


**ECONOMIST  
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# Ukraine Reform Tracker:

## Social Reforms

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 **Ukraine Recovery  
Conference**  
4-5 July 2022 – Lugano, Switzerland 

# About the report

Maintaining momentum in Ukraine's ambitious reform programme will be essential to the nation's recovery after the war. With the aim of stimulating and supporting discussion on this matter at the 2022 Ukraine Recovery Conference (URC), Economist Impact presents the *Ukraine Reform Tracker*.

The *Ukraine Reform Tracker* analyses the state of reforms across four key areas: **economic reforms, environmental and energy reforms, social reforms and governance reforms** (mirroring the key themes of the 2022 URC). Economist Impact has produced a policy brief for each reform area, with an assessment of: 1) reform progress since 2014; 2) the resilience of reforms in 2022, in particular given the stresses of the ongoing war with Russia; and 3) the outlook for reform, with a focus on the role that reforms will play in facilitating Ukraine's recovery. These policy briefs are accompanied by an interactive data story that visualises the key trends in Ukraine's reform progress since 2014.

Importantly, the *Ukraine Reform Tracker* does not attempt to provide a wholly comprehensive account of every reform that has been implemented in Ukraine since 2014. Instead, the tracker focuses on the most salient components of Ukraine's reform programme, which will best support an understanding of the contribution of reform to Ukraine's past, present and future development.

# Progress since 2014

Social policy reforms are critical to developing a prosperous, democratic and open society in Ukraine. To this end, successive administrations have enacted reforms across healthcare, education and human rights, albeit with varying degrees of success. This is particularly evident in health reforms, through which the government set out to improve access, affordability and preventive healthcare. Reforms to the education system, meanwhile, included efforts to modernise the curriculum, increase the autonomy of educational institutions and extend the uptake of vocational education and training. Finally, progress in the protection of human rights, such as through initiatives to safeguard freedom of the media, played a key role in enshrining the status of democratic and pluralistic values in Ukrainian society. However, many challenges remain, and continued progress in social policy reforms will be critical to Ukraine's post-conflict recovery.



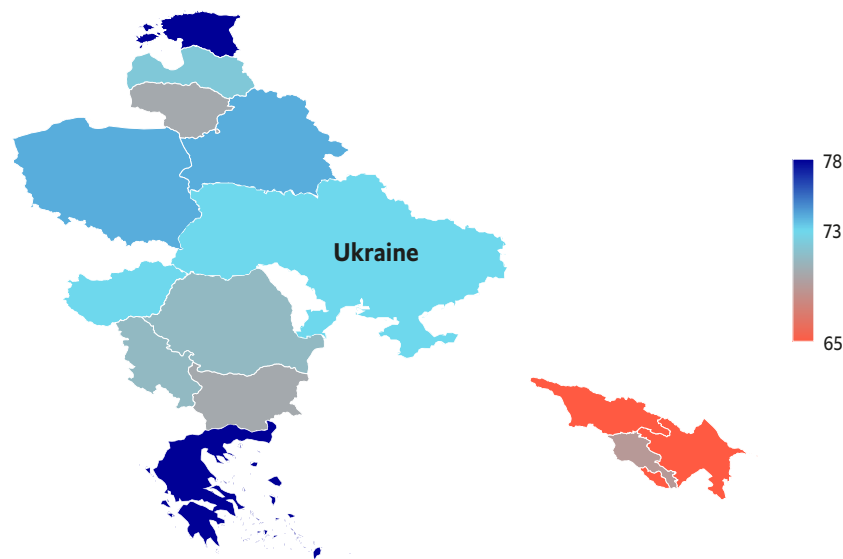
### Health

Ukraine’s healthcare reform programme was launched in 2015, with the publication of the ‘National Health Reform Strategy for Ukraine 2015–2020’.<sup>1</sup> This strategy document set out the government’s ambitions for the health system, including initiatives to remedy Ukraine’s low life expectancy (compared with other European nations), reduce the level of private expenditure on health and strengthen the role played by primary care. The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement placed additional requirements for reform; for example, with respect to infectious disease surveillance, integration of early-warning notification systems within the EU and tackling the prevalence of risk factors for non-communicable diseases (especially tobacco, alcohol and road accidents).

Ensuring that healthcare is affordable is a major priority for any healthcare system. However, high

levels of private expenditure on healthcare—particularly on medicines—have been especially concerning in Ukraine,<sup>2</sup> given their potentially catastrophic impacts on the physical and financial health of Ukrainian citizens. These high levels of household spending principally arose as a result of systemic financial inefficiencies in the healthcare sector and the high cost of pharmaceutical products. As such, the government instituted a number of reforms to remedy these issues. For example, the National Health Service of Ukraine (NHSU) was set up in 2017 to administer funds allocated for financing health services, with the goal of improving the efficiency with which healthcare funds are used.<sup>3</sup> In addition, Ukraine adopted a ‘Programme of Medical Guarantees’, which defined the basic benefits package that all Ukrainian citizens would be entitled to, including emergency care, primary care, childbirth services and palliative care.<sup>4</sup> Under this system, the NHSU was made responsible for contracting public and private

**WHO: Universal Health Care Service Coverage Index (0 to 100, 100 = good) (2019)**



<sup>1</sup> [https://healthsag.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Strategiya\\_Engl\\_for\\_inet.pdf](https://healthsag.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Strategiya_Engl_for_inet.pdf)  
<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*  
<sup>3</sup> <https://ukraineworld.org/articles/reforms/new-ukrainian-health-sare-system-scratch-successful-changes>  
<sup>4</sup> <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/704581639720587025/pdf/Ukraine-Health-Financing-Reform-Progress-and-Future-Directions-Overview.pdf>

medical providers to deliver the medical services provided under the programme. This helped to reduce the fragmentation of health financing and created a more-effective mechanism for ensuring that medical services covered by the programme would be provided for free.<sup>5</sup> The programme is due to grow further, as more specialised services are absorbed into it. In tandem with these reforms, the government introduced an 'Affordable Medicines Programme' in 2017, to reduce household spending on medicines for asthma, cardiovascular diseases, and type 2 diabetes, through the provision of free medicines for these diseases.<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, according to data from the World Health Organisation (WHO), these reforms are yet to improve the overall affordability of healthcare: in 2019, 8.3% of Ukrainians were still spending more than 10.0% of their total household budget on healthcare.<sup>7</sup> While it will likely take time for these wide-ranging reforms to fully bear fruit, their ambitiousness promises meaningful improvements in healthcare affordability in the future.

Reforms also sought to improve the quality of care provided by the Ukrainian healthcare system. For example, decentralisation reforms initiated in 2017 aimed to enhance the role played by local governments, given their more intimate understanding of the healthcare needs of their populations than the central government. To this end, hospital districts were created as the basic geographical unit of the healthcare system, to be loosely governed by

hospital councils comprising representatives from local authorities, the medical establishment and other stakeholders.<sup>8</sup> Primary care provision was strengthened through the introduction of a 'family doctor' system, which gave patients the right to choose their primary care provider—previously they were obliged to obtain free primary care from a designated site based on their registered address.<sup>9</sup> As the salary of family doctors is tied to the number of patients who register with them, this reform created strong incentives for primary care providers to offer a higher-quality service. Digital technologies were also deployed to improve the quality of healthcare provision; for example, through the use of e-referral systems for patients requiring non-emergency specialised care, as well as digital covid-19 certificates in the government's Diia application.<sup>10</sup> Encouragingly, the net effect of these reforms appears to have been a slow but consistent improvement in healthcare outcomes in Ukraine. For example, while life expectancy in Ukraine still lags behind many of its European neighbours, it has increased by almost two years since 2014 (from 70.29 to 71.96, according to the US Bureau of Census).<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, while Ukraine's infant mortality rate (7.44 per 1,000 live births in 2021) is higher than in neighbouring Romania (6% in 2020) and Poland (4.33% in 2020), it is lower than it was in 2014 (8.29%), and significantly lower than in 1991 (13.7%).<sup>12</sup> These positive trends have arisen despite a decline in the number of medical practitioners, which fell by roughly 6,000 from 2014 to 2020 (to 180,000).<sup>13</sup>

<sup>5</sup> <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/704581639720587025/pdf/Ukraine-Health-Financing-Reform-Progress-and-Future-Directions-Overview.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://en.moz.gov.ua/affordable-medicines>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/population-with-household-expenditures-on-health-greater-than-10-of-total-household-expenditure-or-income-\(sdg-3-8-2\)-\(-\)](https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/population-with-household-expenditures-on-health-greater-than-10-of-total-household-expenditure-or-income-(sdg-3-8-2)-(-))

<sup>8</sup> <https://uacrisis.org/en/52744-gospitalni-okrugy>

<sup>9</sup> <https://ukraineworld.org/articles/reforms/new-ukrainian-health-sare-system-scratch-successful-changes>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/en/news/ukrayinski-covid-sertifikati-v-diyi-oficijno-viznani-yes>

<sup>11</sup> UN Population Data

<sup>12</sup> US Bureau of Census

<sup>13</sup> Statistical Yearbook of Ukraine [http://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat\\_u/2021/zb/11/Yearbook\\_2020\\_e.pdf](http://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_u/2021/zb/11/Yearbook_2020_e.pdf)

Public health and preventive healthcare constitutes the backbone of a successful healthcare system. For Ukraine, which has historically featured among Europe's weakest performers in terms of child immunisation, this is particularly pertinent. Thanks to significant investment, Ukraine has seen huge improvements in coverage of a number of essential vaccinations since 2014, including those against measles, tuberculosis and polio.<sup>14</sup> While a latest polio vaccination campaign, due to start on 1 February 2022, has been interrupted, the government's commitment to tackling immunisation bodes well for the future of public health in Ukraine. Furthermore, to improve the quality of preventive healthcare in Ukraine, the government sought to address a number of risk factors responsible for poor health outcomes. This is essential to reduce the burden of disease amongst the Ukrainian population, as well as reduce pressure on the national healthcare system in the long term. For example, a new tobacco control law signed in January 2022 will ban the use of tobacco products in all enclosed public spaces.<sup>15</sup>

The Covid-19 pandemic tested the resilience of Ukraine's healthcare system. The government's pandemic response began with the approval of the 'Covid-19 National Action Plan' on February 3rd 2020, which made the Chief State Sanitary Doctor responsible for intersectoral coordination within the government.<sup>16</sup> The National Action Plan also laid the groundwork for the design of regional pandemic response strategies, the development of standard medical interventions against the virus and the procurement of necessary medical and diagnostic equipment. These initiatives, supported

by reforms to strengthen the accessibility and quality of healthcare, helped to prevent the Ukrainian health system's collapse under the pressures of the pandemic.<sup>17</sup> In fact, in September 2020, the World Health Organisation paid tribute to the power of Ukraine's healthcare reforms in supporting the nation's pandemic response, reporting that "the transformation of health services to ensure that patients can be tested and treated for Covid-19 free of charge is just one of the many positive steps the Ukraine Government has taken. It demonstrates the Government's commitment to Universal Health Coverage".<sup>18</sup>

## Education

Reforms to Ukraine's system of compulsory education began from a relatively strong starting point, with Ukraine performing well compared to many of its peers. This strength was recognised in the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) index. With a score of 462.7 in 2018, Ukraine outranked a number of European Union members, including Romania (428), Bulgaria (426.7) and Greece (453.3).<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, academic corruption, outdated curricula and underpaid teachers presented a major challenge to the quality of compulsory education provided to Ukrainian schoolchildren. As such, a number of government reforms sought to remedy these problems, including the adoption of a new Law on Education in 2017 and the development of 'The New Ukrainian School' programme.<sup>20</sup> These reforms devolved responsibility for education to local governments, expanded the autonomy of educational

<sup>14</sup> <https://immunizationdata.who.int/pages/profiles/ukr.html>

<sup>15</sup> <https://untobaccocontrol.org/impldb/ukraine-new-tobacco-control-law-adopted/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://eurohealthobservatory.who.int/publications/i/health-systems-in-action-ukraine>

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/ukraine-working-towards-universal-health-coverage-while-responding-to-covid-19>

<sup>19</sup> [https://www.oecd.org/pisa/publications/PISA2018\\_CN\\_UKR.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/pisa/publications/PISA2018_CN_UKR.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> <https://mon.gov.ua/eng/tag/nova-ukrainska-shkola>

**PISA Index: mean of maths, science, and reading (higher is better) (2018)**



institutions and modernised the content of compulsory education. This helped to establish a de-bureaucratized, modern compulsory education system that will more effectively equip Ukrainian schoolchildren with the skills and competencies necessary to thrive in the 21st Century.

The Covid-19 pandemic tested the resilience of Ukraine’s system of compulsory education, interrupting students’ learning process, impeding social development and interfering with the accurate assessment of learning outcomes. This challenge was compounded by deficiencies in the digital literacy of teachers and parents, who were unprepared for facilitating home-schooling online, and a widespread lack of proper equipment. Despite these challenges, the education system’s response to the pandemic was impressive. The All-Ukrainian Online School, set up by the Ministry of Education and Science, established a national e-platform for distance and blended learning for students from grades

5 to 11.<sup>21</sup> It hosted video lessons, tests and materials for independent work in 18 different subjects. The platform also provided pedagogical support for teachers, with a number of e-courses designed to help improve their digital literacy.

Higher education reforms, guided by the Bologna Process (that Ukraine joined in 2005) and the 2014 Law on Higher Education,<sup>22</sup> aimed to integrate Ukraine’s universities into the European and global educational community. In particular, reforms sought to encourage the development of innovative research, reduce corruption in higher education institutions, improve the quality of education provided to students and introduce transparent and competitive conditions for entry to universities. The Ukrainian parliament legislated for a package of measures to achieve these goals in 2017. These measures increased student involvement in the governance of universities, improved the transparency of universities’ finances, enforced term limits for university deans

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/en/news/za-pershij-misyac-roboti-platfomoyu-vseukrayinska-shkola-onlajn-skoristalisya-majze-5-mln-raziv>

<sup>22</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p\\_isn=105562](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p_isn=105562)



and presidents, introduced higher penalties for plagiarism and created a new performance-based system for university financing.<sup>23</sup> Crucially, building on a reform initiated in 2014, they also promoted greater academic autonomy, ensuring that universities could operate free from political influence. Nevertheless, despite these wide-ranging successes, significant challenges remain, particularly in aligning university curricula with the labour market, encouraging independent and digital assessments, and ensuring integrity and equality of access.

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is crucial to ensure that the skills of the workforce are well aligned to the needs of the labour market, with corresponding impacts on employment rates and productivity. Unfortunately, unlike compulsory education,

progress in TVET reforms has been relatively lacking. The TVET reform programme was launched in 2020, with the publication of the 'Concept of Modern Vocational Education 2027'.<sup>24</sup> This aimed to restructure the TVET system in Ukraine, with the goal of modernising curricula and increasing the number of students enrolling in TVET. To this end, a work-based dual training system (similar to that which exists in Germany) was recently introduced to attract more prospective students by offering educational programmes that consist of 30% theoretical instruction and 70% practical training.<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately, despite this reform agenda, TVET remains unpopular amongst young Ukrainians. In fact, while 182,000 Ukrainians graduated from TVET institutions in 2014, this figure dropped to just 112,400 in 2021.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> <https://wenr.wes.org/2019/06/education-in-ukraine>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/en/reformi/rozvitok-lyudskogo-kapitalu/reforma-osviti>

<sup>25</sup> <https://wenr.wes.org/2019/06/education-in-ukraine>

<sup>26</sup> State Statistics Service of Ukraine. [https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ukrstat.gov.ua%2Foperativ%2Foperativ2022%2Fosv%2Fosv\\_rik%2Fzpto\\_90\\_21\\_ue.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ukrstat.gov.ua%2Foperativ%2Foperativ2022%2Fosv%2Fosv_rik%2Fzpto_90_21_ue.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)

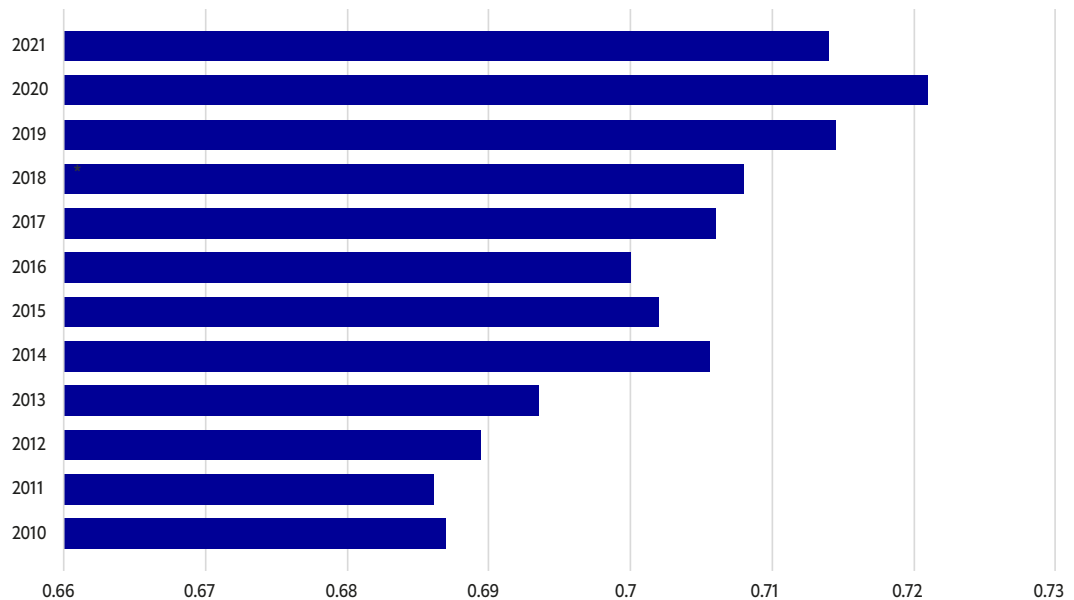


### Human Rights

Safeguarding Ukrainian citizens’ human rights and civil liberties is key to the nation’s development as a modern, democratic state. In particular, Ukraine made significant progress in assuring the development of a vibrant civil society, which enjoyed increasing freedom to criticise the government and vested political interests. Encouraging reforms included the cancellation of a requirement for anti-corruption activists to submit asset declarations, which opponents argued unjustly interfered with their ability to carry out their work.<sup>27</sup> In fact, the 2020 edition of the Civil Society Organisation(CSO) Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia argued that non-government organisations (NGOs) in Ukraine were among the most stable and effective in the region.<sup>28</sup>

The government also instituted a number of reforms safeguarding freedom of the media in Ukraine. This is especially pertinent given the difficult balance that exists between promoting media freedom and protecting against the destabilising impact of Russian disinformation campaigns. To enhance media freedoms, several sets of laws have been passed since 2014 related to media transparency (introducing detailed definitions of ownership and interest in media companies, alongside financial disclosure requirements for owners), access to public information and open data (facilitating more detailed investigative journalism) and the protection of journalists.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, Suspilne—an independent public broadcaster—was established in 2017, with an emphasis on objectively reporting news stories with care, accuracy and transparency.<sup>30</sup>

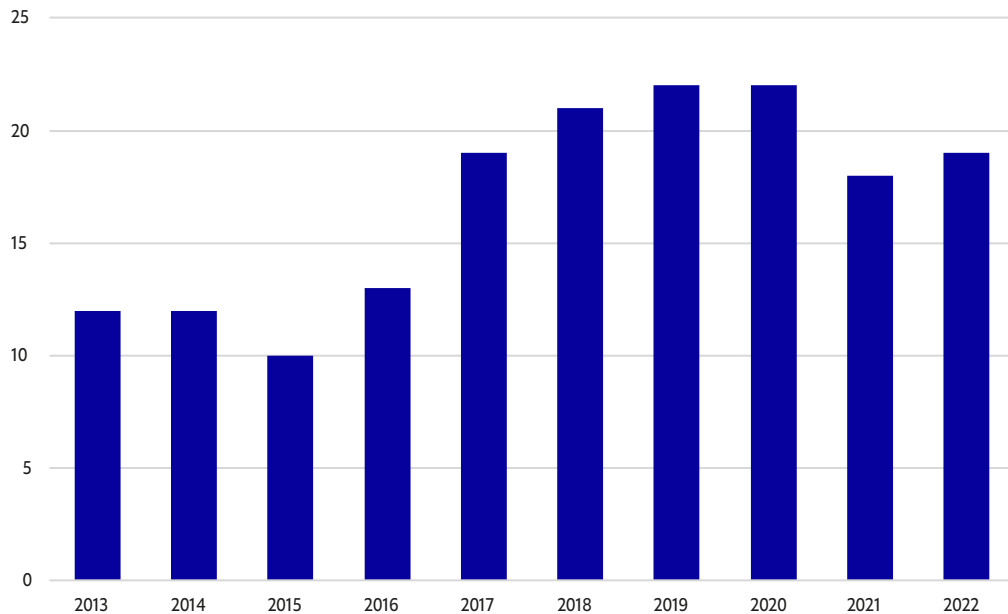
### World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report (0 to 1, 1 = good)



\*No data published for 2019, straight line average applied as Economist Impact estimate.

<sup>27</sup> <https://freedomhouse.org/country/ukraine/freedom-world/2022>  
<sup>28</sup> [https://storage.googleapis.com/cso-si-dashboard.appspot.com/Reports/CSOSI-Europe\\_and\\_Eurasia-2020.pdf](https://storage.googleapis.com/cso-si-dashboard.appspot.com/Reports/CSOSI-Europe_and_Eurasia-2020.pdf)  
<sup>29</sup> <https://www.razomforukraine.org/projects/policyreport/media-in-ukraine/>  
<sup>30</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/bbcmediaaction/entries/aa372ddf-659b-4d14-bc8b-a38e96ed6fca>

**ILGA Europe- Rainbow Europe Index (0 to 100, 100 = good)**



Unfortunately, while the media landscape in Ukraine has improved since 2014, the majority of media companies remain owned or influenced by political and vested interests.<sup>31</sup> Freedom of the media also continues to be threatened by attacks against journalists, which remain relatively frequent compared with other democratic European countries: according to Ukraine’s National Union of Journalists, roughly 100 Ukrainians employed in the media industry were physically assaulted in 2021.<sup>32</sup> In 2019, Vadym Komarov—a journalist known for his coverage of corruption in Ukraine—died in hospital after being attacked by an unidentified assailant.<sup>33</sup>

The Ukrainian government instituted reforms to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women,

including through its accession to the Biarritz partnership in 2020.<sup>34</sup> In particular, Ukraine made significant progress in tackling gender-based violence, following the government’s 2019 pledge to eradicate it by 2030.<sup>35</sup> The government sought to realise this commitment by establishing new funding initiatives to help local governments fund support services, as well as by ensuring access to legal aid for survivors of violence. Nevertheless, broader progress toward gender equality has been slow. According to the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap report, Ukraine’s progress in gender equality has stagnated. In 2021, Ukraine’s score of 0.714 placed it 74th globally, below Belarus, Georgia and Moldova (but above Russia).<sup>36</sup>

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.razomforukraine.org/projects/policyreport/media-in-ukraine/>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2022/02/ukraine-media-fight-battles-on-all-sides/>

<sup>33</sup> <https://cpj.org/2019/06/ukrainian-journalist-vadym-komarov-dies-six-weeks/>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/-/status-of-a-member-of-the-biarritz-partnership-is-another-chance-for-ukraine-to-achieve-equality-in-ensuring-rights-and-opportunities-for-men-and-wome>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.unfpa.org/news/ukraine-steadfast-tackling-gender-based-violence-despite-pandemic-related-increases>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2021>



The extent to which marginalised groups are protected from discrimination is a crucial consideration when evaluating the status of human rights in Ukraine. The ‘National Strategy for Barrier-Free Environment in Ukraine until 2030’, adopted in 2021, aims to enhance inclusion of marginalised and vulnerable groups in Ukrainian society, including the elderly, young people, people with disabilities, and people with infant children.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, in October 2021, the President signed a law that legally defines and combats antisemitism, including through prohibition of denial of the Holocaust.<sup>38</sup> In the years since 2014, Ukraine has established a

number of initiatives targeted at safeguarding the rights of the LGBTQ population in Ukraine. These include a 2015 amendment of the Labour Code to ban sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination at work<sup>39</sup> as well as the provision of police protection for gay pride parades in Kyiv, Odesa and Kharkiv.<sup>40</sup> However, as indicated by Ukraine’s ranking in ILGA Europe’s Rainbow Europe Index, this progress stagnated in recent years.<sup>41</sup> For example, while Ukraine’s Parliament registered bills that propose protection from hate crimes on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity, these have not yet been passed.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.undp.org/ukraine/press-releases/cabinet-ministers-ukraine-adopts-national-strategy-barrier-free-environment-ukraine>

<sup>38</sup> <https://freedomhouse.org/country/ukraine/freedom-world/2022>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/11/17/dispatches-ukraine-bans-anti-lgbt-discrimination-work>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.dw.com/en/ukraine-holds-its-biggest-ever-gay-pride-parade/a-49319080>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.ilga-europe.org/rainboweurope/2021>

<sup>42</sup> <https://gay.org.ua/en/blog/2020/05/12/ukraine-new-lgbti-hate-crime-bill-is-real-test-for-european-commitment/>

# Resilience in 2022

## Health

The Russian invasion placed significant pressure on Ukraine's healthcare system, which was still dealing with the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic prior to the war. In particular, the war inflicted significant damage on physical infrastructure and severely restricted access to quality healthcare and medicines in those areas most exposed. Many healthcare facilities have been destroyed by Russian attacks, while the distribution of critical medical supplies has become difficult due to damaged transport infrastructure. On April 7th, the WHO recorded the hundredth Russian attack on healthcare since the start of the war, including attacks on both hospitals and ambulances.<sup>43</sup> Preventative healthcare and public health measures have understandably been de-prioritised during the conflict, with potentially devastating impacts on vaccination rates for polio and other diseases.<sup>44</sup>

However, the healthcare system exhibited substantial resilience despite these challenges. The reformed health financing system, through the NHSU, enabled rapid distribution of funds from the government to individual providers. Many healthcare providers saved sufficient financial resources to manage cash flow issues, while additional hospital capacity helped to

compensate for destroyed facilities. Changes to Ukraine's primary care system allowed patients to access health services no matter where they were registered prior to the war and consolidation of the health workers movement meant that doctors were able to advocate for policies that allowed them to continue working, despite their temporary displacement during the war.

## Education

The war has also had a highly damaging impact on Ukraine's educational system. As of May 21, more than 1000 educational institutions had been destroyed by the Russian army, and many others have been closed.<sup>45</sup> As the war continues, more than 13,000 schools have instituted remote learning,<sup>46</sup> given the danger posed by the conflict, as well as the volume of children and teachers who have been forced to flee abroad. Meanwhile, schools have been repurposed to serve as shelters for orphans and internally displaced persons, presenting an obstacle to their reopening.<sup>47</sup> Further development and reforms of the educational system, such as the opening of new TVET Education and Practice Centres, have been suspended. The impacts of these disruptions to the provision of education across all levels are likely to be felt for years to come.

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.who.int/news/item/07-04-2022-who-records-100th-attack-on-health-care-in-ukraine>

<sup>44</sup> <https://time.com/6155963/polio-ukraine-war/>

<sup>45</sup> [https://edition.cnn.com/europe/live-news/russia-ukraine-war-news-05-21-22/h\\_5b2d3c517f58feb4f99dbcdc221bfdbf](https://edition.cnn.com/europe/live-news/russia-ukraine-war-news-05-21-22/h_5b2d3c517f58feb4f99dbcdc221bfdbf)

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/13/world/europe/ukraine-schools-war.html>

<sup>47</sup> <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/ceid/2022/04/27/how-do-we-count-the-education-impacts-of-the-war-in-ukraine/>

Fortunately, however, the All Ukrainian School Online platform developed during the covid-19 pandemic has played a major role in supporting the resilience of the education system. Containing over 2,200 video lessons, tests and self-learning materials, the platform facilitated the continuation of compulsory education, despite school closures. Pedagogical materials have also been translated into numerous languages (including German, Polish, Hungarian and English), to help teachers across Europe facilitate the education of Ukrainian children who have been forced abroad.<sup>48</sup>

## Human Rights

The Russian invasion undermined Ukrainians' ability to exercise their civil liberties, including freedoms of expression and the media. Journalists currently operate under the risk of substantial physical harm, with multiple individuals having been killed since the start of the war.<sup>49</sup> The Russian invasion also forced the temporary curtailment of Ukrainians' economic, social and cultural rights more broadly. While the imposition of martial law is legitimate in the context of the war, it has placed significant restrictions on Ukrainians' rights. For example, on March 20th, the Ukrainian President signed a decree that combines all national television channels into one platform, to implement a 'unified information policy'.<sup>50</sup> Similarly, in April, the State Special Communications Service cut digital broadcasting by the three biggest opposition TV channels—Espresso, Priamyi and Channel 5.<sup>51</sup> In May, the Ukrainian Parliament passed the first reading a draft law on protecting the honour and dignity of

police officers and servicemen, which introduces liability for the public insult of police officers, military or border guards.<sup>52</sup> Finally, while under martial law there has not been a general ban on peaceful assemblies, however local military administrations may prohibit assembly, and, in reality, they have been completely prohibited during curfews and in areas of hostilities.<sup>53</sup>



<sup>48</sup> <https://mon.gov.ua/eng/news/presentation-ukrainian-online-school-use-abroad>

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-60729276>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/citing-martial-law-ukraine-president-signs-decree-combine-national-tv-channels-2022-03-20/>

<sup>51</sup> <https://global.esspreso.tv/monomathon-why-did-the-authorities-disable-channel-5-priamyi-and-esspreso>

<sup>52</sup> <https://ccl.org.ua/en/news/why-protect-police-officers-from-insults-in-wartime-in-ukraine/#:~:text=Why%20protect%20police%20officers%20from%20insults%20in%20wartime,martial%20law%2C%20although%20it%20is%20unrelated%20to%20it.>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/ukraine-military-orders-38-hour-curfew-southern-zaporizhzhia-city-says-official-2022-03-19/>

# Outlook

Ukraine's emergence from the current conflict will present a unique opportunity for progress in the social sphere. Across health, education and human rights, the Ukrainian government has the opportunity to build on pre-conflict reform progress, as well as remedy areas that have experienced stagnation or regression.

## Health

The survival and recovery of Ukraine's healthcare system will be critical in assuring the nation's social and economic prosperity post-conflict. To this end, the continuation of Ukraine's pre-war healthcare reform programme will be essential. In particular, this programme of reform will depend upon effective coordination between national institutions (such as the Ministry of Health and the NHSU) and local self-governments within the framework of a decentralised healthcare system. The importance of decentralisation reflects the diversity of impacts of the war on different regions of the country, as well as the need to respond with agility to changing health needs, which include the ongoing repercussions of the covid-19 pandemic, and mitigate longstanding inefficiencies within the healthcare system.

A priority target for future healthcare reforms will be the reconstruction and expansion of primary healthcare facilities across the country. This is in part due to the significant damage to physical infrastructure and primary healthcare facilities that the war has inflicted on Ukraine. However, it also reflects a continuation of the pre-war

healthcare reform programme, which sought to increase the quality of healthcare provided by strengthening the role of primary healthcare providers (including through family doctors, general practitioners and paediatricians).

The re-establishment of effective primary healthcare provision across the country will be critical in tackling a number of healthcare challenges that Ukraine will face after the conflict. These include reducing the prevalence of behavioural risk factors amongst the population (such as smoking, alcohol consumption and poor diet) and tackling localised areas of poor vaccination coverage (particularly for polio, measles and tuberculosis). Furthermore, as part of the expansion of primary healthcare, an accelerated rollout of mental health and rehabilitation services across the country will be crucial in remedying longstanding deficiencies in access to adequate care for those suffering from mental illness.

Finally, Ukraine will need to build on its pre-war progress in improving the affordability of healthcare. Ukraine's 'Affordable Medicines Programme', introduced in 2017, allowed for rapid improvements in the affordability of medicines to treat cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and asthma; future reforms should seek to further improve access to a broader range of pharmaceutical products. This will play a key role in improving healthcare outcomes and reducing out-of-pocket healthcare expenditure, which remains a particular problem for poorer Ukrainians.

## Education

Prior to the conflict, Ukraine introduced wide-ranging reforms to its compulsory education system, as set out in the 2017 Law on Education. Completion of this reform programme, as well as significant financial investment in restoring damaged educational facilities, will be crucial to the recovery of the education system post-conflict. In fact, school curricula will likely need to be reviewed in light of refugees' experiences of education systems abroad (which are often more inter-disciplinary and practice oriented), with a likely growth in demand for similar approaches in Ukraine. The government should also seek to prioritise the development of profession-oriented secondary schools (grades 10 to 12), with a view to improving the employability of school graduates. This phase of the reform programme will require large public investments in creating new educational and municipal infrastructure, developing new educational content and retraining teachers.

Similarly, the Ukrainian government will need to resume reform of technical vocational education and training (TVET), as set out in Ukraine's 'Concept of Modern Vocational Education 2027', which was interrupted by the conflict. This process will include the establishment of new multi-functional TVET centres, equipped with modern facilities and curricula as well as the reconstruction of destroyed TVET institutions. It will also require the government to encourage public-private partnerships within the framework of a dual TVET system, which was in the process of being introduced before the war. Successful implementation of this reform is key to ensuring that Ukraine's education system is well aligned with labour market needs, to improve productivity and long-term economic growth.

## Human Rights

Ukraine made significant progress in protecting the human rights of its citizens, including through advancements in freedom of the media as well as the introduction of legal protections for marginalised groups. However, some regression has been apparent as a result of the current conflict. While some restrictions to human rights in the context of the war are legitimate—and necessary—Ukraine needs to ensure that as soon as circumstances allow, these restrictions end. In particular, the Ukrainian Parliament will need to use its oversight function to hold the government accountable for reinstating these rights following the end of martial law.

To demonstrate its strong commitment to safeguarding civil liberties, the government will have an opportunity to institute measures that expand the freedom of assembly beyond what existed before the war. These measures include adopting legislation that clearly defines the duties and responsibilities of local authorities and the police during peaceful assemblies, providing adequate security for public assemblies throughout Ukraine, ensuring the protection of participants irrespective of their political views, providing law enforcement personnel trained in handling rallies and protests in line with international human rights standards and conducting effective investigations of incidents where violence or the threat of violence have been used to suppress the freedoms of association and peaceful assembly.

Finally, it is essential to emphasise that Ukraine must adopt an inclusive and participatory approach to recovery, with the full involvement of diverse stakeholders from civil society. Reparations will constitute a key part of this process. As such, it is vital that the victims of crimes that have occurred during the war are listened to when designing the content of Ukraine's recovery programme, and plans for its implementation.

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