UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Education on hold

Addressing barriers to learning among refugee children and youth from Ukraine—challenges and recommendations.

Education Policy Brief
(September 2023)

Contents

Overview 3

Education of refugee children and youth from Ukraine in Europe 4

Major challenges in refugee education 9

Risks to children and youth from Ukraine 16

Parent dilemmas 18

Future-proofing the education of refugees from Ukraine: policy recommendations 21

Contact us:
UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe
Email: rbeext@unhcr.org

Cover photo:
May 2022, Romania: Ukrainian children during a class at the Pepsico funded Learning Center in Bucharest. © UNHCR/Andrew McConnell

Overview

Since the full-scale war started in Ukraine in February 2022, over 5.9 million of refugees have crossed into neighbouring countries, in addition to those displaced inside the country. This has presented European countries with very specific refugee protection needs, including the inclusion of unprecedented numbers of children and youth into national education systems of host countries. Around nine out of ten refugees from Ukraine are women and children.

With available data showing that, on average, only about half of refugee children from Ukraine were enrolled in schools in host countries for the 2022-2023 school year, hundreds of thousands are at risk of remaining out of school as Europe moves into 2023-2024, the third school year marked by the effects of the full-scale war in Ukraine.

Some refugee parents remain hesitant to enrol their children in host country schools as they foster an expectation to return soon, or they prefer other learning options for children while they wait for their situation to stabilize. Schools and education systems in some countries and regions have reached capacity or do not currently have the resources, teachers or experience to scale up support systems to include large numbers refugee children in schools, leaving many without qualitative options to enrol children.

Effective solutions to address some of these major challenges will be needed to mitigate the considerable damage hundreds of thousands of refugee children are facing with regards to academic performance and, ultimately, their careers and later prospects in life. Limiting time-out-of-learning and returning refugee children to school as soon as possible remains among the major refugee protection priorities for UNHCR in the Ukraine emergency.

Solutions to some of the major challenges will not be easy to develop and implement in the short term. Education authorities, teachers, parents and other stakeholders will have to plan for every possible scenario, with no certainty as to how long the conflict and forced displacement may last. Future-proofing the education of refugee children from Ukraine will therefore necessarily need to include planning for long-term, high quality education in host countries as well as initiatives to facilitate return of refugee and internally displaced children to the Ukrainian school system whenever this becomes possible.

This Education Policy Brief focuses on the main challenges in education of refugee children and youth from Ukraine in Europe and links this to internal displacement and education disruptions inside Ukraine. It also offers certain insights and avenues toward potential solutions for refugee education identified by UNHCR during the emergency response.

Education of refugee children and youth from Ukraine in Europe

The education of children both within and outside Ukraine has been disrupted for several years. Hundreds of thousands had already been internally displaced since 2014 as a result of the conflict in the eastern regions and Crimea, while the COVID-19 pandemic brought periods of extended school closures, a pivot to online learning and other major disruptions.[1] Since the start of the full-scale war in February 2022, a considerable part of Ukraine's child population has been forced to flee to other countries, or is newly displaced inside Ukraine, affecting over 5 million children.[2] This makes for a uniquely complex range of challenges with regard to access to education for children and youth from Ukraine.

In refugee hosting countries in Europe

The Ukraine refugee emergency has led to an unprecedented influx of school-aged refugee children into European countries.[3] Since February 2022, over 5.9 million refugees from Ukraine were recorded in the region. Over 358,000 fled to countries beyond Europe.[4]

Almost nine out of ten of these refugees are women and children of school age, with the latter typically making up 30 to 50 per cent of the total refugee population in any given host country in Europe.[5] This means the population of school age children who have fled to other European countries since the start of the war amounts to many hundreds of thousands.

These numbers are far larger than the numbers of child refugees entering Europe during the last significant spike of refugee arrivals through the Mediterranean in 2015 - 2016. While disaggregated enrolment data is not available for all countries, population statistics show that between 2014 - 2020, some 802,000 minors were recognized as refugees or received another protective status in the EU, with the vast majority in countries with compulsory education.[6] The figure for that six-year period is less than half of the currently estimated number of refugee children from Ukraine who arrived in the seventeen months since the full-scale war started, demonstrating the rapid growth and unprecedented scale of displacement of minors in Europe since February 2022.

Currently, the largest populations of refugee children from Ukraine are in Poland, Germany and Czechia. Large numbers are also present in countries geographically further removed such as Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom.[7] Czech Republic is under particular strain as it currently hosts one of the largest refugee populations from Ukraine in proportion to its overall population. Moldova hosts a proportionally similar refugee population, but has far less resources to address the major challenges.[8]

June 2022, Poland: Sofia, 13, a Ukrainian refugee, attends a geography class led by her teacher Ewa Golofit at Primary School no. 58 in Warsaw. Sofia's parents sent her to live with her grandmother in the Polish capital after the invasion of Ukraine began in February 2022.
© UNHCR/Rafal Kostrzynski

A long-standing education crisis: link to internal displacement in Ukraine since 2014

The vast challenges in education of refugee children and youth from Ukraine must be placed in a context of years of disruptions prior to the start of the invasion in 2022.

Access to education inside Ukraine has been severely impeded since the start of the conflict in the eastern regions of Ukraine and its southern peninsula of Crimea in 2014. By October 2019, an estimated 670,000 children and 67,000 teachers were affected in Government-Controlled Areas (GCA) and Non-Government Controlled Areas (NGCA) on either side of the former 'contact line' in the Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts.[9]

Schools in the affected areas have remained closed for long periods since 2014, and school facilities were subject to regular attack, destruction or damage.

As a result of this, many children and educational personnel from affected areas in Ukraine are experiencing symptoms of extreme trauma and stress, with most students suffering significant learning losses. Barriers to education on either side of the former contact line — such as lack of certification or student mobility[10], as well as widespread disruptions caused by school closures as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic — added further obstacles to accessing education inside Ukraine.[11]

Additional challenges emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic, during which many schools and educational facilities globally were forced to close or switch to remote learning for extended periods, disproportionally affecting refugee and internally displaced children, including those who were already internally displaced within Ukraine.[12]

April 2022, Georgia: Ukrainian children who fled to Georgia started school in specially organized Ukrainian sections in Georgian education facilities.
© Ministry of Education of Georgia

The new phase of the conflict since 24 February 2022 has caused this already precarious situation to deteriorate significantly. Many more schools are no longer operating normally due to damage or destruction, and many more were newly internally displaced or fled to other countries, making a return of school aged children and youth to the Ukrainian education system unlikely in the short term.

The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine rose sharply from 854,000 at the end of 2021 to some 5.9 million at the end of 2022.[13] The Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science reported in February 2023 that 3,151 educational institutions were damaged by bombing or shelling, with 440 completely destroyed, representing around 25 per cent of school infrastructure in the country. According to figures of Ukrainian authorities, 461 children were killed and 927 wounded since the start of the full-scale invasion in February 2022.[14]

Adding to the strains on educational infrastructure, many schools in Ukraine have been vacated and are being used as military facilities or as temporary shelter for IDPs. Schools in the west of the country have seen large numbers of newly internally displaced children arrive, adding to the pressure they were under already as a result of displacement from the east since 2014. As a result, many internally displaced parents are unable to place their children into schools.[15]

Unexploded ordnance, widespread destruction of property and civilian infrastructure, flooding as a result of dam breaches, as well as the unpredictable security situation will prevent many children from returning to school in Ukraine for the foreseeable future.[16] [17] Some have also fled the country after first having been internally displaced inside Ukraine, with many having been exposed to multiple traumatic episodes.

April 2022, Georgia: Ukrainian students have access to general education with the same curriculum and textbooks as they used to study in Ukrainian schools. © Ministry of Education of Georgia

The combination of previous internal displacement since 2014, the 2020-2023 COVID pandemic, recent internal displacement and large amounts of children and youth fleeing Ukraine since February 2022 has exposed many to severe, complex and multi-layered risks related to their education. Now approaching the third school year facing disruptions as a result of the full-scale war, the Ukraine situation has become a protracted education emergency for millions of displaced children.

Use of online and non-formal education by refugees and internally displaced persons

Since the full-scale war began, Ukrainian teachers and students have shown remarkable determination to ensure continuity of learning despite themselves being internally displaced or forced to flee the country. Many have resorted to remote and online learning and non-formal education to keep in learning. Despite this, the conditions in which refugee and internally displaced children and youth from Ukraine are learning are in most cases far from ideal.

Inside Ukraine. The Government of Ukraine has taken measures to equip most schools with bomb shelters and is relying heavily on continued online learning to keep pupils and educational personnel safe through use of the All-Ukrainian Online School,

an online teaching platform for grades 5 - 11 developed by the Ministry of Education and Science during the COVID-19 pandemic with the support of UNICEF and the Government of Switzerland, among others.[18] A more limited learning application for primary school, focusing on literacy and numeracy for grades 1 - 4 has also been made available more recently.[19]

In addition, the Government of Ukraine, humanitarian organizations, the European Union and other stakeholders have been supporting the education system to ensure pupils and teachers can learn and work in safety, receive adequate support and training, and have access to infrastructure for those forced to switch to remote learning modalities.[20]

Outside Ukraine. The online learning tools developed by the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science have also been widely used and promoted for use by refugee children and teachers who have left the country. Various surveys, needs assessments and qualitative information gathering exercises have shown that a great number of refugee children from Ukraine are still learning online according to Ukrainian curriculum, using the All-Ukrainian Online School or other remote learning tools made available to them by teachers and schools.[21]

In addition to online learning, groups of refugee children from Ukraine are learning Ukrainian curriculum in non-formal, face-to-face school settings, often with refugee teachers from Ukraine.

Before the full-scale war, Ukraine had some 4.1 million students and some 500,000 teachers in its compulsory school education system.[22] A significant proportion of the teachers have since fled the country. In May 2022, an estimated 25,000 teachers had already crossed into other countries.[23]

More recent and precise estimates are not available, but intention surveys and other data show that around 70 per cent of refugees from Ukraine have a university or higher degree, and 16 per cent worked in the education sector before fleeing, pointing to an important contingent of persons with teaching skills or certification among the refugee population.[24]

Many refugee teachers from Ukraine have started teaching again in some form in their host countries. Various models of non-formal Ukrainian schools have emerged in host countries across Europe, of varying quality and with varying degrees of funding. Some of these non-formal education facilities are recognized by Ukrainian authorities. Many have received funding from humanitarian organizations or other donors, with some using existing school infrastructure or renting, or being provided with, premises outside the host country school infrastructure.[25]

Data on how many refugee children from Ukraine are learning online or in non-formal education facilities is not available, or at best only in scattered and anecdotal form, making it unfeasible to monitor what kind of learning is taking place and what level of academic performance refugee children and youth from Ukraine are currently attaining.

There are however strong indications that access to online education for those outside Ukraine is at best intermittent as teachers inside Ukraine are often forced to interrupt lessons if the security situation deteriorates. Many refugee children also do not have access to devices, internet and learning space to adequately follow lessons. Non-formal education settings such as non-formal Ukrainian schools often do not have the funding and support to teach at scale, which means that such education settings are not accessible to the vast majority of refugee children and youth in most European host countries.

Major challenges in refugee education

Most education systems across Europe have re-activated or scaled up support systems and policies for refugee children implemented during previous periods of increased arrivals of refugee and migrant children in the region, as observed most recently along the Mediterranean in 2015 - 2016.[26] The challenges in education resulting from the Ukraine emergency are related to the sheer size of the population of children and youth fleeing the conflict, capacity problems and hesitancy of parents to enrol children in local schools in host countries. There is also a geographic shift compared to previous peaks in arrivals in Europe, with some countries who hosted relatively small numbers of refugee children and youth prior to the start of the full-scale war in Ukraine now having the highest numbers.

Low enrolment rates

At the end of the 2022 - 2023 school year, the enrolment rate of refugee children from Ukraine into schools in refugee-hosting countries in Europe remains low. Where data on enrolment of Ukrainian children in pre-school, primary and higher education is available, the number of enrolled children is consistently far below the estimated refugee child population from Ukraine registered in the country. Estimates based on available data show that current enrolment rates of Ukrainian children in national school systems in EU host countries are on average around 30 - 50 per cent.[27]

- In **Poland**, currently the largest recipient of refugees from Ukraine[28], over 303,000 refugees are in the compulsory school age bracket (6 - 17 years old). By contrast, only around 134,000 children from Ukraine are enrolled in Polish primary and secondary schools. This means that approximately 56 per cent of school-aged refugee children in Poland are outside the Polish education system. Enrolment of children and youth from Ukraine has dropped slightly over the course of the 2022 - 2023 school year.[29]
- **Germany** is currently the second largest recipient of refugees from Ukraine, with just over one million registered refugees.[30] At the end of May 2023, some 207,000 minors and youth were enrolled in schools.[31] Exact age breakdowns of the refugee population from Ukraine in the compulsory school age bracket are not currently available, though estimates show that up to 80 per cent of children are enrolled in schools. However, teacher shortages and school capacities in some regions remain an issue due to the many arrivals from Ukraine.[32]
- In **Czech Republic,** almost 40,000 children were enrolled in primary schools and over 3,300 in secondary schools as of end-March 2023. One comprehensive analysis shows that up to 90 per cent of Ukrainian children of primary school age are enrolled, though secondary school enrolment remains low at around 50 per cent, with many remaining in online and non-formal education. Refugees from Ukraine make up

May 2022, Romania: Ukrainian children show their artwork during a class at the Pepsico funded Learning Center in Bucharest.
© UNHCR/Andrew McConnell

about 3.9 per cent of the total Czech primary school population and 0.7 per cent of the secondary school population.[33] The total refugee population currently stands at over 520,000 (across all age brackets).[34]

- In **Romania** the enrolment in school (6 - 18 years) is 5,370, with 1,983 in pre-school (3 - 6 years). In addition, 16,137 children are enrolled in schools and pre-schools as 'audients', meaning they do no yet enjoy a permanent legal status and receive no official grades, but can still participate in lessons. This contrasts to a total number of Ukrainian refugees registered in Romania 134,625. An estimated 44,599 are minors, including an estimated 35,000 children of compulsory school age (5 - 18).[35] If we count only those of compulsory school age fully who are enrolled in school — i.e., excluding those with 'audient' status — the enrolment rate would be around 15 per cent. If refugee students with 'audient' status were to be fully enrolled, the estimated enrolment rate would be considerably higher, at around 60 per cent.

In most countries, available data shows that a significantly lower proportion of secondary school age children are enrolled compared to younger children enrolled in primary. This points to far greater hesitancy for parents to enrol teenagers in local schools in host countries than with parents of children in lower and upper primary, presumably due to greater challenges in language learning and social barriers.

Hesitancy of parents to enrol

Needs assessments carried out shortly after February 2022 in several countries hosting refugees from Ukraine, showed a considerable number of parents did not intend to enrol their children in local schools before the end of the 2021 - 2022 school year.[36]

In UNHCR's first Intention Survey conducted across six European countries before summer 2022, most refugees prioritized other basic needs such as cash, accommodation and employment over education.[37]

A second Intention Survey conducted in late summer 2022 across 43 countries worldwide showed an apparent shift, with 73 per cent of refugee respondents from Ukraine confirming an intention to enrol their children in a national school within their host country, and 76 per cent in the third Intention Survey held at the end of 2022 and early 2023.[38]

Despite increasing numbers of refugees expressing an intention to enrol their children in national education systems within host countries, actual enrolment remains low and appears to stagnate. This points to ongoing hesitancy of parents to enrol children in refugee hosting countries.

Various needs assessments, intention surveys, protection monitoring, as well as anecdotal and qualitative evidence[39] have shown that this hesitancy is due to several factors, namely:

- **An expectation of parents to be able to return to Ukraine soon.** Many see their stay abroad as temporary and see no need to enrol their children in a school in a different country with a different language and education system.[40]
- **Language barriers.** In a recent OECD survey, 63 per cent of participating OECD countries cite language as a significant barrier for enrolment of refugee children and youth. Many parents experience language barriers when attempting to enrol children in schools in host countries. Many children are also reluctant to go to schools in host countries because they fear the language barrier will be too great to learn and interact with their peers effectively, particularly in secondary schools. Some also cite being the subject of bullying because of such language barriers.[41]
- **Lack of information on education options.** Many Ukrainian parents have little to no information about education options for children.[42] A factor that may contribute to this limited information could be that the vast majority of refugee from Ukraine have entered host countries on Temporary Protection or similar schemes and are staying in rented accommodation (43 per cent) or with relatives or acquaintances (26 per cent).[43] As such, they do not usually receive the same levels of information as they would if applying for asylum and staying in government-organized reception facilities. Some 20 per cent of OECD states also cite lack of information as a major barrier to enrolment.[44]
- **Uncertainty over procedures for return to learning in the Ukrainian education system.** 48 per cent of participating countries in the OECD survey cite "concerns about the future recognition of skills/ competencies/ diplomas by Ukraine" as a barrier to enrolment. Many parents have little to no information about how children with a learning history in the Ukrainian education system can have their grades and certificates validated in host country education systems. Some are also unsure about how grades and certificates obtained in a host country will be validated in the Ukrainian education system once they return. Many parents fear that children will lose valuable grades and certifications once they leave the Ukrainian education system and assume that time spent in a host country education system might set back the education of children once they return to the Ukrainian system.[45]

School capacity in refugee hosting countries

Many education systems in Europe do not have sufficient capacity and teaching staff in schools to accommodate the very large numbers of Ukrainian children that have arrived since February 2022, particularly in urban areas.

In many cities and regions there is **lack of physical space and learning infrastructure**. Some schools have introduced waiting lists for parents or are offered options to enrol children in less congested school districts. In some cases, refugee children have been offered the option of home schooling or remote learning when they cannot find a place in a school.

With pervasive **teacher shortages** throughout the region — which was first exacerbated by people leaving the teaching profession during the COVID-19 pandemic[46] — most European countries struggle to find enough qualified or specialized, teachers to work with refugee children in classrooms. This has prompted some of the top hosting countries to relax certification and hiring requirements for teachers and teaching assistants so as to increase class sizes or to take other measures to expedite recruitment of educational personnel.

Major capacity problems can also be found in **preparatory classes** and **language support programmes** to prepare refugee students for inclusion in the national school system. Preparatory programmes come in different formats throughout Europe, with some offering separate 'preparatory years' or 'welcome classes' in which refugee students receive intensive lessons to learn the language of instruction before they move into classes with local children of the host community. In other variants of these programmes, students are either fully or partially following lessons in a regular class with children of the host community and receive additional language lessons or language support in parallel. In many countries, education authorities struggle to find specialized teachers to teach preparatory programmes or language classes. In some cases additional certification requirements discourage teachers from applying for teaching positions in such programmes.[47]

Some examples showing the pressures on education systems as a result of the Ukraine emergency include:

- In **Poland** only around 11 per cent of enrolled refugee children from Ukraine are currently able to attend preparatory classes, mostly as a result of shortages of teachers of Polish as a foreign language.[48]
- In the Federal State of Hamburg in **Germany** alone, 6,200 Ukrainian children were accommodated in schools by the end of 2022, prompting school authorities to set up 400 additional classes and hiring around 600 teachers.[49]
- In Prague, **Czech Republic**, 650 children from Ukraine were unable to enrol in school due to shortages of space, prompting city council to take emergency measures such as increases in class sizes.[50]
- Similar stresses on school capacity have been observed in **other European countries**.[51]

Legal, financial and administrative barriers to accessing education

Some of the existing barriers to accessing education for refugees are re-emerging or have become more pronounced as a result of the influx of refugee children from Ukraine.

These barriers include lack of clear provisions on **compulsory education** for refugee children, children without **residence permits** or international protection status. Legal provisions on the age brackets for compulsory education may limit access to education for children outside a certain age group, such as children below 5 or above 15 years of age.

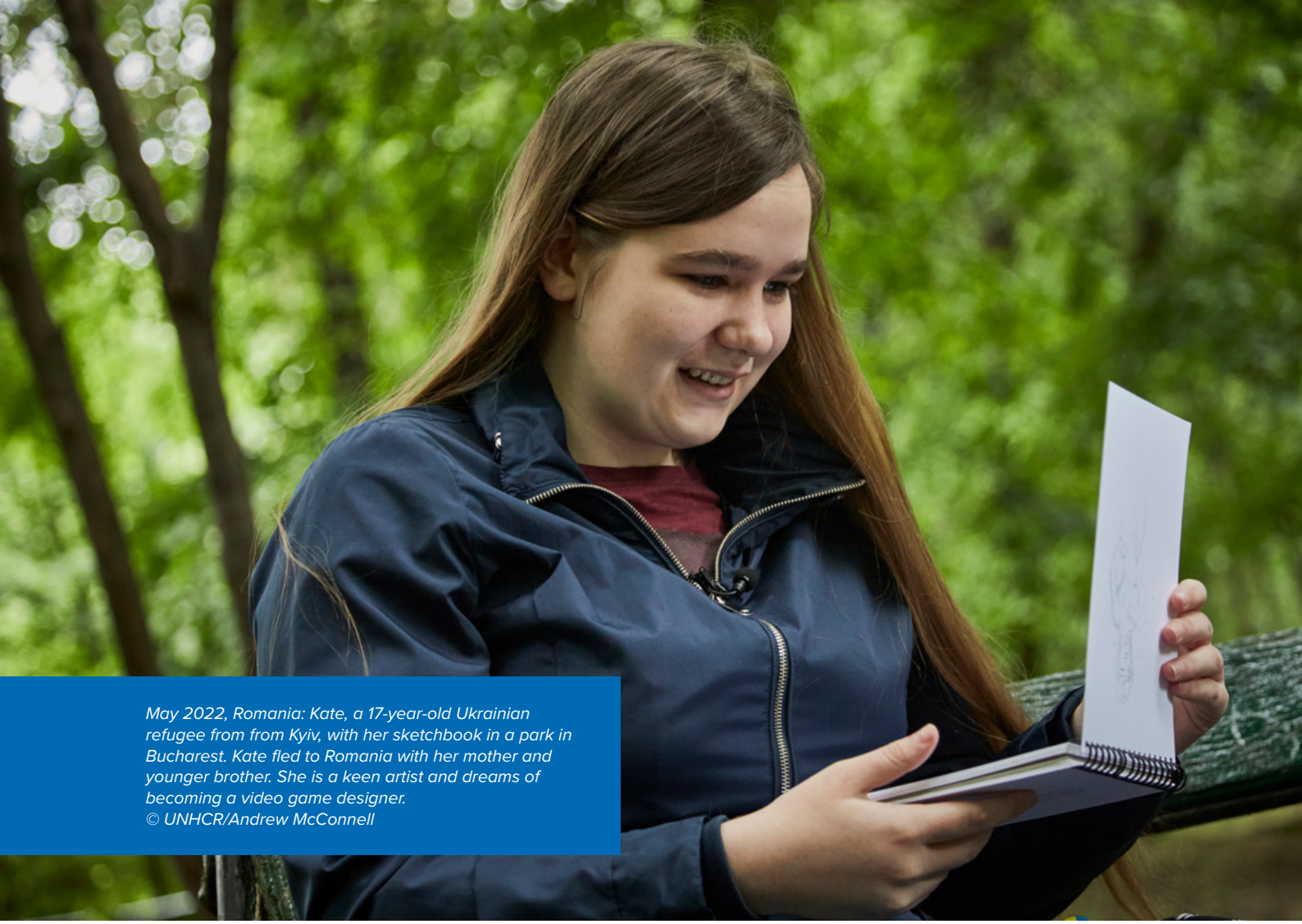
In countries with **devolved competency** over education to regions or sub-regions, legal provisions and language requirements on access to education for newly arrived refugee children may also greatly vary from one region to another, presenting challenges to refugee parents to understand what they can do to in order for their children to access education systems.

In addition, there are often no legal provisions on — or even a uniform approach — to how children's pre-displacement education level should be **assessed** and assigned to school grades.[52]

Many refugees from Ukraine also lack **financial resources** to pay for tuition fees, books and other school equipment, transport and other costs associated with enrolling in school.[53]

- Schools in some countries could until recently only consider children with a **long-term residency permit** as eligible for enrolment in schools. Temporary Protection holders typically do not have such permit because their right of stay is limited in time.
- **Romania** and **Moldova** had or continue to have systems allowing migrant and refugee children into schools initially only as 'audient' students, meaning they can follow lessons but are unable to sit for tests and exams which would allow them to progress through the education system and obtain grades and certificates.
- In March 2022, the Government of **Poland** issued a ministerial decree exempting Ukrainian children from compulsory education if parents sign a declaration that their children remain in Ukrainian education through remote learning.[54] In practice there are no provisions for the Polish Government to verify whether Ukrainian children are at school or learning after parents sign the declaration.[55] Some other countries are either allowing exemptions to compulsory education through legally recognized forms of home schooling, while home schooling in others is illegal.[56]

Most European countries are scrambling to remove administrative and practical barriers in the wake of the arrival of large populations of refugee children and youth from Ukraine. Vast differences in approaches, quality and effectiveness of measures to ensure access to education persist, however.



May 2022, Romania: Kate, a 17-year-old Ukrainian refugee from from Kyiv, with her sketchbook in a park in Bucharest. Kate fled to Romania with her mother and younger brother. She is a keen artist and dreams of becoming a video game designer.
© UNHCR/Andrew McConnell

The data problem

Countries in Europe for the most part do not make available and/or disaggregate data on refugee education, which has traditionally made detailed analysis and planning of inclusion of refugee children into education systems in Europe a challenge. Some indicators can be gleaned from asylum statistics, local studies and other sources but usually there are no exact breakdowns available of how many refugees are in education; their age, gender and other personal characteristics; nor about where they are educated and in which grades.[57]

This situation has improved somewhat as a result of the Ukraine refugee emergency. Because Temporary Protection in the EU is limited to Ukrainian nationals, some data has become available on numbers of TP beneficiaries in EU education systems, though it remains scattered and incomplete. While registration and documentation of TP holders has improved in recent months, many countries still have no precise data on place of residence, age, gender and education of refugee children and youth from Ukraine. Double counting and lack of de-registration when refugees move to other countries also results in inaccuracies. Some education systems also lack planning data an assessments of how many places for refugee children and youth are available in the school system.[58]

As a result, many countries are struggling to make adequate assessments of education needs, to plan school infrastructure and staff, and to cope with other aspects of managing the influx of refugee children. The lack of data has in some cases also made coordination of allocation of additional resources more challenging, for example when EU funding and resources offered by the humanitarian community to support refugee education are mobilized to complement what states are doing.

Risks to children and youth from Ukraine

September 2023 will mark the beginning of the third successive school year of significant disruptions in the education of hundreds of thousands of school age refugee children and youth from Ukraine. Being out of school or remaining in unsustainable and lower-quality forms of online and remote education for extended periods of time brings significant protection risks for refugee children and youth from Ukraine.

Learning losses

If enrolment rates in national school systems of host countries remain low, many refugee children and youth risk losing out an another year of school for the 2021-2022[59] and 2022-2023 academic years. These potential learning losses will come on top of learning losses already incurred by Ukrainian children as a result of the conflict starting in the east of the country in 2014 and the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic since early 2020, which involved school closures, a switch to lower quality online learning and less content covered during instruction.[60]

Such long and profound learning interruptions are known to have long-term detrimental effects on academic performance and lead to lower enrolment in secondary and higher education.

There is some evidence that the academic performance of Ukrainian children is dropping significantly as a result of the conflict. Before the war, Ukrainian children performed on par or outperformed children in neighbouring countries on most education indicators. Data from the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) indicators for students aged 15 — as well as the World Bank's Harmonized Learning Outcomes (HLO) — now show significant drops in academic performance of Ukrainian children, placing them below the lowest performing countries in Europe (i.e. Moldova and Armenia). [61] [62]

Lack of safe school environment

With hundreds of thousands of refugee children from Ukraine likely to be out of school for extended periods, many risk being further exposed to exploitation, gender-based violence (GBV), harmful coping mechanisms and other risks associated with being out of school.

Some initial evidence gathered in Czech Republic and Hungary for example points toward increased vulnerabilities of women and girls to trafficking, sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as recruitment into irregular employment. Unaccompanied children remain at particular risk.[63]

Declines in well-being and mental health

Sustained periods in online education or other forms of remote learning may lead to social isolation, mental health issues and learning difficulties, with disproportionally large effects on refugee learners, as was the case during the COVID-19 pandemic.[64] In addition to learning, schools fulfil vital social and emotional needs that contribute to overall well-being and mental health, and which cannot be fulfilled to the same level through online learning.[65]

Mental health surveys carried out in countries hosting refugees from Ukraine have shown a relatively high prevalence of stress and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in refugee children. Children are also relatively more prone to mental health challenges if parents are suffering from such challenges. Of note is also that parents who have children in school suffer less from mental health issues than those whose children are out of school.[66]

The social and emotional aspect of being able to interact with other children is another important factor. In a recent survey by Impact Initiatives and Save the Children, 13 per cent of refugee caregivers of children and adolescents cite 'not having enough friends around ' as a safety and well-being risk.[67]

Diminished prospects for inclusion

For most refugee children, postponing enrolment in the school system of the host country will likely diminish their prospects for inclusion and integration into the host country in the longer term.

Out-of-school refugee children typically do not receive the intensive language education, introductory classes or other preparatory programmes they would receive in schools in host countries in Europe. Since language-learning is a multi-year endeavour, postponing language education can significantly set back the educational trajectory of refugee children and youth.[68]

Not knowing the language(s) of instruction in a host country also has a negative impact on mental health and well-being, as shown by the Impact/Save the Children data. 14 per cent of refugee caregivers of children and adolescents cited 'not knowing the language of the host community' as a safety and well-being risk.[69]

Livelihoods of parents

Given the large amount households headed by single female refugees from Ukraine, access to pre-school and school education for children is crucial to allow women to find employment and allow for the time and space to take care of essential daily routines. If access to pre-school and school is not ensured, female heads of household may not be able to cope, or be left with no choice but to return to Ukraine despite the unfavourable security situation.

Parent dilemmas

Refugee parents from Ukraine are often forced to make difficult decisions regarding their children's education. Clear information about education options are available, but often not available in formats or languages that parents are likely to find or understand. Recognizing certain basic principles increases the chances of refugee children receiving a quality education.

Why do I need to enrol my child in a host country school?

Refugee children should best be enrolled in school in a host country where they can benefit from face-to-face education provided in schools by qualified teachers.

This has several major advantages over other forms of education, namely:

- Enrolment in a host country school is usually the most effective way to return children to learning after forced displacement. Unrestricted access to education for refugees from Ukraine and other countries is guaranteed in the vast majority of countries in the Europe region.[70]
- Face-to-face education is of higher quality than online education and other firms of remote learning. Learning is much more effective with a skilled and trained teacher in a classroom setting.
- Attending school allows children to interact with others and socialize with the host community. This has benefits for mental health and well-being.
- In most European countries, refugees can access a wide range of support services through schools, including mental health and psycho-social support services, language learning, pedagogical support and pre- and post-school time childcare.
- Children learn new languages and life skills in a school in a host country. These skills will benefit refugee children in the future, even if they return to their native education system. If displaced for extended periods, children in a host country school will learn the skills to rebuild their lives while they are displaced. If forced displacement is of a shorter time and return is possible, skills learned abroad can be validated in the education system of the country of origin.
- Sending children to school enables parents to pursue employment or other essential activities.
- Enrolling children in the education system of a host country is more sustainable. Many online and other forms of education are not always available, are often at risk of being discontinued when funding runs out, and often do not offer widely-recognized grades or certificates.

Most European countries have systems of compulsory education.[71] This means that any child of school age legally residing on the territory of the host country must be enrolled in a school or in a form of education legally recognized by the host country. Examples are Ukrainian international schools and other international schools (in countries where these are available), forms of legal home schooling, or legally recognized schools with alternative pedagogical approaches such as Steiner or Montessori.

The Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science recommends refugee parents to familiarize themselves with requirements for compulsory education and to enrol children according to the local rules. The Ministry also points to the social benefits of enrolling in a host country education system.[72]

Can I keep my child enrolled in the Ukrainian education system?

Enrolment in a host country school does not exclude refugee children from Ukraine to remain enrolled in online education according to the curriculum of Ukraine. The Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science allows children to continue following online lessons as distance learning students, externships, home education or in an individual educational trajectory. Exams and evaluations are normally organized online for certain grades.[73]

Some organizations also offer face-to-face education in line with Ukrainian curriculum, by Ukrainian teachers. Some of these non-formal Ukrainian schools are recognized by the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science, while some are not.[74] Funding for some of these schools is also limited in certain cases, or funding is discontinued, forcing them to cease their activities sooner or later.

Parents should evaluate the quality and continuity of these education options before considering them. For online education it is important that children have spaces were they can study online (a separate room in the house, or a space in the local school they can use after normal teaching hours of the school). They also need to have access to adequate Wi-Fi and electronic devices to facilitate online learning.

Parents should also consider the workload of children if they are in education in the host country and studying Ukrainian curriculum at the same time. Following parts of the Ukrainian curriculum for subjects that are not taught in the host country, such as Ukrainian language, history and culture is very useful to maintain linguistic and cultural links with the country of origin. Subjects that are taught in both the host country and in the Ukrainian education system — such as mathematics and sciences — should be followed only in the host country school where the child is enrolled.

When complementary forms of education in addition to education in the national school system are considered, parents should ensure that any learning that takes place is recognized and rewarded with official grades or certificates, to protect against their children losing out on credentials and to avoid lack of documentation on academic achievement and skills.

Can I send my child back to school in Ukraine if we return?

In most European countries, schools will take into account documentation of previous learning and assess refugee children from Ukraine, offer them a preparatory programme and facilitate a transition to a regular class once the child has an adequate grasp of the language of instruction.[75]

The Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science has several bilateral agreements with key refugee hosting countries on mutual recognition of grades, certificates and diplomas. Ukraine is also part of the international ENIC-NARIC network for recognition of skills and competences.[76] It is critical that parents keep records of the previous learning of their children in Ukraine (i.e. report cards, evaluations, grades, diplomas, certificates). These will in most cases be taken into account when a child is assessed and placed in a host country school.

Refugee children and youth who have studied abroad can also get their learning validated in the Ukrainian education system once they return. The Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science has issued methodological guidance for educational authorities explaining how children returning from abroad can get their learning history in secondary schools abroad validated in Ukrainian schools.[77]

Where can I find information on educational options for my child?

Most European ministries of Education have published information materials for refugee parents from Ukraine in appropriate formats and languages.[78] In some cases, a simple internet search is enough to find this information, but the information is not always available in Ukrainian and is often hard to find among large quantities of other information. The Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science's website has several resources with guidance. Parents are advised to rely on official information, and apply necessary caution when gleaning information from sources such as social media and news reports.

Future-proofing the education of refugees from Ukraine: policy recommendations

Refugee hosting countries in Europe face the challenging task to include unprecedented numbers of children and youth in their education systems. This cannot be done overnight and will require adequate resources and planning for every possible scenario, for as long as the war in Ukraine results in forced displacement.

May 2022, Romania: Ukrainian children during a class at the Pepsico funded Learning Center in Bucharest.
© UNHCR/Andrew McConnell

1. Education systems in Europe should build enough capacity so they can provide every refugee child with a place in school

In the short term, schools can consider **temporary measures** to accommodate increased numbers of refugee children and youth, such as expanding class sizes, hiring teaching assistants and adapting teaching schedules.

In the longer term, **providing enough spaces and infrastructure** in schools for refugee children will in some cases require building or making available additional classrooms, teaching materials such as presentation boards, seats and pedagogical materials, internet connectivity and access to digital devices.

Hiring additional adequately **trained and certified teachers** should be a priority if schools are faced with longer-term presence of high numbers of refugee children. Teachers can also be recruited from the refugee population, if needed with simplified and fast-tracked hiring procedures and waivers of certain professional requirements.

Resources for capacity building in education can be sourced from public finances and where needed from the EU, NGOs and other donors. Expert support services for refugees attending school — for example mental health and psycho-social support — can be provided through partnerships with institutions and organizations that have the resources and expertise to provide them.

2. Education systems in Europe should work towards the highest degree possible of inclusion of refugee children and youth into national education systems

Current numbers of refugee children and youth arriving from Ukraine will continue to present education systems across the region with capacity problems and other challenges. Full enrolment of the refugee child population will not be possible in most European countries in the 2023 - 2024 school year.

States and education authorities should use the upcoming school year to plan ahead and ensure that all necessary capacities remain in place to increase enrolment and, ideally, to **guarantee a place for every refugee child in a school for the 2024-2025 academic year**. If refugees are able to return to Ukraine before the start of the 2024-2025 school year, plans can be adapted accordingly.

Planning must start with an accurate **assessment** of and **preparation** for school-aged refugee child and youth population in the country. Current and expected populations should be matched with available spaces and support systems (language learning programmes, psycho-social support) in schools for refugee children. Once these assessments are carried out, concrete plans can be developed and resources made available to increase school capacities, where needed.

3. Refugee parents should receive detailed information about education options available to children and youth to allow them to make informed decisions

States, regions or other education authorities should reach out to refugee populations and ensure **parents receive accurate information on education options** available for their children. Information provided should explain all benefits and disadvantages of each option in formats and languages that are easily accessible for refugees. The effectiveness of information campaigns should ideally be measurable and involve community-based approaches.

While information campaigns should be **targeted at maximizing enrolment** of refugee in the national education system of the host country, information should also be provided on options to retain a **link with the Ukrainian education system**, which learning options are available, and how these can be graded and certified. This requires close cooperation, ideally at the regional level, between refugee hosting countries in Europe and the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science.

4. Relevant authorities in Ukraine and in host countries should coordinate closely to maximize the quality of all educational options available to refugees

Given the possible fluidity of refugee movements in and from Ukraine, many refugee parents prefer for their children to retain a link with the education system of Ukraine. Many also seek to keep the option open to return to the Ukrainian education system after having spent some time abroad.

Host countries in **Europe and relevant authorities in Ukraine should coordinate closely** to make both longer term stays in host countries and return to the Ukrainian education system as easy as possible, and to maximize the quality and compatibility of education in host countries and the country of origin.

This can be achieved by putting in place **affordable and swift procedures for mutual recognition of grades**, certificates and diplomas obtained by displaced learners, **sharing data** on academic performance and mobility of displaced learners and by putting in place **uniform laws and directives**, preferably at a regional level.

Recommended guidance of the European Commission, with input from UNICEF and UNHCR, is available on https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/resources/publications/practical-manual-on-refugees.htm

Endnotes

1 See UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe's Education Policy Paper 'Learning after Lockdown', https://reliefweb.int/report/world/refugee-education-europe-learning-after-lockdown-july-2022; the WHO designated COVID-19 a public health emergency if international concern from 30 January 2020 – 5 May 2023.

2 See https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/11-months-war-ukraine-have-disrupted-education-more-five-million-children

3 Ukraine is the fastest-growing refugee crisis since WWI, see UNHCR's latest Global Trends Report https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends-report-2022

4 See latest figures on https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine

5 See https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine; as of 11 May 2023, 85% of those included in UNHCR's protection monitoring are women or children https://data.unhcr.org/en/dataviz/293?sv=54&geo=0

6 See UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe Policy Brief: Learning after Lockdown p.14 https://reliefweb.int/report/world/refugee-education-europe-learning-after-lockdown-july-2022. Figures pertain to the EU-27 and do not include the United Kingdom, source is Eurostat. For a overview of the structire of compulsory education in Europe, see https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/publications/compulsory-education-europe-20222023

7 See https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine

8 As of June 2023, Czechia recorded over 520,000 refugees from Ukraine for a population of around 10.7 million, amouting to almost 5% of the total population on Czech territory.

9 For data, studies and other materials, see the Ukraine Education Cluster https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/ukraine/education, for example https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/certification_issue_briefing_note_2019_v7.pdf

10 https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/certification_issue_briefing_note_2019_v7.pdf

11 See https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/education-impact-war-ukraine-may-2022

12 See https://reliefweb.int/report/world/refugee-education-europe-learning-after-lockdown-july-2022

13 See https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/ukraine; the number of internally displaced went down somewhat at the beginning of 2023 according to some metrics, to 5.3 million in January, see https://dtm.iom.int/reports/ukraine-internal-displacement-report-general-population-survey-round-12-16-23-january-2023

14 See https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cpn2M9_v7SK9idkiU42h1j9y8s2CFDAt/view - updates on the situation by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine are published regularly on https://mon.gov.ua/eng/ministerstvo/diyalnist/mizhnarodna-dilnist/pidtrimka-osviti-i-nauki-ukrayini-pid-chas-vijni. EMIS data shows that in 2021, Ukraine had 4.1 million students in primary and secondary education (excluding preschoolers) and 588,000 teachers and educational personnel in 14,000 education facilities.

15 See https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/when-school-gym-becomes-home-ukraines-displaced

16 Ibid footnote 7, see also https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/ukraine/document/ukraine-education-cluster-sdr-report-05032022

17 See among other https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/20220817_acaps_thematic_report_ukraine_analysis_hub_impact_of_conflict_on_education_0.pdf and https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/ukraines-schools-race-build-bomb-shelters-before-term-starts-2022-08-29/

18 See https://lms.e-school.net.ua

19 See https://lms.e-school.net.ua/primary

20 To name one initiative, UNESCO partnered with Google to deliver 50,000 laptops to teachers in Ukraine, and is providing training in MHPSS to soem 20,000 teachers, see https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-supports-50000-ukrainian-teachers-safeguard-learning-amid-war?TSPD_101_R0=080713870fab20005a1c36efedd7a7b7e98ca795d16dd67a07e73102cb97dfb5e488cb1f867d47720860a21dff14300088f7c17d9526832eef4baa581677199d6f176fc330849a52ac6933e1a3804711a9acadc8ff-4b1a67a81a095b7d8514dd ; for an overview of the education support activities of the humanitarian sector in Ukraine, see https://www.educationcluster.net/country/ukraine; updates from the Ministry of Eduxaton and Science are published regularly on https://mon.gov.ua/eng/ministerstvo/diyalnist/mizhnarodna-dilnist/pidtrimka-osviti-i-nauki-ukrayini-pid-chas-vijni

21 See among other pp. 13-14 of Intention Survey #2, https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/95767; 18% of parents, on average, prefer their children to continue studying Ukrainian curriculum, and 73% indicates an intention to enrol their children in local schools. Preferences vary from country, with more refugees in Poland and Slovakia preferring to enrol their children in local schools, and refugees in Romania and Moldova leaning more toward a preference for keeping their children in on-line learning of Ukrainian curriculum.

22 See https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cTfPzd9_EU9ob4QBA4Sh_PrUzY2VmfK7/view

23 See https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/education-impact-war-ukraine-may-2022

24 See UNHCR and IPSOS' intention surveys #2 and #3 https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/95767 and https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/99072

25 See, for example, the Unbreakable Ukraine network of non-formal schools in Poland https://www.facebook.com/ICF.Flashlights/photos/?paipv=0&eav=AfYK9ZSrC2D3JE8k6Ih0yj_5W9rF3QuEsbbXeDif4KJ3hrStMz9hM_ZJFTxKnlEkUc8&_rdr or the Ukrainian School in Evacuation (USE) launched by SME SPOLU in Slovakia, in collaboration with UNICEF and Cambridge International School Bratislava https://smespolu.org/en/

26 See among other https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/publications/supporting-refugee-learners-ukraine-schools-europe-2022 and https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/publications/supporting-refugee-learners-ukraine-higher-education-europe-2022

27 Approximate figure based on data made publicly available by various EU Member States.

28 Poland currently hosts over 1.6 million refugees from Ukraine, see https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine

29 See this analysis by the Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej (CEO), the largest NGO focusing on citizenship education https://ceo.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/CEO_ukrainian_refugee_students_april_2023-ENG.pdf; the data on school enrolment is sourced from the Polish Government's open data statistics portal https://dane.gov.pl/pl; exact figures on how many children are attending on-line education and face-to-face education provided by Ukrainian educators and NGOs are unknown.

30 See footnote 21, same source.

31 See most recent figures from the Kultusministerkonferenz, the body that coordinates education policies between German federal States https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/pdf/Statistik/Ukraine/2023/AW_Ukraine_KW_21.pdf; the compulsory school age bracket in most German States is 6 to 16 years old, with slight variation in a handful of States.

32 See, for example, https://www.spiegel.de/panorama/bildung/steigende-fluechtlingszahlen-an-den-schulen-unsere-unterrichtskapazitaet-ist-erschoepft-a-85b0a534-4792-4c28-b159-d8e91478181f

33 See most recent figures published by the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports - https://www.msmt.cz/ministerstvo/novinar/pocty-ukrajinskych-deti-ve-skolach-se-oproti-zari-temer and thise recent study https://www.paqresearch.cz/post/vzdelavani-ukrajina-nova-vlna

34 Same sources as footnotes 21 and 23.

35 See Government data shared in the education sector working group for Romania https://data.unhcr.org/en/working-group/371?sv=54&geo=10782 and population statistics on https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine/location/10782; for information on the structure of the Romanian education system, see https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/romania/overview

36 See Ukraine Situation - Moldova : REACH & UNICEF - Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA) Education, July 2022 https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/94192; at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, 84% of some 700 refugees surveyed in Moldova for the MSNA reported not having enrolled their children in school, with 61% expressing apreference to keep children in on-line education.

37 Only 14% of 4,900 respondents in 6 refugee-hosting countries named education as a priority need, see https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/94176

38 UNHCR's second large-scale intention survey was based on 4,800 interviews carried out in 43 countries https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/95767; the third Intention Survey can be viewed here https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/99072. Similar percentages of respondents said the same in a Multi-Sector Needs Assessments carried out in Hungary, Slovakia and other refugee hosting countries.

39 See among other materials quoted in footnotes 35 - 42; most of the challenges have been corroborated by UNHCR staff, field workers of UNHCR partners in education working groups, media reports and other open source information.

40 See the OECD dashboard. The situation of educational instututions inside Ukraine indicates, however, that a return in the short term seems merely impossible, see above.

41 See the OECD dashboard. See also teh UNHCR Intention Surveys, available on data.unhcr.org, footnotes 34, 35.

42 In the Hungary MSNA, 28% of respondents cited language barriers as a reason for not enrolling children; in the Moldova rapid needs assessment, 15% of respondents cited lack of information about education opportunities in Moldova and an additiona 13% cited a general lack of information on education.

43 See https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/99072; onlmy 15% of refugees are currently staying in collective or planned sites.

44 See the OECD dashboard.

45 See also the OECD dashboard (cf. footnote 44). Some bilateral agreements between Ukraine and other countries on recognition of grades, diplomas and certificates were in place before the start of the full-scale war, see among other Agreement between UKR and Romania; Agreement between UKR and Hungary; Agreement between UKR and Slovakia https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/703_097#Text; Agreement between UKR and Poland https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/616_067#Text; Agreement between URK and Bulgaria https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/100_029#Text - note that on 15 May 2023, the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science also issued an Order with methodological guidance on mutual recognition of grades and certificates for secondary education https://mon.gov.ua/ua/npa/pro-zatverdzhennya-metodichnih-rekomendacij-shodo-okremih-pitan-zdobuttya-osviti-v-zakladah-zagalnoyi-serednoyi-osviti-v-umovah-voyennogo-stanu-v-ukrayini

46 In the OECD study quoted above (cf. footnote 44), 32% of participating countries cite teacher shortages as contributing to barriers in enrolment; see also https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2022/11/30/teacher-shortages-worry-countries-across-europe#

47 For an overview of the different models of preparatory classes or programmes implemented in Europe since the onset of the Ukraine war, see https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/publications/supporting-refugee-learners-ukraine-schools-europe-2022. An additional complication in the European Union is that EU Member States are not obliged by EU law to provide preparatory programmes to Temporary Protection holders from Ukraine; for asylum-seekers and refugees, such preparatory programmes are legally mandated under Directive 2013/33/EU (Art. 14).

48 See https://ceo.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/CEO_ukrainian_refugee_students_april_2023-ENG.pdf

49 See among other https://www.abendblatt.de/hamburg/kommunales/article236977381/schule-hamburg-unterricht-fuer-gefluechtete-system-stoesst-an-seine-grenzen.html

50 See https://english.radio.cz/why-are-so-many-ukrainian-children-not-attending-school-czechia-8777876 and https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/96855

51 See among other these examples in press coverage in France https://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2023/02/22/les-ecoles-francaises-face-au-defi-de-l-accueil-des-eleves-ukrainiens_6162871_3224.html; Belgium https://www.hln.be/binnenland/meer-dan-12-500-oekraiense-kinderen-ingeschreven-in-het-belgische-onderwijs~ac854578/; The Netherlands https://nos.nl/artikel/2446598-scholen-worstelen-steeds-vaker-met-les-voor-oekraiense-leerlingen; Italy https://www.quotidianodelsud.it/laltravoce-dellitalia/i-nord-e-i-sud-del-mondo/cultura-e-istruzione/2022/05/12/bimbi-ucraini-accolti-nelle-scuole-italiane-piu-che-quadruplicati-da-marzo-a-oggi; Spain https://www.elespanol.com/espana/20220701/espana-escolarizado-ucranianos-cuarta-parte-alicante-valencia/684182096_0.html

52 For a detailed analysis, see the 2019 inter-agency advocacy brief by UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM on education of refugee, migrant and asylum-seeking children in Europe, https://www.unhcr.org/neu/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2019/09/Access-to-education-europe-19.pdf and the recent Eurydice report https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/publications/supporting-refugee-learners-ukraine-schools-europe-2022.

53 In survey referenced above (cf. footnote 44) 29% of OECD countries indicated that there are financial barriers to school enrolment.

54 See https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU20220000645/O/D20220645.pdf

55 The Decree was criticized by the Polish legal publication Prawo https://www.prawo.pl/oswiata/obowiazek-szkolny-a-zdalna-nauka-w-ukrainie,514199.html

56 See https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/news/focus-educating-home-what-can-we-learn

57 See https://reliefweb.int/report/world/refugee-education-europe-learning-after-lockdown-july-2022 p. 14.

58 See https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/96266

59 The full-scale war in Ukraine started early in the second semester of the 2021-2022 school year, cutting the school year short for hundreds of thousends of children.

60 See among other https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/education-impact-war-ukraine-may-2022; for the impact of COVID, see https://reliefweb.int/report/world/refugee-education-europe-learning-after-lockdown-july-2022

61 See https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/education-impact-war-ukraine-may-2022 and https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/skills-comparison-between-ukraine-and-eu-27

62 World Vision expects a drop in testing scores of as much as 11%,see https://www.wvi.org/newsroom/ukraine/ukrainian-refugee-children-face-long-term-consequences-disrupted-schooling

63 See this survey by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/98506

64 See https://www.unhcr.org/publications/education/5d651da88d7/education-2030-strategy-refugee-education.html and https://reliefweb.int/report/world/refugee-education-europe-learning-after-lockdown-july-2022 .

65 See among other https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/refugee-education_a3251a00-en

66 See among other this study carried out with refugees from Ukraine in Czech Republic https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/99624; similar risk assesment in Poland https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/91893; see also https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/war-ukraine-pushes-generation-children-brink-warns-unicef

67 See https://repository.impact-initiatives.org/document/repository/ecc9ff14/IMPACT_UKR_Factsheet_Regional-child-protection-assessment_January-2023.pdf

68 See among other UNHCR's language acquisition guide for teachers https://www.unhcr.org/media/39728

69 See footnote 64; https://repository.impact-initiatives.org/document/repository/ecc9ff14/IMPACT_UKR_Factsheet_Regional-child-protection-assessment_January-2023.pdf

70 The Temporary Protection scheme for Ukrainians in the EU guarantees access to education to all minors https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/temporary-protection-displaced-persons/

71 For a detailed analysis of compulsory education systems in Europe, see https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/publications/compulsory-education-europe-20222023

72 See Q 1 of the FAQ on this page of the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science https://refugee-ed.sqe.gov.ua/to-the-parents-of-children-who-were-forced-to-leave-ukraine/?q=q-7&fbclid=IwAR2vk8G9UD0mkvGXsUGA5WfpSATfq3R2Sji_-Kirrv3w71RclCgx-M2OqE0

73 See this page with official advice to parents staying abroad of the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science https://refugee-ed.sqe.gov.ua/to-the-parents-of-children-who-were-forced-to-leave-ukraine/?q=q-7&fbclid=IwAR2vk8G9UD0mkvGXsUGA5WfpSATfq3R2Sji_-Kirrv3w71RclCgx-M2OqE0

74 See examples from Slovakia https://smespolu.org/en/ and Poland https://nezlamna.org/

75 For more information see among other https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/opportunities/recognitionlearningabroad.htm.

76 See among other Agreement between Ukraine and Romania

https://mon.gov.ua/ua/news/uryad-shvaliv-pidpisannya-ugodi-mizh-ukrayinoyu-ta-rumuniyeyu-pro-viznannya-dokumentiv-pro-osvitu; Agreement between Ukraine and Hungary https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/348_001-21#Text; Agreement between Ukraine and Slovakia https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/703_097#Text; Agreement between Ukraine and Poland https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/616_067#Text; Agreement between Ukraine and Bulgaria

https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/100_029#Text; for ENIC-NARIC, see https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/latest/news/recognition-qualifications-ua.htm

77 See https://mon.gov.ua/ua/npa/pro-zatverdzhennya-metodichnih-rekomendacij-shodo-okremih-pitan-zdobuttya-osviti-v-zakladah-zagalnoyi-serednoyi-osviti-v-umovah-voyennogo-stanu-v-ukrayini

78 See also the OECD survey (cf. footnote 44).

UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe
rbeext@unhcr.org