

SOCIAL RECOVERY

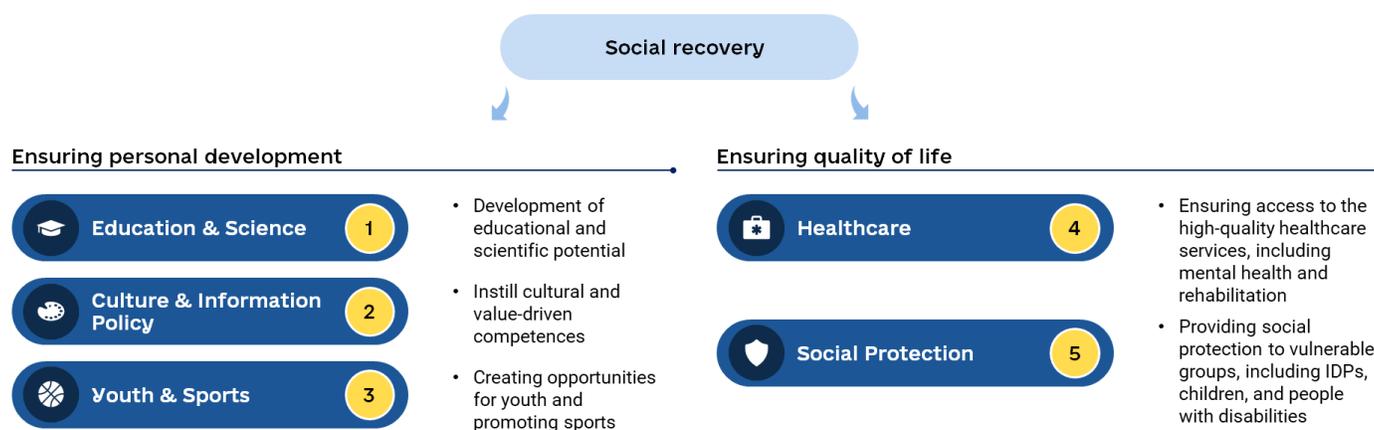
The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine caused the biggest humanitarian catastrophe in Europe in the 21st century. However crucial the post-war restoration of the infrastructure and economy is, the ultimate goal of the country's recovery is ensuring decent standards of living for the people, which all social groups will be able to enjoy without discrimination. That will be reinforced by aligning with the EU policies, norms and standards and progressing Ukraine's path towards EU membership. The work is aligned with the following groups of the National Recovery Council: Social Protection, Healthcare, Return of Ukrainians, Protection of Rights of Children affected by war, Rights of Veterans, Education, Culture and Information Policy.

As of June 27, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) recorded 10,000+ casualties among Ukrainian civilians, including 4,731 people killed. The real figures are likely to be much higher since there is no exposure to the locations under occupation or where intense hostilities are currently taking place. Thousands of Ukrainians have been physically injured, there are numerous recorded cases of torture, rape, mass executions, and other war crimes. Even more Ukrainians suffer from psychological trauma.

The United Nations (UN) reports that ~8 million refugees have fled the country as of June 21, of whom women and children make the overwhelming majority. Even though now up to 90% of refugees report their willingness to return home, the situation may change over time. In addition, over 8 million Ukrainians have become internally displaced persons (IDPs). Those who were living in highly-damaged regions will need to stay in their current location at least for some time. This will inevitably affect all dimensions of social cohesion: social inclusion (e.g. employment opportunities, access to different resources - social services, healthcare, childcare, and education), cultural diversity, trust to the institutions and civic tolerance in communities.

Finally, a key demographic that was significantly affected by the war consists of men and women who joined the Armed Forces, with the majority of these people having left their normal life and jobs to defend the country. Despite the fact that the Ukrainian army has been defending Ukraine for more than 4 months, the Armed Forces are suffering heavy combat losses and defenders receive serious injuries.

The framework below describes the overall structure of the social recovery, covering two pillars and five priority areas.



Also, social recovery heavily depends on reforms in other areas, such as infrastructure recovery and development and economic growth. Those domains are considered in more detail in other policy briefs.

#1. EDUCATION & SCIENCE | As a result of the war the educational process was significantly disrupted. According to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, as of June 20, 2022, at least 650,000 students and 22,000 pedagogical staff of general secondary schools were forced to flee abroad, including about 2,029 children with special educational needs. Moreover, at least 2,028 educational institutions were damaged by shelling and bombing, 209 of them were completely destroyed. Roughly 15% of the research infrastructure of higher education and research institutions was also destroyed. Educational and scientific policy should be focused on the provision of equal access to high-quality education as well as professional and personal skills development provided by governmental and private institutions.

- Adjust educational programs in response to learning losses caused by war;
- Resume the educational process in war-torn areas, restore the infrastructure of educational and research institutions;

- Provide psychological support to educational process participants. Implement psychological rehabilitation programs, adapt and support children and other educational process participants in wartime and postwar period;
- Restore full-scale independent assessment for admission and attestation of students;
- Continue the New Ukrainian School reform. Build an accessible and secure digital educational and research environment;
- Provide training of qualified specialists for the needs of the country's economy (dual education, financial autonomy of higher education institutions, public-private partnership);
- Resume grant support for research, scientific and technical developments by the National Research Foundation of Ukraine;
- Accelerate integration into the European and global education and research areas.

An educated nation is fundamental to the country's human potential, contributing to an innovative society and thus enhancing economic growth, sustainable development, individual well-being and cohesion.

#2. CULTURE & INFORMATION POLICY | The war caused significant destruction of cultural heritage sites. As of June, more than 360 episodes of Russian war crimes against cultural heritage were documented, including destruction of memorials, religious sites, museums etc. In turn, using hybrid warfare practices, Russia produces a large number of fakes and manipulative messages on a daily basis that require refutation. Ukraine should focus on counteracting Russian disinformation, restoration and protection of cultural heritage and cultural development with multi-stakeholder engagement (national and international) in the process.

- Counter Russian disinformation by restricting access to Russian propaganda resources in the media;
- Contribute to the preservation of cultural artifacts - temporary evacuation of artifacts outside of active hostilities;
- Collect information on the destruction and damage of cultural artifacts and the losses of the creative sphere;
- Substitute the Russian informational channels with Ukrainian channels, expand the production of content in European languages;
- Conduct historical research in the field of memory and memorialization, make sure that the contribution of different ethnicities, sexes and regions to Ukraine's historical development is recognized, restore damaged artifacts and cultural monuments;
- Promote Ukrainian culture worldwide through emphasizing the diversity of Ukrainian culture and support of independent media;
- Support culture and creative industries, develop creative products to strengthen the voice of Ukraine on the international level.

Restored after the war, culture will help to strengthen the information space independent from Russia and contribute to long-term social cohesion and a diverse, inclusive and participatory Ukrainian society. It will also contribute to global heritage, through the promotion of the unique features of Ukrainian culture.

#3. YOUTH & SPORTS | During 2020-2021, a number of projects were implemented aimed at attracting citizens to a healthy and active lifestyle, as well as creating conditions for preparing athletes for international competitions. As a result of the invasion, the implementation of these projects was disrupted. The sports infrastructure was severely damaged, and many athletes were forced to interrupt the training process. Moreover, thousands of young people had to leave the country and search for shelter elsewhere. Ukraine should be focused on reconstruction of sports infrastructure facilities, creation of a system of incentives for the return of young people to Ukraine and support for youth participation and activism on the basis of domestic and international partnerships.

- Create an incentives system for the return of the youth to Ukraine, including through the activities of the Ukrainian Youth Fund;
- Create mechanisms for the participation of young people in the process of reconstructing Ukraine at all levels;
- Rebuild sports facilities based on the needs of the population;
- Promote close cooperation on youth policy with partner countries, international organizations, including the EU.

Thanks to a healthy lifestyle and active participation in the recovery processes, the youth will transform into a vibrant civil society that will eventually help reform the country and drive positive change.

#4. HEALTHCARE | Ukraine's healthcare system has been hit hard by the war: more than 640 health care facilities have been destroyed or severely damaged. According to the UN, during the 100 days of the war, more than 260 attacks were aimed directly at health facilities. Ukraine needs to focus on ensuring that health services are provided with special attention to the treatment and rehabilitation of people affected by the conflict, by a reformed and sustainable national healthcare system.

- Strengthen policies and institutions of the national healthcare system to guide the recovery process;
- Ensure the financial stability of the healthcare system and the development of voluntary health insurance;

- Strengthen health services (including mental health services and physical rehabilitation) to meet the special needs of people (including IDPs, war veterans, children, and wounded and traumatized) caused by the war;
- Ensure the country's pharmaceutical security and uninterrupted access to modern, effective and safe medicines and medical devices;
- Restore and transform the healthcare facilities network based on patient-focused and value-based healthcare approaches;
- Strengthen the human resources of the healthcare system via educational reform and through integration of international practices;
- Strengthen the public health system, preparedness for health emergencies, health information systems and digitalization;
- Develop and implement elements of the quality assurance system in health care at all levels.

A transformed healthcare system will enhance the overall quality of life and increase the number of active years that Ukrainian citizens could contribute to their country's growth and prosperity.

#5. SOCIAL PROTECTION | The Ukrainian social protection system presented some challenges already before the war, but suffered greatly as a result of the war, having faced 1) the destruction of social infrastructure; 2) mass departure of the population from permanent residence; 3) loss of property and means of subsistence of part of the population; 4) occupation of parts of the territory, which makes it impossible to provide services. Ukraine needs to focus on the provision of social services for all categories of the war-affected population, including IDPs, veterans, and vulnerable groups, as well as children and people with disabilities, based on principles of transparency and sustainability.

- Digitalize the system of the social services provision, ensure barrier-free access to the services by all the social groups;
- Increase targeting and strengthen the verification of social assistance recipients, leaving no one behind;
- Develop the second-level of pension insurance (obligatory saving pension system), stimulate voluntary funds accumulation, systematize different types of social payments, develop effective mechanisms of compensation for all categories of war-affected population, including injured and traumatized;
- Create opportunities for the reintegration of veterans into peaceful life;
- Create opportunities for women and men with family responsibilities to reconcile professional and family duties;
- Build a viable system of protection of children's rights at the national, regional and local levels that meets international standards;
- Stimulation of returning Ukrainians back to Ukraine through migration and integration policies.

Providing a decent level of social protection to all categories of war-affected population and vulnerable groups, Ukraine will ensure building of a more just and equal society. Addressing these challenges through an inclusive, participatory approach based on human rights, ensuring that in line with the Sustainable Development Goals no one is left behind.

POSSIBILITIES TO SUPPORT | International partners are welcome to join any of the aforementioned initiatives by providing: (1) *Valuable sectoral experience* in optimization of the service provision in different areas; (2) *Financial support*, especially in the field of restoration of the physical infrastructure; (3) *Institutional expertise* with planned and ongoing reform processes; (4) *Possibilities for the joint projects* regarding restoration of the selected structures; (5) *Assistance in monitoring the social recovery processes* for them to happen in accordance with best practices and the EU standards.

At the request of the URC2022 Organizational Committee, this brief was prepared by the Centre of Economic Recovery (CER) based on extensive multi-stakeholder consultations, which included representatives of the government, civil society, business, local self-government, and academia. The views expressed are those of the authors and contributors and should not be reported as the position of the Ukrainian or Swiss Governments.