



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE
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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

**Civil Society Committee
on the Rights of the Child (CSC-RC)
Comité de la Société Civile
sur les Droits de l'Enfant (CSC-DE)**

Support to children staying in and migrating from Ukraine

2022 March 10

The Civil Society Committee on the Rights of the Child (CSC-RC) of the Conference of INGOs wish to raise the collective awareness of people and institutions of the Council of Europe and its member States about the dramatic living conditions of Ukrainian children: those who still live in Ukraine and those in migration.

The current Ukrainian migration is specific compared to previous ones in Europe as the men –and therefore often the fathers– largely stay to fight and defend their country or to support the continuance of civil society in Ukraine. In addition, many brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts and other dear relatives are still on the battlefield. Many staying may not be able to leave because of their own vulnerability, disability or age. The tearing apart of social and family life networks will inevitably traumatise the children and their parents, and also the volunteers and professionals who care for them.

The fate of children still living in Ukraine is worse, if there is any scale in terms of terror. We can only imagine the tremendous anxiety of these children and their relatives and their need for immediate humanitarian help and long-term support when recovery is possible.

The INGOs represented in the Civil Society Committee on the Rights of the Child (CSC-RC) support the declarations and actions of the institutions of the Council of Europe, of the European Union and of the United Nations.

On the basis of their expertise, these INGOs call for:

1. the protection of children's lives and well-being, including supporting all children and parents to find safety in the country where they wish to live, and recognition of the specific protection and support needs of different groups of children (e.g. according to gender, health condition, disability, and age group) and particularly unaccompanied children;
2. the psychological assessment and support for children and adults that are most traumatised or distressed perhaps through exacerbation of a pre-existing mental health or psychological condition or extreme trauma;
3. the support, counselling and social services to refugees who are least well-resourced including those from marginalised and discriminated communities, such as Roma people;
4. the strengthening of existing organisations and networks that are already established on the ground and underway for years, by increasing their funding, facilitating the hiring of trained professionals and improving guidance and coordination between the different agents;
5. the assurance that funding is channelled through best practice providers including relevant NGOs, and ensure inclusivity, non-discrimination and a focus on effective safeguarding children (and adults) is a requirement for funding;
6. the protection of the rights of all human and child rights defenders, including children who defend human and child rights, who are exercising their right to freedom of peaceful assembly, association and expression in all countries involved.