



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council No. 1342 Vienna, 28 October 2021

#### **EU Statement in response to the report by the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine, Ambassador Henrik Villadsen**

1. The European Union warmly welcomes Ambassador Henrik Villadsen to the Permanent Council and reiterates its firm support for the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine. We thank you for the report and for all the work that your Mission has carried out since your last appearance at the Permanent Council in June. We highly value your persistent support to the reform process in Ukraine, in particular against the background of multiple challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's continuous acts of aggression, which have resulted in the fact that substantial parts of the country are currently outside government control.
2. We note with satisfaction that thanks to the mitigating measures taken and the high level of flexibility and adaptability of your staff, your programmatic work continued without interruption despite the Covid-19 pandemic. We applaud your well-calibrated response to the pandemic and the broad use of digital tools, including web-based courses. This has allowed you to achieve, by the beginning of this month, an outstanding implementation rate of 75%.
3. The EU and Ukraine's shared commitment to strengthening the reform process in Ukraine was reaffirmed during the 23rd EU-Ukraine Summit held in Kyiv on 12 October. This includes continued close cooperation to strengthen the rule of law, advance reforms, foster sustainable economic growth, support the green and digital transitions and increase resilience.

4. The EU welcomes the PCU's continued focus on strengthening democracy and good governance in Ukraine. In particular, we would like to thank the PCU for its assistance in the implementation of the new National Strategy Promoting the Development of Civil Society in Ukraine and the decentralisation reform.
5. Equally, we highly value PCU's activities aimed at promoting a culture of dialogue in Ukraine. We welcome in this regard, that during the reporting period, the PCU has trained 204 civil servants in dialogue skills and has provided input to the Guide on Civil Service Culture prepared by the National Agency of Civil Service.
6. Providing support to constitutional and judicial reforms, strengthening the rule of law and the protection of human rights in Ukraine should also remain a focus of the PCU. We welcome the launch of the work of the High Anti-Corruption Court. We underline the importance of accelerating and reinforcing reform efforts, in particular on the judiciary and in the fight against corruption, ensuring strong and independent anti-corruption institutions and in the field of media freedom.
7. The EU welcomes the PCU's work on gender equality and gender mainstreaming, both, internally, in policies, procedures, working environment and externally in terms of concrete projects and activities. We also note with satisfaction the important role of gender-related topics in the PCU outreach and publicity work.
8. The EU welcomes your initiatives aimed at combatting domestic violence and informing Ukrainian citizens on the risks related to trafficking in persons. The support to the Ukrainian government in preventing and combating these phenomena, exacerbated by the ongoing pandemic, is appreciated.
9. We are saddened to read in your report about how the civilian population, including children, suffer from the ongoing conflict. In this context, we welcome your efforts on mine action, combatting illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and your support to environmental rehabilitation in the conflict zone. We note, in particular, the project donating educational material to schools in eastern Ukraine, including the use of 3D mock-up boards of realistic mines and other explosives to enhance mine awareness among the youngest.
10. We are pleased about the importance you attach to coordinating with other OSCE structures, in particular with the Special Monitoring Mission and welcome coordination with the EU Advisory Mission in Ukraine.

11. In conclusion, we wish the Project Coordinator and his team all the best in their future work.

The Candidate Countries the REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, and ALBANIA\*, the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

\* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.