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Supporting refugee learners from Ukraine in schools in Europe

Eurydice report

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FOREWORD



Since the start of the Russian military invasion of Ukraine on 24 February, more than 6.5 million people have fled the country. UN estimates suggest that nearly half of them are children and young people. They now need protection, care and support.

On 4 March, the European Council activated the Temporary Protection Directive, providing immediate and collective protection to those who fled Ukraine and the right to residence, access to the labour market and housing, medical assistance and, very importantly, access to education up to the age of 18.

European countries have already taken major steps to integrate Ukrainian refugees in their school systems, and the European Commission is mobilising a variety of policy instruments and programmes to support them.

We are providing financial support for schools, vocational education and training, as well as for early childhood education and care through EU Cohesion Funds, Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps. We set up an EU Education Solidarity Group for Ukraine to identify the needs of Ukrainian children and to support Member States who host them. We have provided access to learning material in Ukrainian and offered online resources and courses for teachers through the School Education Gateway. We are supporting teachers' exchanges in the eTwinning community.

In addition, the European Commission is also empowering the higher education and research community to provide undivided support to Ukrainian universities, students and staff. Ukraine is a full member of the European Higher Education Area, and Ukrainian scientists and researchers are key participants in EU Framework programmes for Research and Innovation. We are supporting them through greatest flexibility in the implementation of Erasmus+ projects towards Ukrainian students and higher education staff. And Ukrainian research and innovation actors can now fully participate in Horizon Europe and the Euratom Research and Training Programme, in addition to ongoing ERA4Ukraine, Horizon4Ukraine and ERC4Ukraine initiatives as well as the new MSCA4Ukraine fellowship scheme.

Schools and higher education institutions have a key role to play in ensuring refugee learners' return to stability and in helping to alleviate their psychological stress. This Eurydice report provides an extremely helpful overview of the initiatives taken in European education systems in this respect. It also shows that wide-ranging policies and measures have been put in place to support refugee learners, some of which can be considered as good practices. My hope is that these country examples may help authorities and educational institutions in other countries in their policy responses.

Mariya Gabriel

Commissioner responsible for
Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

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CODES AND ABBREVIATIONS

Country codes

EU	European Union				EEA and candidate countries
BE	Belgium	CY	Cyprus	AL	Albania
BE fr	Belgium – French Community	LV	Latvia	BA	Bosnia and Herzegovina
BE de	Belgium – German-speaking Community	LT	Lithuania	CH	Switzerland
BE nl	Belgium – Flemish Community	LU	Luxembourg	IS	Iceland
BG	Bulgaria	MT	Malta	LI	Liechtenstein
CZ	Czechia	NL	Netherlands	ME	Montenegro
DK	Denmark	AT	Austria	MK	North Macedonia
DE	Germany	PL	Poland	NO	Norway
EE	Estonia	PT	Portugal	TR	Turkey
IE	Ireland	RO	Romania		
EL	Greece	SI	Slovenia		
ES	Spain	SK	Slovakia		
FR	France	FI	Finland		
HR	Croatia	SE	Sweden		
IT	Italy				

Statistics

: Data not available

* Estimate

Abbreviations

ISCED International Standard Classification of Education (<https://iscd.uis.unesco.org/>)

INTRODUCTION

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has posed a serious threat to the lives of millions of people, many of whom have been forced to flee their homes and search for protection in neighbouring European countries. These host countries now have a responsibility to respond to this situation by providing various support measures to facilitate the rapid and successful integration of refugees from Ukraine.

In order to offer immediate assistance and clarify the legal status of those fleeing the conflict, the Council of the European Union adopted Directive 2001/55/EC on 4 March 2022 regarding the granting of temporary protection to refugees from Ukraine ⁽¹⁾. On 23 March 2022, with the communication 'Welcoming those fleeing war in Ukraine: Readyng Europe to meet the needs', the European Commission proposed a series of concrete actions to help displaced people from Ukraine in host countries (European Commission, 2022b). In particular, access to education was recognised as an immediate priority for the integration and well-being of Ukrainian children and young people. Further key principles and practices for the inclusion of displaced children from Ukraine were outlined in a staff working document published on 30 June 2022 (European Commission, 2022a).

To ensure the successful inclusion of children and young from Ukraine in education, schools in receiving countries need to provide these learners with high-quality education and the required psychosocial support. While European countries have already taken many actions to help the children and young people access local schools, they are also facing some difficulties, which could hamper school integration. Language barriers, lack of documentation and the reluctance of families to enrol their children in local schools could represent obstacles to Ukrainian learners' inclusion. To minimise these risks, the European Commission has highlighted the importance of taking a comprehensive approach to integrating refugee learners, including collaboration with the parents and the wider school community, and also involving non-formal education activities.

This short Eurydice report on 'Supporting refugee learners from Ukraine in schools in Europe' focuses on some of the key policies and measures developed by top-level education authorities across Europe that aim to assist schools in integrating and helping children and young people arriving from Ukraine ⁽²⁾. These include recent policies and measures specifically targeting Ukrainian learners, and policies and measures targeting all newly arrived learners ⁽³⁾ that were in place prior to the current conflict.

This report builds on the findings of the 2019 Eurydice report 'Integrating students from migrant backgrounds into schools in Europe: National policies and measures' ⁽⁴⁾. It provides up-to-date information gathered through a survey of the countries that are part of the Eurydice network ⁽⁵⁾, except for Hungary and Serbia. The report covers primary and general lower and upper secondary education (ISCED 1-3). The reference year is the 2021/2022 school year (i.e. up to May 2022).

⁽¹⁾ Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 of 4 March 2022 establishing the existence of a mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine within the meaning of Article 5 of Directive 2001/55/EC, and having the effect of granting temporary protection, OJ L 71, 4.3.2022, p. 1–6.

⁽²⁾ This report has been published at the same time as the Eurydice report 'Supporting refugee learners from Ukraine in higher education in Europe'. See: <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/publications/supporting-refugee-learners-ukraine-higher-education-europe-2022>

⁽³⁾ The term 'newly arrived learner' refers to all first-generation children and young people who, as they enrol in the formal education system of a host country, may require specific support measures that facilitate their inclusion in schools.

⁽⁴⁾ See: <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/publications/integrating-students-migrant-backgrounds-schools-europe-national-policies-and-measures>

⁽⁵⁾ EU-27 plus Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Switzerland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia and Turkey

Respondents were invited to provide information on the number of children and young people from Ukraine in their countries, in addition to information on top-level policies and measures related to:

- determining refugee learners' educational and personal needs;
- providing learning arrangements for refugee learners;
- promoting the social, emotional and mental well-being of refugee learners.

It is hoped that this short report can contribute to informing and supporting European education systems in their endeavours to ensure that learners from Ukraine have access to education, training and support that correspond to their needs and aspirations.

1. REFUGEE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FROM UKRAINE IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND SCHOOLS

There are large differences across European countries regarding the number of Ukrainians refugees. According to Eurostat⁽⁶⁾, the number of beneficiaries of temporary protection has been increasing between March and May 2022 in all EU Member States for which data are available. The highest numbers of beneficiaries of temporary protection at the end of May 2022 can be found in Poland (1 145 665), followed by Bulgaria (112 355) and Slovakia (77 005). It should be noted, however, that these data do not reflect the number of people who registered for temporary protection but have not been granted it yet, or the number of people who have not registered for temporary protection. Therefore, the data may not capture all people who have fled Ukraine since the beginning of the Russian invasion.

What is known is that a large proportion of refugees from Ukraine across Europe are children and young people. For the purpose of this data collection, the members of the Eurydice network – which, in addition to the EU Member States, also includes other European countries that have received refugees – were asked to provide the known or estimated number of children and young people from Ukraine in their country in May 2022 and the known or estimated number of children and young people from Ukraine who were enrolled in schools during the same month. Even though these data are not entirely harmonised across countries (e.g. there are likely differences in the age range or in the exact timing of the data collection), there are no other similar, public data currently available that can contextualise the situation in the different education systems.

According to these reported data (see Figure 1), the numbers of school-aged children and young people from Ukraine (i.e. those of primary and secondary school age) vary significantly between European countries. Of those countries for which data are available, the largest numbers have been reported in Poland (528 110), Germany (around 290 000) and Czechia (70 530), followed by Italy, Romania, Spain and Slovakia with between 30 000 and 40 000 school-aged children and young people from Ukraine. In contrast, the German-speaking Community of Belgium, Malta, Albania, Liechtenstein, and North Macedonia reported that there were fewer than 300 school-aged children and young people from Ukraine in May 2022. Montenegro and Iceland reported estimates of 514 and 700 school-aged children and young people from Ukraine, respectively.

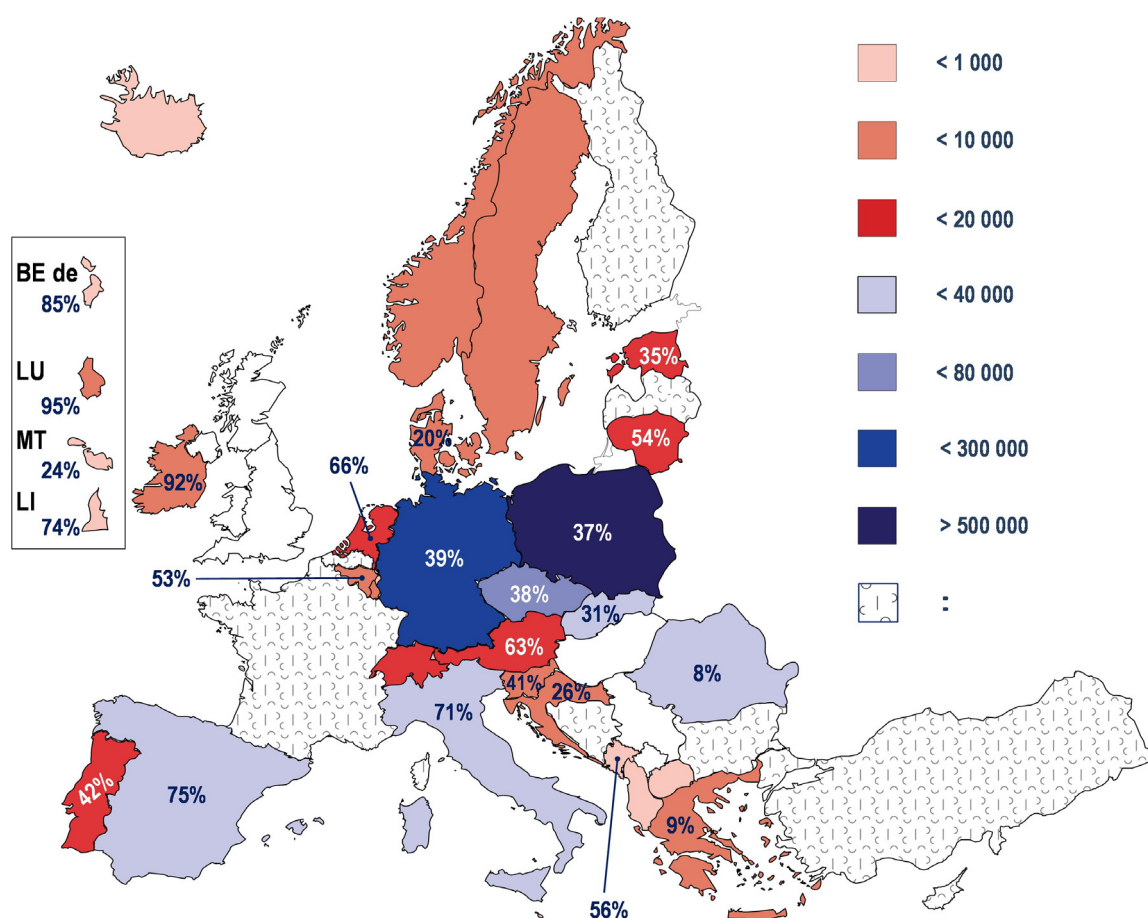
What is moreover crucial to note is the share of children and young people from Ukraine who are enrolled in schools in various countries. As shown in Figure 1, among those education systems for which these data are available, there are some, in which less than 30% of the children and young people from Ukraine were enrolled in schools in May 2022. These include Denmark, Greece, Croatia,

⁽⁶⁾ Eurostat (MIGR_ASYTPSM)

Malta and Romania. In others, a relatively higher share (more than 60%) of children and young people from Ukraine were reported to have enrolled in schools. This is the case in the German-speaking Community of Belgium, Ireland, Spain, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria and Liechtenstein.

As mentioned above, these data must be treated with caution, especially as they are constantly evolving. In particular, the number of school-aged children and young people from Ukraine who are enrolled in schools has been increasing in some countries. Still, some of the children and young people may not yet attend local schools. Education systems therefore play a crucial role when it comes to reaching out to refugee families and communities and helping their children integrate into schools.

Figure 1: Number of refugee children and young people from Ukraine in European countries and the percentage of those enrolled in schools, May 2022



Source: Eurydice.

	BE fr	BE de	BE nl	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	MT
A	5 969*	131	:	:	70 530	3 596	290 000*	13 504	6 376	6 000	34 881	:	6 388	38 495*	:	:	15 783	1 227	270
B	3 167	112	5 138	805*	26 711	720	113 584	4 747	5 843	562	26 298	15 913	1 631	27 323*	246	4 173	8 524	1 162	66
	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE		AL	BA	CH	IS	LI	ME	MK	NO	TR
A	17 380	16 353	528 110*	10 350	36 940	2 100*	31 081	:	9 600*		91*	:	16 500*	700*	66	514*	250*	6 177	:
B	11 450	10 378	194 000*	4 350	2 920	868	9 732	3 000*	:		:	:	:	:	49	289	:	:	208

A Number of school-aged children and young people from UA B Number of children and young people from UA enrolled in schools

Explanatory notes

The figure presents official data reported by the Eurydice network countries taking part in this data collection on the number of school-aged children and young people from Ukraine and the percentage of those who are enrolled in schools. Where the number of school-aged children and young people from Ukraine who are enrolled in schools is not known, only the total number of the children and young people is presented in the figure.

The table below the figure presents both the total number of school-aged children and young people from Ukraine and the total number of the children and young people who are enrolled in schools in each country. Estimated numbers have been reported for countries where the actual number is not known (these are marked with an asterisk (*), see also the country-specific notes).

Country-specific notes

Belgium (BE fr): The children and young people (3-18 years) in the whole Belgian territory was 14 459 in May 2022. It can be estimated that 40% of the children who arrived in Belgium are enrolled in the education system of the French Community of Belgium (i.e. 5 969 children).

Belgium (BE de): Children aged 5 years are not included in the data, although they are subject to compulsory schooling, as data for these children were not separately available. The number provided of Ukrainian children and young people enrolled in schools is equivalent to the number of those who do not have sufficient knowledge of the language of schooling.

Bulgaria: The number of children and young people from Ukraine enrolled in schools is an estimate from April 2022. It includes the number of submitted applications to enrol in schools.

Czechia: The reported data are from 27 May 2022. Only children aged 6-15 years, and those enrolled at ISCED levels 1 and 2 are included. The number of young people aged 15-18 was 22 931 on 27 May. The number of students at ISCED level 3 on this date was not available.

Denmark: The number of school-age children and young people from Ukraine represents those aged 6-17 years with a residence permit under the Special Act on displaced persons from Ukraine on 5 May. The number of school-age children and young people from UA enrolled in schools includes enrolment in ISCED 0-2, on 5 May, and ISCED 3, on 30 April.

Poland: The number of school-aged children and young people from Ukraine represents the number of registered beneficiaries of temporary protection below 18 years, according to Eurostat data (MIGR_ASYTPSM).

Slovakia: The data refer to the number of children aged 0-17 years.

Sweden: A survey conducted by the Swedish National Agency for Education between 9 and 11 May showed that, at ISCED levels 1 and 2 around 40% of the children and young people from Ukraine were enrolled in schools, and at ISCED level 3 around 30% were enrolled in schools.

2. DETERMINING REFUGEE LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL AND PERSONAL NEEDS

Refugee children and young people learn more effectively if they can build on their previous learning and continue to be challenged to progress. However, their educational backgrounds and their knowledge, competences and skills are varied (Bunar, 2019). Some will possess relevant school certificates, while others will have had to leave all school documentation behind. Top-level education authorities and schools in the host countries therefore need to ensure that all newly arrived children and young people are placed in an educational setting that corresponds to their learning needs. Moreover, a thorough assessment of the children and young people's personal needs, including their social, emotional and mental health needs, can help ensure the provision of other required support measures and can contribute to their successful integration (Cerna, 2019).

This section discusses existing top-level guidance (i.e., on the one hand, policies and recommendations and, on the other hand, tools, such as assessment instruments) that can be used by schools to help determine newly arrived learners' educational and personal needs; it can also be used by schools in decision-making regarding the support measures to be provided for them. Educational needs include the choice of school setting (e.g. regular or separate classes) or school grade, and the additional learning support that may be required. Personal needs include support needed to ensure learners' social emotional and mental health and well-being.

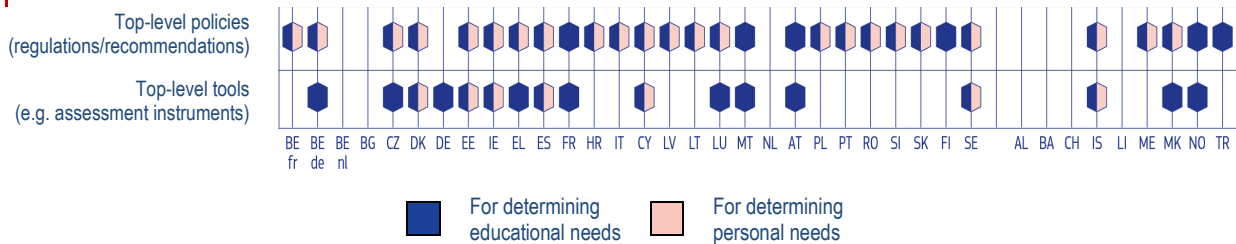
2.1. Top-level policies

Overall, the majority of European countries have adopted policies in the form of regulations and/or recommendations to guide schools in determining the educational and personal needs of newly arrived learners, including refugee learners from Ukraine (see Figure 2). However, there are national variations in these top-level policies.

Many such policies focus on assessing the educational needs of the learners through a mapping of their knowledge and skills so that schools can determine effective pedagogical approaches. Official documents provide, in particular, guidance for schools regarding the initial assessment of newly

arrived learners' competences in the language of schooling, and the measures to adopt in order to support those learners with no or a low level of language skills (see also Section 3). This is the case in Greece, Spain, Cyprus and Austria, for example, where official documents require that newly arrived learners' competences in the language of schooling be initially evaluated in order to decide which school setting they will be placed in and to provide them with the language support they need.

Figure 2: Top-level policies and tools for determining educational and personal needs of newly arrived migrants and refugees, 2021/2022



Source: Eurydice.

Country-specific notes

Belgium (BE fr): Top-level policies for determining educational needs apply only to secondary education, while in primary education the assessment of learners' needs is carried out autonomously by the schools.

Germany: The top-level tool (2P / Potential & Perspectives) is implemented in eight *Länder*.

In certain countries, there are compulsory initial assessment policies and procedures; in others, there are recommendations regarding initial assessment. In France and Sweden, for example, initial assessment procedures for newly arrived learners are mandatory. Similarly, in Iceland, the national curriculum for compulsory schools stipulates that schools have to assess newly arrived learners' educational background, language skills and competences. In Slovenia, schools conduct initial interviews with newly arrived students; they have to interview in particular those who have no evidence of formal educational qualification as well as upper secondary students in order to assess their knowledge and language skills, respectively. In Turkey, newly arrived students who cannot provide an educational certificate within 3 months of their arrival need to take a placement test in order to determine their level of education.

In some other countries, education authorities provide recommendations to schools on determining newly arrived learners' school needs. For example, in Estonia ⁽⁷⁾ it is recommended that schools hold an introductory interview with the learner in order to draw up an individual action plan. During the adjustment period, it is suggested that schools focus on supporting learners' general competences in order to restore learning motivation and maintain learning skills, and to help them start learning Estonian. At the end of this period, another interview should be conducted with the learners and their family, to plan the continuation of their education. In Finland ⁽⁸⁾, when deciding the grade placement of newly arrived learners and to which learning programme they should be assigned, schools are advised to take into account students' ages and backgrounds and to assess their knowledge and competences.

In Ireland, education authorities have provided specific recommendations regarding the initial assessment and integration of refugee learners from Ukraine.

⁽⁷⁾ See: https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/ua_lapse_ja_noore_hariduse_jatkamine_08_03_lapsevanem_22_03.pdf

⁽⁸⁾ See: https://www.oph.fi/sites/default/files/documents/perusopetukseen_valmistavan_opetuksen_opetussuunnitelman_perusteet_2015.pdf

The Irish Department of Education has provided advice to schools to support the placement of children and young people arriving from Ukraine in classes and year groups in primary and post-primary schools⁽⁹⁾. Schools have been advised that the needs of the child should be placed at the centre of decisions relating to curriculum provision and access to programmes and support. Such decisions should also take account of the current and future needs of the students, including their preparation for key transition stages in the Irish education system: primary to post-primary, junior cycle to senior cycle, including the transition year, and the leaving certificate programmes. The decisions should be made by school management in consultation with the parents/guardians, student, class teachers, year heads/class tutors and relevant support teachers/teams, as appropriate.

The department has also published information notes in Ukrainian and Russian for students and parents, which set out the language of schooling used in Irish schools.

In addition to their educational backgrounds and needs, newly arrived learners also have personal (i.e. social, emotional and mental health) needs that should be determined and addressed. In particular, refugee learners from Ukraine may have experienced traumatic events such as war, trauma, loss of relatives and periods without schooling. They may require psychosocial support for restoring their positive mental health and well-being (see also Section 4). However, there are fewer European countries with policies that aim to help schools identify and address the learners' personal needs than those with top-level guidance on the educational needs of newly arrived learners (see Figure 2).

Cyprus and Romania are among the countries with specific policies aiming to evaluate whether newly arrived learners may be in need of psychosocial support. In Luxembourg, the Department for the Schooling of Foreign Children (SECAM) is responsible for welcoming newly arrived learners (aged 12 to 24) and determining the needed support services, including psychological care. Similarly, in Poland, the Ministry of Education and Science has charged psycho-pedagogical counselling centres and school superintendents with carrying out the process of diagnosing refugee learners' personal needs. Slovenia has top-level regulations on determining learners' personal needs, although these target all students in need of psychosocial support rather than refugee students specifically. In Italy, the Ministry of Education recognises the necessity to determine to what extent the war in Ukraine has had an impact on the physical, mental and emotional health of children and young people. Italy's top-level policies do not provide guidance on determining the learners' psychosocial needs. However, schools are encouraged to use dedicated funds to provide psychological assistance to Ukrainian students and families whose mental well-being has been affected.

Finally, eight education systems – the Flemish Community of Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, the Netherlands, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein – do not have any top-level policies on determining newly arrived learners' educational or personal needs. In some of these countries, such as the Netherlands and Switzerland, the assessment of the learners' needs is carried out at the local level. Despite the institutional autonomy in the Netherlands, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has issued in collaboration with other organisations an 'Education manual for children and young people from Ukraine'⁽¹⁰⁾, which offers expertise and assistance regarding the school integration of children and young people from Ukraine.

2.2. Top-level tools

Apart from top-level policies, around half of the European education systems have developed concrete tools to help schools determine the educational and personal needs of newly arrived learners, including those from Ukraine. These tools may be in the form of mapping tools or templates to be used

⁽⁹⁾ See: <https://assets.gov.ie/225902/acd1d24a-3df1-4b97-b9c1-7f04eda06d59.docx>

⁽¹⁰⁾ See: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/opvang-vluchtelingen-uit-oukrajne/documenten/publicaties/2022/04/19/handreiking-onderwijs-voor-kinderen-en-jongeren-uit-oukrajne>

in the assessment procedure (e.g. in the German-speaking Community of Belgium, Denmark and Sweden), or models of entrance tests (e.g. in Czechia). The tools can also help schools and teachers understand newly arrived learners' capacities and follow their learning progress.

Like in the case of top-level policies, the assessment tools provided by education authorities have a stronger focus on determining newly arrived learners' educational needs, in particular their knowledge and skills in the language of schooling. For example, authorities in Greece, Austria and Norway have created language-mapping tools to help schools and teachers determine the support needs of learners with limited language competences. In some other countries (e.g. Denmark, Germany, Cyprus and Sweden), the top-level tools for determining learners' educational needs go beyond their language competences and also assess students' knowledge and competences in other educational areas.

The **Swedish** National Agency for Education, for example, has produced mapping material ⁽¹¹⁾ for the initial assessment of newly arrived learners. This material is split into three steps: during the first and second steps, the school maps the student's language and background, including their levels of literacy and numeracy skills. These two steps are mandatory for the initial assessment. The third step aims to assess the student's knowledge of a specific subject and is intended to be carried out at the school where the student is enrolled. The results of the assessment in this third step helps the teacher to estimate the student's knowledge and skills in the subject in question and, on this basis, to develop an individual study plan.

Regarding the personal needs of newly arrived learners, only seven European countries ⁽¹²⁾ have specific tools to help schools determine the type of psychosocial support learners may need. These include Denmark ⁽¹³⁾ and Estonia ⁽¹⁴⁾ where interview guidelines exist to determine newly arrived learners' educational and personal needs and to enable individual support plans to be developed.

In a few education systems, recent top-level tools address specifically Ukrainian learners' social, emotional and mental health needs. For example, in Ireland, the National Educational Psychological Service of the Department of Education has published a range of advice and support documents for schools including guidance for primary and post-primary schools in relation to determining the personal needs of Ukrainian children and young people. In Spain, the autonomous community of Valencia issued a protocol for the reception of students from Ukraine, providing specific ideas and resources for schools to identify newly arrived learners' specific needs (see country example below). Cyprus developed the document 'Reception guide for children with a migrant background: First days at school' ⁽¹⁵⁾, which includes questionnaires for assessing the learners' personal backgrounds.

The autonomous community of Valencia, **Spain**, has two protocols in place: one is more general ⁽¹⁶⁾ – for the reception of newly arrived learners, especially displaced pupils – and the other one has been developed specifically for the integration of children and young people from Ukraine ⁽¹⁷⁾. The first protocol establishes the necessary procedures and criteria for the reception of newly arrived learners and provides guidelines to ensure that they are received and cared for in a way appropriate to their educational and personal needs. The second protocol highlights the need to observe the learner and to assess aspects such as their state of mind, general attitude, attitude towards teachers and other students, and adaptation or response to classroom dynamics.

⁽¹¹⁾ See: <https://www.skolverket.se/undervisning/grundskolan/bedomning-i-grundskolan/bedomning-av-nyanlanda-elevers-kunskaper-i-grundskolan/kartlaggningsmaterial-for-nyanlanda-elever-i-grundskolan>

⁽¹²⁾ Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Spain, Cyprus, Sweden and Iceland

⁽¹³⁾ See: <https://emu.dk/grundskole/saerlige-elevgrupper/hele-vejen-rundt-om-elevens-sprog-og-ressourcer>

⁽¹⁴⁾ See: https://harno.ee/sites/default/files/documents/2022-03/tegevusplaan%20%C3%B5pilasele_1703_k_0.pdf

⁽¹⁵⁾ See: https://www.pi.ac.cy/pi/files/epimorfosi/entaxi/Odiqos_Ypodoxis_Nipiagogeio_Dimotiko.pdf

⁽¹⁶⁾ See: <https://ceice.gva.es/es/web/inclusioeducativa/protocols#acollida>

⁽¹⁷⁾ See: https://ceice.gva.es/documents/169149987/356012149/STOP_WARS_cas.pdf

3. LEARNING ARRANGEMENTS FOR REFUGEE LEARNERS

One of the immediate priorities, after having determined refugee learners' educational and personal needs, is to offer the children and young people a place in schools in which they feel secure and can access education and other required support measures delivered by qualified professionals.

This section discusses the existing learning arrangements for newly arrived migrants and refugees, including those from Ukraine. It first presents the different approaches to school integration promoted across European countries. In addition to access to local schools, Ukrainian learners may also be offered support to access distance learning, based on the Ukrainian education system and curriculum, or to attend specific classes gathering only students from Ukraine. To further respond to the needs of the learners, European education systems may cooperate with Ukrainian teachers and draw on their expertise and language skills.

3.1. Integration in local schools

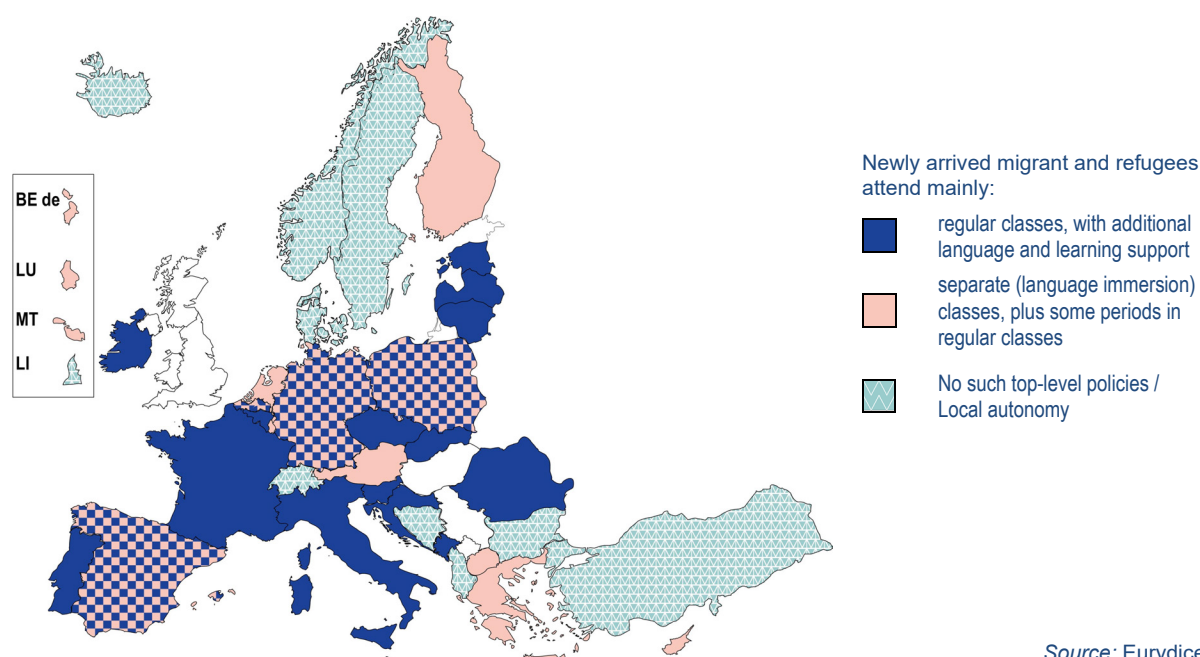
There are various approaches to the integration of newly arrived migrants and refugees in schools, which are subject to ongoing debate. Newly arrived learners may initially spend a larger proportion of their time in separate classes focused on the teaching and learning of the language of schooling, or they may be directly integrated into regular or mainstream classes together with all other students (European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice, 2019).

The former – separate-class – integration model has raised concerns over the exclusion of learners, especially if too much time is spent in these separate settings. The latter model of direct integration proves successful if it is accompanied by strong support measures and the involvement of adequately trained teachers and other specialised staff (Cerna, 2019; Koehler and Schneider, 2019). Irrespective of their integration approach, many European countries have recently adopted policies aiming to strengthen the support measures and the number of educational staff available in schools to meet the needs of the arriving learners from Ukraine.

Overall, in the current context, most European education systems promote the initial integration of newly arrived learners, especially refugee learners from Ukraine, mainly in regular classes (see Figure 3). In other words, the majority of the learners follow the regular instruction together with all other students of the same age, and they receive intensive support to learn the language of schooling. This intensive language support is frequently organised in small groups, and it mostly takes place during the school day, but it can also be after usual school hours.

Other support measures available to newly arrived migrant and refugee learners include those that are generally available to all students, i.e. remedial teaching, help with preparation for lessons or with homework, speech therapy and psychosocial support (see also Section 4). These support measures are often provided by professionals other than the class teacher, such as additional teachers, Ukrainian teachers (see also Section 3.3), teaching assistants, mentors, 'buddies', interpreters, mediators, counsellors and psychologists.

Figure 3: Main school integration approaches for newly arrived migrants and refugees promoted through top-level policies, ISCED 1-3, 2021/2022



Source: Eurydice.

Country-specific notes

Belgium (French Community): Although there are preparatory classes (DASPA) specifically for newly arrived migrants and refugees residing in temporary shelters, refugee learners from Ukraine have free choice of which school they enrol in, and the majority have enrolled in schools that do not provide DASPA classes.

Belgium (Flemish Community): In primary education, newly arrived learners are integrated into regular classes, whereas in secondary education, they usually follow one (or two) year(s) in separate reception classes focusing mainly on the language of schooling.

Cyprus: In primary education, newly arrived learners may be included in regular classes and attend extra lessons in the language of schooling.

Luxembourg: In primary education, parents of learners from Ukraine have the choice to enrol their child in regular primary schools/classes or in welcome classes in the public international schools.

Sweden: Upper secondary school ordinance promotes language introduction (i.e. Swedish or Swedish as a second language) for newcomers to prepare them for further studies.

An example of the support measures for newly arrived migrants in regular school classes, paired with targeted funding for increased language support for learners from Ukraine, can be found in Czechia.

In primary and general secondary education, the **Czech Education Act** guarantees the teaching of the Czech language for newly arrived learners in basic education. For this purpose, language training groups are established in public schools. The students participate in language training preferably in person, but they can also participate through distance learning. This language training generally takes place during the teaching time. The students are excused from the usual school lessons that overlap with language training and are therefore not evaluated in those lessons. If it is more suitable for the education of a learner, and with the consent of the learner's parents/guardians, the language training may take place outside of the usual teaching time. There are a maximum of 10 students in a group. The time allocated for the language training is 100–200 hours for a maximum of 10 months of teaching. The length of each student's language training is determined by the head teacher of the designated school, according to the student's existing knowledge, which is verified before the start of language training. The school head can use an indicative entrance test, which is part of the Curriculum of Czech as a Second Language for Basic Education (see also Section 2).

In addition, migrant and refugee learners are also entitled to the same language support measures provided to other students in basic schools, such as learning Czech as a foreign (second) language for 3 hours per week (at a maximum of 120 hours or 200 hours). This may apply, for example, if the abovementioned language training is not sufficient or if a pupil is not 'newly arrived' but still needs support.

In upper secondary education, there is no specific language training for migrant and refugee learners set by law. These learners are, like other students, entitled to support measures such as those mentioned above if they have insufficient knowledge of the

language of schooling. In addition, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports issued the call 'Language courses for children of foreigners migrating from Ukraine 2022' (with a financial allocation of CZK 150 million) ⁽¹⁸⁾ to support intensive language courses for children and young people aged 14–18 years arriving from Ukraine. The purpose of the call is to increase these students' skills in the Czech language and to reduce their risk of early school leaving.

Other support mechanisms are set by the Education Act (No 561/2004) and Decree No 27/2016 on the education of pupils with special educational needs and talented pupils. Such mechanisms may include modified teaching methods, a plan of pedagogical support or pedagogical intervention (support may include help with preparation for lessons, with homework or with interpersonal communication).

Teaching assistants may be involved in the provision of support to learners with insufficient knowledge of the language of schooling or other special educational needs. Support from other educational staff (e.g. a school psychologist) may also be requested. Other supporting services, including translation and interpreting services, are provided by the National Pedagogical Institute.

In Germany and Spain, newly arrived migrant and refugee learners may be initially directed towards regular or separate classes, depending on regional and other circumstances. However, in Germany, the Standing Scientific Commission of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder issued a guidance note on support for children and young people from Ukraine ⁽¹⁹⁾, which favours a rapid integration of the learners in regular school classes, particularly in primary schools and the lower grades of secondary school. Similarly, top-level policies in Spain promote the integration of newly arrived learners in regular classes, especially if they arrive individually. A national plan on the education of Ukrainian learners has been developed to ensure the availability of sufficient educational staff providing the learners with the required support measures.

According to **Spanish** policy guidance, students who arrive individually should be placed in regular classes whenever possible. An initial assessment is carried out upon arrival. The purpose of this assessment is to provide guidance on the most appropriate schooling option for the learner, taking into account their characteristics and educational needs. The final schooling proposal is based not on strictly curricular criteria, but on those aspects that may influence the adequate social and emotional adaptation of the learner, and that allow them to successfully complete the school year. Consequently, depending on the individual situation and initial evaluation, the language of schooling can be learned either during the usual lessons with the help of additional educational staff (specialist teachers, teaching assistants, mediators, etc.) or in specific classes during or after school.

When students arrive in groups, they are generally placed in language immersion classes in small groups (e.g. 10 students). The number of hours spent in these classes depends on the autonomous community and the needs of the students arriving, and these hours can be combined with hours spent in mainstream classes. In addition, these classes incorporate all the support measures available in regular classes.

Each autonomous community develops specific programmes for learners with additional support needs in the language of schooling or other learning areas. The national contingency plan for the comprehensive educational care of displaced Ukrainian students ⁽²⁰⁾ provides extraordinary quotas of the necessary teaching staff, including support and reception staff (providing guidance, therapeutic pedagogy, socio-community intervention, etc.). It also addresses the involvement of teachers from Ukraine to support the educational care of Ukrainian learners.

Top-level policies in Poland also allow the possibility of both approaches, depending on the choice of the family and the needs of the individual child.

The **Polish** education system provides parents/guardians with two options regarding school education for their children: (1) continuation of education through the Ukrainian system using distance-learning methods and techniques (see also Section 3.2), and (2) enrolling the children and young people in a school operating within the Polish educational system. In the latter scenario, learners from Ukraine who do not speak sufficient Polish to follow school education may:

⁽¹⁸⁾ See: <https://www.msmt.cz/mladez/jazykove-kurzy-pro-deti-cizince-migrujici-z-ukrajiny-2022>

⁽¹⁹⁾ See: https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/pdf/KMK/SWK/2022/SWK-Stellungnahme_Ukraine.pdf

⁽²⁰⁾ See: <https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2022/04/02/pdfs/BOE-A-2022-5288.pdf> (Annex II, p. 44624)

- attend regular classes and participate in additional classes on the Polish language;
- attend preparatory classes, in which the teaching process is adapted to the learners' needs and competences;
- be assisted by a person speaking their home language, employed as a teaching assistant;
- benefit from additional remedial classes in different subject areas organised by the school authority.

The decision to grant a given form of support is made by the school head in agreement with the school managing body, taking into account the individual needs of the learners in order to provide the best possible support and reduce further stress after the trauma of war.

According to statistical information in the Educational Information System database administered by the Ministry of Education and Science, 80% of Ukrainian refugee learners who are enrolled in schools are included in regular classes and the rest are in preparatory classes. Teaching in preparatory classes is conducted based on general education curricula adapted to the needs of the learners in terms of the content, methods and forms of teaching. The students have at least 6 hours per week of Polish language lessons; the remaining hours may be allocated by the headmaster to classes supporting students' adaptation and preparation for further education. The Act (Law) of 12 March 2022 on Assistance to Citizens of Ukraine in Connection with the Armed Conflict on the Territory of that Country introduces the possibility of creating inter-school preparatory classes ⁽²¹⁾.

Nine education systems – the German-speaking Community of Belgium, Greece, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Finland and North Macedonia – have top-level policies recommending the placement of newly arrived migrant and refugee learners mainly in separate classes (usually for 1 or 2 years). Within this approach, the focus of instruction is on the language of schooling, and it is usually provided by teachers specialised in teaching the language of schooling as a second language. Moreover, top-level policies in the Netherlands and Finland recommend that, within this approach, the home language, in this case Ukrainian, be taught and used for the teaching of other curriculum subjects. Learners attending separate classes can obtain additional learning support if needed, and they generally also spend a certain amount of time (1 day per week or certain school subjects such as arts, music and sports) in regular classes with other peers.

In the **Netherlands**, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science recommends the reception and integration of newly arrived migrants and refugees in preparatory classes. Specifically for the provision of extra preparatory classes for learners who are subject to the EU temporary protection directive, schools can be extended, through so-called temporary educational facilities, as there is currently not enough capacity in regular schools and preparatory classes. In the temporary educational facilities (part of regular schools), the Ukrainian language is used for a part of the curriculum. The curriculum content varies but must meet certain requirements. At least part of it must be focused on Dutch as a second language, and another part must be focused on other subjects, which must include at least mathematics, civic education and physical education. A third part of the curriculum content can be used for other education-related activities, such as sports, cultural activities and psychosocial support. A draft law to further regulate temporary education facilities is expected to enter into force before the next school year ⁽²²⁾.

Finally, 10 education systems ⁽²³⁾ report having no policy in place that promotes a particular integration approach for newly arrived migrant and refugee learners. Amongst them are several Nordic countries: Denmark, Sweden, Iceland and Norway. In these countries, local authorities and/or schools have the autonomy to make decisions on the best form of school integration approach and support provision. In Denmark, Sweden and Norway, separate classes focusing on the teaching and learning of the language of schooling (combined with lessons in regular classes) can be organised if this is in the interest of the learner. Several special laws ⁽²⁴⁾ passed recently by the Danish parliament provide flexibility for municipalities in relation to the teaching of refugee learners from Ukraine. This includes the possibility of teaching in Ukrainian and English. In Iceland, there is also no legal framework

⁽²¹⁾ See: https://q.infor.pl/pl_files/37400000/1-specustawa-o-pomocy-obywatelom-ukrainy-37399599.pdf

⁽²²⁾ See: <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/wetsvoorstellen/detail?cfg=wetsvoorsteldetails&qry=wetsvoorstel%3A36106>

⁽²³⁾ Bulgaria, Denmark, Sweden, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Switzerland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Turkey

⁽²⁴⁾ See: <https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/ta/2022/546>; <https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/ta/2022/693>; and <https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/ta/2022/691>

specifying a particular integration approach, but like in Denmark, recent steps have been taken to accommodate the needs of learners from Ukraine.

The main policy approach of the **Icelandic** education system is to provide inclusive schools for all, where all students are taught according to their individual needs in mainstream schools. How refugee and migrant learners are integrated is the decision of the municipalities and schools. However, in practice, most newly arrived learners, who are of compulsory school age (6-16 years), are placed in mainstream classes. As for newly arrived youth (those aged 16-18 years), a suitable solution is found in cooperation with the local or state-level authorities.

The national curriculum guides for compulsory and upper secondary schools oblige school authorities and municipalities to provide needs-based support for learning in the language of schooling; home language teaching is also encouraged. The Icelandic national curriculum guide for compulsory school stage has been revised with regards to the needs of children with diverse language and cultural background. The changes have already taken force and implementation has started ⁽²⁵⁾.

In the case of the learners from Ukraine, a flexible approach is currently being taken; this accommodates their specific and short-term needs to be able to continue to learn in their home language. Assistance and finances have been provided to municipalities so that they can support the learners with tailor-made solutions, including the provision of computers for distance learning (see also Section 3.2). No rules or guidelines have been issued yet; provisions are still being dealt with on an ad hoc and needs basis, through and in cooperation with the municipal services. The longer-term plan is for these learners to enter regular schools (i.e. as of the school year 2022/2023).

3.2. Ukrainian groups/classes and distance learning

As the previous section showed, which learning arrangements are provided to newly arrived migrant and refugee learners may depend on the particular circumstances and needs. Educational approaches involving a grouping of newly arrived learners may be relevant in the event of a sudden arrival of a large number of refugees to a local community (Bunar, 2019), as has been the case in some countries and regions with regard to children and young people from Ukraine.

Learning arrangements that gather only learners from Ukraine include Ukrainian groups or classes, in which the Ukrainian curriculum is taught and/or instruction takes place in the Ukrainian language. Another existing possibility is for Ukrainian learners ⁽²⁶⁾ to follow their national curriculum online. While these learning arrangements can be helpful in maintaining a link with the Ukrainian education system, language and culture, the importance of face-to-face learning in local schools is generally acknowledged. This face-to-face approach can ensure students have access to measures for learning the language of the host country and access to psychosocial support (see the previous section and also Section 4), and it can promote the participation of children and young people in the social life of the host country (European Commission, 2022a).

Across European countries, there is widespread top-level support for distance learning for refugee learners from Ukraine (Figure 4). In most cases, this means that education authorities assist schools and learners access the online learning platforms provided by the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science. They may provide information and support material on dedicated websites (as is the case e.g. in Finland), spaces for online learning (e.g. special classrooms, which have been provided in all educational districts in Cyprus) or computers (e.g. the large-scale provision of equipment, as in Austria and Poland; see country example below). Germany and Italy also provide top-level support for synchronous distance learning through videoconferencing to enable Ukrainian learners in secondary education to participate in schooling and final examinations.

⁽²⁵⁾ See: <https://www.stjornartidindi.is/Advert.aspx?RecordID=a5799517-7d75-4347-9b8b-e6ea56b31068>

⁽²⁶⁾ See for example the All-Ukrainian Online School: <https://lms.e-school.net.ua/>

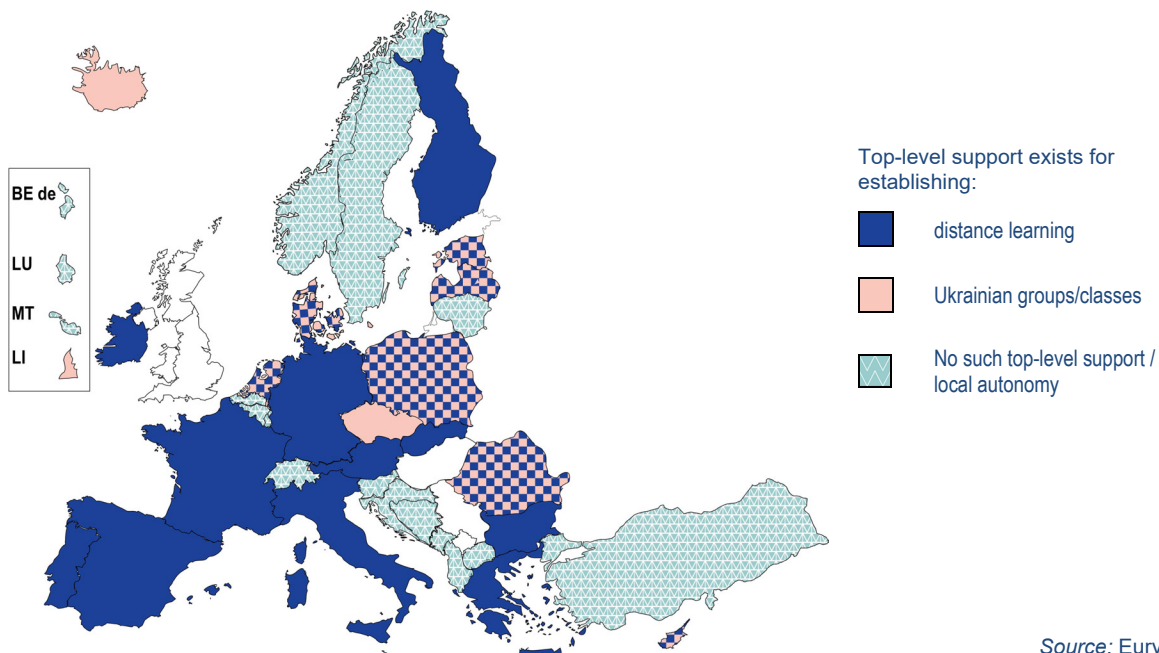
The **Austrian** Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research and subordinate departments promote the access of Ukrainian students to computers for the purpose of learning. This enables students to participate in lessons at their Ukrainian schools through distance learning, among other things. Through the ministry's *weiterlernen.at* initiative ⁽²⁷⁾, computers donated by companies and private individuals are refurbished and given to Ukrainian students free of charge and on a permanent basis.

Through the Ministry's device initiative (Federal Act on Financing the Digitization of School Instruction), Ukrainian students can also obtain a mobile device under the same conditions as Austrian students. Federal schools have a pool of lending equipment that has been purchased for COVID-19 distance learning. Available notebooks and tablets may be lent to Ukrainian students.

The content platform Eduthek ⁽²⁸⁾ provides a variety of teaching materials, including in the Ukrainian language. It is also linked to the online school of the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science and provides its online courses. The 'Learning without borders' project ⁽²⁹⁾ of the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science is also embedded in this platform, providing access to the relevant textbooks.

It should be noted that all of the abovementioned education systems provide the possibility of distance learning in addition to the support for the integration of the learners into local schools (as described in Section 3.1). In fact, in some countries, such as France and the Netherlands, top-level policies underline the importance of the learners' integration into local schools; therefore, distance learning can only be carried out outside usual school hours or not as a full-time option.

Figure 4: Top-level support for the establishment of Ukrainian groups/classes or distance learning, 2021/2022



Another learning arrangement, which is promoted in 10 European education systems ⁽³⁰⁾, in addition to integration into regular schools, is the possibility for schools to establish groups or classes specifically for learners from Ukraine. For example, education authorities in Estonia and Latvia promote the possibility of establishing classes for learners from Ukraine, in which Ukrainian is the language of schooling, students can be taught by Ukrainian teachers and in which the focus is on the Ukrainian curriculum and textbooks. However, in Estonia this is a temporary arrangement, and longer-term efforts will shift towards learners' integration into the local school system.

⁽²⁷⁾ See: <https://weiterlernen.at/>

⁽²⁸⁾ See: <https://eduthek.at/>

⁽²⁹⁾ See: <https://uied.org.ua/en/lets-learn-without-borders/>

⁽³⁰⁾ Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Iceland and Liechtenstein

The **Estonian** Ministry of Education and Research is collaborating with the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science, the Ukrainian community and Ukrainian-speaking teachers in Estonia to find solutions for teaching Ukrainian language and culture and providing distance learning in Ukrainian. Ukrainian e-learning resources have been made available for all schools in the Estonian e-learning repository.

There are no limitations for establishing separate mixed-aged groups or classes for Ukrainian students during the adjustment period, but from the next school year it is highly recommended to assign Ukrainian learners to age-appropriate classes. As a rule, only language and cultural studies can be organised in a separate group for Ukrainian students.

From the school year 2022/2023, efforts will also be made to avoid the extensive integration of Ukrainian distance learning into studies, in order to facilitate the faster adaptation of Ukrainian students to the Estonian school system and the acquisition of the Estonian language.

Some other countries provide classes or courses for Ukrainian learners that aim to promote the language and culture of the host country. This is the case, for example, in Czechia (classes/groups aimed at learning the Czech language and adaptation), Cyprus (intensive Greek language summer schools) and Iceland (special integration classes for Ukrainian youth aged 16-20 years).

Finally, around one third of education systems in Europe ⁽³¹⁾ provide no specific top-level support for the establishment of Ukrainian groups/classes or distance learning. However, such initiatives have been reported by some municipalities or schools (e.g. in Lithuania, Malta, Montenegro and Norway) or even encouraged as an extracurricular activity (e.g. in Luxembourg). Luxembourg organises, moreover, the national multi-subject test ⁽³²⁾ for Ukrainian learners' admission to higher education.

3.3. Cooperation with Ukrainian teachers

In order to support refugee learners from Ukraine in all the abovementioned learning contexts and arrangements, cooperation with Ukrainian teachers may be established. Education systems can draw on these teachers' expertise and language competences to help learners integrate in schools and progress with their learning (European Commission, 2022c).

In the majority of European countries, education authorities support the recruitment of, or collaboration with, Ukrainian teachers (Figure 5). Most of these countries have passed special laws that make it possible for schools to employ these professionals as teachers or teaching assistants, especially in the separate classes or groups gathering learners from Ukraine. Educational professionals from Ukraine may also assist teachers in regular school classes or be recruited for other positions, for example as special pedagogues, school psychologists or speech therapists (in Estonia and Lithuania), as adaptation or study coordinator (in Czechia and Estonia), or as linguistic-cultural mediator (in Italy).

The top-level support may allow a simplification of the procedures for the recognition of the qualifications of teachers and other educational professionals from Ukraine who have been granted temporary protection under the EU Temporary Protection Directive (e.g. in the French Community of Belgium, Estonia, Ireland and Luxembourg) or flexibility in the application of language requirements. The latter means that professionals from Ukraine who do not fulfil the language requirements can nevertheless be employed for a certain time. For example, in Czechia, Ukrainian education staff without knowledge of the Czech language can be employed, but only until 31 August 2022. Similarly, in Lithuania, teachers from Ukraine are not required to speak Lithuanian during the first 2 years of their employment.

⁽³¹⁾ Belgium (all three Communities), Croatia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovenia, Sweden, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Switzerland, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway and Turkey

⁽³²⁾ See: <https://testportal.gov.ua/osnovne-pro-nmt/>

In the **Netherlands**, Ukrainian teachers without knowledge of the Dutch language can be employed as educational support staff in preparatory classes (referred to as temporary education facilities). In secondary education, they can have their professional qualification as a teacher recognised and be formally employed as a teacher.

A proposed change in regulation will also make this possible for teachers in primary education ⁽³³⁾. If the proposed law is passed by Parliament, Ukrainian teachers without Dutch language skills can get a temporary recognition of their qualifications in order to teach in preparatory classes at primary level.

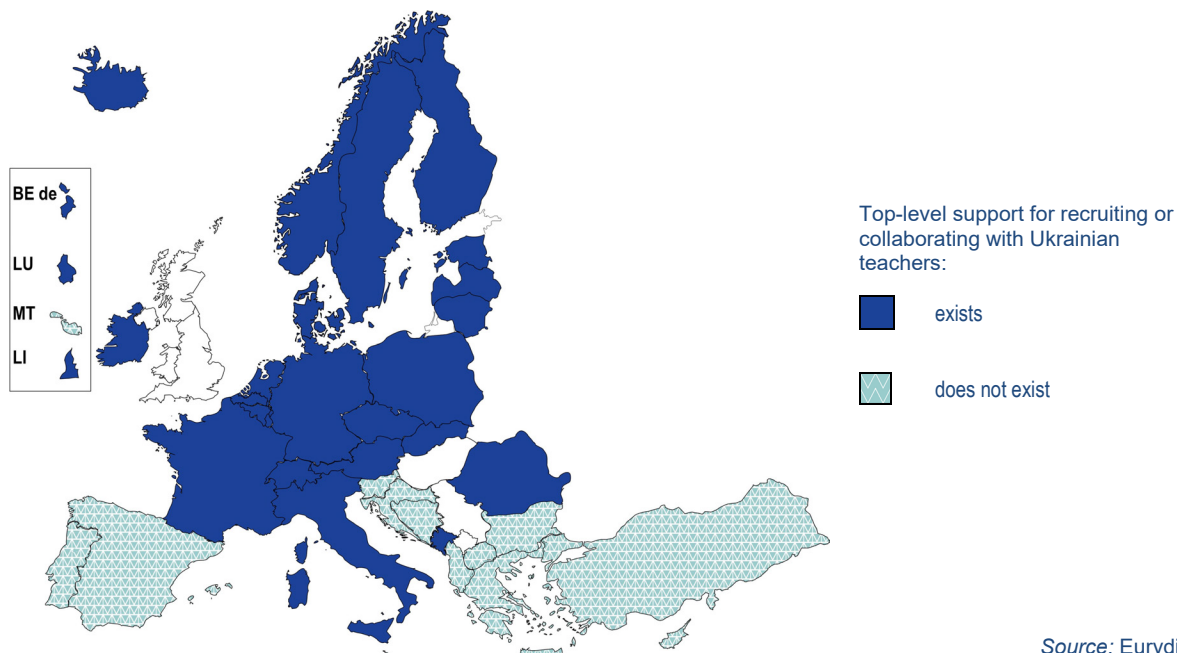
Some countries (e.g. Estonia and Poland) are organising special training programmes in order to promote Ukrainian education professionals' acquisition of the language of schooling.

In **Poland**, the Act (Law) of 12 March 2022 on Assistance to Citizens of Ukraine in Connection with the Armed Conflict in Ukraine ⁽³⁴⁾ introduces facilitated employment procedures for the position of a support teacher for Ukrainian citizens who have a command of the Polish language, spoken and written, to the extent that they can assist a student who does not speak Polish.

The Minister commissioned the Centre for Education Development in Warsaw – a national in-service teacher training institution – to prepare and conduct intensive preparatory courses in Polish language skills (at the basic level) for 1 000 incoming teachers from Ukraine and persons who may be employed as support teacher.

In other education systems, for example those of the German-speaking Community of Belgium and France, teachers and other educational professionals from Ukraine can only be recruited in schools if they have sufficient knowledge of the language of schooling. These teachers provide assistance with a variety of tasks, including the teaching of the language of schooling as a second language.

Figure 5: Top-level support for recruiting or collaborating with Ukrainian teachers, 2021/2022



In twelve countries, primarily located in southern parts of Europe ⁽³⁵⁾, there is no top-level support for recruiting or collaborating with Ukrainian teachers. However, some measures exist in practice. For

⁽³³⁾ See: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2022/06/07/ministeriele-regeling-tijdelijke-onderwijsvoorzieningen-bij-massale-toestroom-van-ontheemden>

⁽³⁴⁾ See: <https://g.infor.pl/p/ files/37400000/1-specustawa-o-pomocy-obywatelom-ukrainy-37399599.pdf>

⁽³⁵⁾ Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, Croatia, Cyprus, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Turkey

example, in Spain where publicly funded schools cannot hire teachers directly, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training has published a call to recruit 200 Ukrainian language assistants. These language assistants will be allocated to schools in the different autonomous communities according to need. In Portugal, schools can establish partnerships with Ukrainian associations with a view to supporting teaching activities.

4. PROMOTING REFUGEE LEARNERS' SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL WELL-BEING

Children and young people who are fleeing the war in Ukraine have been confronted with many stressors that may have a negative impact on their mental health and well-being. Many have witnessed violence and destruction, and experienced loss, the hardships of war and challenges related to their migration journey.

All these events increase the chances of anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorders, depression and suicide; and they can evoke negative feelings such as guilt, anger, sadness, anguish and loneliness (Gonçalves Júnior et al., 2022). The longer-term impact of these experiences is dependent on the psychosocial support the children receive in their host country (European Commission, 2022d). Their social, emotional and mental well-being is, moreover, directly related to their personal development, motivation and school success (McBrien, 2022).

This section investigates the existing top-level policies and measures for promoting the social, emotional and mental well-being of learners, in particular refugee learners from Ukraine. It first provides an overview of how education systems address this issue through the curriculum or similar steering documents, and through relevant teacher training. The last part of this section investigates top-level policies and measures guiding the provision of psychosocial support, either through professionals and services working within schools or through specialised centres collaborating with schools.

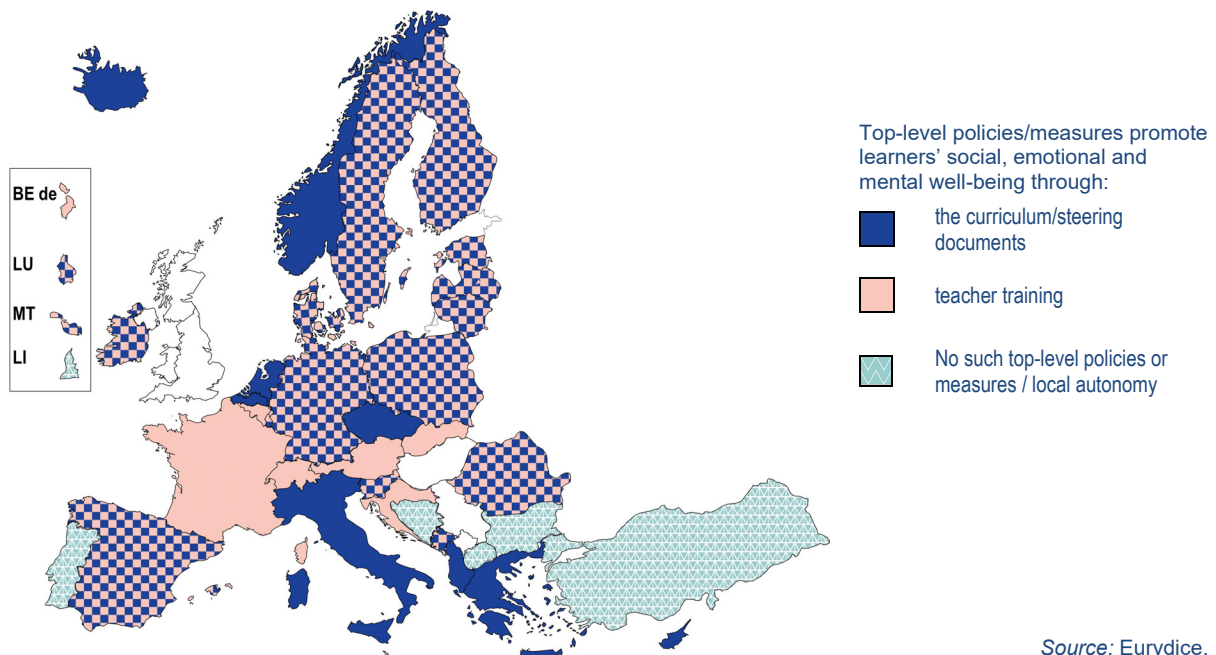
4.1. National curricula and teacher training on social, emotional and mental well-being

Schools can be a space where newly arrived migrant and refugee learners can feel safe and protected, and where they can continue their education. This space is also where social and emotional learning can take place, which is essential for strengthening learners' resilience and helping them to manage their feelings and friendships, solve problems and cope with difficulties. Across Europe, most education systems have top-level policies and measures in place that promote learners' social, emotional and mental well-being through the school curriculum (or similar steering documents) and/or through teacher training (Figure 6).

Where these topics are addressed through the curriculum/steering documents (in around half of the education systems), it is often stated, as a general goal, that primary and secondary schools should support the development of all learners, including their mental, physical, social and emotional development (e.g. in Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden and Montenegro). These issues may also be addressed through a specific curriculum subject (e.g. in Cyprus, Romania and Albania) or as a cross-curricular theme (e.g. in Czechia). Learners' social, emotional and mental well-being is sometimes also promoted through dedicated top-level guidelines and recommendations (e.g. in Germany, Slovenia and Iceland) or through specific support material provided by education authorities (e.g. in Ireland, Italy and Norway).

Whereas most of the aforementioned policies and measures focus on the social, emotional and mental well-being of all learners in schools, the specific support material developed in Ireland focuses on supporting the well-being of refugee learners from Ukraine in schools⁽³⁶⁾. Similarly, in Italy, pedagogical material has been developed with the aim of supporting the well-being of learners who are experiencing challenges due to the context of violence and war in Ukraine⁽³⁷⁾. In Norway, the aim is to guide schools in addressing themes, such as war, fear, terror and crisis within society⁽³⁸⁾.

Figure 6: Top-level policies and measures promoting learners' social, emotional and mental well-being through the curriculum and/or teacher training, ISCED 1-3, 2021/2022



In the context of promoting learners' social, emotional and mental well-being in schools, teachers play a key role. They are on the front line when it comes to facilitating refugee learners' inclusion, achievement and overall well-being. Teachers therefore need to be informed of, and sensitive to, the diverse cultural backgrounds of their students, able to address prejudices and discrimination in the classroom and able to recognise signs of stress and trauma so they can direct children and young people to adequate support structures (UNHCR, 2021).

As shown in Figure 6, around half of the education systems across Europe promote the provision of teacher training on learners' social, emotional and mental well-being. Specific topics related to well-being that are addressed in training programmes include (family–school) relationships, the school climate (e.g. in the French Community of Belgium, Luxembourg and Austria) and creating inclusive and collaborative learning environments that support learners' well-being, development and creativity (e.g. in Estonia and Romania). Some education systems also promote teacher training focusing on the topic of migration, addressing the well-being and needs of newly arrived migrant learners or dealing more generally with diversity, including avoiding stereotypes (e.g. in the French Community of Belgium, Spain, Malta and Sweden).

⁽³⁶⁾ See: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/48639-information-for-schools-ukraine/#supports-from-neps-for-students-from-the-ukraine>

⁽³⁷⁾ See: <https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/0/Spunti+per+la+riflessione+pedagogica+e+didattica.pdf/0e281e7b-a593-2d8d-1872-f006f027dd08?version=1.0&t=1648149854473>

⁽³⁸⁾ See: <https://www.udir.no/kvalitet-og-kompetanse/stotte-til-a-snakke-med-barn-og-unge-om-krigen-i-ukraina/> and <https://www.udir.no/kvalitet-og-kompetanse/sikkerhet-og-beredskap/oppfolging-etter-kriser-og-traumer/>

Teacher training addressing the specific mental health experiences and needs of refugee learners from Ukraine can be found in Ireland, Spain, France, Latvia, Poland, Slovenia and Switzerland. The content of these training programmes centres around the development of teachers' understanding of the sources and impact of stress and trauma on the children and young people and their capacity to support them.

At the National Education Institute of **Slovenia**, a seminar was held for teachers working in classes with many Ukrainian students. The seminar included internationally renowned experts in psycho-traumatology and other relevant professionals, who spoke about ways to support the inclusion of and activities with traumatised children ⁽³⁹⁾.

The institute's staff have, moreover, been responding to the needs of schools in terms of providing advice and recommendations on how to work in groups and classes that are heterogeneous in terms of language and culture. They have organised thematic meetings with individual education staff members on this topic. They have also made available video packages on the topic of creating safe and encouraging learning environments that empower teachers to support students in balancing emotions in challenging situations ⁽⁴⁰⁾.

In Latvia, the teacher training on the social, emotional and mental well-being of learners, including those from Ukraine, also covers a digital support tool and reflections on teachers' own social and emotional states.

The **Latvian** Ministry of Education and Science, together with its partners, is offering online discussions supporting teachers in dealing with crisis situations, including the war in Ukraine. Teachers are also trained in the use of a digital support tool called EMU School ⁽⁴¹⁾, which allows them to keep track of students' emotional needs at school and provides practical advice to teachers so that the school, along with parents, can better support students.

To provide psycho-emotional support for teachers, supervisions are offered. That is the most targeted, personalised support possible (taking into account the specifics of different types and levels of education), allowing teachers to discuss and reflect on professional and personal issues and problems.

In some education systems, for example Czechia, Croatia, Luxembourg and Slovakia, teachers are supported in their work on promoting learners' social, emotional and mental well-being through practical guidelines, recommendations and other materials.

In **Croatia**, the Ministry of Science and Education and the Education and Teacher Training Agency published, in March 2022, a document containing guidelines, instructions, recommendations and proposals for activities to be implemented by teachers and other educational professionals in primary and secondary schools, with a view to providing timely and effective support to children and young people affected by the war in Ukraine ⁽⁴²⁾.

The document addresses talking to students about the war in Ukraine and advising parents on how to talk to their children about it. It includes recommendations on how to show patience, honesty and understanding and how to provide support to students. The war in Ukraine does not only affect children; it also causes insecurity, fear and anxiety in adults, which is why the document also provides advice for adults on how to take care of themselves and strengthen their own psychological resilience in order to be able to help students.

⁽³⁹⁾ See: <https://video.arnes.si/watch/vjp8wbjI0stp>

⁽⁴⁰⁾ See: <https://www.zrss.si/nekategorizirano/povabilo-k-uporabi-seminarskih-video-paketov-na-temo-varno-in-spodbudno-ucno-okolje/>

⁽⁴¹⁾ See: <https://skolas.emu.lv/>

⁽⁴²⁾ See: <https://mzo.gov.hr/UserDocImages/dokumenti/lzbjeglice/Smjernice-upute-preporuke-prijedlozi-aktivnosti-za-osnazivanje-djece-i-mladih-za-pravovremenu-ucinkovitu-reakciju-u-kriznim-situacijama.pdf>

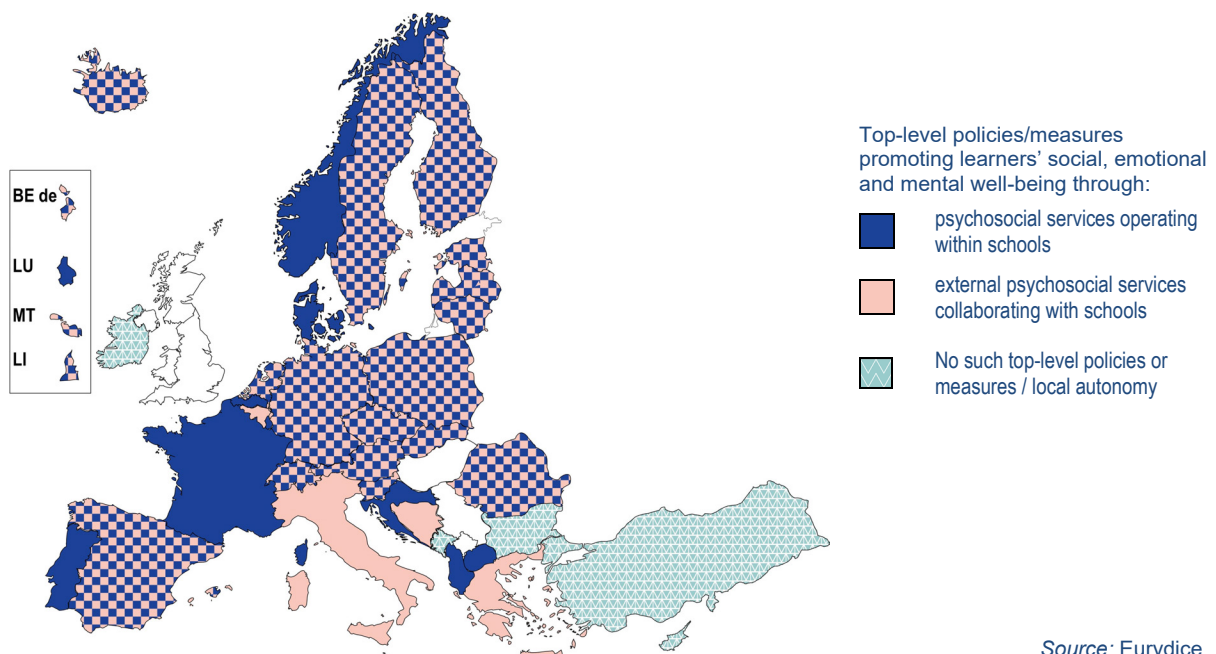
4.2. Psychosocial services working in and with schools

In order to address learners' specific psychosocial support needs, schools can play an important role in facilitating the provision of required services by specialised professionals or multidisciplinary teams of professionals (including psychologists, counsellors, medical professionals, social workers and cultural mediators) (European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice, 2019). Indeed, almost all European education systems have top-level policies and measures in place that ensure the availability of psychosocial services operating within schools and/or external psychosocial services collaborating with schools (Figure 7).

Most European countries' national policies specify that schools must provide in-school guidance, counselling or psychological support to ensure learners' well-being and to create a safe and healthy environment that facilitates learning and development in schools. These in-school psychosocial services are usually provided by psychologists; however, policies may also advise the involvement of specialist teachers, speech therapists, social workers, school doctors and/or school nurses.

A variety of professionals are usually also involved in external psychosocial services. Schools collaborate with the providers of these services in support of their learners' social, emotional and mental well-being. Like the in-school services, the mission of the external services providing psychosocial support to students is to promote their healthy physical, psychological and social development from an early stage.

Figure 7: Top-level policies and measures promoting learners' social, emotional and mental well-being through school psychosocial services, ISCED 1-3, 2021/2022



Regarding the provision of psychosocial support to refugee learners from Ukraine, several education systems have taken specific measures to facilitate the work of external psychosocial service providers. These measures include the provision of information and guidelines on offering psychosocial support to these learners (e.g. in Czechia, Germany, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia), an additional budget specifically dedicated to promoting their well-being (e.g. in Estonia and Italy) and webinars on how to address the emotional dimension of the war in Ukraine (e.g. in the French Community of Belgium and Poland).

In **Slovakia**, a number of support mechanisms are in place to assist the integration of Ukrainian learners in schools. Schools, school staff and especially class teachers should pay due attention to the arrival of these children and young people. The cooperation of all school pedagogical and professional staff is important, as is the preparation of the class itself. The changes experienced by those who are fleeing the war in Ukraine can be a great psychological burden.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport has made available all the relevant materials, including methodological guidelines and instructions, some of which are also available in the Ukrainian language, on its website ⁽⁴³⁾. Moreover, telephone helplines in the Ukrainian language were launched and an email address was established to process all the requests for information and support regarding the integration and well-being of Ukrainian children and young people.

In order to provide psychosocial assistance, 62 intervention teams have been made available for schools, with at least 7 teams in each region. Each intervention team consists of between three and eight experts (i.e. psychologists or special educators who have experience with crisis intervention). They are able to assist teachers of refugee learners in helping their students cope with the impacts of the war. In addition, Ukrainian-speaking experts are available to assist each intervention team.

CONCLUSION

The Russian invasion of Ukraine forced many people to flee their homes and search for protection in neighbouring European countries. This situation is challenging in many respects – notably for the Ukrainian families whose lives were irrevocably changed – but also for the host countries, which now have a responsibility to respond to this situation.

The report shows that there are large differences between European countries in the number of refugees who have arrived from Ukraine, and in particular in the number of Ukrainian children and young people. However, all countries that had data available in May 2022 have in common that **some of these children and young people were not yet enrolled in local schools**. Therefore, reaching out to refugee families and communities to help their children integrate into schools remains a primary and central element of support.

What is also noteworthy are the rapid policy responses across many European education systems. Based on oftentimes existing policies and measures, **many education authorities have issued recent top-level guidance to support schools that are welcoming learners from Ukraine**.

Most countries provide top-level regulations or recommendations on the initial assessment of newly arrived learners' competences and needs in order to help schools place learners in an appropriate educational setting and school grade. The main focus of these policies is on assessing learners' educational needs, in particular in the language of schooling; **fewer education systems provide top-level guidance that also addresses the assessment of learners' personal (i.e. social, emotional and mental health) needs**. The latter includes some recent policies that focus on the specific mental health needs of learners from Ukraine.

Around half of the education systems provide schools with concrete tools or instruments for the initial assessment of newly arrived learners, including those from Ukraine. Where such tools exist, they mainly cover the assessment of newly arrived learners' competences in the language of schooling; in some cases, their competences in other subject areas are also covered. **Learners' social, emotional and mental health needs are addressed in assessment tools in only a minority of countries**.

Regarding the initial placement of children and young people from Ukraine, **most European education systems report that they promote the learners' integration into regular classes combined with intensive support for learning the language of schooling** (and other subjects).

⁽⁴³⁾ See: <https://ukrajina.minedu.sk/podporne-materialy-a-webinare/>

Relatively fewer education systems advise the initial integration of the learners in separate classes, which also primarily focus on the teaching and learning of the language of schooling and in some cases on their home language (i.e. Ukrainian). Among the education systems with no top-level policies in this area are several in which education authorities have granted schools additional flexibility to make decisions regarding the choice of integration approach; this choice will depend on the number of refugee learners at regional or local level and should take into account the learners' individual needs.

The majority of European education systems also provide top-level support for refugee learners who wish to follow the Ukrainian curriculum through distance learning (e.g. spaces in schools and digital tools). Some countries also support the possibility of establishing specific classes only for learners from Ukraine. However, all these are additional or extracurricular arrangements that complement efforts focused on integrating learners into local schools.

In order to assist refugee learners from Ukraine in the abovementioned learning contexts and arrangements, **most education systems across Europe have passed special laws or provided legal flexibility allowing the recruitment of, or collaboration with, Ukrainian teachers**. Ukrainian teachers may teach or assist teachers, or they may work as special pedagogues, school psychologists, speech therapists, etc.

Children and young people who are fleeing the war in Ukraine may have had experiences that affect their mental health and well-being. Around half of the European education systems have top-level policies and measures in place that promote learners' social, emotional and mental well-being through the curriculum. Among them, **some have issued specific guidelines or materials to help schools and teachers support the well-being of refugee learners from Ukraine and address themes, such as war, fear, terror or crises**. Around half of the education systems also provide teachers with training on topics related to learners' well-being; **in some of these countries, the teacher training programmes focus on the specific mental health experiences and needs of refugee learners from Ukraine**.

In order to address learners' specific psychosocial support needs, almost all European education systems promote top-level policies and measures that ensure the availability of psychosocial services operating within schools and/or external psychosocial services collaborating with schools. **Several education systems have taken specific measures to facilitate the work of external psychosocial service providers with regard to psychosocial support for refugee learners from Ukraine**, including the provision of information and guidelines, an additional budget and dedicated webinars.

Overall, this short report has shown that many education systems across Europe have taken recent steps to promote the integration and inclusion of refugee learners from Ukraine into schools, to help them with their development and progress and to provide them with required support measures. The main focus of the top-level policies and measures is on addressing the learners' educational needs. In order to ensure refugee learners' inclusion and access to holistic support, equal attention needs to be paid to their personal needs, especially in initial assessment procedures, curriculum guidelines and teacher training. This report provided many examples of top-level policies and practices that can hopefully inspire future efforts in including and supporting newly arrived migrant and refugee learners in European schools and societies.

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Supporting refugee learners from Ukraine in schools in Europe

Eurydice report

The Russian invasion of Ukraine forced many people to flee their homes and search for protection in neighbouring European countries, amongst them a large proportion of children and young people. Education systems in the receiving countries now have a responsibility to provide these children and young people with quality education as well as psychosocial support.

This report investigates some of the key policies and measures developed by education authorities across Europe to assist primary and secondary schools in integrating and supporting children and young people arriving from Ukraine. It presents qualitative Eurydice data on national policies and measures in 37 European education systems.

The findings show that some children and young people from Ukraine may not yet be enrolled in schools. Most education systems have reacted rapidly with policy initiatives addressing learners' educational needs. The report also presents some examples of policy initiatives promoting the learners' social, emotional and mental well-being.

The Eurydice Network's task is to understand and explain how Europe's different education systems are organised and how they work. The network provides descriptions of national education systems, comparative studies devoted to specific topics, indicators and statistics. All Eurydice publications are available free of charge on the Eurydice website or in print upon request. Through its work, Eurydice aims to promote understanding, cooperation, trust and mobility at European and international levels. The network consists of national units located in European countries and is coordinated by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). For more information about Eurydice, see: <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/>

