

Global Pro Bono Guide 2026

Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in Ukraine

Introduction

The pro bono legal culture in Ukraine has developed significantly over the past two decades, shaped by key historical events such as the Euromaidan Revolution in 2014, the conflicts in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, and, most notably, the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Historically, pro bono work was almost non-existent due to Soviet-era legal traditions, but increased NGO activity, legal system reforms, and international collaboration have fostered a growing culture of voluntary legal service. Today, both national and international law firms, along with NGOs and other organisations, provide critical pro bono legal assistance to those in need.

At a glance

Minimum pro bono hours requirement for lawyers?	Specific pro bono licence required?	May foreign lawyers practice pro bono?	Insurance required for law firm pro bono?	Insurance required for in-house pro bono?	Rules to limit advertising pro bono work?	Does pro bono work count to CLE credit?	Limitations for in-house lawyers to do pro bono?
No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

The landscape

Professional regulation	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of legal services, including any licensing required to provide legal services. Please highlight any differences for lawyers working as in-house counsel. 	<p>The legal profession in Ukraine consists of licensed attorneys (advocates) and unlicensed legal professionals (jurists), including in-house lawyers.</p> <p>Advocates are regulated by the Law of Ukraine “On the Bar and Advocacy”,¹ which establishes the framework for legal practice, including requirements for licensing, ethical standards, and professional conduct. Advocates have exclusive rights to represent clients in courts (with minor exceptions) and in criminal proceedings. Other legal work, including corporate law, business consulting, etc., can be performed by non-licensed jurists, including in-house counsels. In-house lawyers are not required to have an advocate’s licence unless they need to represent</p>

¹ See The Law “On the Bar and Advocacy” No. 5076-VI dated 5 July 2012, URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/5076-17#Text> (last visited on 7 February 2025) in Ukrainian.

	their company in court proceedings.
Regulatory landscape for pro bono	
2. Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of pro bono legal services.	<p>There is no mandatory requirement for advocates or jurists to provide pro bono legal services.</p> <p>However, advocates who voluntarily contract with a state-run free legal aid centre may be required to provide services to qualifying individuals. There are no formal limitations on pro bono work, and practitioners may offer free legal services at their discretion.</p>
3. Do lawyers need a license to provide pro bono legal services (beyond usual local qualification to practice law)?	No, lawyers only require the general licensing needed to practise law in Ukraine.
4. Do foreign-qualified lawyers need any additional license to provide pro bono services (beyond their foreign qualification to practice law)?	Foreign lawyers must comply with general licensing requirements. Lack of proficiency in Ukrainian and unfamiliarity with the Ukrainian legal framework may present challenges.
5. Are lawyers required by such rules to work a minimum number of pro bono hours? If so, how many?	No, there is no mandatory minimum pro bono hours requirement.
6. Are aspiring lawyers required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services to become licensed lawyers?	No, pro bono work is not required for legal licensing.
7. Aside from mandatory targets (if any), are there aspirational pro bono hours targets for lawyers set by the local bar association, regulatory body or other body?	No, there are no formal aspirational targets.
8. Do lawyers receive any “Continuing Legal Education” (CLE) or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked?	No, pro bono hours do not count toward any equivalent CLE credit in Ukraine.
Insurance and advertising	
9. Do lawyers need professional indemnity legal insurance cover for pro bono legal services they provide? Does the requirement differ for in-house lawyers?	No, professional indemnity insurance is not required for pro bono work.

<p>If insurance is required, can lawyers meet the requirement by working under the cover of another pro bono provider, e.g. in partnership with a private law firm or organization working on the same pro bono project?</p>	
<p>10. Are there any rules that limit or prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients?</p>	<p>There are no prohibitions against advertising pro bono work.</p> <p>However, legal advertising in general must be objective and non-misleading, per the Rules of Advocates' Ethics.²</p>
Pro bono practice and culture	
<p>11. What are the main areas of law which require or present opportunities for pro bono? What are the major unmet legal needs?</p>	<p>Currently, pro bono work in Ukraine primarily supports internally displaced persons, veterans, disabled individuals, and victims of war. There are also opportunities in human rights, environmental law, and social justice advocacy.</p> <p>There is also pro bono involvement in defence, medical assistance, and prosthesis, as well as cultural initiatives and intellectual property.</p> <p>Unmet legal needs include access to justice for vulnerable groups, veterans, military servants, social benefits disputes, labour rights violations, and regulatory challenges for small organisations.</p>
<p>12. Who are the main providers of pro bono legal services?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs (e.g., HIAS in Ukraine,³ CrimeaSOS,⁴ EuroMaidan SOS,⁵ Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union,⁶ Caritas Ukraine,⁷ Legal Development Network,⁸ Ukrainian Legal Aid Foundation⁹).

² Rules of Advocates' Ethics, approved by the Congress of Advocates of Ukraine on 9 June 2017, URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/rada/show/n0001891-17#n427> (last visited on 3 February 2025).

³ See <https://hias.org/where/ukraine/> (last visited on 10 February 2025).

⁴ See <https://krymsos.com/en/pro-nas/> (last visited on 10 February 2025).

⁵ See <https://ccl.org.ua/tools/yevromajdan-sos/> (last visited on 10 February 2025).

⁶ See <https://helsinki.org.ua/> (last visited on 10 February 2025).

⁷ See <http://www.caritas-ua.org/> (last visited on 10 February 2025).

⁸ See <https://ldn.org.ua/en/about/> (last visited on 10 February 2025).

⁹ See <https://ulaf.org.ua/en/> (last visited on 10 February 2025).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law firms (e.g., AEQUO,¹⁰ Arzinger,¹¹ Asters,¹² Avellum,¹³ CMS Ukraine,¹⁴ LCF,¹⁵ Vasil Kasil & Partners¹⁶). • Ukrainian Bar Association (e.g., sports law initiatives, clinics for soldiers and families).¹⁷ • Academic institutions (Legal Clinic “Pro Bono” of the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv,¹⁸ Legal Clinic of the Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University,¹⁹ Legal Clinic “Pro bono” of the National University of Ostroh Academy,²⁰ Legal Clinic “Pro bono” of the Volodymyr Dahl East Ukrainian National University²¹).
<p>13. Are there any noteworthy examples of how innovative technology or artificial intelligence is being used to enable access to pro bono or otherwise as part of pro bono cases or matters?</p>	<p>While significant AI-based initiatives have not been widely implemented yet, NGOs and law firms are experimenting with chatbots and automated legal assistance platforms to help individuals navigate legal processes.</p> <p>One notable example is Tech To The Rescue, a global nonprofit platform that connects tech companies with nonprofit organisations to develop pro bono or low-cost digital solutions, thereby enhancing social impact. In response to the war in Ukraine, Tech To The Rescue launched the #TechForUkraine campaign²² aiming to support Ukrainian nonprofits by providing pro bono digital solutions, including website development and digital platforms, to help them continue their vital work during the war.</p> <p>The Legal Development Network (LDN) operates an online chatbot, the “Pravomen” platform for</p>

¹⁰ See <https://aequo.ua> (last visited on 7 February 2025).

¹¹ See <https://arzinger.ua/en/kso/> (last visited on 29 March 2025).

¹² See https://www.asterslaw.com/ua/about_us/esg/pro_bono/ (last visited on 7 February 2025).

¹³ See <https://avellum.com> (last visited on 7 February 2025).

¹⁴ See <https://cms.law/en/ukr/> (last visited on 28 March 2025).

¹⁵ See <https://lcf.ua/en/pro-bono-and-corporate-social-responsibility/> (last visited on 28 March 2025).

¹⁶ See <https://vkv.ua/en> (last visited on 7 February 2025).

¹⁷ See <https://uba.ua> (last visited on 7 February 2025).

¹⁸ See <https://legalclinics.in.ua/en/legal-clinic-pro-bono-of-the-taras-shevchenko-national-university-of-kyiv-probationer-alcu/> (last visited on 28 March 2025).

¹⁹ See <http://legalclinic.nlu.edu.ua> (last visited on 3 February 2025).

²⁰ See <https://www.oa.edu.ua/ua/resources/probono> (last visited on 3 February 2025).

²¹ See http://pravo-snu.com.ua/clinic/?fbclid=IwY2xjawlNp1RleHRuA2FlbQlxMAABHb9lFPOR85B5NV9u06e3dIPA0Pvt-By8lv-naiAuMxPhHbPKtqCD9bTL1A_aem_B8GA-db3_nixHdNxlUdPA (last visited on 3 February 2025).

²² See <https://techtotherescue.org/campaign/tech-for-ukraine/> (last visited on 13 February 2025).

consultations with Ukrainians abroad. It has a legal component within an innovative Link mechanism for the local coordination of humanitarian responses.²³

Sources of Pro Bono Opportunities and Key Contacts

14. Describe notable sources of pro bono matters or resources in your jurisdiction.

- Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War²⁴ (providing legal aid to families of captured soldiers).
- Pro Bono Space: a platform created by the Ukrainian Legal Aid Foundation that brings together non-governmental organisations and the legal business sector for collaboration²⁵
- Danchurchaid & Norwegian Church Aid in Ukraine: supports Ukrainian organisations and community-led responses, provides psychosocial and legal support.²⁶
- Public International Law & Policy Group (PILPG): a global pro bono resource supporting peace negotiations, post-conflict constitution drafting, and transitional justice. It has been actively involved in Ukraine-related matters.²⁷
- USAID programmes, which are currently suspended.
- Many universities in Ukraine spread information about pro bono initiatives and have their own legal clinics (Legal Clinic of the National University of Law named after Yaroslav Mudryi,²⁸ Legal Clinic “Pro bono” of the National University “Ostroh Academy”,²⁹ Legal Clinic “Pro bono” of Volodymyr Dahl

²³ https://ldn.org.ua/en/event/the-legal-development-network-modernizes-tools-and-develops-standards-for-legal-assistance-in-ukraine/?utm_

²⁴ See <https://koordshtab.gov.ua/about> (last visited on 7 February 2025).

²⁵ See <https://pro-bono.in.ua/about-us/> (last visited on 3 February 2025).

²⁶ See <https://www.danchurchaid.org/what-we-do/where-we-work/danchurchaid-in-ukraine> (last visited on 10 February 2025).

²⁷ See <https://www.publicinternationalallawandpolicygroup.org/war-crimes-prosecution-transitional-justice?.com> (last visited on 10 February 2025)

²⁸ See <http://legalclinic.nlu.edu.ua> (last visited on 3 February 2025).

²⁹ See <https://www.oa.edu.ua/ua/resources/probono> (last visited on 3 February 2025)

	<p>East Ukrainian National University³⁰).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union has established a programme aimed at promoting and cultivating human rights in Ukraine in line with European standards.³¹ • International Renaissance Foundation: an NGO focused on fostering democratic values in Ukraine.³² • Environment People Law (focuses on increasing environmental advocacy and awareness).³³ • Caritas Ukraine is the project whose main aim is to provide legal assistance to migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees detained at detention facilities and asylum seekers and refugees who are in the process of being granted refugee status in Ukraine.³⁴ • There are a number of NGOs that support citizens affected by war, including HIAS in Ukraine³⁵ and CrimeaSOS.³⁶
<p>15. Is there any public or private organization with which a local or foreign lawyer can register to be made aware of pro bono opportunities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ukrainian Bar Association Pro Bono Initiatives.³⁷ • Local law firm pro bono programmes.³⁸ • International legal networks assisting with Ukraine-related cases.³⁹
<p>16. Are there any awards, lists or rankings related to pro bono work?</p>	<p>While Ukraine does not have widely recognised pro bono awards, many international organisations, including <i>Chambers and Partners</i>,</p>

³⁰ See http://pravo-snu.com.ua/clinic/?fbclid=IwY2xjawINp1RleHRuA2FibQlxMAABHb9IFP0R85B5NV9u06e3dlPA0Pvt-By8lv-naiAuMxPhHbPKtqCD9bTL1A_aem_B8GA-db3_nixHdNxIUdPA (last visited on 3 February 2025).

³¹ See <https://helsinki.org.ua/> (last visited on 6 February 2025).

³² See <http://www.irf.ua/en/> (last visited on 6 February 2025).

³³ See <http://epi.org.ua/> (last visited on 6 February 2025).

³⁴ See <http://www.caritas-ua.org/> (last visited on 6 February 2025).

³⁵ See <https://www.hias.org/ukraine> (last visited on 6 February 2025).

³⁶ See <https://krymsos.com/en/pro-nas/> (last visited on 6 February 2025).

³⁷ See <https://legalaid.gov.ua/advokatam/> (last visited on 28 March 2025); <https://uba.ua/eng/news/doluchajtes-do-komandy-yurystiv-garyachoyi-liniyi-apu> (last visited on 28 March 2025).

³⁸ See Pro Bono platform connecting law firms and NGOs providing pro bono services: <https://pro-bono.in.ua/> (last visited on 28 March 2025); law firms (e.g., [AEQUO](#), [Arzinger](#), [Asters](#), [Avellum](#), [CMS Ukraine](#), [LCF](#), [Vasil Kisiil & Partners](#)).

³⁹ For example, see <https://ukrainelegalnetwork.org/> (last visited on 28 March 2025).

	recognise law firms with strong pro bono commitments.
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Learn more

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