

BORDERING REGIONS AT THE FOREFRONT: SLOVAKIA'S ROLE IN UKRAINE'S RECONSTRUCTION

PART OF THE **THE FESTIVAL OF FUTURE**

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The first afternoon of the Festival of Future was dedicated to Ukraine. As part of the 'Festival Specials,' we hosted an intense and insightful discussion titled "Bordering Regions at the Forefront: Slovakia's Role in Ukraine's Reconstruction."

Despite the ongoing invasion, many AmCham Ukraine members remain fully operational, and the chamber is eager to collaborate with Slovak businesses in rebuilding Ukraine. The speakers stressed that private capital will be crucial in these reconstruction efforts.

amidst the war, with inflation rates comparable to Slovakia's. Monika Pavlik emphasized the importance of forming strategic partnerships to enhance local impact and navigate legislative challenges. Eduard Buraš, Ambassador of Transcarpathia, highlighted the rapid development of Uzhorod, which is poised to surpass Košice in growth, illustrating the potential for regional cooperation between the two nations.

In collaboration with CIPE Europe & Eurasia, we curated a program that explored Slovakia's unique opportunity to actively contribute to Ukraine's reconstruction, support the country's economic recovery, and act as a bridge between Ukraine and the European Union. The significance of the event was underscored by compelling keynote speeches from Volodymyr Kuzyo, Deputy Minister of Economy of Ukraine, and H.E. Gautam Rana, the U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia.

Several speakers shared specific examples of successful collaboration. Zuzana Kaparová from the European Investment Bank (EIB) highlighted projects with the Ukrainian government, such as the modernization of the Čierna nad Tisou-Čop border crossing. Ján Ridzoň from the Office of the Slovak Government discussed the state's focus on creating a framework to support Slovak businesses in developing Ukraine's connectivity and energy infrastructure.

Throughout the event, we heard inspiring stories of resilience and determination from Ukrainians committed to overcoming the current challenges and unlocking their full potential when conditions improve. Dávid Bořuta presented an in-depth CIPE study, outlining key business opportunities, obstacles in Ukraine's reconstruction, and the pivotal role public-private partnerships will play in this endeavor.

During the first panel, we had the privilege of hearing first-hand reports from Tetyana Prokopchuk of the American Chamber of Commerce in Ukraine and Artem Gerganov of Citi Ukraine, who traveled from Kyiv to provide insights into the resilience of Ukraine's business environment.

The second panel delved into practical steps and further examples of collaboration. Martin Šuster from the Council for Budget Responsibility pointed out Ukraine's extraordinary economic resilience, noting that growth continues even

AmCham Slovakia remains dedicated to advancing this important topic and will continue to seek opportunities for mutually beneficial collaboration between Slovakia and Ukraine as part of the ongoing "Mapping the Potential of Eastern Slovakia" project. The commitment to Ukraine's recovery and the deepening of cross-border partnerships are not just aspirations—they are essential steps toward a brighter, more resilient future for both nations.

