

Recommendations on Youth Work with Displaced Ukrainian Youth

2024

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The project was implemented with the participation of partners:

- Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine;
- Association of Youth Workers of Ukraine;
- Executive Committee of the Palanska Village Council, Ukraine;
- Stand with Ukraine Foundation, Poland;
- “Exchanges Lorraine Ukraine” NGO, France;
- Association “Descoberta de Momentos”, Portugal.

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

***Youth Work with Displaced Ukrainian Youth* project addresses the challenges faced by thousands of young Ukrainians displaced internally or forced to seek refuge abroad due to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.** State institutions and civil society organisations in Ukraine and Europe currently lack sufficient knowledge and experience to support these young people effectively. The project seeks to enhance the capacity of Ukrainian youth workers by expanding their knowledge of youth work practices in Austria and across Europe.

Drawing on successful EU methodologies for supporting military migrants and refugees, particularly in Austria, the project facilitates the integration of displaced Ukrainian youth into new communities. It also aims to establish a knowledge-sharing network for capacity building among youth workers in Ukraine and the EU.

Additionally, the project promotes the dissemination of best practices in youth work with internally displaced persons (IDPs) and migrants, ultimately aiming to influence youth policy in Ukraine. Through these efforts, displaced Ukrainian youth will receive the support and resources they need for successful development in their new environments.

**Preparation meeting with partners from 5 countries.
Vienna, Austria. March 2024**





One-week training for 36 participants. Vienna, Austria. April 2024



The Final conference for 50+ participants. Warsaw, Poland. October 2024

Project organisers

WIENXTRA (Vienna, Austria), the largest organisation of its kind in Austria, was established to help and organise leisure activities for children and young people living in Vienna. The ten institutions that make up the organisation offer a wide range of services, from activities and information support to education and counselling. The organisation also offers programmes and initiatives to support youth engagement and development, as well as an extensive adult education programme. WIENXTRA works closely with the City of Vienna, in particular with the municipal department for children and youth.

<https://www.wienxtra.at/>

The European Centre for Freedom and Independence (EUCFI) (Vienna, Austria) is an organisation that aims to promote united Europe, support the rebuilding of Ukraine and its integration into the EU. Established after the outbreak of full-scale war in Ukraine in 2022, the organisation specialises in educational projects that strengthen the competencies of Ukrainian professionals by providing them with European experience and engaging them in Ukraine's recovery and EU integration.

<https://eucfi.org/>

■ Key project partners:

- Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine;
- Association of Youth Workers of Ukraine;
- Executive Committee of the Palanka Village Council, Ukraine;
- Stand with Ukraine Foundation, Poland;
- “Exchanges Lorraine Ukraine”, France;
- Association “Descoberta de Momentos”, Portugal.

■ The project took place in 2024 and included the following activities:

- March 2024 — preparatory meeting of the project partners in Vienna, Austria;
- April 2024 — one-week training and study visits for a group of 36 participants from partner-organisations in Vienna, Austria;
- July 2024 — online conference with interim results of the project;
- October 2024 — the final two-day conference in Warsaw, Poland.

The main target group of the training and study visits in Vienna, Austria, were Ukrainian participants with experience of working with youth who are currently working in the youth sector in Ukraine or in the project countries. The key goal of the training in Vienna was to develop a common understanding of the needs of Ukrainian youth, share good practices and develop practical recommendations for improving youth work with displaced Ukrainian youth in Europe. Through study visits to various Vienna-based institutions, participants learned about the Austrian approach to youth work, discussed its relevance to

Ukraine and its relevance to local realities. The programme also provided opportunities for networking, cultural exchange and professional development.

The conference in Warsaw, Poland, was the second largest event in the project. The event brought together more than 50 high-level participants from Ukraine, Poland, Austria, France and other European countries. The conference was aimed at addressing current pressing issues facing Ukrainian youth both in Ukraine and in the host countries. It provided a platform to engage various groups, including government representatives, youth workers, educators and international experts, in discussions aimed at finding sustainable solutions to support this vulnerable demographic. Government representatives, including representatives of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, youth workers from organisations such as the Association of Youth Workers of Ukraine, SOS Children's Villages Ukraine and international NGOs shared best practices, identified gaps in service provision and presented recommendations on the necessary efforts to work with displaced Ukrainian youth at both the strategic and practical levels.

Key project results:

- certification of more than 30 Ukrainian youth workers from different European countries who participated in the training and study visits within the project;
- creation of a network of more than 50 professionals in the field;
- development and dissemination of recommendations based on the European experience of youth work with displaced youth.

Beneficiaries: the recommendations and best practices developed within the project are available to beneficiaries in Ukraine and the EU. These include relevant government agencies, civil society organisations and other organisations involved in supporting displaced Ukrainian youth.

The project provides free access to recommendations on youth work with displaced youth for all interested parties.

ABBREVIATIONS

- IDPs — internally displaced persons
- NGO — non-governmental organisation
- EU — European Union
- LU — law of Ukraine
- CSI — civil society organisation
- MFA — Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine
- Minmolod — Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine
- UNDP — United Nations Development Programme
- rf — russian federation

■ INTRODUCTORY PART

At this challenging time for Ukraine, as the war continues to impact all aspects of citizens' lives, supporting and integrating Ukrainian youth both domestically and abroad has become increasingly critical. Young people are a vital part of society, capable of shaping the country's future, stability, and recovery. However, in the context of war, displaced youth face significant social, economic, and psychological challenges that require comprehensive support from the state, NGOs, and international institutions.

This document presents recommendations based on research and practical experiences from the project *Youth Work with Displaced Ukrainian Youth* organized by WIENXTRA and the European Centre for Freedom and Independence, Austria, in collaboration with partners and supported by the Erasmus+ program. The project gathered insights from Ukrainian and European experts actively engaged in youth work, outlining key challenges and identifying actionable solutions.

The project highlighted the primary needs and obstacles faced by Ukrainian youth due to the war. Many have been forced to leave their homes, facing life-altering changes and uncertain futures. This document addresses the key challenges they encounter and proposes practical solutions that can be implemented at various levels — from local initiatives to national and international programs.

Additionally, the document reviews existing national and international initiatives supporting youth, offering recommendations to improve living conditions, enhance development opportunities, and promote resilience among Ukrainian youth. The proposed solutions focus on key areas such as psychological support, education, social integration, and civic engagement.

These recommendations aim to assist both youth workers and government officials in Ukraine and in the EU countries in designing and implementing effective support systems. By addressing challenges related to education, employment, and social adaptation, the recommendations foster the integration and development of Ukrainian youth, ensuring they remain active, resilient, and empowered despite the ongoing crisis.

SECTION I. THE STATE OF UKRAINIAN YOUTH SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR

1.1. General characteristics of Ukrainian youth based on available research in Ukraine

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has changed the lives of Ukrainians, bringing many losses and destruction, including to the youth of Ukraine. However, young people have shown great courage, incredible strength and determination.

Losses and impact on young people

In total, since the beginning of the full-scale war, the UN mission has recorded 10,810 killed and 20,556 injured civilians. At least 604 civilians were killed or injured in Ukraine in March 2024. This is 20% more than in February [1].

The loss of children is one of the most disturbing statistics that indicates the extent of the devastation caused by war and its consequences for future generations. Since the start of the full-scale Russian invasion in February 2022, more than 600 children have been killed and more than 1,420 injured across Ukraine. However, the actual numbers are likely much higher [2].

The loss of young, talented and educated citizens will have long-term and negative consequences for the country's economic and social development, especially given the demographic factors.

According to the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, the total number of births in 2023 was 187,387, which is 32% less than in 2021. In addition, 80% of Ukrainians aged 25-34 do not plan to have children in the near future, according to a survey by the Centre for Social Change and Behavioural Economics [3].

According to the Law of Ukraine "On the Basic Principles of Youth Policy," young people are defined as individuals aged 14 to 35. This demographic represents the driving force behind the country's economic and social development. Youth are innovators, carriers of new ideas and technologies, and catalysts for change, bringing fresh energy that fuels progress and growth. The loss of this segment of the population due to war, displacement, and emigration poses significant economic and social risks. These include a decli-

ning birth rate, reduced workforce capacity, and diminished human capital needed for post-war recovery and national development. Ensuring the retention, engagement, and development of young people is therefore essential for Ukraine's future resilience and sustainable progress [4].

Ukraine faces serious challenges that require comprehensive measures to ensure sustainable development and support for young people.

Challenges facing modern Ukrainian youth: from war's impact to future aspirations

Today's young Ukrainians face numerous challenges, as evidenced by the following research data:

The study "The Impact of the War on the Youth of Ukraine", conducted at the end of 2022, was prepared by the Cedos Analytical Centre NGO and the Info Sapiens Research Agency, with technical and organizational support from the United Nations Population Fund in Ukraine, the United Nations Development Programme in Ukraine, and the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, and financial backing from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark [5].

"National Youth Survey", June-July 2023. The results of a survey of Ukrainian youth conducted from 30 June to 14 July 2023 (in Ukraine) and from 23 June to 1 July 2023 (in Poland) by the Centre for Analysis and Sociological Research (CISR) of the International Republican Institute (IRI) as part of the USAID "Dreaming and Acting" programme [6].

"National Youth Survey", June-July 2024. The survey of Ukrainian youth was conducted from 19 June to 21 July 2024 by the Centre for Analysis and Sociological Research (CISR) of the International Republican Institute (IRI) as part of the USAID "Dreaming and Acting" programme [7].

According to the study "The Impact of the War on the Youth of Ukraine" [5], **82% of young people reported losses due to the war.** It can be assumed that the 18% of respondents who did not report losses from the war are not aware of them or consider their losses insignificant compared to those of other people, as stress and economic factors have probably affected everyone. As of November 2022, almost half of young people were experiencing problems due to power outages and unstable communication. As of 2024, this problem remains relevant, and it can be assumed that the urgency of this problem remains high.

According to the National Youth Surveys [6,7], the main concerns of pupils and students are power outages, problems with the Internet and interruptions to their studies due to alarms. Problems with electricity remain the most pressing:

13-15 years old:

- Interrupting studies due to air raid alert (50% in 2023, 49% in 2024)
- Power outages (22% in 2023, 36% in 2024)
- Problems with the Internet (25% in 2023, 18% in 2024)

16-35 years old:

- Power outages (31% in 2023, 65% in 2024)
- Interrupting studies due to air raid alert (48% in 2023, 47% in 2024)
- Problems with the Internet (23% in 2023, 27% in 2024)

Thus, the issue of electricity remains sensitive and affects the educational process.

Other most common losses from the war, according to 2022 data, are a decrease or loss of income (36%) and deterioration of mental health (28%). In addition, 18% reported a breakdown in relationships and the same number reported separation from family, 16% reported displacement to other locations in Ukraine (either personally or by family members), 14% reported the death of friends or family members, 6% reported damage to their homes, and the same number reported receiving injuries related to hostilities (either personally or by family members).

According to surveys [5, 6, 7], since 2021, there has been a significant increase in the level of concern about health (50% compared to 35% in 2021) and mental health (22% vs. 11%). Compared to the previous period, the problem of insufficient income, which was the main concern for young people in 2021, has decreased to 31%, while the share of people who lack money for food and meet basic needs has increased (40% in 2022). Problems related to physical safety have become relevant for 27% of young people, and 12% are actively looking for a job.

Among young people who have moved abroad because of the war, 76% plan to return to Ukraine, including 64% to their hometown. 57% of young people abroad express a desire to be useful to Ukraine. The majority of young people have a positive vision of the future: 70% of 16-35 year olds, 80% of 13-15 year olds, and 88% of 10-12 year olds. However, scepticism increases with age: compared

to 2023, there is a decrease in optimism — among adults by 19 percentage points, among children aged 13-15 by 16 percentage points.

According to the study "The Impact of War on the Youth of Ukraine" (2022), 66% of young people do not want to leave the country. However, surveys conducted in 2023-2024 indicate that 35% of older youth and 42% of youth aged 13-15 plan to leave Ukraine in the next 5 years. Regarding prospects in Ukraine, 56% of young people believe they can influence government decisions, and 59% agree that the state is responsible for their well-being. Despite concerns, 76% of young people believe in career opportunities, 73% feel respected in society, and 83% see their future in Ukraine.

The majority of young people believe in Ukraine's victory, with 54% of those aged 13-15 and 42% of those aged 16-35 expressing absolute confidence in this outcome.

1.2. Level of civic engagement

According to the study "The Impact of the War on Ukrainian Youth" (2022), the share of young people engaged in volunteering increased from 20% to 42%. In contrast to the 6% who joined volunteering for the first time in the last 12 months in 2021, in 2022, the number was already 30%. The proportion of young people who listed being useful to their country as one of their life goals also increased significantly from 6% in the previous wave to 37% in 2022 [5].

According to the study "National Youth Survey" (2023, 2024), civic engagement in war-related activities remains very high among people aged 16-35: 94% donated money to the military and 78% to social causes (IDPs, orphans, animals, etc.) [6,7].

In 2024, the most common forms of civic participation among young people aged 16-36 were volunteer programs (88%), educational programs and trainings (80%), and student and pupil self-governance (77%).

In 2023, 77% of young people aged 16-36 in Ukraine participated in volunteer activities following the full-scale invasion on February 24, 2022 (excluding charitable donations), either on their own initiative, with their families, through school, or within their communities. In Poland, this figure was 70%.

In other words, we can observe a tendency that volunteering remains the most

common tool for civic engagement among Ukrainian youth.

When comparing civic engagement tools, such as supporting or signing petitions, the number of people using them continues to grow: 68% reported using them in 2023, while 75% did so in 2024. However, when comparing data between 2024 and 2021, cautious comparisons must be made due to changes in the population structure. Notably, there is a decline in the popularity of activities like restoring, repairing, or improving public spaces.

Research shows that civic engagement among young people in Ukraine has increased, in part due to the war. The proportion of young people who volunteer has increased significantly, from 20% in 2021 to 42% in 2022. In 2022, 30% of young people joined volunteering for the first time. There is also an increase in the desire to be useful to the country: from 6% to 37%. Volunteering remains the most common tool for civic participation, as evidenced by the high rates among young people aged 16-36 (88% of volunteer programmes in 2024). Petition signing is also growing in popularity, from 68% in 2023 to 75% in 2024.

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has resulted in significant losses among young people. However, it has also highlighted their resilience, determination, and strong desire to contribute to the country's recovery. This underscores the need to create conditions that foster the development, support, and active involvement of youth in decision-making processes and public initiatives.

SECTION II. OVERVIEW OF TRENDS IN YOUTH WORK, THE ROLE OF YOUTH WORKERS, AND EVOLVING PRACTICES

Since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, youth work has become a critical component of supporting the country during the war. Young people have been actively engaged in volunteering, social initiatives, and rebuilding efforts. By 2022, Ukraine had more than 300 youth centres. As of November 2024, this number has increased to 383, including 140 youth centres (13 regional, 107 urban, and 20 rural) and 243 youth spaces. These centres and spaces have resumed nearly all of their activities and continue to provide vital assistance to the civilian population [8].

As of November 2024, 110 youth infrastructure facilities worth about UAH 145 million were destroyed, damaged and occupied as a result of Russia's military aggression in Ukraine. In particular, 26 facilities have been destroyed (Donetsk — 21, Luhansk — 4, Chernihiv — 1), 19 have been damaged (Donetsk — 11, Kharkiv — 3, Kherson — 3, Sumy — 2), and 65 facilities are under occupation (Donetsk — 37, Luhansk — 19, Zaporizhzhia — 4, Kherson — 5). At the same time, 11 facilities have been restored: in Mykolaiv, Kyiv, Chernihiv and Kharkiv regions." [9]

Youth workers across Ukraine have been actively involved in helping the military and organising the work of the SpivDiia hubs. In 2022-2023, 24 hubs operated in 21 regions, 12 of which were youth centres. They provided humanitarian aid, psychological and legal support, worked with children, supported young entrepreneurs and SpivDiia Shelter.

As of October 31, 2024, 25 hubs in 19 regions were operating under the SpivDiia charitable foundation. Over the year, 814,047 people received humanitarian aid. In addition, 1,746 individual psychological support consultations and 357 legal consultations were provided. The "Save the Children" programme supported more than 46,000 children, including 30% of IDPs. Over 1,200 beneficiaries received career counselling services.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine actively promotes the development and popularization of a volunteering culture among young people. One such initiative is the National Volunteer Platform [11], developed in collaboration with UNICEF, the Ukrainian Volunteer Service NGO, and SoftServe company.

Each year, the platform sees growth in the number of organizations and volunteer opportunities available to young people.

In 2023, the National Online Volunteering Lesson was launched, with more than 15,000 students joining. More than 1,800 people took part in a survey by U-Report. To date, more than 2,000 School Volunteering Lessons have been held in Ukraine and abroad, introducing more than 57,000 children and youth to the volunteer movement.

Since the end of 2022, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, together with UNDP, has been implementing the VidNOVA:UA National Programme, aimed at engaging young people in rebuilding Ukraine and normalising life in war-affected communities. The programme includes youth exchanges held in different regions of Ukraine. In 2022, 4 exchanges took place with the participation of 120 young people, in 2023 — 24 exchanges with the restoration of 24 youth centres with the participation of 721 people, and in 2024 — 24 communities and 713 participants. In total, 52 youth spaces have been restored, and more than 35,000 people use them every year. The programme has also led to an increase in the number of new youth workers, but there is a high turnover of staff due to lack of experience [12].

In the field of youth policy, there is fatigue, burnout and lack of awareness of their own trauma, which leads to a high rate of resignations.

The Council of Europe project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II" in cooperation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and UNDP conducted a survey among youth workers, 60% of whom were internally displaced. About half of the workers are in need of experience exchange, information and financial support. Although the situation has improved, there is a shortage of staff, especially at the local level, and there is a growing demand for programmes that meet current challenges [13].

Since 2023, many donor organisations have been involved in the youth sector with various programmes to support young people, including IDP youth.

In 2023, 1,109 graduates were trained as part of the Youth Worker programme in cooperation with the VMC and international partners. In particular, 921 participants completed 47 basic level trainings in 19 regions of Ukraine, and 188 people took part in 8 specialised trainings. In addition, 30 trainers were trained to deliver basic trainings and 20 trainers to train civil servants. Two events were

held on youth work in communities and professionalisation of this area, a competition of best practices in youth work, the All-Ukrainian Forum of Youth Workers, and a study on the inclusion of youth work in the curricula of higher education institutions [14].

In 2022, the focus was on providing assistance and meeting the basic needs of displaced persons, including through the organisation of meaningful activities. In 2023, projects targeting internally displaced persons (IDPs) were implemented, which is reflected in their descriptions and objectives. In 2024, the focus shifted to organising joint events for IDPs and local residents aimed at integrating and uniting communities.

Since the beginning of the war, youth work in Ukraine has become a critical component of humanitarian support, focusing on infrastructure reconstruction, volunteering, integration of internally displaced persons (IDPs), and professional development. At the same time, it faces challenges such as staff fatigue and shortages, highlighting the need for expanded support programs, including for Ukrainians abroad.

SECTION III. ANALYSIS OF DISPLACED YOUTH ABROAD BY INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES

3.1 Temporary protection for Ukrainians in the EU: statistics

As of 31 July 2024, a total of 4,123,875 individuals who fled Ukraine due to the war are receiving temporary protection in the EU, according to the latest Eurostat data [15].

The highest number of people with temporary protection status is in the following countries: Germany (1,110,600 individuals, accounting for 26.9% of the total in the EU), Poland (976,205 individuals, or 23.7%), and the Czech Republic (369,610 individuals, or 9.0%).

In July, Ukrainians actively sought temporary protection in the following countries: Poland (+10,430 people, +1.1%); the Czech Republic (+8,834 people, +2.4%); and Romania (+4,250 people, +2.6%).

However, in two countries, the number of Ukrainians with temporary protection decreased: France (-470 people, -0.8%) and Luxembourg (-470 people, -11.0%).

Germany receives the largest number of Ukrainians each month. However, according to Eurostat, the number of asylum seekers due to the effects of the war in Ukraine decreased by 236,925 individuals (-17.6%) in July. This decline is attributed to the removal from the registered number of people with temporary protection those whose status became invalid, either because they received another form of protection or left Germany.

By the end of July, Ukrainian citizens accounted for over 98% of all people with temporary protection status in the EU. Among them, adult women represented 45.3%, children made up 32.4%, and adult men comprised 22.4%.

There is no precise data available in open sources regarding the number of Ukrainian youth (aged 14-35) abroad, nor on the number of Ukrainian students abroad.

The needs of Ukrainian youth in various areas of life, including education and socio-economic support, require special attention.

3.2. Key aspects and challenges faced by Ukrainian students abroad

The “Survey 2022: Ukrainian Students Abroad”, initiated and conducted by the association of volunteer student organizations — NGO “Erasmus Student Network Ukraine”, NGO “Ukrainian Student League”, NGO “Ukrainian Students for Freedom”, and student volunteers with the support of the National Erasmus+ Office in Ukraine — targeted individuals who are currently studying or planning to study abroad. The survey, which is not representative, outlines the needs of Ukrainian students in 2022 based on responses from 528 participants [16].

To analyze the challenges faced by students abroad, questions were asked about their place of residence, their status, issues related to universities, financial difficulties, and access to housing.

Respondents' place of residence:

- 40.5% of respondents are already residing in their country of study;
- 15.5% plan to move in the near future;
- 13% intend to move closer to the beginning of the autumn semester;
- 6% are still looking for training opportunities;
- 10% are uncertain about where to continue their studies.

There is insufficient dissemination of information about opportunities to study abroad, in particular under the Erasmus+ programme, especially among marginalised categories of students.

Respondents who had already found study opportunities primarily used the internet or sought advice from their Ukrainian universities.

30% of respondents encountered significant or partial difficulties during the process of studying or enrolling abroad. The main issues included excessive bureaucracy, insufficient or hard-to-find information, financial difficulties, and challenges related to language proficiency or the lack of required language certificates.

83% of respondents have not participated in exchange programmes, academic mobility, internships, or volunteering abroad. This highlights the need for broader dissemination of information, more consultations from universities, and events that explain the principles of mobility and available exchange programmes.

Financial difficulties:

- 53% of respondents need to combine their studies with work due to financial problems;
- 15% need part-time employment;
- Only 7% are able to fully cover their education and accommodation expenses abroad;
- 18% can afford accommodation but not tuition fees;
- 33% expect to find free education opportunities with the possibility of receiving a scholarship;
- 38% plan to work to cover both tuition and living expenses.

Another related challenge is housing, particularly for female students. Since it is common for universities in Ukraine to provide preferential dormitory accommodation, students often expect the same from universities abroad.

- 21% of respondents received assistance from universities in securing preferential housing, such as dormitories;
- 17% did not receive such assistance;
- 55% are unsure about the availability of housing assistance.

There is a need to disseminate information about opportunities to study abroad, in particular under the Erasmus+ programme. Important aspects include financial support for students, accommodation and overcoming bureaucratic difficulties. Additional consultations and activities for students, especially those from marginalised groups, are needed. In general, it is very important to provide more information and support to students, in particular through universities and academic mobility organisations, to overcome existing barriers and ensure access to education abroad.

As of the end of July 2024, over 4 million Ukrainians are receiving temporary protection in the EU, including a significant number of women and children. There is an urgent need to enhance information support and address challenges, particularly in the areas of finance and housing, for Ukrainian students abroad.

The lack of reliable data and the absence of a systematic approach to collecting relevant information prevent an accurate assessment of the situation and hinder the ability to monitor the evolving issues faced by Ukrainian youth abroad.

SECTION IV. RESULTS OF THE TRAINING WITHIN THE PROJECT "YOUTH WORK WITH UKRAINIAN DISPLACED YOUTH"

The project "Youth Work with Ukrainian Displaced Youth," organized by WIENXTRA and the European Centre for Freedom and Independence with support from the Erasmus+ programme, provided a platform to examine the current situation through the personal and professional experiences of its participants.

The primary target group consisted of Ukrainian participants with experience working with young people who remain active in this sector either in Ukraine or in participating countries.

The project identified key needs and challenges faced by Ukrainian youth abroad. Due to the hostilities in Ukraine, many young people were forced to leave their homes and seek new places to live, causing significant disruptions in their lives. Understanding and addressing these challenges in the new environment is crucial.

1. Characteristic features of Ukrainian youth in Europe

Cultural identity: Ukrainian youth who have moved to Europe face the issue of preserving their cultural identity. Many young people want to maintain Ukrainian traditions, language and customs, which sometimes leads to conflicts with the new cultural environment. At the same time, young people are highly adaptable to new conditions. They are able to quickly learn languages and integrate into new communities, although this requires considerable effort and resources.

Education and professional opportunities: many young people continue their education or seek employment in new countries. This creates opportunities for development, but also puts their psycho-emotional well-being at risk due to the stresses of new demands.

2. Challenges of Ukrainian youth in Europe

Psychological: traumatic experience of wars, loss of loved ones, loss of housing or resources, torn families, flight from occupation, violence, stigmatisation, irreversibility of events, mental regression due to constant stress, feeling of "life postponed".

Financial and housing, which often involve the lack of own housing or even own space and lack of savings, leading to dependence on social benefits and humanitarian aid, which in turn creates new psychological challenges and a sense of inadequacy, unfulfilled potential and even greater dependence.

Educational: for schoolchildren, it is mainly studying in two educational programmes, which leads to constant overwork and exhaustion, differentiation of assessment systems, bullying in educational institutions and youth environments, online education or incomplete higher education, This also includes the language barrier as one of the biggest obstacles faced by Ukrainian youth. The inability to communicate in the local language and the difference in cultural contexts often makes it difficult to integrate into a new environment, creating difficulties in education and employment.

Social isolation: young Ukrainians often feel lonely due to the loss of their previous social circle and lack of social ties in a new country. The lack of friends and acquaintances can lead to feelings of isolation and insecurity. The distance in Ukrainian spaces abroad between those who came before and after the military aggression. Psychological unwillingness to integrate and a sense of "not belonging" to the new society.

Legal and administrative difficulties: difficulty in obtaining documents abroad, bureaucratic procedures for legalisation, obtaining displaced person status or work permits. In some European countries, there is also a conflict between the generations of emigrants and a lack of tolerance of the adult Ukrainian population towards young people.

Lack of support from the local population: in some cases, Ukrainians face negative attitudes from the local population, which can worsen their integration and psychological state.

3. Challenges of internally displaced Ukrainian youth

- **Psychological challenges**

Traumatic experiences: many young people have experienced the loss of loved ones, the destruction of homes and violence. This causes severe stress, anxiety and depression.

Isolation: the loss of social connections and friends leads to feelings of loneliness and alienation. This makes it difficult to adapt to new living conditions.

- **Financial challenges**

Lack of stable income: internally displaced youth often face economic uncertainty, lack of financial resources and dependence on humanitarian assistance.

Problems with employment: young people have difficulty finding employment, leading to further financial dependency and reduced opportunities for development.

- **Housing challenges**

Housing instability: internally displaced youth often live in temporary conditions that do not provide adequate comfort and security. This affects their psycho-emotional health.

Lack of personal space: it is not possible to create your own environment, which hinders personal development.

- **Educational challenges**

Access to education: internally displaced youth face difficulties in accessing education, in particular due to language barriers and lack of resources.

Problems with adaptation in the educational process: there is often a lack of coherence between educational systems, which makes learning difficult.

- **Social challenges**

Language barrier: difficulties in communication hinder integration into new communities and the creation of new social ties, but there are positive results from the activities of Ukrainian language clubs and the conscious desire of Ukrainians to improve their language skills, much less than in 2022-2023.

Stigmatisation: internally displaced youth may experience discrimination due to their status, which impairs their integration into society.

4. Strategies for working with displaced youth in the context of open youth work

The implementation of successful youth work in open spaces closely resonates with the challenges faced by Ukrainian displaced youth. Three main areas were identified in which this activity should be carried out to maximise the involvement of Ukrainian youth and their active participation. These are the following areas:

- Emotional support: many young people experience stress, anxiety and depression. Therefore, they need open and safe spaces to restore their psycho-emotional health.
- Social integration: the need to build new social ties.
- Educational opportunities: access to education and training in the new country of residence.

Another important aspect is the proper funding of youth centres for the appropriate qualification of youth workers to work with the category of Ukrainian displaced youth. It is necessary to conduct a study on the needs of this particular category of people, which should form the basis for the development of a new strategy and a plan of tasks or activities to be implemented.

Participants of the project's training sessions developed strategies for engaging young people by fostering a trusting atmosphere through various mechanisms, including:

- An individual approach that takes into account the personal characteristics of each young person, as well as group activities to overcome isolation, expand the circle of communication and interaction with peers;
- Mobile training courses organised at convenient times and locations.

Partnerships are important for effective work with displaced young people:

- Collaboration with local organisations to attract resources and specialists to provide assistance;
- Creating support networks by establishing contacts between youth centres, spaces and organisations.

5. Specific needs of internally displaced Ukrainian youth in Europe

Internally displaced young people from Ukraine who have found themselves in Europe because of the war have experienced loss, anxiety and have needs that often differ from those faced by young people in other settings and safe countries. The specific needs of Ukrainian displaced youth include the following:

- Emotional and psychological support based on previous experiences in war.
- A safe environment, which youth centres can and should be, creating

spaces where young people can open up, express their feelings and not be judged.

- Assistance in enrolment in schools and universities, taking into account previous education, reducing the workload due to the impact of mastering two educational programmes - Ukrainian and local.
- Training in the languages of the host countries to facilitate communication and integration.
- Vocational guidance, as many young people are looking for opportunities to acquire professional skills.
- Internships and practice: establishing partnerships with enterprises to gain practical experience.
- Using digital tools to disseminate information and support.

The project "Youth work with Ukrainian displaced youth" provided important insights for the development of strategies to support and adapt Ukrainian youth in Europe, contributing to a better understanding of their needs and challenges, allowing for effective planning and implementation of measures for their social and psychological well-being.

V. STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORT AND INTEGRATION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED YOUTH AND YOUTH ABROAD: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF UKRAINE

5.1. Overview of proposals and initiatives in Ukraine

Several initiatives have been launched in Ukraine to support both internally displaced youth and young people living abroad.

One notable example is the UA-Ukrainian Abroad project. This initiative was launched by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine in collaboration with the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada Subcommittee on Higher Education, the Youth Council at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Student Expert Council under the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada Subcommittee on Higher Education. The project aims to unite and support Ukrainian youth living abroad by fostering connections, promoting educational opportunities, and encouraging civic engagement.

The UA-Ukrainian Abroad project envisages the creation of a coordination platform that will include representatives of the Office of the President of Ukraine, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, the Minister of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, and the Minister of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine. The platform will also include other experts who will organise and coordinate the creation of a network of youth NGOs in a number of countries around the world. The project organisers have already begun to actively consolidate activists, and all young Ukrainians abroad can join the initiative.

The Presidential Council actively advocates, together with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, the establishment of youth councils at all ministries to ensure youth participation in decision-making, including strategic decisions, in important areas of Ukraine's development. To date, youth councils have already been established at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine and the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine. The process of establishing councils is ongoing at the Ministry of Health of Ukraine and the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine.

The Ministry of Economy of Ukraine has launched the CREATE UKRAINE programme to bring Ukrainian professionals back home to implement inter -

national experience and best practices. The aim is to assist the Government in reforming the state and overcoming the challenges of the war [18,19]. The programme was initiated by EU4Youth Phase III: Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Programme, co-funded by the EU and the Central Project Management Agency team in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, and implemented by the KSE Foundation.

The E-Oselia programme enables Ukrainian citizens, especially internally displaced persons, to apply for housing subsidies or assistance. It is aimed at those who need support to rent or purchase housing, namely those who defend, heal and teach Ukraine, have received their housing. The programme participants have access to financial assistance and special conditions for housing (fixed rate of 3%) within the affordable price range. To participate, you need to register on the platform and submit an application. More information can be found on the official website of E-Oselia [23].

The “eRestoration” programme provides Ukrainians with the opportunity to purchase new housing with the help of housing certificates issued as compensation for the destroyed housing. This initiative has become a significant step in restoring the lives of thousands of families who lost their homes as a result of the shelling [24].

The Youth Mortgage Lending Programme helps young families finance the purchase of a home. Young people and families who meet certain criteria are eligible for a loan. This programme is supported by the State Fund for Youth Housing [25].

A state grant is an opportunity for applicants who will receive their first higher education under a contract to receive UAH 15,000 or more per year to cover part of the tuition fee for any bachelor's degree programme (or medical training programme). In general, the amount of the grant is determined individually for each applicant, based on the results of the NMT and the speciality coefficient. For applicants with an NMT score of 150 points or more in any 2 subjects, there is an opportunity to receive a grant of UAH 15 thousand. The 2nd tier grant provides that applicants with an NMT score of 170 points or more in any 2 subjects will be eligible for a grant of UAH 25 thousand. Importantly, the amount of the grant may be larger (i.e. multiplied by the appropriate coefficient), which [will depend on the chosen specialty](#) [26].

A new service in Diia was launched — state grants for education. For the first time, students enrolled on a contract basis will receive financial support from the state. The grant partially or fully covers the cost of education. This is a widespread global practice that operates in the US and Europe, and for the first time in 2024 — in Ukraine [27].

The Bohdan Hawrylyshyn Family Foundation [20] has implemented several initiatives aimed at strengthening Ukraine's youth diplomacy. These efforts focus on areas such as international information policy, communication campaigns, engagement between diplomatic missions and diaspora communities, preservation of Ukrainian identity, social integration, and addressing institutional challenges faced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Ukraine.

More than 60 participants from various countries contributed to the initiative, developing actionable **recommendations to enhance Ukraine's diplomatic presence and youth engagement abroad**, including the following points:

- Establish an intergovernmental group at the level of first deputy ministers, whose key task is to ensure the interaction of various ministries on the return of Ukrainian youth;
- Establish a systematic dialogue between Ukrainian organisations and communities abroad through a platform for meetings, communication and networking (initiative of the Youth Council at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
- Introduce quarterly meetings of Ukrainians abroad to exchange best practices (cases) of youth diplomacy;
- Prioritise the most important communication needs and organise a meeting of well-known communicators (PR agencies) to develop creative products that will neutralise the impact of Russian propaganda;
- Prepare priority areas for support by international partners and make a presentation of such areas;
- Conduct a qualitative and in-depth study of Ukrainians abroad and successful cases of youth diplomacy;
- Support the idea of a unified communication campaign on acceptance of returning and returning youth. Promote such a campaign to strengthen social cohesion within the country, improve youth reintegration and prevent bullying;
- Develop a procedure that guarantees the transfer of cases and contacts by diplomats/employees of the embassy and/or consulate to new diplomats, employees during rotation and ensures continuity in the work of new emp-

loyees, including in the work with Ukrainians abroad;

- Create information blocks on embassies' websites that would guide Ukrainian youth abroad and active foreign youth in ways to help and join the common victory
- Establish youth councils or youth ambassadors to assist embassies and consulates in their interaction with Ukrainian communities, associations, and organisations [21].

The Association of Young IDPs of Ukraine is actively working to develop a number of legislative initiatives on youth housing issues [22].

The NGO "Centre for Social Transformations", in collaboration with the "Mariupol Youth Council", conducted a study on the challenges faced by internally displaced (IDP) students. They developed and presented a set of recommendations to the Ministry of Education and Science, focusing on educational issues, as well as the comprehensive integration and adaptation of IDP youth.

5.2. Recommendations for effective state initiatives to support young people

The participants of the project **"Youth Work with Displaced Ukrainian Youth"** have developed a number of recommendations that can be taken into account by government officials and decision-makers in Ukraine and other European countries when developing state programmes and legislative initiatives to address the issues of IDPs and Ukrainian youth abroad:

1. Cultural and national identity

Support and development of traditions, language, culture, in particular through the implementation of the CMU Resolution No. 864 of 30 July 2024 "On Approval of the State Targeted Social Programme for the Strengthening of Ukrainian National and Civil Identity for the Period up to 2028". The programme focuses on the following key tasks:

- National-patriotic and military-patriotic education;
- Civic education;
- Establishing cooperation between all stakeholders;
- Development of the personnel system;
- Research and methodological work.

At the level of work with youth IDPs and youth abroad, it is recommended to: Increase funding for civil society institutions and youth initiatives aimed at strengthening Ukrainian national and civic identity, as well as institutional support for the development of CSIs working in this area.

Create conditions for the integration of Ukrainian youth into European communities. It is important to create opportunities for Ukrainian youth to integrate into local communities while preserving their cultural identity. This can be achieved through existing youth infrastructure, youth centres, CSIs, and programmes aimed at integrating Ukrainian youth.

Promote the establishment of Ukrainian cultural centres to disseminate Ukrainian cultural products and organise discussion platforms to discuss the common future. Such platforms will become platforms for communication and interaction between Ukrainian youth and the youth of the host country.

The centres should be open to the whole community on an equal footing, facilitating the exchange of cultures and ideas, as well as the development of joint initiatives and visions of the European Union by young people.

Provide advisory and information support for the establishment of civil society organisations, in particular through local self-government bodies.

2. Insufficient information

Ukraine's strategic communication should consider several key target audiences: diaspora youth, youth who left because of the full-scale invasion, young professionals, Ukrainians with children, students abroad, and active foreign youth aged 18-29. Each of these groups has its own specific needs and challenges, and appropriate strategies need to be developed to support these audiences both in the context of their return to Ukraine and in the context of maintaining their connection and identity.

The following activities are recommended to work with these groups effectively:

- Organise information campaigns on youth participation, participation tools and clear outcome indicators;
- Carry out ongoing assessment of the needs of young people, both in Ukraine and abroad, with the involvement of Ukrainian organisations, the diaspora and European CSOs, as well as in cooperation with Ukrainian diplomatic missions;

- Use existing resources in Ukraine and abroad that are relevant to young people and engage Ukrainian youth as communication ambassadors;
- Create a unified database of Ukrainian organisations abroad and promote their activities by providing organisational and informational support;
- Analyse the number of qualified youth workers abroad and those who want to work with young people and need additional training;
- Develop an updated training programme for youth workers abroad, taking into account the country's context, EU legislation and tools for working with young people, as well as the issue of strengthening Ukrainian national and civic identity;
- With the participation of the Ministry of Youth, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and diplomatic missions of Ukraine, create a platform to inform CSIs abroad about available opportunities;
- Organise advisory councils at diplomatic missions to help study the needs of young people and jointly develop solutions.

At the level of the European countries: provide consultations to CSIs established by Ukrainians on existing programmes in the EU (e.g. Erasmus and other programmes).

Involve Ukrainian youth in decision-making through joint needs analysis, development of policy documents and participation in youth parliaments.

Include Ukrainian CSOs in databases for sending information on youth participation and development opportunities, adapting materials into Ukrainian and local languages, taking into account cultural specifics.

Create Ukrainian studies on the basis of educational institutions.

Disseminate and support resources for learning Ukrainian language and culture among young people, increasing their number and accessibility.

3. Uncertainty about the future

To address this issue, establishing continuous collaboration with Ukrainian embassies is essential. This includes creating coordination centers or youth councils within embassies. Strengthening cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, embassies, consulates, and relevant ministries in other countries will enhance the advocacy for young people's needs and support the implementation of appropriate solutions.

Additionally, a comprehensive system of youth services should be introduced at both state and local levels. These services should include psychological support, information assistance, career development services, and other essential programs aimed at fostering the well-being and professional growth of young people.

At the European level, it is essential to compile a list of opportunities available to young people in host countries for the Ukrainian side (the state of Ukraine), including:

- A list of institutions working with young people, with materials adapted into Ukrainian;
- A list of projects focused on youth activities, including addresses and contact information;
- A list of NGOs engaged in youth initiatives and implementing projects for young people.

4. Financial security

The state program "Youth of Ukraine" and educational initiatives should incorporate a focus on developing and enhancing civic competencies and soft skills, including financial literacy, with the active involvement of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

The concept for the development of civic education in Ukraine should engage all relevant stakeholders, including youth workers, to increase available resources and create more opportunities for youth workers, while considering the current situation in the country.

Develop youth infrastructure, especially in small communities.

Create a legal framework for the participation of IDP youth in decision-making at the community level.

Develop social and educational infrastructure, with the integration of youth work into it (creation of youth spaces, etc.).

The housing program for young people should provide improved conditions that foster personal development, career growth, and a stable future. It should consider salaries in state institutions for income deductions, offer low or inte -

rest-free loans, and provide affordable housing purchase programs for young professionals (funded by the state and local budgets).

Additionally, preparatory programs for free education abroad and in Ukraine should be established, alongside scholarships, tuition benefits, and resources for IDP youth. These should include access to digital resources, adapted educational programs, mentoring, career path guidance, volunteer programs for local community integration, and leadership skill development.

Priority should be given to negotiations with international partners to secure predictable, short-to-medium-term commitments for funding youth programs. Allocated funds should align with social sector priorities, based on needs analysis, to address competing recovery requirements. Strengthening partnerships with international donors and ensuring transparent fund allocation mechanisms should involve the active participation of young people in negotiations.

At the level of the European countries, it is crucial to create conditions that ensure equal access to opportunities for CSOs formed by Ukrainians, including funding and local budget support for these initiatives.

The Presidential Foundation for Education, Science, and Sports should implement programs aimed at supporting young people abroad.

Additionally, language courses should be provided to facilitate faster adaptation, along with information on opportunities to develop personal and professional competencies.

5. Language barriers

Recommendations on reducing language barriers in Ukraine:

Focus on encouraging active learning of foreign languages, particularly among students and people aged 14-35. This can be achieved by offering youth speaker clubs, film clubs, board games, and debate clubs in both English and Ukrainian, tailored to different age groups and language proficiency levels.

Within the regulatory framework for the protection and development of the Ukrainian language, enhance the availability of engaging and diverse content in Ukrainian.

Focus on improving the quality of Ukrainian language instruction and increase access to free courses. This can include motivating teachers and reducing their workload to enhance teaching efficiency.

Undertake systematic research to assess the current language barriers faced by young people. This should include evaluating the relevance of learning content, teaching quality, and other contributing factors.

At the level of the European countries, create conditions for cooperation with embassies to address language issues among young people.

Develop and implement methodological materials for learning languages with translation into Ukrainian for young people.

Establish a network of trained youth workers across the country, focusing on creating Ukrainian-language environments in local youth centres. This can be achieved by recruiting Ukrainian-speaking staff and fostering collaboration with diaspora communities to enhance support for young people.

Create conditions for the development of youth speaking clubs that will help develop language skills.

6. Information integration and support for youth at national and international Levels

At the national level in Ukraine:

Foster the institutional development of Civil Society Initiatives (CSIs) through the Ukrainian Youth Foundation.

Support youth environments and initiatives that promote social cohesion and youth integration via volunteering, entrepreneurship, and skills development.

Develop institutional support tools to enhance these efforts.

Promote youth participation through the Youth of Ukraine program.

Create a unified information portal to facilitate the exchange of information between state institutions, CSIs, international partners, and Ukrainian youth, regardless of their location.

At the European level:

Ensure equal access for Ukrainian youth to participation tools, including opportunities in local and national youth councils, parliaments, and other platforms.

7. Lack of volunteers and capacity for volunteering

Continue improving Ukrainian legislation to foster a culture of volunteering, with a focus on volunteer protection, creating conditions for the growth of volunteer activities, and attracting foreign volunteers.

Study and implement EU best practices, particularly the Solidarity Corps program, to strengthen volunteerism in Ukraine.

8. Trauma and psychological problems

With regard to psychological support for young people, increase the focus on the youth audience within the framework of the national programme "How are you?" ("Ти як?"). Launch a psychological support service based on youth infrastructure.

Increase the number of programmes to train psychologists and psychotherapists, taking into account war-related trauma.

At the level of European countries: create conditions for Ukrainian youth to receive free psychological support to overcome the consequences of trauma.

Support the professional development of specialists working with Ukrainian youth and children affected by war trauma.

5.3. Recommendations for the development of youth work in Ukraine and European countries

Youth work in Ukraine:

To address the current problems of young people, including internally displaced youth, it is necessary to create effective mechanisms of cooperation between the authorities, local self-government bodies and youth workers. This will help to achieve social cohesion, support and development of young people, in particular through psychological and social support.

- Establish an interagency working group to address the problems of young people, including internally displaced people (involving the authorities in addressing relevant issues).
- Ensure a comprehensive approach to solving youth problems through cooperation between youth workers, local governments and central authorities.
- Develop and implement a nationwide information campaign that answers the question of young people "How can I influence?" with measurable results and open dialogue.
- Provide quality training for specialists in related fields (psychologists, social workers, etc.).
- Introduce a special course on "Youth work, theory and practice" in universities.
- Involve professionals from educational institutions in youth activities (non-formal education).
- Increase state funding for youth work.
- Provide social and psychological support for youth workers.
- Involve youth infrastructure institutions in the reconstruction of Ukraine.
- Create "youth-friendly" service providers for young people.
- Create a list of mandatory services for young people, in accordance with community requests.
- Youth programmes at the level of territorial communities and their funding should be mandatory.
- Continuously promote youth work and policy among young people.
- Introduce classes on financial literacy and other basic skills in schools, kindergartens and universities in cooperation with the Ministry of Education of Ukraine.
- Provide communities with premises for youth centres (for example, school basements on weekends).
- Focus on the needs of young people in Ukraine, including education, leisure, financial situation, and employment.
- Introduce quality indicators for youth work.
- Organize specialized programs for working with youth veterans and train relevant specialists.
- Ensure dedicated support for young people with disabilities and those with IDP status, including training for specialists.
- Promote and support youth exchanges both within Ukraine and abroad.

Youth work in the European countries:

- Establish cooperation in the field of youth policy between the authorities of Ukraine and the host country, with a focus on internally displaced Ukrainian youth.
- Finance the work of Ukrainian youth centres abroad.
- Establish youth councils at Ukrainian embassies.
- Establish cooperation with the MFAs, embassies, consulates and ministries of youth of other countries to advocate for recommendations to support Ukrainian youth.
- Conduct a study to summarise data on the number and needs of Ukrainian youth abroad (age, interests, needs, ongoing survey).
- Develop a list of opportunities for young people in the host country, including:
 - institutions that work with young people,
 - projects for young people with contacts,
 - NGOs implementing youth initiatives.
- Involve Ukrainian youth and youth workers in the development of policies to support internally displaced youth in Europe.
- Inform Ukrainian-founded NGOs about youth support programs in the EU (e.g., Erasmus) and implement a project with grants for Ukrainian youth organizations in the EU.
- Organize training programs for Ukrainian youth workers abroad.
- Provide information support for Ukrainian youth to participate in local and national youth programs.
- Offer information support on accessing public services.
- Organize joint youth projects between Ukrainian and local youth workers to support Ukrainian youth and preserve national identity during integration.
- Create mobile groups of youth workers to engage with Ukrainian youth in remote areas.
- Develop information products by the Ukrainian diaspora in cooperation with Ukrainian authorities.
- Strengthen youth work focused on Ukrainian youth in youth centers in host countries, providing relevant services.
- Involve Ukrainian youth workers in the operation of youth centers in host countries in a "one for one" model.

The participants of the Youth Work with Displaced Ukrainian Youth project developed a set of recommendations to improve government programs and legislative initiatives aimed at integrating and supporting IDP youth and Ukrainian youth abroad. These recommendations include enhancing cultural, educational, and psychological support, as well as promoting volunteerism. The goal is to contribute to their social cohesion and ensure financial and linguistic adaptation.

VI. PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOUTH WORKERS ENGAGED WITH UKRAINIAN DISPLACED YOUTH

Due to the war in Ukraine, many young people have been forced to leave their country, seeking refuge abroad or in other regions. This creates new challenges for youth workers, who must support young people in adapting to their new environments, preserving their national identity, and developing key competencies. This section presents practical recommendations for youth workers both in Ukraine and abroad.

- Create platforms for Ukrainian youth abroad to support volunteering and mobile youth work.
- Organise events to help young people connect, build support networks, and participate in youth initiatives.
- Conduct outreach in shelters and compact living areas to provide essential information and support.
- Offer personal development activities to reduce stress and improve emotional well-being.
- Organise events on Ukrainian history, culture, and traditions.
- Create youth groups for learning the Ukrainian language and culture.
- Develop the Plast movement abroad.
- Host events celebrating Ukrainian national achievements.
- Promote historical memory through engaging events and storytelling.
- Foster pride in Ukrainian origins with cultural and historical activities.
- Unite displaced and local youth in host countries through joint activities.
- Collaborate with schools and extracurricular organisations to inform about youth work opportunities.
- Develop an online Ukrainian language course with gamified elements.
- Use this course in Saturday schools or for self-education abroad.
- Introduce incentive systems like certifications or scholarships for participation in educational and cultural projects.
- Organise a flash mob to trace family names from early 20th-century Ukraine.
- Launch an information campaign with short videos on Ukrainian holidays, traditions, crafts, and prominent figures.
- Integrate psychological support programmes into youth organisation activities.
- Train youth workers in psychological counselling basics and stress recognition.

- Use platforms like TikTok to promote creative youth work and cultural content.
- Engage businesses and grant-making organisations to fund youth initiatives.
- Establish partnerships with youth spaces, cultural figures, and international youth workers.
- Develop inclusion programmes ensuring equal opportunities for all young people, including those with disabilities or from diverse backgrounds.
- Organise workshops and meetings with youth centres, cultural figures, academics, and international youth workers for collaborative learning and development.

The recommendations for youth workers supporting displaced Ukrainian youth, developed by participants of the Youth Work with Displaced Ukrainian Youth project, highlight the importance of providing comprehensive support. This includes fostering youth cohesion, strengthening national identity, offering psychological support, facilitating integration into local communities, and creating opportunities for education and self-development. Additionally, engaging in cultural initiatives, promoting positive attitudes towards Ukrainian culture, and ensuring access to resources that help young people adapt to new environments while maintaining a connection to their homeland are essential.

PRACTICAL CASES OF WORK WITH DISPLACED UKRAINIAN YOUTH

The following are practices for working with Ukrainian displaced youth that contribute to their adaptation, development of national identity and various competences. These practices include volunteering, cultural initiatives, educational programmes and psychological support to help young people integrate into their new environment and maintain ties with Ukraine.

PROJECT TITLE: PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION HUB

Name of the organisation: The European Centre for Freedom and Independence, Vienna, Austria.

Target audience: Ukrainian professionals of all ages, including young people, with higher education and at least 3 years of work experience, who speak English and German, temporarily residing in Austria and have temporary protection status from the EU.

The aim of the programme is to promote the professional growth of Ukrainian specialists by integrating them into the European professional environment and building links between the Austrian and Ukrainian professional communities. A special focus of the programme is to gain experience important for the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine and its integration into the EU.

Project description

The Professional Integration HUB team organises internship, professional development and networking opportunities for Ukrainian professionals who have been living in Austria since the end of February 2022 and have been granted temporary EU protection status. The programme offers a 3-month internship with a stipend of EUR 1200 for 40 working hours per week at leading Austrian institutions. The programme organisers negotiate with partners, announce a call for candidates and organise a selection process to find the best candidates for the internships. During the internship, participants work in Austrian organisations, gaining experience in the labour market, exchanging skills and establishing professional contacts between Ukrainian and Austrian professionals through practical projects. In addition to the internship, participants have access to other programme activities such as group study visits, joint meetings and a free intensive German language course for better integration. The programme culminates in a final conference where parti -

participants present their experiences and offer recommendations for Ukraine's reconstruction and integration into the EU.

Resources: the programme is funded by ERSTE Foundation (Austria) and implemented by the team of the European Centre for Freedom and Independence.

Results and achievements

As a result of the first programme, 13 Ukrainian women completed a three-month internship in spring 2024 and received certificates of successful completion of the programme. The following organisations became internship partners: The Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, the Austrian Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sport, Caritas Austria, ERSTE Foundation, Austrian Integration Fund, the European Forum Alpbach, Belvedere Museum Vienna, Salzburger Kunstverein, Vienna Contemporary, WIENXTRA. 100% of the curators from these organisations provided positive feedback on the programme and the specialists with whom they collaborated within the programme. 30% of the programme participants received offers to extend their contracts at their internship organisations.

The programme continued with the second intake of Professional Integration HUB 2.0, which opened 20 new vacancies for Ukrainian women in 15 well-known institutions and organisations in Vienna, Graz and Salzburg. The internships and programme activities for the selected participants started in October 2024 and last until January 2025. In addition to the agreed list, several Austrian organisations have expressed their willingness to become internship partners for the duration of the programme, as well as to fund scholarships for several interns at their expense.

The participants and alumni of the programme, together with the semi-finalists of the selection process formed the basis for the community of Ukrainian women professionals in Vienna. A range of professional development and networking events are regularly organized for the HUB community in online and offline formats.

PROJECT TITLE: FRENCH-UKRAINIAN DIPLOMA IN INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND TRADE

Name of the organisation: Echanges Lorraine Ukraine, France

Project objective: the aim of the project is to provide Ukrainian students with the opportunity to obtain a European education in International Management and Trade at the University of Lorraine (Metz, France). The objectives include assisting students in acquiring knowledge and skills in international management, developing cultural awareness and integrating into the international business environment.

Target audience: men/women over 18 years old, Ukrainian students with at least two completed years of higher education.

Brief description of the project: the initiative is aimed at supporting Ukrainian students who want to obtain a European Bachelor's degree in International Management and Trade. The programme offers training at the University of Lorraine with the possibility of internships in international companies. In addition, students are required to do volunteer work, which allows them to implement their ideas and organise various events to support Ukraine and promote Ukrainian culture in France.

Results and achievements

The Franco-Ukrainian programme International Management and Trade has demonstrated significant success since its launch, becoming an important tool for the development of young professionals in the field of international business. Over the three years of its existence, the programme has been successfully completed by about 60 students, and currently about 30 more are continuing their studies. Graduates of the programme have chosen different paths of further development: some of them continue their studies at prestigious French universities, deepening their academic knowledge, while others have been able to sign employment contracts with international companies, enabling them to start a career in international management.

The programme not only opens up new opportunities for professional development, but also strengthens ties between Ukraine and France in the educational and business environment. It provides students with unique knowledge and skills for a successful career in a globalised world, promoting international partnerships and cooperation between the two countries.

PROJECT TITLE: "DAY OF HAPPINESS" — INVOLVEMENT OF YOUNG VOLUNTEERS IN HELPING DISPLACED UKRAINIANS

Name of the organisation: Stand With Ukraine Foundation, Poland.

Target audience: children aged 3-16 and their mothers, mostly women aged 25-45, who have experienced the trauma of war and were forced to leave Ukraine for Poland.

The project aims to support Ukrainian families affected by the war by organising events aimed at psychological relief, emotional healing and integration into a new environment.

The "Day of Happiness" project was organised by young volunteers of the Stand With Ukraine Foundation to support Ukrainian IDPs in Poland. The events took place at the Nadiya Pier, which has become a temporary home for many families. Volunteers held workshops for children, including acting, modelling, singing and creative games, and organised a relaxation corner for mothers with style, make-up and spa services. Particular attention was paid to families who had experienced the consequences of the war, for example, a girl who will be able to continue her dental treatment thanks to the foundation's support.

The project's resources include human resources — volunteers with experience in art, cosmetology and pedagogy — material resources — materials for creativity (clay, paints), cosmetics and equipment for workshops, and financial resources - charitable contributions from donors.

The results of the "Day of Happiness" project include the participation of more than 30 children and 20 adults in creative and entertaining activities, which provided emotional support and positive impressions. Mothers received individual attention, which contributed to their emotional recovery. The project also deepened cooperation with the Nadiya Pier centre and laid the groundwork for planning further activities, such as vocational training courses for women. The tangible improvement in the participants' mood and the creation of an atmosphere of trust laid the groundwork for further support to the families. This initiative demonstrated the effectiveness of youth work and showed how even small efforts can make a big difference in the lives of war survivors.

PROJECT TITLE: SKILLS CAMP — CAMP FOR PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT FOR TEENAGERS

Name of the organisation: NGO "ET CETERA", Ukraine.

Target audience: teenagers aged 13-17.

The project aims to promote the emotional development and social adaptation of teenagers, including IDPs, by providing them with opportunities for self-expression, developing important skills such as self-regulation of emotions, empathy and non-violent communication, and engaging them in charitable initiatives that strengthen social cohesion.

Project description: "Skills Camp" is a day camp for psychosocial support for teenagers aged 13-17, which aims to help young people develop emotional competence and provide them with tools for self-observation and self-regulation of emotional states. The camp's programme includes psychological trainings, cultural workshops and thematic clubs such as online game development, historical role-playing games and modelling.

The value of the method lies in creating a safe environment based on equality, mutual respect and support, which makes teenagers aware that their emotions are normal. During the camp, teenagers learn non-violent communication, empathy and safe ways to express emotions, which is important for their mental health. Each group has its own volunteer mentor who accompanies the participants and helps them implement their mini-projects.

The Skills Camp brings together teenagers from internally displaced persons (IDPs) and local residents to help IDPs adapt to the new community and create an atmosphere of cooperation and support rather than competition. Participants are actively involved in organising charity events such as singing and theatre performances. Their contribution helped raise UAH 15,000, which was donated to help children in Saryi Saltov and animals in Solomianskyi district.

Resources: A variety of resources were used to implement the practice. Project team cooperated with Plast activists, volunteers, trainers, administrative staff and mentors who worked on a voluntary basis. Material support was provided

by businesses, including pallets for furniture, fabrics for making pillows, paint, water coolers, and products from Yarych and Molokiya. The premises for the camps were provided by partner institutions, including the National University of Ostroh Academy and the youth space Hub316 for the first two camps, and the National University of Water and Environmental Engineering for the third camp. Financial support came from the Office of Action scholarship programme and an anonymous sponsor for the third camp, as well as from Ukrainian businesses and brands.

Results and achievements: A total of 300 participants were registered and took part in 300 group sessions. The project managed to raise UAH 15,000 for charity, which became an important part of the camp's activities. 40% of the participants noted in their reflections that they had made new friends during the camp. In particular, 30% of the participants were teenagers from internally displaced persons (IDPs), which contributed to their integration and socialisation in the new community. In total, the camp lasted 63 days.

PROJECT TITLE: YOUTH UNIFICATION OF KREMINNA DISTRICT

Name of the organisation: Youth Council at the Kreminna City Council, Ukraine.

Project objective: to develop the potential of young people, especially IDPs, through educational programmes and project activities, to promote effective cooperation between government, business and the community to support youth initiatives, and to provide humanitarian assistance in difficult war conditions.

Project description: the practice was implemented in four key areas that contributed to youth development and community support in times of war. The main aspects included the organisation of educational trainings, project activities, cooperation between the government, business and the community, and the provision of humanitarian aid.

Educational trainings for youth: IDP youth from the Kreminna community, together with experienced professionals from Kyiv, Dnipro, Rivne and Uman, participated in trainings on project management and international youth participation opportunities.

Project activities: thanks to cooperation with the Charivny Pendel NGO, 11 projects were implemented between 2022 and October 2023, supporting non-formal education, environmental safety, youth policy development, psychological assistance, and work with children.

Government - business - community cooperation: an important component of the practice was cooperation between different sectors (government, business, community) to support youth and community development. Thanks to media support and resources, the initiative was able to continue its activities.

Humanitarian aid: since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, young people have been actively involved in delivering humanitarian aid to remote areas of Kreminna, and after the evacuation, they continued to volunteer in humanitarian HABs in the Kreminna community.

Resources: the following resources were used to implement the practice:

- Human resources: members of the local council, active youth, volunteers.

- Technical (digital) resources: digital platforms for communication and online activities.
- Premises: Kreminna City Council and humanitarian hospitals.
- Partnerships and additional resources: Department of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports of the Kreminna City Council, resources from projects.

Results and achievements: about 397 people took part in the internship and improved their skills in areas such as management, entrepreneurship, content creation and public speaking. Participants gained new knowledge and implemented about 6 projects. In the future, it is planned to continue the work by engaging more young people and creating a youth hub to support and develop new initiatives.

The impact of a full-scale invasion on the implementation of the practice:

The full-scale invasion had a significant impact on the implementation of the practice, as members of the Youth Council, partners, authorities and residents of the Kreminna community were forced to move to different parts of Ukraine due to the outbreak of war and the temporary occupation of the city. Most of its citizens settled in the cities of Rivne, Dnipro, Kyiv, and the head of the Youth Council - in Uman. Humanitarian HUBs were set up in these cities to support IDPs. In addition, activists from the Kreminna community in Rivne founded the NGO "Step Together - Act Together", which helped to provide social support and maintain communication between community members.

Despite the challenges of the war, the Youth Council is ready to continue to actively contribute to the development of the youth sector and to continue implementing the Youth Unity of Kreminna initiative, working on new opportunities for young people in the context of the war and after it.

PROJECT TITLE: PROJECT NAME: AWARE ZONE YOUTH HUB

Name of the organisation: UCIS, Ukraine.

Target audience: includes young people aged 14 to 35, including internally displaced persons who need support in adapting to new communities. It also includes local young people interested in developing their social and professional skills, as well as young activists and volunteers who are ready to participate in community initiatives. Special attention is paid to young veterans seeking support in socialisation and psychological assistance. In addition, the audience includes NGOs that work with youth, IDPs and veterans and look for partnership support.

The project aims to support young people in times of war by providing comprehensive resources, such as psychological and legal assistance, financial support and free workspace for initiatives. The programme aims to integrate IDP youth into new communities, develop youth entrepreneurship and support relocated organisations. The main goal is to provide young people with the necessary tools to adapt, develop and implement their own projects, as well as to create conditions for sharing their experiences through the aWArE Stories platform.

Project description: aWArE Zone Youth Hub is a comprehensive all-Ukrainian programme to support young people in times of war, which operates on the basis of physical spaces in Mukachevo, Kyiv and Chernihiv. The programme provides comprehensive support to civil society organisations, including psychological and legal assistance, as well as free workspace and financial support for their initiatives. The main areas of support are youth entrepreneurship development, institutional support for relocated organisations and IDPs, and legal and psychological counselling for young veterans.

The programme promotes the integration of IDP youth into new communities, with concrete examples such as the opening of a space in Mukachevo in cooperation with a relocated organisation from Mariupol, and in Chernihiv with the Donetsk Regional Youth Council. Despite its physical presence in three cities, aWArE Zone Youth also has additional tools for working with young people, including sub-grant programmes. In 2022, UAH 1 million was allocated to support relocated organisations, and in 2023, the organisation launched its own YouTube channel, aWArE Stories, to share stories of Ukrainian youth.

Resources: The following donors and partners were involved in the implementation of the practice: USAID, the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), the Council of Europe, the European Youth Foundation, the NGO "Ukrainian Focus", the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom in Ukraine, and the American companies WeShield and Coacore. In the period from 2022 to 2023, the organisation raised about \$500,000 to support youth and develop youth infrastructure. The team consists of 60 active members, 10 employees, and is active in social media. Initially, all activities were carried out on a volunteer basis.

Results and achievements: Over the 1.5 years of its operation, aWARE Zone has opened in 3 cities of Ukraine, and two more locations are planned for 2024 in the eastern regions.

In 2022, the aWARE Zone team supported 13 NGOs, allocating about UAH 1 million for emergency assistance to the affected teams.

In September-November 2023, the aWARE Zone held art therapy for IDP women, which was attended by about 150 young women.

The aWARE Zone CRM system contains 4,700 contacts, of which about 3,000 unique users use services in 3 cities every month, including free events and psychological and mentoring support.

The aWARE Zone regularly hosts volunteer, outreach and educational events. aWARE Zone has its own website, online registration system, Instagram with 2,000 followers and a YouTube channel with podcasts.

PROJECT TITLE: SPIVDIYA HUB — A SPACE TO HELP UKRAINIANS

Name of the organisation: Charitable organisation "SpivDiya" Charitable Foundation, Ukraine.

Target audience: civil war-affected population of Ukraine, including young people.

The aim of the project is to help the civilian population of Ukraine affected by the war with Russia by supporting youth volunteering at youth centres, combining and streamlining government and volunteer efforts for Ukraine to effectively deliver charitable assistance to civilians through the sustainable operation of the Cooperation Hubs operating at youth centres.

Project Description: support for youth centres and youth NGOs through the implementation of an ecosystem of services (humanitarian aid, psychological and legal support, career counselling, support for young entrepreneurs and small/medium business owners, psycho-emotional support programmes for children, support for shelterers and people temporarily residing in these shelters with the support of social workers) for the war-affected population. SpivDiya operates on the basis of a regional partner network — SpivDiya Hubs. SpivDiya Hubs are accessible spaces in the regions of Ukraine, based on active volunteer and community organisations. There one can get free services within the existing SpivDiya ecosystem. The sustainability of the network is ensured by the involvement of volunteers and young people — in the Hubs, they process applications, collect and distribute humanitarian aid, and provide services to people.

To ensure high-quality processing of applications from people in need of assistance, from the very first days of the Foundation's work, a client service department (case management) was launched, combining the call centre model and an online support service. Case managers work with the CRM system, which receives requests from the SpivDiya website, and also helps to resolve requests from hotlines.

Resources: a number of key partners and donors were involved in the implementation of the practice, including the USAID's "Dreaming and Acting" programme, the Civil Society Sectoral Support Initiative implemented by ISAR Ednannia, and the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine. Numerous civil so-

ciety organisations and municipal institutions, including the Youth Council of Odesa Oblast, Dnipro Youth Centre, Zaporizhzhia Oblast Youth Centre, Kharkiv Eco City, Cherkasy Youth Council, and many other organisations from different regions of Ukraine, also joined the implementation.

Results and achievements: Over 1 million Ukrainians have received charitable assistance since the project's inception. 7 existing services were deployed in the ecosystem, and in 2022, about 170 thousand applications were processed and more than 386 thousand phone calls were made, with a total duration of more than 7,500 hours. The organisation became an implementation partner of the international platform NEEDLIST and the UN World Food Programme. Humanitarian aid was provided to beneficiaries in 21 regions of Ukraine. The organisation also involved 25 NGOs and youth centres in the network of SOCIETY hubs.

PROJECT TITLE: LONG-TERM ACCOMMODATION CENTRE AND RESOURCE CENTRE FOR IDPS

Name of the organisation: Ukrainian Student League, Dnipro.

Target audience: internally displaced youth who need support in adapting to new living conditions.

The project aims to provide comprehensive support to internally displaced youth through the provision of educational, social and cultural services that facilitate successful adaptation to new living conditions in host communities. A special emphasis is placed on psychological and legal assistance, trainings and workshops that allow young people to develop leadership and professional skills, and support their psycho-emotional health under stress.

Project Description: the project started with the opening of a long-term centre for IDPs in the city of Dnipro, which offers comfortable living conditions. However, later it became clear that for the full development of young people, it was necessary to create a space for trainings, lectures and workshops. As part of this project, a lecture theatre and an area for educational and psychological activities were set up.

The key aspects of the implementation are the involvement of qualified specialists — psychologists, trainers and teachers, as well as the provision of appropriate equipment for comfortable events. The project is aimed at raising public awareness, developing leadership skills, patriotic values and psycho-emotional recovery of young people. Training in leadership, communications, time management, career development and art therapy enables adolescents and young people to improve their skills for successful integration into new communities and career building.

Resources: the project involved student volunteers who helped with the initial stages of the renovation, including cleaning and measuring. The renovation and refurbishment works were carried out in partnership with various donors and organisations that provided financial resources and technical assistance. For example, the Dnipro Polytechnic National Technical University provided the premises, while other partners provided materials, machinery and equipment for the activities. The Proliska humanitarian mission also helped to set up the space, and KIDDISVIT provided equipment for the training sessions. Information support and assistance in arranging the space was provided by or-

ganisations such as Globa22 and SpivDiya. In-house resources included a team of administrators, project managers and volunteers who were actively involved in the project.

Results and achievements: a comfortable space has been created that can accommodate up to 80 people and consists of 25 separate bedrooms. All those living in the centre have been successfully employed and were able to continue their education even after the outbreak of war. The centre has become an effective tool for supporting young people in adapting to new conditions and providing opportunities for development and self-realisation.

PROJECT TITLE: MEDIA LITERACY SCHOOL 'SINICHANS SPEAK'

Name of the organisation: NGO 'Synytsia', Palanka Local Community, Ukraine

Target audience: includes students aged 10-14, teachers, parents of students, school administrators and the local community, including residents of the village of Synytsia, who are interested in the development of media education, preservation of cultural heritage and active participation in local initiatives.

Project goal: to create a space for students' creative expression through the production of media content that covers school life, achievements of students and teachers, events in the village and the local area, as well as cultural and historical heritage. The project aims not only to develop students' media and communication skills, but also to strengthen the link between the school and the local community, and to promote responsibility, creativity and teamwork among students. The content created by the TV studio will allow the villagers to learn more about the school's events and cultural initiatives, as well as to tell about important historical and cultural aspects of the community.

Resources: Includes human resources (teachers, teachers and school administrators), material resources (filming equipment, computers and editing software), information resources (online platforms for content distribution) and time resources (participants' time for training and content creation). The project is implemented by the team of NGO 'Synytsia' with the support of the administration of the Synytsia Lyceum and the executive committee of the Palansky village council using their own resources.

Results and achievements

The participants of the TV studio have successfully mastered the creation of media content, developing important skills in scriptwriting, video filming, editing and editing. This allowed them to express their creativity through a variety of media formats and deepen their understanding of the processes involved in media production. The project provided participants with the opportunity to learn how to analyse and create media content, improving their ability to critically analyse information and effectively use the latest technologies in production.

The project produced regular reports covering important events at the school, the achievements of students and teachers. A total of 50 reports on school events and 6 reports on the achievements of students and teachers were pro -

duced, which significantly contributed to strengthening the school's image and attracting more attention to its activities.

The media products created by the participants improved communication between the school and the residents of Synytsia village, contributing to the strengthening of ties and cooperation between the school and the community. In addition, the coverage of the cultural and historical aspects of the village through 15 reports contributed to the preservation and promotion of an important part of the local heritage among young people and the community.

The project also actively promoted teamwork among the students. They learnt to cooperate effectively, plan and organise work processes within joint media projects. Through their participation in these projects, the participants developed leadership skills and responsibility for the final result, learning how to organise work and lead projects to successful completion.

Project participants: total number: 11 (men: 4, women: 7; age: 10-14 years old). Parents and teachers also took part in the project.

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