоденною системною працею. Всеукраїнська благодійна організація "Даун Синдром" одна з тих інституцій, які вже понад два десятиліття вибудовують нові стандарти підтримки людей із синдромом Дауна, інтеграції їх у суспільство та формування культури прийняття.

Створена у 2003 році батьками дітей із синдромом Дауна, Організація стала провідним центром експертизи, підтримки та інноваційних рішень у сфері інклюзії. Сьогодні це спільнота родин, фахівців, партнерів і однодумців, яка працює над тим, щоб кожна людина із синдромом Дауна в Україні мала не лише право на майбутнє, а й реальні можливості для нього.

Батьківське об'єднання, народжене з порожнечі державної підтримки

Двадцять років тому в Україні фактично **не існувало жодної допомоги сім'ям, у яких народжувалася дитина із синдромом Дауна, окрім скромної соціальної допомоги**. Не було інформації, фахівців, програм раннього розвитку, підтримки батьків чи державних сервісів. Саме ця критична порожнеча і стала точкою відліку: активні батьки об'єдналися і 15 жовтня



Мирослава Слюсаренко,
комунікаційна менеджерка, копірайтерка та Членкиня Правління ВБО "Даун Синдром". Керівниця проєкту "Батьківський клуб". Мама Любомира, хлопця із синдромом Дауна, пластунка.

2003 року створили ВБО "Даун Синдром". Організація виникла з болю, відповідальності та усвідомлення, що ніхто, крім батьків, не подолає цю прогалину. І саме тому сьогодні вона має таку глибоку експертизу та непохитну місію.

Місія, що стала дороговказом

Місія ВБО "Даун Синдром" амбітна та глибока: покращення якості життя людей із синдромом Дауна та створення нового майбутнього для них і їхніх родин в Україні.





І це зовсім не про милосердя, а про рівність можливостей, руйнування стереотипів та формування суспільства, у якому інклюзія є нормою, а не винятком. Дитина із синдромом Дауна може народитися у будь-якій сім'ї та будь-якому соціальному середовищі. В Україні щороку народжується близько двохсот дітей з трисомією 21 хромосоми. Тому підвищення обізнаності та формування толерантності — питання не лише гуманності, а і державної та соціальної зрілості.

20 років системної роботи: коли інклюзія стає реальністю

Сьогодні Організація працює на перетині соціальної, освітньої, медичної та психологічної сфер. Її підхід базується на трьох принципах: **прийняття, навчання, підтримка**. Але за цими принципами стоїть значно більше — це багаторічний досвід боротьби за увагу держави, право родин на підтримку та за можливість жити у суспільстві, що приймає, як рівних. Сьогодні бенефіціари організації близько 2000 родин, де живуть люди із синдромом Дауна.

Психологічна підтримка родин — фундамент змін

Поява дитини із синдромом Дауна — це сильний емоційний виклик для родини. Тому одним із ключових напрямів стало створення системи психологічної та педагогічної підтримки. Фахівці організації допомагають батькам подолати шок, прийняти діагноз, побачити потенціал дитини та отримати "кисневу маску" у найвразливіші моменти.

Програма "Немовлята" має потужний формат раннього втручання та охоплює дітей із синдромом Дауна від народження до двох років: заняття, консультації, діагностика, індивідуальні плани розвитку. Методики команди зібрані у книгах «Формування навичок комунікації та мовлення у дітей із синдромом Дауна» та «Підготовка до школи дітей з інтелектуальними порушеннями та синдромом Дауна». Дорожня карта є інструментом, який допомагає батькам орієнтуватися у системі державних послуг, оформленні документів, освітніх та реабілітаційних доступних можливостях. Вона створена саме тому, що держава системно не забезпечує сім'ї знаннями та супроводом. Також є програма BabySteps Інтенсив — модель, що допомагає батькам працювати з дитиною вдома, з опорою на фахову підтримку і дає змогу охопити десятки родин бенефіціарів Організації.



Міжнародний досвід та глобальні стандарти

Організація є членом:

- European Down Syndrome Association (EDSA)
- Down Syndrome International (DSI)

Завдяки членству українські фахівці долучаються до світових досліджень, отримують можливість навчання, а родини — переклади вебінарів та доступ до міжнародного досвіду.

Проблеми, які організація вирішує, і ті, що неможливо вирішити без держави

Попри системну роботу, реальність лишається жорсткою:

- після 18 років молоді люди фактично опиняються в ізоляції;
- підтриманого проживання в Україні майже не існує;
- працевлаштування тримається на ентузіазмі окремих роботодавців;
- післяшкільна освіта недоступна;
- інклюзія формально існує "на папері".

Громадський сектор не здатен самостійно забезпечити інфраструктуру для тривалих соціальних послуг. Підтримане проживання, робочі місця, державні соціальні сервіси — це те, що **має бути відповідальністю держави**, а не лише батьківських організацій.

Освіта, інклюзія та розвиток професійної спільноти

Попри впровадження інклюзивної освіти в Україні, держава не забезпечила розв'язання питання системної підготовки та навчання вчителів та асистентів повною мірою. Тому глобально система освіти "пробуксовує" цей напрямок, який тримається лише на людському факторі та зацікавленості самих вчителів. Організація провела масштабні тренінги для педагогів початкової та середньої школи НУШ з інклюзивною складовою по всій Україні.

Сотні вчителів отримали:

- навички роботи з інклюзивними класами;
- практичні методики;
- інструменти взаємодії з дітьми з інтелектуальними порушеннями;
- розуміння адаптивних підходів до навчання.

Це дозволило підвищити якість інклюзивного навчання та посилити спроможність шкільної системи працювати з дітьми із синдромом Дауна.

Командою Організації створено інформаційну онлайн-платформу "Інклюзіум" — першу в Україні масштабну базу знань для педагогів, батьків, роботодавців і фахівців. Тут доступні:

- курси з інклюзії;
- практичні матеріали;
- правові ресурси;
- рекомендації для роботодавців;
- матеріали для людей з порушеннями інтелектуального розвитку.

Це приклад того, як Організація будує **системні зміни, не чекаючи державних реформ.**

Молодіжна платформа та соціальна інтеграція

Молодіжний клуб для підлітків і молоді 14–44 років — місце, де розвиваються та підтримуються навички, без яких неможлива самостійність:

- емоційний інтелект;
- соціальна взаємодія;
- фінансова грамотність;
- базові навички безпеки;
- комунікація.

Організація паралельно розвиває **підтримане працевлаштування**, де молоді люди працюють на відкритому ринку праці. Це можливо завдяки роботодавцям, які готові дивитися не на діагноз, а на потенціал. Але поки що таких роботодавців — одиниці. Ми все ще очікуємо від держави включення у цей процес. Адже на шляху до євроінтеграції Україна має опрацювати і цей кластер.

Правова допомога — новий напрям, що змінює правила гри

Щодня родини звертаються за допомогою через:

- проблеми з оформленням інвалідності;
- не зрозумілий алгоритм доступу до соціальних виплат;
- ускладнену взаємодію з державними структурами;
- потребу захисту прав дітей та дорослих.

З грудня в Організації стартував дворічний проект, який, завдяки партнерам, забезпечить: правові консультації; зрозумілі алгоритми дій для бенефіціарів та допомогу у складних ситуаціях.

Всесвітня акція: чому важливо долучатися 21 березня — Всесвітній день людей із синдромом Дауна

Його мета — нагадати, що кожна людина має право на видимість, підтримку і місце в суспільстві.

В Україні ВБО "Даун Синдром" щорічно проводить інформаційну кампанію та флешмоб "Шкарпетуйся" до цієї дати. Це не просто яскрава акція, а фандрейзингова підтримка для всіх програм та напрямків Організації.

Гасло цьогорічної кампанії — **"Разом проти самотності"**, яке особливо відгукується тим, що після 18 років молоді люди найчастіше залишаються "замкненими у чотирьох стінах".

Адже справжня інклюзія — це відчуття того, що тебе цінують і ти належиш до спільноти, можливість реалізації, а також наявність хороших дружніх стосунків. Щоб зупинити самотність, кожна людина потребує:

■ Бути справді включеним у навчання, роботу та громадське життя. Не просто "бути присутнім", а брати участь.

■ Відчувати себе бажаним і цінним, бути запрошеним приєднатися та бути в безпеці від стигми.

■ Мати міцні, підтримуючі та значущі стосунки з друзями, сім'єю та партнерами.

Долучитися до інформаційної кампанії та флешмобу "Шкарпетуйся" означає зробити внесок у те, щоб діти та дорослі із синдромом Дауна не залишалися ізольованими.

Чому підтримка від бізнесу і суспільства критично важлива

Корпоративна соціальна відповідальність — це не просто філантропія та благодійність, а стратегічний підхід до гармонійного співіснування із суспільством та розв'язання глобальних проблем. І саме тому важливо підтримувати такі організації, як ВБО "Даун Синдром", адже вона існує виключно завдяки: бізнесу, приватним благодійникам, благодійним фондам, міжнародним партнерам та грантовим програмам.

Державного фінансування у неї немає. Тому кожна компанія та бізнес, які долучаються у допомозі, не просто підтримують соціальний проект. Вони інвестують у **суспільство, де немає зайвих людей**. Високий градус включеності — це взаємодія з людьми з інвалідністю. За нашим досвідом, спільні активності команд партнерів та дітей/дорослих з інвалідністю, нікого не залишають байдужими та формують глибокий слід у свідомості.

Погляд у майбутнє

Організація планує розвивати програми:

- для дорослих;
- для людей, яким потрібне підтримане проживання;
- для педагогів;
- для молоді;
- для роботодавців;
- для територіальних громад.

І поглиблювати співпрацю з бізнесом, який стає ключовим партнером у побудові інклюзивного суспільства.

Команда ВБО доводить: **культура прийняття і рівних можливостей не з'являється сама по собі. Її створюють люди — професійні, послідовні й далекоглядні.**

І поки держава рухається повільно, Організація з колегами по громадському сектору щодня формує країну, де у кожного є місце, роль і право на гідне життя.



Сайт ВБО "Даун Синдром" для підтримки: <https://downsyndrome.org.ua/21-bereznya-den-lyudej-z-sindromom-dauna-shkarpetujasya>

Наші партнери:



Кабінет Міністрів
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З ПИТАНЬ ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОЇ ТА
ЄВРОАТЛАНТИЧНОЇ ІНТЕГРАЦІЇ
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МІНІСТЕРСТВО
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Омбудсман України
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НАЦІОНАЛЬНА
СОЦІАЛЬНА СЕРВІСНА
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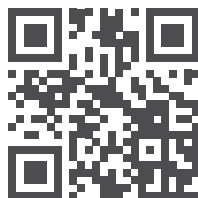
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