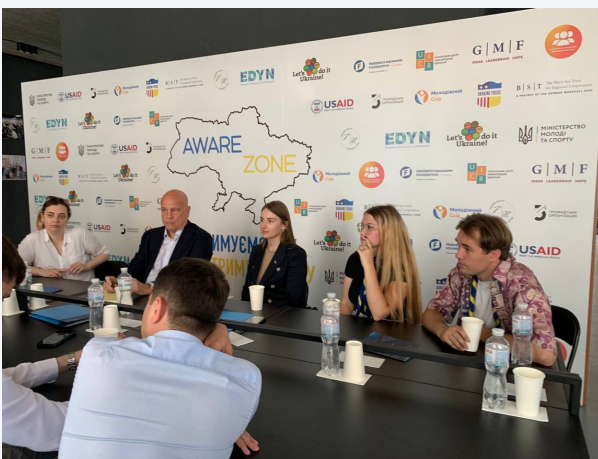


Enhancing Youth's Role in Ukraine's Reconstruction and Development: Recap of CoD Discussions with Youth Stakeholders

During their visit to Kyiv on July 3-7, 2023, Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett and CoD Youth Network Coordinator Daryna Onyshko met with a diverse group of youth stakeholders, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Youth and Sport, and youth organizations, councils, and hubs from different parts of the country. This summary outlines key strategies to empower and engage Ukrainian youth as crucial stakeholders in the country's reconstruction and development efforts mentioned by youth.

Key points

By addressing their needs for education, employment, and inclusion, Ukraine can tap into the potential of its ambitious and talented youth population. Additionally, specific attention should be given to supporting the integration of internally displaced persons and improving access to and quality of services for veterans. Simplifying bureaucratic grant procedures and supporting volunteers and young entrepreneurs are vital to fostering a vibrant and resilient society. Lastly, the return of Ukrainian youth who have experienced better living conditions abroad presents an opportunity to instigate positive change and aspire for a better future in their homeland.



Highlights and recommendations

Ukraine's post-conflict recovery and long-term development require the active involvement of its youth population. During discussions, youth representatives mentioned proposed targeted policies and initiatives that address the aspirations and needs of Ukrainian youth, positioning them as central contributors to the nation's progress. By providing opportunities for education, employment, participation, and support services, Ukraine can harness its youth's energy, creativity, and commitment toward building a prosperous and democratic future.

Education and Employment Opportunities: To encourage Ukrainian youth to return and actively contribute to the country's development post-conflict, it is crucial to create new educational and employment opportunities. Investing in quality education and vocational training programs will empower youth with the necessary skills and knowledge for personal growth and economic success. Moreover, initiatives facilitating entrepreneurship and providing temporary tax exemptions can stimulate innovation and economic development in post-conflict Ukraine.

Inclusion and Democratic Decision-Making: Youth must be included in democratic decision-making processes at all levels. Their perspectives and voices should be valued, and platforms for meaningful engagement should be established. By involving youth in policy development, their sense of effectiveness and contribution will increase, fostering a sense of ownership and commitment to the nation's future.

Integration of Internally Displaced Persons: Efforts should be made to support the integration of internally displaced persons (IDPs) within Ukrainian society. Specific programs should be developed to address their unique needs and ensure their active participation in decision-making processes. By welcoming and embracing IDPs, Ukraine can utilize their valuable skills and capacities, promoting social cohesion and regional advancement.

Improving Services for Veterans: As Ukraine's veterans transition to civilian life, the quality and accessibility of support services must be a priority. This includes expanding employment and vocational training opportunities and providing comprehensive psychosocial and physical rehabilitation services. Accessibility should be prioritized and mainstreamed in all infrastructure projects, ensuring inclusivity for veterans.

Streamlining Support for Youth Organizations: To engage youth from smaller communities, it is important to simplify administrative requirements and eliminate unnecessary bureaucratic procedures for youth organizations. Reliable Internet access should be ensured to facilitate their participation and provide information on available opportunities. These measures will enable local youth initiatives to thrive and sustain their valuable contributions.

Ukraine's youth represent a significant asset for the country's reconstruction and future prosperity. By prioritizing their education, employment, inclusion, and well-being, Ukraine can build a society that values youth participation and empowers them to shape a better version of their nation. The successful implementation of the proposed policies and initiatives will contribute to a vibrant, resilient, and democratic Ukraine that embraces its youth as key agents of change in the post-conflict era and beyond.