

AGENDA



Ukraine Reform Conference 2021: High-Level Preparatory Event

Good governance reforms in Ukraine

Tuesday 25 May 2021

14:30 – 16:00 pm (CET)

15:30 – 17:00 pm (Ukraine)

Virtual meeting

■ CONTEXT OF THE EVENT

This online meeting provides a platform for high-level representatives from Ukraine, Lithuania and the OECD to discuss advances to date and challenges ahead in Ukraine's governance and territorial reforms. Drawing on recent and ongoing OECD work in Ukraine on such issues [multi-level governance](#) and [decentralisation](#), as well as the [Principles of Public Administration](#) and the [Recommendation for Effective Public Investment across Levels of Government](#), participants will reflect on reform progress and identify key priorities for the future. They will also discuss ways in which the international community can help Ukraine tackle multi-level governance challenges and inject further momentum into the country's ambitious reform programme.

The meeting is a high-level preparatory event for the **Ukraine Reform Conference 2021** (URC 2021) to be hosted by the Government of Lithuania on 7-8 July 2021. The URC 2021 will address the issue of "**Multilevel Governance – Improving Efficiency and Professionalism in Ukraine**", and the OECD has longstanding experience working on these topics with member countries and Ukraine alike. The URC 2021 will provide an opportunity to take stock of public administration reforms and efforts to improve public service delivery at all levels of government while advancing its decentralisation agenda. This preparatory online event will lay the ground for the in-depth discussions in July and will culminate in a more specific list of priority topics to address at the URC 2021.

■ FOCUS OF THE EVENT

Efficient public administrations and well-functioning governance systems at all levels of government are pivotal to delivering public services for citizens and creating conditions for sustainable growth, regardless of where people live. Establishing robust multi-level governance arrangements that can deliver on policies to reduce inequality and address the consequences of megatrends, such as digitalisation, climate and demographic change, across regions is a challenge facing virtually all governments. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these challenges, highlighting how important it is for governments around the world to strengthen their governance systems, making them more adaptable and resilient, and ensuring that all can benefit from a greener and more inclusive recovery.

In the past 15 years, Ukraine has taken great strides to improve public management and service delivery nationally, regionally and locally, notably as part of its commitment to establishing closer links with the European Union (EU). This work continues under the Ukrainian government's strategic plans on Public Administration Reform (PAR), Public Finance Management and Regional Development. These plans include enhancement of the policy-making and strategic planning capacity of ministries and further empowering local authorities with greater decision-making powers and higher budgets. Better defining the role of the central government's funding mechanisms and decision-making processes to improve investment needs at the sub-national level will be essential to ensure for positive regional development outcomes.

Moving forward, the agendas to consolidate good governance in the public administration and regional development will require Ukraine's government to undertake decisive actions in a number of areas. One relates to improving the mechanisms governing the allocation of funding. The inadequate costing of certain reforms risks compromising their financial sustainability, while the relatively weak management of funds by certain national and sub-national authorities could undermine the government's regional development objectives. Another issue pertains to addressing disparities in service delivery across regions. Significant variations in administrative capacity and access to public services have been observed within amalgamated hromadas. Moreover, the digitalisation of government services is proceeding at an uneven pace depending on the types of services. Also, the establishment of clear responsibilities among levels of government and effective dialogue mechanisms at the national and subnational levels remain a priority to promote more coherent planning, public investment and programme implementation. Finally, there is scope to enhance the strategic planning process and to increase the capacity of centre-of-government institutions, further professionalising the civil service, in order to improve government decision-making and thus moving closer to meeting the [Principles of Public Administration](#). Merit-based recruitment in public administration needs to be enhanced and the remuneration system reformed in order to ensure competitive and more predictable salaries. The Law on Administrative Procedure, pending in the Verkhovna Rada, has the potential to enhance the procedural safeguards for citizens and businesses in their relations with public administration and to curtail corruption.

This preparatory online meeting will facilitate discussions on how the government can overcome the challenges of improving public governance at all levels, as well as regional development, including through the

implementation of OECD instruments and good practices. Discussants will also be invited to share their views on how Ukraine's current programme of reforms aligns with the OECD Principles on Public Administration and the Recommendations for More Effective Public Investment across Levels of Government.

■ UKRAINE and THE OECD

The OECD has worked with Ukraine for a quarter-century, supporting the country's efforts to transform its economy and integrate more deeply into international markets. In 2014, the OECD boosted its co-operation with Ukraine and responded positively to Ukraine's request to strengthen the Organisation's long-standing co-operation with that country, bringing the OECD's broad expertise to bear in support of deep economic and social reforms. This led to the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding on Strengthening Co-operation (the "MoU") between the OECD and Ukraine. Since then, the MoU has defined the overall framework for co-operation. In February 2021, the two sides agreed to revise and prolong the MoU until 2025.

The OECD has been intensively supporting the Ukrainian authorities, in particular the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the National Agency for Civil Service through the SIGMA Programme, a joint initiative of the OECD and EU. In 2018, SIGMA performed a baseline assessment against the Principles of Public Administration, which largely informed strategic planning and implementation of the reform. Since independence, SIGMA has been providing assistance to Ukraine in crafting the new Public Administration Reform Strategy, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of PAR, government policy planning and policy making, civil service and HRM, organization of public administration, administrative procedure and public financial management.

The OECD has also been working on Ukraine's territorial development and multi-level governance issues since 2012 resulting, among others, in the policy framework to the launch of the decentralisation reform in Ukraine in line with OECD recommendations. Ongoing work in Ukraine on decentralisation and regional development looks at approaches to establishing robust multi-level governance arrangements that can deliver on policies to reduce inequality and address vertical and horizontal co-ordination mechanisms, strengthening public investment at subnational level and enhancing fiscal decentralisation.

■ REGISTRATION and ACCESS

Participation is free of charge, but registration is mandatory.

- **Please register here:**
<https://meetoecd1.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEodOCrrTgtGNwVsELWOVSBEazN6nNWM6wd>
- Advance registration is required for the virtual session. A personalised confirmation link will be sent following registration by email. Please check both your inbox and spam folder.
- Please join 10 minutes prior to the start of the session, with the personalised confirmation link provided following your registration.

Working Languages: English and Ukrainian

■ CONTACTS

Ms Gabriela Miranda

Country Manager for Ukraine
Global Relations Secretariat
OECD
gabriela.miranda@oecd.org

Ms Dovilė Paužaitė

First Secretary
Permanent Representation of the Republic of
Lithuania to the OECD
dovile.pauzaite@urm.lt

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Virtual meeting – Tuesday 25 May 2021

Moderator: Mr William Tompson, Head of Eurasia Division, Global Relations Secretariat, OECD

15:30-15:37
(Kyiv time)

Keynote address

- **H. E. Mr Denis Shmyhal**, Prime Minister of Ukraine

15:37-15:50
(Kyiv time)

Introductory remarks

- **H. E. Mr Gabrielius Landsbergis**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania
- **Mr Ulrik Vestergaard Knudsen**, Deputy Secretary-General, OECD

15:50-16:30
(Kyiv time)

Roundtable discussion: strengthening good governance in Ukraine, anchoring the reform and drawing on lessons learnt by OECD members

Panellists will discuss the government's ongoing reform programme at both central and sub-national levels. In particular, they will address the continued challenges that Ukraine faces in areas such as multi-level governance for regional development and public investment, decentralisation, sub-national finance and public administration reform in general, with suggestions on how the OECD and its members can work with Ukraine to accelerate the adoption of good practices in these areas.

- **Mr Arnoldas Abramavičius**, Vice-Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania
- **Ms Tetyana Kovtun**, Deputy State Secretary of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine
- **Ms Valeria Ionan**, Deputy Minister of Digital Transformation of Ukraine
- **Mr Ihor Korkhovi**, Deputy Minister for Communities and Territories Development of Ukraine
- **Ms Lamia Kamal-Chaoui**, Director of the Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities, OECD
- **Ms Elsa Pilichowski**, Director for Public Governance, OECD

16:30-16:50
(Kyiv time)

Open discussion with panellists and OECD

Question and answer session with the audience regarding centre-of-government and sub-national challenges facing Ukraine, and the role that members of the international community can play to generate additional reform momentum in the country.

16:50-17:00
(Kyiv time)

Closing remarks

- **H. E. Ms Lina Viltrakienė**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lithuania to the OECD
- **Mr Andreas Schaal**, Director of the Global Relations Secretariat, OECD

■ ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The OECD is a forum where governments work together to address the economic, social and environmental challenges of globalisation. The OECD is at the forefront of efforts to help governments respond to new developments and concerns, such as corporate governance, the information economy and the challenges of an ageing population. The OECD is also supporting governments in their efforts to “build back better” from the COVID-19 crisis and deliver a sustainable and inclusive economic recovery. It provides a setting where governments can compare policy experience, seek answers to common problems, identify good practice and work to co-ordinate domestic and international policies. The OECD members are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, Colombia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. The European Union takes part in the work of the OECD.

www.oecd.org

■ OECD EURASIA COMPETITIVENESS PROGRAMME

The OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme, launched in 2008, helps accelerate economic reforms and improve the business climate to achieve sustainable economic growth and employment in two regions: Central Asia (Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan), and Eastern Europe and South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine). The Programme contributes to the OECD outreach strategy implemented by the Global Relations Secretariat, and works in close collaboration with specialised expert Directorates across the OECD.

www.oecd.org/eurasia

■ OECD REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

The Regional Development Policy Committee (RDPC) was created in 1999 to identify territorial challenges and assist governments in the assessment and improvement of their territorial policies. Through its mandate today, the Committee aims to serve as the premier international forum for senior-level policy makers to identify, discuss, develop, and disseminate a vision of regional development policy that is place-based, multi-level, multi-sector, evidence-driven and innovative. The Committee also seeks to enhance well-being and living standards in all types of regions, from cities to rural areas, and improve their contribution to national performance and more inclusive and resilient societies.

www.oecd.org/regional

■ SIGMA PROGRAMME

The SIGMA programme is a joint initiative of OECD and EU with a long-standing (28 years) tradition of supporting EU enlargement and neighbourhood countries in public administration reforms. SIGMA has developed, in cooperation with the European Commission, the Principles of Public Administration, a framework of standards of good public administration and indicators for measuring performance in this area. The Principles are based on good practices of the OECD and EU member states. SIGMA regularly performs monitoring measurements and assessments in the beneficiary countries and works closely with the European commission – DG NEAR.

www.sigmaweb.org

■ OECD PUBLIC GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The OECD Public Governance Committee (PGC) works to assist countries in building and strengthening capacity for designing, implementing and assessing adaptive, innovative, anticipatory and citizen-focused public policies, institutions and services. In particular, the Committee’s work is directed toward helping countries strengthen their capacity to govern by improving policy-making systems and the performance of public institutions. Through meetings of member country officials and experts, exchanges of information and expertise, and data and analysis, PGC examines what governments do and how they are seeking to improve public policy effectiveness, efficiency, responsiveness to citizens and quality of services.

<https://www.oecd.org/governance/>