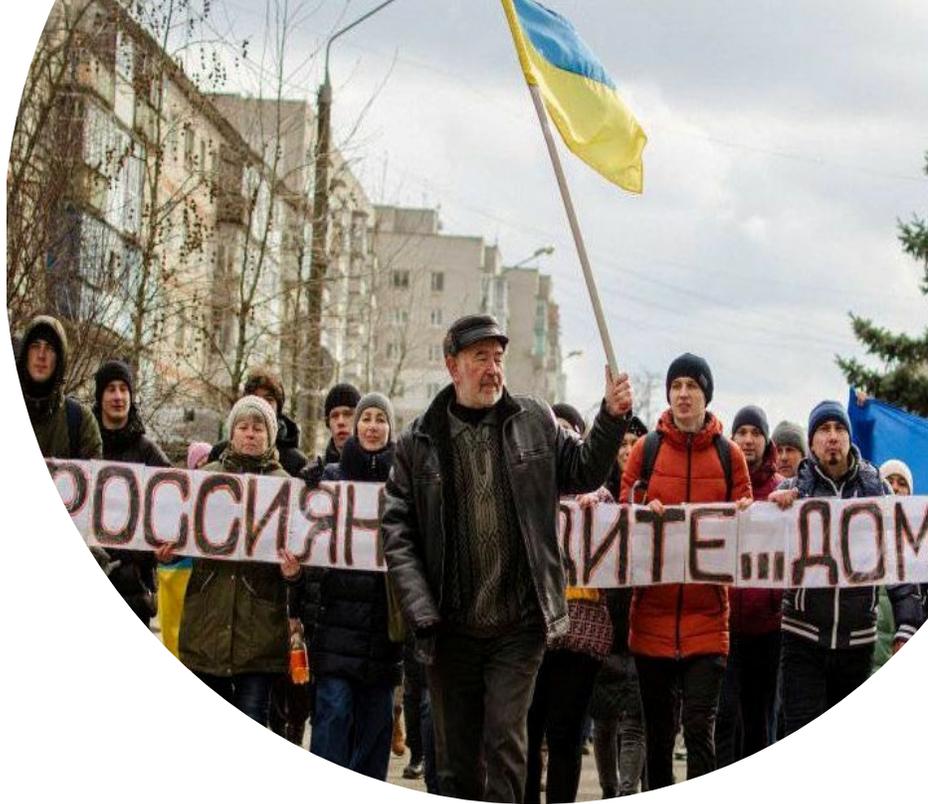




**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



# RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

## OVERVIEW

Stronger rule of law institutions and human rights protections are critical for Ukraine’s continued development as an independent, democratic, and prosperous country, pursuing deeper integration with its European neighbors. Progress in these areas is particularly threatened by Russia’s full-scale invasion, which aims to erase three decades of democratic progress and in which members of Russia’s armed forces have committed grave human rights abuses and war crimes, including attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure. Human rights abuses have been a significant challenge since 2014, prior to the current phase of the war, most notably due to Russia’s attempted annexation of Crimea and its support for the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine and have intensified since.

USAID support for the rule of law and human rights in Ukraine focuses on increasing judicial independence, accountability, and transparency while responding to the human rights challenges arising from Russia’s military aggression against Ukraine and the attempted annexation of Crimea. The work has promoted an effective, transparent, and independent judiciary, strengthened Ukraine’s efforts to reduce and deter corruption, supported the Government of Ukraine’s “lawfare” against the Russian Federation, and helped ensure justice for conflict-affected civilians.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Help Ukraine establish an effective, transparent, and independent judiciary.
- Reduce corruption in Ukraine’s judicial institutions.
- Promote inclusive, people-centered justice that protects the equal rights of all of Ukraine’s citizens equally.
- Respond to the human rights crisis resulting from Russia’s military aggression against Ukraine and occupation of Crimea, help conflict-affected civilians pursue justice, advocate for accountability for grave human rights abuses and war crimes, strengthen domestic human rights law capacity, and help preserve historical memory of these tragic events.

## OUR ACTIVITIES

### Justice for All

USAID works closely with Ukrainian counterparts to: (1) strengthen the independence, accountability, and effectiveness of Ukraine's justice systems and institutions; (2) enhance the accessibility and quality of people-centered justice services; and (3) equip and empower civil society and active citizens to hold the justice system and justice services accountable and advocate for meaningful judicial reform. The Justice for All activity supports a network of seven community justice centers across Ukraine that provide legal aid to internally displaced persons. Under the activity, USAID is supporting Ukraine's Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Office of the Prosecutor General to more effectively respond to legal and human rights issues stemming from Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The activity also includes technical assistance to key Ukrainian rule of law institutions including the Legal Reform Commission under the President of Ukraine, the Ethics Council, the Selection Commission, the Supreme Court, and the High Anti-Corruption Court (HACC). This assistance supports capacity building and implementation of key reforms, including Ukraine's Strategy on the Development of the Justice System and Constitutional Proceedings for 2021 to 2023.

### Human Rights in Action

USAID promotes stronger human rights protections in Ukraine through a partnership with the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union (the "Helsinki Union"), a coalition of 26 domestic human rights organizations. USAID assistance supports the Helsinki Union's efforts to strengthen accountability for human rights abuses, crimes against humanity, and war crimes arising from Russia's aggression against Ukraine, including the full-scale invasion launched in February 2022. This work includes: (1) human rights monitoring and advocacy; (2) strategic litigation; (3) awareness raising and citizen empowerment regarding human rights issues; and (4) legal assistance to survivors of torture, war crimes, and conflict through 22 legal aid centers located across the country. The Helsinki Union also partners with the two domestic coalitions, the Ukraine 5AM Coalition, and the Global Initiative "Breaking the Vicious Circle of Russia's Impunity for Its War Crimes" (Tribunal for Putin) to collect evidence of human rights abuses, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, and work with domestic and international institutions to bring the perpetrators to justice. Since 2014, Human Rights in Action has helped Ukraine protect the rights of more than 26,000 conflict-affected persons and train more than 2,000 legal practitioners and human rights activists. It also supported the Government of Ukraine in standardizing documentation of human rights abuses as well as launching both the National Center for Peacebuilding and the Crimea Platform.

### Countering Trafficking in Persons

USAID is working in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Government of Ukraine, and local civil society organizations (CSOs) to counter trafficking in persons and support a sustainable, nationwide response to the issue. USAID's work in this area has the following key objectives: 1) promote an effective state-led counter-trafficking response at the national and local levels; 2) enhance efforts to mitigate the risks of trafficking, gender-based violence (GBV), and children's vulnerability to rights violations, while responding to the increased vulnerabilities caused by Russia's aggression; and 3) increase access to comprehensive and sustainable assistance as well as economic opportunities for survivors of trafficking and GBV, migrants subject to violence, children with limited access to rights, as well as vulnerable internally-displaced persons and others affected by conflict. Notably, USAID's efforts to counter trafficking in persons includes funding for the Medical Rehabilitation Center in Kyiv, which treats trafficking and GBV survivors. The center's operations are critical amid Russia's full-scale invasion and the trauma it has inflicted on communities near Kyiv. The center can provide housing and care for up to 24 persons at any given time and is staffed by a psychologist, psychotherapist, gynecologist, and nurse.

### Ukraine Civil Society Sectoral Support

USAID launched the Ukraine Civil Society Sectoral Support activity in 2019 to build the capacity of Ukraine's civil society organizations and improve the legal environment in which they operate. The activity is implemented by the Initiative Center to Support Social Action (ISAR) Ednannia in consortium with the Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research (UCIPR), and the Center for Democracy and Rule of Law (CEDEM). Since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion, the activity has provided rapid response grants to nine local CSOs, enabling them to support internally-displaced persons, provide legal assistance to people in need, and raise funds for much-needed food and medicine.