

ANALYTICAL SUMMARY OF THE WEBINAR

TRANSPORT AND EU INTEGRATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

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CHANGES THAT AFFECT EVERY CITIZEN

Core Thesis: European integration is not merely an agreement between governments; it is a direct transformation of citizens' quality of life, starting at the local level: on roads, at bus stops, and in transport services. For Ukraine, particularly given the large-scale invasion and significant destruction of the transport sector (roads, bridges, port infrastructure), alignment with European standards is not just a requirement, but a **critical prerequisite for attracting reconstruction funding** and ensuring economic activity.

I. THE EU INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK: DEPTH OF TRANSFORMATION

1. EVOLUTION AND SCALE OF LEGISLATIVE ADAPTATION

Stage	Period	Essence and Scope of Transformation
Association Agreement (AA)	2014–2017	The first step toward political and economic rapprochement, which did not imply membership. Required the implementation of approximately 50 key directives in the transport sector to open markets.
Candidacy and Accession Negotiations	Since 2022	Transition to full integration. The transport chapter requires the adaptation of over 500 acts of the <i>acquis communautaire</i> (the body of EU law).
Negotiating Framework	–	Determines that success depends on practical implementation, not just the adoption of laws, and adherence to the principles of the rule of law and anti-corruption.

2. THE THREE PILLARS OF EUROPEAN TRANSPORT LEGISLATION

All EU legislation in the transport sector (road, rail, air, maritime, and inland waterways) falls into three key categories, which must become a practical norm for Ukrainian communities:

1. Social Standards and Public Service Obligations:

- **Labour and Safety:** Regulation of drivers' working hours (Directives 2002/15/EC and Regulation 561/2006) to prevent fatigue and accidents.
- **Accessibility and Fairness:** Ensuring transport services for all citizens (people with disabilities, the elderly, residents of remote areas). The key instrument is **Regulation 1370/2007 (Public Service Obligation)**, which allows local authorities to organize and fund social routes.

2. Technical Interoperability:

- **Principle:** Ensuring a single system where all transport elements (from trains to electronic tickets) operate under unified technical rules. This is the core of European logistics.
- **Impact at the Local Level:** Every infrastructure project, from road repair to communal transport procurement, must meet European technical standards to qualify for EU funding.

3. Safety and Environment:

- **Road Infrastructure Safety:** Mandatory **safety audits** before construction or reconstruction (Directive 2008/96/EC). This eliminates hazardous features such as left turns or pedestrian crossings on expressways that are still common in Ukraine.
- **Ecology and Energy Efficiency:** Mandatory implementation of emission standards, establishment of eco-zones, development of electric transport, and energy-efficient lighting (including bus stops).

II. FUNDING AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

1. THE TEN-T NETWORK AND DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL HUBS

Transport infrastructure does not exist in isolation; it is the "circulatory system" of the economy.

- **TEN-T (Trans-European Transport Network):** The inclusion of Ukraine in the updated TEN-T map since 2023 positions Ukrainian cities as key hubs. This opens up priority access to EU infrastructure financing mechanisms, notably the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).
- **Multimodality and Hubs:** The core development principle is multimodality (combining different transport modes for passengers and freight). **Regional transport hubs** (e.g., integrating a railway station with a bus terminal, taxis, and cycling infrastructure) make communities more attractive to business and tourism.
- **The "Last Mile" Principle:** The transport system must be planned to ensure easy access from any point in the community (the last mile) to major TEN-T corridors.

2. ATTRACTING FUNDING AND MENTAL TRANSFORMATION

Attracting funding from International Financial Institutions (EIB, EBRD) or through the Ukraine Facility (Pillar 2) directly depends on the alignment of projects with European logic.

- **Key Requirement:** European institutions demand **systemic planning** and adherence to norms (safety audits, EIA) from communities even at the stage of preparing project documentation.
- **Historical Experience:** Although Ukrainian standards began implementing European rules (e.g., road safety audits) after 2014, the requirement imposed by donors made this process mandatory in practice. This reflects a transition that demands a **"break with the old mentality"** regarding infrastructure planning.
- **Effect of Strategic Planning:** Communities possessing advanced strategic documents, such as **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs)**, receive priority support. The experience of Lviv, Vinnytsia, and Zhytomyr proves that SUMPs successfully attract EIB funds for the development of urban electric transport and infrastructure.

III. PRACTICAL STEPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNITIES

To ensure high-quality reconstruction and development, communities must take the following steps:

- 1. Proactive Project Preparation:** Do not wait, but actively develop quality project proposals that comply with EU standards, as resources are often available but ready projects are not.
- 2. Moving Beyond Car-Centrism:** Urban planning documentation in Ukraine often relies on the logic of a planned economy (road widening). It is necessary to transition to people-centric planning and micro-mobility.
 - Example: Planning must account for the needs of citizens with special requirements (e.g., mothers with strollers), ensuring barrier-free access from the stop to the shop or home.
- 3. Strategic Vision:** Development strategies must be realistic, based on assessing the community's potential and economic growth points. It is necessary to define how transport infrastructure can serve this economic development.
 - Note: Strategies should not be generic but must be tailored to the community's unique economic profile.
- 4. Use of PPP Instruments (Public-Private Partnership):** Develop PPP mechanisms to implement projects that meet the needs of business and society, thereby attracting private investment where state resources may be limited.
- 5. Local Capacity Development:** Establish local teams dedicated to project preparation and utilize technical assistance (through donor programmes) to build or strengthen these teams.
- 6. Advocacy at the National Level:** Actively demand that the central government accelerates the adoption of EU integration draft laws (e.g., Regulation 1370/2007) and ensures transparency in planning processes.

Conclusion: The readiness of communities to implement European logic is the main factor determining the speed of reconstruction and Ukraine's integration into the EU.

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