

Approved by Order

No. 0202-П/26 dated 02.02.2026

of the Executive Director
of the RELIGIOUS MISSION 'CARITAS-SPES'
/CARITAS-SPES/
OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN UKRAINE

SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS POLICY

of the Religious Mission 'Caritas-Spes'
of the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine

Introduction

The 'Caritas-Spes' Religious Mission of the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as the 'Mission') is the Caritas organisation of the Latin Rite Catholic Church in Ukraine.

Founder: The Bishops' Conference of the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine.

Date of official registration: 24 September 1996. EDRPOU code: 21664879.

Mission: Nurture compassionate love and hope in action.

Vision: To build a civilization of love, justice and peace, which will enable us to overcome poverty, establish justice and restore the dignity of every person in all regions of Ukraine.

Values: The main sources of inspiration and guidance for the 'Caritas-Spes' Mission are the social doctrine of the Catholic Church, the teachings of the Gospel and the Church, and the law. The Mission's day-to-day activities are based on three principles: respect for the human person, solidarity and subsidiarity.

1. General provisions

- 1.1. The Social and Environmental Standards Policy (hereinafter referred to as the 'Policy') sets out the Mission's principles and commitments regarding the integration of social, environmental and ethical standards into all aspects of its operational and project activities, in accordance with the Mission's requirements, the Caritas Internationalis Management Standards (CIMS)¹, the ethical standards and social teaching of the Catholic Church², as well as the applicable legislation of Ukraine.
- 1.2. The Policy aims to minimise negative impacts on the environment, uphold human rights, ensure safe and fair working conditions, and implement sustainable development practices.
- 1.3. All staff³, partners and suppliers of the Mission are required to act in accordance with the provisions of this Policy.

2. Principles of Social and Environmental Responsibility

The Mission carries out its activities on the basis of a comprehensive approach to social and environmental responsibility, which involves not only compliance with current Ukrainian legislation, but also the implementation of standards set out in the teachings of the Catholic Church, as formalised in the official documents of the international confederation Caritas Internationalis, and international standards ratified by Ukraine.

¹ <https://www.caritas.org/what-we-do/we-increase-the-effectiveness-of-caritas-confederation/caritas-internationalis-management-standards-cims/>

² See 'Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church', https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_uk.pdf

³ The term 'staff' as used here and throughout refers to permanent and casual staff, volunteers, trainees and members of management

In its work, the Mission is guided by the following principles:

- **compliance with Ukrainian legislation, the standards and teachings of the Catholic Church, the standards of Caritas Internationalis and UN recommendations governing respect** for human rights, child protection, the prevention of all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation, environmental safety and transparency in governance;
- **transparency and accountability:** the Mission ensures that information regarding its activities is made available to donors, partners, beneficiaries and state authorities; it maintains records and provides regular reports on social and environmental indicators, including waste volumes, energy consumption levels and the sustainable development measures implemented;
- **preventing negative environmental impacts:** the Mission's activities are planned in accordance with the principles of minimising environmental risks, sustainable use of resources and reducing its carbon footprint. Priority is given to environmentally friendly technologies, products and solutions;
- **respecting and protecting human rights,** including the rights of children, people with disabilities and vulnerable groups. The Mission guarantees non-discrimination, equal opportunities, ethical treatment and respect for the dignity of every person, regardless of age, gender, social status, nationality, race, religious beliefs, etc.;
- **ethical conduct of staff and partners:** all those involved are required to behave responsibly and professionally, avoid conflicts of interest, and ensure honesty and integrity in all processes;
- **sustainable development and the rational use of resources:** the Mission strives to reduce its consumption of energy, water and single-use materials, and to foster a culture of environmental awareness amongst its staff;
- **continuous improvement of internal processes:** the Mission regularly reviews its management, social and environmental practices to enhance efficiency, safety and compliance with best international practices.

3. Sustainable selection of suppliers/contractors

- 3.1. The Mission implements the principles of a responsible procurement process, aimed at minimising environmental risks, ensuring social justice and promoting ethical behaviour amongst partners. Suppliers/contractors are selected using sustainability criteria that take into account both the quality of goods and services and their social and environmental impact.
- 3.2. When carrying out procurement, the Mission gives preference to suppliers/contractors that adhere to the following approaches:
 - comply with Ukrainian labour legislation, ensure safe working conditions, fair pay and equal opportunities for employees, and do not permit (demonstrate zero tolerance for) discrimination or any form of violence or abuse;
 - demonstrate compliance with environmental standards, hold relevant certification (where applicable), use energy-efficient technologies or materials, and contribute to the reduction of harmful emissions and waste;

- implement a corporate social responsibility policy and uphold the principles of sustainable development, environmental safety and ethical standards;
 - do not permit forced or child labour and comply with the principles of child rights protection;
 - ensure that products can be reused, repaired or recycled.
- 3.3. When considering proposals, the Mission analyses not only the financial aspect, but also the following factors:
- the product life cycle (from manufacture to disposal);
 - the potential to reduce environmental impact;
 - the supplier's waste management practices;
 - policies on energy conservation and the reduction of CO₂ emissions;
 - compliance with the principles of ethical conduct by staff.
- 3.4. The Mission reserves the right to refuse to cooperate with a supplier should the following negative factors be identified (including on the basis of third-party evidence):
- the identification of violations of human rights or children's rights;
 - suspected tolerance of any form of violence, abuse or exploitation;
 - failure to comply with environmental standards;
 - involvement in corrupt practices;
 - failure to meet social and environmental responsibility requirements.
- 3.5. All contracts with suppliers must include provisions regarding the following:
- compliance with social and environmental standards;
 - the obligation to provide information on sustainability policies;
 - the right to terminate the contract in the event of a breach of the principles of this Policy.

4. Waste management and resource utilisation

- 4.1. The Mission implements a comprehensive approach to waste management with the aim of minimising the negative impact on the environment and optimising the use of resources. This approach is based on the principles of 'reduce – reuse – recycle' and is guided by modern European and international standards for responsible waste management.
- 4.2. A mandatory waste sorting system is in place at all levels of the Mission's offices (National Office, diocesan, regional and local), covering the following categories: paper, plastic, glass, metal, organic waste, batteries, small electronic items and other hazardous waste. All staff are required to use the appropriate bins and to comply with the sorting rules set out in the internal regulations.
- 4.3. With a view to reducing the volume of waste, the Mission is implementing the following measures:

- minimises the use of single-use items, including disposable tableware, plastic bottles and packaging;
 - encourages the use of reusable items (thermos flasks, water bottles, food containers, etc.);
 - implements a policy on the rational use of office supplies, including their reuse where possible.
- 4.4. The Mission encourages staff and partners to switch to electronic document management with a view to reducing paper consumption. The following practices are encouraged: double-sided printing, a minimum number of copies, the use of digital archives, secure electronic signatures and online forms.
- 4.5. To reduce its environmental impact, the Mission is implementing the following measures:
- uses energy-efficient equipment and lighting;
 - implements a policy of switching off equipment outside working hours;
 - optimises water use by monitoring leaks and wasteful consumption.
- 4.6. The Mission works exclusively with licensed waste collection and recycling operators who can demonstrate that their activities comply with Ukrainian legislation. Where possible, preference is given to companies that provide full or partial waste recycling.
- 4.7. Electronic waste, single-use batteries, rechargeable batteries and other hazardous materials are sent for disposal to specialised companies. When procuring electronic equipment, the Mission takes into account the possibility of its repair, reuse and environmentally sound disposal.
- 4.8. The Mission organises awareness-raising events for staff (as well as beneficiaries and partners) on environmentally responsible behaviour, waste sorting, the prudent use of resources and modern methods of reducing environmental impact.

5. Reducing carbon emissions and minimising the harm caused by transport use

- 5.1. The Mission recognises the importance of reducing its own carbon footprint and is implementing measures to cut CO₂ emissions across all aspects of its operations. The emissions reduction strategy is based on optimising transport and energy use, digitalisation, and the transition to sustainable management practices.
- 5.2. The main measures to reduce emissions include the following actions:
- planning business travel in such a way as to avoid excessive use of transport;
 - organising online-meetings, provided that meetings participation does not require physical attendance;
 - encouraging staff to use public transport, bicycles or other environmentally friendly modes of transport;
 - introducing an 'eco-routes' policy: choosing a route that minimises fuel consumption.

-
- 5.3. The Mission ensures that all official vehicles used in its operations undergo regular technical inspections. These inspections are carried out in accordance with the schedule specified by the manufacturer, as well as on an additional basis in the event of intensive use of vehicles in the course of operational and/or project activities. The inspection includes checks on emissions, the condition of the engine, the braking system, the fuel injection system and safety standards.
- 5.4. The Mission has implemented an internal policy on the ethical and economical use of transport, which includes the following:
- a ban on unnecessary journeys;
 - optimisation of routes when travelling to the regions;
 - keeping records of fuel consumption and vehicle mileage;
 - using vehicles in accordance with their technical capabilities and intended purpose.
- 5.5. As part of its office operations, the Mission (at all levels, from national to local) is reducing energy consumption by implementing the following measures:
- the use of LED lighting and energy-efficient appliances;
 - fitting timers or sensors to lighting (where possible);
 - switching off equipment that is not in use;
 - optimising heating and air conditioning.
- 5.6. To raise environmental awareness, the Mission organises information sessions and training courses for staff on the impact of carbon emissions on the climate, methods of reducing energy consumption and the responsible use of motor vehicles.
- 5.7. In the long term, the Mission aims to transition to more environmentally friendly modes of transport (electric and hybrid vehicles) and to adopt technologies that reduce CO₂ emissions. Where possible, the Mission initiates partnerships aimed at implementing innovative environmental solutions.

6. Fair working conditions and staff protection

- 6.1. The Mission guarantees the creation of fair, safe and decent working conditions for all staff and external specialists in accordance with Ukrainian legislation, the social standards of the Catholic Church, international labour standards and the principles of Caritas Internationalis regarding the protection of human rights and the rights of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and the prevention of all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation.
- 6.2. The Mission recognises that high-quality working conditions have a direct impact on the effectiveness of programme delivery and the well-being of staff.
- 6.3. Any form of discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, race, nationality, ethnic origin, language, religious beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, political views or other characteristics is prohibited. The Mission ensures equal opportunities for all staff in matters of recruitment, professional development, participation in projects and career progression.

-
- 6.4. The Mission strictly prohibits all forms of harassment, mobbing, bullying, threats, psychological pressure, forced labour or exploitation. All staff members have the right to work in a safe emotional environment where their dignity, professional judgement and personal safety are respected.
- 6.5. Salaries, remuneration and compensation are paid on time and in full in accordance with applicable legislation. The Mission guarantees transparency regarding pay conditions, adherence to working hours, employment safeguards, social benefits, paid leave and sick pay. All principles and procedures governing the appointment, calculation and payment of salaries, remuneration and compensation are set out in the document binding on all Mission staff: 'Human Resources Management Policy of the "Caritas-Spes" Religious Mission of the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine'.
- 6.6. The Mission ensures that staff have access to information on internal policies, including policies on human resources management, security, equality, child protection, anti-corruption, and the prevention of harassment, violence, exploitation and abuse. Where necessary, staff may seek advice from the designated compliance officer or HR.
- 6.7. Mission staff have the right and duty, in the event of discovering or suspecting (including where reported in any form by third parties) instances of violence, abuse or exploitation in any form, to contact (in accordance with confidentiality requirements) the person responsible for safeguarding ('Caritas-Spes Ukraine' National Safeguarding focal point) or the Mission's Helpline, or to use any other reporting mechanism provided for in the Mission's relevant policies and regulations.
- 6.8. The mission supports the professional development of staff by:
- participation in training sessions, seminars and educational programmes;
 - opportunities for professional development;
 - providing the conditions for teams to share experiences..
- 6.9. To protect its staff, the Mission utilises and refines mechanisms for the confidential reporting of incidents, instances (and even suspected instances) of breaches of staff rights or security policies. All reports are considered impartially, with a guarantee that the person making the report will not face any reprisals or adverse consequences, in accordance with the Procedure for Receiving and Considering Complaints and Feedback of the 'Caritas-Spes' Religious Mission of the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine.
- 6.10. The Mission pays particular attention to the children safeguarding, young people and vulnerable adults: all staff members are required to undergo special training and adhere to the 'Caritas-Spes Ukraine' Safeguarding Policy..

7. Health and Safety

- 7.1. The Mission ensures the creation of a safe working environment that complies with the requirements of Ukrainian legislation on occupational health and safety, and with health and safety standards. The Mission recognises staff safety as a

priority and ensures that all processes, operations and projects are carried out under conditions that minimise risks to people's health and lives.

- 7.2. Before starting work, all staff undergo induction and initial training on health and safety, fire safety, travel safety, evacuation and how to behave in emergencies (shelling, air raid alerts, natural disasters, etc.). Refresher training is provided in the event of changes to working conditions or the introduction of new procedures.
- 7.3. The mission ensures the availability of first-aid kits, fire extinguishers, emergency exits, evacuation plans and means of communication. All staff members are required to know their locations and how to use them.
- 7.4. When carrying out projects in high-risk regions, the Mission implements additional safety measures, including preliminary risk assessments, briefings on working in the field, the use of personal protective equipment, and coordination with local authorities (civil and military).
- 7.5. All incidents, injuries, accidents or potentially hazardous situations must be reported immediately to the person in charge and investigated in accordance with established procedures. The Mission ensures that such cases are documented and that recommendations and preventive measures are drawn up to prevent a recurrence of such incidents.
- 7.6. The Mission promotes a culture of safety, including:
 - regularly reminding staff of the need to comply with health and safety regulations;
 - conducting evacuation drills;
 - implementing internal emergency response procedures;
 - training staff in the basics of stress management and psychological support.
- 7.7. Particular attention is paid to the safety of staff whilst travelling, including on business trips to the regions. Staff are required to follow recommendations regarding safe routes, rules of conduct in hazardous areas, and rules for the use of vehicles and protective equipment. The technical condition of vehicles is checked before departure.
- 7.8. The Mission ensures that, in the event of an emergency, staff receive the necessary support: medical, psychological, legal or logistical. The Mission cooperates with local emergency services, medical facilities and international partners.
- 7.9. All staff are required to familiarise themselves with this Policy, as well as with any additional safety instructions that may be implemented depending on the project or the location where work is carried out.

8. Monitoring and responsibility

- 8.1. The Mission adopts a systematic approach to monitoring the implementation of this Policy. Monitoring involves the regular assessment of compliance with social and environmental standards across all departments, the preparation of internal reports, the analysis of compliance with Caritas Internationalis requirements, and the review of procedures where shortcomings or risks are identified.

-
- 8.2. Responsibility for implementing this Policy rests with the Mission's management, the Ethics Officer, the Safety Officer, the Health and Safety Officer, the heads of organisational units, and all staff involved in operational and project activities. Each employee bears personal responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Policy within the scope of their functional duties.
- 8.3. The Mission regularly carries out an internal audit or self-assessment of the implementation of the Policy, including an analysis of the following aspects:
- compliance with the Caritas Internationalis Management Standards (CIMS);
 - compliance with environmental standards (waste sorting, recycling, energy efficiency);
 - the status of labour rights and social safeguards;
 - the level of staff safety;
 - compliance of suppliers' operations with established criteria;
 - the effectiveness of mechanisms to prevent human rights violations and the Safeguarding policy.
- 8.4. Where breaches or deviations from the requirements of the Policy are identified, the Mission shall take corrective action: reviewing procedures, providing additional staff training, suspending or replacing suppliers, and updating internal guidelines. In cases of significant risk, individual processes may be suspended until the breaches have been rectified.
- 8.5. Staff, partners and other involved parties have the right to report potential breaches of the Policy confidentially and without fear of reprisal, in accordance with the Procedure for Receiving and Considering Complaints and Feedback of the 'Caritas-Spes' Religious Mission of the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine. The Mission ensures that communication channels are available (email, internal form, helpline) and guarantees the protection of those who submit reports.
- 8.6. All reports of breaches are dealt with promptly and impartially. Following the review, the authorised person draws up a report (in accordance with the provisions of the Procedure for Receiving and Reviewing Complaints and Feedback of the 'Caritas-Spes' Religious Mission of the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine), which includes a list of recommended measures, deadlines for their implementation and the persons responsible. Where necessary, the Mission informs donors or partners of the consequences of incidents in accordance with the terms of cooperation.
- 8.7. The policy is reviewed at least once every three years, or more frequently in the event of changes to Ukrainian legislation, the approaches of the Catholic Church (the Holy See – the Vatican) and/or the Conference of Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine, Caritas Internationalis standards, recommendations from international organisations, or the operational needs of the Mission. The review involves the participation of management, relevant specialists and, where possible, external experts in the field of environmental and social responsibility.
- 8.8. The results of monitoring and auditing can be used to improve other internal policies, plan budgets, adjust procurement procedures, implement environmental management systems and develop training programmes for staff.

9. Final provisions

- 9.1. The Policy comes into force upon its official approval by the Mission's Executive Director. From that point onwards, all staff members, consultants and partners are required to comply with the established requirements in their day-to-day work, and to take the provisions of the Policy into account when planning and implementing projects.
- 9.2. Once approved, the Policy must be distributed to all Mission staff. Each staff member must familiarise themselves with the document and sign to confirm they have done so. The Mission may organise special induction sessions, training courses and presentations to explain the content of the Policy, its requirements and its practical application in the workplace.
- 9.3. The Mission ensures that the Policy is accessible to external stakeholders, including partners, donors and beneficiaries. The document may be published on the official website, sent as part of programme documentation, or made available on request. The transparency and openness of this document help to build trust in the Mission and its activities.
- 9.4. In the event of any amendments or additions to the Policy, the Mission ensures that staff and partners are informed in a timely manner. The updated version of the Policy is distributed no later than 10 days after the amendments have been approved. Staff are required to familiarise themselves with the updated document and sign to confirm they have done so.
- 9.5. In the event of situations not covered by this Policy, decisions shall be taken in accordance with the applicable legislation of Ukraine, the principles of Caritas Internationalis, the social teaching of the Catholic Church, and international standards on human rights and environmental responsibility. Where necessary, the Mission may engage external experts to develop recommendations or clarify procedures.
- 9.6. This Policy forms part of the Mission's management system and must be applied in conjunction with other internal documents, including the policy on the protection of children and vulnerable adults, the anti-corruption policy, the policy on the handling of conflicts of interest, the staff safety policy and other regulatory acts governing the Mission's activities.
- 9.7. All organisational units of the Mission must incorporate the provisions of the Policy into their internal procedures, guidelines and work plans. Heads of units (at all levels) are responsible for implementing the provisions of the Policy in the day-to-day activities of their teams.
- 9.8. The Policy may be used as an annex to grant agreements, partner contracts and programme documents, confirming the Mission's responsibility for the social and environmental aspects of its work.