



# CHALLENGES AND NEEDS OF UKRAINIAN UNIVERSITIES

REPORT FROM THE FIRST CIVICA –  
UKRAINE HIGH LEVEL MEETING

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## INTRODUCTION

War is a devastating force that disrupts lives and destroys communities. The ongoing war in Ukraine is no exception, with far-reaching consequences, extending beyond the immediate impact on infrastructure and human lives. Among the victims of the war are the Ukrainian universities, which have been facing numerous problems and challenges that threaten their ability to fulfil their vital role in educating and shaping future generations of the Ukraine.

This report aims to assess the needs of Ukrainian higher education institutions and identify critical areas that require both immediate attention and long-term support. Understanding these needs is essential for formulating strategies and developing roadmaps to assist universities, safeguard their educational mission, foster stability and resilience.

In this report, we describe various dimensions of the problems and challenges faced by Ukrainian universities. We examine the physical infrastructural damages on campuses, the disruption caused to academic activities, the financial strain experienced by institutions, the brain drain resulting from faculty and student migration, and the technological setbacks hindering effective teaching and learning. Our aim is to provide valuable insights and recommendations for all the partners involved in the CIVICA-Ukraine dialog and cooperation.

The report has been prepared based on the discussions held during the First CIVICA-Ukraine High-Level Meeting, which took place at SGH Warsaw School of Economics on March 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023. This meeting brought together academic leaders and managers from both Europe and Ukraine to address the pressing challenges faced by Ukrainian universities during the ongoing war. The insights presented in this report reflect the valuable contributions and expertise shared by the participants.

We would like to express our gratitude to all those who have contributed to the development of this report. We are thankful to the representatives of CIVICA and Ukrainian partner universities for their active participation in CIVICA-Ukraine High-Level meeting, insightful discussions and engaging presentations. Their contributions have been of crucial importance in shaping the content and recommendations presented in this document.

We express our sincere appreciation to each participant for the contributions and for fostering an environment of collaboration, knowledge exchange, and collective action.

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## **PART ONE: SITUATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION OF UKRAINE AND THE NEEDS OF UKRAINIAN UNIVERSITIES**

The war in Ukraine has brought about profound challenges to the stability and functioning of the country's higher education system. The Ukrainian universities, renowned for their academic excellence and social impact, have been negatively affected by the persistent state of war. The effects of the war have been felt in various aspects, encompassing infrastructure, technological advancements, human resources, and educational opportunities.

As the war violence persists, it is important to understand and address the pressing needs of Ukrainian higher education institutions to ensure the continuity of learning, research, and stable and sustainable growth.

### **FUNCTIONING OF UKRAINIAN UNIVERSITIES & HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR IN TIMES OF WAR**

#### **Reality of Ukrainian universities**

As of March 2023, due to the shelling and bombing caused by the Russian armed aggression against Ukraine, 3180 educational institutions were damaged. Among them 350 were completely destroyed, including research and innovation facilities, infrastructure, properties, and buildings of 116 higher education and scientific institutions.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the serious challenges facing Ukrainian universities, such as the pressure on educational process, destroyed campus infrastructure, constant threat of missile

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<sup>1</sup> Data provided by the representative of the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science

strikes, profound psychological exhaustion, and lack of funding, **universities in Ukraine continue to carry out their duties with strong dedication.**

The situation of Ukrainian universities differs significantly depending on their location, status (displaced or not), and the war intensity in the region. For instance, **displaced universities face unique challenges that negatively affect their ability to function effectively.** One of the primary challenges is the lack of own infrastructure, educational buildings and dormitories, insufficient scientific facilities, laboratories for high tech research, especially in natural sciences. This creates a major difficulty in providing an adequate learning environment for students and researchers.

**Ukrainian universities find themselves in a dilemma of combining survival mode with development.** They strive to continue their usual activities such as teaching, research, social engagement while coping with the difficult realities of missile attacks and the need to invest in the future. **A key focus for universities is supporting the local community and promoting decentralization.** The modus operandi is to help cities and various local communities, which vary with their circumstances. For instance, the Lviv region and Vinnytsia experience massive internally displaced persons (IDPs) migration, and different cities exhibit different levels of adaptation.

The difficult situation induced by the war has led to a **brain drain.** Students, faculty, and staff who escaped the war are unsure whether they will be able to return to Ukraine in one year, three years or even five years. Thus, assistance from European partners would be crucial.

The war has also inflicted **significant psychological traumas on the population** which shows that addressing the needs of those affected shall go beyond mere infrastructure recovery. Despite the ongoing war, life goes on, and efforts are made to improve different areas. For example, urban development projects such as creating flower beds in the parks and public places, aim to have a positive impact on psychological condition of communities and their mental health.

Ukrainian universities **seek support for their ideas of alliances and strategic activities** in teaching, research and social engagement. Projects like CIVICA are seen as valuable platforms to enhance capacity of Ukrainian universities, to develop their strategic thinking and to undertake joint practical initiatives. The challenge lies also in **balancing short-term with long-term projects and research activities.** Most projects

tend to be short term, lasting only a couple of months, which makes it difficult to develop the capacity for fundamental, long-term research.

Another issue is the **insufficient level of the university autonomy** in Ukraine. Public universities need to have the capacity to be more responsible and autonomous. The issue of financial autonomy is particularly important for public universities, as they have decision-making power regarding educational matters but face strict control over finances and employment of personnel.

There is **a significant gap between the Ukrainian educational and research system and international systems**. Ukraine cannot simply advance fast to the same level, as it requires a long path with new ideas, creativeness, and project work.

Rather than competing, Ukrainian universities recognize the need to collaborate and develop **a culture of collaboration**. The academic culture has traditionally been competitive, but there is now **a new idea to create strategic alliances among Ukrainian universities**. Learning from EU universities on how to collaborate effectively becomes of key importance. These alliances can bring great benefits to Ukrainian universities, and it is essential for Ukraine to embrace this approach and move away from competition towards cooperation.

### 1.1.1. The new role of universities in response to the realities of war

The new role of Ukrainian universities in response to the reality of war is characterized by resilience, adaptability, and a commitment to social impact. By rethinking education, conducting research for peacebuilding, engaging in humanitarian efforts, preserving cultural heritage, and supporting sustainable development, universities are contributing to the recovery and transformation of communities affected by the war.

It has been underlined that facing the new reality of wartime, Ukrainian universities play a **crucial role in supporting Ukraine, local communities, and the government**, whenever possible.<sup>2</sup> Universities have transformed into hubs of human capital, inspiring individuals to take initiatives. For instance, people have started to establish their own charitable foundation, to cooperate with alumni associations and help local communities. The focus here is obtaining the necessary resources for their initiatives,

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<sup>2</sup> Tymofii Brik (KSE)

projects, and actions. Universities need additional resources to enhance their efficiency and effectively implement projects aimed at supporting communities. They also seek greater flexibility in terms of legal engagement with the government as well as financial autonomy.

The active involvement of universities in supporting local communities goes in parallel with the close connections to the local communities.<sup>3</sup> Being located in the cities, **universities often receive requests from city authorities seeking their expertise and assistance** in various areas of development. These may range from psychological support and water cleaning to food supplying schemes, infrastructure development, and buildings reconstruction. The cooperation and use of the expertise from international institutions in Europe are considered essential as many smaller stakeholders, such as NGOs, associations, and local communities, may lack the necessary knowledge in fundraising, grant acquisition, and strategic planning. In this context, **universities can serve as a platform that can enhance the ability to take collective action.** The provision of human-centred services within universities benefits not only students and faculty members but also extends to the local communities in need, which further emphasizes the role of universities in supporting their closest environment.

The Ukrainian universities take an active stand in **transforming Ukraine and its local communities as well as in strengthening civil society.**<sup>4</sup> With a vision of shaping civil society not just in Ukraine but across the globe, universities shall step up their efforts to drive change and impact through innovative academic programs. Many Ukrainian universities have introduced **new study programs that break down disciplinary barriers.** For instance, interdisciplinary programs like the management of post-conflict territories have emerged, combining fields such as political science and management. Focus areas such as digital business, diplomacy, and social entrepreneurship have gained prominence, reflecting the global challenges and opportunities.

Each university as autonomous institution can reflect what is needed and can approach the community, and the responsibility of universities is to educate people who would be needed to rebuild the country.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Dmytro Sherenhovskyy from UCU underlined

<sup>4</sup> In her statement, Anna Osmolovska (DonNU) emphasized

<sup>5</sup> Larysa Chovniuk from NaUKMA

### 1.1.2. The role of public administration in supporting higher education institutions

The role of the Ukrainian government has been instrumental in mitigating the horrible effects of the war on the higher education sector. In response to the war, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine has implemented a variety of measures aimed at addressing the primary obstacles and needs faced by the Ukrainian universities.

In the face of adversity, the Ministry underscores the pivotal role that science, technology, and innovation will play in accelerating the recovery of war-stricken regions across Ukraine. With a focus on nurturing a robust ecosystem, it outlines a comprehensive set of directives for the rebuilding and advancement of the scientific domain.

Firstly, the Ministry emphasizes the need for the restoration and modernization of the research and innovation infrastructure. This is coupled with the reinstatement of state financial aid for scientific research, with a particular focus on studies aimed at facilitating Ukraine's resurgence and economic recovery.

Next, there is a strong focus on ensuring defence capabilities and promoting sustainable development. It also sets the stage for implementing a multi-channel target system of quantum science, aiming for a gradual increase in the share of scientific content in the country's GDP.

To further enhance the scientific community's resource base, there is a strong determination to broaden opportunities for Ukrainian scientists and innovators to access non-budgetary resources or funding. This includes leveraging the benefits of integration programs designed to support scientific endeavours.

In this vein, there are plans to create conditions conducive to scientific, technical, and innovative activities, while also attracting back scientists and innovators who were compelled to leave the country amidst the turmoil.

Moreover, the technology transfer, commercialization of scientific outcomes, and creation of conditions that foster the development of an innovation ecosystem have been broadly recognized. This ecosystem is envisioned as a fusion of scientific and industrial potential.

Lastly, the **Ministry articulates the goal of integrating Ukraine into the European and global research space**, recognizing that this will open further opportunities for collaboration, resource-sharing, and progress. Through these initiatives, the Ministry



remains committed to the resolute pursuit of scientific advancement, even in the face of daunting challenges.

The Ministry's policies and programs have also been built upon the recognition of initiatives undertaken by international partners to support Ukrainian higher education sector. In collaboration with international partners, various programs and initiatives have been introduced to address the urgent needs of universities affected by the war. These partnerships have facilitated the provision of financial resources, technological assistance, and expertise, strengthening the resilience of the higher education sector in Ukraine.

#### **Key measures taken by the central government of Ukraine:**

The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine has implemented several measures aimed at mitigating the main challenges arising from the war in the following priority areas:

- **Integration of Ukrainian higher education sector into the European Research Area:** efforts have been made to align Ukraine's standards with those in the European Research Area, fostering cooperation and knowledge exchange. Integration into the European Research Area will provide Ukrainian scientists with access to leading research European institutions.
- **Financial support for scientific research:** the Ministry has prioritized providing financial assistance to scientific research initiatives, particularly those which will ensure the availability of funding for project of importance to the universities' rebuilding and sustainable development. The financial support from the international partners and EU funds will be crucial in advancing governmental support in that regard.
- **Legislative regulation and development of research and innovation infrastructure:** Informational and organizational support for educational, scientific and innovative activities of universities is highly important. The universities should focus on development of an innovative ecosystem combining scientific and industrial potential.
- **Access to advanced electronic resources of scientific information:** efforts have been undertaken to ensure Ukrainian universities have the access to advanced electronic resources (databases) of scientific information.

## 1.2. ADDRESSING KEY NEEDS OF UKRAINIAN UNIVERSITIES

The Ukrainian universities face various challenges and have different needs depending on their context, location, and exposure to the war. During the war, Ukrainian universities play a crucial role in mitigating and combating the consequences of the war and actively participating in the post-war recovery and rebuilding of the country.

The following key messages reflect the realities, challenges, and priorities of Ukrainian universities as well as emphasize the importance of support, collaboration, and strategic decision-making to ensure their resilience, sustainable post-war growth and contribution to the recovery and development of Ukraine.

- (1) Ukrainian universities face diverse challenges and articulate different needs, depending on the location and type (private or public); understanding and addressing their unique needs is detrimental for their survival and post-war development.
- (2) Universities play crucial role in mitigating war consequences and participating the post-war rebuilding of Ukraine in rebuilding Ukraine.
- (3) Different levels of support are already in place ranging from micro to medium and macro levels.
- (4) Lack of capacity and advanced skills poses challenges in managerial, organizational, and financial aspects poses significant challenges.
- (5) Human resources management is an important challenge due to the brain drain, engagement of students and faculty, overload and multitasking.
- (6) Prioritizing of partnerships beyond the mere humanitarian aid is crucial for Ukrainian universities.
- (7) Agile management and timely decision-making are crucial factors for strengthening of resilience of universities and their long-term development.
- (8) Significant number of higher education institutions (especially smaller ones with not so good quality) is perceived as a challenge for the system,
- (9) Collaboration and alliances, both domestically and internationally, play key role in addressing the challenges and responding to the needs of Ukrainian universities.

### 1.2.1. Strengthening Capacity: Overcoming Challenges and Seizing Opportunities in Ukrainian universities

One of the important points discussed during the High-Level meeting was the issue of capacity. As discussed, universities in Ukraine currently benefit from partnerships, international support, media backing, and numerous ongoing projects. However, despite having a plethora of initiatives, Ukrainian universities are confronted with a capacity shortage. Even with significant support received in the event of a full-scale invasion, they struggle to effectively handle and execute all the plans and projects they have in mind. This presents a considerable challenge in managing everything simultaneously. As a result, it is crucial for Ukrainian partners to prioritize their efforts, while foreign partners should consolidate their actions and support to ensure more manageable outcomes.

When discussing capacity, leaders of Ukrainian universities have highlighted various dimensions and specific areas of concern. Firstly, they have emphasized **the limited availability of time for participating in international projects due to the challenges of mobility caused by the ongoing war**. Traveling abroad from Ukraine has become difficult due to logistical challenges, prompting Ukrainian partners, researchers, and leaders to carefully prioritize events, meetings, and projects.

Additionally, Ukrainian universities are **struggling with human resource limitations as martial law restricts men from traveling abroad, thus reducing the number of individuals available to execute various projects**. Consequently, universities find themselves overwhelmed and burdened with multitasking, resulting in a lack of skills capacity in key areas such as English language proficiency, research proposal writing, project management, and various managerial skills at different levels within the university, including financial management and international cooperation.

Furthermore, **the constraints of time and intellectual capital contribute to an insufficient managerial capacity to handle the multitude of offers, partnerships, and possibilities presented by universities worldwide to Ukrainian partners**. Ukrainian universities are faced with the challenge of making choices between urgent matters concerning their students and engaging in long planning meetings. Currently, the focus is on urgent actions and compressed planning, which have proven to be the most effective approaches for Ukrainian partners. It would be highly advantageous if

international partners could coordinate their proposals and consolidate their efforts, considering the overwhelming number of offers received by Ukrainian universities, particularly those of prominence. Additionally, Ukrainian universities require the capacity to respond effectively to these international offers.

**The limitations in teaching and research capacity within Ukrainian universities** are directly linked to the ongoing military actions. The situation of short-term funding and dangerous conditions makes it challenging to develop long-term fundamental research initiatives. **Ukrainian researchers need support to enhance their capacity for conducting high-level national research and to foster growth in this regard.**

Addressing the capacity constraints faced by Ukrainian universities is crucial for their sustainable development and their ability to seize opportunities offered by international partners. By enhancing skills capacity, effectively managing offers, and supporting research endeavours, Ukrainian universities can overcome these challenges and make meaningful contributions to the academic community.

### 1.2.2. Managing human resources

The war had forced many male students, faculty members and staff to serve in the Ukrainian Armed Forces. The dual responsibility of defending their country while educating the next generation placed an immense burden on researchers and lectures. **The universities face enormous challenges in maintaining the continuity of education and research.** Furthermore, as the war in Ukraine imposed limitations on the ability of male students to leave the country, it became crucial to find alternative solutions to overcome physical boundaries and enable academic education. **Through the implementation of online exchanges and targeted joint online programs, male students could still benefit from the education and international experiences.**

Adding to the strain, a significant number of both faculty and students sought refuge in the European Union countries and the United States. Fleeing the war, they emigrated looking for safety and stability. This mass emigration further depleted the already diminished human capital of Ukrainian universities. The brain drain that ensued threatened the prospects of academia in the country. For the faculty members, e.g. visiting program, research program or teaching, program for administrators, also for men, using compliant structures.

Equally important is the aspect of **socially responsible education**. Both students, PhDs and faculty members should be taught how to engage in practical initiatives and make a positive impact. By providing them with the additional skills, they can actively contribute to strengthening academic and local communities. Empowering individuals with the tools to make a difference not only benefits their personal development but will also contribute to the fast and solid, post-war recovery of universities. To ensure equal opportunities for male faculty members, HR and staff should develop programs that cater to their needs within compliant structures. This may involve creating visiting programs, research programs, or teaching programs that can be conducted remotely or within the country, depending on the specific limitations.

### 1.2.3. Research projects and research collaboration

To increase the impact of research, it is crucial for Ukrainian universities to establish cooperation with European counterparts. By combining expertise and resources, joint research projects can generate truly valuable scientific products. This cooperation will not only enrich the research outcomes but also strengthen the international profile and prestige of Ukrainian universities.

Given the need for a comprehensive strategy on post-war recovery in Ukraine, research projects implemented by Ukrainian universities in cooperation with international partners should **prioritize topics related to restoration and rebuilding of the country**. By directing research towards areas such as infrastructure reconstruction and urban planning, and sustainability heritage, universities can significantly contribute to the post-conflict reconstruction. The applicable projects should leverage interdisciplinary approaches, involving experts from various fields to develop comprehensive and sustainable solutions.

In order to foster exchange of knowledge and skills, **Ukrainian researchers should be invited more frequently to participate in international scientific conferences**. By attending conferences focused on relevant fields such as political science, urban development, tourism, and more, Ukrainian researchers can share their findings and gain exposure to global perspectives. Likewise, **inviting researchers from the CIVICA alliance to participate in Ukrainian conferences**, even in an online format, would enable the exchange of knowledge and promote collaboration.

Furthermore, to enhance the quality of research and address the needs of Ukrainian Early-Stage Researchers, **double supervision of PhD thesis** could be highly beneficial. This entails assigning a supervisor from a Ukrainian university and another from a European institution. Double supervision of PhDs would foster internationalization of research, provide students with a broader perspective and allow them to tap into diverse research methodologies.

Ukrainian researchers, including PhD candidates, should be involved more extensively in the research projects by their European and global partners, including by partners from CIVICA. By **forming research teams with members from different universities, interdisciplinary cooperation can actively be developed**. Topics such as governance, democracy versus autocracy, the study of well-being, and innovation in times of crisis provide solid foundation for collaborative research. The inclusion of PhD students in the research teams will enable the development of doctoral candidates as future full-fledge researchers and will foster a culture of research excellence.

Promoting **knowledge exchange between Ukrainian and CIVICA universities** would have an invaluable advantage for both sides. Ukrainian institutions can benefit from bringing cutting-edge experiences from Europe, such as advanced research methodologies, innovative approaches, and best practices in academia. Simultaneously, Ukrainian universities possess unique insights and experiences that could be shared with European partners. **This reciprocal exchange would enrich research and strengthen ties between academia on both sides.**

To benefit fully from international research collaboration, **Ukrainian universities need strengthen their institutional capacity in terms of research methodologies, international communication, and partnerships**. Training programs and workshops should be implemented at all levels to enhance researchers' skills and competencies. Additionally, building strong research support structures, including grant and project management will enable universities to efficiently engage in international research projects.

**The internationalization of research projects is a priority for Ukrainian universities.** Entering meaningful partnerships with international institutions, participating in international funding programs, and joining research networks are effective solutions to foster international collaboration. By embedding internationalization into the research activities, Ukrainian universities can expand their research horizons and contribute with their research to global scientific advancements.

#### 1.2.4. Education and students

Education plays a crucial role in shaping the future of Ukrainian nation. To ensure a better future for Ukraine, it is essential to provide students, student parliaments, and student leaders with more opportunities to network and establish contacts. Enhancing academic mobility, both offline and online, would be crucial. There remains a significant need for supporting mobility programs that facilitate the participation of Ukrainian students and staff in international educational endeavours.

Ukrainian universities fully recognize **their mission in retraining veterans and facilitating their reintegration into peaceful society**. Veterans possess leadership qualities, passion, and determination, and they deserve support. With the assistance of international partners, universities can serve as places where veterans can explore new career opportunities. They can have access to successful entrepreneurs and businesses, many of which have been established by veterans themselves. Universities can play a pivotal role in helping veterans become entrepreneurs and reinvent their careers, making them ideal settings for this mission.

**Shifting the focus from brain drain to brain gain would also be of significance.** Ukrainian universities need to fundamentally change their perspective and create an environment that nurtures talent, encouraging graduates to contribute to the development of Ukraine. By fostering innovation, supporting entrepreneurial ecosystems, and providing research opportunities, universities can retain and attract talented students. It is essential to actively promote the idea that graduates have the potential to make significant contributions to the development of Ukraine and the Ukrainian nation, thereby reversing the narrative of brain drain.

#### 1.2.5. Expert and capacity-building support for European integration and the reconstruction of Ukraine.

The Ukrainian academic community comprises experts in various fields, yet they require support from EU experts, particularly in terms of research and innovation. EU experts can assist in planning and provide consultations. Ukrainian partners seek **expert support for European integration, an area where CIVICA partners, as EU members, possess valuable expertise**. They are knowledgeable in the functioning of

the European Union, having undergone the process of harmonizing legislation and utilizing EU funds.

Ukraine is currently going through this process and Ukrainian universities are still adapting to the new reality. There is a **need for policy analysis, research, and advisory services to guide Ukrainian universities on the necessary steps and legislative changes required to make the integration process more efficient.** CIVICA can help in this regard.

Ukrainian universities can also play a crucial role in educating other institutions, the business community, and even the Ministry or Government on how to effectively utilize European platforms and fully implement projects under programs such as Erasmus or Horizon.

In terms of expertise, **consideration must be given to the recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine.** CIVICA and the group of universities can contribute to the transformation and rebuilding of Ukraine. Universities have a profound impact on shaping individuals, accumulating knowledge, and setting trends for generations to come. However, the scope of rebuilding Ukraine extends beyond academia; it encompasses also security structures in Europe and the reshaping and rethinking of Europe's future. **Ukrainian and European partner universities can collaboratively develop strategies for strengthening European security,** restructuring, and reconfiguring the continent, and ensuring its continued significance as a global player.



## PART TWO: FEEDBACK FROM THE CIVICA PARTNER UNIVERSITIES: INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In times of war, the collaboration between European universities and their Ukrainian partners becomes even more crucial.

In terms of strategic priorities, **CIVICA's cooperation with Ukraine could concentrate on two main areas** each contributing to the overall goal of fostering collaboration and enhancing academic capacities.

Firstly, **continuing CIVICA's engagement with Ukraine** would involve students, faculty members, and staff from both Ukrainian and CIVICA universities participating in various activities. This could include student exchanges, joint research projects, academic conferences, and workshops. By facilitating these interactions and exchanges, CIVICA's and Ukrainian universities can promote cultural understanding, knowledge sharing, and cross-border collaboration. Such initiatives would provide valuable opportunities for students to experience different academic environments, broaden their perspectives, and establish international networks. Faculty and staff exchanges would facilitate the sharing of expertise, best practices, and teaching methodologies, fostering professional development, and promoting academic excellence on both sides.

Secondly, **the cooperation could focus on capacity building for Ukrainian universities** by connecting their academic and scientific needs with the expertise and resources of CIVICA. This partnership would complement the existing capacities of Ukrainian universities, such as **their expertise in writing international project proposals** and specific topics requested by Ukrainian institutions. CIVICA, with its diverse academic disciplines and research strengths, can offer **support in areas such as curriculum development, pedagogical innovation, research methodologies, and academic governance**. Workshops, training programs, and mentoring initiatives can be established to provide guidance and support to Ukrainian universities, strengthening their academic programs and research capabilities. Additionally, CIVICA can **assist in fostering a culture of internationalization within Ukrainian universities**, helping them develop partnerships with other European institutions and facilitating participation in collaborative research projects and funding opportunities.

## 2.1. COLLABORATION BETWEEN CIVICA AND UKRAINE

In managing the collaboration between CIVICA and Ukraine, it is **important to focus on individual interactions and thematic areas related to the recovery of Ukraine**, as well as **engaging the wider academic community in Ukraine**. To facilitate this, European institutions could **appoint a dedicated desk person or establish a desk office specifically for Ukraine, if feasible**. This individual would serve as a direct point of contact between the European institutions, university senior administration, and CIVICA leadership. This appointment would help streamline coordination efforts and manage the overwhelming multiple requests that often arise from various directions. Ideally, this person could be a Ukrainian citizen or have expertise in matters related to Ukraine, enabling them to better understand the needs and necessary actions. Such a centralized solution could also help overcome administrative barriers within the institutions.

Partners should recognize the complexity of coordination and the high costs associated with it. **It would be beneficial to have a designated point of contact in each university, as well as a central point of contact within CIVICA**. Without proper coordination, managing the collaboration would become nearly impossible. This central contact person should ideally be allocated at least half of their time to the role, possessing the initiative and imagination to establish connections and secure resources. Partners fully understand the time and workload involved in such coordination efforts, and it may be worth considering a seed funding model that brings together individuals and resources to initiate and facilitate cooperation.

European partners can also involve institutions and colleagues from Ukraine who may not receive significant attention from other international partners. This inclusive approach allows for mutual benefit and the exploration of tools and resources together. This is particularly relevant for displaced universities and their networks, where initiatives such as Fulbright and the Institute of International Education could play an indispensable role.

Further, it is essential to **acknowledge the reality and specific needs of Ukrainian refugees, who are often focused on survival rather than integration**. In this regard,

support from international partners is very much needed. For example, programs like the Frederick Scholars and the Direction Initiative, a scholar rescue program of the Open Society University Network, have provided support to over 140 Ukrainian scholars since 2014, including those still within Ukraine, as well as those who have been internally or internationally displaced. While academic integration is typically the focus for colleagues at foreign host institutions, in the case of Ukraine, smaller support packages are necessary to ensure their basic survival for a few months.

European partners have suggested a range of actions that can be implemented with and for Ukrainian universities. These actions include among others:

### **2.1.1. Teaching and Training Activities:**

- Offering online master classes on specific topics with renowned speakers.
- Providing teaching support in online programs, particularly in courses addressing specific needs such as digital diplomacy, post-war needs assessment, and combating fake news and disinformation.
- Collaborating with experts to teach online courses.
- Assisting in improving online pedagogy and teaching strategies. Facilitating student exchanges, ranging from short-term visits to full-time programs, including grants for tuition.
- Conducting online classes and knowledge exchange related to specific teaching programs, such as delivering lectures online for the master program on public policy and governance.

### **2.2.2. Research Activities**

- Nurturing research collaborations and jointly working on research papers.
- Inviting Ukrainian researchers and experts to participate in research conferences, either online or in person.
- Promoting joint supervision of PhD programs.
- Collaborating on research relevant to policymaking, leveraging the expertise of CIVICA partner universities in interacting with policymakers and crisis resolution.

- Focus on research related to strategic and policy aspects of the Ukraine's development in the broader context of its European future.
- Collaborate in research that is relevant to policymaking. One of the key identities of CIVICA is conducting research that informs policymaking. All CIVICA universities have expertise in interacting with policymakers and crisis resolution.
- Fostering the engagement of early-career researchers from Ukrainian institutions into CIVICA for Ukraine. For example, the European University Institute (EUI) has a talented pool of young doctoral researchers and postdocs who are the future leaders of European academia. Their involvement would bring a dynamic element to CIVICA's objectives.
- Facilitating contacts between researchers would provide the Ukrainian researchers with new experience, knowledge, and research opportunities. In this context, mechanisms for "plugging in" Ukrainian researchers into existing research activities should be explored and established. The European University Institute (EUI) has declared to develop a proposal to address such a need.
- Encouraging individual interactions between scholars, including junior, senior, and mid-career researchers, from Ukrainian institutions and European partner institutions. Such interactions should focus on thematically specific projects to ensure sustainability and tangible outcomes. Projects could address topics such as urban development, transparency of aid allocation, post-war recovery planning, and economic development. Projects should also connect with other initiatives at Ukrainian partner institutions, such as documentation, data gathering, and international communication on war crimes, to ensure their voices are heard in discussions.
- CIVICA partner universities can collaborate on joint proposals that unite researchers from partner and Ukrainian universities. These proposals can focus on specific issues such as democracy, autocracy, urban renewal, and more. The Alliance can seek funding for these long-term projects and involve the private sector, which benefits from such collaborations.
- Investing in local research partnerships and adapting research results to local conditions. It is important to prioritize the internationalization of research by supporting partners and tailoring research outcomes to address local needs and challenges.

- Facilitating connections between early-career researchers (ESRs) from CIVICA and Ukrainian institutions, using the potential of the young academic community.
- Integrating Ukrainian researchers into existing research activities, including conference exchanges, doctoral researcher exchanges, and professor exchanges based on specific needs and objectives.
- Developing long-term projects through concrete proposals that unite researchers from CIVICA's and Ukrainian universities, focusing on topics such as democracy, autocracy, and urban renewal, and seeking funding from the Alliance, potentially involving the private sector.

### 2.2.3. Social Actions

- Single session online or double session where students from the same course, such as History of International Relations from European and Ukrainian universities, mix in a Zoom session and participate together for 2 hours. This is highly relevant not only to support Ukraine in the short and mid-term but also to foster a sense of European identity among our students coming from France, Germany, Spain, Ukraine, and other countries.
- Online bootcamp or challenge: One-day collaborative work on specific solutions, serving as a digital accelerator for innovative ideas for students, doctoral researchers, and faculty.
- Online summer research program on post-war reconstruction: Students from various disciplines, including reconstruction and historical programs, study together to examine post-war scenarios in different parts of the world, including Spain and other conflict zones.
- Mobilizing Ukrainian alumni of European universities with the aim to build a Ukrainian community/network abroad and establish bridges to provide better support for Ukrainian universities.
- Engaging in activities with and for high school students from Ukraine. Each partner in CIVICA could engage with high school students in their communities, addressing issues of accessibility to higher education, such as through first-generation programs.
- Support for academics and students involved in civic and military support activities. Ukrainian and European partners can collaborate to offer meaningful

and long-term opportunities that ensure their academic presence, develop their capacities, and expand their international networks. This support would be valuable for their future career prospects after the war.

- Emphasize the contributions of Ukrainian partners to European societies and universities. Highlight the unique perspective of national belonging, sense of unity, and international orientation of Ukrainian colleagues. Ukrainian universities' distinct style of reacting, acting, working, and thinking can enrich European university cultures.
- Visits of Ukrainian colleagues to European universities to share their experiences, deliver talks, and meet with faculty, creating a lasting impact.
- Establishing practical strategies and actions to develop functioning connections and relationships in order to strengthen capacity-building efforts. Emphasize the importance of practical implementation.
- Discussing the possibility of sharing benchmarking results conducted in CIVICA. Explore the sharing of select results on diversity, equity, inclusion, and doctoral programs. This will facilitate learning from mistakes and effective university management during times of crisis. It is important to approach this suggestion on an individual basis at each university due to the presence of private information.

Regarding the challenge of a brain drain, it is essential to consider multiple perspectives. On one hand, it is important to respect individual liberty and freedom of choice, allowing individuals to decide their own paths. Foreign universities should welcome and support Ukrainian students and staff as refugees in need. On the other hand, European partners recognize the need to swiftly address the protection of the Ukrainian nation and commit to partnership and agreements. Engagement of students or staff within existing partnerships is a shared responsibility and serves as a guarantee for Ukrainian universities that they will return. The partnership dimension is crucial, and CIVICA's collaboration with Ukraine should continue these discussions.

## PART THREE: INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Internationalization and modernization are two pivotal factors shaping the current education policy in Ukraine. Recognizing the significance of internationalization, Ukrainian universities are striving to broaden their global presence, facilitate exchanges, and provide students, faculty, and staff with opportunities for international exposure and cooperation.

Partnerships with international higher education institutions play a vital role in the long-term and sustainable development of Ukrainian universities, particularly in the challenging times of war and the post-war period. Through strategic alliances, Ukrainian universities gain access to diverse scientific resources and engage in joint research projects. Similarly, integration into the European Research Area grants researchers from Ukraine access to leading research infrastructures. Academic mobility plays a crucial role in exchanging experiences, knowledge, and finding partners to address national and global challenges.

Within the context of internationalization, Ukrainian partners emphasize **the importance of dialogue and reciprocity in collaborative efforts**. To enhance the effectiveness and focus of this cooperation, several key considerations need to be addressed and further elaborated upon<sup>6</sup>.

**Firstly, there is need to motivate and develop a dedicated staff at the universities to engage in developing cooperation and dialog with Ukrainian partner universities.** It is vital to have dedicated personnel, ideally at least half-time, within partner institutions who focus on academic support for Ukraine. These local offices can actively push forward collaborative agendas with Ukrainian institutions. Building alliances of international officers at the level of dedicated staff is essential to ensure the sustainability of cooperation.

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<sup>6</sup> The session devoted to internationalization held during the CIVICA-Ukraine High Level Meeting focused on fundamental questions: How can EU universities (CIVICA) provide concrete support to Ukrainian universities in implementing activities that enhance their faculty, boost research, and train researchers and faculty members? What experiences do European and Ukrainian partners have with national measures, instruments, and solutions? How can these schemes and other funding instruments offered by the European Commission be utilized for partnerships and cooperation with Ukrainian universities?

Second, **capacity building through technical projects would be a key element that enable learning through practical implementation.** The emphasis should be on collaborative efforts where partners work together to build capacity, sharing knowledge and expertise. Hands-on involvement and joint problem-solving can lead to more effective outcomes.

**Partnerships must be flexible and ready to adapt their approaches to the local realities of Ukraine.** Often, projects fail when advisors or experts are unable to adjust their strategies to suit the specific conditions and challenges faced by Ukrainian institutions. It is essential for partners to understand the local context and be willing to adapt their methodologies accordingly.

Ukrainian partners may not always be aware of all the possibilities and available knowledge within international networks. Therefore, **actively informing and sharing information with Ukrainian counterparts is highly encouraged.** Providing guidance and support on various aspects, such as best practices, funding opportunities, and academic resources, can greatly benefit Ukrainian universities as well.

Ukrainian partners **seek support from foreign counterparts in disseminating accurate information about the war and its impact.** This goes beyond administrative levels and extends to student networks, conferences, webinars, and other platforms. **The focus is on raising awareness about Russia's crimes against Ukraine** and highlighting the sacrifices that Ukrainian universities and students endure in defending academic values, student interests, and democratic principles.

### **3.1. ENHANCING THE INTERNATIONALIZATION: INSTRUMENTS AND MECHANISMS**

European and Ukrainian universities have the potential **to enhance their international cooperation in three dimensions:** teaching, research, and social actions. By leveraging existing programs, fostering personal connections, and engaging with civic societies, European and Ukrainian universities can strengthen their cooperation in teaching, research, and social actions.

Regarding teaching and training, the use of Erasmus+ is recommended, but it is not advisable to prioritize online mobility before physical mobility. The existing "classical" Erasmus+ Action 1, 171 allows for student exchange and staff exchange, and it serves as a valuable mechanism to support partnerships with Ukrainian universities.



CIVICA universities should assess the current exchange programs and determine how they can be more effectively implemented.

In reference to research, policy advice, and expertise, there is room for specific projects that can be aligned with planned CIVICA activities. The crucial aspect is **the development of personal connections between European and Ukrainian researchers and faculties**, fostering engagement driven by research interests and a sense of civic responsibility for both countries and Europe as a whole. It is important **to create a space where joint ideas can be developed**.

Social actions present the most challenging area, necessitating the establishment of networks not only between EU and Ukrainian partners but also with civic societies, such as schools, businesses, and local communities. The goal is to integrate academia with practical initiatives. It is essential **to explore instruments that facilitate collaborative efforts between European and Ukrainian partners, including engagement with NGOs and the business sector**. In this process, Ukrainians should take an active role in co-creating and shaping initiatives alongside their European counterparts.

Currently, the CIVICA for Ukraine project, supported by NAWA, serves as the primary work program of the CIVICA Alliance involving Ukrainian faculty and students. Partners should focus on its implementation within the approved work program, while also considering future perspectives.

### **3.1.1. Erasmus+ mechanisms for education**

Erasmus+ KA 131 and 171 are eligible for Ukraine, with KA 171 being a particularly practical instrument. However, currently, there is some chaos and lack of clarity regarding the funding sources, making it administratively more complicated. European partners undertaking projects with Ukraine should consider the capacity issues involved.

There is a need to further explore the possibilities offered by Erasmus+. To facilitate this, a meeting with the Head of the Erasmus+ Office in Ukraine could be organized, allowing Svitlana Shytikova to update CIVICA on the goals and potential cooperation

opportunities for European universities with Ukraine. A list of suggested actions, which can be implemented, is included in the attached presentation.

It is worth noting that Erasmus+ capacity building, rather than strategic partnership, is not the most ideal instrument now. It predominantly focuses on European Union universities, with Ukrainian universities being able to participate. However, it remains a familiar option for Ukrainian partners.

### **3.1.2. Research cooperation**

Ukrainian partners can be invited to participate in a research project focused on the reconstruction of Ukraine, aiming to align activities and create synergy with other universities. Ukrainian universities may require administrative assistance in project management and identifying suitable projects, as well as in developing joint business activities. Access to reputable journals and support with publications is also crucial for Ukrainian researchers to enhance their collaboration with researchers from more advanced institutions. CIVICA can consider developing a dedicated agenda for these types of activities.

Within the *CIVICA for Ukraine* project, 20 staff visits have been planned, providing a platform to build upon and develop further steps.

## **3.2. UKRAINE'S ADDED VALUE FOR EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES**

The perception of beneficiaries in exchanges and visits should be developed in a way that not only Ukrainian researchers or students benefit, but also the host academic community and local students gain from these contacts.

Supporting two-way mobility, including virtual exchanges, is crucial. It is of great importance for young Europeans to come to Ukraine and experience the country from within, gaining a deeper understanding.

Ukraine is creating an entirely new pool of expertise for Europe in various fields such as logistics, economic rebuilding, psychological rehabilitation, and emerging trends in building civil society. Topics like dealing with ecocide, genocide, proving them in historical contexts, transforming cities, digital transformation, cyber security, and cyber warfare are areas where Ukrainian experts can provide valuable insights and assistance to European countries.

### 3.3. STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONALISATION

Staff weeks could serve as an effective instrument for capacity building and a starting point. It can be utilized to enhance practical skills, promote interpersonal interaction, and facilitate knowledge exchange. Another avenue for European universities **to consider is the implementation of new forms of short-term mobility, such as blended intensive programs involving partners from Ukraine.**

Capacity building efforts that are not solely reliant on exchanges present a constructive approach. It should be based on the specific needs of Ukrainian universities, such as research capacity building or administrative procedure improvement. Exploring EU funding opportunities for capacity building is crucial and will depend on the specific form it takes. This could involve projects focused on concrete development, training initiatives, job shadowing exchanges, or dedicated capacity building projects.

It was emphasized that capacity building should be understood in a broader context than within the scope of Erasmus+. Ukrainian partners should identify their specific needs and determine how they can be addressed. Financial instruments can then be sought accordingly, ensuring reciprocity and balance in the collaboration.

## PART FOUR: KEY RECOMMENDATION AND NEXT STEPS

### KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The report offers a comprehensive review of the possible avenues for collaboration between CIVICA and Ukrainian partner universities. These possibilities were extensively discussed during the in-person High-Level Meeting CIVICA-Ukraine in Warsaw in March 2023.

Since that meeting, interactions with Ukrainian universities across various levels and formats have been developed. Through these exchanges, both CIVICA and Ukrainian partner universities have been able to voice their needs and expectations and weigh them against potential cooperation models.

After several months of interactions, different strategies have been evaluated to strengthen ties between CIVICA universities and the Ukrainian counterparts. Addressing the needs outlined in the report, as well as those identified in other joint or bilateral discussions, will undoubtedly demand significant efforts in the months and years ahead. As a principle, plans for cooperation will be developed and executed based on available funding (including the monitoring of new opportunities) and the existing work programme of the alliance. Partners agree to implement a pragmatic approach results oriented and limit the set of recommendations to prioritise the actions.

Based on the concrete achievements obtained by CIVICA for Ukraine in 2023 and given the series of existing bilateral programmes between CIVICA members and Ukrainian universities, **the CIVICA alliance suggests to renew the approach taken for a new cycle and offer the Ukrainian partners to join CIVICA activities set out in the work programme already approved by the Commission.** This programme “CIVICA with Ukraine” will consist in **opening a series of concrete activities to students, researchers, faculty and staff from Ukrainian institutions** on a tailor-made basis for each Ukrainian partner across CIVICA’s work packages, and will contribute to addressing their needs in terms of education, training and research. Attention will be given to allow regular dialogue at senior management level and address long term

institutional cooperation on broader scope of activities in light of the European future of Ukraine.

To support this approach, an institutional framework for CIVICA with Ukraine will be designed in order to integrate the Ukrainian partners within CIVICA's organisational structure. Consequently, a key recommendation for CIVICA is to **offer the five Ukrainian partner universities to join the alliance as “associate partners” under Erasmus+.** Associate membership is proposed bilaterally (and not as a group) between each partner and CIVICA. It will strengthen solidarity with Ukrainian universities in times of war and human tragedy and **send a signal of CIVICA's commitment to the principles of democracy, freedom, and human rights.** Beyond the work programme, each Ukrainian institution will be encouraged to contribute to the activities and bring their own expertise to the alliance.

Anchoring Ukrainian partners within CIVICA institutional structure will provide a more formalised and sustainable basis for cooperation. The status of associate partner would also facilitate the acquisition of funding for the activities, particularly for European projects (primarily Erasmus+ or Horizon Europe).

CIVICA's governing bodies will decide in partnership with Ukrainian institutions how to implement the recommendation.

## ANNEX 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS OF THE FIRST CIVICA-UKRAINE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING

### Representatives of CIVICA universities:

Bocconi University (Italy): Catherine de Vries, Asia Michalak

Central European University (Austria-Hungary): Monika Jitareanu, Oleksandr Shtokvych

European University Institute (Intergovernmental institution): Sebastien Huber, Zeineb Mazouz

IE University (Spain): Krystina Dos Santos, Borja Santos-Porras

Hertie School (Germany): Sarah Lawton-Gorlach, Kai Wegrich

London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) (UK): Paul Apostolidis

SGH Warsaw School of Economics (Poland): Piotr Wachowiak, Jacek Prokop, Iryna Degtyarova, Katarzyna Kacperczyk, Małgorzata Chromy, Renata Kamińska

SNSPA (Romania): Aleksandru M. Chingiu

Sciences Po (France): Vanessa Scherrer, Aurelien Kreibich, Frank Stadelmaier

Stockholm School of Economics (Sweden): Salam Zandi

### Representatives of Ukrainian universities:

DonNU: Roman Gryniuk, Anna Osmolovska

KNEU: Viktor Chuzhykov, Olena Tsyrukun

KSE: Tymofii Brik, Oleg Nivievsky, Tatevik Marharian

NaUKMA: Orysia Demska, Marharyta Chabanna, Larysa Chovniuk

UCU: Dmytro Sherenkovskyi, Volodymyr Turchyniovskyy

### Team of CIVICA for Ukraine Project in SGH:

Iryna Degtyarova ([idegty@sgh.waw.pl](mailto:idegty@sgh.waw.pl))

Katarzyna Kacperczyk ([kkacpe@sgh.waw.pl](mailto:kkacpe@sgh.waw.pl))

Małgorzata Chromy ([mchromy@sgh.waw.pl](mailto:mchromy@sgh.waw.pl))

Renata Kamińska ([rkamins1@sgh.waw.pl](mailto:rkamins1@sgh.waw.pl))

## ANNEX 2: INFORMATION ABOUT UKRAINIAN PARTNER UNIVERSITIES IN CIVICA FOR UKRAINE PROJECT

### Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman



City: Kyiv, Ukraine

Public

Students: 13,076

PhDs/Postdocs (Dr.Sc.): 366/19

Academic staff: 792

Admin staff: 430

Degree levels: BA – MA- PhD- Dr.Sc.

Teaching languages: Ukrainian, English

Founded in 1906, Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman is a leading economic university in Ukraine. It trains more than 13,000 students in economics, business, IT, law, as well as sociology, psychology and business education at bachelor, master and doctoral levels. The mission of the university is to contribute to the development of the society by means of research, generation and dissemination of knowledge and training of competitive specialists and creative personalities. Due to thorough integration of research and education it contributes greatly to the development of the nations' future leaders and is a key part in the national innovation system.

More on the University website <https://kneu.edu.ua/>

## National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy



City: Kyiv, Ukraine

Public

Students: 4864

PhDs/Postdocs (Dr.Sc.): 194

Academic staff: 668

Admin staff: 494

Degree levels: BA - MA- PhD - Dr Sc

Teaching languages: Ukrainian, English,  
German

National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (NaUKMA) is one of most prestigious research-intensive universities in Ukraine, established in 1615 and re-established in 1991, after being closed 80 years. NaUKMA's educational philosophy is based on the student-centred, Liberal Arts approaches, with the focus on the attitudes' formation, development of a wide range of skills and competences along with the high-level professional preparation. NaUKMA has a history of introducing experimental initiatives that become models for educational reform throughout the country: NaUKMA was the first university in Ukraine to introduce 4-year Bachelor and 2-year Master Programs; NaUKMA was the forerunner of the EHEA-compliant PhD programs. Currently NaUKMA serves 4800 students and about 600 full-time and adjunct faculty members, studying, teaching, and researching at 6 NaUKMA Faculties (Computer Sciences, Economics, Humanities, Law, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences and Social Technologies) on the Bachelor, Master and PhD levels.

More on the University website <https://www.ukma.edu.ua/eng/>



## Kyiv School of Economics



City: Kyiv, Ukraine

Private

Students: 300

PhDs/Postdocs (Dr.Sc.): 0/1

Academic staff: 55

Admin staff: 25

KSE Institute (researchers): 60

Degree levels: BA - MA- MBA

Teaching languages: Ukrainian,  
English

Kyiv School of Economics (KSE) was founded in 1996 by the EERC and the Eurasia Foundation, now it is a world-class academic institution ranking among top schools in Europe. Our goal is to improve economic, business, and policymaking environments in Ukraine by raising new generations of world-class economists, governors and managers, who will become future transformational leaders. Kyiv School of Economics is the premier graduate school of economics, public policy, and management in Ukraine and one of the best economic schools in Eastern Europe. It offers programs in economics, business, and public policy & governance, as well as multiple midterm programs. KSE is also a leading institution in advocating market economy reforms in Ukraine through education, and policy research, and outreach. Since 2015, KSE has been governed by its Alumni. In 2021 KSE launches two bachelor's degree programs: Business Economics, Economics and Big Data and IT and Business Analysis.

More on the University website: [www.kse.ua](http://www.kse.ua)

## Ukrainian Catholic University



City: Lviv, Ukraine

Private

Students: 2201

PhDs/Postdocs (Dr.Sc.): 14

Academic staff: 391

Admin staff: 233

Degree levels: BA - MA- PhD

Teaching languages -

Ukrainian, English

*Our University is educating a new generation based on the leadership model of "Witness - Serve - Communicate." UCU was and remains a small university with a significant societal impact, entrepreneurial spirit and start-up approach, and therefore the main focus of our activity remains a witness (Fr. Bohdan Prach, Ph.D, Rector of UCU)*

Ukrainian Catholic University is the first and unique Catholic University in Ukraine, which educates future generations of professionals and leaders for Ukraine and the world. It is a private educational institution officially registered in 2002, but its history dates back to the 1930s. Now, UCU is a modern, innovative university that offers a wide range of high-quality bachelor's, master's, doctoral and short-term certification programs, attracts students from all throughout Ukraine and foreign countries, but the focus of the university's activity remains a witness.

More on the University website <https://ucu.edu.ua/en>

## Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University



City: Vinnytsia, Ukraine

Public

Students: 3471

PhDs/Postdocs (Dr.Sc.): 117/7

Academic staff: 272

Admin staff: 133

Degree levels: BA - MA- PhD - Dr Sc

Teaching languages: Ukrainian,

English

Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University (Vasyl' Stus DonNU) was founded in 1937. It is a public classical university, a leading scientific and educational center, and a socially responsible partner that forms the intellectual and creative potential of Ukraine. In 2014 Vasyl' Stus DonNU had to relocate to Vinnytsia because all its infrastructure in Donetsk were captured by militants from the Russian Federation. The University managed to preserve its classical structure, scientific schools, and improve its positions in rankings (1<sup>st</sup> among HEIs of Central Ukraine, 8<sup>th</sup> among classical universities of Ukraine). Vasyl' Stus DonNU comprises 6 faculties (Faculty of Chemistry, Biology and Biotechnologies, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of History and International Relations, Faculty of Information and Applied Technologies, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Philology, Psychology and Foreign Languages). The university also incorporates Educational and Scientific Institute for Academic Potential Development and has one branch located in the city of Khmelnytskyi. Vasyl' Stus DonNU offers Bachelor, Master, PhD, and Doctor of Science degrees in 77 study programs, 5 of which are double degree programs.

More on the University website <https://www.donnu.edu.ua/en/>