

Annex to the Application Form

Relevant Call: GGC01 / Good governance and cross-border cooperation

Cross-border cooperation activities plan

Applicant name:	Združenie miest a obcí Slovenska (ZMOS) Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia
Project title:	"Cross-border cooperation for Ukraine and Slovakia - CBC4US"

1. Briefly describe the activities aimed at fostering institutional cross-border cooperation with Ukraine. Stay focused on:

- *main focus of the activity and its implementation,*
- *involvement of the Slovak and Ukrainian public entities in the project's activities,*
- *measures taken in order to foster institutional cross-border cooperation with Ukraine,*
- *sustainability of the intended results.*

Project activities foster institutional cross-border cooperation with Ukraine in almost a full range, primary the activity 1, 2 and 3. **The first activity** will focus on transfer of best practices from Slovakia, V4 countries and Norway in various areas of local government's competencies and activities with emphasis on linking innovative or smart solutions based on approach of good governance, integrity and responsibilities. These approaches applying in local government's competencies and activities will be the key intention of the project activity. The activity will focus on following **topics: accessibility of public services in regions, transparency, civic participation, raising confidence in local government through participatory mechanisms, participatory legislation, responsible / transparent budgeting / civic budget, register of public sector partners as a tool to increase transparency and combat corruption, GDPR, territorial social responsibilities, principles of Good Governance.**

Cross-border implementation of the activity will allow following structure:

- 1. Survey** on local needs on a selected sample of Ukrainian municipalities with an aim to map the needs of self-governments from above mentioned topics. The survey will conduct and evaluate partner 1 (AUC). Survey is in Ukrainian language.
- 2. Six workshops** on topics resulted from survey with an aim to share experiences from Slovakia, other V4 countries and Norway.
- 3. Six Methodological Assistance Manuals** will correspond to the content and topics of the workshops. Each workshop and manual will be endorsed by two experts from Slovakia and will reflect on the OECD Council's recommendations on public integrity. Norwegian experts will also serve as consultants on manuals thematically related to two workshops. The manuals will be reviewed by 1 expert from Ukraine. The scope of each manual will be 10-15 pages. Experts will draw up manual in English and will be translated into Ukrainian.
- 4. Two professional conferences** on modernization processes in local governments. Conferences will be thematically focused based on needs resulting from survey.

The second activity also includes cross-border dimension and will focus **on transfer of knowledge and experience of public administration reform processes** based on approaches of good governance, integrity and transparency and with an emphasis on the level of local government - future **development of local governments, local government governance and future reform steps that the central government needs to adopt from the perspective of local government.**

Cross-border implementation of the activity will allow following structure:

- 1. Two roundtables** as a social dialogue between different representatives from the local and national level aimed at presenting and negotiating AUC needs and requirements in this area. Based on the Slovakian experiences, roundtable facilitates a social dialogue between central government and local government in Ukraine - as a key prerequisite for strategic planning, improving the performance and quality of services provided to citizens by local authorities.
- 2. A strategic document** will focus on EU standards in this area in order to prepare Ukrainian local governments for EU accession process. The strategic material of approx. 100 pages will be elaborated on the basis of Slovak experience (including V4 expertise) in the modernization of local self-government. Its preparation will be facilitated by approx. 5 experts from Slovakia and Ukraine, the material will be translated from English into Ukrainian and the project applicant (ZMOS) will be in charge of its elaboration.

The third activity will focus on strengthening of cross-border cooperation at local level in order to promote visibility of the cross-border program (ENI Hungary - Slovakia - Romania - Ukraine), EEA and Norway Grants, Vysegrad Funds+, transnational EU programs (Danube and Central), SlovakAid and other available grants for cooperation with Ukraine and will present examples of good practice from the programs. The activity will also concentrate on exchange of experience from drawing pre-accession funds, combating corruption, public procurement process, protection of whistle-blowers, exploiting cross-border potential and support for building partnerships between municipalities, cities, regions and non-governmental organizations. The target group of the activity will be mayors, local government representatives, students and university professors.

Cross-border implementation of the activity will allow following structure:

- 1. Two one-day events organised during the "Days of Ukraine" in Košice (SK)** creates space for thematic blocks and will include a significant topic for local government such as preparing the Ukrainian municipalities for pre-accession funds, the EEA and Norway financial mechanisms and other EU programs, etc.
- 2. Two almanacs** from each event that will include presentations, discussions and conclusions and will be available on the project website. Almanac will be prepared by a partner 3 (Association FEMAN).
- 3. Two Newsletters in Slovakia** - monitoring the calls for proposals from different mentioned financial mechanisms on cross-border cooperation for Slovak local governments in order to enhance their participation in different financial mechanisms on cross-border cooperation. The activity will be coordinated by ZMOS in cooperation with Association FEMAN.

Newsletter we can consider for measure, which will foster the cross-border cooperation with Ukraine. In Newsletter actual calls for proposals on cross-border cooperation will be published which allow local governments from Slovakia to submit a proposal for a common project. After the project implementation we consider to continue in publishing the Newsletters as well as make efforts to look for available financing to organise one-day event during the **"Days of Ukraine" in Košice (SK)**.

2. Briefly describe the best practices in the field of transparency to be transferred from Slovakia to Ukraine. Stay focused on:

- *description of the best practices to be transferred,*
- *the way of the best practices transfer,*
- *competency and appropriateness of the implementing institutions as regards the best practices,*
- *necessity, usefulness and benefits of the best practices transfer for Ukraine,*
- *compliance with the aim of the programme,*
- *the innovative aspects of the best practices transfer for Ukraine, if relevant.*

Transparency is a process that has gradually become a common part of making, adopting and implementing decisions. It includes public control and contributes to the legitimacy of self-government decisions. It puts pressure on decisions that are legal, legitimate, and constitutional and reflect the principle of good governance. This means making decisions which impacts are quantified beforehand. We will therefore use the transfer of knowledge from broad participatory legislation in Slovakia and the V-4 countries, which can be used to improve the processes of local government management in Ukraine, thus supporting a variety of tools and opportunities that can be used by residents of cities and municipalities in Ukraine to become part of active decision making.

The Slovak local government and the local government in the V-4 countries have practical experience with the gradual extension of participatory legislation, which is connected with the possibility to actively participate in decision-making processes, public control and also with the protection of personal data. While each of the V-4 countries has applied the European Commission's Directive on GDPR, however, based on free access to information, we find that there is a need for a balance between accessibility and publishing, directly related to personal data protection, respect for human dignity, public control and misuse of information from local government for example in business. That is why we focus on these aspects as well as on the experience of direct, proactive communication, which eliminates suspicions, increases credibility and enhances local patriotism.

Within the project **at least two workshops focused primary on the topic of the transparency** will be organised— transparency at local level, civic participation, raising confidence in local government through participatory mechanisms, participatory legislation, responsible / transparent budgeting / civic budget, register of public sector partners as a tool to increase transparency and combat corruption, GDPR, territorial social responsibilities, principles of Good Governance. The topics of the workshops will be defined by the project partner 1 (AUC) based on needs resulting from survey. The topic of the workshop will be one or more topics merged mentioned above. Transparency as the cross-cutting topic will be generally pointed out at all project workshops and conferences. The aim of the project applicant (ZMOS) is to transfer and share experiences and know-how which are based on the principles of the good governance. The transparency is the one of the 12 principles of Good Governance stipulated in the Strategy on Innovation and Good Governance at local level of the Council of Europe and following the concept of the Corporate Social Responsibilities (in case of local government: Territorial Social Responsibilities). Norwegian experiences, which are very rich in this field, will be very important and significant inputs in the topic of transparency .

3. Briefly describe the joint workshops organised between Slovak and Ukrainian public sector entities. Stay focused on:

- *aim of the planned workshops,*
- *who will be the target groups and the justification of your selection,*
- *measures taken in order to make the workshops attractive for the target group,*
- *duration and size of the workshops.*

Six workshops aim at transferring best practice from Slovakia, V4 and Norway in various areas of competencies and activities of local governments with an emphasis on innovative and smart solutions, transparency and good governance. The target groups of the workshop will be **elected local representatives (Mayors and Local Councillors) and local officers from mainly Ukrainian local level, but also from Slovakia**. Participants will be selected based on their professional backgrounds – have to be local elected representatives or professional officers from local government. The project applicant (ZMOS) and project partner 1 (AUC) will select the participants so to harmonize the significant diversity of the environment across the entire spectrum of the defined target groups regardless of age, sex, religion, sexual orientation and disability. The duration of **each workshop will be one day (8 hours)**. **40 participants will be at each workshop** (proportional participation from Ukraine and Slovakia). 2 workshops will take place in Slovakia and 4 workshops in Ukraine. Workshops in Slovakia will be organised by the project applicant (ZMOS). Workshops in Ukraine will be organised by partner 1 (AUC). One expert from Slovakia and one expert from V-4 countries will participate in each workshop. Expert from Norway will participate in two workshops. Working languages of the workshops in Slovakia will be Slovak with simultaneous interpretation into Ukrainian and into English (in case of participation of partner 2 (KS)). Working languages of the workshops in Ukraine will be Ukrainian with simultaneous interpretation into Slovak and into English (in case of participation of partner 2 (KS)).

Two professional conferences, aimed at modernization processes in local governments, thematically focus on needs resulting from the survey. The target groups of the conferences will be **elected local officers (Mayors and Local Councillors), local officers and professional stakeholders from regional and national level, professional experts from local level (NGOs) and professionals from public as well as a wider public**. The duration of each conference will be **one day (8 hours)**. The first conference will take place in the first year of the project implementation and the second conference at the end of the project. Each conference **will be attended by at least 100 participants from Ukraine and Slovakia**. Both conferences will take place in Ukraine and will be organised by partner 1 (AUC), but in mutual cooperation with project applicant and other project partners. **Three experts from Ukraine, one from Slovakia, one from V-4 countries and one from Norway will be represented at each of the conference**. Working language of the conferences will be Slovak, Ukrainian and English (simultaneous interpretation).

Two roundtables aim at transferring of knowledge and experience of public administration reform processes based on approaches of good governance, integrity and transparency and with an emphasis on the level of local government. Based on the Slovakian experiences, the roundtable facilitates a social dialogue between central government and local government in Ukraine - as a key prerequisite for strategic planning, improving the performance and quality of services provided to citizens by local authorities. The target group of the roundtables will be **elected representatives and Chief Executive Officer of the project applicant (ZMOS) and partner 1 (AUC) and representatives from the regional and national level (ministries) – from different level of the public administration**. The project applicant (ZMOS) and project partner 1 (AUC) will select the participants to harmonize the significant diversity of the environment across the entire spectrum of the defined target group

regardless of age, sex, religion, sexual orientation and disability. The duration of each roundtable will **be one day (8 hours)**. Each roundtable will be organised **for 25 participants (10 Slovaks and 15 Ukrainians)** and will be most likely facilitated by 2 experts from Slovakia and 1 expert from Ukraine. Simultaneous interpreting from Ukrainian to Slovak and vice versa will be ensured. One roundtable will take place in Slovakia, the other one in Ukraine. Coordination and organization will be ensured by project applicant (ZMOS) in Slovakia and project partner 1 (AUC) in Ukraine, but in mutual cooperation.

Two one-day events organised during the "Days of Ukraine" in Košice (SK) will be aimed at strengthening the cross-border cooperation at local level in order to promote visibility of the cross-border program (ENI Hungary - Slovakia - Romania - Ukraine), EEA and Norway Grants, Vysehrad Funds+, transnational EU programs (Danube and Central), SlovakAid and other available grants for cooperation with Ukraine and will present examples of good practice from these programs. Different thematic discussion on local topics will be conducted during the events, including the new methods in local governance based on principles of good governance, transparency and integrity. The target group of the events will be **elected local officers (Mayors and Local Councillors), local officers and professional stakeholders from regional and national level, professional experts from local level (NGOs), students and professors and professionals from public as well as a wider public from Slovakia and Ukraine**. The project applicant (ZMOS) and project partner (3) will select the participants to harmonize the significant diversity of the environment across the entire spectrum of the defined target group regardless of age, sex, religion, sexual orientation and disability. "Days of Ukraine" in Košice take place in April each year. The duration of the event will be **one day (8 hours)**. Events will be coordinated and organized by a partner 3 (Association FEMAN) with cooperation with project partner 1 (AUC) and the project applicant (ZMOS). The official language of the events will be Slovak and Ukrainian.

4. Briefly describe the secondments from Ukraine to Slovakia. Stay focused on:

- *aim of the secondments,*
- *compliance with the aim of the programme,*
- *benefits of the secondments for the institution involved,*
- *who will be the secondee (their position and tasks) and the justification of your selection.*

The aim of the secondment will be

- **to compare the practical experience of local governments before and after the public administration reform and its decentralization,**
- **to acquaint with the implementation of the principle of good governance, transparency and integrity in concrete local governments and their national association, i.e. access to the information, public participation in decision-making, performance decisions and tasks in the field of public procurement, sale and rental of property, budget and grants, buildings and social services, ethics and conflict of interest, territorial planning and building office, etc.**
- **to acquaint with the European policies implemented at local, regional and national level.**

Three seconded persons (2 representatives of Ukrainian cities and municipalities and 1 representative of the project partner (AUC)), each for 1 month, **will be a benefit for the seconded institution in terms to gain professional knowledge and experience**, in particular in areas where such expertise is not readily available in seconded institution. Secondees during their staying in Slovakia will gain experiences in several local governments / national institutions (max. in 4).

In terms of content, we will place the activity in an environment of comparable self-governments, as it is a prerequisite for the performance and solution of a comparable agenda and its impact on the size of the population. **Secondments will be completely in line with the program and project objectives and will reflect the content of the call and content requirements of the seconded institutions.** Seconded person will be selected in a transparent manner by their seconded institutions, with the participation of the project partner 1 (AUC). An advantage for the seconded institution and the seconded participant itself is the fact that the project applicant (ZMOS) will select partners on the Slovak side who will have the capacity to devote to the secondee and transfer them the best experience from Slovak public administration, especially local government.

The seconded person should be an officer from the Local / City Office (2) and officer from the Office of the project partner 1 (AUC) (1). These persons should be experienced in issues of the local governments and public administration system in Ukraine, dispose with teamwork skills and be able to communicate in Slovak (from neighboring regions) or in English.

5. Briefly describe activities aimed at improving integrity and accountability of the public institutions in Slovakia and Ukraine. Stay focused on:

- *main focus of the activities,*
- *description of the public integrity system to be achieved,*
- *compliance with the aim of the programme,*
- *who will be the key experts cooperating in improving integrity and accountability of the public institutions in Slovakia and Ukraine and their professional expertise, if relevant,*
- *recommendations of the OECD to be reflected, if relevant.*

Within the project activities we also **consider the approach based on integrity in local government.** Together with the principle of transparency, we would like to include the topic of integrity approach as part of the workshops devoted to the transparency - civic participation, raising confidence in local government through participatory mechanisms, participatory legislation, responsible / transparent budgeting / civic budget, register of public sector partners as a tool to increase transparency and combat corruption, GDPR, territorial social responsibilities, principles of Good Governance. Integrity as the cross-cutting topic will be generally pointed out at all project workshops and conferences.

We are aware that **integrity is essential for building strong institutions and assures citizens that the government is working in their interest and is necessary for increasing confidence in local government,** local authorities and the public administration as well. Within the best practices which will be presented during the workshop, we will focus on the relating processes necessary to undertake at the local level which should be in compliance with OECD recommendations in public integrity – **methods and forms implemented in public policies,** which determine the quality of citizens' daily live, **public procurement,** which should not be bureaucratic, inefficient and highly vulnerable to corruption and **public infrastructure** to demonstrate that infrastructure projects can be productive, transparent and free from corruption.

We will highlight the ethical code of the local elected representatives or of the local officers as best practice which is introduced in several local governments in Europe. As the Ethical Code of the EU Committee of Regions was introduced in the last period, the project applicant (ZMOS) intends to prepare ethical code for members of its decisive body – ZMOS Council during the next year.

6. If relevant, briefly describe activities aimed at facilitating the Ukrainian accession process to the EU. Stay focused on:

- *main focus of the activities and their implementation,*
- *necessity, usefulness and benefits of these activities for Ukraine,*
- *competency and appropriateness of the implementing institution to implement these activities.*

The Slovak Republic has direct experience in the transformation of the local government as a result of EU accession. The change of legislation, approximation to new standards, comparison of performance and possibilities of drawing European structural and investments funds were accompanied by legislative problems, technical shortcomings, incorrect evaluation of possibilities and needs of local self-government. Therefore, **project applicant (ZMOS) can approximate the 30-year development**, which involved various transformation processes with direct implications for local and regional authorities in different areas of activities, to help our partners in Ukraine in terms of technical assistance to formulate their needs for local government reform. At the same time **we will use the knowledge from the V-4 countries, which will increase the informative value for the preparation of local government** for the purposes of transformation processes.

7. Briefly describe the awareness raising activities and the activities aimed at appropriate communication about the ambitions and the achieved results of the project to the general public. Stay focused on:

- *description of the activities,*
- *who will be the target groups and the justification of your selection,*
- *measures taken in order to make the activities attractive, accessible and appropriate for the target group,*
- *main communication channels (TV and Broadcast shows, internet and social media, door to door visits, distribution of information materials as banners, leaflets, stickers, brochures, advocacy and enforcement activities, theatre plays etc.).*

Communication of project implementation will be significantly proactive as we are convinced that if we as the project applicant (ZMOS) have to present the importance of efficiency, openness and transparency to a partner in Ukraine; the communication plan should reflect the progressive steps and results achieved. Within the framework of communication we will permanently **use indirect communication in the form of press releases, press conferences, use of social networks** and also **direct communication with participants of events**. At the same time, we will make maximum use of the website and the sharing of media outputs by all project partners.

The project will include following aware raising activities within its communication plan:

Informing of public through the electronic and printing media – press releases (at least 18), press conferences (at least 4), articles on websites and newspapers of the project applicant and partners, frequent releases after implementation of each project activity in order to provide information on project implementation on ongoing basis, including information concerning workshop organisation, publication of methodological assistance manuals, organisation of round tables and secondments to Slovakia and Norway. Project applicant and partners will facilitate sufficient media coverage and will distribute **press releases among Slovak, Ukrainian and regional media**, including Press Agency of the Slovak Republic (TASR), with whom the project applicant (ZMOS) has a signed partnership agreement as well as to Radio Patria and its Ukrainian version, since project applicant (ZMOS) has a longstanding

partnership approved by ZMOS Council also with regional studios of Slovak Radio and Television (RTVS).

Target group: general public in Ukraine, Slovakia and Norway

Information conferences (launching and closing – activity 5)- the aim of these conferences will be to present the project intentions, outputs, information about the programme and programme Operator as well as donor countries. Ca. 30 **participants from Slovakia and Ukraine will participate at each of the conference. Duration of each conference will be from 4 to 6 hours.**

Target group: project applicant, project partners, Programme Operator, professional public and media in Ukraine and Slovakia

Project activities (professional conferences, events during the “Days of Ukraine”)

Target group: elected local officers (Mayors and Local Councillors), local officers, and professional stakeholders from regional and national level, professional experts from local level (NGOs) and professionals from public as well as a wider public in Slovakia and Ukraine

Other events of the project applicant and partners besides the project (“Days of Slovaks” organised yearly by the project partner 3 (FEMAN).

Target group: professional public in Ukraine

Publication of manuals, strategic material, almanacs and Newsletters

Target groups: elected local officers (Mayors and Local Councillors), local officers, and professional stakeholders from regional and national level, professional experts from local level (NGOs) and professionals from public as well as a wider public in Slovakia and Ukraine

Promotion materials (roll-ups, notebooks, pens, leaflets, writing pads, memory stick, etc)

Target group: project applicant, project partners and elected local officers (Mayors and Local Councillors) and local officers in Slovakia and Ukraine

The website of the project by the project applicant ZMOS created at the beginning of project implementation and websites of project partners where information about project outputs and about the programme will be published.

Target group: general public in Slovakia, Ukraine and Norway

Project implementation results will be **discussed at the meetings of ZMOS Foreign Affairs Section and Foreign Affairs Section of the Association of Ukrainian Cities (AUC)**. Interim information on project implementation will also be discussed by ZMOS managing structures, namely **the Council (consist of 131 mayor of towns and municipalities) and the Presidency (consist of 18 mayor of towns and municipalities) and by 61 regional associations across Slovakia** whose members are towns and municipalities with great interest in cooperation with Ukrainian self-governments. We will also make sure that our knowledge and experience is transferred to the bodies of Czech Association of Towns and Municipalities and Association of Gmin Subcarpathian region in Poland.