

# Executive summary Development plan for Ukrainian studies in Europe

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# RATIONALE AND METHODOLOGY

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The EUkraine Forum project, started in November 2024, is a cooperation partnership between Inalco University (France), the University of Warsaw (Poland), Charles University (Czech Republic) and Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Ukraine), supported by the EU Erasmus+ programme through the Key Action 220, that in this report aims to present recommendations for the future of Ukrainian Studies in Europe, targeted at key policymakers and decision-makers.

Motivated by the growing demand for expertise on Ukraine, the current geopolitical context and the need for informed knowledge on Ukraine's linguistic and cultural specificities, the project included an analysis of existing programmes resulted in **Ukrainian Studies in Europe: Situation Report** and the organisation of a European conference in Warsaw in May 2025, **"Planning the Future of Ukrainian Studies in Europe"**. The Development Plan for Ukrainian Studies in Europe marks the project's final step and provides the framework for strengthening Ukrainian Studies programmes and collaboration on the European continent.

On the basis of consultations with teachers and researchers in Ukrainian Studies across Europe, as well as with policymakers, NGOs, and representatives of the business sector, and building on a comparative assessment of the institutional position of Ukrainian Studies in different European contexts, the report identifies key structural challenges and formulates recommendations for European, national, and university-level decision-makers.

# SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

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## Definition and state of Ukrainian Studies in Europe

Ukrainian Studies are defined as including both traditional aspects and the new needs arising from the impacts of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, a political reality that has increased the demand for multidisciplinary and policy-oriented knowledge. While the support and expansion of policy-oriented courses and study programmes dealing with Ukraine is understandably a strategic aim of European institutions and national governments, the creation of new programmes should not negatively affect Ukrainian Studies centres that have existed for decades. Existing Ukrainian Studies centres should not only be preserved, but recognised as strategic hubs of expertise and coordination within the future European Ukrainian Studies ecosystem.

The reality of war and Ukraine's EU candidate status has fundamentally altered Ukraine's position, shifting it from being a regional case study to becoming a strategic partner in enlargement, reconstruction, and security policy. However, institutional transformation, including the academic sector, has not kept pace with these geopolitical changes. The transformation of Ukrainian Studies into a discipline of strategic relevance brings several challenges. Overall, Ukrainian Studies, or teaching about Ukraine, has faced and still faces structural constraints and disciplinary imbalances. Thus, this paper seeks not only to identify structural deficiencies in contemporary scholarship on Ukraine, but also to offer several recommendations to policymakers and decision-makers for essential changes in Ukrainian studies and the production of knowledge about Ukraine.

## Policymakers and decision-makers

The document is addressed primarily to policymakers and decision-makers who have the power to implement the necessary changes. We classify them into four broad categories, each associated with a distinct agenda: supranational governance, national governance, higher education regulators and funding agencies, and strategic philanthropic and institutional funders.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research and considerations provided in sections *Institutionalisation of Ukrainian studies and sustainable funding*, *Strengthening of area and multidisciplinary concepts*, *The Attractiveness and Effectiveness of Ukrainian Studies Programmes for students*, *Sustainability of Ukrainian Studies*, the following key recommendations and principles should be followed by policymakers and decision-makers when formulating their strategic plans:

- **Strengthen institutional structures** – establish stable and sustainable Ukrainian Studies centres in European universities, integrated into national and European academic networks, while also maintaining, further developing, and providing additional funding for already existing centres and programmes.
- **Promote a multidisciplinary approach** – combine traditional humanities with political, economic, and security studies to provide comprehensive knowledge of Ukraine and its current challenges.
- **Support mobility and career development** – invest in mobility programmes, scholarships, and postgraduate projects, including support for early-career and displaced Ukrainian scholars, to expand Europe’s expert network.
- **Enhance programme practicality and attractiveness** – introduce internships, field research, project-based modules, and the use of technological innovations (e.g., generative AI) to improve the quality and relevance of education.
- **Ensure sustainability and strategic planning** – apply clear sustainability principles, coordinate at European, national, and university levels, and implement monitoring and evaluation of programme outputs and outcomes.
- **Safeguard and strategically support existing Ukrainian Studies units** – ensure stable, long-term organisational and financial support for established Ukrainian Studies centres and programmes across Europe.

The future development of Ukrainian Studies in Europe should not be understood merely as the expansion of an existing small academic field, but as the creation of a durable European knowledge infrastructure capable of responding to the political, social, cultural, economic, and security challenges connected with Ukraine and the wider East European region in the twenty-first century.