LT Partnerships

CPVA Central project management agency

Ensuring a Safe Education:

New Underground Shelters for Ukrainian Schools



With education sector losses reaching **$13.9 billion**, Ukraine faces a total restoration need of **$33.5 billion**. According to the latest RDNA assessment by the World Bank, EU, and UN, **restoring in-person learning is a top national priority**. Building modern **underground shelters is the critical first step** to overcome educational losses, provide psychosocial support, and return students to a safe classroom environment

Russia's war of aggression is robbing thousands of Ukrainian children of a normal life and education. Our most recent initiative underlines the EU's unwavering commitment to ensure an educational environment that is as safe as possible for all children in Ukraine.

Katarína Mathernová

Ambassador of the European Union to Ukraine

Programme overview

Launched in 2024, the **New Underground Shelters for Ukraine's Schools Programme** addresses the urgent lack of safety infrastructure in schools.

The programme focuses on constructing **dual-use, anti-radiation shelters** that serve communities both in wartime and peacetime.

Programme outputs

- Construction of **6 dual-use, anti-radiation shelters** in higher-risk regions
- Support for the return to **offline learning**
- Contribution to **reducing learning losses among children**
- Safer education process and **reduced anxiety levels for children and parents**

Priority regions: Sumy, Zaporizhzhia, Chernihiv, Odesa, Mykolaiv, Kharkiv



Implementation

The programme is led and funded by the **European Union** and **Lithuania**, with co-financing from **Ireland**.

It is implemented by **Lithuanian International Partnerships Center | CPVA**

Budget

EUR 18,500,000

15,000,000 – EU

3,000,000 – Ireland

500,000 – Lithuania

Time frame

38 months

until 2027 June






Proof of concept: design for both wartime and peacetime

DUAL-USE SHELTER, opened in Odesa region, 2025

Capacity: 700 students

Size: 2100 sq.m.

Design: 24 functional rooms serving various needs, including a cinema and sports rooms

DUAL-USE SHELTER, opened in Sumy region, 2026

Capacity: 500 students

Size: 1350 sq.m.

Design: 12 fully equipped classrooms, technology-equipped rooms, and sports zones.

Synergistic approach

School shelters serve as hubs for wider LIPC | CPVA-led “LT Partnerships” initiatives. We are extending our solar power programme to help keep children warm and safe, and bringing Catch-Up learning support to the first shelters opened in the Odesa and Sumy regions.



SOLAR POWER PLANTS PROGRAMME

Solar plants allows the lyceum and shelter to operate independently of power outages caused by energy infrastructure attacks.

CATCH-UP PROGRAMME

An initiative based in the school-shelter is bridging education gaps caused by the war. In Odesa shelter 90% of students showed improved tests’ results within first 6 months, in Sumy region the project starts in 2027.



Scaling the mission: Shelter Coalition

In November 2025, the **Civil Protection Shelters Coalition for Ukraine** was officially launched as a Team Europe initiative, with Finland and Ukraine leading its coordination. The goal is to help Ukraine to protect the civilian population from ongoing Russia’s missile and drone attacks.

The coalition brings together key partners, including the **EU and 15 countries participants**.

Building on successful delivery of shelters and extensive experience in complex infrastructure, **LIPC | CPVA now implements the Coalition’s projects in partnership with Belgium’s Enabel.**

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