

Terms of reference

Expert on Administrative Services

Polaris Programme: Supporting multi-level governance in Ukraine

About SALAR International and its activities in Ukraine

SALAR International is a subsidiary of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR), which represents all 290 municipalities and 21 regions in Sweden. As SALAR's international affiliate, we work globally to support local democracy and good governance in developing and transition countries. Our expertise covers areas such as capacity building in municipal management and service delivery, local and regional development planning, support to local government associations, decentralisation policy and European integration. Geographically, SALAR International's projects cover the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa.

SALAR International has been working in Ukraine since 2014, supporting the decentralisation process in Ukraine through three main initiatives aimed at building a robust multi-level governance system, improving the accessibility and quality of services at the local level, and strengthening international cooperation between municipalities from Ukraine and the EU. After the full-scale invasion, SALAR International joined the anti-crisis support of Ukrainian municipalities by providing them with material assistance.

Description of the context of engagement

To meet the evolving needs of Ukrainian municipalities and national stakeholders during the war, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) initiated a broader programme to support multi-level governance and recovery. This programme is called Polaris, Support for Multi-level Governance in Ukraine. It is being implemented by SALAR International and will run for four years (July 2024 – May 2028).

The Polaris programme aims to address both short- and long-term needs of Ukraine's multi-level governance system, while strengthening municipal service delivery and direct community participation in recovery and reconstruction processes, in line with the requirements of Ukraine's EU accession. The programme works both at the national level (focusing on policy and cooperation with national stakeholders) and in direct support to communities. The programme covers five thematic areas: Education, Fiscal Decentralisation and Budgeting, Administrative Service Delivery, Local Recovery and International Cooperation of Communities.

The programme provides material support to meet the short-term material crisis needs of local communities.

The Polaris Programme's Administrative Service Thematic Area focuses on improving the quality and territorial accessibility of administrative services in Ukrainian communities. The thematic area works through the following activities: legislative support and advocacy (supporting the improvement of legislation and state policies to enhance the accessibility and quality of administrative services in communities); expert support (providing expert assistance to communities in establishing or strengthening Administrative Service Centres (ASC)); and training and knowledge exchange (delivering training for community leadership, heads of ASCs and ASC staff to strengthen their capacity to provide administrative services more effectively to community residents).

Organisational structure

The programme is a joint Swedish-Ukrainian initiative with management structures in Stockholm and Kyiv. It encourages a horizontal organisational structure, which means a high degree of autonomy and responsibility for the experts involved, as well as strong local ownership among beneficiaries such as national stakeholders and Ukrainian local communities. Around 60 people are working in Ukraine on a full-time basis in various thematic areas, including the support unit.

Office

The Programme office is located in Kyiv, but support and activities are targeted at local governments in all regions of Ukraine and are implemented in all regions controlled by the Ukrainian government. Support is provided upon request, in most cases through open calls for proposals.

Role description

The 'Administrative Services' team consists of four experts who work directly with Ukrainian communities and relevant national and regional stakeholders to improve the delivery of administrative services through Administrative Service Centres (ASC). Their work includes advising and training political leaders and civil servants, as well as developing policy and methodological documents. The experts also focus on services provided to vulnerable groups, such as internally displaced persons, veterans and their families.

Main responsibilities:

- Advise communities on issues relating to Administrative Service Centres via the Help-Desk;
- Ensure that all partner communities receive the necessary support to strengthen their capacity at both the political and administrative levels, to ensure an adequate standard of administrative service delivery;
- Support partner communities in delivering administrative services to vulnerable groups, such as internally displaced persons, veterans and their families;
- Ensure that cross-cutting issues, such as anti-corruption, gender equality and sustainable environmental development, are taken into account in the provision of expert support and in policy documents;
- Review and update the methodology for improving the quality of administrative service delivery at local level;
- Monitor the impact of the war on the accessibility and quality of administrative services and how the Programme can support affected communities in the most effective way;
- Provide comprehensive and in-depth training on issues related to the delivery of administrative services to political leaders and public servants, such as heads of Administrative Service Centres;
- Coordinate activities and prepare policy documents with relevant national stakeholders;
- Represent the Programme at national and regional forums/meetings relating to the provision of administrative services;
- Ensure the provision of data and analytical reports on the implementation of activities.

Required skills and experience

- At least 10 years' experience in the provision of administrative services in Ukraine;
- An excellent understanding of the local self-government system in Ukraine and the potential of communities to provide administrative services;
- A wide range of experience in coordinating events and negotiations involving multiple stakeholders at local level, such as politicians, civil servants and representatives of national agencies;
- Excellent communication (written and oral), reporting and presentation skills;
- At least 8 years' experience in training and advising political leaders and civil servants on the provision of administrative services;
- Proven experience in developing policy and methodological documents relating to the local self-government system in Ukraine;
- Substantial experience of working with various national stakeholders and political leaders on issues relating to the provision of administrative services;
- Fluency in Ukrainian.

Advantages

- Previous experience of working with international organisations is an advantage.

Diversity and equal opportunities

SALAR International supports diversity and respects human rights in all areas of its work. SALAR International is committed to creating a gender-equal and diverse work environment. Team members respect the equal rights of people and strive to create an atmosphere in which differences between people are accepted and valued. SALAR International supports working arrangements that allow staff to combine work with family responsibilities.

Location: Kyiv/ government-controlled territory of Ukraine, partial physical presence in the Programme office in Kyiv is required, as well as willingness to travel to communities.

Duration of engagement: from August 2026 to May 2027 with a possibility of extension.

Application:

Please send your CV (no more than 3 pages) and cover letter (no more than 1 page in PDF format) to ukraine@salarinternational.se. Please indicate in the subject line "Expert on Administrative Services". Interviews will be conducted on a rolling basis. **Early applications are encouraged.** Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted by email once the recruitment process is complete.

For any questions or clarifications, please contact: ukraine@salarinternational.se

Personal information provided by the applicant during the selection process will be processed by SALAR International.

Deadline: 17 July 2026. Expected start of engagement: August.

