

5 Europe

Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which began in February 2022, continues to this day, worsening the humanitarian situation in Ukraine and its neighboring countries and destabilizing Ukraine's economy and society. It has also disrupted global supply chains, highlighting challenges for the entire international community such as food and energy security, which are fundamental for people to live with dignity, as well as the maintenance and strengthening of a free and fair trading system. These compound crises are by no means "someone else's problem" for Japan; they have had serious impacts on the daily lives of Japanese citizens and on the business activities of Japanese companies.

Taking the consistent position that Russia's outrageous aggression must not be tolerated and that support for Ukraine and its neighboring countries is essential, Japan has collaborated with the international community, including the G7, from the outset of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Japan also continues to advance public- and private-sector support for Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction, including through the Japan-Ukraine Conference for Promotion of Economic Growth and Reconstruction held in February 2024.

Japan regards European countries, including those in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union countries, that are pursuing market-based economic development as important partners that share fundamental values such as human rights, democracy, a market economy, and the rule of law, and supports their efforts in areas such as reconstructing economic infrastructure and addressing environmental challenges. Japan also works to strengthen comprehensive relations with the European Union (EU) and other Europe-based international organizations through continued dialogue and cooperation, as well as the development of human networks.

Japan's Efforts

■ Support for Ukraine and Neighboring Countries

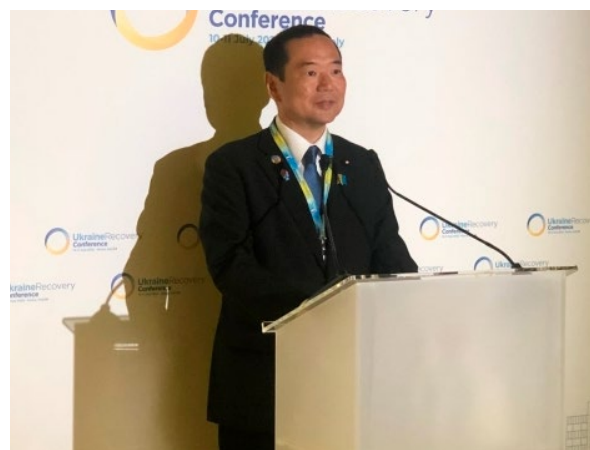
(Overview)

Support for Ukraine is "investing in the future" for Ukraine, Japan, and the world. Based on the three principles of "inclusiveness," "partnership," and "knowledge and technology" announced by then Prime Minister Kishida at the Japan-Ukraine Conference for Promotion of Economic Growth and Reconstruction held in Tokyo in February 2024, Japan is making what it calls "Japan's unique contribution" through public-private collaboration and through five actions (including

support through international financial institutions, public-private partnership projects through ODA, and JICA's Private-Sector Investment Finance for Ukrainian venture capitalists, etc.). Japan is also supporting Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction in collaboration with partners, including G7 countries, other countries, and international organizations.

In June 2025, then Prime Minister Ishiba stated at the G7 Kananaskis Summit that Japan would further promote public-private partnership assistance for recovery and reconstruction, including industrial development in Ukraine, and would continue to strengthen cooperation with like-minded countries, including members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), regarding the situation in Ukraine.

At the "Ukraine Recovery Conference" co-hosted by the governments of Italy and Ukraine in July, then State Minister for Foreign Affairs Fujii noted that Japan had been steadily following up on the cooperation documents and projects exchanged with the Ukrainian side at the 2024 "Japan-Ukraine Conference for Promotion of Economic Growth and Reconstruction." He also delivered a speech at the Human Dimension session of the Ukraine Recovery Conference, stating that Japan had been focusing on supporting Ukraine through the acquisition of academic degrees by administrative officials, training for personnel of the Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine, and capacity building in the field of mine action, which is a prerequisite for recovery and reconstruction, and that these efforts were also contributing to the reintegration of the Ukrainian people.



Then State Minister for Foreign Affairs Fujii delivering a statement at the "Ukraine Recovery Conference"

Then Prime Minister Ishiba in July and August, and Prime Minister Takaichi in October, attended the "Virtual Leaders Meeting of the Coalition of the Willing on Ukraine" hosted respectively by the governments of

the United Kingdom, France, and Germany, where they stated that Japan would continue its support for Ukraine in coordination with the international community and would work closely with partners in Ukraine, the United States, and European countries.

(Public-Private Initiatives for Ukraine's Reconstruction)

In 2025 as well, various initiatives were undertaken to promote Ukraine's reconstruction and the participation of Japanese companies in this effort. In January 2025, the "Japan-Ukraine Platform on the Infrastructure Technology for Recovery and Reconstruction" (JUPITeR) was established with the aim of accelerating the participation of Japanese companies in future infrastructure reconstruction in Ukraine's land, infrastructure, and transport sectors. In March, as part of the platform's activities, a public-private mission consisting of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) and member companies was dispatched to Ukraine, where they exchanged views and conducted business-to-business networking with the Ministry for Development of Communities and Territories of Ukraine, which leads the country's infrastructure reconstruction, as well as with Multilateral Development Banks and local industry associations.

In July, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), together with representatives of Japanese companies, visited Ukraine as a public-private mission and exchanged views on recovery and reconstruction with Ukrainian government officials and Ukrainian companies in the capital Kyiv and in Lviv in western Ukraine.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) also supported initiatives such as the invitation of Ukrainian stakeholders to Japan by agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and food-related companies, and the dispatch of engineers to Ukraine and other countries. In August, MAFF held the "4th Japan-Ukraine Joint Task Force on Revitalization Strategy of Agriculture" online with the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine, exchanging information on public-private initiatives for cooperation on agricultural reconstruction. In October, in order to encourage greater participation by Japanese companies in the reconstruction of Ukraine's agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and food sectors, a public-private mission consisting of MAFF and seven Japanese agri-food companies visited Ukraine, where they exchanged views with the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine and the Mayor of Lviv, conducted business matching with Ukrainian companies, and toured an agri-food business exhibition held in Kyiv.

In August, METI co-hosted the "Japan-Ukraine Economic Reconstruction Promotion Forum" together with JETRO and the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine. From the Government of

Japan, then State Minister for Foreign Affairs Fujii and then Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Kato attended. From the Government of Ukraine, Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration Kachka, Minister for Foreign Affairs Sybiha, and Minister of Economy, Environment and Agriculture Sobolev attended, with First Lady Olena Zelenska participating as a special guest. In the presence of then Parliamentary Vice-Minister Kato and Deputy Prime Minister Kachka, an unveiling ceremony was held for 29 cooperation documents between related companies and organizations from both countries in fields such as infrastructure, agriculture, and IT.

MLIT is also advancing initiatives to realize inclusive reconstruction that addresses labor shortages while including women and war-wounded persons through the introduction to Ukraine of remote construction technology that has extensive operational experience at Japanese construction sites. As part of these efforts, in October MLIT conducted a demonstration experiment of this technology and a demonstration to which Ukrainian government officials and others were invited, in the capital Kyiv.

(Humanitarian Assistance and Support for Recovery and Reconstruction)

As Russia's aggression against Ukraine continues, the war has damaged infrastructure and facilities that support daily life—including energy, transportation, housing, and schools—placing the Ukrainian people in a dire situation. Even as the aggression continues, Japan is providing support that is responsive to the needs of the Ukrainian people, including women and children, integrating perspectives such as Women, Peace and Security (WPS) across all phases, from humanitarian assistance to livelihood reconstruction to recovery support, economic revitalization, and industrial advancement, so that Ukrainians can envision a better future (see "Stories from the Field" on page 116 for support by Japanese NGOs for vulnerable households in Ukraine).

As part of emergency recovery efforts aimed at restoring daily life to near-peace-time conditions, Japan provides assistance that improves humanitarian conditions and livelihoods, including in electricity, healthcare, education, and temporary infrastructure, in cooperation with international organizations, Japanese NGOs, and NGOs in Ukraine and neighboring countries. For instance, in response to the widespread destruction of energy infrastructure and large-scale power outages across Ukraine, Japan has supplied generators and solar lanterns. By supporting damaged energy infrastructure facilities, these efforts contribute to restoring and strengthening electricity and heating supplies, helping the people of Ukraine endure the winter.

In addition, Japan has supported the country's recovery and reconstruction from an early stage in areas

such as mine action and debris clearance, restoration of basic services, including infrastructure, the revival of agricultural production and industrial development, and the strengthening of democracy and governance. In February 2025, Japan decided to provide a total of ¥8.8 billion in grants under “the Programme for Emergency Recovery (Phase 4).” Through this cooperation, Japan is supporting the Government of Ukraine in (i) early recovery from war damage (support for the energy sector and others), and (ii) inclusive reconstruction (support for local governments and economic revitalization), thereby helping accelerate the country’s rapid recovery and reconstruction efforts. Furthermore, in April 2025 Japan decided to provide a yen loan of up to ¥471.9 billion under the “Extraordinary Revenue Acceleration Loan for Ukraine,”²⁰ which the G7 leaders had consented to launch at the 2024 G7 Puglia Summit in order to address Ukraine’s severe fiscal situation and to support the country’s reconstruction and development.

The removal of mines and unexploded ordnance is not only essential for ensuring the safety and security of residents, but also a prerequisite for recovery and reconstruction, underpinning the rebuilding of livelihoods, agriculture, and industry. Drawing on the expertise it has accumulated to date in demining assistance, Japan is providing comprehensive support for mine and unexploded ordnance clearance in Ukraine. To accelerate mine action and build international momentum for recovery and reconstruction, on October 22 and 23, 2025, Japan hosted the “Ukraine Mine Action Conference” in Tokyo, leading discussions under the theme of “Accelerating toward Reconstruction.” Japan also announced the “Ukraine Mine Action Support Initiative,” with the aim of communicating Japan’s contribution to a comprehensive process that links mine action through the safe rehabilitation of cleared land and the return of residents to Ukraine’s reconstruction and development.

In addition, Japan launched the Ukraine Business Support Project in April 2024 to accelerate the country’s recovery and reconstruction by mobilizing private sector funding and technology and revitalizing the economy through private sector participation. Building on the framework of the existing SDGs Business Supporting Survey,²¹ the project is designed to reduce risks in the initial stages of market entry by supporting activities such as information gathering and market research, which are particularly difficult in wartime Ukraine. To date, fourteen projects have been selected. With a view to promoting future investment in Ukraine, Japan will continue to actively support the country’s economic development by assisting Japanese companies in formulating business expansion plans.

Japan will continue to provide support that is closely attuned to the needs of the Ukrainian people facing difficulties, while working in coordination with the international community, including the G7.



A Ukrainian delegation visiting a demining site in Cambodia (Photo: JICA)

(Support for Poland and Moldova)

Russia’s prolonged aggression against Ukraine has placed a sustained burden on neighboring countries. In this context, Japan provides support to these countries to help alleviate their burdens while delivering effective humanitarian, recovery, and reconstruction assistance to Ukraine.



A Moldovan wheat field cultivated by a young farmer who benefited from support from the Government of Japan

For Poland, which has been at the forefront of support for Ukraine, serving as a hub for both military and humanitarian assistance, Japan has provided humanitarian assistance through international organizations and NGOs. This includes support for temporary housing and social integration projects for displaced Ukrainians, as well as the provision of school buses for displaced children and educational equipment for displaced children with disabilities, helping support the daily lives of Ukrainian evacuees over the long term. In addition, on the occasion of the Japan-Poland Foreign Ministers’

²⁰ The G7 framework under which the G7 intends to provide financing that will be serviced and repaid by future flows of extraordinary revenues stemming from the immobilization of Russian sovereign assets, in order to address Ukraine’s financing needs.

²¹ See the glossary on page 144.

Meeting in February 2025, then Foreign Minister Iwaya signed with Polish Foreign Minister Sikorski the “Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategic Partnership between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Poland for the years 2025–2029.” The Action Plan includes cooperation toward Ukraine’s recovery and reconstruction with a focus on the delivery of the capacity-building assistance and the involvement of the business sector.

Moldova provides shelters, food, medical services, and other assistance to evacuees who have fled from Ukraine, and many of them continue to live as displaced persons with support from Moldova. As these efforts place a significant economic burden on the country, Japan has been extending assistance to help mitigate the impact of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine and reduce Moldova’s vulnerability to economic crises. At a meeting with then Prime Minister Recean of Moldova held in September 2025, then Prime Minister Ishiba stated that protecting Moldova’s democracy was more important than ever, and that Japan would spare no effort in providing the necessary cooperation to that end and would seek to further strengthen the partnership between the two countries, adding that Japan would continue to support Moldova’s development by providing assistance in areas such as agriculture and industrial promotion. In response, then Prime Minister Recean, who was visiting Japan, expressed his appreciation for Japan’s support to date.

■ Support for the Western Balkans

Reforms in the Western Balkan countries ²² were once stalled due to the conflicts of the 1990s. As a result of reconstruction assistance from donor countries and international organizations, as well as the countries’ own reform efforts, they have now moved beyond the reconstruction phase and require support to achieve sustainable economic development. In support of a united Europe, Japan provides development cooperation to these countries in collaboration with the EU and other partners. Under the 2018 “Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative,” ²³ Japan assists the Western Balkan countries in implementing the socio-economic reforms necessary for EU accession.

Regarding Serbia, building on initiatives such as the flue gas desulfurization facility at the Nikola Tesla Thermal Power Plant completed in 2024, Japan will continue to support Serbia’s efforts toward decarbonization as the country transitions from coal to renewable energy (see “Featured Project” on page 117 for support for start-ups in Serbia).



Air quality monitoring in Kosovo intended to develop air pollution control policies (Photo: JICA)

Japan also supports the development of human resources who will play a key role in the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In recent years, this has included assistance to strengthen medical and health systems aimed at improving the quality of life of the people, support for enhancing border management capabilities essential for progress in the EU accession process, and the sharing of knowledge on disaster prevention and mitigation.



A newborn being examined with a digital X-ray imaging device provided through the Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Project in Albania (Photo: Queen Geraldine University Hospital of Obstetrics & Gynecology)

²² The six countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia.

²³ An initiative aimed at supporting the socio-economic reforms of the Western Balkan countries toward EU accession and promoting reconciliation and cooperation among different ethnic groups.



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Stories from the Field

From the Front Lines of Supporting Psychological Recovery: Psychosocial Support in Ukraine

- A Japanese NGO and Local Staff Working Together to Support Children Wounded by Conflict -



Three and a half years have passed since Russia began its aggression against Ukraine. As many people continue to be forced into displacement and the conflict drags on, the situation on the ground changes by the day, and the forms of support required are becoming increasingly diverse and complex.

In this context, Good Neighbors Japan (GNJP), a Japanese NGO engaged in activities to protect the mental and physical well-being of children, and its local partner organization The Tenth of April (TTA), with funding from Japan Platform (JPF),^{*1} provided emergency humanitarian assistance to vulnerable people in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast in eastern Ukraine, which has taken in large numbers of internally displaced persons. With approximately 440,000 people in the oblast in need of support at the time the project launched at the end of 2024, GNJP and TTA delivered support that was closely attuned to the needs of local people. In addition to protection activities through case management providing individualized support including medical care, they also offered psychosocial support (PSS) aimed at helping those affected by the conflict to restore their dignity.

More than 96,000 are children among the internally displaced persons. Ms. IKEDA Hiromi of GNJP explains: "Children in Ukraine are carrying significant psychological burdens, including separation from or loss of family members, fear caused by air raids, and anxiety about the future. Through local facilitators, we provided trauma care to children based on an approach advocated by Dr. KUWAYAMA Norihiko, a Japanese psychosomatic medicine and psychiatry specialist and PSS expert." The approach involves using artistic expression, such as drawing and clay work to help participants confront painful life experiences, share hopes for the future with fellow group members, and process memories and emotions, with the aim of preventing the onset of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and restoring psychological well-being. Ms. Ikeda served as the coordinator of this program and conducted capacity-building training for local facilitators on how to deliver PSS effectively. She describes the outcomes of the initiative: "We had some concerns about whether a Japanese approach would be accepted, but the Ukrainian children were eager to express themselves and participated actively. In addition, as local psychologists adapted the PSS approach for adults, we were able to provide PSS to a cumulative total of 2,267 people, including 667 children over just one year."

Mr. Bohdan Pischanskyi of TTA, working as one of the local facilitators, has supported children by delivering PSS in underground shelters and schools. He shares the encouraging results: "During the PSS sessions, we saw children naturally reaching out to help others who were struggling. In schools where PSS was implemented, students began accepting each other, and this has also had a positive effect on their day-to-day school life." He also expresses his enthusiasm for continued efforts: "I want to support children in building their self-esteem and developing the ability to recover on their own."



A PSS session taking place while evacuated in an underground shelter (Mr. Pischanskyi is in the center left) (Photo: GNJP)



Children absorbed in drawing during a PSS session (Mr. Pischanskyi is in the center right) (Photo: GNJP)

Mr. Pischanskyi expresses his gratitude to Japan: "Thanks to support from Japan that also made use of local NGOs, the people of Ukraine were able to receive psychological care with peace of mind. We will never forget that Japan was by our side during Ukraine's most difficult times." Ms. Ikeda, for her part, reflects on the distinctive value of Japan's support: "One of the strengths of Japanese NGOs is our ability to work in partnership with local organizations to respond flexibly and rapidly to complex and wide-ranging needs, while providing a human face to our assistance." She also underscores an important point: "It is sometimes said that Ukraine's support needs are transitioning toward the reconstruction phase, but there are still many areas where emergency assistance remains necessary. We need to think about future support from both perspectives, and we want to continue providing comprehensive support that includes PSS."

The children and people of Ukraine are striving every day to overcome hardships without losing hope. Japan's support, delivered with close attentiveness to the people on the ground, will continue to contribute to generating the energy that they need to reclaim their everyday lives.

^{*1} See the glossary on page 151.



Bridging Innovation from Japan to Serbia

Technical Cooperation (Phase 1: August 2022 – February 2023;
Phase 2: July 2024 – August 2025)

Data Collection Survey of Supporting
Overseas Expansion of Serbian Startups
(NINJA Serbia Phase 2)

📍 Serbia



Serbia faces a high unemployment rate, particularly among young people, and is aiming to move away from its service sector-dominated industrial structure. The fostering of domestic industries and the creation of employment through the development of new industries, including in the ICT sector, are regarded as urgent priorities. In response, an ecosystem is gradually taking shape in Serbia, bringing together various actors such as startups, investors, public institutions, and companies to form networks and develop together. At the same time, the country's startups continue to face numerous challenges, including in the areas of institutional frameworks and resource mobilization.

Against this backdrop, Japan has extended "Project NINJA (Next Innovation with Japan)," originally launched in Africa, to Serbia in an effort to support startups in the country. A survey conducted between 2022 and 2023 found that Serbia's startup environment was still in its early stages and that the key to further growth lay in overseas expansion. In response to these findings the project examined in 2024 how public support could better promote

the overseas expansion of Serbian startups, including through analyses of overseas markets in the Asian region and beyond. To help create opportunities for international business development, representatives from five Serbian startups seeking overseas expansion were invited to Japan and Singapore, to take part in workshops and sector-specific consultations.

Stakeholders involved in the project have shared that "Through Project NINJA, Serbian startups gained an excellent opportunity to develop strategies for overseas expansion and build networks with Japan and Singapore. We were also able to learn that the innovation born in Japan and Singapore is not a matter of coincidence, but a result of a shared vision and investment in knowledge." Japan will continue to roll out Project NINJA worldwide, promoting the growth of startups that serve as catalysts for quality job creation in each country, and working to address social challenges in developing countries through business.



Discussions between the Ministry of Science, Technological Development, and Innovation (MoSTDI) and JICA experts (Photo: JICA)



Serbian startups participating in "Sustainable High City Tech Tokyo 2025 (SusHi Tech Tokyo 2025)," one of Asia's largest international startup conferences hosted by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (Photo: JICA)