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СІЧЕнь-БЕРЕЗЕнь
2026

YOUNG BUSINESS CLUB IN CYPRUS

CYPRUS EU COUNCIL PRESIDENCY

UA EXPERTS LEADERSHIP CLUB IN CYPRUS

A SHARED PATH TO EU INTEGRATION AND RESILIENCE

UAExperts

UKRAINE

VOICES, STORIES & EUROPE'S FUTURE

Соціально-правовий Дискурс

• 24.02. •
2026



#CY2026EU

OPINION DECISION
STATEMENT OF SECURE,
INDEPENDENT AND STABLE
UKRAINE GUARANTEES
IN CYPRUS



«UA Experts: Соціально-правовий дискурс»

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News

Consultative Meeting: Youth Participation in UN Decision-Making Processes

On February 7, 2026, a significant online consultative meeting titled "Enhancing Youth Participation in UN Decision-Making Processes" successfully brought together young leaders and activists from across Eastern Europe. The event served as a collaborative platform for UN Youth

Delegates from Poland and Ukraine to share regional perspectives and develop actionable strategies for global engagement.

The meeting featured insightful presentations from delegates Julia Oleszynska, Aleksandra Izabela Kobyłeczka, Vitalina Shevchenko, and Yan Earl-Ruzhytskyi. Participants engaged in

interactive small-group discussions, focusing on strengthening youth cooperation and encouraging the next generation of leaders to actively shape international agendas.

Held via Zoom, the session provided a unique networking opportunity for students and youth activists to connect with like-minded peers. The event was organized through the joint efforts of several partners, including UA Experts, the Bohdan Hawrylyshyn Family Foundation, Ukrainian Youth Delegate, Youth Delegate of Poland to the United Nations, and the Association of Young Diplomats.

This meeting marks another step forward in ensuring that the voices of Polish and Ukrainian youth are heard and integrated into the vital decision-making processes of the United Nations.



Expanding Regional Cooperation



The NGO "UA Experts" has officially signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Association of Young Diplomats of Moldova, marking a significant step forward in strengthening ties with the active youth of Moldova. This partnership aims to foster structured interaction between the members of the Association of Young Diplomats of Moldova and the UA Experts Leadership Club, facilitating peer-to-peer networking, joint youth leadership initiatives, and the exchange of best practices in public administration.

Under the framework of this memorandum, the parties will focus their collaborative efforts on several strategic directions. These include conducting joint expert research regarding the European integration processes of both Moldova and Ukraine, as well as policy analysis and advocacy through specialized workshops and seminars for young diplomats. The partnership also emphasizes human capital development through mentorship programs, with a particular focus on supporting inclusive recovery initiatives.

Furthermore, the organizations will address critical social issues by implementing projects centered on social and demographic resilience, including the fight against domestic and gender-based violence. Through joint campaigns aimed at promoting sustainable growth and demographic development in the region, UA Experts and the Association of Young Diplomats of Moldova are committed to working together toward a shared European future for Ukraine and the broader region.

UA Experts Leadership Club Members Join the Youth Council under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine



In a significant milestone for youth diplomacy, members of the **UA Experts Leadership Club** have officially joined the third convocation of the **Youth Council under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine**. At the end of January, the newly elected Youth Council held an inaugural meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, **Andrii Sybiha**, which members attended both in-person and virtually.

The appointed representatives from the UA Experts Leadership Club include:

- **Yelyzaveta Kaidash**, serving as the Deputy Chair;
- **Yelyzaveta Gorai**, serving as the Secretary of the Council;
- **Anna Kryzhanivska**, serving as the Partnerships Manager;
- **Kateryna Opanasenko**, Council Member.

The establishment and active work of such a Youth Council are of paramount importance in the current geopolitical landscape. Today's youth are no longer just passive observers but are active architects of the nation's future, exerting a tangible influence on policy-making processes. By integrating young leaders directly into the advisory structures of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ukraine ensures that fresh perspectives and innovative solutions are at the heart of its diplomatic strategy. This platform allows young professionals to contribute to high-level decision-making, ensuring that the voice of the next generation is heard and respected on both the national and international stages.

We congratulate our club members and wish them inspiration and success as they embark on this vital mission within the Youth Council!

New National Standards for Family-Friendly Parking

What began as a pioneering proposal by the **UA Experts** team in Irpin in June 2025 has officially become a cornerstone of Ukrainian legislation. On March 5, 2026, **Law No. 4657-IX** officially entered into force, establishing new infrastructure standards designed to support parents with young children.

This legislative milestone introduces several key changes to national parking regulations:

- **Mandatory Quotas:** Owners of parking facilities are now required to designate at least **5%** of their total spaces specifically for drivers transporting children under the age of three.
- **Enhanced Accessibility:** These specialized spots are designed to be wider than standard spaces, providing parents with the necessary room to safely maneuver strollers and secure children in car seats without the risk of damaging adjacent vehicles.
- **Increased Inclusive Infrastructure:** These new spots complement existing quotas for persons with disabilities, bringing the total share of specialized parking spaces across the country to **15%**.



Photo: Lavina Mall

- **Identification Requirements:** To utilize these priority spaces, vehicles must be equipped with the appropriate official identification marking.

At **UA Experts**, we believe that accessible infrastructure is the fundamental bedrock for supporting Ukrainian families. We are immensely proud that our initiative, first presented less than a year ago, has served as the foundation for these tangible, nationwide improvements in comfort and safety for parents and children.

Ukraine and Cyprus

Strengthen Partnership at the Start of the Cyprus EU Council Presidency

On January 7, 2026, a Ukrainian delegation led by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy participated in the official opening of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The issues of Ukraine's path toward EU membership and the development of human capital have been placed at the forefront of the Cypriot presidency's agenda.

A significant highlight of the visit was Ukraine's focus on the SAFE initiative. Ukraine expects this vital European initiative to demonstrate its effectiveness this year and looks forward to productive cooperation with Cyprus and all EU member states through this instrument.

During the proceedings, President Zelenskyy expressed gratitude for the shared vision regarding the European integration of the region. "We are grateful for the President's words that

Volodymyr Zelenskyy,
President of Ukraine
and Sergiy Nizhynskyi,
Ambassador of Ukraine
to the Republic of
Cyprus

our goal should be the simultaneous opening of negotiation clusters during your presidency for both Ukraine and, certainly, for our friends in Moldova," the Head of State remarked.

Andrii Sybiha, Ukraine's Minister of Foreign Affairs, emphasized the depth of the bilateral relationship, noting that Ukraine values Cyprus as a reliable

partner. He further expressed anticipation for strengthened unity within the EU and progress toward a lasting peace throughout the duration of the Cypriot presidency.

The visit was also marked by strong diplomatic and grassroots support:

- The Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Cyprus played an active role in facilitating the President's working visit.
- Members of the Ukrainian community in Cyprus gathered at Eleftheria Square in Nicosia to show their support for the President and the Ukrainian delegation during this historic start to the EU presidency.

The NGO "UA Experts" sincerely supports this deepening of Ukrainian-Cypriot cooperation as a vital step toward Ukraine's European future.

In Nicosia, President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy met with President of Cyprus Nikos Christodoulides.

The Head of State congratulated Cyprus on the start of its presidency of the Council of the European Union.

"Thank you for your support, especially for the humanitarian assistance during this war and Russia's attacks," Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

The leaders discussed support for Ukraine's European integration during Cyprus's presidency of the Council of the European Union and the earliest possible opening of negotiating





clusters. Volodymyr Zelenskyy emphasized that Ukraine is counting on strong decisions and real progress over these six months.



Particular attention was paid to the importance of strengthening sanctions against Russia, including additional restrictions on Russia's shadow fleet and proposals for the 20th sanctions package of the European Union.

support and achieving real progress in negotiations on Ukraine's accession to the European Union.

The Head of State separately thanked European partners for their engagement in the work toward achieving a dignified peace. Volodymyr Zelenskyy emphasized that Europe must play an important role in all peace efforts and that our shared interests must be protected.

The presidents also discussed humanitarian support, including the rehabilitation of wounded warriors and medical treatment for children.

They also addressed defense support for Ukraine, strengthening air defense, the supply of drones, and Cyprus's participation in the PURL initiative and SAFE instrument.

In Nicosia, President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy held a joint meeting with President of Cyprus Nikos Christodoulides, President of the European Council António Costa, and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen.

The Head of State separately noted Cyprus's participation in the Coalition of the Willing. The leaders discussed the diplomatic situation and joint efforts with American and European partners to achieve a dignified peace.

The key focus of the discussion was the priorities of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Among them are strengthening defense



Particular attention was given to defense support for Ukraine from EU member states, including the strengthening of air defense, combat aviation, and drone production. Cooperation within the SAFE instrument was also addressed.

The President noted that the allocation of EUR 90 billion for Ukraine is an unprecedented decision that will have a tangible impact on Ukraine's defense capabilities and on Europe's security. The parties also discussed further cooperation on a reparation-based loan aimed at restoring Ukraine's financial stability.



I wish you a very successful presidency. I truly hope that during these months, Europe will become stronger, of course, and that people across our continent will feel that tomorrow can be safer, more stable, and better than today. I also deeply believe that together, we can help deliver one of the most important guarantees of peace and security – for our nation and for the whole of Europe – Ukraine's membership in the European Union.

Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine

Cyprus and Ukraine

Commemorating Resilience

February 2026 has seen an unprecedented number of events across Cyprus, as every city and institution gathered to mark the fourth anniversary of the full-scale invasion while showcasing Ukrainian culture to the local population. These commemorations, organized by the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Cyprus, have fostered a vital dialogue between diplomatic institutions, civil society organizations, and the diverse international community. The Embassy expressed deep gratitude

to the active Ukrainians from Paphos, Larnaca, Limassol, and Ayia Napa who traveled to Nicosia, strengthening the bond between regional communities and tirelessly sharing the truth about Ukraine in the global information field.

A cornerstone of the Ukrainian experience in Cyprus over these four years has been the profound need for spiritual support. Throughout the war, Ukrainian priests have provided strength and hope through prayer, confession, and the coordination of community events. On the National Day of Prayer, February 24,

Theater in Nicosia, where the Embassy, in partnership with the "Voice of Ukraine" organization, hosted a meeting with Volodymyr Mykolaïenko, the former mayor of Kherson. Mykolaïenko, who survived three years of Russian captivity, spoke alongside Dmytro Khylyuk, a UNIAN journalist and fellow former captive, and Yulia Pavlyuk, head of the Central Regional Center of

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Sergiy Nizhynskyi presented honorary awards to Archpriest Petro Zuev, chaplain of the mission of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine in Cyprus, and Hieromonk Vasyl Zakharus, rector of the mission of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Cyprus. This recognition is particularly significant at a time when 560 churches in Ukraine have been destroyed and 50 Ukrainian chaplains remain in Russian captivity.

The human cost of the conflict was brought into sharp focus at the Strovolos Municipal



Sergiy Nizhynskyi presents a letter of thanks to former Kherson mayor Volodymyr Mykolaïenko, who returned from Russian captivity



The head of the Central Regional Center of the Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War and the representative of the "Voice of Ukraine", Yulia Pavlyuk, carried out extremely important work in Cyprus to inform the world community about the Ukrainian military being held in Russian captivity

the Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners. The attendees, including members of the diplomatic corps, remained long after the official proceedings to ask Mykolaienko about his endurance and inner strength during his years in detention.

In a moment described by diplomats as historic, the Embassy presented the "Opinion Decision"—a document signed by 17 ambassadors in a powerful show of unity for Ukraine. The event began with a minute of silence and the National Anthem, followed by a briefing from the five initiators: Ambassador Sergiy Nizhynskyi, Swedish Ambassador Martin Hagström, British High Commissioner Michael Tatham, Netherlands Ambassador Wouter Plomp, and Polish Ambassador Marek Szczepanowski. French Ambassador Clélia Chevrier



Ambassador of Ukraine Sergiy Nizhynskyi, Ambassador of the Netherlands Wouter Plomp and Ambassador of Poland Marek Szczepanowski

Kolačko, also a signatory, addressed the audience. The document declares that a secure and independent Ukraine is a guarantee for the security of Cyprus and all of Europe, calling for a partnership rooted in international law and the UN Charter.

The cultural richness of the nation was represented by the Ukrainian choir "Vilna" from Paphos, whose performance added a sense of dignity to the proceedings, while the event was professionally hosted by Julia Vertova. Beyond the official ceremonies, these gatherings in Nicosia served as a critical networking platform where joint project ideas were born and mutual respect was formed through open communication. As Cyprus continues its EU Presidency, these events underscore the unwavering commitment to Ukraine's victory and a future of lasting peace in Europe.

H.E. Dr. Sergiy Nizhynskyi, Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Cyprus



The Ukrainian choir "Vilna"

Cyprus and Ukraine

A Shared Path to EU Integration and Resilience



Michalis S. Firillas,
Ambassador of the
Republic of Cyprus
to Ukraine

The Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to Ukraine discusses the deepening bilateral relations between the two nations, focusing on Ukraine's path toward EU membership. Drawing parallels between the historical challenges of Cyprus and the current resilience of Ukraine, the Ambassador highlights the vital role of the younger generation, technical cooperation in rule-of-law reforms, and the shared vision for a stable, European future.

Perhaps we can start with your general perspective on the current state of relations between Cyprus and Ukraine. What areas are priorities for you right now?

Currently, our main focus is on the period of presidency of the EU Council — this six-month window where we look at how to best support Ukraine's ambition of joining the European Union. Since I arrived last July, my activities have been twofold. First, I needed to get acquainted with the situation on the ground here as quickly as possible. It is a very dynamic situation, and we operate within the parameters of a small diplomatic mission. Second, I wanted to re-establish an active presence with the Ukrainian authorities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the academic community. There was a hiatus of two or three years where things were uncertain. I came here with the attitude of being present, which shows solidarity with Ukraine—a sentiment that is natural for us—and serves as a way of building for the future.

The bilateral relationship has never truly stopped. For instance, Cyprus remains the largest foreign direct investment partner for Ukraine, holding about 27% of the total investment pie, while the next investor holds 14%. Because this relationship is heavily linked to finance, it isn't always "bombastic" or easy to see, but it is there. It is taking shape through our interactions regarding the EU, international law, and the resilience Ukraine is showing. As a small country with our own sphere of volatility in the Middle East, we are looking for grounded ways to interact. President Zelenskyy and Foreign Minister Sybiha have been to Cyprus, and more visits are planned. There is also significant interaction between our teams in Brussels, where the real business of the EU takes place.





Given the support Cyprus provides regarding European integration, what specific Cypriot experience would be most beneficial for Ukraine, perhaps in terms of harmonising legislation or implementing European standards?

Most European partners are looking for substantive reforms in the “rule of law” category. We say this because the rule of law is the fundamental pillar of democracy, transparency, and economic freedom. Unless citizens feel secure within a system of justice, they cannot function effectively as EU citizens. When Cyprus began negotiations in the 1990s, we were ahead of the curve

because we had established democratic structures for a long time. However, there is always room to improve regarding transparency, corruption, and crime.

In the EU, we are currently urging Ukraine to move forward with reforms while simultaneously looking at our own traditional methodologies to find ways to expedite the accession process. It isn’t easy because the EU consists of many partner states, each with its own interests. However, the “European peace project” is a framework for fair negotiations where everyone gives up something to gain for the whole. Cyprus is ready to provide technical assistance at any level to help Ukrainian teams prepare. We also work in “trios”—the Polish, Danish, and then our presidency—to ensure continuity. While Denmark worked on the first three clusters of accession, we are taking over the next three.

You cooperate actively with the Ukrainian Ambassador to Cyprus, Mr Nizhynskyi, who sends his greetings. How do you view this cooperation between your embassies?

I met Serhii before I arrived here; we met twice in New York while he was the Ambassador-designate. He is a very active individual. His energy is vital because he is reviving the Ukrainian communi-

ty in Cyprus. Historically, our relations with Ukraine were strong, but I’m not sure they always identified the unique, independent identity of Ukraine as clearly as they do now. Serhii is introducing the “new” Ukraine to the Cypriots while I am showing Ukraine that Cyprus is active and listening. We share ideas openly and have established a great deal of trust. He was instrumental in signaling to Ukrainian officials that I was coming as a friend of Ukraine.

During our visit, we saw the importance of this cultural diplomacy. Do you think young Cypriot leaders will eventually come to Ukraine? Is there a need for more exchange?

Regarding Cypriots coming here, I haven’t seen enough confidence yet because they mostly see the war on the news. They don’t have a full understanding of the situation on the ground. Investment in the new generation is a clear government policy in Cyprus. I see incredible dynamism in young Ukrainians, and I want to encourage that.

We are working on various ideas, such as teaching the Greek language at Mariupol University in Kyiv as a precursor to sending students to the University of Cyprus. We are also looking at specialized areas like the restoration of cultural artifacts, or internships in legal, shipping, and trading firms. The



younger generation will be the ones implementing the changes that bring Ukraine into the EU. We can start with video conferencing and then move to



physical exchanges.

We actually signed a memorandum of understanding with several Cypriot youth organizations during our visit. We also noticed that Cyprus hosts nearly 30,000 Ukrainian refugees.

Yes, and we have proposed continuing that support in next year's budget. Interestingly, Ukrainian technologists and innovators have found a significant place in the Cypriot IT ecosystem. These young people are starting businesses and making Cyprus their home. They are a classic example of the Ukrainians who will interact within the EU and eventually help with the reconstruction of your country.

Speaking of reconstruction, does Cyprus plan to participate in specific projects, perhaps for certain cities or communities?

The embassy is currently working on a proposal to identify smaller communities, specifically focusing on green technology and "green jobs." As a

Mediterranean country, this is a priority for us and our regional partners. We don't expect to do this alone; we are building a group of partners, including the UN Environmental Program and third countries like Japan and the UAE. The goal is to help peripheral communities create sustainable capabilities in water management, air pollution, and electricity production.

You have been

First, you must have "Brussels experience." It is essential for those who will negotiate within the EU system to spend six months or a year there to understand the ethos, the rules, and the culture of dialogue. Ukraine needs a critical mass of experts who are fluent in how the EU works.

Second, young professionals must be active in spreading the message of what kind of Ukraine you are building. Many smaller communities in Europe—and even in Cyprus—can be suspicious of EU accession. They wonder what it will cost them or how it will affect their farms. Young professionals need to create the credibility and confidence that will win over these communities.

My message to Ukraine is this: if you need a reminder of what is possible, look at Cyprus. We had refugees living in tents and a destroyed economy, but we rebuilt while improving our democratic state.

here since July. What aspects of Ukrainian society have impressed you the most?

Two things have impressed me deeply. First, the professionalism people bring to their tasks, whether in a restaurant or a government office. I didn't expect that level of patience after four years of war. Second, there is a built-in strength that allows for both resilience and solution-finding. I expected more complaining or dissatisfaction, but instead, I see incredible cohesion. I've seen people handle winters without electricity, heat, or water while caring for small children, and yet they keep functioning. War makes things "easy" in one sense: you know exactly what the emergency is. I am optimistic because Ukrainians have proven they have the state of mind to handle this struggle.

Finally, our UA Experts Leadership Club consists of young leaders and students of international law and relations. What is your main piece of advice for them?

Finally, I must mention that Cyprus has had more than one-third of its territory occupied by a foreign power for 52 years. It is not easy to reconcile, but we have managed to rebuild, grow our economy, and join the EU while continuing the fight for reunification. We are a stronger state today than we were before, despite the occupation. In 2013, we had a catastrophic economic crisis, and now our GDP and per capita income have increased substantially.

My message to Ukraine is this: if you need a reminder of what is possible, look at Cyprus. We had refugees living in tents and a destroyed economy, but we rebuilt while improving our democratic state. We are here to help, and I will always make time to discuss these issues with you or your fellow students.

Your words are very close to our hearts. Thank you so much for your time.



Strovolos Municipality

Stavros Stavrinides,
Mayor of Strovolos and
First Vice President
of the Nicosia District
Local Government
Organization



Brief History

The Municipality of Strovolos was established in 1986 under the Municipal Law N.111/85 and is the third largest municipality in Cyprus after Limassol and Nicosia, with a population of over 70,823 inhabitants according to the 2021 census.

References to Strovolos (or Strovilos) date back to the Middle Ages. Today, Strovolos is a large urban municipality covering an area of 25 km² and is divided into six parishes. Its modern development was significantly shaped by the tragic events of 1974, when Turkey

invaded Cyprus and occupied 38% of the island's territory. Following these events, many refugees settled in Strovolos, contributing to the rapid expansion of the municipality. Since then, a large industrial area has been established, while the service and manufacturing sectors have developed significantly.

Strovolos has traditionally been a green municipality and has long embraced innovation and sustainability, even before these approaches became widely recognised as essential. The Municipality actively participates in environmental initiatives, including the Covenant of Mayors. Strovolos is currently implementing a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) and pursuing a climate neutrality strategy by 2030, with an official target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 15% between 2020 and 2030.

To further strengthen climate adaptation, the Municipality has been implementing a green infrastructure plan since 2010, promoting biodiversity through Nature-Based Solutions. Strovolos has received numerous awards for its environmentally friendly actions and was the first public organisation in Cyprus to receive the Green Offices Award.

The Municipality is currently implementing its 2021–2027 Development Strategy, funded by EU Structural Funds, in close cooperation with the Municipalities of Nicosia and Lakatamia. The strategy



includes projects focusing on the circular economy, smart city and digital transformation, sustainable urban mobility, social inclusion, biodiversity protection, and the upgrading of the Pediaios River Linear Park.

Infrastructure

The Municipality hosts some of the most popular parks and green areas in the Nicosia metropolitan area. Along with the Pediaios River Linear Park, which is to be fully revamped it hosts Acropolis Park and Agios Demetrios Park. In Acropolis park there is a living lab, which was created through the EU funded project FEED4FOOD (Vulnerable communities driving innovation and governance for sustainable food systems in European cities). The Lab is located in the Acropolis Park in a semi-arid urban environment. The facilities include a greenhouse, raised beds and planter boxes, and a shade net house, a shaded area for meetings, presentations, and rest. All these are part of our commitment to creating a sustainable and productive environment. The target group is low-income families, elderly, mentally or physically challenged and migrants.

The Lab is committed to organic agriculture and is in the process of obtaining organic certification.

Strovolos hosts some of the most popular parks and green spaces in the Nicosia metropolitan area. In addition to the Pediaios River Linear Park, which is currently being fully upgraded, the municipality is home to Acropolis Park and Agios Demetrios Park.

Within Acropolis Park, a Living Lab has been created through the EU-funded project FEED4FOOD (Vulnerable Communities Driving Innovation and Governance for Sustainable Food Systems in European Cities). Located in a semi-arid urban environment, the Lab includes a greenhouse, raised beds and planter boxes, a shade net house, and a shaded area for meetings, presentations and rest. These facilities form part of the Municipality's commitment to creating a sustainable and productive urban environment.

The Living Lab primarily supports vulnerable groups, including low-income families, elderly citizens, people with physical or mental disabilities, and migrants. The Lab promotes organic agriculture and is currently in the process of obtaining organic certification.

In Agios Demetrios park the Municipality has also recently upgraded the Munic-



ipal Sports Centre facilities. Renamed "Glafkos Klerides" Municipal Sports Centre in honour of the late President of the Republic, the facility now includes two new padel courts, two basketball courts, a basketball half-court and a high-quality running track. The project is funded through the EU Interreg Greece-Cyprus programme and aims to create a fully accessible sports centre capable of welcoming people with disabilities and other accessibility needs.

Projects

Two major urban development projects are currently underway: the improvement of Tseriou Street and the revitalisation of the historic centre of Strovolos.

The redevelopment of Tseriou Street, with a budget of €9 million, aims to create a safer and more people-friendly street while preserving the area's vibrant commercial activity. The project will maintain the street's commercial vitality, identity and local character while enhancing safety and prioritising pedestrians.

The revitalization of the historic centre of Strovolos began on 12 January



Acropolis
Park

2026. It is a €5 million project, funded through the Cohesion Policy Programme "THALIA 2021-2027". The first phase focuses on the area surrounding the historic churches of Panagia Chryseleousa and Agios Georgios. The project includes the creation of a unified street surface, the installation of underground utility infrastructure, and the resolution of long-standing rainwater drainage issues.

These interventions will help reduce vehicle speeds, improve accessibility for all users and enhance safety for both pedestrians and drivers, while also creating an area with reduced noise and lower pollutant emissions.

At the same time, the cultural character of the area will be strengthened through the highlighting of the historic monuments of the two churches. The project also includes the creation of new parking spaces, the undergrounding of services and the installation of infrastructure to support future smart city technologies.

In addition, the Municipality has advanced its digital transformation through the implementation of the digital document management system "Evagoras", which supports the transi-

tion towards a paperless administration. The Municipality has also introduced the innovative application "Novoville", which allows citizens to submit suggestions and report issues in real time, strengthening communication between the Municipality and its residents. Through these digital tools, Strovolos aims to optimise municipal operations and improve service delivery.

Culture and Society

Culture is a key pillar of the Municipality's activities, supported through a diverse and dynamic cultural programme. Strovolos operates the Strovolos Municipal Theatre, the Strovolos Municipal Library and Cultural Centre, and the Ethnomartyras Archbishop

Kyprianos Museum. It also supports a wide range of cultural clubs and groups, including a Folkloric Dance Group, Choir, Children's Choir, Photographers' Club, String Quartet, and Symphonic Band, among others.

In addition, the Municipality runs the Open School programme, with financial support from the Ministry of Education, offering artistic, sports and educational activities for both adults and children.

The Municipal Theatre has recently undergone significant upgrades, including improvements to seating, lighting and sound systems. At the same time, the Municipal Library has expanded and enriched its collections.

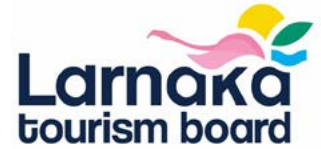


Municipal
Council



The Ethnomartyras Archbishop Kyprianos Museum is a recent addition to the Municipality's cultural portfolio, following an agreement with the Church of Cyprus for its management. The museum houses an important collection of religious relics, artefacts and icons. Entry is free for all visitors, and guided tours in Greek and English are available upon request.

Cyprus Welcomes the World



Nana Asmeni
Pavlou, Director of
the Larnaka Tourism
Board

The last tourist season in Cyprus, Larnaka in particular, had record figures. What are the expectations from this year's season? Has the situation in the Middle East significantly affected the future tourist flow?



Foinikoudes Beach,
Larnaka, Cyprus



Indeed, last year Larnaka experienced record numbers in terms of tourist arrivals and overnight stays, reflecting the region's growing appeal and the overall positive momentum of Cyprus as a destination. For this year, expectations remain optimistic, although developments will naturally depend on the geopolitical situation in our wider region.

While the situation in the Middle East is closely monitored, its impact has, so far, been mitigated by the diversity of our tourist markets. Larnaka's strategy in recent years has been to reduce dependence on any single market and to attract visitors from a variety of regions. This diversification helps stabilise tourist arrivals even when regional challenges arise.

What exactly attracts tourists from a particular region? What attracts visitors to Larnaka?

Each market has distinct preferences, and we take these into consideration when shaping our tourism strategy. However, there are certain elements that consistently attract visitors to Larnaka.

Apart from the sunshine and the pleasant climate almost all-year-round, the city offers long sandy beaches, a calm and friendly environment, and above all, authenticity. Larnaka has managed to preserve its local character and traditional atmosphere, and this has become a defining element of tourism in the region.

The region also offers a wide range of local experiences, historical landmarks, and cultural sites. In fact, Larnaka is considered one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities, with a history spanning thousands of years; evident in its many attractions.

Another important advantage is that Larnaka is a compact and easily accessible destination. It is located very close to the island's main international airport and serves as an ideal base for visitors wishing to explore the rest of Cyprus. Ultimately, visitors are drawn not only to the city's natural and cultural attractions, but also to the sense of authenticity and relaxed atmosphere that defines Larnaka.

Cypriot hospitality – what is it?

As a tourism board, we organise an award scheme for repeat visitors to our region. Many of them have been return-





ing to Cyprus for decades, and almost all say that one of the main reasons they keep coming back is the warm Cypriot hospitality. And what does that mean? It is a unique blend of warmth, genuine friendliness, and professional service. It is about creating an emotional experience where visitors feel truly welcome, almost as if they were at home, which is why our slogan is

tourism segments that help differentiate the destination. These include sports tourism, diving, agrotourism, culture and gastronomy and conferences/business travel.

Digitalisation is another area where Larnaka has made significant progress. We invest in modern tools that enhance both visitor information and destination promotion. For example, we have created virtual experiences such as the digitalisation of museums across the region, thematic cultural walking routes, and 3D virtual reconstructions of archaeological sites. We have also introduced the Larnaka Storytelling Statues initiative, which brings historic personalities to life through technology.



Saint Lazarus Church, Larnaka, Cyprus

'Welcome Back'. Maintaining this genuine human connection is particularly important in today's fast-paced and increasingly digital world.

How is Larnaka building its image as a top tourism destination in Cyprus?

Larnaka focuses primarily on continuously improving its tourism product and offering visitors a wide range of authentic and experiential activities. Sustainability is also an important pillar of our strategy. At the same time, we are developing several special-interest

What problems are there in the tourism industry in Cyprus today? What should be worked on?

Despite the sector's positive growth, the tourism industry in Cyprus still faces several challenges. Seasonality remains one of the most important, as tourist arrivals are still heavily concentrated during the summer months. In addition, infrastructure and digital services must continuously evolve in order to meet the expectations of modern travellers. There is also an increasing global demand for more sustainable

tourism practices, both environmentally and socially.

What news is possible in the hotel sector? Do you expect the emergence of new interesting hotels?

The hotel sector in Larnaka is currently experiencing renewed interest from both local and international investors. In recent years, we have seen a growing trend toward boutique and city hotels, particularly in the historic centre, offering more personalised and experience-driven stays for visitors. At the same time, investment interest also includes seaside resorts and agrotourism establishments in the surrounding rural areas. According to current plans, a total of 29 new hotel and tourism accommodation units are expected to strengthen Larnaka's hospitality capacity in the near future, adding more than 890 beds to the region's overall tourism infrastructure.

How active is tourism within the country? What stimulates it?

Domestic tourism in Cyprus remains active and continues to grow, stimulated by a wide range of factors, including cultural events and festivals, gastronomy experiences, sports activities, and wellness tourism. As a tourism board, we actively inform the public through our digital platforms and through local media about new attractions, points of interest, village experiences, and upcoming events. These initiatives encourage Cypriots and permanent residents to discover their own country.



Lefkara, Cyprus

Orthodox Church of Ukraine

The issuance of the Tomos of Autocephaly for the Ukrainian Church in 2019 radically reshaped the map of the Orthodox world. By the decision of the Mother Church, Ukraine received a new canonical status—autocephaly. Consequently, Constantinople and the broader Greek Orthodox world gained a new strategic ally: the canonically independent Orthodox Church of Ukraine.

As of today, the local Ukrainian Church has been officially recognized by four authoritative Greek-speaking local Churches: the Mother Church, the Ecumenical Patriarchate; the ancient Patriarchate of Alexandria; the Church of Greece; and the Church of Cyprus.

The Church of Cyprus is one of the oldest local Orthodox Churches, with its autocephaly confirmed at the Third Ecumenical Council in 431. The Church occupies a unique position in the life

of Cypriot society and the state, with its rights and independence guaranteed by the Constitution of Cyprus (Article 110). This status is deeply rooted in Greek history: since the Ottoman era, the Orthodox Church has served as the primary institution of the Greek people of Cyprus, and its head, the Archbishop of Cyprus, fulfilled the role of Ethnarch, or national leader.

To this day, the Primate of the Church of Cyprus enjoys exceptionally high authority within Cypriot society. The decision to recognize the autocephaly of the Ukrainian Church was made during the primacy of the late Archbishop Chrysostomos II (2006–2022). This trajectory of cooperation between the Orthodox Churches of Ukraine and Cyprus has been sustained and further developed by the new Cypriot Primate, His Beatitude Georgios, the 66th Archbishop of New Justiniana and All Cyprus.



His Beatitude Georgios is a true friend of Ukraine, deeply concerned for its fate and constantly praying for the establishment of a just peace on Ukrainian soil. With the permission and blessing of Archbishop Georgios, a Chaplaincy Mission of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine has been operating in Cyprus since 2023, providing spiritual care to Ukrainian refugees and relocated persons.

On January 7, 2026, as part of his visit to Cyprus, President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy met with Archbishop Georgios. This was a symbolic gesture by the Ukrainian President and a landmark event in Ukrainian-Cypriot relations. The meeting demonstrated the President's recognition of the significance of the Church of Cyprus and its head, both for the island's social life and for the bilateral dialogue between the two nations.

The President of Ukraine thanked His Beatitude Georgios and the Church of Cy-



Archbishop Georgios

prus for recognizing the autocephaly of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. He emphasized the importance of the moral and humanitarian support provided by the Church of Cyprus, particularly with regard to the restoration of religious sites and the return of Ukrainian children abducted by Russia. Volodymyr Zelensky also briefed the Archbishop on the efforts of Ukraine and its partner nations to achieve a dignified and just peace, and extended an invitation to His Beatitude to pay an official visit to Ukraine. Archbishop Georgios thanked him for the invitation, expressed his readiness to visit Ukraine, and noted that the visit of the Ukrainian Head of State held exceptional significance for the Church of Cyprus.

Further evidence of the Primate's respect and love for Ukraine and its people was the prayer for peace in Ukraine led by His Beatitude Georgios on February 22, 2026. The head of the Cypriot Orthodox Church presided over the service at the Church of Panagia Makedonitissa in Nicosia, located near



Archbishop
Georgios & Sergiy
Nizhynskyi,
Ambassador of
Ukraine to the
Republic of Cyprus

the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Cyprus. His Beatitude Georgios offered prayers for the establishment of a just peace in Ukraine, for the liberation and return of Ukrainian prisoners of war, and for the repose of all Ukrainians who have fallen on the battlefield defending their country's sovereignty and independence. Following the service, the Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Cyprus, Sergiy Nizhynskyi, presented the Archbishop with a valuable artistic gift—a painting by the renowned Ukrainian artist Yuriy Khymych—and thanked him for his prayers and words of support.



Humanity as the Basis of Larnaca's Development Strategy

This year, Larnaca received the status of the winner for the title of European Capital of Culture 2030. To obtain this title, the entire city worked, from the Town Hall to a specially created committee that developed cultural projects. In parallel, Larnaca is experiencing a construction boom and city improvement works. The city, which has a thousands-year history, is trying to maintain a balance between preserving the heritage of the past and taking steps into the future.



Foinikoudes Beach, Larnaca, Cyprus



Iasonas Iasonides,
Deputy Mayor of
Larnaca

Mister Iasonas, in your speeches, you always emphasize an important feature of Larnaca - multiculturalism. How does the city manage to keep this balance, so that everyone feels comfortable and has a sense of home, no matter where you come from?

It's true, I always emphasize that Larnaca is a multicultural city, meaning that a lot of cultures live in Larnaca, many religious communities live in Larnaca

and manage to have them, communicate with them regularly. We go to their events when they invite us. We try to organize events together, we respect their culture and we are always in communication.

It seems to me that a personal attitude is important, you always attend events of different communities, it's true, and everyone appreciates such support. And it is immediately noticeable that your speeches are very sincere. That is, you are really interested in culture, traditions, and the peculiarities of different communities?

I really like to be with people from other cultures and other countries. I'm always in their support, always within the legal framework and I try to solve their problems. If I cannot solve their problems, I hear them and I advise them what to do. Every Friday, me and the mayor of Larnaca Andreas Vyras, we have an open door policy and we receive people who live in Larnaca no matter what nationality or what community they belong to. We listen to them and we provide solutions for different matters.

What do you personally consider a priority in the development of the city and community? Infra-



structure, new facilities for tourism, security issues?

Our most important priority for the moment is the development of the harbour and the marina of Larnaka. It is a project that will lead the economic of the city to the businesses that are in Larnaka and to the villages and other smaller cities around us. It is a development that we are looking to develop soon. We are in communication with the government and we would like to finalize it. But we have started to renovate the old hospital. It will be the new house of the municipality of the city council and it costs around eight million and it will be a colonial listed building in the middle of Larnaka. That's a very nice facility that we want to upgrade

as soon as possible. Considering security issues, those issues belong to the central government, which is being administered and managed by the central government. As a municipality we cannot do many things. But we are trying to create infrastructure. We are trying to keep Humane for all the tourists who come to enjoy themselves. And said a very nice city because it is not a touristic resort. It's a city by itself. And if you walk into a restaurant, you do not know who is the local, who is tourist and who is the permanent resident of Larnaka. That's the most beautiful thing we have here.

What projects does the city plan to implement in the near future (the next 2-3 years)?

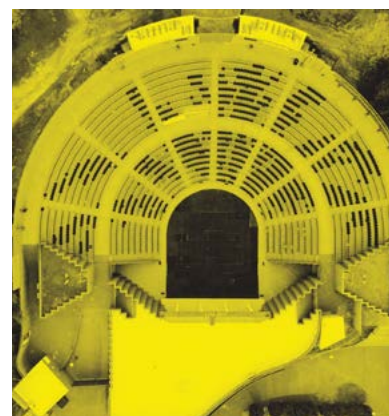


As I said before, the old hospital of Larnaka that is being renovated to become the new house of the municipality and the new and the city council. It's a very important project for us and is gonna take about two years to be finished. Starting next month. The Marina and the Harbour project is taking a little bit more time. But that's a very important plan that we want to develop. The "Larnaka Land of Tomorrow" - it has started to happen. That's a very important project as well.

We have renovated the Pattichio Open Amphitheatre and Park, we have the Salina park that has finished. We will renovate the Saint George community, Saint John community in the center of it used to be the first bishop of Larnaka. Saint John area under developed area that we want to upgrade. That's in our plans as well. And also we would like the innovation that is happening in the center of Larnaka.

History has gifted Larnaka with archaeological artifacts, finds, and a certain heritage. What do you consider the most valuable in this regard? What finds can Larnaka be most proud of?

Larnaka - Is a 10,000 year old city. The most important thing for us is that, our people, our ancestors never left Larnaka for the last four thousand years! And even today when we use an excavator or to exchange the water pipes, we find antiques with this day that four - five thousand years old. So once all those



people lived in Larnaka we would like to continue to do that with the people who come here to find a better future. We are proud of many things of the Larnaka medieval castle of the St. Lazarus church of the district municipal museum. And most of all we are proud of our hospitality. Larnaka safe and humane city. That's what we are most proud of.

Cypriot Business with Ukrainian Inspiration

The Cypriot cheese brand Zerzeckis has been operating since 2021. Its founders are Evagoras and Oksana F'iakkou, while Evagoras had already spent many years developing expertise in the dairy sector before the company was established.



Evagoras and Oksana F'iakkou



Oksana F'iakkou is Ukrainian, and this has strongly influenced the company's social mission. In 2022, Zerzeckis brought its products to the humanitarian hub in Larnaca, where Ukrainians who had recently arrived on the island due to the events in their homeland were able to taste traditional halloumi cheese. Later, the family also helped create the first children's space at the Papadopoulos football stadium premises, which was greatly needed for Ukrainian children. Evagoras F'iakkou sponsored the purchase of essential items for the space, including stationery and toys.

Today, the company continues to grow, showcasing its products in differ-

ent countries and supplying halloumi cheese for export. It also produces several types of cheese that have received top awards for quality at international exhibitions.

Oksana F'iakkou has also shared the company's future plans: Zerzeckis will soon begin producing frozen products, and Ukrainian cheesecakes made from Cypriot anari cheese are expected to be launched on the market. This will be very welcome news for the Ukrainian community in Cyprus.



Cyprus and Ukraine

Young Business Club in Cyprus

For 9 years, the Young Business Club (YBC) has been uniting entrepreneurs, creating an environment for development, exchange of experience and building strong business relationships. Today, the community is reaching a new level - soon YBC will open a branch in Cyprus.

YBC is not just a club, but a platform where business owners and co-owners exchange practical cases, find partners, investors and mentors.



er entrepreneurs who think in terms of growth, create strategic partnerships, and strive to scale internationally.

The program will feature speeches by entrepreneurs and thought leaders, including Yevhen Chichvarkin, Fedir Drozdovsky, Taras Levchyk, Dmytro Bondarenko, Maksym Dem'anyuk, and Maksym Slobodyanyuk.

The event will be an opportunity to gain new knowledge, find partners, and become part of a strong international business community.

An important part of YBC are interaction formats: from Mastermind and Peer-to-Peer meetings to company visits, networking lunches and international events. Thanks to this, participants receive not only contacts, but also real value for business development.

Opening a branch in Cyprus is a logical step in expanding the international community. The island becomes a point of unification of entrepreneurs from Europe and other countries, opening up new opportunities for partnerships and collaborations.

The official opening will take place on April 24–26, 2026 and will bring togeth-



A nighttime photograph of a city skyline in the background, with a road in the foreground leading towards a large, illuminated building on the right. The scene is dark, with the city lights and the building's lights providing the primary illumination.

YBC Young
Business
Club

For cooperation and joining the club, you can contact the founder of the Cyprus branch,

Oleg Polchyn: +357 96410005 (Telegram, WhatsApp)

YOUNG BUSINESS CLUB



UA Experts Leadership Club

In the Republic of Cyprus

From 29 January to 5 February 2026 a distinguished delegation payed an official visit to the Republic of Cyprus. This week-long educational trip marks a significant milestone for Ukraine's emerging leaders, bringing together the brightest minds from the Institute of International Relations of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv and the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy.

The journey began with a deeply symbolic welcome at Larnaca International Airport, where the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine, Dr. Serhiy Nizhynskyi, personally greeted the delegation. The group's first stops were poignant: a visit to the historic Church of St. Lazarus and a gathering at the "Anchor" on the Finikoudes embankment—a monument gifted by the twin city of Odesa, standing as a silent testament to the enduring maritime and

cultural bonds between Ukraine and Cyprus.

The spirit of collaboration extended beyond official government channels as the UA Experts Leadership Club joined forces with Cyprus Youth Diplomacy. This partnership was highlighted by a joint visit to the Centre of Visual Arts and Research (CVAR). In

"Anchor" on the Finikoudes embankment – a monument gifted by the twin city of Odesa



this museum setting, which chronicles centuries of Cypriot heritage, the youth leaders from both nations shared perspectives on how history shapes modern identity and foreign policy.

University of Cyprus

Organized by the Embassy of Ukraine, this first official visit to the University of Cyprus (UCY) provided a sophisticated platform for international communication and institutional collaboration. The visit was marked by an exceptionally warm reception from the university's senior leadership. Rector Tasos Christofides, alongside esteemed faculty members specializing in International Relations, hosted an in-depth presen-

tation focusing on the university's diverse Master's level programs tailored for international scholars. In a spirited exchange of ideas, the Ukrainian delegation engaged in a Q&A session that went beyond standard curriculum discussions, touching upon the strategic importance of academic exchange in strengthening bilateral ties. It became clear that UCY is not merely a center for learning, but a space for the implementation of bold, cross-border initiatives.



Parliament of Cyprus

In a gesture of profound respect for the visiting Ukrainian students, Mr. Harris Georgiades, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign and European Affairs, personally welcomed the delegation. The meeting transcended a standard official briefing, evolving into a meaningful and deep dialogue about the complex challenges facing the modern world. Mr. Georgiades took the opportunity to express his sincere admiration for the resilience and strength of spirit demonstrated by the Ukrainian people, reaffirming the strong bond of solidarity between Nicosia and Kyiv.



H.E. Dr. Sergiy Nizhynskyi, Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Cyprus

For the students, the interaction with such a seasoned political figure offered invaluable insights into the nuances of the current geopolitical climate. The discussion centered on the importance of parliamentary diplomacy and the role of legislative bodies in shaping foreign policy and international security. Engaging directly with the Chairman allowed the participants to better understand the political processes within the Republic of Cyprus and explored how inter-parliamentary cooperation can serve as a vital tool for achieving lasting peace.



Mr. Harris Georgiades, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign and European Affairs



UN in Cyprus

On February 3, 2026, the educational journey of the UA Experts Leadership Club took a profound turn toward the frontlines of international conflict resolution. The delegation, composed of students from the Institute of International Relations (KNU) and the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, was granted a rare and comprehensive briefing within the United Nations Buffer Zone in Nicosia. Hosted jointly by the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General (Good Offices Mission), this visit offered the young leaders a firsthand look at one of the world's longest-standing peace operations.



The session was attended by Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine, Dr. Sergiy Nizhynskyi, who joined the students in a high-level dialogue with UN officials. The briefing provided an intricate overview of the Cyprus peace process, detailing how the two distinct UN missions work in tandem to maintain stability, facilitate dialogue, and implement essential confidence-building measures across the island. For the Ukrainian delegation, the discussion moved beyond textbooks into the gritty, practical challenges of sustaining peace in a divided landscape—a subject with deep resonance for their own national context.



Meeting with Rector Tasos Christofides and faculty members specializing in International Relations



Exploring Larnaca Future

Students engaged in a high-level dialogue at the Larnaca City Hall, gaining insights into how a city with 4,000 years of history prepares for a high-tech, multicultural future.

The delegation was received by the Deputy Mayor of Larnaca, Mr. Iasonas Iasonides, who offered a comprehensive overview of the city's unique administrative and social fabric. A poignant aspect of the discussion focused on Larnaca's identity as a sanctuary; following the 1974 occupation, 52 percent of the city's current population are Cypriots from Famagusta who built new lives here. Mr. Iasonides emphasized that this history has forged a deeply resilient and multicultural community. In a stirring tribute to the visiting delegation, the Deputy Mayor expressed profound respect for the Ukrainian people, noting their "exceptionally strong character" and sharing his firm conviction in Ukraine's future prosperity.

The conversation transitioned from governance to economic strategy during a session with Nana Asmeni Pavlou, Director of the Larnaca Tourism Board. While detailing Larnaca's success as a premier global destination, Ms. Pavlou initiated a forward-looking discussion regarding the future of tourism in Ukraine. The students actively queried how regional tourism acts as an economic engine and a tool for "city diplomacy," shaping a nation's brand on the global stage.



Ukraine and Cyprus Youth Sign Memorandum in Nicosia

Representing the Ukrainian side was the UA Experts Leadership Club, led by Anna Kryzhanivska. They were met by a robust delegation of Cypriot student leaders, including Christos Parmakkis of ΦΩΝΗ ΦΟΙΤΗΤΩΝ (Voice of the University of Cyprus Students), Nicholas Thomas from the Democratic Front of the Cypriot Student Renaissance, and Kostas Aspris representing EU To You CY.

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The memorandum is far more than a symbolic gesture; it serves as a comprehensive framework designed to foster tangible results across several key pillars of international cooperation. At its core, the agreement facilitates educational and cultural synergy through joint initiatives aimed at academic exchange and the promotion of national heritage. Furthermore, it establishes a commitment to a continuous exchange of experience in organizational management and youth policy, ensuring a steady transfer of knowledge between the two regions. The document also outlines a strategy for mutual advocacy, creating a unified front to promote each other's interests within European and international institutional frameworks. This is bolstered by a commitment to collaborative action, focusing on the development of joint projects that address the modern challenges facing the youth of both the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe.

Christos Parmakkis, ΦΩΝΗ ΦΟΙΤΗΤΩΝ (Voice of the University of Cyprus Students), Nicholas Thomas, Democratic Front of the Cypriot Student Renaissance, and Kostas Aspris, EU To You CY, Anna Kryzhanivska, Head of the UA Experts Leadership Club



University of Nicosia

Beyond the administrative meetings, the delegation was given an extensive tour of the UNIC campus, with a particular focus on its world-class dig-



ital communications infrastructure. The Ukrainian students were notably impressed by the university's digital media production laboratories. These facilities, equipped with professional workstations for high-end video editing and post-production, represent the gold standard for modern media education. These sessions provided a platform for a detailed presentation of the university's diverse bachelor's and master's programs, specifically highlighting the pathways available for international students. A significant portion of the dialogue was dedicated to the Erasmus+ framework, identifying new avenues for mobility and funding.

Reviews

Sergiy Nizhynskyi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the Republic of Cyprus

This is the first official visit in recent years by students who are true lead-



ers of their universities and can convey the information about Ukraine that has been needed in the Republic of Cyprus for a long time. This week's program, held together with the Embassy of Ukraine and organized jointly with our universities, will provide a convincing argument for why it is necessary to invest in youth for both Ukraine and Cyprus. After all, human capital is what Ukraine can win with.

Olena Andrews-Skalyodes, Communications Expert at the Embassy of Ukraine to the Republic of Cyprus

Today's students and leaders are building connections with the Cypriot side, which is a certain guarantee for the development of relations between the countries in the future. But youth do this differently; the new generation does it in a different way, which gives some faith in a good future and a good position and image for Ukraine in Europe.

Polina Levina, member of the UA Experts Leadership Club

Visiting the UN base in the buffer zone made a strong impression, as we saw how peacekeeping mechanisms work in practice. This allowed for a deeper understanding of the role of international organizations in conflict regulation, as well as the importance of dialogue between parties.

Borys Ursul, member of the UA Experts Leadership Club

During the journey, we visited the Museum of the History of Cyprus, learned many interesting things, and found certain similar moments that connect us with the Cypriots and the history of Cyprus.

Kateryna Leshko, member of the UA Experts Leadership Club

We also visited the University of Nicosia. It is one of the best universities in Cyprus and is private. It was very interesting to hear and see how the educational process takes place. They showed us how training in the field of media is conducted.

Alisa Mazurenko, member of the UA Experts Leadership Club

The dialogue was very productive and actually very important for us as Ukrainian students. This is because Cyprus is a country that at one time strongly sought to join the European Union, just as we are doing now. Also, this is a country that, like no other, knows well what occupation is in modern conditions.

Artem Rybalchenko, member of the UA Experts Leadership Club

This trip has already taught us about the work of the diplomatic mission of Ukraine in Cyprus and showed how to interact with state and non-state institutions, universities, and other actors in this diplomatic field.

Kateryna Opanasenko, member of the UA Experts Leadership Club

The program was very rich and diverse, with many live meetings and frank conversations about diplomacy and international cooperation. In general, such initiatives are very important for young people, for their career growth, for building the right priorities, and generally for the motivation to move forward and set ambitious goals.

Gleb Tsukanov, member of the UA Experts Leadership Club

This trip is very important for us because we cooperate directly with students and study the culture and politics of Cyprus. I want to say that we are working for the benefit of Ukraine, for our bright future. Everyone is doing their part. Thank you for such an opportunity. Glory to Ukraine!

Youth Council under the MFA of Ukraine

The growing role of young people in public decision-making has become an important feature of democratic governance worldwide. As governments face challenges that directly affect younger generations, including youth perspectives in policymaking is increasingly seen as a practical necessity. Youth advisory mechanisms help public institutions better understand the expectations of younger citizens while fostering a generation familiar with the functioning of the state. In Ukraine, the creation of youth councils under governmental bodies reflects a new and rapidly developing approach to institutionalizing such engagement.

Today, the Youth Council under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs consists of 38 young professionals committed to supporting Ukraine's diplomatic mission both domestically and abroad. While members come from different professional and academic backgrounds, they are united by a common goal: to strengthen the connection between young people and government for the benefit of Ukraine.

As the Council began its third term, its members held a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andrii Sybiha, and presented the key priorities for the current candidacy. These priorities were

developed during a strategic session, with the understanding that the work of the Youth Council should be closely aligned with the Ministry's current and long-term priorities and complement them in areas where youth participation can bring practical results.

The first priority is engagement with young Ukrainians abroad. The Council focuses on supporting their self-organization into communities, maintaining their sustainable connection with Ukraine, advocating for their needs, involving them in coordinated international advocacy for Ukrainian interests.

The second priority is encouraging youth participation in the diplomatic service. Building on the previous term's research on improving the MFA's HR brand, the Council aims to continue this work by raising awareness among young people about career opportunities in the diplomatic service.

The third priority is the development of youth diplomacy, alongside the Council's broader advisory role. In particular, the Youth Council will be developing recommendations on engagement with foreign youth, tailored to different regional contexts, in order to make Ukraine's outreach more targeted and effective. The Youth Council remains open to cooperation with public institutions, youth organizations, academic communities, and international partners who share the goal of strengthening youth participation in public life and diplomacy. As this model continues to develop, the Council seeks not only to support the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but also to contribute to a broader culture of meaningful youth engagement in shaping Ukraine's future.



Yan Earl-Ruzhytskyi,
Chair of the Youth
Council;

Yelyzaveta Kaidash,
Deputy Chair of the
Youth Council

Fostering a European Future

On March 11, 2026, members of the UA Experts Leadership Club participated in a mentoring meeting with Gediminas Navickas, the Deputy Ambassador of the European Union to Ukraine. This engagement served as a vital platform for the next generation of Ukrainian experts to discuss the intricate dynamics of European integration directly with senior diplomatic leadership.

During the session, Mr. Navickas emphasized the fundamental pillars of Ukraine's journey toward EU membership, focusing on the European Union's enlargement policy and the continuous multi-faceted support provided to Ukraine in its struggle for sovereignty and reform.



A central theme of the discussion was the development of human capital and the proactive involvement of Ukrainian youth in EU-related initiatives. Mr. Navickas high-

lighted that the EU Delegation places immense value on the participation of young leaders and civil society in fostering democratic processes and advancing Ukraine's integration goals.

Reflecting this commitment, Anna Kryzhanivska, an expert at NGO "UA Experts" and Head of the UA Experts Leadership Club, presented the organization's ongoing efforts in the fields of human capital development and European integration.



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

and open in his remarks. It was truly important that we raised urgent issues and shared common views on their further development and resolution. It is gratifying to see how much common ground exists between Ukrainian youth and official EU institutions, which motivates further cooperation and engagement".

The dialogue moved beyond formal procedures to address the pressing geopolitical realities of the day. Participants engaged in a candid analysis of current events, including the recent elections in Hungary and their potential implications for broader European policy. This open exchange left a profound impression on the students, who valued the transparency and depth of the insights shared by the Deputy Ambassador.

Club member Oleksandra Kasyarum remarked on the sincerity of the interaction, noting, "What I liked most was that, although the meeting was professional, Mr. Navickas remained sincere



Echoing this sentiment, Mariia Petrova emphasized the value of receiving a direct perspective from Brussels: “We discussed the most relevant issues on the agenda, specifically the elections in Hungary and their possible impact on European politics, as well as Ukraine’s real progress on the path to EU membership. I am glad I had the opportunity to hear the position of someone at this level directly, as it provides a much deeper understanding of how Brussels views our integration today”.

The meeting was characterized by its multidisciplinary scope, covering everything from technical enlargement criteria to the EU’s stance on immediate global challenges. As Alisa Mazurenko highlighted, “The diverse approach to the discussion brought particular satisfaction, ranging from enlargement policy to the EU’s position on current events. This was exactly the type of open dialogue that inspires action and a deeper immersion into the European context!”.



This visit to the EU Delegation to Ukraine underscored the critical necessity of maintaining a structured dialogue with the young generation of Ukrainian experts who will ultimately spearhead the country’s European future. By bridging the gap between official diplomatic missions and youth leadership, the initiative continues to strengthen the human capital essential for a resilient and integrated Ukraine.



This was exactly the type of open dialogue that inspires action and a deeper immersion into the European context!



Geopolitical Turbulence and the Role of Youth



Christos Parmakkis,
Youth delegate in
respect of Cyprus to
the council of Europe
congress
President of the
independent student
movement "Voice of
the Students"

The world has once again entered a period of serious geopolitical tension. The latest escalation in the Middle East, with the military operation of the United States and Israel against Iran, risks drawing more countries of the region into a wider confrontation. Even countries that are not directly involved are feeling the consequences.

My country, Cyprus, is a clear example. Life on the island continues normally for most people, but the regional situation reminds us how fragile stability can be. Military infrastructure on the island has become part of the wider strategic picture, and European forces from countries such as France and Greece have been deployed in the region. Cyprus once again finds itself close to the centre of a geopolitical storm.

Despite the brutality of the war, Ukraine has shown extraordinary resilience. Ukrainian society has demonstrated remarkable strength, and the role of young people has been particularly striking. While their country is under constant attack, Ukrainian youth continue to volunteer, participate in public life, and defend their country. Some fight on the battlefield, others support their communities, and many remain politically active even

under the most difficult circumstances. Their determination shows that youth are not simply victims of geopolitical events but also important actors in shaping their nation's future.

Cyprus itself offers an interesting example of how youth can play a role in conflict resolution. In 2025, as part of renewed efforts in the Cyprus peace process, the president of the republic of Cyprus and the Turkish Cypriot leader agreed in Geneva to establish the Technical Committee on Youth as a confidence-building measure with the support of the United Nations.



President Nikos Christodoulides appointed me as one of the Greek Cypriot members of this committee, together with other young representatives. Our task is to promote cooperation and dialogue between young people from both communities of the island. Through joint initiatives and capacity-building programmes, we aim to strengthen trust and encourage a new generation to think differently about the future of Cyprus.

The importance of youth participation in the Cyprus peace process has also been highlighted by the Personal Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for Cyprus, María Ángela Holguín, who is in general doing a great and encouraging job regarding her mandate in Cyprus. Her work has underlined that long-term peace on the island will require the active involvement of the younger generation.

The future stability of our societies will depend not only on political leaders, but also on whether the next generation is given the opportunity to shape a more peaceful and cooperative world.

Advancing Strategic Autonomy and Democratic Resilience

A Vision for the 2026 Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU

The Council of the European Union is one of the seven institutions of the European Union, which serves as the co-legislator alongside the European Parliament and through which the Member States coordinate different policy areas. Its work is guided every six months by a rotating presidency, which is responsible for setting priorities, facilitating negotiations with other EU bodies and governments, and ensuring institutional continuity. Having acceded to the EU in 2004, Cyprus first held the Council presidency in the second half of 2012, with financial stability and growth being the then priorities.

The forthcoming presidency is expected to be focused on European strategic autonomy, security and defence, competitiveness, migration management, and the EU's regional engagement, reflecting both evolving geopolitical pressures and the island's distinct position at the Union's southeastern frontier. This article lays out our vision for the upcoming Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU, which is set to commence on January 1, 2026.

The aftermath of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine escalated the security risks that the EU is currently facing. Experiencing the conditions of resumed warfare and prolonged occupation, Cyprus and Ukraine jointly uphold pressure on the international community to

condemn and sanction governments that breach the principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty in international relations. Moreover, as experience shows, coordinated policies are necessary to address multifaceted, broader security crises, including conventional and non-conventional threats, climate change, and democratic resilience. There are no 'secondary' emergencies, and the sooner we recognise their urgency, the more just and peaceful our future will be. This vision aligns with the broader vision outlined in UN Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015) on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS), which sets out a framework for reflective decision-making to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies. The YPS agenda can guide Member States and partners in deepening existing partnerships with youth-focused and youth-led organisations, thus transforming existing bilateral relations even further. The Cyprus presidency of the Council of the EU is facing a unique opportunity to streamline the YPS agenda within the EU's Strategic Compass framework and to promote a structured dialogue with civil society, specifically in areas of EU enlargement, democratic resilience, peacebuilding and counter-disinformation initiatives.

Finally, as Cyprus assumes the forthcoming Presidency of the Council of the EU, we encourage prioritising robust



**Romanos Orfeas
Tofis, Public
Relations Officer
of Cyprus Youth
Diplomacy**

measures aimed at safeguarding the marine environment, promoting sustainable fisheries, and reducing emissions in line with the European Commission's Ocean Pact. These measures shall be transparent and with adequate compliance mechanisms to support a transition towards a sustainable economy.

Internship

at the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of the Philippines



Interns and the
Ambassador of
Ukraine in the
Republic of the
Philippines

The opportunity to serve as an intern at the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of the Philippines has been one of the most enriching and transformative experiences of my professional journey. Over the course of this internship, I have gained invaluable insights into the workings of diplomatic mission, developed essential professional skills, and deepened my understanding of international relations in the dynamic Southeast Asian region.

One of the most significant challenges I encountered was learning to navigate the complex landscape of ASEAN politics and understanding how they intersect with Ukraine's foreign policy priorities. The Philippines, as the chair of ASEAN in 2026 and a nation with its own unique geopolitical considerations, presented fascinating case studies in diplomacy, economic cooperation, and cultural exchange.

This internship has significantly enhanced my professional skill set in numerous ways. For instance, my written and verbal communication skills were refined through drafting official documents, correspondence, and reports in English.

I am deeply grateful to the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of the Philippines for providing me with this exceptional opportunity. Their mentorship, guidance, and support throughout this internship have been instrumental in my professional development.

This internship has been truly transformative, and I look forward to applying the knowledge and skills acquired as I continue to develop my career in the field of international relations and diplomacy.

Oleksandr Koptiev,
Member of the UA Experts Leadership Club

Justice Conference



Members of UA Experts attended the Justice Conference, which took place on February 23, 2026. The conference served as an international platform for discussing key legal issues related to ensuring the rule of law and holding the aggressor state accountable.

Participants from Ukrainian government institutions, international organizations, diplomatic missions, the business community, and the legal sector discussed the creation of a Special Tribunal, the establishment of a compensation mechanism to reimburse damages caused to Ukraine, as well as possible international legal steps in response to the aggression.

The conference was opened with an introductory speech by the Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine, Kyrylo Budanov. In his address, he emphasized that the concept of justice today has not only a moral but also a practical dimension, as it is directly linked to security, stability, and the achievement of peace.

The Justice Conference became an important platform for discussing ways to restore justice and develop international mechanisms of accountability for the aggression against Ukraine. Participants emphasized that only through holding those responsible accountable, returning deported children, and implementing effective compensation mechanisms can a just and lasting peace be achieved.

Marta Kovalchuk,
Member of the UA Experts Leadership Club

70th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women

The 70th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70) has commenced in New York. This session remains one of the most critical international platforms for advancing gender equality and the global empowerment of women and girls.

This year, the Ukrainian delegation is led by Mariana Betsa, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. The delegation also includes Liudmyla Shemelynets, First Deputy Minister of Social Policy, Family, and Unity; Maryna Slobodnichenko, Deputy Minister of Health; Kateryna Levchenko, Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy; Yevheniia Kravchuk, Member of Parliament, and other officials.



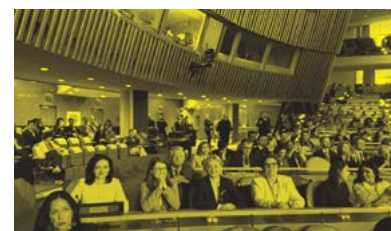
The priority theme for this year's session is ensuring and enhancing access to justice for women and girls. Discussions focus on developing inclusive and equitable legal systems, eliminating discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, and overcoming structural barriers that hinder the realization of women's rights.

During the session, the Ukrainian delegation will host a series of thematic side events. A key highlight will be the presentation of Ukraine's experience in combating Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV). This includes providing comprehensive assistance to survivors, documenting these crimes, and expanding international cooperation to ensure accountability for perpetrators.

Ukraine's participation in CSW70 serves as a vital opportunity to share its experience in protecting women's rights under conditions of war and to contribute to the formation of global policies aimed at ensuring gender equality and supporting conflict-affected populations.

Source: <https://www.msp.gov.ua/press-center/news/lyudmyla-shemelynets-bere-uchast-u-70-y-sesiyyi-komisiyi-zi-stanovyshcha-zhinok-oon>

As part of the working meetings, participants from UN member states will discuss ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men across various spheres of public life, the role of women in peacekeeping and building a just and sustainable peace, the protection of rights in the digital environment, and efforts to combat violence and human trafficking.



Survivor-Centered Approach

Best Practices from Members of the International Alliance on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict

War crimes know no gender, no age, no borders. It leaves no one untouched. And even as the nature of warfare evolves, conflict-related sexual violence continues to be one of the most destructive and cynical tactics – used to cause pain, instill fear, and destroy communities. Ukraine has faced such crimes since 2014, when Russia turned sexual violence into a systematic weapon of aggression.

In the face of such cruelty, Ukraine chose not only to condemn but to act. We put survivors at the center of our response – by adopting new laws, introducing urgent interim reparations even in wartime, building cooperation between law enforcement, military, social services, and civil society. Above all, we listen to survivors themselves – whose voices, courage, and demands for justice shape our way forward.

This collection of best practices reflects both Ukraine's own path and our shared global journey. In 2025, Ukraine became the chair of the International Alliance on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict. For us, this is not just a title – it is a responsibility and an opportunity: to contribute, to learn, and to create a stronger, united response with our partners globally.

Through our chairmanship, we sought to emphasize that this issue is not only of concern to Ukraine but to the wider international community. We are therefore proud that, during our presidency, six new members chose to join the Alliance, further strengthening our common cause.



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

In this book, you will find lessons tested in the hardest of circumstances. They are intended for governments, institutions, practitioners – and, importantly, for survivors everywhere. We hope to inspire concrete action, grounded in dignity, respect, and accountability, all around the world.

Above all, we pay tribute to the survivors. Their resilience is the true foundation of all our work. It is my sincere hope that, with survivor-centered practices, political will, and international solidarity, we can bring them closer to justice, recognition, and the healing they so rightfully deserve.

Within the framework of Ukraine's 2025 Chairmanship of the Global Alliance to

Prevent Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV), a compendium titled "Survivor-Centered Approach: Best Practices of Alliance Members" has been developed. This document consolidates the expertise of 23 Alliance members and spans the critical areas of prevention, response, the co-creation of policies with survivors, and justice and reparations. The initiative to collect these leading practices was launched to document and analyze how Alliance members have implemented survivor-centered methodologies since the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2467. The best practices shared reflect the diverse experiences of states directly affected by CRSV or those addressing it through their global activities, as well as the expertise of organizations dedicated to CRSV prevention and response.

Contributions to this publication were provided by Australia, the Association of Women Lawyers of Ukraine "JurFem," Bosnia and Herzegovina, the United Kingdom, the Global Survivors Fund, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Colombia, Sisma Mujer Corporation, UN Women, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Timor-Leste, Ukraine, the Ukrainian Women's Fund, France, the Dr. Denis Mukwege Foundation, UNFPA, Switzerland, Japan, Jordan, Justice Rapid Response, Legal Action Worldwide, and UA Experts.



Read the book here

Eurointegration Digest

Ukraine has reached 84% implementation of the Association Agreement with the EU: Report for 2025 published

Today, the Report on the Implementation of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union for 2025 was published. The document reflects Ukraine's progress in implementing reforms and approximating legislation to EU standards.

According to the results of 2025, the overall progress in implementing the Agreement increased from 81% in 2024 to 84% in 2025. In 2025, the greatest progress in implementing the obligations provided for by the Association Agreement was achieved in the following areas:

- Financial sector – annual growth is 8%, overall progress is 82%;



- Social policy and labor relations - annual growth is 7%, overall progress is 87%;
- Customs issues – annual growth is 5%, overall progress is 96%;
- Agriculture - annual growth is 5%, overall progress is 79%.
- At the same time, the highest level of fulfillment of obligations was recorded in the following areas:
 - Statistics and information exchange – 100%;
 - Education, training and youth – 99%;
 - Intellectual property – 98%.

The government approved draft laws on out-of-court settlement of consumer disputes

The government has approved a package of draft laws introducing a system of out-of-court consumer dispute resolution (ODR) - a mechanism for the rapid resolution of conflicts between consumers and businesses without resorting to court. The decision, adopted as part of the consumer protection reform, implements EU Directive 2013/11/EU and is part of Ukraine's implementation of its obligations under the Association Agreement with the EU.

The proposed system provides for an alternative mechanism for resolving disputes through special bodies of the Consumer Protection Agency - legal entities, business associations and public consumer associations. The consumer will be able to file a complaint with the Consumer Protection Agency, where independent experts will consider the dispute and provide a decision or recommendation.

Ukraine has joined the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions

The adoption of the relevant law will join Ukraine to one of the key international anti-corruption instruments – the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions.

The Convention establishes:

- criminalization of bribery of foreign officials in international business transactions;
- liability of legal entities for bribery of foreign officials;
- effective and proportionate sanctions for such offences;
- prevention of laundering of proceeds of crime;
- requirements for proper accounting and financial reporting;
- mechanisms of international legal assistance and extradition.

Its implementation involves amendments to the Criminal Code of Ukraine, the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine, and the Law of Ukraine "On Prevention of Corruption".

Inter-Municipal Cooperation as a Tool
for Systemic Protection and Support:

New Model for Responding to Domestic and Gender-Based Violence

In 2025 and 2026, at the initiative of the **National Social Service of Ukraine** and with the support of **UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund in Ukraine**, the non-governmental organization **"UA Experts"** is implementing a project on inter-municipal cooperation among territorial communities in the field of preventing and combating domestic and gender-based violence (GBV).

As the National Coordinator of NGO "UA Experts" and the coordinator of this project, I am convinced: today, communities do not need fragmented solutions, but a systemic model that guarantees equal access to assistance for every survivor, regardless of their place of residence.

Why Inter-Municipal Cooperation?

Ukrainian communities possess varying levels of capacity. Some have already established shelters, day centers, and mobile teams (specialized services for preventing and combating

domestic and gender-based violence), while others lack the resources for full-scale infrastructure development. Meanwhile, the demand for services is growing.

For instance:

- In the **Khmelnytskyi region**, 2,696 reports of domestic violence were recorded in the third quarter of 2025 alone.
- In the **Kirovohrad region**, nearly 5,000 reports have been filed since the beginning of 2025.
- In the **Chernivtsi region**, over 2,000 cases were recorded during the year, including severe crimes with fatal outcomes.

These figures are not just statistics; they are an argument for transitioning from a reactive model to a systemic one.



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

Inter-municipal cooperation allows for:

- Pooling the resources of multiple communities;
- Jointly financing specialized services;
- Ensuring the operational stability of shelters, day centers, and mobile teams;
- Planning personnel workloads;
- Guaranteeing continuity of care.

Implementation Geography

In December 2025, the project team conducted a series of advocacy visits to pilot communities: **Chernivtsi, Ternopil, Khmelnytskyi, Rivne, and Kropyvnytskyi**. Each region demonstrated its own specific characteristics.

- **Chernivtsi Community** confirmed its readiness to serve as a baseline cooperation model and initiated communication with neighboring communities to plan the signing of memoranda and agreements.
- **Ternopil Community** is considering expanding the service area of its day center and crisis room through inter-municipal agreement mechanisms.
- **Khmelnytskyi Community** already has experience with signed agreements and demonstrates a practical model for service procurement, yet requires a transition to more sustainable forms of systemic funding.
- **Rivne Region** became a platform for inter-municipal partnership based on several communities and a strategic discussion on creating shared services with subsequent joint financing.
- **Kropyvnytskyi Community** possesses a well-developed system for preventing and combating domestic and gender-based violence and is exploring opportunities to expand the geographic coverage of its specialized services for inter-municipal interaction.

Training as the Foundation of Resilience

On December 12–13 in Rivne, January 27–28 in Chernivtsi, and January 29–30 in Khmelnytskyi, two-day training sessions were held for stakeholders of in-

teraction. We worked with real cases, practiced algorithms for inter-agency coordination in responding to domestic and gender-based violence, and analyzed the challenges posed by wartime.

The training proved that the inter-municipal model is not just a legal mechanism—it is a change in the culture of interaction. It is a transition from “firefighting” to a predictable, structured protection system.

Key Project Results

Based on advocacy visits:

- Communities for the “first wave” of cooperation were identified;
- Templates for memoranda and agreements were developed and distributed;
- Needs for material and technical reinforcement were outlined to enable the expansion of service coverage;
- The budget planning process, accounting for inter-municipal agreements, was initiated.

Based on training sessions:

1. Strengthened inter-agency coordination: Participants practiced interaction algorithms between social services, police, and other responders, minimizing duplication of functions and reducing response times.
2. Established practical models of inter-municipal cooperation: Communities developed specific scenarios—from service procurement to the creation of shared services with systemic funding.
3. Increased budget planning capacity: Participants received tools to integrate inter-municipal service costs into local budget programs, which is critical for the model’s sustainability.
4. Refined response to complex cases under martial law: Analysis of real-life situations allowed communities to adapt work mechanisms to increased risks and the growing load on the system.

5. Established a professional mutual support network: The training served as a platform for horizontal ties between communities, facilitating future experience sharing.

6. Shifted focus from crisis response to prevention: Participants agreed on the need to move toward a comprehensive system involving early intervention, long-term social support, and preventative work.



7. Developed concepts for local communication campaigns: Participants drafted approaches for awareness-raising campaigns to increase public knowledge of domestic/GBV issues and available aid.

Prospects

We see significant potential for scaling this model to other regions and communities across Ukraine. The project has proven its adaptability: each community can choose the optimal format—service procurement, joint financing, or the creation of an inter-municipal service.

The primary value of this initiative lies in forming regional protection systems rather than isolated, point-based solutions. Inter-municipal cooperation is about community solidarity, responsibility, and the understanding that human safety cannot depend on administrative boundaries. This approach is the key to creating a sustainable, professional, and accessible support system for survivors of domestic and gender-based violence in Ukraine.

Educational Workshops

Strengthening Protection Systems Against Violence

In late January 2026, the project for implementing inter-municipal cooperation in the field of preventing and combating domestic and gender-based violence transitioned into an active phase of practical training. Educational workshops held in Chernivtsi and Khmelnytskyi brought together representatives of local communities to develop concrete mechanisms for assisting survivors.

Chernivtsi: Moving from Economic Feasibility to Practical Interaction

Alla Vaskovetska, trainer and expert on the development of systems to prevent and combat domestic violence

On January 27–28, 2026, Chernivtsi hosted the second stage of engagement with the community following an advocacy meeting held a month prior. The primary goal of this stage was to



transition from discussing economic expediency to establishing practical interaction mechanisms for specialized services to assist neighboring communities. Key efforts during the training focused on teaching local stakeholders referral algorithms for survivors and developing a joint referral map to ensure aid accessibility in communities lacking their own specialized services. Participants also analyzed current legislation, addressed practical gaps through expert support, and identified communication materials necessary to inform residents about newly available services. This phase concluded with the awarding of certificates to participants, setting the stage for future in-depth training to finalize interaction protocols and create joint information products.

Khmelnytskyi: Leadership in Cooperation Agreements

Following the sessions in Chernivtsi, a training workshop took place in Khmelnytskyi on January 29–30, 2026. As a pilot community for the project, Khmelnytskyi achieved a significant milestone by signing seven cooperation memoranda with neighboring partner communities, establishing a robust legal and organizational foundation. The training involved 32 participants directly engaged in providing survivor assistance. The curriculum covered a deep understanding of forms of violence, the impact of the war on communities, and the application of



legislation to streamline interaction between response entities. Furthermore, the sessions focused on implementing models for inter-municipal partnerships and joint service financing, alongside resource inventorying through mapping to create a comprehensive referral system. All participants received certificates upon completion of the intensive course.

This project is implemented in collaboration with the National Social Service of Ukraine and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). These efforts demonstrate that human safety should not depend on administrative boundaries, as systemic assistance is only possible through professional interaction and regional solidarity.



Natalia Frunze,
Director of the Social Policy Department of the Chernivtsi City Council

Training on establishing intermunicipal cooperation in Khmelnytskyi



Experience of the Khmelnytskyi Community



Yulia Berezhanska,
Director of the Centre
for Prevention and
Counteraction of
Violence of the
Khmelnytskyi City
Council

Why is it important for communities to join forces specifically in the field of providing social services to other municipalities?

The first reason, of course, is resource efficiency, as opening a specialized service requires financial expenditures, and such cooperation will allow communities to reduce these costs. Next is the fact that our Khmelnytskyi community already has trained specialists, established proper infrastructure, and accessibility for providing such services.

At what stage is the cooperation with territorial communities now?

First of all, we have familiarized ourselves with the services and units that function in the partner communities. Also, we signed memoranda of cooperation between our communities in the field of preventing and combating

violence. Today, we are actively working on an individual basis on the contracts that will be concluded between our Center and the social service providers working in the partner communities.

What challenges do you face in coordinating between communities?

The first challenge is the lack of clear standards and unified forms of cooperation contracts, and there is also a need for an individual approach to each community, as the requests for services are different. Another challenge is the mechanism for transferring data about persons in need of services and the protection of their personal data.

What will change for the residents of these communities thanks to this cooperation?

First of all, if there is a proper information campaign in the communities about the Center for Preventing and Combating Violence of the Khmelnytskyi City Council and about the services that can be obtained here, then people's trust in social institutions will increase, and there will be a desire to reach out for support and receive qualified assistance and a safe space.

What is your main message to other communities that are only planning to establish cooperation?

The procurement of social services is a step forward toward a safe and supportive environment in every community, as residents of every community, according to legislation, should receive quality services, even if a particular community does not have the opportunity to open a specialized support service; therefore, such cooperation is an excellent interaction mechanism. If there is a community with trained specialists, professional skills, and a good material and technical base, then why not use its services.

Experience of the Chernivtsi Community

Why is it important for communities to join forces specifically in this area?

Joining forces is about ensuring that assistance is timely and of high quality. It is about ensuring that a person doesn't have to search for where to turn, but rather knows there is a clear response mechanism and that they will receive support. When assistance is accessible and coordinated, people have more trust and are not afraid to reach out. This is very important.

What joint initiatives have already been implemented?

Within the framework of the project, we have held meetings with communities of the Chernivtsi district, identified responsible officials, and agreed upon algorithms for joint action. We have developed a referral pathway for survivors and are preparing for the signing of inter-municipal cooperation agreements.

What challenges do you face in coordination between communities?

The primary challenge is resources. In small communities, they are limited, particularly in the social sector. It is not always possible to establish specialized services or ensure a sufficient number of specialists. Additionally, some communities have not yet developed clear

algorithms for interaction between various services.

What has already changed for community residents thanks to this cooperation?

The most important thing is that a person is no longer left alone with their problem. There is now a clear pathway for assistance: Police → Social Services → Psychologist → Safe Space. Mobile teams can now travel even to remote settlements. Consultations can be obtained by phone, which is very important for rural residents.

People know that in case of danger, there is a real, safe option and that their request will be kept confidential.

This means that assistance has become faster and more accessible.

What is your main message to communities that are only just planning to establish cooperation?

Do not wait for perfect conditions. Even if a community does not have a shelter or a dedicated specialist, you can already designate a responsible official today, establish cooperation with other communities, and agree on an assistance pathway.

The system begins with the decision to act.



Natalia Frunze,
Director of the Social
Policy Department of
the Chernivtsi City
Council

The European Child Guarantee

Paving Ukraine's Path to Social Integration and European Membership



In a decisive move toward full European integration, Ukraine has joined the European Child Guarantee (ECG), a flagship EU initiative designed to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty and social exclusion. By becoming one of the first candidate countries invited to participate in this framework, Ukraine is not merely adopting a policy; it is fundamentally reimagining its social contract with the next generation.

The initiative ensures that every child in need—regardless of their background or the challenges posed by war—has effective access to a core set of essential services: early childhood education and care, inclusive schooling, healthy nutrition, adequate housing, and high-quality healthcare.

The implementation of the ECG is a cornerstone of Ukraine's broader integration process, aligning national priorities with the Council of the EU's recommendations. To bring these standards to life, Ukraine has developed a National Action Plan and is currently preparing an operational roadmap. This process relies heavily on regional consultations to ensure that local stakeholders and

the public are actively involved in tailoring European standards to the specific needs of Ukrainian communities. By committing to biennial progress reports to the European Commission, Ukraine is establishing a transparent political framework that helps identify barriers to service access, consolidates ongoing reforms, and benchmarks progress against international goals.



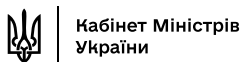
What does this transformation look like in practice for Ukrainian families? The European Child Guarantee turns quality kindergartens, inclusive classrooms, and nutritious school meals from aspirations into mandatory community standards. The initiative places a particular emphasis on protecting the most vulnerable, accelerating the transition from institutional care to family-based upbringing, and expanding the "Municipal Nanny" service to support parents of children with disabilities or those liv-

ing in frontline areas. Furthermore, the ECG provides a strategic opening for local communities to attract European grants for the construction of modern school kitchens, hospitals, and barrier-free public spaces.

Ukraine is actively drawing inspiration from the success stories of EU member states to build its own modern social protection system. From Germany's "Education Package" (BuT), Ukraine is learning to transition social payments from "status-based" to "needs-based" support, ensuring that funds cover school supplies and extracurricular activities for those who need them most. Following Sweden's model of balanced parenthood and France's robust support for working parents through nursery subsidies, Ukraine is refining its own parental leave policies and childcare services.

This European-oriented approach allows Ukraine to go beyond "patching holes," focusing instead on building a resilient, strategic infrastructure where the best interests of the child are the ultimate priority. This journey toward the European Child Guarantee is a significant stride toward a future where every Ukrainian child is protected by the highest international standards.

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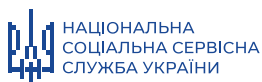
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