

IWO visits Kyiv, Zhytomyr and Poltava within the SUR project

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On March 31 – April 3, 2025, IWO team visited Ukraine as a part of SUR project.

As we informed before, IWO e.V. joined the project “Strengthening of Urban Resilience in the Areas of Supply Infrastructure and Housing in Ukraine” (SUR) for 2025-2026, which is part of German Transitional Development Assistance, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

On March 31, 2025, executive board member of IWO e.V. Knut Hoeller participated in the workshop “Strengthening Housing Solutions in Ukraine: A Collaborative Approach Workshop 2025” in Kyiv, organized by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ), the Ministry for Development of Territories and communities of Ukraine and other partners. Upon the invitation from BMZ, he contributed to the panel “Innovative Housing Solutions: construction and management of affordable housing (EU and Ukraine)”, presenting the German model of the municipal rental housing, its advantages



*Photo 1. Knut Hoeller at
the “Strengthening Housing
Solutions in Ukraine:
A Collaborative Approach
Workshop 2025”.*
Source: provided by IOM.

for the territorial communities, and presented recommendations of the measures that can help to catalyze the full-fledged implementation of this model in Ukraine in order to address the housing shortage.

As Mr. Hoeller pointed out,

“Municipal housing companies will soon be eligible to become affordable housing providers, as envisaged in the draft law «On the Basic Principles of Housing Policy of Ukraine», and develop their own stock of much needed social and affordable housing to accommodate IDPs, vulnerable residents and returnees from abroad. In parallel with the development of the National Housing Strategy in line with the Ukraine Facility Plan due by the end of 2025, it is now time for Ukrainian cities and hromadas to develop their own housing strategy and instruments, to train staff and strengthen their capacity to act. European twin cities, especially from the strong German-Ukrainian network, could contribute to this process with their municipal housing companies and provide authentic experience and quality advice.”

Furthermore, IWO’s team joined the Head of SUR project Mr. Schweikhardt on his official visit to the cities of Poltava and Zhytomyr. His visit aims at strengthening the cooperation of GIZ with the mentioned cities and discussing the ongoing implementation of the SUR projects.

IWO had a chance to present the SUR’s housing component and to receive the feedback from the visited cities. The representatives of the cities confirmed their high interest in the topic of housing resilience. As the acting mayor of Poltava Ms. Kateryna Yamshchukova pointed out,

“Poltava needs new housing programs, as housing is not only a basic need, but also the foundation for the well-being and economic sustainability of the community. More than 48,000 IDPs, veterans, families of defenders, people with disabilities, large families and young people all need modern, barrier-free housing with high-quality public space. We need to develop a new approach to housing waiting lists. We are developing new standards of housing policy in the community.”



Photo 2. GIZ visit to the city of Poltava.
Source: city of Poltava.

Furthermore, the needs and challenges of the housing sectors in the two cities were presented by the acting mayor of Poltava Ms. Yamshchykova and deputy mayor of Zhytomyr Ms. Olshanska. Both cities have accepted a high number of internally displaced persons and with the support of the international organizations are developing housing solutions for these new populations.

The GIZ and IWO delegations had a chance to visit the diverse housing projects that are being currently implemented in the city of Zhytomyr, including those supported by the GIZ. The city has already established a municipal housing enterprise, under which functions of social housing management are being integrated. The projects demonstrate diversity of housing typologies and solutions, which proved that the city is striving towards housing resilience.

The cities shared their visions for the development of the affordable housing segment, which are in line with the EU policies. IWO expresses its high appreciation and support for the initiatives in these cities and calls for the support of the international community in strengthening the affordable rental and social housing segment in Ukraine. As Mr. Hoeller earlier suggested at the workshop, SUR project aims to contribute to this goal, and the city partnerships can become a strong platform for the exchange on the municipal housing companies and development of the housing solutions for Ukrainian cities.

[Press-release of Poltava city](#)

[Press-release of Zhytomyr city](#)

Implementation framework

The project “Strengthening Urban Resilience in Housing” is implemented by IWO e.V. within the framework of the project “Strengthening of Urban Resilience in the Areas of Supply Infrastructure and Housing in Ukraine” (SUR).

SUR is part of German transitional development assistance, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

Initiative Wohnungswirtschaft Osteuropa (IWO) e.V. – Housing Initiative for Eastern Europe (IWO) is a German non-governmental organisation whose mission is to support the market-based, sustainable, ecologically and socially compatible development of the housing and building sectors in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. With its members representing the developed German housing industry, a broad international network of experts and 22 years of experience working with the housing sectors of countries in transition, IWO offers the necessary expertise and organisational approaches to support the resilient recovery of the housing sector in Ukrainian cities.

All texts and materials under the project are the intellectual property of IWO e.V. and GIZ.

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