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**Civil Society Committee  
on the Rights of the Child (CSC-RC)**

**Comité de la société civile  
sur les droits de l'enfant (CSC-DE)**

This document provides examples to better understand the situation of Ukrainian children.

## **Situation of Ukrainian children displaced to Russia**

**Conflict Observatory: Russia deports thousands of Ukrainian children. Investigators say that's a war crime**

February 14, 2023

<https://www.npr.org/2023/02/14/1156500561/russia-ukraine-children-deportation-possible-war-crime-report>

The report by the Conflict Observatory, "Russia's Systematic Program for the Re-Education and Adoption of Ukrainian Children," describes how the Russian government is operating a systematic network of at least 40 child custody centers for thousands of Ukrainian children, a potential war crime, according to a new report by Yale University researchers in a collaboration with the U.S. State Department in a program to hold Russia accountable.

**Key findings:** Primary purpose of the camps appears to be political re-education. Children from two of the camps have been placed with foster families in Russia. Consent is collected under duress and routinely violated. Children's returns from at least four camps have been suspended.

<https://hub.conflictobservatory.org/portal/apps/sites/#/home/pages/children-camps-1>

**United Nations: UN accuses Russia of breaking child protection rules over refugees**

27 January 2023

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-64429377>

The head of the United Nations' refugee agency has accused Moscow of violating "fundamental" child protection principles by giving Russian passports to unaccompanied child refugees. Filippo Grandi added that Russia had then been putting these children up for adoption by Russian families. He said the UNHCR would try to get access to those affected and try to find solutions in their best interest. However, Mr Grandi admitted he did not know how many children were affected.

"In the situation of war, you cannot determine if children have families or guardianship. And therefore, until that is clarified, you cannot give them another nationality or having them adopted by another family," Mr Grandi said.

According to the most recent UNHCR data, [nearly three million refugees from Ukraine have been recorded in Russia](#) - more than in any other European country. It is unclear how many of these are children. A Ukrainian presidential adviser said earlier this month almost 14,000 children had been "deported" to Russia from occupied parts of Ukraine, and accused it of kidnapping them. The Kremlin has denied the allegations.

Mr Grandi has said the UNHCR is seeking access to Russia "all the time" but that so far this has been "rare, sporadic and not unfettered".

His comments come after the United Nations' top rights official expressed concern in July that Ukrainian children had been taken from orphanages in the eastern Donbas region and "forcibly deported" to Russia. There was also concern Moscow was "modifying existing legislation" to fast-track this process. Michelle Bachelet said at the time that she could not confirm the allegations or the number of children potentially affected. Then in September, the assistant UN secretary-general for human rights said there were "credible allegations" of "forced transfers of unaccompanied children to Russian occupied territory, or to the Russian Federation itself".

### **The Guardian: Weeks turn to months as children become stuck at camps in Crimea**

27 December 2022

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/dec/27/children-become-stuck-at-camps-in-crimea-ukraine-russia>

The Russian-run camps were advertised as restorative breaks; parents say some children have been kept there for months. Though the parents sent them willingly, they had agreed to a short stint. The UN convention on children's rights bans the "illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad", so Russia is obliged to return the children.

## **Situation of Children in Ukraine under war conditions**

### **UNICEF: Ukraine war disrupts education for more than five million children**

23 January 2023

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/01/1132757>

Thousands of schools, pre-schools and other education facilities in Ukraine have been damaged or destroyed due to the use of explosive weapons in the war, including in populated areas. At the same time, many parents and caregivers are reluctant to send children to school, fearing for their safety.

The situation for children who have fled the country is also concerning. An estimated two out of three Ukrainian refugee children are not currently enrolled in host country education systems, UNICEF reported. Some of the factors driving this include stretched education capacities, while many refugee families have opted for online learning, instead of attending local schools, as they had hoped to be able to return home quickly.

UNICEF is calling for an end to attacks on education facilities and other civilian infrastructure in Ukraine, and for increased support to ensure children have access to offline learning materials and supplies. This will enable students to continue their education, and remain connected to their peers and teachers.

Support for Ukraine's recovery plan, and efforts to rebuild and rehabilitate schools and preschools, is also needed.

## **UNHRC Statement at the end of the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine's visit to Kyiv**

2 December 2022

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2022/12/statement-end-un-independent-international-commission-inquiry-ukraines-visit>

Destruction and devastation of medical institutions by attacks prevents people to access health protection. Additionally, attacks on transport and energy infrastructure limit mobility of patients and indirectly reduces enjoyment of the right to health. Patients with chronic conditions and those who have need for urgent medical treatment are particularly affected by this situation.

In resolution A/HRC/49/L.1, as orally amended, on the **situation of human rights in Ukraine stemming from the Russian aggression**, adopted with a vote of 32 in favour, 2 against and 13 abstentions, the Human Rights Council condemns in the strongest possible terms the human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law resulting from the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine; calls upon the Russian Federation to immediately end its human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law in Ukraine, and calls for the strict observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the protection of civilians and critical civilian infrastructure in Ukraine;

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/03/human-rights-council-establishes-independent-international-commission>

### **Sexual violence, including against children**

23 September 2022

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1127691>

Horrific allegations of sexual violence against Ukrainian communities - including children - were also found to be based in fact.

## **Situation of Children as refugees in other countries**

**UNICEF: Ukraine war disrupts education for more than five million children** *(continuation)*

23 January 2023

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/01/1132757>

In refugee-hosting countries, UNICEF is calling for prioritization of the integration of Ukrainian refugee children into national education systems, especially for early childhood and primary education.

“It is important that relevant authorities **identify and overcome regulatory and administrative barriers** that hinder children's access to formal education across all levels and provide clear and accessible information to refugee families,” the UN agency said.

UNICEF added that where access to the education system cannot be immediately ensured, host countries must provide “multiple pathways to learning”, especially for secondary school age children.

## UNHCR: Ukraine Refugee Situation

18 July 2022

<https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/94313>

The escalation of the international armed conflict in Ukraine has caused civilian casualties and destruction of civilian infrastructure, forcing people to flee their homes seeking safety, protection and assistance

Big data challenge: 100s of thousands of schoolchildren are in unknown locations. Some do not have residency status in host countries, making it more difficult to enrol in schools and/or assess their numbers.

- The neighbouring countries to Ukraine have functioning school systems, but their capacity is already a challenge, esp. in Poland. In Denmark and the Netherlands, they also expect strains on their educational systems.
- A good deal of children suffers from stress, PTSD, and double displacement consequences.
- UNHCR is already seeing a couple of potential legal and administrative gaps and barriers in access to education: 1) Temporary Protection (TP) holders in some countries do not get permanent residency permits, e.g., in Slovakia. 2) For TP holders, the EUMS do not have the obligation to enroll them in schools within the period of three months upon their arrival. 3) EU MS are not obliged to organize preparatory language classes for TP holders.
- Ukrainian MoEdu has offered the children the option to study online (middle and high school) and option to graduate from high school online, but the remaining issue is that not all children are able to access online learning. There is pressure from MoEdu of Ukraine on children to continue learning online, and the message is that they need not enrol in national systems of host countries. Consequently, the Ukrainian parents have insufficient options for education in host countries and are reluctant to enrol their children in local schools, the preparatory language classes, the MHPSS support, et al.
- Analysis showed that actual enrolment of children in Poland is very low; PESEL registrations are at 528,549 in Poland in the 0–17-year-old category. We can assume that only 40-43% of school-age children are enrolled to start school in Poland in September. Another worrisome fact is that 80% of those enrolled had not received preparatory classes or language classes. As mentioned, the Polish law does not enforce the compulsory education for Ukrainian children.