



# PROJECT FACTSHEET

Ukraine February 2016

## BETTER LIVING CONDITIONS THROUGH DECENTRALISATION IN UKRAINE



DESPRO provides support for municipal initiatives to increase the efficiency of local public services. © SDC

**More than 20 years after gaining independence, Ukraine remains a highly centralised state. In addition to its work to promote better local services, in particular in the area of water, Switzerland provides support for decentralisation at the national level by helping to draw up legislation based on experience gained through the DESPRO project.**

The European Charter of Local Self-Government was ratified by Ukraine in 1997. As a signatory, it committed itself to conceding greater responsibility to local authorities and to strengthening the involvement of the country's citizens in the democratic decision-making process. It is only in more recent years, however, that the government has taken the first steps towards reforming the public administration. In that context the SDC, at the official request of the then president of Ukraine, and based on its positive experience with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), decided in 2006 to launch the project "Support to Decentralization in Ukraine" (DESPRO).

### SUPPORT FOR CONCRETE INITIATIVES

The project provides support for municipal initiatives to increase the efficiency of local public services. The community is encouraged to organise itself in cooperatives and to decide which specific tasks should be given priority for improving the water supply and waste management system in their village. Once they have developed a workable plan, and following a quality control procedure, DESPRO furnishes assistance for the realisation of the initiative. The costs of funding such local projects are shared: until 2009, roughly half of the total costs for water supply systems was covered by the SDC; the local village communities paid one third of the costs, and the remainder was provided by the local government authorities. Meanwhile, the contribution of SDC is limited to an average of 28% in each project.

DESPRO also assists in the search for co-financing partners, such as members of the local business community. Villagers who are unable to make a financial contribution help in other ways, e.g. take part in the digging works and in laying pipes. By 2010, 40 projects in 33 villages had been completed. A further 32 water supply projects have been launched since 2011. DESPRO does not focus solely on the question of water supply, however. It also supports projects for the implementation of integrated solid waste management. Overall, it has contributed to an improvement in the living conditions of some 100,000 people.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT

Local governments are involved in the planning, financing and realisation of village projects. They contribute technical support and delegate the operation and maintenance of the water supply system to the municipalities. Funding for the co-financing of joint projects comes from the municipal budgets and from the regional and sub-regional authorities. This leads to a substantial degree of decentralisation in the procedures for the budgeting and allocation of funds by the local governments.

In a number of communities, the project management know-how gained in carrying out DESPRO projects has successfully been put to use for bringing to the villages additional public services, such as gas and street lighting. The central government of Ukraine, along with the regional governments, has requested that DESPRO expand its efforts to promote decentralisation of public services in rural areas throughout the country.

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## **SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL REFORM PROGRAMMES**

DESPRO also assists the national government in the drafting of legislation for decentralisation reforms. This involves, among other things, the formulation of the concept for the government's regional policies, planning the reform of local self-government structures, and measures for modernising public services. The intent is to provide a foundation for further local self-government reforms and for a reform of the existing power structures. DESPRO also provides technical support for government working groups involved in the development of concepts and draft legislation for various reforms. In that context it organises meetings with experts and public discussions at both the national and the regional levels. Since the Poroshenko government this kind of activities has increased.

## **PROJECT AT A GLANCE**

### **Project title**

Support to Decentralization in Ukraine (DesPro)

### **Duration**

2006 - 2020 (currently phase 3)

### **Current budget (2013-2017)**

9,33 million CHF

### **Implementing agency**

Swiss Resource Centre and Consultancies for Development (Skat)

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## **COUNTRY FACTS** (Source: World Bank)

### **Population (2014)**

Ukraine : 45,4 million

Switzerland : 8,1 million

### **Life expectancy at birth (2013)**

Ukraine : women 76 years, men 66 years

Switzerland : women 85 years, men 81 years

### **Gross domestic product per capita (2014)**

Ukraine : 3 082 USD

Switzerland : 85 594 USD

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## **IMPRINT**

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