



ARRANGEMENT FOR COOPERATION ON HEALTH

between the European Commission and the Ministry of Health of Ukraine

Against the backdrop of Russia’s unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine, Vice-President of the European Commission for Promoting the European Way of Life, Mr Margaritis Schinas, and Ukraine’s Minister of Healthcare Mr Viktor Liasko have declared they intend to further strengthen cooperation and dialogue on health, as set out in the present Arrangement for Cooperation¹. The Arrangement has been agreed during the [15-16] June 2023 official visit of Vice-President Schinas to Ukraine.

The European Commission (hereinafter- Commission) and Ukraine recall the Association Agreement between the European Union and its Member States of the one part, and Ukraine, of the other part (the “Association agreement”)², in particular the Chapter relating to Public Health. Both sides underline the ambition of Ukraine to become a Member State of the European Union and its aim to align with the *acquis* of the European Union.

To underpin this arrangement, the European Commission and Ukraine envisages to hold **bi-annual Ministerial meetings on Health**. In 2023, the first ministerial meeting was held with Vice-President of the European Commission Schinas on 15 June 2023 in Kyiv. The second ministerial meeting is envisaged to take place in autumn 2023.

The European Commission and Ukraine acknowledge the importance of quality health care and its accessibility to the population, as well as its effectiveness, resilience to change and future challenges.

EU-Ukraine cooperation also intends to focus on both urgent and long-term health priorities from the response to the COVID-19 crisis and resilience to cross-border health threats, to Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan, the Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe and digital health.

¹ The provisions of this arrangement for cooperation express political intent and are not designed to create legal rights or obligations under international law.

² OJ L 161, 29.5.2014, p. 3

Russian aggression against Ukraine has had devastating consequences for the health of thousands of people, whilst simultaneously destroying health care facilities and systems. Since the outbreak of the war, the European Union has provided significant political, financial and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine's healthcare system, as well as support to those who had to flee the country.

The European Commission and Ukraine intend to build on the existing cooperation and past achievements, and to further develop the potential of cooperation. The European Commission and Ukraine declare their common intentions as follows:

1. **Increase mental health and psychosocial support.** The mental health and psychosocial support for displaced people coming from Ukraine and inside Ukraine is one of the priorities established by the European Commission and the Government of Ukraine. The Commission's recently adopted comprehensive approach on mental health recognises the need to increase in-person support, helplines and other service platforms by building strengthened capacities and capabilities of front-line responders and other professionals. The Commission intends to establish a training programme for people working with children to equip them with the possibility to provide trauma-informed care. The Commission and Ukraine intend to work together with the EU Member States to provide specialised rehabilitation services to distressed children in both Ukraine and the European Union.
2. **Improve access to healthcare for refugees and people displaced from Ukraine benefitting from temporary protection in EU Member States.** The Commission intends to continue to facilitate access to health services for beneficiaries of Temporary Protection in the EU by identifying and working with the EU Member States on removing legal and administrative barriers. The Commission also intends to support EU Member States to increase the ability of refugees to navigate health services in their host country and ensure that health workers in the host country are better knowledgeable of the health needs of refugees and facilitate their access to the regular health services. This is envisaged to include efforts to integrate displaced health professionals from Ukraine into their national health workforce and provide refugees with increased access to immunisation services, public health information and health promotion activities.
3. **Support repatriation and the insertion of Ukrainian patients into the social and health system – thereby strengthening the rehabilitation system in Ukraine.** The support and solidarity of the European Commission to Ukrainian patients is envisaged to continue in the future. Since June 2022, MEDEVAC patients start to be discharged from EU health care facilities. The Ukrainian Health Ministry is organising the repatriation of the patients back to Ukraine and a repatriation task force was established with the participation of 19 EU Member States to further support facilitation. A coordinated repatriation system, which incorporates MEDEVAC patients into the Ukraine's healthcare system, is implemented by the World Health Organization (WHO) since 1 January 2023 with financial support from the EU's Foreign Policy Instrument (FPI) with a budget of EUR 5 million.

4. Anticipate and assess short and medium-term health needs of Ukrainian refugees.

The European Commission, through its Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA), intends to work with Ukrainian authorities to anticipate and assess health needs of Ukrainian refugees with a focus on paediatric vaccines, treatment for tuberculosis HIV and Covid-19 vaccines, in close cooperation with WHO Europe and UNICEF, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and Global Fund to fight AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis. . A systemic discussion is envisaged to be held on Ukraine's immunisation programme and related medical countermeasure needs. The European Commission has encouraged EU Member States' national health authorities, as well as industry partners, to donate urgently needed medical supplies, including vaccines, medicines and medical equipment, through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM). The European Commission intends to further facilitate donations of medical countermeasure from the private sector in case large quantities of specific medicine are needed. In addition, the Commission intends to invite Ukraine to participate in the Joint Procurement Agreement (JPA) to procure medical countermeasures. In accordance with Article 12(3), point (a) of Regulation (EU) 2022/2371 on serious cross-border threats to health³ and the applicable procurement rules, Ukraine with its status of candidate country, could become a member of the Joint Procurement Agreement (JPA). The main goal of the JPA is to ensure equitable access and availability of medical countermeasures in the participating countries. Procuring jointly also strengthens purchasing power allowing for better contractual terms and economies of scale.

5. Enhance the work of Ukraine in rare diseases, namely in cooperation with the European Reference Networks (ERNs).

The European Commission intends to continue to support the work of the Rare Diseases Hub Ukraine (hereinafter- The hub), to enable diagnosis and treatment of Ukrainian patients with rare diseases. The hub started in June 2022 as a pilot project at Sant Joan de Déu Children's Hospital in Barcelona. Since January 2023, the hub is in the Children's Kyiv Hospital Okhmatdit and has been working in coordination with the ERNs, Commission services, and the patient organisations such as the European for Rare Organisation Diseases (EURORDIS) and supported by the Ukraine's Ministry of Health.

6. Continue funding through the EU4Health Programme.

The EU and Ukraine envisage to continue to work under the framework of the EU4Health Programme⁴, to which Ukraine has been associated following the signature of an agreement on 15 July 2022. As a result, Ukraine can access the EU4Health funding on equal footing with Member States and other associated countries. Ukraine participates in the annual programming process through its representatives in the EU4Health steering group and the programme committee, and in the implementation through its national focal point.

³ Regulation (EU) 2022/2371 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 November 2022 on serious cross-border threats to health and repealing Decision No 1082/2013/EU (Text with EEA relevance), OJ L 314, 6.12.2022, p.26

⁴ Regulation (EU) 2021/522 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 March 2021 establishing a Programme for the Union's action in the field of health ('EU4Health') for the period 2021-2027, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 282/2014, OJ L 107, 26.3.2021 p.1

Performed in Kyiv on 15 June 2023 in Ukrainian and English in two copies (one copy for each of the Parties, each of which has equal legal force).

For the European Commission,

For the Ministry of Health of Ukraine,

Margaritis Schinas
Vice-President of the European Commission
for Promoting our European Way of Life

Viktor Liasko
Minister