



## Press Release

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### **EUNPACK Project results:**

**the EU remains among the top three most-recognised international actors involved in crisis responses in Ukraine. However, the EU– Ukraine relations should be reframed as a partnership rather than assistance.**



Pictures from the project fieldwork in Kramatorsk and Lviv by Kateryna Korepanova and Mariana Yeleyko.

In spring 2018, [Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence in European Studies](#) at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy has finished the final stage of the [research project “EUNPACK”](#) supported by the Horizon 2020. The project titled “A conflict sensitive unpacking of the EU comprehensive approach to conflict and crisis mechanism” was designed to examine the EU’s ability to respond to crises in different types of regions (e.g. the EU’s neighboring countries), including Ukraine. Employing a mixed-method approach, the project team conducted a quota-based survey in selected locations across Ukraine (190 respondents among Internally Displaced People (IDPs), traders/entrepreneurs, NGO activists, security sector officers, local council representatives and other actors and practitioners that represent categories of actual and/or potential beneficiaries of EU crisis response instruments, programs and policies) and in-depth interviews (43 talks with different segments of local and external stakeholders including government authorities, civil society, and EU representatives/officials).

The research showed that the EU remains among the top three most-recognised international actors involved in crisis responses in Ukraine (nearly 90% of the respondents are aware of the EU’s support for Ukraine, together with the United Nations (UN) and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)). Among the different instruments deployed by the EU in that framework, respondents were most aware of political/diplomatic activities (75% are aware

of such EU crisis response), development aid and humanitarian assistance (both 74%). Still, the levels of satisfaction varied across the groups of beneficiaries and regions (for example, it is higher in Lviv and lower in Kramatorsk). Overall, for nearly half of the respondents, the EU's involvement has had positive effects, while for a third it has either aggravated or had no effect on the crisis. During the survey interviews, some respondents pointed to the perceived criticalities of the EU's crisis-response endeavors: above all, the EU's actions seem to come 'too little, too late' and relations should be reframed as a partnership rather than assistance.

The local experts underlined that efficient use of the EU's resources is an urgent issue: the standards of aid delivery and results' evaluation should be improved. Specifically, 'well-paid experts and motivated experts are two different things'. Also, 'the lack of transparency in many spheres remains a crucial problem, which is explained by security reasons but, in fact, is often a pretext for avoiding accountability'. Another urgent issue is the lack of human resources: 'the local authorities have no expertise in filling out application forms to get foreign funding'. As some of our interviewees argued, 'it seems, there is no PR strategy to present the EU-supported projects to a wider public in Ukraine. This gap is used by the local authorities: the beneficiaries perceive aid as support from other public sources'.

In Ukraine, the EU is widely perceived as an actor with expertise in post-conflict solutions and sustainable development. The EU's ability to facilitate a balanced agenda makes it the most reliable partner of Ukraine today. As local experts said, 'the EU's role in turning Ukraine from a conflict spot to a success story (and, possibly the most successful EU project of the new century) is a mission that can reinforce the European project'.

The EU's reputation in Ukraine should be used to speak about the reintegration of Donbas and about complex post-war processes in Ukraine. Also, 'the historical role of the EU can hardly be underestimated – "it can prevent Ukraine from becoming a totalitarian state". The Eastern Partnership should be used for appropriation of European standards in legislation and practices. Double standards should not become common place in Ukrainian politics (currently, the situation is alarming).

**For more information, please check up the full reports following the links below or contact us at: [europa.org.ua@gmail.com](mailto:europa.org.ua@gmail.com)**

A Summary of Perception Studies in Ukraine:

<http://www.eunpack.eu/sites/default/files/publications/D%206.4%20A%20Summary%20of%20Perception%20Studies%20in%20Ukraine.pdf>

Implementation of the EU's crisis response in Ukraine:

<http://www.eunpack.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2018-01-31%20D6.3%20Working%20paper%20on%20implementation%20of%20EU%20crisis%20response%20in%20Ukraine.pdf>