

“CREATE UKRAINE” – Attracting Young Professionals back to Ukraine

Programme Description

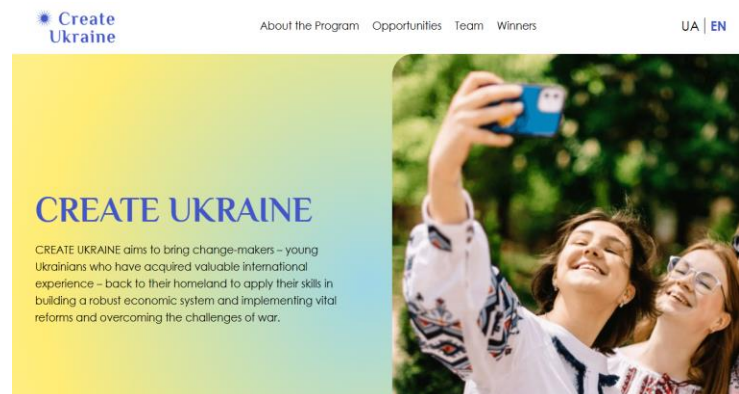
According to the data of IOM, since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, over 14 million people – nearly one third of Ukraine's population – have fled their homes. Some 3.7 million people remain displaced within Ukraine, while nearly 6.5 million are refugees globally. The Ukrainian diaspora, estimated to be between 12-20 million people worldwide, acts as a powerful and unified advocate and supporter for their country, but can also become an important pool of people willing to come back and contribute to Ukraine's reconstruction and recovery.

Ukrainian political and societal leaders reiterate that creating a path for bringing people back to Ukraine will be vital for a successful economic recovery and sustainable development.

THE AIM

By harnessing the experience and expertise of young Ukrainian professionals abroad, **Create Ukraine aims to encourage and enable them to return, join government institutions and strengthen the country's administrative capacity to support recovery and EU integration efforts.**

In the upcoming 3 years, the Programme would return 250-300 young professionals from all around the world to Ukraine.



The Programme is informed and supported by [Create Lithuania \(Kurk Lietuvai\)](#) programme, which has a 13 years successful track record of attracting Lithuanian professionals from abroad to join Lithuanian public sector and implement specific projects there.

OBJECTIVES

1. **Attract to Ukraine and reintegrate young talents:** address the significant challenge of the brain drain caused by the full-scale invasion by returning skilled young professionals from abroad back to Ukraine. This is the first initiative designed to provide a structured path for their return and reintegration into the public sector.
2. **Drive Ukraine's recovery and European integration oriented reforms:** place young professionals in the strategic positions (working in the teams of Deputy Ministers or similar level officials) to support Ukraine's recovery and Euro-integration efforts through specific assignments and milestones for their assignment.
3. **Enhance institutional efficiency and build public trust:** implement project management approaches that improve public sector efficiency while promoting transparency and collaboration with civil society, thereby strengthening public confidence in governmental institutions.

DESCRIPTION: What is Create Ukraine doing?

- Create Ukraine connects with the targeted Ukrainian institutions to identify the fields of need where internationally experienced professionals could propose solutions and create value add.
- A campaign aimed to attract Ukrainian professionals living abroad to become participants is led by the Foundation of Kyiv School of Economics Foundation.
- Participants undergo a rigorous selection process based on their international experience, motivation, and alignment with Ukrainian institutional needs.

- Selected individuals are employed by the Kyiv School of Economics Foundation and matched with appropriate institutions to work alongside senior level staff.
- Participants are paired with Deputy Ministers, who introduce them to relevant topics and help ensure the sustainability of the results of their assignment/project.
- Participants design their assignments/projects in collaboration with Deputy Ministers, agreeing on objectives and expected results.
- While implementing their assignments/projects, the participants receive continuous training on public governance and project management, advanced digital skills (including AI), mentoring, and, if needed, psychological support.

FROM PILOT TO A PROGRAMME: UPSCALING

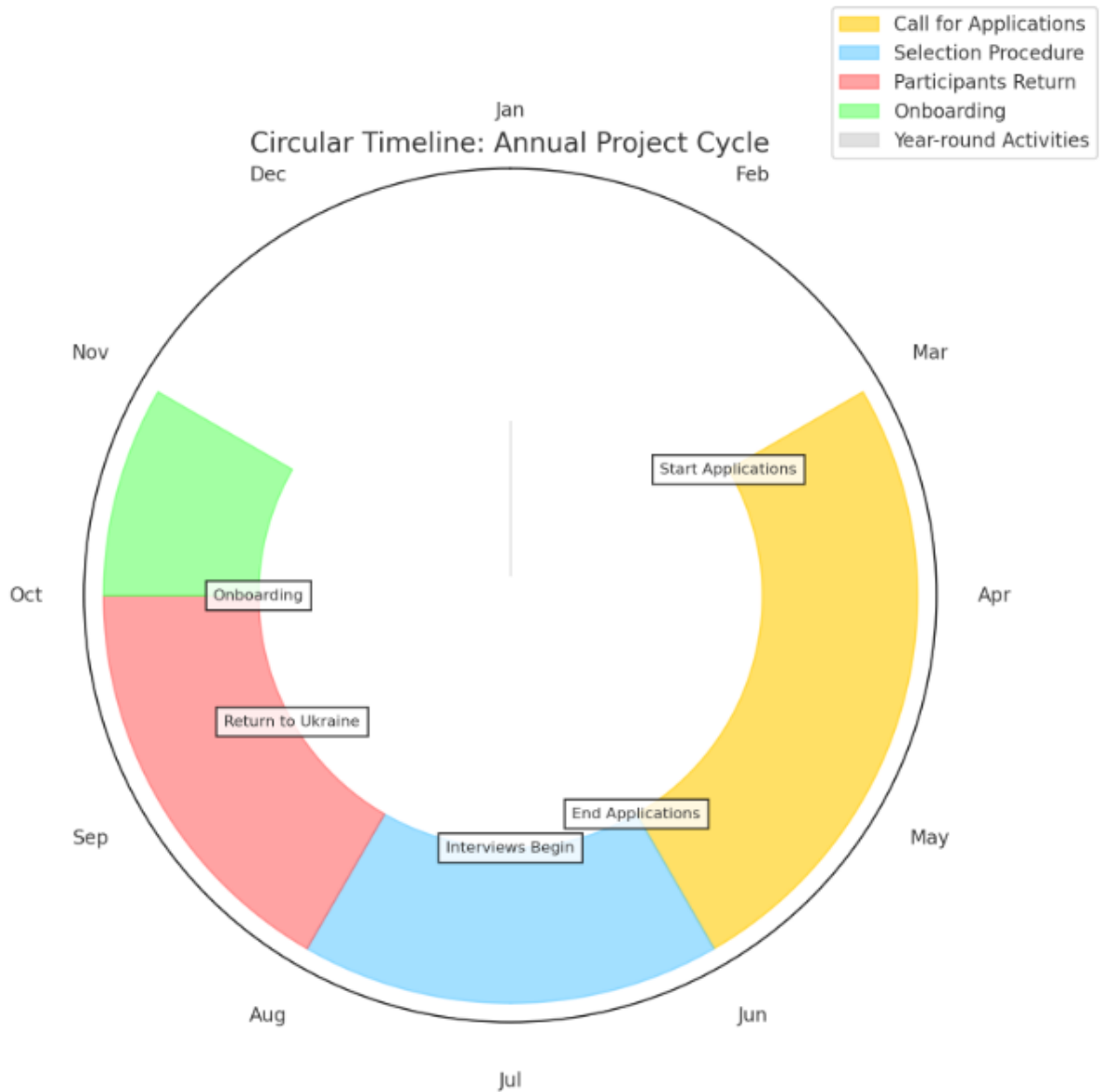
Following the successful implementation of the pilot, scaling involves expanding the programme in terms of the number of returning participants and the coverage of Ukrainian institutions. Given the fast-moving and complex situation in Ukraine and the lessons learned from the pilot, it is important to focus future assignments/projects on the main priorities of the Ukrainian government - European integration and reconstruction/recovery. This would complement existing initiatives such as the Reform Support Teams (focused on the legislative environment) and allow these multilingual experts to use their skills, experience and networks abroad. The Euro-integration angle will also ensure the sustainability and relevance of the assignments/projects, building on the overall commitment of Ukraine and fully utilizing the potential of internationally experienced young professionals.

The needs of Ukrainian institutions will be identified prior to the recruitment process, and the involvement of several institutions will enhance inter-institutional cooperation through the common network of participants.

Participants, assignments/projects and their outcomes will be published on the programme website to ensure transparency and accountability. In the long term, it is expected that the visibility and strategic communication of the results will contribute to increasing public trust in Ukrainian institutions.

PILOT STAGE	PROGRAMME (LTU funding)	TARGET PROGRAMME (LTU + other donors' funding)
10 young professionals	1st year 25 young professionals 2nd year 30 young professionals 3rd year 30 young professionals	1st year 40 young professionals 2nd year 75 young professionals 3rd year 135 young professionals
Ministry of Economy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ministry of Economy 2. Cabinet of Ministers (Euro-integration office) 3. Ministry of Justice 4. Ministry of Digital Transformation 5. Ministry of Infrastructure and Regions 6. President's Office 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ministry of Economy 2. Ministry of Digital Transformation 3. Ministry of Infrastructure and Regions 4. Ministry of Environment 5. Cabinet of Ministers 6. Ministry of Education and Science 7. Ministry of Health 8. Ministry of Justice 9. President's Office
Trainings		
12-month assignments/projects		

TIMELINE



EVALUATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Create Ukraine programme will be informed by and based on a thorough evaluation of the pilot:

- **Interim evaluation** will be conducted to guide the expansion of the programme, taking place before the announcement of the new call for applications. This evaluation will examine pre-programme procedures, including the selection of suitable participants, recruitment, onboarding, and initial feedback from participants and their supervisors..
- **Final pilot evaluation** will be carried out after the pilot stage concludes to refine and adjust the expanded programme. This evaluation will focus on the programme's impact, participant and supervisor experiences, and the outcomes of assignments/projects. The insights gained will help reshape various elements of the programme, such as training, mentorship, and setups within the Ministries, to foster an environment conducive to achieving increasingly impactful results.

OUTCOMES

The programme aims to lead to the following specific **outcomes**:

1. **Successful integration of at least 250 returning young Ukrainian professionals into the public sector.**
2. **Increased capacity of Ukrainian Ministries/Institutions to implement key European integration and recovery related initiatives as well as facilitated cooperation with international partners.**

ESTIMATED PROGRAMME BUDGET BREAKDOWN (in EUR):

LITHUANIAN FUNDING: €3 000 000 for 2025-2027 (€1 000 000/ year)

FUNDING NEEDED FROM OTHER DONORS: €7 000 000

Planned composition of the budget:

- salaries for the participants - 51.8%
- trainings for participants - 13.3%
- administrative staff (conducting the selection, procedures, mentoring, etc; Kyiv School of Economics and Create Lithuania) - 11.8%
- comms and visibility - 9.3%
- travel - 6.9%
- indirect cost - 6.9 %.

Let's co-create and support Ukraine together!

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