



# EU4Ukraine Review

EU-Ukraine Cooperation Newsletter

September 2023



## "Together, we will succeed. I firmly believe in this, because together, we are Europe."

Dear friends,

My name is Katarina Matherenová.

Today, I have the honour of addressing you as the Ambassador of the European Union to Ukraine.

I would like to start by thanking the Ukrainian Defenders. It is because of their bravery that I can speak to you from Kyiv, the amazing capital of free Ukraine.

I am lucky not to be a stranger to your country – I have worked with Ukraine since 2015. Serving as EU Ambassador at this pivotal moment in Ukraine's history is an immeasurable privilege and honour for me. At a time when Ukraine is repelling Russia's illegal war of aggression; a time when your country is reforming in order to take its rightful place in the European family.

As I begin my mission, I would like to share my priorities with you: I will make sure that EU assistance for Ukraine's



war effort is managed in the best possible way. I will do my utmost to support Ukraine's reform process as an EU candidate country.

The future of Ukraine is in Europe, and I will help advance recovery and rebuilding through the EU's powerful instruments – so that children can go to school, people can go to work, and homes can be safe. I will work as part of a strong community of Ukraine's friends and supporters in Kyiv, in Brussels, and internationally.

Finally, I will work with Ukraine's democratic institutions – your business community and vibrant civil society. With the Ukrainian people who ensure that their country strives while its heroic defenders are advancing towards victory.

Together, we will succeed. I firmly believe in this, because together, we are Europe.

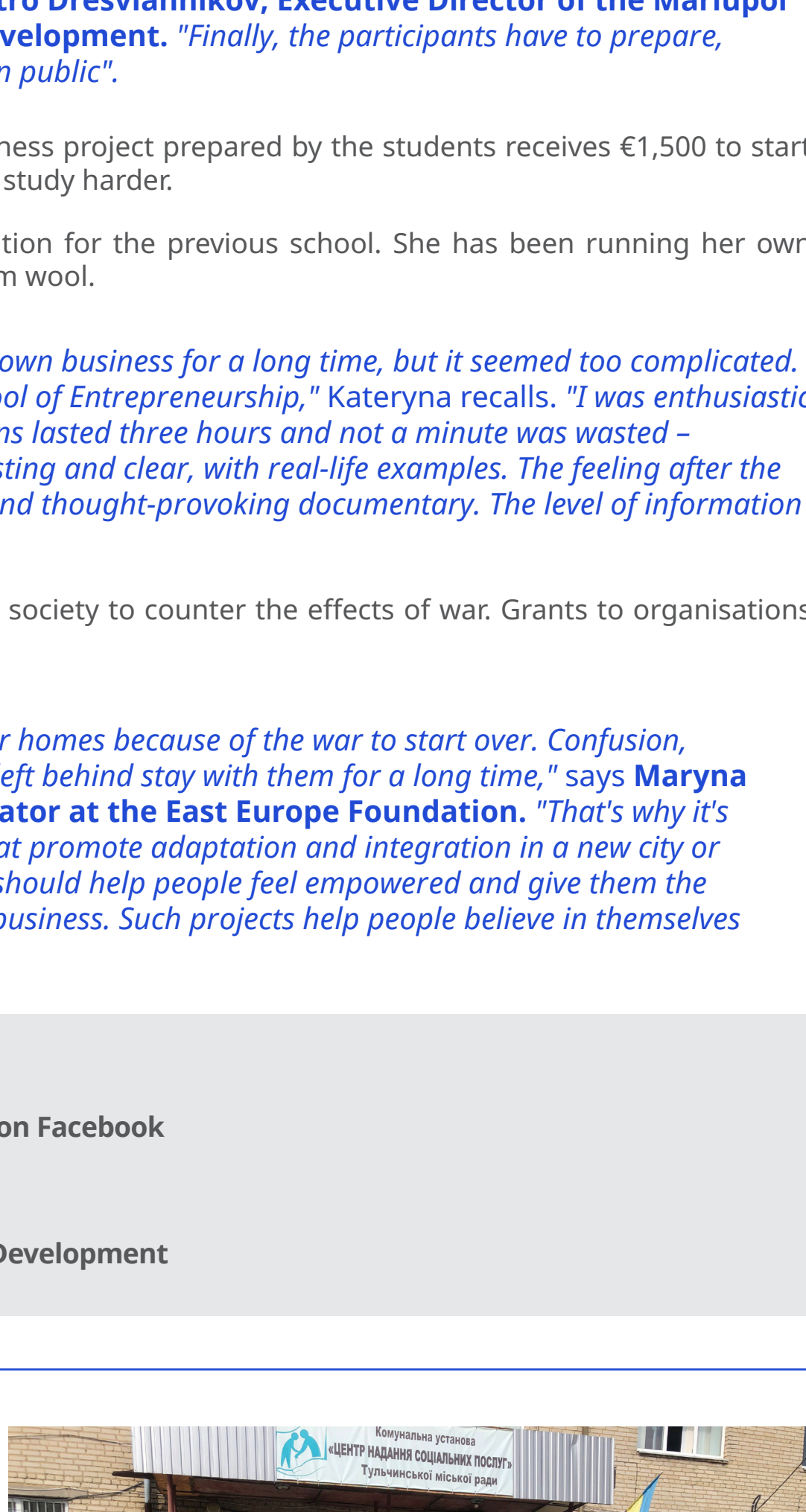
Slava Ukraini!

## PROJECT NEWS

### Believe in yourself: Mariupol School of Entrepreneurship encourages starting your own business

In mid-September, the 12th Mariupol School of Entrepreneurship was launched in Dnipro. Established in 2020 to support Mariupol residents who wanted to start businesses, the school still focuses mainly on them, but also internally displaced persons (IDPs).

The school is run by the Mariupol City Centre for SME Support and Development, thanks to a grant from the Eastern Europe Foundation under the EU-funded Phoenix programme.



"The course consists of 7 training sessions where 20 students learn how to create business ideas, plan the economic parts of their project, study and choose a tax system, and search for grant opportunities for financing," says **Dmytro Dresviannikov, Executive Director of the Mariupol City Centre for SME Support and Development**. "Finally, the participants have to prepare, present and defend a business project in public".

A highlight of the school is that the author of the best business project prepared by the students receives €1,500 to start their own business. This is extra motivation and incentive to study harder.

**Kateryna Plekonosova** (from Mariupol) won the competition for the previous school. She has been running her own business for several months, making toys and souvenirs from wool.

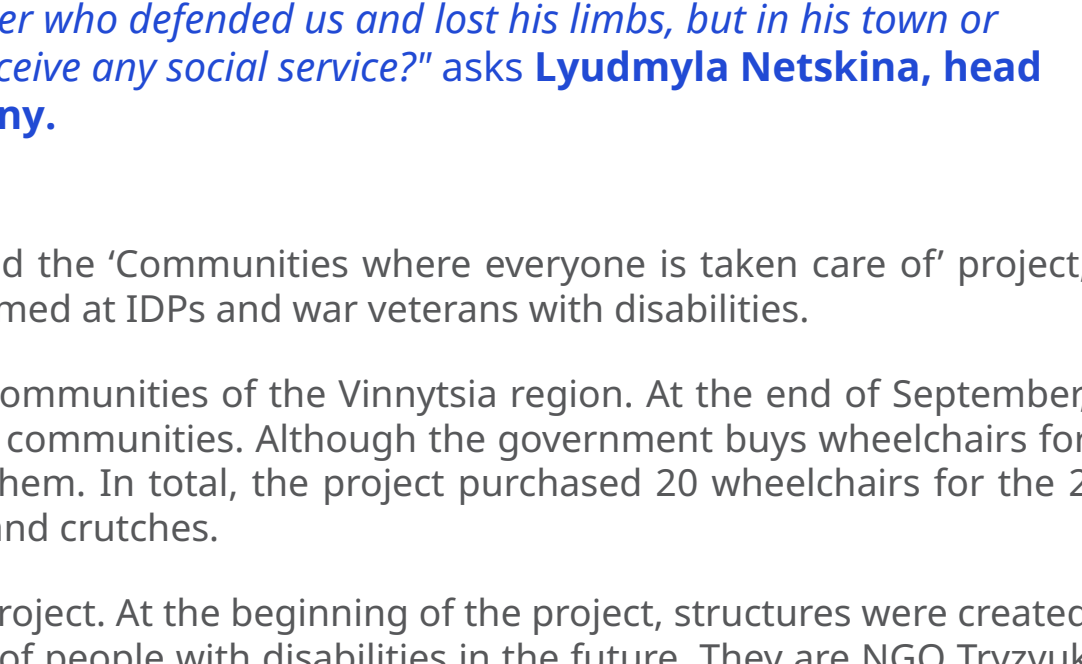
"I had been thinking about starting my own business for a long time, but it seemed too complicated. That is why I came to the Mariupol School of Entrepreneurship," Kateryna recalls. "I was enthusiastic from the beginning. The training sessions lasted three hours and not a minute was wasted – presentation of the material was interesting and clear, with real-life examples. The feeling after the training was like watching an exciting and thought-provoking documentary. The level of information was very high".

The Phoenix programme aims to strengthen Ukrainian civil society to counter the effects of war. Grants to organisations are one of its elements.

"It is hard for people who have fled their homes because of the war to start over. Confusion, loneliness and sadness for the life they left behind stay with them for a long time," says **Maryna Honko, Grants Programme Coordinator at the East Europe Foundation**. "That's why it's important to support local initiatives that promote adaptation and integration in a new city or community. Entrepreneurship training should help people feel empowered and give them the strength to start or continue their own business. Such projects help people believe in themselves and take steps towards a better future".

**More information:**  
[Mariupol City Centre for SME Support and Development on Facebook](#)  
**Phoenix Programme**  
**Photo credit:** Mariupol City Centre for SME Support and Development

### New approaches to working with people with disabilities implemented in Vinnytsia region



Ensuring a full life for people with disabilities was a significant challenge for the Ukrainian government and society, even before the full-scale Russian invasion. Now, the problem is becoming even more acute. According to the Ministry of Social Policy, the number of people with disabilities has increased by 300,000 over the past year and a half.

"How do we look into the eyes of a soldier who defended us and lost his limbs, but in his town or village cannot visit a shop or cafe, or receive any social service?" asks **Lyudmyla Netskina, head of the Vinnytsia-based NGO Harmony**.

From February to September, the organisation implemented the 'Communities where everyone is taken care of' project, supported by the U-LEAD with Europe programme. It was aimed at IDPs and war veterans with disabilities.

The project was implemented in the Bratslav and Tulchyn communities of the Vinnytsia region. At the end of September, wheelchair hire centres were opened in the centres of both communities. Although the government buys wheelchairs for people with disabilities, it can take a long time to receive them. In total, the project purchased 20 wheelchairs for the 2 communities, and NGO Harmony provided walking frames and crutches.

The opening of the rental points was the final stage of the project. At the beginning of the project, structures were created to directly implement the project activities and to take care of people with disabilities in the future. They are NGO Tryzruk in Bratslav and the Municipal Centre for Social Services in Tulchyn. In addition to opening the rental centres, the project provided mental health support to people with disabilities, facilitated their socialisation in the communities, worked to improve public perception of them and their needs, and helped them to start using wheelchairs.

Service providers have been trained to understand the needs of people with disabilities, sometimes in creative ways.

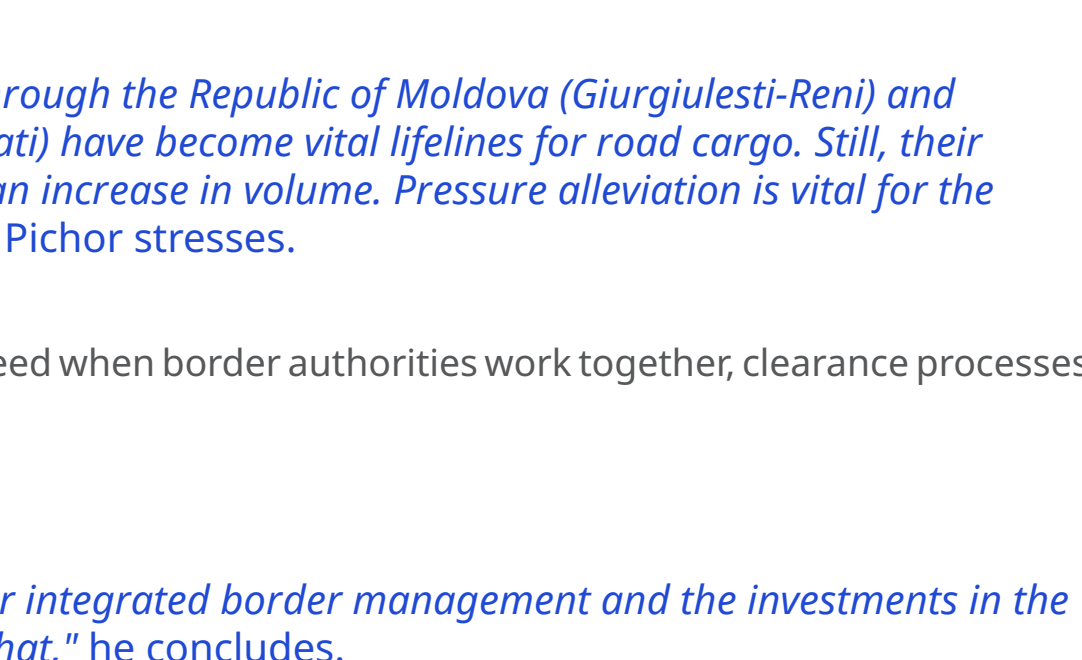
"At one of the training sessions, we asked the participants to sit in a wheelchair or blindfolded, and then try to do some basic things – go to a certain building or sign a document. This way, they could feel and understand how a person with a disability feels, and how to provide them with a certain service," says Lyudmyla Netskina.

This was a pilot project. It is expected that the experience gained will be useful for public associations and local governments.

"The idea was to create such institutional models of work with people with disabilities that would allow some work to be delegated to non-governmental organisations that have certain expertise in this area," summarises **Vitaliy Shvets, Head of the Vinnytsia Regional Office of the U-LEAD with Europe Programme**. "They know how to work with people with disabilities, and can do it even better than state or municipal structures. NGO Harmony, for example, employs people with disabilities who are themselves aware of the difficulties that can arise, and so know how to overcome them. They can therefore help other people who are learning to live with disabilities much more effectively".

**More information:**  
[NGO Harmony on Facebook](#)  
**Photo:** Opening of a wheelchair hire centre in Tulchyn

### EUBAM helps develop routes for Ukrainian grain exports



Due to the challenges posed by the aggressor affecting grain exports, Ukraine and its allies are exploring various alternatives, one of which is to route exports through Moldova and Romania. The European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM) has been actively supporting this initiative.

On 11 September, the EUBAM-led tripartite Romanian-Moldovan-Ukrainian Customs Coordination Group met at the Cahul (Moldova)-Oancea (Romania) border crossing point to address issues related to the Solidarity Lanes in the lower Danube region.

The Solidarity Lanes initiative, launched by the European Commission in March 2022, aims to enhance border crossing processes for agricultural products from Ukraine. Since its launch, 42 million tonnes of grain, oilseeds and related products have been exported from Ukraine through Solidarity Lanes.

The Customs Coordination Group brings together customs authorities from all three countries, and serves as a platform for the participation of various other relevant institutions.

**Slawomir Pichor, Head of EUBAM**, emphasises the significance of this cooperation, particularly in light of the challenges Ukrainian grain exporters face.

"The southern border crossing points through the Republic of Moldova (Giurgiulesti-Reni) and further on to Romania (Giurgiulesti-Galati) have become vital lifelines for road cargo. Still, their infrastructure is not designed for such an increase in volume. Pressure alleviation is vital for the functioning of that corridor," Slawomir Pichor stresses.

In his view, there are enormous effects on border crossing speed when border authorities work together, clearance processes are harmonised, and infrastructure is well-designed.

"EUBAM remains an ardent advocate for integrated border management and the investments in the border infrastructure to support all of that," he concludes.

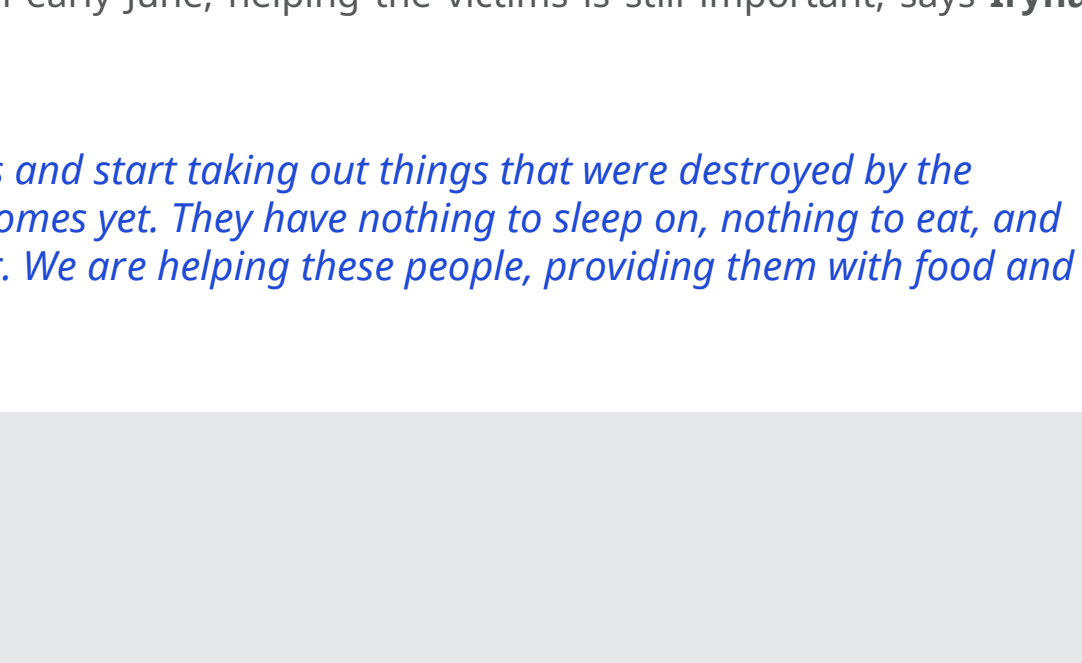
During the meeting at the Cahul-Oancea border crossing point, participants discussed changes in the operational situation at the border crossing points and measures to address bottlenecks and administrative barriers that hinder the smooth flow of agricultural products.

"We would like to see EUBAM as a catalyst for this platform where customs authorities share ideas and projects that could ease the situation. All those innovations have already impacted border management, and we hope for new developments in the coming months", **Artur Janiszewski, EUBAM customs expert**, adds.

Leading the Customs Coordination Group is just one of EUBAM's efforts to support the Solidarity Lanes initiative. For instance, the mission played a role in advocating for the swift opening of the railway border crossing point at Serpente-1 - Basarabeasca. This new rail link, launched in March/April of this year, has contributed to diversifying the transportation routes for Ukrainian cargo.

**More information:**  
[EUBAM website](#)  
**Information on the Solidarity Lanes on the website of the European Commission**  
**Photo credit:** EUBAM

### From Lviv to Kherson: Hundreds of residents received emergency aid



Between July and September, the Lviv-based NGO Tarilka delivered 750 kits containing food products, drinking water, hygiene and household items to victims of the Kakhovka Hydropower Plant explosion in the Kherson region. More than 320 residents of the region and their families received aid.

These are the results of the 'Crisis Response to Flooding in Kherson Region: Assistance to Victims' project, which Tarilka implemented with financial support from the European Union. In June, the organisation was one of the winners of the EU4CSOs Emergency Actions grant competition, which was announced immediately after the destruction of the plant by the Russians.

"We managed to develop an effective working algorithm, a mechanism for receiving and distributing aid to the victims. First, our volunteer colleagues in Kherson identified the priority needs. Then the volunteers from NGO Tarilka in Lviv quickly found reliable suppliers of the necessary items and organised the fastest possible delivery," says **Anastasia Plyusarenko, Tarilka's acting Chairperson**. "Thanks to the sustainable partnership with Nova Poshta, we avoided significant logistics costs, so all the humanitarian aid was sent directly from the suppliers to Kherson free-of-charge. In turn, Tarilka's Kherson team promptly organised the kits from the goods received and organised their delivery to Kherson residents in the flooded areas and evacuees, according to their requests and current needs".

The victims received food, water, adult and children's nappies, feminine hygiene products, toothpaste and brushes, dry and wet wipes, bedding and underwear, towels, socks, and other items. Tarilka carefully monitored the targeting of this aid.

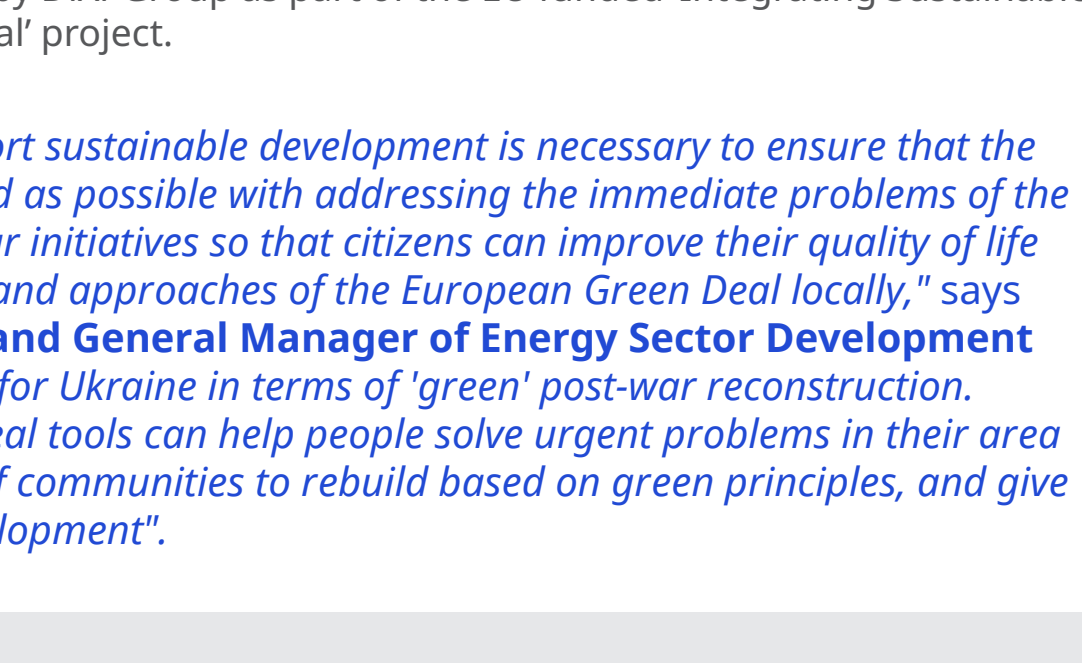
"Our volunteers could see for themselves that people really needed help. Among other things, we take into account the availability of documents – a pension certificate, a certificate of disability, a certificate of a large family, a proof of a low income," says **Anastasia Onyshchenko, Head of NGO Tarilka Kherson**, which was established with the help of Lviv residents. Now, the organisations are partners and members of the Association of Food Banks of Ukraine.

Although the Kakhovka Hydropower Plant was blown up in early June, helping the victims is still important, says **Iryna Ilyina, a volunteer with NGO Tarilka Kherson**.

"Now people can get inside their houses and start taking out things that were destroyed by the water. But they cannot return to their homes yet. They have nothing to sleep on, nothing to eat, and much of their furniture is beyond repair. We are helping these people, providing them with food and other things," she says.

**More information:**  
[NGO Tarilka](#)  
**EU4CSOs Emergency Actions project**  
**Photo credit:** NGO Tarilka

### School gardening as part of the European Green Deal



Seven environmental projects were launched in September as a result of a call for proposals for civil society organisations run by the EU-funded think tank, Dixi-Group. The aim is to promote change in communities in line with the European Green Deal.

Among the winners is the NGO 'Source of Public Initiatives' from the Tupychiv territorial community in the Chernihiv region. The main actors in the project are local schoolchildren.

The project has two main focuses. The first is to provide children, the elderly, large families and local residents with fresh vegetables grown by schoolchildren. The second is to encourage the schoolchildren to become youth entrepreneurs in their community.

The project is already underway, and the gymnasium in the village of Vykhostiv is setting up a farm: two 3 metre x 8 metre greenhouses, seedling trays, seedling cassettes and drip irrigation systems for each greenhouse. Schoolchildren will grow vegetable seedlings in the greenhouses and in the open field. Staff from the Department of Agricultural Technologies and Forestry at Chernihiv Polytechnic University will provide mentoring support to teach them how to use modern technology.

"We want children to acquire some economic knowledge," says **Mykola Sylenko, Principal of the Vykhostiv Gymnasium**. "We have realised that it is possible to use new technologies to work the land efficiently, without the exhausting and hard work we are used to".

"From November to December, the students of the gymnasium will collect information from all 11 settlements of the municipality through a Google form and social networks, about the needs of people for seedlings of the main vegetable crops – tomatoes, cucumbers, cabbage, peppers, zucchini," says **Zoya Chupak, head of the Economic Development and Investment Department of the Tupychiv Territorial Community**. "Some of the seedlings grown will be sold to those who want them, and we want to start a school social enterprise. The rest will be used to grow vegetables ourselves. They will then be dried and processed into dry borscht, soups and greens".

In particular, the school's products will be targeted at people registered with the Social Assistance Centre.

The competition of environmental initiatives was organised by Dixi-Group as part of the EU funded 'Integrating Sustainable Development in Ukraine in line with the European Green Deal' project.

"Strengthening local initiatives to support sustainable development is necessary to ensure that the green transition is as synchronised as possible with addressing the immediate problems of the community. The EU also supports similar initiatives so that citizens can improve their quality of life by implementing sustainable practices and approaches of the European Green Deal locally," says **Mykola Yakovenko, Project Expert and General Manager of Energy Sector Development at Dixi-Group**. "This is also important for Ukraine in terms of 'green' post-war reconstruction. Understanding how the European Green Deal tools can help people solve urgent problems in their area is necessary to increase the readiness of communities to rebuild based on green principles, and give them a new impetus for long-term development".

**More information:**  
**Winners of the call for proposals held by Dixi-Group**  
[The Vykhostiv Gymnasium on Facebook](#)  
**Information on the European Green Deal on the EU4Ukraine website**  
**Photo credit:** The Vykhostiv Gymnasium on Facebook

## Opportunities

### Business

Ten Ukrainian companies will have the opportunity to travel free-of-charge to EU countries to establish business contacts and attract investment to develop their businesses.

Participants will take part in networking, lectures on project financing, business conferences and other activities.

The project is part of the EU4Business: SME Recovery, Competitiveness and Internationalisation programme, funded by the EU and the German Government.

Deadline: **10 October 2023**

[Read more](#)

### Culture

Artists, cultural managers, professionals, researchers, entrepreneurs, architects, landscape designers, urbanists and other creative professionals can receive up to €4,000 for a professional event in the EU or UK. This can include festivals and training, meetings with leading experts and colleagues, research, showcasing achievements, etc.

Deadline: **13 October 2023**

[Read more](#)

### Digital safety

Non-profit organisations and public associations can participate in a call for mini-grant proposals to implement projects to prevent violence against children in the digital environment. The competition is part of the European Union-funded project 'Empowering Law Enforcement to Combat Online Child Abuse'. The maximum amount of the grant is UAH 150,000.

Deadline: **30 October 2023**

[Read more](#)

### Social entrepreneurship

Founders, directors, senior and middle managers of registered social enterprises, coaches, mentors and teachers in the field of social entrepreneurship can receive a grant to attend a professional event in the EU or UK. The maximum grant is €4,000, which can be used for flights, accommodation, meals, visas, insurance and event tickets.

Deadline: **13 October 2023**

[Read more](#)

### Education

The European Commission invites universities to participate in the fifth call for applications to join the European Masters in Translation (EMT) network. Applications are invited from universities offering programmes that meet the EMT quality standards.

Deadline: **15 December 2023**

[Read more](#)

### Media

Journalists covering culture and business, fact-checkers and investigators, managers, editors, and journalists from local and regional media can receive a grant to attend a professional event in the EU and UK. This includes conferences, meetings with leading experts and colleagues, and research, among other things. The maximum grant is €4,000, which can be used for travel, accommodation, meals, insurance, event tickets, and other related costs.

Deadline: **13 October 2023**

[Read more](#)

### Youth

The Thompson Foundation offers many thematic online courses prepared as part of the EU-funded Open Media Hub project:

[Innovation in storytelling](#)

[Digital transition in the newsroom](#)

[Principles of media company management](#)

[Online media production – mastering the essentials](#)

### Administrative services

The EU4PAR project has developed an online course on the General Administrative Procedure. It briefly explains the main provisions of the Law on Administrative Procedure, which will come into force in December 2023 and establish new, uniform and transparent rules for the interaction of the state with citizens and businesses, based on the principles of the European Union.

[Online course 'General Administrative Procedure'](#)

### Digital transformation

In September, the Dilia.Osvita portal launched the 'Updated Informatics - IT Studios' educational materials, created as part of the EU4DigitalUA project in cooperation with the Ministry of Digital Transformation and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. These digital educational resources are designed for students and teachers, and represent a new approach to learning focused on the practice and application of digital skills in real-life situations.

[Read more](#)