

**Development Strategy**  
**of the All-Ukrainian Association**  
**of Amalgamated Territorial Communities**  
**until 2028**

Year 2023

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## INTRODUCTION

The request for the creation of the All-Ukrainian Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities (hereinafter referred to as the Association) was formed by the reform of the administrative and territorial system of Ukraine in 2015-2020. The advantage of the new Association is that it has become a European-type association, bases its activities on approaches recognized in Europe, develops on the basis of the methodology recommended by the Council of Europe and the practical experience of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR).

The Association acts in the interests of amalgamated territorial communities, contributes to the full implementation in Ukraine of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union and the Council of Europe Action Plan on Ukraine. In its activities, the Association consistently implements the principles and approaches on which European associations of local and regional authorities are based. At the same time, the Association's activities to defend the interests of local self-government are carried out in the interests of all amalgamated territorial communities of Ukraine.

The Association is a platform on which territorial communities form a consolidated position, and a channel through which they relay it to all stakeholders.

The Strategy of the Association is a planning document that ensures the formation of strong, capable and cohesive territorial communities, effective representation and advocacy of the interests of territorial

communities in the context of reforming the territorial organization of power.

On November 25, 2016, on their own initiative, territorial communities - Novoukrainka urban hromada (Kirovohrad Oblast), Pyriatyn urban hromada (Poltava Oblast) and Nova Borova settlement hromada (Zhytomyr Oblast) - established the Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities in order to ensure the unity and effective partnership of territorial communities formed after the start of the reform of the administrative-territorial structure of Ukraine. Philosophy development based on the value of local self-government development, which is shared by the EU countries, and the active work of the Association ensured the rapid growth of territorial communities-members of the Association. A year after the formation of the organization, there were about 100 of them, by the end of 2018 there were already 270. In 2019, the Association has already united the majority of territorial communities of the basic level (by the end of the year - 520 territorial communities that decided to participate in the Association). This allowed the Association on November 26, 2019 to proclaim at the General Assembly of the Association to obtain the status of All-Ukrainian. Since then, the Association changed its name to the All-Ukrainian Association of Local Self-Governments "Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities". The change of status allowed the Association to be more effectively involved in the analysis of the legal framework for regulating the activities of local self-government and to provide approval to legal initiatives in this area.

The active involvement of territorial communities in the Association, despite the full-scale invasion of the Russian occupation forces in the Ukraine, continues. Currently, it has 804 member communities (as of 01.11.2023) in 24 regions of Ukraine. The Association has 19 thematic platforms. The political body that represents the Association is the Board, the Presidium and the Chairperson of the Association. The political leaders of the Association are democratically elected at the General Assembly by secret ballot.

The Association is worthy to represent the local self-government of Ukraine, which in the conditions of a long war has demonstrated itself as a powerful basis for the protection and development of the Ukrainian state.

During the period of validity of the Development Strategy of the Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities-2022, the Association has grown sevenfold and united the majority of territorial communities of the basic level of Ukraine, received the status of All-Ukrainian, and became a significant factor in the reform and development of local self-government in Ukraine. In 2023, a working group was formed to work on the development of the Development Strategy of the All-Ukrainian Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities until 2028 (hereinafter referred to as the Strategy-2028), which involved the expert community and members of the Board of the Association.

The preparation of the Strategy-2028 is implemented in several stages. At the first stage, the working group organized a study of the state of implementation of the Development Strategy of the Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities-2022, an analysis of the environment and factors of the Association's development, a survey of community leaders of the Association's members (200 questionnaires were completed), 48 in-depth interviews of various types of communities from 24 regions of Ukraine, focus groups for communities of 10 regions (300 participants from territorial communities). This made it possible to assess the activities of the Association in 2016-2023, the state of implementation of the Development Strategy of the Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities-2022, to determine the tasks to be solved by updating the Strategy. At the second stage, a strategic session was held at a meeting of the Board of the All-Ukrainian Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities, which made it possible to determine the mission, vision, scenarios and directions of the Association's development until 2028 and prepared the text of the Strategy. At the final stage, a discussion of the prepared document was organized by the representation of the territorial communities of the Association's members, on the basis of which the text of the document was adjusted and a plan for the implementation of the Strategy was prepared. The document was adopted at the General Assembly of the All-Ukrainian Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities. The methodology for preparing the Strategy of the All-Ukrainian Association of Amalgamated Territorial Communities-2028 is based on a participatory approach and maximum involvement of leaders of territorial communities of the Association's members in the preparation of the document.

## **MISSION OF THE ALL-UKRAINIAN ASSOCIATION OF AMALGAMATED TERRITORIAL COMMUNITIES. VALUES. PRINCIPLES.**

### ***Mission***

*The Association promotes the development of territorial communities and represents their interests at all levels. A strong and effective all-Ukrainian organization unites its members around the joint development of local self-government as one of the most important foundations of an independent and democratic Ukraine integrating into the EU.*

### ***Values & Principles***

In its work, both within the organization and in cooperation with external partners, the Association is guided by the following principles:

The Association was established on the initiative of communities, by the communities themselves and in the interests of communities. The legitimacy of the Association is based on voluntary membership and

common interests, patriotism and mutual trust, collective experience, transparency and democracy of activities for communities and on behalf of communities.

The Association is an association of equals. All members have an equal opportunity to participate in decision-making and have equal access to membership benefits. The Association promotes gender equality, inclusion and the fight against discrimination based on age, gender, nationality and other grounds.

The Association is a democratic organization. It actively engages members in joint decision-making. Decisions are made by consensus or by majority rule. The governing bodies of the Association are elected by secret ballot from an unlimited number of candidates.

The Association is transparent in its activities and actions in relation to public authorities. Information on activities and decisions made is available, and the governing bodies of the Association are responsible for their actions to the communities.

The Association supports the principle of subsidiarity and the territorial community as the basis of local self-government, authorized to solve public issues of local importance that are not assigned to other entities. It recognises multi-level governance as the key to achieving sustainable democratic development in Ukraine.

The Association is non-partisan, but not apolitical. The Association is independent of any of the political parties, has its own proactive policy within the framework of an independent and democratic Ukraine.

The Association promotes solidarity among members. It provides special support to local governments in the de-occupied territories and territories affected by the Russian invasion.

The Association supports Ukraine's European integration. It supports cooperation between members and regional branches with European partners. Working with all pro-European forces, it helps Ukraine and communities prepare for membership in the European Union.

## **VISION OF THE FUTURE**

By the end of 2028, the Association is:

- an influential, democratic, pro-European and non-partisan institution that unites at least 3/4 of communities, unites local governments at the local and national levels and provides them with the necessary services of proper quality;
- the basis of effective representation of the interests of territorial communities at the national and international levels;
- an important partner involved in key decisions on reforms, reconstruction and development of an independent and democratic Ukraine;
- the representative of the interests of de-occupied territorial communities.

## **STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND OBJECTIVES**

***Strategic Direction A. Defending the interests of local self-government***

***STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE A.1. BUILDING A SYSTEM OF ANALYSIS AND MONITORING OF THE RULES OF LAW ON LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT,*** analysis of the legislation in the field of local self-government; monitoring of legal initiatives and prepared proposals for changes in the rules of law in the field of local self-government; formation of an analytical base for substantiating the legal initiatives of the Association.

***STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE A.2. CREATING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION ON THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS***

involvement of authoritative and highly qualified advisers of the Association;

improvement of the mechanisms of communication of the Association with central and regional authorities;

involvement of all structural components of the Association in the support of activities and information campaign on Ukraine's accession to the EU.

***STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE A.3. FORMATION OF A FAVORABLE LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES IN THE INTERESTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN UKRAINE***

increasing the capacity of the Association to generate legislative initiatives;

improvement of the mechanisms for the Association's approval of regulatory documents and amendments to the legislation in the field of local self-government;

preparatory work on the development of the Code on Local Self-Government;

involvement of external expertise of legislative initiatives and projects.

## ***Strategic direction B. Capacity Building of Local Self-Government***

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE B.1. ENSURING THE NEEDS OF ASSOCIATION MEMBERS IN QUALITY SERVICES**

monitoring of the urgent needs of territorial communities and organization of a system of training and operational consulting of communities; strengthening of expert capacity, development of professional networks, regional branches as providers of services to communities of the Association;

formation of effective alliances with interested central executive bodies, NGOs, business associations and other stakeholders to improve the quality of service delivery;

support for innovative approaches and digital solutions in local self-government.

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE B.2. CREATION OF A SYSTEM OF INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING FOR ASSOCIATION MEMBERS**

formation of a mechanism for rapid response to an individual request and support of communities of the Association's members in an atypical situation; strengthening the expert capacity to provide advice to communities of the Association's members, including in atypical situations.

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE B.3. TRAINING OF PERSONNEL RESERVE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS**

participation in the training of local self-government officials and their internships in coalition with leading providers of educational services in Ukraine and at the international level;

formation of the educational platform and network of the Association, including for the organization of distance education;

formation of own resource of recommended human resources for communities;

involvement in the process of forming a personnel reserve for the reconstruction and restoration of the de-occupied territories.

***Strategic direction C. Involvement in the process of recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine.***

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE C.1. PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR PLANNING RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION OF UKRAINE AT ALL LEVELS OF TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT**

expert support for planning and programming the reconstruction and recovery of territorial communities-members of the Association; representation of the interests of territorial communities in the formation of the agenda of the system of reconstruction and recovery of Ukraine in the formation of national and regional plans, programs and projects;

effective interaction with ITA projects in planning and programming the reconstruction and recovery of territorial communities;

development of investment packages and attraction of investors in areas that contribute to recovery and reconstruction.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE C.2. PROMOTION OF INVESTMENT**

formation of a digital platform to inform investors about the needs of reconstruction and restoration of territorial communities, monitoring of reconstruction projects;

representing the interests of the reconstruction and restoration of territorial communities-members of the Association and joining the formation of the investment environment in Ukraine.

***Strategic direction D. Ensuring institutional capacity***

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE D.1. BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT LEADERS**

involvement of leaders of territorial communities-members of the Association in the decision-making system and policy development;

formation of a mechanism for formulating a request and supporting the initiatives of members of territorial communities regarding the activities of the Association; exchange of experience and best practices of local self-government leaders.

## *STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE D.2. OPTIMIZATION OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE STRUCTURE, INCLUDING THE CREATION OF EFFECTIVE REGIONAL BRANCHES*

increasing the capacity of the Executive Office, regional branches of the Association;

expansion of the Association's communication channels and improvement of those involved;

development of international cooperation and interaction with international technical assistance programs.

## *STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE D.3. DEVELOPMENT OF THE FINANCIAL STRATEGY OF THE ASSOCIATION*

optimization of the system of membership fees of territorial communities, diversification of financial support of the executive office of the Association and determination of directions for achieving financial independence;

formation of a charitable fund for the development of the Association and support for key projects for the development of territorial communities-members; development and implementation of the Association's financial strategy.

## **STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF ITS IMPLEMENTATION**

The Strategy management system has two levels: political and organizational. The political level is provided by the General Assembly of the Association, the Chairperson of the Association, the Board of the Association. At this level, the reports of the Strategy Implementation Management Committee and proposals for making changes (updating) to the Strategy are listened to and approved. At the General Assembly of the Association, decisions are made to amend the Strategy on the basis of proposals from the Chairperson of the Association or the Board of the Association.

The organizational level of implementation of the Strategy is provided by the Executive Director and the Executive Office of the Association. In particular, they are developing an Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy. Management and monitoring is carried out by the Strategy Implementation Management Committee (hereinafter referred to as the SIMC), which:

- carries out annual monitoring of the state of implementation of the Strategy;
- carries out an intermediate analysis of the development of the Association;
- studies the main political, economic, financial, social, scientific, technological, etc. trends, determines their impact on the development of the Association
- forms proposals for strategic scenarios in the new political, socio-economic conditions of the external environment
- forms proposals for changes in goals and objectives that need to be included in the Strategy as a response to changes in the external environment and internal development of the Association.

### **Management of the Strategy implementation process**

Management of the process of implementation of the Development Strategy of the Association is carried out according to the principles of unity of management, personal responsibility, transparency of actions. Administration of the Strategy implementation process is carried out by the Executive Office of the Association.

In order to coordinate actions, by order of the Chairperson of the Association, a permanent Committee is created to manage the implementation of the Strategy (SIMC). The SIMC includes those responsible for the implementation of the objectives of the Strategy. The SIMC is headed by the Deputy Chairperson of the Association. The full composition of the SIMC and personal responsibility for the implementation of the objectives of the Strategy is determined by the order of the Chairperson of the Association. The SIMC meets at least once every six months and performs the following functions:

- organizes the interaction of departments of executive bodies on the implementation of the Strategy, programs and projects of the Association's development;
- prepares annual reports on the status of implementation of the Strategy, submits them to the Chairperson of the Association and presents them at the General Assembly of the Association. The full text of the report is subject to mandatory posting on the Association's website;
- prepares annual reports on the status of implementation of the Strategy, submits them to the Chairperson and presents them at the meeting of the executive committee. The monitoring report and proposals for changing the main text of the Strategy are considered by the Board of the Association, discussed at regular and extraordinary meetings of the SIMC and submitted to the General Assembly of the Association once a year.

## **Strategy Monitoring Procedure**

Monitoring of the Development Strategy includes three levels:

1) ***Monitoring of the external environment of community development.*** It is based on the analysis of the main indicators that characterize the situation in Ukraine and abroad, which have a direct impact on the development of the Association. The results are summed up once a year and brought as part of the consolidated analytical monitoring report.

2) ***Monitoring the implementation of the Strategy*** in accordance with the following indicators:

- number of territorial communities involved in the Association - new members of the Association, units;
- share of collected membership fees to the planned ones, percentage;
- level of satisfaction with the services of the Association, percentage;
- number of implemented activities for the member communities of the Association, units;
- number of projects financed by membership fees, units;
- number of projects financed by grants from ITAs, units;
- the amount of funds actually received from grants and ITAs, thous. UAH;
- number of processed legal documents and approvals granted, units;
- number of developed legislative initiatives of the Association, units;
- number of processed legal documents and approvals granted, units;
- number of visits, reviews, appeals, reactions on the pages of the website and in social networks of the Association, units;
- number of individual consultations provided to communities, units;
- number of training events conducted, units;
- the number of persons who have undergone personnel training activities, persons;

- number of planning documents for the restoration and reconstruction of territorial communities developed with the participation of the expert community of the Association, units;
- number of operating and organized regional branches, units;
- number of activities implemented by regional branches, units.

The SIMC organizes sociological events to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the Strategy.

A report on the implementation of this part of the monitoring is prepared annually as part of the consolidated analytical monitoring report. The list of assessment indicators is supplemented by the SIMC if necessary.

***Monitoring the implementation of projects to ensure the achievement of the objectives*** of the Strategy, which make up the Strategy Implementation Plan. This monitoring begins in the next six months after the approval of the Development Strategy Implementation Plan. The status of implementation of each measure and the degree of achievement of the results envisaged by the terms of reference for the project are evaluated. By December 1 of each year of implementation of the Strategy, the Board of the Association receives monitoring reports.

# Appendix. STRUCTURE AND GOVERNING BODIES OF THE ALL-UKRAINIAN ASSOCIATION OF AMALGAMATED TERRITORIAL COMMUNITIES

## Territorial communities (804)



## Regional branches (24)



## Thematic Platforms (19)

1. Legislation for amalgamated territorial communities
2. Temporarily occupied and de-occupied hromadas
3. International relations
4. Human resources management (personnel)
5. Gender equality
6. Administrative services, e-government
7. Local budgets and finances
8. Economy and investments
9. Education
10. Health care
11. Social protection and cohesion
12. Youth, sport, culture
13. Starostas
14. Rural development: Land relations
15. Security: Law and order
16. Security: housing and communal services
17. Safety: Ecology
18. Development of mountain areas
19. Development of tourism and resorts

# Governing Bodies

