

# Ukraine: Relief, Resilience, Recovery

## Two Decades of GMF Democracy Support in Ukraine

Starting with the Orange Revolution in 2004–2005, the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) has continuously supported Ukraine's civil society and independent media in the country's pursuit of democratic reforms and Euro-Atlantic integration. Until 2021, the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation (BST) and further GMF programs invested \$6 million in 230 civic and media organizations and a further \$1 million in 150 individual leaders in Ukraine.

Ukraine faces an existential threat to its sovereignty, democracy, and Euro-Atlantic integration since the full-scale Russian invasion of February 2022. In response, GMF has substantially expanded and focused its support through its Ukraine: Relief, Resilience, Recovery (U3R) program. U3R acknowledges the key role played by Ukrainian citizens and grassroots initiatives, civic activists and civil society organizations, and journalists and independent media for the short-term defense and long-term development of a democratic Ukraine. Building on 15 years of prior BST programming, U3R pursues

three broad objectives. First, it helps Ukraine's civil society and media to ensure their immediate safety and uninterrupted operations. Second, it bolsters the resilience of Ukrainian society by enabling civic and media actors to fight disinformation, to assist vulnerable citizens, to reintegrate internally displaced people and liberated areas, and to engage young people. Third, it fosters the early involvement of Ukraine's civil society and local communities in the planning of internationally funded reconstruction efforts. U3R is funded by partners from Europe and North America.

# Civil Society Support in 2022–2025

U3R provides up to 120 emergency, organizational, capacity-building, and project grants annually to grassroots and local initiatives, civil society organizations, and independent media in Ukraine and, if needed, outside the country. At an average of \$20,000, this support ensures the safety and continuous operations of civic and media actors, expands the infrastructure

of civil society, bolsters the capacity of independent media, supports the reintegration of liberated areas, empowers young people to take an active role in their communities, fosters the involvement of civic and media actors in early recovery efforts, and enables the Ukrainian diaspora to address international publics and politics.

U3R grantmaking is maximally flexible and responsive to the changing situation and needs of Ukrainian partners. Funding prioritizes the key role of local communities, the urgent needs of most vulnerable social groups, the democratic potential of women and youth, and support for Ukrainian regions worst affected by the war.



**\$ 6.7**

Million in Grantmaking

**298** **305**

Organizations

Projects

## Grants outside of Ukraine

Poland 🇵🇱 4

Romania 🇷🇴 3

Germany 🇩🇪 2

Finland 🇫🇮 1



Media Capacity  
\$1,500,137 (69 Grants)

Reintegration of Liberated Areas  
\$214,700 (9 Grants)

Youth and Education  
\$702,621 (31 Grants)

Early to Medium-Term Recovery  
\$894,188 (35 Grants)

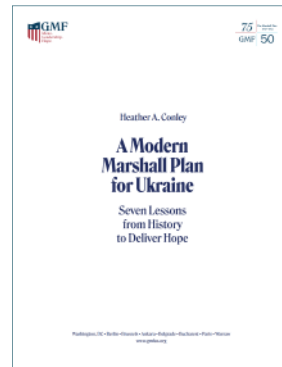
Emergency Support  
\$1,441,377 (71 Grants)

Civic Infrastructure  
\$1,908,476 (83 Grants)

Ukrainian Diaspora  
\$128,542 (7 Grants)

# A Marshall Plan for Ukraine

Since February 2022, Russia's full-scale invasion has brought unspeakable suffering for Ukraine's people and massive destruction on its economy, infrastructure, and environment. Ukraine will need a large-scale, long-term, and internationally funded assistance program to fully recover and develop as a democratic, stable, and prosperous member of the Euro-Atlantic community. GMF has proposed and advocated an ambitious Marshall Plan for Ukraine for the country's comprehensive and sustainable recovery and reconstruction. GMF experts and Ukrainian partners have developed detailed recommendations for the design and implementation of efforts to achieve this goal. These have informed policy discussions in Ukraine and internationally, including at the Ukraine Recovery Conferences in London in 2023 and in Berlin in 2024.



## Leadership Development

GMF has long been committed to developing democratic leadership in Ukraine. For two decades now, it has enabled next-generation leaders from politics, civil society, media, business, and culture to hone their professional skills, learn from peers across Europe and the transatlantic space, build new partnerships, and jointly address the challenges facing Ukraine. At present, this network comprises over 70 fellows and alumni. U3R actively taps and expands this large and diverse pool of democratic leaders from Ukraine.

Marshall Memorial Fellowship

14 fellows

Leadership Lab

8 participants

ReThink.CEE Fellowship

14 fellows

Manfred Wörner Seminar

4 fellows

Policy Designers Network

28 participants

Transatlantic Inclusion Leaders Network

10 participants

## U3R Impact Highlights

U3R provides emergency support to local communities, civil society, and media in Ukraine

The **NGO MAGNOLIA** was set up by journalists in 2001 to use the media in searching for missing children and to protect the rights of vulnerable children and families in Ukraine. Since Russia's full-scale invasion, Magnolia has received and processed over 3,000 search requests for missing children. The fate of all but 180 has been established, with most established to be alive.



Billboard in search of missing children, **Magnolia**



Demanding better accessibility for disabled people, **Fight for Right**

**FIGHT FOR RIGHT** works to strengthen the rights of people with disabilities in Ukraine. Since Russia's full-scale invasion, it has managed evacuations, humanitarian aid, and medical support for this most vulnerable community. It also set up a psychological-support helpline as anxiety skyrocketed among them. The helpline receives around 50 calls in a calm week and up to 100 calls per day when fighting intensifies. The Fight for Right team has handled over 20,000 requests for support since February 2022.

The **EASTERN UKRAINIAN CENTER FOR WOMEN'S DEFENSE** is a mutual-support organization run by and for women displaced by the war. It was established in the eastern city of Sloviansk in 2021 and, with U3R support, relocated part of its team to the southern city of Odesa after Russia's full-scale invasion. It has since expanded its services, including in critical psychosocial support, media literacy, and employment and entrepreneurship for women.

U3R strengthens the overall capacity of civil society in Ukraine

The **GURT RESOURCE CENTER**, based in Kyiv, is an innovative accelerator of democratic transformation. Since 1995, it has built the largest information network of changemakers in Ukraine, with more than 65,000 individuals and organizations registered on its platform. In 2022, GURT's leadership programs benefited 1,200 participants from civil society, business, and government, and its Meet and Code initiative improved the digital skills of nearly 3,000 young people.



Logo of the **GURT Resource Center**

Volunteers are a key resource for Ukraine's civil society, not least in wartime. To be effective, volunteers need basic training and knowledge to be compliant with Ukrainian laws. The **CHARITABLE FOUNDATION "LAWYERS' MOVE"** provides necessary and free legal aid to

volunteers and civil society organizations. In 2023, it provided 132 legal consultations to new civic initiatives and prepared legal guidelines for volunteers. In so doing, it empowers volunteers and new civic initiatives, and it expands the collective capacity of Ukraine's civil society.



Legal clinic for volunteers, **Charitable Foundation "Lawyers' Move"**

## U3R supports independent media and the fight against disinformation

Izium is one of the towns that was worst affected by Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022. It was occupied from March to September before the Ukrainian army liberated it, discovering atrocities committed by Russian troops. Throughout the occupation, **OBRII 1919** was the only local media available to residents, providing 145,000 readers with up-to-date and true information, and countering false narratives disseminated by Russian occupiers.

**UKRAÏNER** is a media project that aims to discover and highlight Ukraine's unknown sides and sites.



Local young people and IDPs in Ivano-Frankivsk, **Mish Inshym**

Established in 2016, it has over 500,000 subscribers and followers, and it publishes stories in 15 languages. With Russia's war against Ukraine, **UKRAÏNER** took on the additional challenge of fighting Russian propaganda. It works to expose false claims and narratives, to explain the mechanisms of disinformation, and to show how Russia is fighting a cultural war against Ukraine.

## U3R bolsters youth participation and civic education

Western Ukraine has become a haven for many fleeing Russia's aggression. In the city of Ivano-Frankivsk, **MIZH INSHYM** works with local young people and internally displaced persons.

It organizes educational activities, offers a space for events, and engages volunteers. It builds bridges between long-time residents and new arrivals, helping to ease the socio-emotional stress in Ukrainian society.

## U3R helps civil society to engage in the democratic recovery of Ukraine

The **CREATIVE SUMY REGION AGENCY** was established in early 2022 and, with the full-scale Russian invasion, prioritized urgent humanitarian and social support. It has now returned to its original mission of forming a cluster of creative professionals, initiatives, and industries in Sumy region.



Participants of the Recovery Leaders 2.0 program, **Creative Sumy Region Agency**

It works to create an environment of creativity, innovation, and competence among local stakeholders and communities to rebuild normalcy in this border region, including through its Recovery Leaders 2.0 program since 2023.

The **VETERANS HUB ODESA** was established in 2019 and is part of a countrywide coalition of veteran spaces. Odesa and the surrounding region already hosted about 26,000 war veterans, and Russia's full-scale Russian invasion in 2022 caused their number to shoot up. Veterans face bureaucratic barriers, legal problems, and corruption, and they lack the knowledge, skills, and support to protect their rights and reintegrate with their communities. The Veterans Hub Odesa provides

the necessary support and training for them to successfully return to civilian life.

## U3R supports the Ukrainian diaspora and its international advocacy

**STAND WITH UKRAINE** emerged in Poland after the 2013–2014 Revolution of Dignity. To promote Ukraine's EU integration, it engages with Polish politicians, public opinion, media, and civil society organizations. Since the full-scale Russian invasion, it has also provided help to Ukrainian refugees. This includes transport and accommodation; psychological, legal, and employment services, and language courses. To date, Stand With Ukraine has supported over 20,000 refugees in Poland.

## U3R Donor Contributors

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### European Commission, DG ENST

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