Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of our NGO "League of Mediators of Ukraine» ([www.limu.org.ua](http://www.limu.org.ua) ) I kindly ask your help for conducting the 40-hour online training “The understanding-based model of mediation” in spring 2025 for the group of Ukrainian family mediators.

NGO "League of Mediators of Ukraine" (LiMU) was established in December 2017 to develop and promote family mediation in Ukraine as a peaceful way to resolve conflicts. Today, LiMU unites and coordinates the work of more than 50 family mediators throughout the country and, in cooperation with the social services of the country, provides a social family mediation service to all families in need of help and support.

Since the beginning of the war, family mediators of LiMU have started the project “Family Mediation in the time of War” to provide for free an online cross-border family mediation for Ukrainian families affected by the war. Mediators take all possible measures to encourage parents in cross-border family disputes affecting the interests of children to find an agreed solution to the conflict. Supporting a negotiated resolution of contentious issues is especially helpful in family conflicts where children are involved, and where disputing parents typically need to constantly interact with each other to ensure children's rights.

In this project, family mediators with many years of practical experience conduct online mediations for all Ukrainians seeking help in resolving a conflict. The main difficulties that the mediator faces in such crisis mediations are due to the vulnerability and sensitivity of the parties to the conflict, the rapid loss of control over anger, fearfulness and high levels of distrust, loss of concentration and a marked decrease in cognitive abilities and, as a result, increased helplessness. And given the fact that prioritization, decision-making and situational understanding take place in the frontal part of the brain, which turns off in stress, this makes the work of the mediator even more difficult. The more efforts in crisis mediation, the mediator directs to work with the emotions of the parties to reduce the activity of the limbic system, mental stimulation and increase cognitive abilities, thereby reducing the feeling of helplessness and the possibility of generating short-term solutions to meet the needs of the "here and now".

At the same time, the big difficulty today is the fact that Ukrainian family mediators also experienced stress, many continue to be in the war zone, and are not independent in relation to the ongoing traumatic events.

Every day for a long period of work, plunging into the suffering and feelings of loss of people, it is impossible not to relive the traumatic experience, all these factors lead to emotional and physical exhaustion of our mediators.

Since the beginning of the war the specifics of family conflicts have changed and mediators have faced the need to take into account the impact of trauma on the emergence and forms of the conflict, over two years of practice we have been developing a new approach to mediation and call it "Trauma-informed approach".

To improve our efficiency in work, faced with the uncertainty of working in war conditions, we appeal to all international experts with a request to share knowledge and experience for improving our work with Ukrainian families.

We are kindly asking for your financial support to conduct the 40-hour online training “The understanding-based model of mediation” in spring 2025 for our family mediators, which will help us gain new tools for working with highly emotional conflicts and improve our mediation practice.

Thank you in advance!

Sincerely,

Tetiana Bilyk

Head of the Board of NGO "League of Mediators of Ukraine"

Mob. +38 (050) 446 3020 (WhatsApp, Telegram, Viber)

Email: Tatyana.bilyk@gmail.com