

Training Summary and Results: Youth Work with Ukrainian Displaced Youth Project

*Summary prepared by the European Centre for Freedom and Independence Team,
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Training Overview: The training on Youth Work with Ukrainian Displaced Youth took place in Vienna from May 21-27, 2024, organized by WIENXTRA and the European Center for Freedom and Independence funded by Erasmus+ program. The event brought together delegations from Austria, Poland, Portugal, and Ukraine, comprising a total of 36 participants. These participants included Ukrainian and European professionals actively engaged in youth work at various levels.

Participants

The attendees were a diverse group of experts, including:

- Central government officials, such as the Director of the Youth Work Department of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine and two former Deputy Ministers of Youth Policy at the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine.
- Local authorities in Ukraine, represented by the Head of Palanka Village Council, and members of the Departments of Youth and Sports Policy from Kyiv and Chernivtsi regional state administrations, as well as the Chairman of the Youth Council of the Volyn Regional State Administration and the Council on Internally Displaced Persons at the Transcarpathian Regional State Administration.
- Leaders in youth work, such as the Head of the Association of Youth Workers of Ukraine, the Deputy Head of the National Youth Center of Ukraine, and over 10 certified youth workers from Ukraine.
- Professionals from Plast, the largest international scout organization in Ukraine.

Most participants have extensive experience in youth work, ranging from 3 to 20 years. Besides, the majority of them had an experience of working with internally and externally displaced Ukrainian youth after March 2022.

Training topics: throughout the week, participants engaged in intensive sessions covering:

- the characteristics and challenges of Ukrainian youth in Europe;
- challenges of internally displaced Ukrainian youth;
- strategies for working with displaced youth in open youth work settings;
- the specific needs of internally displaced Ukrainian youth in Europe;
- drafting recommendations for youth work in Europe and Ukraine with displaced Ukrainian youth.

Program structure of the training program included:

- 3.5 days of in-depth training sessions.

- 1.5 days of meetings and study visits to Austrian youth centers and youth organizations, including Youth Center Club Nautilus, Bahnfrei 'Waggons', Juvivo, Hemayat, Youth Info, MA 13, etc.
- A special visit to the Austrian Parliament.

Objectives: the primary objectives of the training were:

1. To establish a network of professionals and volunteers dedicated to working with displaced Ukrainian youth.
2. To draft comprehensive recommendations for youth work with displaced Ukrainian youth.

Target groups for recommendations: the recommendations were aimed at two main groups:

1. Youth workers who engage in practical work with displaced Ukrainian youth, both internally and externally.
2. Local and central government representatives in Ukraine and other countries.

Two levels of recommendations were planned:

- Practical Level: For youth workers on the ground.
- Policy Level: For government officials to inform and shape youth policy.

As a result of the training sessions the participants came up with the following findings.

Problems of forcibly displaced Ukrainian youth

Problem	Constituents	Reasons
Psychological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broken families, losses, fleeing from hostilities, violence • bullying, racism, • stigmatization, position • "victims" • Lack of certainty • the end of the war, payments • Addictive behavior • Personal space • There is no choice, irreversibility • Fault • Loss of loved ones • Loss of housing/resources • Social service workers are Russians • Mental regression due to constant stress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devaluation of problems • Lack of quality psychological help • Lack of narrow professionals (lawyers, advocates) • Lack of measures (preventive, warning)
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funds, savings • Dependence on payments, • Life with humanitarian aid 	
Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of life itself • Lack of own space 	

Social (socialization, integration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social limitation, • Lack of friends, social connections • Language barrier • Lack of work experience • Complexity of the legalization procedure of educational documents • Lack of spaces for expressing interests and needs. Distance in Ukrainian spaces between those who came "before" and "after" • Suspended state - "delayed life" • "I am not a part of this society" • Information bubble • Involvement Reluctance to integrate • Difficulty of processing documents abroad • Loss of identity • Lack of information about opportunities • Not accepted by the local population • Not knowledge of culture, lifestyle, traditions • Lack of independence in decision-making • Lack of tolerance of the adult population towards young people (Ukraine) • Conflict between generations of emigrants; • Non-realization; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct information policy (state)
Educational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online education • Bullying • Dual education (abroad), overfatigue • Lack of access to education (power outages, etc.) • Incomplete higher education • Russian teachers for Ukrainians • Change of educational path • Differentiation in assessment • Language barrier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpreparedness of the education system for war • Lack of consistency between the Ukrainian education system and the education system of the host country
Cultural identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cult. Product. • Lack of Ukrainian content in music, creativity, books, films • Understanding and acceptance in society • Traditions (food, etc. • Conditions, religion, culture) 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of quality cultural product (informative propaganda of russia) 		
Lack of volunteers and capacity to volunteer/ Volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatigue, lack of energy, burnout • Lack of time due to study/work • Negative previous experience • Lack of an active civic position • Lack of awareness of volunteering opportunities • No reward system • Bad management 		
Language barrier	Ukraine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical component • Devaluation of the Ukrainian language and traditions • Influence of neighboring countries • Inferiority of Ukrainians • pressure/pressure 	EU <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak knowledge of the language • Low level of international language • Lack of motivation 	

Problems of youth work with Ukrainian youth abroad	Problems of youth work in Ukraine
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lower needs aren't satisfied / higher are not needed 2. Lack of information about spaces and activities 3. There is not enough advertising in those places or social networks where there is a target audience 4. Advertising not appropriate for the target audience (in the wrong places, in the wrong language, in the wrong way) 5. Wrong offered activities or events, Events that are not relevant for the target audience 6. Incompetence of the workers, not knowing the context, background, needs. 7. Language issue 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Absence of the necessary legal framework. 2. Insufficient attention to youth work on the part of the state. 3. Lack of motivation among youth workers - motivation at the level of volunteering 4. Lack of necessary funding (lack of funding for youth centers, youth events, low wages for youth workers, etc.) 5. Emotional burnout of youth workers 6. Lack of human resources 7. Insufficient training of youth workers

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Sponsorship and lack of interest from the government to the Ukrainian context 9. No motivation to volunteer. 10. Networking with other Ukrainians 11. Failure of the target audience to leave their "information bubble" | |
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Recommendations

Youth work in European countries

1. Establishing cooperation in the field of youth policy with a focus on forcibly resettled Ukrainian youth between the authorities of Ukraine and the host country.
2. Financing the work of Ukrainian youth centers abroad.
3. Creation of youth councils at Ukrainian embassies.
4. Establishing cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and embassies, consulates, and youth ministries of other countries regarding the advocacy of recommendations for Ukrainian youth.
5. Conducting research with the aim of generalizing information about the number of young people, their age, interests in terms of settlements in the country of residence, and the needs of Ukrainian youth abroad, taking into account the age of young people in Ukraine, 14-35 years. Conducting surveys on an ongoing basis
6. Formation by the Ukrainian side (embassies and consulates of Ukraine) of the list of opportunities for young people in the territory of the host country:
 - a list of institutions that work with young people.
 - a list of projects aimed at youth activities with addresses and contacts. - a list of public organizations that position themselves in work with young people and implement projects for young people
7. Involvement of Ukrainian youth and youth workers in the development of policies regarding Ukrainian forcibly resettled youth in European countries
8. Informing/consulting NGOs founded by Ukrainians about current youth support programs in the EU (Erasmus, etc.). Implementation of a project to work with grants for Ukrainian youth organizations in the EU (writing, organization, practice in the EU)
9. Organization of a training program for Ukrainian youth workers abroad.
10. Information support regarding the participation of Ukrainian youth in local and national youth programs.
11. Informational support for obtaining public services.
12. Organization of joint youth projects by youth workers from Ukraine and the host country in order to support Ukrainian youth and preserve Ukrainian national identity in the process of integration into host societies. Emphasis on the national identity of Ukrainians in youth work
13. Creation of mobile groups of youth workers to work with Ukrainian youth from remote areas.
14. Creation of an information product by the Ukrainian diaspora in cooperation with the relevant authorities of Ukraine

15. More Ukrainian youth centered agenda in youth centers in hosting countries. Provision of relevant services in youth centers.
16. Work in the style of "one's own for one's own", involvement of Ukrainian youth workers to work in the youth centers of the host country.

Youth work in Ukraine

1. Creation of an interdepartmental working group on solving the problems of youth, in particular forcibly displaced (authorities involved in solving relevant problems).
2. Ensuring a comprehensive approach to solving the problems of youth, in particular youth workers forcibly displaced due to the cooperation of local authorities. self-government - central authorities.
3. Development and implementation of a nationwide information campaign that would answer the question of youth "how can I influence", and which would have measurable results and an open dialogue + assessment of needs in this direction (a nationwide program on the involvement of youth in decision-making at the level of the community, region, state
4. Provide high-quality training of specialists in related fields - psychologists, social representatives, etc.
5. Introduction of a special course "youth work, theory and practice" in universities;
6. Involve specialists from educational institutions in youth events (informal education).
7. Increase in state funding of youth work.
8. Provide social and psychological support for youth workers.
9. Involvement of youth infrastructure institutions in the reconstruction of Ukraine.
10. Formation of "youth-friendly" institutions (Service providers)
11. Forming a list of mandatory services in accordance with community requests
12. Mandatory availability of youth programs at the TG level (and their funding)
13. Constant promotion of youth work/politics among young people
14. Implementation of classes on financial literacy, understanding the nature of other basic directions that are needed in adult life, in schools, kindergartens and universities together with the Ministry of Education.
15. Allocation of institutions/premises for youth centers to communities (for example, school basements on weekends).
16. Emphasis on the needs of youth in Ukraine (education, leisure time, material condition, employment)
17. Implementation of a qualitative indicator of youth work
18. To ensure work with veteran youth as a separate direction. Training of specialists in this field.
19. Provide work with disabled youth with IDP status as a separate area. Training of specialists in this field.
20. To introduce youth exchanges within Ukraine, as well as abroad.

During the training, the participants proposed ideas for solving certain problems of Ukrainian youth.

Elevator Project Pitch

- Creation of National Patriotic Center Education preparing for Military Service
- Roadmap of organizations working abroad with Ukrainians
- Questionnaire for Ukrainian Youth
- Conflict mitigation & adaptation policy for ppl. working with Ukr. Displaced Youth
- Strategy of Drug Policy through conversation & acceptance
- Youth Space @ Ukrainian-Polish Hub