

JOINT STATEMENT

Ukraine – EU Trade and Sustainable Development Sub-Committee to the Joint Civil Society Forum

(7 November 2025)

Representatives of the European Commission and the Ukrainian authorities held the 8th Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) Sub-Committee on 7 November 2025 (via videoconference Brussels-Kyiv). They discussed the implementation of the TSD Chapter of the European Union-Ukraine Association Agreement.

The Sub-Committee noted the importance of civil society participation and that the EU and Ukraine will debrief the Civil Society Forum on 12 November 2025 on the issues discussed during the TSD Sub-Committee meeting.

The EU reiterated its full support for Ukraine in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and underlined that Ukraine and the EU have continued to significantly increase their bilateral trade, which has more than doubled since the entry into force of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) in 2016.

General update on trade and sustainable development policy

Ukraine reiterated that it recognised itself as an integral part of the European Green Deal and committed to contributing to joint efforts to create a climate-neutral European continent by 2050, in particular, within the framework of the Paris Agreement, the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and the Ukraine-EU Association Agreement.

Ukraine adopted in October 2024 its first framework climate law, including the objective of reaching climate neutrality by 2050. The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the new Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) on 29 October 2025, which sets a target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by more than 65% from 1990 levels by 2035. In accordance with the above Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine shall submit the Second Nationally Determined Contribution to the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in the first half of November 2025, as part of Ukraine's continued implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Ukraine has committed itself to introducing a national Emission Trading System from 2028 on and eventually to implementing Directive 2003/87/EC establishing a system for the trading of greenhouse gas emission allowances, as well as Article 363 and Annex XXX of the Association Agreement.

Ukraine adopted its National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) in June 2024. The NECP will be further discussed in the context of the Sub-Committee on Cluster 3 under the European Union-Ukraine Association Agreement.

Ukraine informed on the progress in implementation of the project "Circular Economy - Promoting Sustainable Production and Consumption Models in Ukraine", funded by the EU.

The EU and Ukraine also discussed the recent reorganisation of the Government of Ukraine, under which the Ministry of Economy was merged with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources and the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food. Ukraine explained that this new institutional set-up aims to enhance policy coherence, streamline public administration and strengthen the integration of environmental and agricultural considerations into economic policymaking. The EU referred to commitments made by

Ukraine during the screening exercise, notably to implement Chapter 27 on the environment and climate change and called on the new ministry to actively build up administrative capacities in this regard.

The EU updated on the implementation of the EU's autonomous instruments such as deforestation, corporate due diligence, and forced labour. The EU welcomed ongoing legislative efforts by Ukraine on forced labour and asked for updates about their envisaged form, in line with the Forced Labour Regulation.

Progress on selection of candidates for the Group of Experts

The Sub-Committee noted progress in establishing the list of TSD experts under Article 301 of the Agreement.

Ukraine informed the EU of updates to its nominations for the list. Both sides agreed to continue cooperation and exchanges with a view to finalising the list before their next meeting in 2026.

Trade and labour

As regards the **modernisation of labour relations**, Ukraine informed the EU about the ongoing comprehensive reform of labour legislation through the preparation of a new Labour Code. The Ukrainian side underlined the objective to align national legislation with relevant EU labour directives, particularly in the areas of working time, occupational safety and health, non-discrimination, and gender equality.

The EU welcomed Ukraine's continued work on the draft Labour Code, and reiterated the importance of ensuring its full alignment with the applicable EU *acquis* and international labour standards, taking into account the feedback provided by the European Commission and the ILO. The EU recalled the importance of upholding labour rights as much as possible, even in times of war and reiterated that successful labour reform will be key for a sustained recovery after the war. The EU also underlined the importance of ensuring that the draft Law on occupational safety and health is in line with the EU framework directive. The EU reaffirmed its readiness to provide technical support.

Both sides emphasised the need for meaningful and timely involvement of social partners in the preparation of labour and OSH legislation.

Ukraine also provided an update on the preparations for the ratification of Section III of ILO Convention No. 173 and informed that the Verkhovna Rada has registered a draft law aimed at strengthening the protection of workers' wage claims, including in cases of employer insolvency.

In the area of **social dialogue and collective bargaining**, Ukraine informed the EU about the current state of social dialogue at the national level. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted the Law No. 4582-IX of 21 August 2025, introducing temporary provisions allowing, by mutual agreement, the suspension of certain clauses of collective agreements during martial law.

Ukraine is also preparing an updated version of the Law on Social Dialogue and registered a corresponding draft Law on Collective Labour Disputes in the Verkhovna Rada in September 2024.

The Ukrainian side reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening social dialogue and collective bargaining in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights and the relevant Council

Recommendation, and expressed readiness to deepen cooperation and exchange of best practices with the EU and its Member States.

The EU recalled the importance of reinforcing social dialogue, as demonstrated by the Pact for European Social Dialogue signed in March 2025. It welcomed the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Ministry of Economy and Ukraine's social partners at the Ukraine Recovery Conference in July 2025, which confirmed a shared commitment to advancing labour reforms, including in the context of Ukraine's EU accession process. It should serve as a basis for strengthening social dialogue in Ukraine, with its implementation benefiting people, workers, and employers in Ukraine.

Ukraine also updated the EU on efforts to modernise the legal and institutional framework for social dialogue, including the revision of the Law on Social Dialogue, the restoration of the National Tripartite Social and Economic Council, and the preparation of a new General Agreement with social partners.

The EU sought an update on the functioning of the National Tripartite Social and Economic Council. Ukraine informed that the procedure to renew the composition of government representatives in the Council has been launched, with the draft order submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers. Ukraine is working on preparing the procedure for selecting a candidate for the new head of the Council.

Both sides agreed on the importance of further strengthening social dialogue and ensuring compliance with international labour standards on freedom of association and collective bargaining.

Concerning **labour inspection** Ukraine informed the EU of its commitment to European integration obligations, in particular to strengthening the institutional capacity of the labour inspectorate and gradually aligning national legislation with the EU *acquis* and ILO Conventions. The Ukrainian side underlined that tackling undeclared work remains a priority, as it is essential for fair competition and adequate protection of workers' rights.

Ukraine reaffirmed its intention to enhance cooperation with the EU in combating undeclared and forced labour and labour exploitation, notably through awareness-raising campaigns, exchanges of best practices among labour inspection services, systematic training of inspectors, and the introduction of modern digital tools.

The EU recalled the essential role of labour inspections in ensuring the effective implementation and enforcement of labour rights. In this context, it highlighted the need to further strengthen the labour inspectorate and ensure that the overall system complies with international labour standards, taking into account the comments of the ILO supervisory bodies.

Trade and Environment, Climate Change, Renewable Energy/Energy Efficiency

The EU briefly presented the latest developments in the field of environment, highlighting the adoption of the Water Resilience Strategy in June 2025.

It underlined the importance of long-term strategic planning in sectoral environmental policies, including capacity building and financial needs assessment, to support the closing of the alignment gap with the EU *acquis* and to guide future investments. Ukraine provided information on its green recovery efforts and the preparation of the projects pipeline for reconstruction in environment-related sectors, including water management, waste, circular economy, and industrial emissions.

Ukraine also presented data on investment needs for the implementation of river basin management plans in line with the objectives of the Water Framework Directive and the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive.

The EU welcomed the adoption by Ukraine in February 2025 of the Action Plan for establishing a national Emission Trading System and the resumption of mandatory monitoring, reporting and verifications (MRV) of greenhouse gas emissions at installation level in accordance with the 2019 law. The EU encouraged Ukraine continue expanding its MRV towards full alignment with the EU framework under the EU Emissions Trading System Directive and EU Regulation 2015/757, including all relevant secondary legislation.

Ukraine informed the EU about the results of the latest study conducted by international and national experts on direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions caused by military operations on the territory of Ukraine. It also provided an update on the environmental damage resulting from Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. According to official data from the State Environmental Inspectorate, as of October 2025, the total estimated environmental damage amounts to nearly UAH 5.9 trillion. The most affected areas include forest ecosystems, water resources, soils, atmospheric air, and nature reserves — over 30% of which have been impacted by hostilities or pollution.

As regards **initiatives under the green recovery and reconstruction agenda**, the Ukrainian Government will continue work on the practical implementation of the National Energy and Climate Plan. To this end, the necessary institutional framework has already been established, including a dedicated department within the Ministry of Economy and an inter-ministerial working group, while key stakeholders are actively developing a monitoring system. In addition, based on the work already undertaken to collect information on investment projects and needs, those corresponding to the EU taxonomy have been identified, and active efforts are ongoing to connect Ukrainian companies with investors from the EU and beyond.

The EU reiterated its concern regarding the scale of the environmental damage and underlined the importance of thorough documentation of all related cases. The EU pointed to the need to ensure a green reconstruction process across the board, notably to restore nature during and after the war. In this context, the EU reiterated the role of municipalities and civil society and stressed the importance of implementing reconstruction activities based on the build-back-better and do-no-significant-harm approaches, applying environmental assessments broadly, and allowing derogations only when absolutely necessary and duly justified.

On **renewable energy/energy efficiency**, Ukraine noted that energy efficiency policy has evolved beyond environmental and economic dimensions and is now closely linked to national security.

Ukraine provided an update on the implementation of the energy efficiency reform, in particular the adoption of the long-term strategy for thermal modernization of buildings for the period up to 2050.

Ukraine reiterated the need for support to municipalities in developing local energy plans, given the complexity and time required, especially at the data collection stage.

Ukraine also reported progress in the area of technical regulations on eco-design and energy labelling of energy-consuming products, which, together with the public procurement reform, ensures the practical application of the Energy Efficiency First principle. Ukraine reaffirmed its interest in rebuilding infrastructure based on energy efficiency approach and called upon the EU to consider and support such efforts.

Other issues

The EU and Ukraine agreed to finalise the operational conclusions that summarise the steps to be undertaken by the two sides until the 9th TSD Sub-Committee in 2026.

The EU and Ukraine encourage their respective Advisory Groups to actively engage with civil society at large to monitor progress in implementation of the TSD Chapter and provide further inputs to the discussions. The TSD Sub-Committee looks forward to the Advisory Groups' as well as to the open Civil Society Forum's views in this regard.