**Funding opportunities available in Czech Republic for the projects of municipal cooperation with Ukraine**

Since November 2022, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) together with the Association of Ukrainian Cities (AUC) and with the support of the U-LEAD with Europe programme (U-LEAD) is implementing a new phase of the **“Bridges of Trust” initiative**. It will run until September 2023 with 10 CEMR member associations of local and regional governments from the EU member states facilitating 30 new municipal partnerships for the reconstruction of Ukraine. The “Bridges of Trust” initiative is a tool to rebuild Ukrainian municipalities and a new format of international cooperation between local governments in Ukraine and the EU. Municipal partnerships are a way to provide concrete actions of help and support, show solidarity and build back better together.

**The Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic** was selected to be a part of the “Bridges of Trust” initiative and mobilized 3 Czech municipalities to start the cooperation with Ukrainian peers for the joint work on reconstruction projects. Being the contact point for the municipalities, the Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic is coordinating a set of activities defined by the initiative with the aim of rebuilding Ukraine through international municipal cooperation.

**Main activities** of the initiative include:

* Establishment of 30 partnerships between the municipalities in Ukraine and in the EU;
* Study visits/internships of representatives of local governments in EU partner municipalities, exchange of knowledge and experience, acquiring of best practices in reconstruction projects;
* Solidarity Forums aiming at promoting within the EU the scope of municipal cooperation with Ukraine in view of country’s rebuilding efforts;
* Monitoring of funding opportunities for cooperation and reconstruction projects of Ukrainian municipalities available on the EU level, national, regional and municipal level in participating countries;
* Capacity building activities for Ukrainian and EU municipalities, trainings, info sessions on funding opportunities;
* Development of joint gender-sensitive reconstruction projects between partner municipalities in Ukraine and the EU.

**Current financial programmes**, supporting cooperation with Ukrainian municipalities where Czech municipalities are eligible to participate

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of the programme** | **Funding organization/Institution**  | **Eligible types of activities** | **Type of organization eligible** | **Deadline for application** | **Min budget for submission** | **Max budget for submission** |
| Visegrad+ Grants(more info here: [https://www.visegradfund.org/apply/grants/visegrad-plus-grants/)](https://www.visegradfund.org/apply/grants/visegrad-plus-grants/%29) | Visegrad Fund | Democratization and transformation processes in countries from Western Balkan and Eastern Partnership (incl. Ukraine)Cross-border cooperation, sustainable regional development and tourism, democratic values (incl. human rights and minorities, civil society, media freedom), good governance and effectiveness of public policy-making, social developmentUnder [this link](https://www.visegradfund.org/explore/inspirational-projects/?c=0&g=8) or in [this infografic](https://s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/uploads.mangoweb.org/shared-prod/visegradfund.org/uploads/2019/04/V4_EaP_flyer_2019-03-20_online.pdf), you can find inspirational projects run in last years. | At least 3 of the Visegrad group (V4) countries (i.e., Czechia, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary) + Ukraine (or other countries from Eastern Partnership or Western Balkan) - the granted projects must be implemented in the EaP or WB region and/or have a strong impact on local communities in at least one of those countriesNGOs, civil society organizations, educational institutions and the public and private actors (incl. local governments) | There are three regular calls per year (on 1 February, 1 June, 1 October) - the project with EaP/WB country/ies can last max. 18 months | Visegrad Grants cover up to 100 % of the project budget with maximum 15% of the requested sum for overheads | There are five criteria to assess the quality of project proposals regardless the amount of grant – project relevance, regional added value of the project (Visegrad substance), quality and impact of the project, adequacy for the funding in relations to the aims and outcomes of the projects, experience of project partners (for more info see here: <https://www.visegradfund.org/apply/grants/>)  |
| Visegrad4Ukraine(more info here: <https://www.visegradfund.org/archive/documents/visegrad-4-ukraine/>) | Visegrad Fund | Integration of Ukrainian refugees in V4 countries - strengthening the capacities of local authorities, public institutions and civil society organizations who provide necessary assistance, and mitigating potential tensions between refugees and local population resulting from a lack of information, language barriers, and social and economic inequalities | One of the V4 countries or UkraineAny legal entity registered in Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, or Ukraine (e.g., municipalities and local governments, schools, institutions of social and health care, NGOs) can apply (individuals or institutions of state administration directly subordinated to the government and its bodies (e.g., ministries, state agencies, embassies, etc.) cannot apply) | It was a special grant in the context of the Russian invasion in Ukraine that lasted only during 2022 – however, due to the continuous Russian-Ukrainian conflict, there might be another call in 2023 or later depending on the development of the conflictThe deadline for submitting grant proposals is announced on the Fund’s website, shall be at least 30 days in advance of the deadline. | Projects can be financed up to 100%, but co-financing is allowed and encouraged | The grants are paid in tranches. There are two tranches for a project at minimum, but the Fund reserves the right to decide on the final number and sizes of tranches. The last tranche (including the Overhead costs) amounts to 20% of the granted sum and is payable only upon the Fund’s acceptance of the Final Report and Financial Report. Whereas the first tranches are sent in advance, the last tranche must be prefinanced by the grantee and, if duly approved, the Fund reimburses the due amount. |
| **-** | Ministry of foreign affairs (Department of bilateral cooperation) | Bilateral cooperation | Municipalities  | In preparation | Might be specified later | Might be specified later |
| Trade for Ukraine | Ministry of Industry and Trade[[1]](#footnote-1) | Trade missions, business matchmaking events, market research, investment seminars, promotion of trade and investment | Czech and Ukrainian businesses and entrepreneurs | Not specified(In preparation, negotiations with the MIT are launched) | Not specified | Not specified |
| Humanitarian aid from Czech regions(e.g., from Liberec region: [https://ukrajina.kraj-lbc.cz/aktualne/satelitni-telefony-leky-obleceni-i-zdravotnicke-potreby-krajska-pomoc-ukrajine-ani-po-roce-valky-nekonci-n1123427.htm)](https://ukrajina.kraj-lbc.cz/aktualne/satelitni-telefony-leky-obleceni-i-zdravotnicke-potreby-krajska-pomoc-ukrajine-ani-po-roce-valky-nekonci-n1123427.htm%29) | Several Czech regions (incl. Olomouc, Liberec... regions) in cooperation with cities and individuals - often through the public fundraising | Supplies of foods, clothes, sleeping bags, blankets, heaters, medicines etc. | Ukrainian municipalities, institutions or NGOs at the local level | Ongoing | As much as possible |  |
| Strengthening the capacities of Foreign development cooperation partners(more info in Czech here: <http://www.czechaid.cz/dotace/posilovani-kapacit-implementacnich-partneru-zrs-vcetne-kapacit-a-partnerstvi-nno-aktivit-kraju-a-obci-v-prioritnich-zemich-zrs-cr-pro-rok-2023/>) | Czech Development Agency[[2]](#footnote-2) (i.e., subsidy organisation of Czech MFA) |  Building and strengthening basic and professional capacities, platforms and networking for NGOs and partner organisations of local governments | NGOs, foundations, international organisations registered in Czechia, religious organisations, municipalities, voluntary associations of municipalities, private companies.Geographic eligibility from Czech Republic to Moldavia, Georgia, Bosna and Herzegovina, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Zambia, possibly also to Ukraine | Recently, there was one call for the 2023. We expect that similar calls will be announced for next years as the programme is part of the implementing period 2023-2025 |  12 685,7 EUR/300 000 Czech crowns | 31 739 EUR/750 000 CZK |
| Regular calls to support integration of those with temporary protection(more info in Czech here: <https://www.mvcr.cz/clanek/narodni-dotacni-titul-cizinci.aspx>) | Ministry of interior | Consulting services, coordination of integration activities for target group, direct work with clients | Czech municipalities, voluntary associations of municipalities, cities and city districts | Three calls during a year – in February, May and September | Will be set by the government regulation in specific call(s) | Max. 95 % of the allocation can be covered by the state budget |
| Call(s) to support temporary activities of Ukrainian family with children residing in the Czech Republic (more info in Czech here: <https://www.mpsv.cz/web/cz/dotacni-vyzva-pro-rok-2023>) - besides this specific one, there were other calls for the integration of Ukrainian refugees that were funded either by national or EU funds | Ministry of labour and social affairs | Adaptation of Ukrainian families with their children (or orphans) in the Czech Republic, incl. preparation for the education of children, consultancy (e.g., for understanding the Czech social system), strengthening mental health, child-care, language courses and other thematic workshops | Czech NGOs that are active in family policy/integration of foreigners/minorities, cities and regions (and their subsidy organisations), social service providers | There have already been two calls – for the year 2022 and year 2023, but it might repeat in the second half of this year, as the Ministry gained funds for this purpose from the UNICEF for 2022 as well as 2023 and not all amount has been distributed so far | Not specified | Not specified |
| Fundraiser to support Ukrainian artists(more info here: <http://www.muzikantivolnanoha.cz/download/fundraiser-for-jobs-for-ua-artists_eng.pdf>) | Ministry of culture/individual artists and supporters | Support for short-term job opportunities in the arts for newly arrived refugees from Ukraine | Ukrainian citizens registered in the Czech Republic (for a specific job position), cultural institutions and organizations, as well as primary art schools, children and youth centres, founders or organizers of leisure activities for children and youth, retirement houses or social service providers | The fundraiser (and related aid campaign) run in the first few months after the Russian invasion of Ukraine but, in our views, funds from the fundraiser can be also distributed in this year | 422,6 EUR (= 10.000 CZK) | 845 EUR (20.000 Czech crowns) |
| Visegrad+ Grants(more info here: [https://www.visegradfund.org/apply/grants/visegrad-plus-grants/)](https://www.visegradfund.org/apply/grants/visegrad-plus-grants/%29) | Visegrad Fund | Democratization and transformation processes in countries from Western Balkan and Eastern Partnership (incl. Ukraine)Cross-border cooperation, sustainable regional development and tourism, democratic values (incl. human rights and minorities, civil society, media freedom), good governance and effectiveness of public policy-making, social developmentUnder [this link](https://www.visegradfund.org/explore/inspirational-projects/?c=0&g=8) or in [this infografic](https://s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/uploads.mangoweb.org/shared-prod/visegradfund.org/uploads/2019/04/V4_EaP_flyer_2019-03-20_online.pdf), you can find inspirational projects run in last years. | At least 3 of the Visegrad group (V4) countries (i.e., Czechia, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary) + Ukraine (or other countries from Eastern Partnership or Western Balkan) - the granted projects must be implemented in the EaP or WB region and/or have a strong impact on local communities in at least one of those countriesNGOs, civil society organizations, educational institutions and the public and private actors (incl. local governments) | There are three regular calls per year (on 1 February, 1 June, 1 October) - the project with EaP/WB country/ies can last max. 18 months | Visegrad Grants cover up to 100 % of the project budget with maximum 15% of the requested sum for overheads | There are five criteria to assess the quality of project proposals regardless the amount of grant – project relevance, regional added value of the project (Visegrad substance), quality and impact of the project, adequacy for the funding in relations to the aims and outcomes of the projects, experience of project partners (for more info see here: <https://www.visegradfund.org/apply/grants/>)  |
| Visegrad4Ukraine(more info here: <https://www.visegradfund.org/archive/documents/visegrad-4-ukraine/>) | Visegrad Fund | Integration of Ukrainian refugees in V4 countries - strengthening the capacities of local authorities, public institutions and civil society organizations who provide necessary assistance, and mitigating potential tensions between refugees and local population resulting from a lack of information, language barriers, and social and economic inequalities | One of the V4 countries or UkraineAny legal entity registered in Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, or Ukraine (e.g., municipalities and local governments, schools, institutions of social and health care, NGOs) can apply (individuals or institutions of state administration directly subordinated to the government and its bodies (e.g., ministries, state agencies, embassies, etc.) cannot apply) | It was a special grant in the context of the Russian invasion in Ukraine that lasted only during 2022 – however, due to the continuous Russian-Ukrainian conflict, there might be another call in 2023 or later depending on the development of the conflictThe deadline for submitting grant proposals is announced on the Fund’s website, shall be at least 30 days in advance of the deadline. | Projects can be financed up to 100%, but co-financing is allowed and encouraged | The grants are paid in tranches. There are two tranches for a project at minimum, but the Fund reserves the right to decide on the final number and sizes of tranches. The last tranche (including the Overhead costs) amounts to 20% of the granted sum and is payable only upon the Fund’s acceptance of the Final Report and Financial Report. Whereas the first tranches are sent in advance, the last tranche must be prefinanced by the grantee and, if duly approved, the Fund reimburses the due amount. |

**Additional information on the available funding in the country on the national, regional or local level:**

The Czech Republic is one of the most active countries in solidarity with Ukraine and Ukrainian refugees among EU member states, which have been hugely acknowledged by the representatives of the European Union as well as other European and international organisation (incl. Council of Europe). The country hosted about 500 000 refugees (incl. 50 000 children) from Ukraine and sent humanitarian as well as military aid directly to the Ukraine (with financial support from the EU). Logically, the biggest support was evident at the beginning of the war, i.e. in the first half of 2022, and it stemmed not only from the state institutions or individuals but also from municipalities, towns and regions. It often took the form of humanitarian or financial aid transferred directly to Ukraine, or in the form of accommodation of newly arrived refugees and helping them with basic needs and orientation in the Czech Republic. The accommodation of Ukrainian refugees and their integration in the Czech society, education and labour market were supported by series of national, European or international funds provided by several national ministries, such as Ministry of regional development, Ministry of finance, Ministry of education, Ministry of labour or Ministry of agriculture. Ministry of health, Ministry of agriculture or Ministry of defence also sent out direct aid in the form of medicines, foodstuffs or weapons, respectively. Last but not least, ministry of environment made a memorandum with Ukraine and today its experts regularly consult with Ukrainian part the Czech experiences with implementation of EU Law in specific policy fields, such as directive on industrial emissions or directive on the reduction of plastic products. The Czech cities and regions joint this wave of solidarity and also sent humanitarian supplies to Ukraine. Over time, however, this help faded as the energy crisis and increasing inflation become much more urgent that needs to be solved as soon as possible and with as little negative impact on society and vulnerabilities as possible. Therefore, support from national, regional or local level toward Ukraine mostly moved to the integration of Ukrainian refugees in the Czech Republic. In reduced form, the solidarity returned before the end of the year, i.e., at the beginning of winter time. For instance, Czech town Olomouc sent to Irpin and Chernihiv before Christmas the most needed things, such as food, sleeping bags, blankets, electric heaters or toys for children, which were funded by individuals, four private companies and the city council. Similar steps were taken also by the Olomouc or Liberec regions.

The systematic support from national, regional or local level can return depending on the continuation of conflict in Ukraine. Therefore, the table also summarizes some calls that are currently outdated but can be repeated later.

1. MIT is very active in support for Ukraine. It organises crowdfunding campaign, in which sweatshirts with Czech EU presidency statement and other items can be purchased to contribute to the purchase of generators, thermometers, water filtration systems and other equipment that would help repair the damage of Ukraine´s energy infrastructure. The Ministry also established several multilateral platforms, in which possibilities of Czech-Ukrainian (economic) cooperation are discussed among Czech and Ukrainian stakeholders, experts or representatives of national/regional/local level. Such a platform is, for instance, “Business club Ukraine” established in the framework of Czech-Ukrainian Intergovernmental Commission for economic, industrial and scientific-technological cooperation that groups Czech companies with interest to rebuild Ukraine together with bank institutions, associations and Ukrainian representatives from national/regional/local level (more info here: <https://www.businessklubukrajina.cz/>). This is also opportunity for matching Czech and Ukrainian municipalities and their reconstruction needs. Beside these activities at the national level, the MIT also attended, for instance, international fair “ReBuild Ukraine” that took place in Poland in February 2023 and where Czech firms presented their capacities for restoration of Ukrainian infrastructure. Last but not least, the Union of Towns and Municipalities initiated negotiation with the Ministry about a grant that could be used by Czech municipalities for their cooperation with Ukraine. The Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic initiated the negotiations with the MIT about a grant that could be used by Czech municipalities for their cooperation with Ukraine. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. CDA has a specific programme for Ukraine, called “Modernisation of the public education system in Ukraine” (more info here: <http://www.czechaid.cz/en/projekty/modernization-of-the-public-education-system-in-ukraine-ii/>). However, it´s not obvious whether Czech cities can apply. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)