Cities and regions launch Alliance for Ukraine's reconstruction

PUBLISHED JUN 29, 2022
BY EUROPA

Alliance will focus on reconstruction needs of Ukrainian cities and regions, as part of the EU's and international community's long-term support for Ukraine.

The European Committee of the Regions and associations representing European cities and regions on 30 June launched the European Alliance for Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine to help Ukraine's local and regional authorities rebuild homes, schools, infrastructure and services destroyed by Russia since its invasion on 24 February. The Alliance, whose launch came just seven days after the EU's member states agreed to accept Ukraine as a candidate member, was greeted by Ukraine's Minister for Communities and Territories Development as a potential " basis for the European integration of our country ".

The Alliance was created in response to a call in April by President Volodymyr Zelenskiy of Ukraine, and with the support of Charles Michel, President of the European Council, and Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission. It will form part of the ‘Ukraine reconstruction platform’, currently being created by the Commission and by the Ukrainian government, to coordinate EU support. Plans will take further shape on 4-5 July, when Ukraine's prime minister will present his government's reconstruction strategy at the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Lugano, Switzerland.

The president of the European Committee of the Regions – Vasco Alves Cordeiro (PT/PES), member of the Regional Parliament of the Azores – said: "The Committee of the Regions stands side by side, shoulder to shoulder with our Ukrainian friends. Today, together with associations of cities and regions, we launch the European Alliance for Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine to respond to the urgency and build the future. We urge all EU cities and regions to join and demonstrate European solidarity with concrete actions."

Oleksiy Chernyshov, Ukraine's Minister for Communities and

Territories Development, told the launch event – held in a plenary session of the CoR and attended by the leaders of European territorial associations – that estimates of the damage suffered by Ukraine currently run to $195 billion (€186 billion). Around 120,000 private houses have been destroyed or damaged, and 20,000 apartment blocks have been hit, with one-third of them totally destroyed. He welcomed the alliance, saying that "such partnerships can become a basis for the European integration of our country" and declaring that "we will make every effort to entirely transform Ukrainian into a European country".

Vitaly Klitschko, Mayor of Kyiv, president of the Association of Ukrainian Cities and honorary member of the CoR, said that Ukraine "defending our right to be able to build a modern European country" and said that "we need to build a European country with European standards and that is why I thank everyone who tries to help Ukraine".

The launch was attended in person by Oleksandr Markushyn, Mayor of Irpin, one of the towns worst damaged in the early weeks of the war. Showing a video that showed the nature and scale of the damage – over 50% of the town was destroyed – he suggested that the alliance could use Irpin as a pilot project for reconstruction efforts. The Portuguese town of Cascais has already pledged to help with the reconstruction of a kindergarten.

Dario Nardella, President of Eurocities and Mayor of Florence, said: "At city level, we have long developed relationships and networks, many of which have been strengthened over recent months as we have accepted refugees and sent aid. We are ready to respond quickly to people's needs, and to plan for the future. By cooperating with many municipalities and regions through this alliance, we will help Ukrainian people get back on their feet."

María del Valle Miguélez Santiago, Vice-President of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR) and the member of the regional government of Murcia, said: "The destruction and blockade of ports in the Black and Azov seas is a global disaster. European ports are doing their best but struggling to help Ukrainian grain reach the world. With a looming food crisis, we should work together to help Ukraine’s coastal regions and their major port cities like Kherson, Mariupol, Mykolaiv and Odesa return to their central place in the world’s economy."

Jean-Claude Marcourt, President of Conference of European Regional Legislative Assemblies (CALRE), said: "On the path towards Ukraine's accession to the European project, the Ukrainian regions and cities will be able to count on the full support of CALRE, which will endeavour, in accordance with its founding declaration, to work for the defence of the principles and values of regional democracy in Europe."

Magnus Berntsson, President of the Assembly of European Regions (AER), said: "The tremendous leadership of Ukraine’s regions in the face of war are an inspiration to all of Europe – and so too will be their recovery. The AER stands with our regional partners to support Ukraine on its road to a brighter future."

Karl-Heinz Lambertz, President of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), said: "The cooperation between border regions across national boundaries has been central for European grassroots construction. As ‘laboratories of EU integration’, border regions will help contribute to accelerate Ukraine's development and incorporation into the Union."

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) is also a member of the alliance.

The European associations are, along with the CoR, core members of the alliance on the EU side, together with the Covenant of Mayors. The core Ukrainian members are the Association for Ukrainian Cities, the Ukrainian Association of District and Regional Councils, the Association of Rural and Village Councils of Ukraine, and All-Ukrainian Associations of Amalgamated Hromadas. The Alliance's founding members hope to be joined by national local-government associations and individual regions and cities, as well as public and private institutions.

The incoming Czech Presidency of the Council of the European Union plans to hold in October a major conference focused on Ukraine's reconstruction needs, ahead of the launch of the Ukraine Reconstruction Platform planned for the end of 2022. Speaking at the CoR's plenary on 29 June, Ivan Bartoš, Deputy Prime Minister for Digitisation and Minister of Regional Development, said that the reconstruction of Ukraine would be among the Czech Presidency's priorities, stating: "The stability of Ukraine is crucial for the future."

The launch is available for view on Europe by Satellite. For cutaways and interviews with Mayor Markushyn of Irpin, Councillor Irina Yarmalenko of Bucha, and with individual members of the CoR who attended the launch, please contact officer : For more information, please contact Andrew Gardner, andrew.gardner@cor.europa.eu , +32 473 843 981.

Press release distributed by Wire Association on behalf of Europa, on Jun 29, 2022. For more information subscribe and follow us.

Media Assets

Embedded Media

Visit the online press release to interact with the embedded media.

https://wireassociation.eu/newsroom/europa/releases/en/cities-and-regions-launch-alliance-for-ukraines-reconstruction-390

Europa

Newsroom: https://wireassociation.eu/newsroom/europa
Website: https://europa.eu/
Primary Email: press@europa.eu

Social Media

Twitter - https://twitter.com/EU_commission
Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanCommission
Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/europeancommission/
Linkedin - https://www.linkedin.com/company/european-commission

---