

Forum "Think Small First"

September 21, 2026 at 10:00
InterContinental, Hall on Level "-2"

Objective of the Forum:

The "Think Small First" Forum aims to bring together representatives of state authorities, business, and think tanks to establish a common vision for economic and tax reforms essential for the recovery, sustainable development, and growth of Ukraine's economy.

The Forum is grounded in the European principle "Think Small First", which stipulates that the interests of micro- and small businesses must be considered at every stage of economic and regulatory policymaking.

Participants will address Ukraine's key international commitments, current challenges in economic and fiscal policy, and their impact on entrepreneurs and the national economy.

Special emphasis will be placed on joint solutions drafted by the business and expert communities regarding necessary tax, regulatory, and economic measures that reconcile international compliance with entrepreneurial growth, de-shadowing, investment attraction, and job creation.

Event Format:

Two thematic panel sessions featuring government officials, business representatives, and think tanks, structured to move beyond discussion toward establishing a shared roadmap for priority economic and tax reforms.

Core Question of the Forum:

How can Ukraine meet its international obligations without imposing extra barriers on micro- and small businesses, and instead empower private enterprise as a leading engine of national recovery and economic growth?

Expected Result: Agreed proposals and practical recommendations for shaping Ukraine's economic and tax policy based on the *Think Small First* principle.

Organizers: National Business Coalition of MSBs (NBC)

Event Partner: Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE)

Analytical Partners: Economic Expert Platform, CASE Ukraine, ISET

Media Partners: FinClub, Interfax-Ukraine, Ekonomichna Pravda

Moderator: Dmytro Tuzov.

Working Language: Ukrainian

Forum Agenda:

9:30-10:00 **Registration. Welcome Coffee**

10:00 - 10:05 **Opening Remarks, Natalia Zhugai, Head of CIPE in Ukraine**

10:05 - 11:45

Section 1. Think Small First: Economic and Tax Reforms 2026 — Fulfilling International Obligations Without Barriers for Small Business

*The panel will evaluate how European integration and fiscal reforms will impact micro- and small businesses in Ukraine. Topics will cover European precedents in adapting regulatory frameworks and liberalizing compliance on the path to EU accession, key structural changes in VAT and the simplified taxation system (STS), and preserving the **Think Small First** principle across all reform initiatives:*

- *Presentation of the study on European practices of adapting and liberalizing EU directives during accession;*
- *Realities of Ukrainian SME operations; integration hurdles facing small businesses;*
- *The new IMF Memorandum and the expansion of VAT scope for the simplified tax system;*
- *Reforming the preferential simplified taxation regime: a roadmap for VAT compliance and administrative streamlining.*

Central Question: How can Ukraine honor its international commitments and carry out vital reforms without building unnecessary hurdles for micro- and small businesses, while promoting formalization, business growth, and economic recovery?

Panelists:

Krassen Stanchev, Member of the Commission on Economic Policy in the EU; Founder and Executive Director of the Institute for Market Economics (Bulgaria)

Radan Kanev, Member of the European Parliament (Bulgaria)

Petras Auštrevičius, Member of the European Parliament (Lithuania); Member of the Delegation to the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Association Committee (*Awaiting confirmation*)

Mārtiņš Staķis, Member of the European Parliament (Latvia); Former Mayor of Riga (2020–2023) and former Member of the Saeima of Latvia (*Awaiting confirmation*)

Ľudovít Ódor, Member of the European Parliament (Slovakia); Former Prime Minister of Slovakia (2023) and former Vice Governor of the National Bank of Slovakia (*Awaiting confirmation*)

Miriám Lexmann, Member of the European Parliament (Slovakia) (*Awaiting confirmation*)

Jacek Piechota, President of the Polish-Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce (PUIG); Former Minister of Economy of Poland; Former Member of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland

Oleksiy Movchan, Deputy Chairman of the Committee; Chairman of the Subcommittee on Public Procurement Regulation and Effective State and Municipal Property Management of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Economic Development

Ihor Marchuk, Chairman of the Subcommittee on State-Business Interaction and Investments of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Economic Development

Rostyslav Pavlenko, Member of the Parliament of Ukraine; Deputy Head of the Permanent Delegation to the Parliamentary Dimension of the Central European Initiative

Representative of the State Regulatory Service of Ukraine

Study Presentation: Viacheslav Cherkashyn

Business Representatives: (Borys Emeldesh, Lesia Zolotarova)

11:15-11:45 Q&A Session

11:45-12:20 Coffee Break

12:20-14:00 Section 2. Economic Resilience in Wartime: International Experience and Solutions for Ukraine

This section examines foreign mechanisms for maintaining enterprise operations, retaining employment, and securing capital inflows in armed conflict environments, alongside actionable domestic adaptations. Public and private leaders will evaluate the efficacy of current support measures and outline immediate interventions to protect business endurance and foster postwar expansion.

- *Presentation on international programs deployed during armed conflicts to protect business operations, employment, and investments;*
- *Adaptability of foreign conflict frameworks to Ukrainian reality;*
- *Immediate policy actions needed to establish a foundation for recovery and growth (Draft Law "Front-City", the new Labor Code, and employment classification metrics in Draft Law No. 13507);*
- *Domestic business support tools in practice (existing grant programs, "National Cashback", etc.) and their real impact as evaluated by Ukrainian SMEs.*

Panelists:

Olena Shuliak, Chair of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on State Building, Local Governance, Regional and Urban Development

Halyna Tretyakova, Chair of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Social Policy and Protection of Veterans' Rights

Daria Marchak, Deputy Minister of Economy and Environment of Ukraine

Anka Feldhusen, Business Ombudsman

Study Presentation

Business Representatives: (B. Mosunov, M. Payanok)

14:00-14:20 Q&A Session

14:20-14:25 Closing Remarks & Wrap-Up

Reference:

The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) works to strengthen democracy around the globe through the expansion of private enterprise and market-oriented reform.



The event is held with the support of the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE).