

RESILIENCE AND REFORMS IN UKRAINE AT WARTIME: THE ROLE OF LOCAL SELF- GOVERNANCE

20TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF KYIV DIALOGUE

18–19 November 2025

Heinrich Böll Foundation Berlin
Schumannstraße 8
10117 Berlin

The Ukraine Recovery Conference in Rome showed more clearly than ever before that the reforms in Ukraine can only succeed against the horrors of the war if the EU's active support for the country's security will not waver. The resilience of the Ukrainian citizens and their institutions is the basis for a successful path towards the EU. This requires a strong civil society, as well as effective local administrations that work hand in hand and preserve what has already been achieved. It also requires the willingness of central government institutions and international donors to support the decentralisation process and the Ukrainian municipalities.

The 20th annual conference of Kyiv Dialogue will focus on how the resilience of civil society and security in the regions can be strengthened, which successful projects at the local level should set a precedent and how international funds must be used effectively and in a targeted manner. Last but not least, the aim is to show where the EU and its members can learn from Ukraine's experience and expertise at a time when their own security is under threat from Russia.

TUESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER

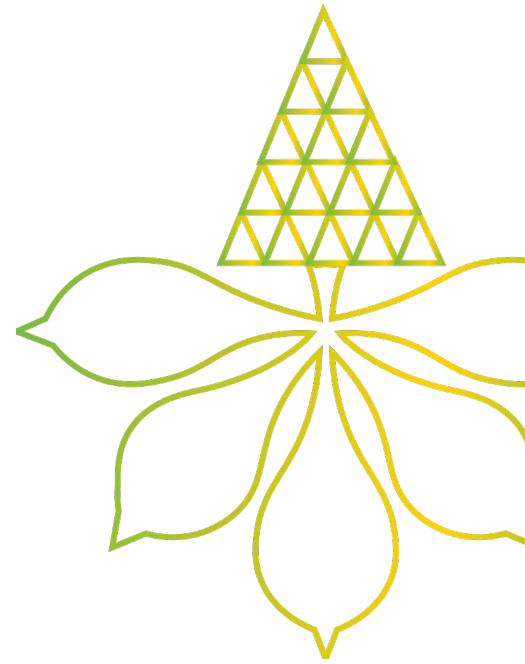
16:00–16:30 REGISTRATION & COFFEE

16:30–16:45 WELCOME & OPENING

Jan Philipp Albrecht, Co-President, Heinrich Böll Foundation
Stefanie Schiffer, Thomas Vogel, Co-Directors, European Exchange
H.E. Oleksii Makeiev, Ambassador of Ukraine to Germany

16:45–17:15 KEYNOTE

Dmytro Kuleba, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine (online)



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17:15–18:45 HIGH LEVEL PANEL

HUMAN SECURITY AND DECENTRALIZED RECOVERY

Strong communities and regions means strong resilience and ability to defend, to secure infrastructure, to keep social life ongoing in cities and communities. What support is needed on the local level from central government and international donors? How can the implementation of the Ukraine Facility become a success on Ukraine's road to the EU?

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

Christine Toetzke, Director General, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Vitalii Lukov, Deputy Mayor City of Mykolaiv

Anna Radwan-Röhrenschef, former Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland

Moderation: **Johannes Voswinkel**, Director, Heinrich Böll Foundation Kyiv Office

19:00 RECEPTION: 20 YEARS OF KYIV DIALOGUE

Opening: **Yevhen Bystricki**, former Director of International Renaissance Foundation

WEDNESDAY, 19 NOVEMBER

9:00–9:30 REGISTRATION

9:30–11:00 PANEL II

DECENTRALISATION VS. RE-CENTRALISATION: STATE OF LOCAL DEMOCRACY IN WARTIMES

The war means that some powers already transferred to the local level must be reorganized again. Beyond that, however, we are seeing tendencies to reverse the successful reform of decentralisation. What are the criteria for sharing competencies between the military vs. civil local administration? How can civic participation and democratic legitimacy still be guaranteed? What needs to be done to strengthen local self-administration and ensure their enshrined participation in the design and prioritisation of financial instruments as the EU's Ukraine Facility?

Tetiana Arsenyuk, Deputy Executive Director, All-Ukrainian Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities

Michael Gahler, MEP, Rapporteur of the European Parliament on Ukraine

Nataliya Drozd, NGO Center "Dobrochyn"

Ihor Onishuk, Polaris Programme "Supporting Multilevel Governance in Ukraine"

Moderation: **Krzysztof Stanowski**, Director International Cooperation Center, City of Lublin

11:00–11:30 COFFEE BREAK

11:30–13:00 BREAK-OUT SESSIONS: STATE OF RECOVERY AND LOCAL RESILIENCE

ROUND TABLE SESSION I: BEYOND EMERGENCY: DECENTRALISED ENERGY AS A PATH TO LOCAL SECURITY

The Russian war against Ukraine has accelerated the adoption of solar panels, batteries, and other decentralized energy solutions. In many communities, these technologies have become critically important for backup power during blackouts. However, they deserve attention not only as a short-term crisis response but as a long-term investment in transforming the energy system. They lay the foundation for a shift from centralized, attack-prone infrastructure to a more sustainable, flexible, and decentralized model. This process is directly linked to energy security – both now and in the future. How can decentralized energy solutions enhance local resilience, support green recovery, and make Ukraine more energy-secure?

Andrii Martynyuk, NGO's "Ecoclub" project coordinator and "Energy Transition" coalition coordinator

Vitalii Lukov, Deputy Mayor of Mykolaiv

Vasyl Novachok, Deputy Mayor of Khmelnytskyi

Moderation: **Valentyna Beliakova**, Women's Energy Club

(Simultaneous translation Ukrainian / English)

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ROUND TABLE SESSION II: MINORITIES IN THE RECOVERY PROCESS – SIDELINED OR IMPORTANT PLAYER?

Ukraine is home to representatives of more than 100 ethnicities, numerous national minorities and three officially recognised indigenous peoples. However, their specific challenges are often overlooked. Racism, especially deep-rooted antiziganism and its consequences such as poor education and career opportunities, poverty and poor housing are of pressing concern for the Roma community. Crimean Tatars are systematically persecuted in the occupied Crimea, many had to leave the peninsula for mainland Ukraine or exile, they struggle to preserve their national identity. For the North Azovian Urums and Roumeans, an autochthonous community whose area of compact settlement — 76 localities in eastern Ukraine — is now fully occupied by Russia, such challenges range from the loss of lives and mass displacement to the urgent need to preserve their identity, two endangered languages, and unique cultural heritage. How can their experiences, specific needs, and perspectives be meaningfully included in the context of war, resistance, and reconstruction, as well as in political decision-making at all levels?

Janush Panchenko, the Head of Youth NGO and Youth Roma Center "Romano Than"

Elnara Nurieva-Letova, Crimean Tatar cross-media activist, author and publicist

Olga Tsuprykova, Head of the board of the NGO "North Azovian Greeks: Urums and Roumeans"

Moderation: **Sarah Reinke**, Managing Team Leader Human Rights Departments, GfbV

(in English only)

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bedrohte Völker**

ROUND TABLE SESSION III: FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES AND TEMPORARY OCCUPIED TERRITORIES OF UKRAINE: ADDRESSING HUMAN SECURITY AND LOCAL NEEDS

The session will put women's perspectives at the centre and present expertise from women's civil society initiatives that have been analysing and addressing the situation of people in these areas. How can civic engagement, civil society cooperation and administrative structures address the needs of the population in frontline communities and temporary occupied territories? How can their concerns become envisaged as an integral part of a future sustainable peace?

Yuliia Kaplan, Ideas for Change, Ukraine

Svitlana Petrova, Center for Law and Mediation, Ukraine

Valerii Novikov, Alternative, Ukraine

Alyona Lunova, ZMINA, Ukraine

Moderation: **Inga Luther** / **Dana Jirouš**, OWEN e. V.

(Simultaneous translation Ukrainian / English)

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ROUND TABLE SESSION IV: SOCIAL CARE AS A BACKBONE OF UKRAINE'S RESILIENT RECOVERY

In Ukraine, care work for minors, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and veterans remains critically under-resourced, despite increasing demand due to war-related injuries, displacement, and an aging population. The country faces significant gaps in social infrastructure, with limited access to quality institutional and community-based care services. Strengthening social security systems and investing in care-related infrastructure are essential to ensure equitable and sustainable support for vulnerable groups as well as for the recovery in general.

Olena Strelnyk, Senior researcher at the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine; fellow at Ukraine Research Network, ZOIS

Oksana Dutchak, Deputy Director of the Center for Social and Labor Research

Oksana Koljada, Head of NGO "Prostir mozhlyvostej"

Moderation: **Galyna Kotliuk**, Program Coordinator, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Kyiv Office

(in English only)

13:00–14:30 LUNCH BREAK

14:30–15:30 PANEL III

UKRAINIAN MEDIA AND JOURNALISM IN THE FOURTH YEAR OF THE GREAT WAR - CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

(In cooperation with European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF))

Although the work of journalists is crucial for the democratic future of Ukraine and the country's path into the European Union, the economic situation of many journalists is pretty bad, especially since the withdrawal of USAID support. The panel provides insight into the difficulties journalists face in Kyiv, in the regions and along the frontlines, and how they overcome them.

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Based on research of the Lviv Media Forum on the economic situation there are ideas to make the media sector especially in the regions resilient and economically more sustainable.

How are Ukrainian Media and Journalists responding to the challenges? Which support do they need now? What kind of changes Ukrainian journalists want to happen and what do they expect from their own government and compatriots?

Olha Myrovych, Director of Lviv Media Forum LMF, Partner of ECPMF Voices of Ukraine Program

Maria Frey, Suspilne, Member of the Board, responsible for news and regional branches

Alona Yatsyna, Founder of Kordon Media, Sumy, military journalist and media manager

Moderation: **Rebecca Harms**, Vice Chair, ECPMF Executive Board

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15:30–16:00 COFFEE BREAK

16:00–17:30 PANEL IV

SECURITY AND MUTUAL SUPPORT BETWEEN UKRAINE AND EU

Current discussions and trends show that Ukraine is becoming a developer of modern warfare technology and potentially even a supplier to the west. Where are the current gaps in the EU's assistance to Ukraine's security? How can the cooperation between Ukraine and the EU look like in the industrial-military dimension? What are the learnings from Ukraine when it comes to quick and efficient procurement and getting ready for self-defence?

Oleksandr Merezko, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Policy and Interparliamentary Cooperation of the Verkhovna Rada (online)

Yulia Marushevska, Reform Support Office, Ukrainian Ministry of Defence

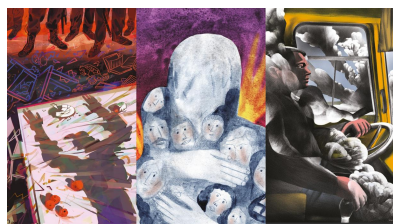
Oleksii Dorogan, Executive Director, Better Regulation Delivery Office BRDO

Łukasz Maślanka, Senior Fellow, Centre for Eastern Studies OSW

Moderation: **Wilfried Jilge**, Associate Fellow, German Council on Foreign Relations DGAP

17:30–17:45 WRAP UP AND CLOSING REMARKS

All day



EXHIBITION

On the sidelines of the conference, the exhibition "[Art of Freedom: Unseen Civilians](#)" about Ukrainian civilians held in Russian captivity will be presented. The exhibition is a project by Common Sense Communications and PR ARMY, in cooperation with the Kyiv Office of the Heinrich Boell Foundation.

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The 20th Annual Conference of Kyiv Dialogue is hosted by the European Exchange and the Heinrich Böll Foundation and is supported by the International Renaissance Foundation (IRF), the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Foundation for German-Polish Cooperation, the German Platform for the Reconstruction of Ukraine, the Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future (EVZ), the European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF), the Bertelsmann Stiftung, and the German Association for East European Studies (DGO).

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