International Labour Organization

▶ GB.353/INS/13

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Developments in the application of the resolution concerning the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine from the perspective of the mandate of the International Labour Organization

▶ Introduction

1. At its 344th Session (March 2022), the Governing Body adopted a resolution concerning the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine from the perspective of the mandate of the International Labour Organization (ILO). [1] Under the resolution, the Office was requested to provide all possible assistance to the tripartite constituents in Ukraine. The same resolution also enacted a temporary suspension of technical cooperation or assistance from the ILO to the Russian Federation, except for humanitarian assistance. Moreover, the Russian Federation's invitations to attend all discretionary meetings were suspended. These included, and still include today, technical meetings and meetings of experts, conferences and seminars whose composition is set by the Governing Body. All other activities in countries supported by the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (DWT/CO–Moscow) continue to be implemented as planned and have expanded based on the emerging needs and priorities of constituents in the subregion.

[1] GB.344/Resolution.

2. At its 352nd Session (October–November 2024), after reviewing the Office's latest report on developments related to the resolution, the Governing Body restated its request to the Director-General to address the needs of constituents in Ukraine and to increase the ILO's efforts to secure resources for Ukraine. The Governing Body also urged the Director-General to intensify resource mobilization efforts for other affected countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. In addition, it called for continued monitoring of the impact of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine on the world of work. This includes the ILO's ongoing collaboration with relevant United Nations (UN) bodies to monitor workers' rights violations, including the situation of maritime and nuclear power plant workers. [2] This report fulfils the Governing Body's request for an update on these matters.

▶ General developments

3. The Russian Federation's military aggression against Ukraine is entering its fourth year, with the hostilities resulting in extensive destruction and exacerbating humanitarian needs both in the Ukrainian territories occupied by the Russian Federation and in the rest of the country. The Russian Federation's actions have resulted in the loss of approximately 9 gigawatts of Ukraine's electricity generation capacity – equivalent to half of the country's winter energy demand, resulting in disruption to business activities and affecting jobs. [3] Moreover, these attacks are endangering the population, which faces the threat of freezing temperatures and limited access to essential health services, water and sanitation. According to the United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU), at least 18 civilians have been killed in attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure, including 2 workers at the facilities. [4] On 25 December 2024, the armed forces of the Russian Federation initiated a large-scale coordinated assault on Ukraine's energy infrastructure, resulting in the death of one energy worker and injuring six civilians. [5] An attack on 8 January 2025 at an industrial facility in Zaporizhzhia resulted in the highest number of civilian casualties in a single incident in almost two years, with many of the victims being workers and bystanders killed or injured while they were leaving the facility or using public transport. [6]

4. Persistent labour shortages are further straining Ukraine's economy. However, despite these obstacles, Ukraine's gross domestic product (GDP) grew by almost 4 per cent in 2024, [7] and the country successfully increased its international reserves to cover five and a half months of future import expenses. [8] Moreover, external financing has been vital in reducing inflation to target levels and managing budget needs. [9] In November 2024, Ukraine suspended the transit

[2] GB.352/PV, para. 713.

[3] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), "Sept. 2024 – Attacks On Ukraine's Electricity Infrastructure Threaten Key Aspects of Life As Winter Approaches", 19 September 2024.

[4] HRMMU, "Attacks on Ukraine's Energy Infrastructure: Harm to the Civilian Population", September 2024.

[5] United Nations: Ukraine, "Massive Attack on Ukraine's Energy Infrastructure Damages and Disrupts Essential Services", 26 December 2024.

[6] HRMMU, "Zaporizhzhia Attack Marks Highest Civilian Casualties in Two Years; Glide Bombs Drive 30% Rise in 2024", 9 January 2025.

[7] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *OECD Economic Outlook, Volume 2024 Issue 2: Ukraine*, 2024.

[8] National Bank of Ukraine, "Ukraine's International Reserves Increased by 8% to USD 43.8 Billion in 2024", 7 January 2025.

[9] European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), "Regional Economic Prospects".

of natural gas from the Russian Federation, with financial implications for Ukraine and other countries in the region.

5. As of December 2024, 3.6 million people were still internally displaced, while 6.8 million Ukrainians had sought refuge abroad. More than 4.2 million of those who have fled Ukraine have received temporary protection status in the European Union (EU), with approximately 77 per cent of them being women or children (45 per cent women and 32 per cent children). [10] As at November 2024, 60 per cent of the 265,000 Ukrainian refugees registered as unemployed under the EU temporary protection scheme were women aged 25 and above, while 12.08 per cent were under the age of 25. By December 2024, around 4.3 million people had voluntarily returned to their homes in Ukraine after being displaced for at least two weeks, with 26 per cent returning from abroad. [11]

6. In 2024, countries in Eastern Europe experienced diverse economic trends. The Republic of Moldova's economy is showing gradual signs of recovery despite challenges related to the ongoing conflict, with forecasts projecting a growth rate of 2.6 per cent in 2024 and a drop in inflation. [12] Bulgaria experienced a 2.1 per cent real growth in GDP compared with 2023, while Romania's economy slowed, with a real growth rate of 1.4 per cent. [13] In both Bulgaria and Romania, declining energy and food prices are expected to lead to a drop in headline inflation throughout 2025. In Eastern Europe, labour markets faced challenges due to the prolonged effects of the war in Ukraine and persistent labour shortages in a number of Eastern European countries, including Romania. [14] These disruptions have resulted in the displacement of a significant number of workers, while economic uncertainties continue to impact employment rates and wage growth in the region. [15] Bulgaria experienced a robust growth in real wages of 14 per cent in 2024 driven by increases in the minimum wage, while real wages in Romania were hampered by rising inflation. [16]

7. The GDP of the Caucasus and Central Asia subregion is estimated to have increased by 4.9 per cent in 2024 and is projected to grow by 5.3 per cent in 2025. [17] Economic growth in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan slowed in 2024 due to stagnation in the mining sector. However, in both countries, strong remittance inflows, rising wages and an increase in tourism stimulated aggregate demand, positively impacting the services sector. High commodity prices, investments in infrastructure and market-oriented reforms are also projected to contribute to increased growth in 2025. [18] High inflation, which impacted low-wage earners and their

[10] International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Measuring Progress Towards Durable Solutions To Internal Displacement In Ukraine: Synthesis Report On A Joint Analytical Framework – January 2025*, 2025. See also Eurostat, "Temporary protection for 4.2 million people in November", 15 January 2025.

[11] IOM, Global Data Institute Displacement Tracking Matrix, "Ukraine – Conditions of Return Assessment Factsheet – Round 9 (December 2024)".

[12] International Monetary Fund (IMF), "IMF Executive Board Concludes the Sixth Reviews Under the Extended Credit Facility and Extended Fund Facility, and Second Review Under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility for the Republic of Moldova", 17 December 2024.

[13] EBRD, "Regional Economic Prospects".

[14] European Labour Authority, *EURES Report on Labour Shortages and Surpluses 2023*, 2024.

[15] ILO, *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2025*, 2025.

[16] EBRD, "Regional Economic Prospects".

[17] Asian Development Bank (ADB), *Asian Development Outlook (ADO) December 2024: Steady Growth Amid a Shifting Global Policy Landscape*, December 2024. For the purposes of the ADB statistics, the South Caucasus and Central Asia comprises Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

[18] EBRD, "Regional Economic Prospects".

families during 2021 and 2022, is expected to drop to 6.9 per cent in 2024 and 2025, down from 13.1 per cent in 2022. [19] These economic patterns are reflected in labour markets. In Central and Western Asia, youth employment improved between 2019 and 2023, [20] with an increase of 1.1 per cent in the share of young people in employment and a 3.9 per cent decrease in the youth unemployment rate. The NEET (not in education, employment or training) rate also decreased by 2.7 percentage points in the same period. [21] Rising wages supported higher spending, with a 5.2 per cent growth in real wages in Kyrgyzstan between January and July 2024, while an increase in public sector salaries, pensions and the minimum wage in Tajikistan led to a growth of 9.1 per cent in the first half of 2024. [22]

Impact on employment, livelihoods and enterprises in Ukraine

8. Ukraine continues to experience fragile economic growth, with inflationary pressures creating significant challenges for people's livelihoods. In November 2024, consumer inflation rose to 11.2 per cent year on year, while core inflation increased to 9.3 per cent. This rise was fuelled by a reduced food supply, higher production costs and the delayed impacts of a prior depreciation in the exchange rate. The National Bank of Ukraine anticipated that inflation would increase further in December 2024. [23] Despite better-than-expected GDP growth, the employment situation in Ukraine remains dire, with at least 1.8 million more Ukrainians in poverty since the start of the war, resulting in a total of 9 million people living in poverty in the country in 2024. [24]

9. Ukraine's private sector has demonstrated impressive resilience, with exports resuming despite persistent challenges, such as the financial instability of small businesses. Nevertheless, confidence in the business environment is still lacking. Companies indicate a negative economic outlook due to ongoing power outages, a lack of skilled workers and rising operational expenses, particularly in the manufacturing, services and construction sectors. [25, 26] Moreover, attacks on critical infrastructure, including ports and transportation networks and energy facilities, have surged, further threatening Ukraine's exports. [27] Regarding the situation of seafarers, the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, in its report published in February 2025, recalled that it had noted with deep concern the impact that situations such as "the war in Ukraine had had on the protection of seafarers' rights as laid out in the MLC, 2006. The Committee had called on governments to recognize seafarers as key workers, acknowledging their pivotal role in the functioning of supply chains and recalled that it is precisely at times of crisis that the protective coverage of the MLC, 2006, assumes its full significance and needs to be most scrupulously applied." In this context, the Committee welcomed the unprecedented resolution adopted in July 2024 by the

[19] IMF, "Regional Economic Outlook: Middle East and Central Asia, October 2024: Navigating the Evolving Geoeconomic Landscape".

[20] Central and Western Asia includes Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Georgia, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

[21] ILO, *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2025*, 2025.

[22] EBRD, "Regional Economic Prospects".

[23] National Bank of Ukraine, *Macroeconomic and Monetary Review: January 2025*, 2025.

[24] World Bank Group, "The World Bank in Ukraine: Overview".

[25] National Bank of Ukraine, *Monthly Business Outlook Survey, December 2024*, January 2025.

[26] National Bank of Ukraine, "Businesses Weaken Their Expectations for Their Economic Performance for the Season – Business Outlook Survey in December", January 2025.

[27] World Food Programme, "WFP Ukraine White Paper – Attacks on ports", December 2024.

United Nations Human Rights Council on Promoting and protecting the enjoyment of human rights by seafarers.[28] Despite these obstacles, there are areas of resilience. For instance, Ukrainian companies are broadening their operations into Central and Western Europe in pursuit of stability and new market opportunities. At the end of October 2024, the European Parliament approved a loan to Ukraine of up to €35 billion aimed at bolstering economic recovery and rebuilding infrastructure.[29]

10. Due to the unstable electricity supply, there is a high risk of exposure to radiation and the potential risk of a nuclear accident at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP).[30] The ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations at its last session in November–December 2024 noted the Governing Body's decision of November 2024 urging the Russian Federation to meet all the obligations following from its ratification of ILO Conventions, including the Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 (No. 115), in relation to the exposure of workers currently performing work under its control to ionizing radiations in the course of their work,[31] and recalled that a safe and healthy working environment is a fundamental principle and right for all and urged the Government to take all necessary measures to ensure the effective implementation of the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), and the Convention No. 115, including the protection of workers against ionizing radiations in the course of their work. In a letter dated 4 October 2024 addressed to the ILO Director-General, Mr Høie, General Secretary of IndustriALL Global Union, reported the enforced disappearance of at least ten workers at the ZNPP and called on the ILO to help ensure their safe release.[32] The Nuclear Power and Industry Workers' Union of Ukraine (Atomprofspilka) confirmed to the Office on 10 January 2025 that the whereabouts of these abducted workers remains unknown. The Office continues to follow up on this matter with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the HRMMU. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), as at 18 November 2024 there had been 2,134 attacks on healthcare workers, resulting in elevated risks for such workers and severely impacting healthcare delivery, with the total number of deaths rising from 24 in 2023 to 65 in 2024, affecting both patients and workers.[33]

[28] Current Developments on Maritime Matters, Extract of the General Report – Committee of Experts on the Application of Convention and Recommendations (CEACR), 95th Session, 2024.

[29] European Parliament, "Parliament approves up to €35 billion loan to Ukraine backed by Russian assets".

[30] IAEA, "IAEA Report Highlights Two Years of Efforts to Prevent an Accident at Ukraine's Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant".

[31] GB.352/PV, para. 713(d).

[32] Letter of 4 October 2024 of Mr Atle Høie, General Secretary, IndustriALL Global Union to Mr Gilbert F. Houngbo, Director-General, ILO.

[33] WHO, "1000 days of war in Ukraine: resilience in health response, recovery and reform efforts despite attacks and ongoing challenges".

▶ Impact on the ILO's constituents and on the implementation of the ILO Transitional Cooperation Strategy for Ukraine 2024–25 and development cooperation in Ukraine

Government

11. At the request of the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Social Policy, among others, the Office continues to support the implementation of Chapters 19 and 2 of the EU labour-related acquis to ensure alignment with international labour standards.

12. In this respect, the latest updates are:

(a) finalization of a draft law regarding the settlement of collective labour disputes, drafted by a tripartite working group established under the National Mediation and Conciliation Service, aligned with ILO technical recommendations. The draft law has been proposed for discussion by the Parliament of Ukraine (Verkhovna Rada);

(b) submission of ILO technical comments on the draft labour code; [34]

(c) preparation of an ILO technical note on representativeness;

(d) ongoing work in developing Ukraine's actuarial model, with data gaps being effectively addressed;

(e) formulation of the Employment Strategy for Ukraine;

(f) development of the Internally Displaced Person Integration Strategy for Ukraine;

(g) continued provision of technical support to the Ministry of Youth and Sports for implementing the Youth Guarantee scheme in Ukraine.

13. The State Employment Service (SES) continues to invest a large share of expenditure in active labour market policies. In 2024, around 593,820 individuals, including women, young individuals, persons with disabilities, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and war veterans, received services. A total of 249,620 jobseekers were job-placed, including 15,173 IDPs, through the compensation programmes for employers. At the same time, 41,429 persons received training or retraining, including 9,523 war veterans, IDPs and persons with disabilities. In total, 32,112 men and women participated in public works programmes, and 15,173 were placed in jobs under subsidized employment programmes. Moreover, the SES awarded some 22,981 vouchers to support the reskilling and upskilling of jobseekers and enhanced service delivery to IDPs, war veterans and persons with disabilities by establishing the "single window for services" platform aimed at integrating support from new non-governmental organizations. In 2024, 1,661 employers were compensated for reasonably adapting workplaces for 1,933 persons with disabilities. Lastly, the SES launched a mobile application to facilitate access to registration, job searches and enrolment in training, thereby promoting more efficient and inclusive service provision.

14. Since its launch in July 2022, the business grant programme eRobota (eWork) has benefited more than 24,000 entrepreneurs with grants to start or expand their businesses through government investments totalling over 11 billion Ukrainian hryvnias (UAH). This includes 1,123

[34] The Government of Ukraine shared with the Office the final and transitional provisions to the draft labour code on 27 December 2024.

grants amounting to 525 million UAH specifically for war veterans and their families. The programme has generated over 60,000 jobs, with 60 per cent of the funding recovered by the State through tax contributions. [35]

15. The State Labour Service (SLS) has adjusted its operations to align with martial law by enhancing its preventive services while having limited enforcement capabilities. In 2024, 902 inspectors responded to 24,632 written complaints and offered 187,237 online consultations. To combat undeclared work, the SLS conducted 102,594 informational visits, leading to 247,460 formalized labour contracts. During their visits, the inspectors discovered 706 working children and provided legal advice to employers on preventing child labour. Preventive efforts have also focused on occupational safety and health, including over 274,900 activities that reached 663,800 workers. Similar initiatives have raised awareness about preventing discrimination, violence and harassment in the workplace. As a result, 168 enterprises included gender equality clauses in their collective agreements in 2024, while 259 introduced initiatives to prevent discrimination on the basis of HIV status. The SLS has also provided practical guidance on psychosocial support through 94,700 workplace visits and 4,800 advocacy events, resulting in the implementation of mental health and psychosocial support measures in approximately 1,220 enterprises.

16. In the second half of 2024, progress was made on the actuarial valuation of the Pension Fund of Ukraine, involving rounds of data extraction and refinement. The ILO actuarial pension model was updated with the latest data, applying assumptions on the long-term trajectory of the economy, labour market and demographics, which produced an initial baseline scenario reflecting long-term trends under Ukraine's current pension programme. The findings were shared with the Ministry of Social Policy in late 2024 for feedback. After incorporating this feedback, further refinements will be made to strengthen the baseline and prepare simulations for potential policy changes in early 2025.

17. The Office continued to support the Government of Ukraine by conducting workshops aimed at ratification of the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181), the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended (MLC, 2006), and the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003, as amended (No. 185). The Office has also advocated for ratification of the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190), as well as the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183).

Trade unions and employers' organizations

18. The Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine (FPU) and the Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Ukraine (KVPU) continue to face severe economic challenges due to the ongoing war, as many workers have either joined the military or fled the country for safety, resulting in loss of membership dues and revenues. Since the start of the war, the FPU has reported a 50 per cent drop in dues-paying members, and 4,400 primary trade unions have ceased their activities as the companies in which they were registered are no longer operating. The FPU and the KVPU have launched an urgent call to reopen social dialogue with the National Tripartite Social and Economic Council (NTSER).

19. To mitigate these challenges, the ILO has supported trade unions in developing outreach and services for their members and vulnerable workers, including IDPs, persons with disabilities

[35] Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, "eRobota: Almost 24,000 Entrepreneurs Received Grants for Business Development from the State".

and war veterans. Two trade union hubs are being established in the frontline regions of Kharkiv and Dnipro. The ILO has also supported Ukrainian agricultural trade unions in assisting farm workers with hazards relating to mines and unexploded ordnance. In addition, the FPU, the KVPU and the Marine Transport Workers' Trade Union of Ukraine (MTWTU) have received training on ways to influence just transition processes in the context of the reconstruction of Ukraine in line with the country's international commitments.

20. On 19 December 2024, the FPU adopted a number of important decisions setting the agenda for the coming year to ensure the participation of trade unions in the reconstruction of the Ukrainian economy and in European integration processes. In line with these efforts, the women and youth committees became statutory bodies of the FPU, ensuring the representation of youth and women in FPU elected bodies.

21. Military conscription and the challenges associated with the renewal of passports and seafarers' record books continue to impact Ukrainian seafarers' access to the employment market. In this challenging environment, the MTWTU remains proactive in advocating for seafarers' rights, including by urging the Government to ratify the MLC, 2006.

22. The three national-level employers' organizations – the Federation of Employers of Ukraine (FEU), the Confederation of Employers of Ukraine (CEU) and the Association of Employers' Organizations of Ukraine (AEOU) – remain operational, despite being severely impacted by the ongoing war. Official membership numbers are stable, but the financial situation remains precarious, with income streams largely dependent on the recovery of their members and of the economy. The ILO continues to support Ukrainian employer and business membership organizations (EBMOs), with some organizations reporting a positive trend in fee collection and membership numbers. The focus has predominantly been on bolstering their services, which has proven to be the most effective strategy for delivering value and supporting members under the current conditions. Several activities have been launched or are being initiated that are primarily funded through the ILO project supported by Belgium and the ILO regular budget supplementary account (RBSA) project on promoting inclusive and sustainable reconstruction in Ukraine through social dialogue. These activities largely build on prior achievements and are strategically aimed at scaling up and diversifying existing EBMO services.

23. The FEU is planning to launch a new service to assist industrial companies in restoring their production capacity, procuring equipment or spare parts at favourable market prices, and integrating into global supply and value chains via business matchmaking events and trade fairs. A parallel government initiative has also been launched to facilitate the provision of services and machinery to FEU members and ensure coordinated efforts between the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Building on the success of the help desk established with ILO support in 2023–24, the new service is also aimed at expanding and enhancing the support available to industrial companies.

24. The CEU, which is part of the ILO Global Business and Disability Network, is prioritizing the expansion and diversification of its consultancy services related to the employment of persons with disabilities. Through its online platform established with ILO support, the CEU provides employers with information and guidance on recruitment and workplace accommodation, and best practices for fostering work environments where no one is left behind. A new component will be added to the platform on the post-recruitment integration and retention of persons with disabilities. Furthermore, the CEU is actively promoting the national business and disability network "Together", which it established with the objective of uniting businesses across Ukraine in sharing knowledge, addressing employment barriers and advocating for policies that create more inclusive workplaces.

25. The AEOU continues to engage actively in piloting and expanding the implementation of childcare services under the ongoing Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) RBSA project. The AEOU also continues to explore ways of developing and implementing workplace psychosocial support programmes, which are increasingly needed in the current context. In addition, it is preparing to launch a new service aimed at supporting businesses in transitioning to independent and reliable alternative energy sources through a dedicated energy solutions hub. This initiative primarily targets small and medium-sized enterprises, which are particularly vulnerable to disruptions in energy supply but often lack the expertise to adopt alternative energy systems.

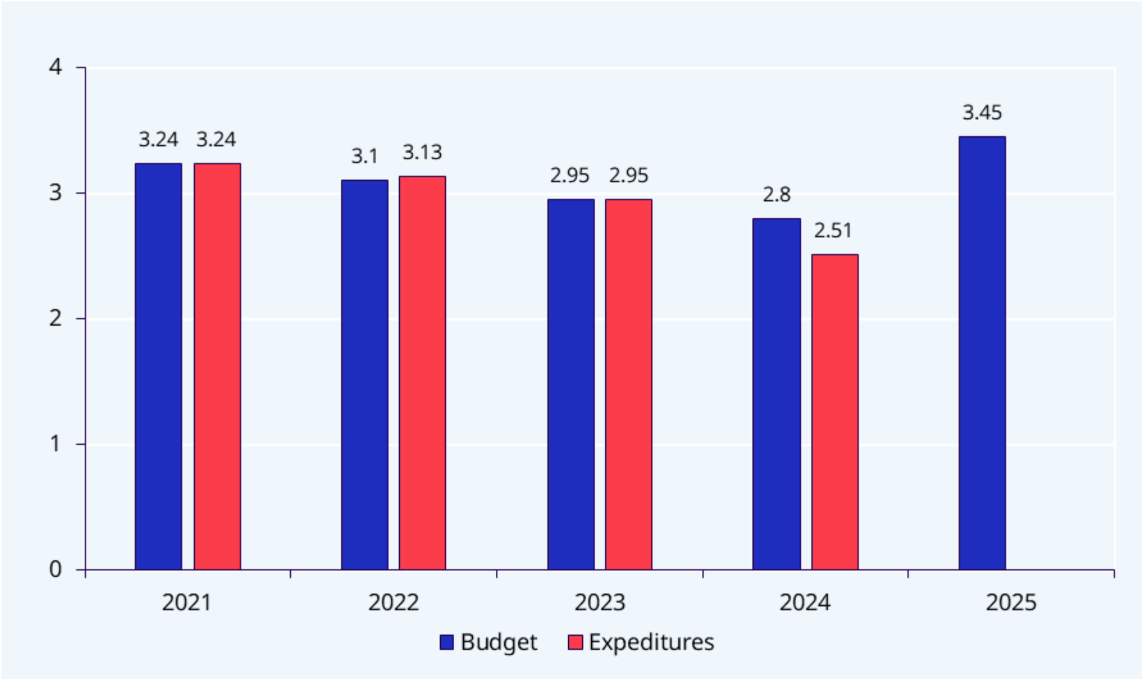
26. In November 2024, the ILO facilitated a meeting between representatives of Ukrainian employers' and workers' organizations and the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Ukraine, to discuss the important role that the social partners can play in the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). The meeting highlighted the critical role of the social partners in Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction efforts, outlining shared priorities such as strengthening social dialogue, enhancing the protection of labour rights during the war, strategically investing in skills development to address labour shortages, and advancing joint recovery efforts to rebuild back better. [36]

Development cooperation

27. The ILO's work in Ukraine is funded both by regular budget resources and, primarily, by voluntary contributions from development cooperation partners, including the RBSA. RBSA funding for childcare is scheduled to conclude in March 2025, which has prompted the Ministry of Social Policy and the Ministry of Education and Science to create a legal framework for work-based childcare solutions. This initiative has informed government policies on parental leave and preschool education reform and enhanced employment opportunities for women through affordable childcare, supported by renewed funding from the SIDA as of November 2024. The overall development cooperation budget in Ukraine has risen to its highest ever level in 2025, with an increase of 23.2 per cent compared with 2024 (see figure 1).

[36] ILO, "UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Ukraine Matthias Schmale meets with Ukrainian workers' and employers' organizations on Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction".

▶ **Figure 1. Development cooperation budget and expenditures in Ukraine, 2021–25** (in US$ million)



Note: Data as at 27 January 2025.
Source: ILO, "ILO Development Cooperation Dashboard".

28. The Office recently launched an RBSA project on social dialogue aimed at strengthening the capabilities of the tripartite constituents in Ukraine to effectively channel reform and recovery efforts through social dialogue mechanisms. The project fulfils a critical role in strengthening the foundation for recovery and an extensive labour reform process, paving the way for more extensive development cooperation. The Office leverages all opportunities for engagement with potential development cooperation partners, including through the annual consultations organized by the Multilateral Partnerships and Development Cooperation Department. Multiple project concept notes are currently being developed to support the implementation of the ILO Transitional Cooperation Strategy for Ukraine 2024–25. Furthermore, consultations with the European Commission and relevant Directorates to provide support for labour reforms and social dialogue are ongoing. The Office facilitated a visit by the Deputy Minister of Economy to Brussels in November 2024, where a series of meetings was held with relevant ILO and EU experts to highlight the connection between international labour standards and the EU labour-related acquis in the labour reform process.

29. Two projects, funded by Belgium and Denmark, continue to support the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) programme by training new SIYB trainers and future entrepreneurs. Since its inception in Ukraine in 2019, the SIYB programme has equipped 4,804 potential entrepreneurs (70 per cent of whom are women) and supported the creation of 94 businesses with the provision of grants. Notably, since the imposition of martial law, 1,856 potential entrepreneurs (80 per cent of whom are women) have received training, leading to the establishment of 52 businesses. Two local employment partnerships have been launched in the Odesa and Mykolaiv regions with funding from Denmark, aimed at fostering local labour market recovery, assisting vulnerable groups in accessing reskilling and upskilling training programmes and supporting active labour market policies.

30. Furthermore, with support from Canada, the Office is working to facilitate labour law reform in Ukraine, including on enhancing compliance through effective application and reporting of international labour standards by the Government of Ukraine. This includes the provision of technical feedback on the draft labour code and other labour laws, as well as initial training for 30 government officials on preparing national reports on the application of international labour standards, and the implementation of a pilot training curriculum on international labour standards for 25 judges, resulting in an adapted curriculum for the National School of Judges of Ukraine. This work is also bolstering the ILO's collaboration with the HRMMU, highlighting the connection between international labour standards, human rights and international humanitarian law, with the first training for 30 HRMMU staff conducted in January 2025, including on how to identify violations.

31. The ILO Country Office for Ukraine continues to actively engage in joint projects, initiatives and programmatic approaches with other UN agencies and bodies such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and UN-Women. Furthermore, the ILO is collaborating with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in developing a national programme to gather data on the impact of green jobs on the reintegration of war veterans into the labour market, with the results to be published in a forthcoming study on the subject. Lastly, due to its proactive participation in the UN Country Team, the ILO now leads one of the four Strategic Results Groups of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG), focusing specifically on decent jobs and economic growth. A town hall meeting with the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Ukraine, was held in November 2024 to present the ILO's initiatives in Ukraine under the ILO Transitional Cooperation Strategy for Ukraine 2024–25. The meeting revealed key synergies between the ILO strategy and the UNSDCF and highlighted the ILO's contribution to UN recovery and reconstruction efforts. The ILO has also collaborated with the WHO to address mental health and psychosocial support needs for both employers and workers, as emphasized in recent discussions with social partners.

Situation of ILO staff in Ukraine

32. Staff safety, security and well-being remain a top priority for the Office. In the context of increased aerial attacks on Kyiv and frequent and long-lasting electricity outages, the Office is working to minimize the impact on the safety and well-being of staff and their dependants. The Office has equipped all staff members in Ukraine with the necessary appliances for staff well-being and to facilitate work continuation in line with the guidance of the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) and of the Office. Nevertheless, the prevailing security situation is having a significant impact on staff mental health, causing major work disruptions and additional stress on the team to deliver under extraordinary circumstances. The Office has granted all national staff additional days of special leave to recover and recuperate from sleep deprivation. The ILO contributes its share to the UN Stress Counsellor services and makes them available to its staff, along with ILO internal Stress Counsellor services. The Office has facilitated group counselling sessions with UNDSS and ILO stress counsellors, and strongly encourages individual counselling sessions.

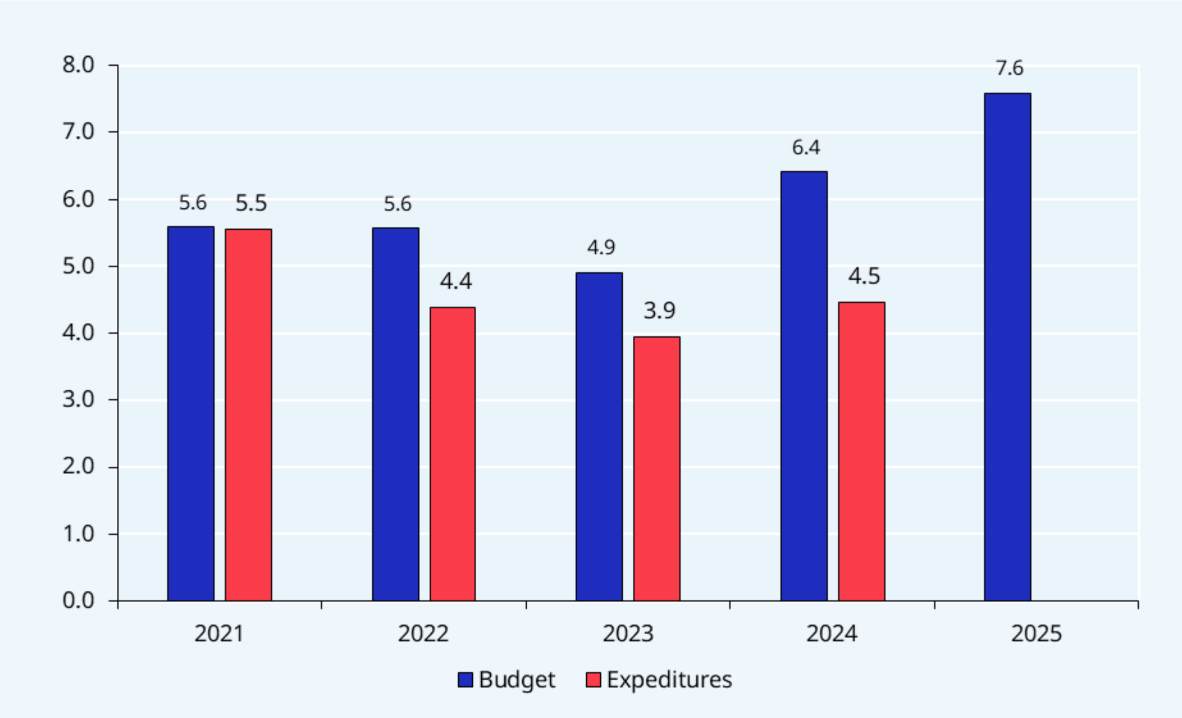
33. The Office is searching for new premises both to accommodate the growing team and due to the increasing security threats. Flexible working arrangements have been introduced for the entire team to address this situation. Furthermore, the signature of the host country agreement, which is being negotiated since September 2023, would significantly enhance the Office's ability to deliver assistance to its constituents and ensure greater staff protection.

34. The Office's duty of care extends to all ILO staff, including those in the DWT/CO–Moscow. Regular town hall meetings are held to discuss staff safety and concerns. Relocation options have been offered to Moscow-based staff, including temporarily relocation to Budapest (DWT/CO–Budapest).

▶ Impact on ILO constituents, on the implementation of Decent Work Country Programmes and on development cooperation in other affected countries in the region

35. In other affected countries in the region where the ILO has an operational presence, the development cooperation budget has increased following an initial drop in 2022–23 (see figure 2). The only exception is Georgia, where there was a pause in development cooperation in 2024.

▶ **Figure 2. Development cooperation budget and expenditures in affected countries with long-standing ILO operational presence, 2021–25** (in US$ million)



Note: Affected countries in the region include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation (until 2022, when expenditures amounted to only 60 per cent of the budget), Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Data as at 27 January 2025.
Source: ILO, "ILO Development Cooperation Dashboard".

36. Under the ILO DWT/CO–Budapest, the ILO has significantly boosted support in the Republic of Moldova for projects on employment, gender equality, working conditions and ongoing labour market reforms. Moreover, during the RBSA field visit to the Republic of Moldova from 15 to 17 October 2024, relevant RBSA partners gained an insight into the progress being achieved under the Republic of Moldova's Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP), which guides the ILO's efforts in the country. The RBSA partners had an opportunity to engage with government officials, social partners and local communities to better understand the labour market and social challenges faced by the Republic of Moldova. Key project sites were visited to observe how RBSA contributions are supporting the implementation of the ILO's DWCP. The active involvement of partners during the visit provided valuable feedback and insights, helping the ILO to further refine and expand cooperation efforts in the Republic of Moldova and beyond. With RBSA funding, the ILO has been supporting the development of a national integrated and gender-responsive formalization strategy since September 2024, with active engagement from tripartite constituents in Georgia. Additionally, the ILO is implementing a joint project with the WHO to map and enhance community-based care services for persons with disabilities while also promoting improved working conditions for care workers in Georgia.

37. The ILO DWT/CO–Moscow continues to provide technical cooperation and assistance to all countries in the subregion, except for the Russian Federation and Belarus, with necessary adjustments to ensure service delivery. [37] This includes addressing the decent work challenges related to the cotton harvest in Turkmenistan through a project funded by the United States Department of State. In Uzbekistan, the ILO is leading a joint UN programme in collaboration with the UNDP and UNICEF under the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions. Additionally, a joint project with UNICEF and the World Bank under the Global Accelerator and the World Bank Social Protection and Jobs Compass (M-GA) is under development. The ILO, the UNDP and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) are also collaborating on the joint programme Promoting Just Energy Transition in Uzbekistan. The diversification of the funding portfolio reflects the contributions from a range of donors, including the UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund, the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the multinational clothing company Inditex, and the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in addition to other ILO development cooperation partners. Kazakhstan has started to provide domestic financing for the implementation of the tripartite road map to promote decent work in the country, signed in June 2024.

▶ Areas for further action

38. The ILO will continue consolidating its support for Ukraine and neighbouring countries by building on its current activities and strengthening partnerships for development. Advocacy efforts are focused on ensuring greater participation of social partners in the Ukraine Recovery Conference to be held in Rome in July 2025, aimed at promoting inclusive decision-making in the recovery process.

39. Efforts will be intensified in Ukraine to reintegrate IDPs and returnees, facilitate the participation of women in the labour market and address the impact of health conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder on demobilized military personnel and their support networks. These actions are aimed at stabilizing livelihoods, advancing the country's economic recovery and strengthening its resilience. A new proposal under the Director-General's crisis response initiative will seek to rapidly reskill and upskill women and vulnerable people to address labour market needs and create pathways to employment.

40. The ILO is developing projects to support key sectors such as energy and agriculture, with discussions already under way with international partners. A proposed energy sector initiative

[37] For further details, see GB.347/INS/16 and GB.348/INS/5/2.

will focus on protecting workers, improving working conditions and fostering skills development for a green and decentralized energy future. Similarly, a concept note shared with the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food outlines strategies to develop skills, address safety and health, and create sustainable jobs in the agriculture sector, prioritizing war veterans, women, persons with disabilities and displaced persons.

Draft decision

41. **In the light of the developments in Ukraine outlined in document GB.353/INS/13 and the resolution concerning the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine from the perspective of the mandate of the International Labour Organization (ILO), adopted at its 344th Session (March 2022), and taking into account the discussions held and the guidance provided during its 353rd Session, the Governing Body:**

(a) noted the information provided in the document;

(b) reiterated its most profound concern at the continuing aggression by the Russian Federation, aided by the Belarusian Government, against Ukraine, and at the impact that this aggression is having on the tripartite constituents – workers, employers and the democratically elected Government – in Ukraine, and on the world of work beyond Ukraine;

(c) urged the Russian Federation again to immediately and unconditionally cease its aggression and withdraw its troops from Ukraine;

(d) urged the Russian Federation, in line with the request made by the Committee of Experts at its 95th Session (25 November to 7 December 2024), to take all necessary measures to ensure the effective implementation of the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), and of the Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 (No. 115), including the protection of workers against ionizing radiations in the course of their work; and to ensure the scrupulous implementation of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended (MLC, 2006);

(e) reiterated its unwavering support for the tripartite constituents in Ukraine, and requested the Director-General to continue to respond to the constituents' needs in Ukraine and to expand the ILO's resource mobilization efforts, including in forthcoming international donor conferences on recovery and reconstruction;

(f) requested the Director-General to continue to enhance resource mobilization efforts for other affected countries across Eastern Europe and Central Asia;

(g) requested the Director-General to continue to monitor the impact on the world of work of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine and to report to the Governing Body at its 354th Session (June 2025) on developments in the light of the resolution, including the ILO's continued engagement with the relevant United Nations bodies involved in monitoring human rights violations and the situation of maritime and nuclear workers.