



REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Inclusive **Education** and Continuous **Learning** for **All Children**

Inclusion of Ukrainian Refugee Children in Education in Europe

CONFERENCE REPORT

Prague, February 14 – 15, 2024,
Liechtenstein Palace

In case of any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to Karolina Emanuelová (kemanuelova@unicef.org).

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CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE



The conference took place over two days,
14-15 February



hosted at the beautiful
Liechtenstein Palace
in Prague.

Organisers: jointly organised by *the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic* and *UNICEF*, under the auspices of the *Human Rights Commissioner Mrs. Klára Šimáčková Laurenčíková*.

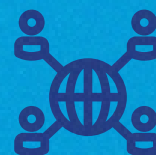
ATTENDANCE



143 participants, including speakers from over 10 countries, represented governments, civil society, academia, regional and international organizations, schools, and other educational institutions

INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION

The conference was enriched by participation of Government officials, academics and NGO representatives from **Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and Ukraine.**



OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES

The conference conclusions were expected to inform the work of policymakers, senior officials, experts, and practitioners thereby facilitating development and implementation of each country's action plans/roadmaps for inclusive quality education system through key investments and programmes.

OUTCOME 1

Host countries inspired to further include Ukrainian refugee children in national education systems

To provide a strategic and open forum of stocktaking and exchange of policies as well as lessons between policymakers, senior officials, academia, and practitioners on the inclusion of Ukrainian refugees (e.g. legislation, coordination, financing, workforce development etc.).

To identify and share innovative measures, tools, and practices to support the Ukrainian children, including young children and adolescents, to quickly develop language skills in the context of the whole school approach, catch-up programmes, and recognition of competencies, skills, and qualifications.

OUTCOME 2

EU education systems enhanced cooperation with the Ukrainian MoES to facilitate continuous learning of the Ukrainian children and future recovery of the country

To identify strategies for improving exchange of information about the students, education systems, curricula and workforce across the countries.

To discuss frameworks and tools for recognising skills and competencies as well as education/school certificates across the countries.

KEY INSIGHTS AND TAKEAWAYS FROM THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE

The conference emphasized education's transformative impact and our collective duty to develop inclusive systems that support all children, focusing especially on the needs of the most vulnerable, including refugees and children with disabilities. It set a foundation for actionable strategies and commitments, outlined in four key areas. These initiatives are designed to tackle current issues and establish a path toward long-lasting educational integration and success for Ukrainian refugee children and other marginalized groups in our communities.

1. Challenges and successes in achieving inclusive education for Ukrainian refugee children

- › The conference showcased the remarkable strides European countries have made in **welcoming and integrating a significant number of Ukrainian refugee children into their national education systems**. This success can be attributed to a conducive policy environment and robust public support. Despite these achievements, nearly two years into Europe's extensive refugee crisis, **many Ukrainian children remain disconnected from national education frameworks**. Addressing this issue promptly is crucial, as integrating these children into local education systems stands as the most viable and sustainable approach for addressing their immediate educational needs and ensuring their long-term academic and social well-being.
- › The conference resoundingly reaffirmed **education as a fundamental human right**, emphasizing the need for inclusive systems that cater to all children, regardless of background or circumstance. This principle carries particular weight for **vulnerable populations like refugees and children with disabilities**, who often face significant barriers to accessing quality education.
- › The conference acknowledged the **unique challenges** faced by Ukrainian refugee children to access formal education in host countries, including lack of absorption capacity of local schools, lack of teachers, cultural and linguistic barriers, socio-economic factors, mobility, etc. These challenges necessitate a **multifaceted approach** to integration, encompassing academic, social, and emotional support systems.

2. Building bridges through collaboration

- › The conference highlighted the critical role of collaboration between various stakeholders, including:
 - **European host countries** responsible for integrating refugee children into their educational systems.
 - **The Ukrainian Ministry of Education**, ensuring ongoing access to education within Ukraine and fostering a smooth reintegration process for returned children.

- **International organizations like UNICEF** providing expertise, resources, and support mechanisms to facilitate successful integration efforts.
- › This collaboration is essential for:
 - **Developing comprehensive support systems** that address the diverse needs of refugee children.
 - **Facilitating knowledge sharing** and the exchange of best practices among countries hosting Ukrainian refugees.
 - **Preparing a future workforce** in Ukraine by ensuring continued educational opportunities for displaced children.
- › Participants recognized the **importance of evidence-driven decision making**, emphasizing the need for robust data collection and analysis to understand the scope of educational needs and plan effective responses. Improved data quality is crucial for ensuring targeted interventions and better support for refugee education initiatives.

3. Toward effective integration strategies

- › The conference presented a range of **actionable strategies** for supporting the educational integration of refugee children in host countries:
 - **Developing targeted language acquisition programs** tailored to the diverse needs and age groups of refugee learners.
 - **Creating safe and welcoming school environments** that prioritize mental health and well-being by providing access to qualified counselors and fostering a culture of inclusion and acceptance.
 - **Implementing flexible and continuous learning pathways** that accommodate the diverse backgrounds and needs of refugee children, including the recognition of prior learning and ensuring uninterrupted educational progress. This includes engaging on the provision of alternative solutions for adolescents and youth who face a trade-off between the short-term pressure to work and the long-term desire to continue education, ensuring pathways are available that do not force a choice between immediate economic needs and future educational aspirations.
- › The conference also underscored the importance of **empowering refugee youth**, recognizing the value of their unique perspectives and lived experiences in shaping effective educational strategies. Including their voices and aspirations in the development of support systems can ensure that interventions are relevant, culturally sensitive, and cater to their specific needs and aspirations.

4. Investing in a brighter future

- › The conference concluded with a **renewed commitment** from European nations to providing **long-term and sustainable solutions for the education of Ukrainian refugee children**. This commitment goes beyond immediate needs and aims to foster **empowerment** by equipping these children with the knowledge, skills, and resilience necessary to contribute positively to their communities and rebuild their lives.
- › Though the event focused on Ukrainian refugees in Europe, conference’s participants, especially from Ukraine acknowledged **the crucial role of Ukraine’s education recovery**. Addressing the dual challenges of infrastructural damage and significant

learning losses will be imperative. Revitalizing the educational sector will go beyond addressing immediate issues; it is a foundational step for long-term socio-economic stability to meaningfully contribute to the nation's resilience and prosperity.

- › Moving forward, the conference serves as a **springboard for continued collaboration and knowledge sharing**. By working together, European countries can ensure that every child, regardless of background or circumstance, has the opportunity to thrive in an inclusive and supportive learning environment. This collective effort is not only a moral imperative but also an investment in a brighter future for all.
- › Leverage the insights gained from hosting refugees **to identify and address the existing deficiencies within education systems**. This presents a valuable opportunity for systemic improvement and reinforces the commitment to providing quality education for all.

RESOURCES

The [conference website](#) contains:

- › Full event information including agenda
- › Recording of the whole conference
- › Conference report
- › Speakers' bios and photos
- › Youth panelists' stories and photos
- › Powerpoint presentations from both days
- › Photos from the conference
- › Graphic recording of Theme II
- › Introductory video with Ukrainian children



RESOURCES SHARED DURING THE CONFERENCE

EU Resources

- › [Commission Staff Working Document](#) - offers considerations and concrete best practices for the EU's education communities to ensure uninterrupted learning for all pupils arriving from Ukraine up to 18 years old, from early childhood education and care to upper secondary education.
- › Eurydice reports on supporting refugee learners in [schools](#) and in [higher education](#). (DG EAC)
- › Country-specific information on support measures collected and reported in the context of the 2022 [Education and Training Monitor](#). (DG EAC)
- › [Eurostat work on Ukraine](#)
- › [Solidarity Platform and EU Migration Preparedness and Crisis Blueprint](#) (DG HOME)
- › Council Recommendation of 28 November 2022 on [Pathways to School Success](#)
- › [Pathways to School Success Handbook](#)
- › [European Toolkit for Schools](#) - on the European School Education Platform; repository, webinars and videos of good practices
- › [Inclusion of young refugees and migrants through education - Publications Office of the EU](#)
- › [Compendium of inspiring practices on inclusive and citizenship education - Publications Office of the EU](#)
- › [European School Education Platform](#) - meeting point for all stakeholders in the school education sector
- › [EPALE - Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe](#)

New Ukrainian School Hub - free, hub of information, resources, and knowledge for Ukrainian refugees no matter where they are

Examples from Switzerland

- › Mentorship programmes in the Canton of Zurich: «Future Kids» and «ChagAll»
- › CORE «[Strengthen your Life Skills](#)» for displaced young people - [Introductory Video](#) (Programme available in several languages).
- › NADIYA (Ukrainian for Hope) APP to help families address experienced trauma
- › [Landscape Model of Learning](#)

REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND CONTINUOUS LEARNING FOR ALL CHILDREN

Prague 14th February 2024

Language is the main **INTEGRATION** pillar
CREATING welcoming environment

Very **PRACTICAL** APPROACH ASAP

GIVE TOOLS for the Teachers

IDENTIFY the real NEED

Adaptation STARTS in the **FAMILY** of NEEDS a **GOAL**

Adaptation is a very **LONG** & Demanding process

Don't want to **REPLACE** UKRAINIAN CULTURE

SUPPORTING children from the very beginning

Less children in groups **MORE** available **MORE SCHOOLS**

Spread **AWARENESS** about their **NEEDS**



Becoming **STRONG** & **INDEPENDENT**



Speak their **NATIVE LANGUAGE** as well



MENTORING

FIND WAYS to **RELATE**

RESPECT

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION FOR LEARNING

LANGUAGE is a CULTURE, a TRADITION a UNIFICATION of Community

EVERY CHILD needs the possibility to GO to SCHOOL

Only strong devoted adults can raise strong selfconfident young people



WELLBEING and SAFE WELCOMING SCHOOLS

STRESS reduction

RELATIONSHIP

SUPPORT in different areas of LIFE

HEALTH & **SOCIAL CARE**

SUPPORT the whole **FAMILIES**



EQUIP schools with **PROPER** tools

Bringing schools together **BEST PRACTISE SHARING**

Address the whole **SYSTEM**



INVEST in **RESOURCES**

FIRST AID not delivered ONLY by **SPECIALIST**

ALL KIDS have diverse **NEEDS**



COUNSELLING for Families

PREVENTION of **POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY**

SHOW that **CHANGE** is **POSSIBLE**

ENCOURAGE **FRIENDSHIP**

MANAGING **EMOTIONS**

SUPPORT Teacher's OWN **MENTAL HEALTH**

COMPLEX approach

Resilience

zmočníkové služby pro učitelá práce



THEME I:

OPENING, SETTING THE SCENE, PRINCIPLES TO STRENGTHEN INCLUSIVE APPROACH FOR ALL LEARNERS

1.1 OPENING SESSION

1.1.1 WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS - YULIA OLEINIK, HEAD, UNICEF REFUGEE RESPONSE OFFICE, CZECHIA

Opening remarks

Yulia Oleinik

Head, UNICEF Refugee Response Office
Czechia



The Regional Conference on Inclusive Education and Continuous Learning for All Children, hosted in Prague, commenced with a warm welcome by Yulia Oleinik, Head of UNICEF Refugee Response Office in the Czech Republic. She lauded the gathering's diverse international representation, which unified more than 140 participants from over 10 countries, all bound by a commitment to the continuous learning and inclusive education of all children. The conference was co-organized with the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Office of the Government, whose leadership was pivotal in setting the stage for cross-country exchange of emerging practices for Ukrainian refugee children's education in Europe. The Czech Republic's laudable response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis, particularly the integration of about 50,000 children into their education system, was acknowledged as a leading example of inclusion of Ukrainian refugees in action.

In her opening remarks, Oleinik underscored the urgent need to uphold every child's fundamental right to quality education. Continued investment in the education and development of Ukrainian children and young people is investment in human capital which will be imperative for recovery of Ukraine. Inclusion of refugee children in education also brings benefits to the host community. Children learn how to live together with people of different backgrounds in a society where diversity is a norm rather than exception.

The conference set out to tackle the barriers still impeding the education of over 2.3 million Ukrainian children in need of assistance across Europe, despite the tremendous solidarity shown by host countries. These challenges include lack of infrastructure, language barriers, and the mental health of children and educators. Oleinik highlighted the conference's objective to not only address these immediate challenges but also to contribute to the broader goal of inclusive quality education, drawing from the experiences of the current refugee response to benefit all marginalized children. The ensuing discussions were anticipated to yield strategic insights, aligning with European educational frameworks and fostering a collaborative approach to quality education for all.

1.1.2 OPENING REMARKS - JIŘÍ NANTL, DEPUTY MINISTER OF EDUCATION, YOUTH AND SPORTS, CZECHIA

Opening remarks

Jiří Nantl

Deputy Minister of Education, Youth and Sports
Czechia



The main points of Jiří Nantl's presentation reflect the Czech Republic's response to the influx of refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine. Nantl, the Deputy Minister of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic, expresses pride in his nation's efforts to provide shelter to those in need, recognizing it as a significant test for a country not accustomed to such events. The sudden necessity to accommodate refugees, especially children at critical formative stages of their lives, has presented challenges not only in terms of education but also the well-being of these individuals who have had to adapt to a new country and language, often without one or both parents.

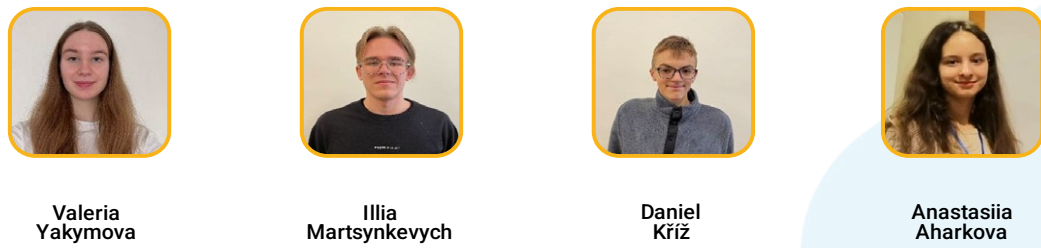
Nantl acknowledges the situation as an invaluable lesson in inclusivity and solidarity. The experience has shown that if Czechia can extend inclusive education to refugees, it can ensure the same for every child born within its borders. This experience is also seen as a lesson in solidarity for Czech children, who benefit from learning alongside classmates from different countries. Nantl thanks UNICEF for their support in managing refugee intake and commends the civil servants, especially Martina Běťáková, for coordinating these efforts. He concludes with a hopeful note that those who return to their country after the war will carry back experiences of friendship and solidarity, emphasizing the importance of the work done by Czech Refugee Response Office team.

1.2 YOUTH VOICES

1.2.1 YOUTH SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES, SUCCESSES AND AMBITIONS

Youth Voices – Hlasy mladých

MODERATOR Karolina Emanuelová, UNICEF



Valeria Yakymova

Illia Martynkevych

Daniel Kříž

Anastasiia Aharkova

Moderator: Karolina Emanuelová, Education Officer, UNICEF Refugee Response Office, Czechia

Youth: Valeria Yakymova, Illia Martynkevych, Daniel Kříž, Anastasiia Aharkova

The Youth Voices – Hlasy mladých session provided an insightful and engaging platform for young people from Ukraine and Czechia to share their personal journeys, challenges, successes, and aspirations. Moderated by Karolina Emanuelová, Education Officer at UNICEF’s Refugee Response Office in the Czech Republic, the panel included Valeria Yakymova, Illia Martynkevych, Daniel Kříž, and Anastasiia Aharkova.

Valeria (16 years) discussed her decision to pursue a discipline in IT, a choice she made while still in Ukraine. In Czechia she did not give up on her dream and after mastering the Czech language to sufficient level thanks to the preparatory zero classes she successfully passed the entrance exams to the secondary IT school, achieving extraordinary results. At the same time she studies the Ukrainian high school online.

In her message to peers she recommended profound thinking through education possibilities before making the choice of a school or education pathway and stressed the importance of deep commitment and fearless efforts.

Illia (17 years) shared his experience transitioning from primary to secondary education in Czechia and his challenges as a newcomer abroad, including dealing with hate speech but eventually finding friends and even helping to compile a dictionary as part of his involvement in the Duke of Edinburgh's Stand By Me buddy programme.

His message was also addressed to Ukrainian peers, encouraging them to mainly study the language of the country they are in and stressing the importance of social environment and interpersonal relations.

Daniel (16 years) is Illia's buddy in the Duke of Edinburgh Stand By Me program. While facing challenges due to his speech issues himself, he welcomed the opportunity to participate in the program which aims to support Ukrainian refugee children by their Czech buddies. The Ukrainian-Czech programme is a part of a broader initiative aimed at empowering youth through personal development and community engagement. Stand by Me program is a buddy program for youth between the ages of 13 and 24 that promotes building relationships with peers and integrating youth into the community. It targets any disadvantaged children, children with different mother tongue, special needs or mental health issues, minorities, etc. The intention of the program is to help them to self-actualize and integrate into the peer group through the creation of mutually supportive pairs. Mutual support was stressed by Daniel in the description of his engagement in the program.

Daniel's final message was focused on people with any kind of disadvantages encouraging them to overcome the obstacles and challenges, not being afraid of talking about them and to work on progress with the support of others.

Anastasiia highlighted her efforts to learn the Czech language, expressing her views on the education system. Anastasiia described that after coming to Czechia as a refugee she managed to finish last two grades of Ukrainian high school online in one year and after that she started to study in Czech university. She combines the studies with two part-time jobs, one of them in the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports as an operator in the helpline for Ukrainian refugees. She volunteers for the editorial office in Prague - webportal ProUkrainu.cz which helps Ukrainian refugees adapt in new country..

Anastasiia (17 years) highlighted two challenges in her message to policy makers and education actors. The first one was related to the high importance of availability of information for refugees to support them while adapting to the new conditions and learning about their host country. The second one revealed the problem of young refugees who want to participate in international student exchanges in universities as coming back they lose the temporary protection status of the original country.

In her message to peers Anastasiia also stressed the importance of learning the language of the host country, even if not needed for the studies or job, but for building the social relations in the new environment and society.

The Ukrainian refugee youth showcased remarkable command of the Czech language, confidence, and proactivity. Their participation provided a refreshing and optimistic perspective on the potential of young individuals in similar situations.

The session underscored the resilience and adaptability of these young individuals. Despite the challenges they faced, they displayed a proactive approach to their education and integration into a new culture, offering a glimpse into the significant potential these youth hold for the future.

SETTING THE SCENE

2.1 SITUATION OF UKRAINIAN REFUGEES AND THEIR EDUCATION AND LEARNING – DATA AND TRENDS - ADRIENN NYIRCSAK, POLICY OFFICER IN EUROPEAN COMMISSION (DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EDUCATION AND CULTURE DG EAC)

Inclusion of Displaced Children from Ukraine in Education – Data and Trends

Adrienn Nyírcsak

European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture



The presentation by Adrienn Nyírcsak from the European Commission Directorate-General for Education and Culture provides a detailed overview of the initiatives and challenges related to the inclusion of displaced children from Ukraine in education across the European Union. The presentation covers data collection efforts for the 2023-2024 period, focusing on enrolment metrics, policy and support measures for inclusion, and the challenges faced by displaced Ukrainian students across various educational levels. It emphasizes the EU's support to member states in the European Education Area framework, including peer learning, policy guidance, online platforms, and funding tools, aimed at ensuring continuity of education for all learners during and after the war.

Key findings highlight that over 1.3 million displaced children from Ukraine are being hosted by EU countries, with approximately 840,000 of compulsory schooling age. Over 680,000 of these children were enrolled in schools in the host country for the 2022-2023 academic year. The presentation also delves into the challenges faced by these students, such as infrastructure capacity, teacher shortages, language barriers, financial constraints, and maintaining well-being. Moreover, it outlines the support measures in place across member states, including integration/reception classes, support in the language of schooling, psycho-social support, and the provision of learning and teaching materials specifically tailored to refugee pupils.

The presentation underscores the importance of a comprehensive approach to support displaced Ukrainian children, ensuring their smooth integration into the educational systems of the host countries. This approach includes enhancing the recognition of prior learning, supporting teachers with training and materials, and addressing the specific needs of migrant and refugee children and their families. The ongoing data collection and analysis are pivotal in shaping policy guidance and facilitating peer learning activities at the European level, contributing to inter-organizational knowledge building and supporting the efforts of Ukrainian authorities and EU Member States in this critical area.

2.2 RIGHTS TO QUALITY EDUCATION AND LEARNING FOR UKRAINIAN REFUGEE CHILDREN - MAIDA PASIC, REGIONAL EDUCATION ADVISOR, UNICEF EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA REGIONAL OFFICE ECARO)

Inclusive Education and Learning – UNICEF perspective

Maida Pasic

Regional Education Advisor
UNICEF Europe and Central Asia Regional Office



Maida Pasic's presentation on behalf of UNICEF Europe and Central Asia Regional Office provides a comprehensive overview of the inclusive education landscape from UNICEF's perspective, underscoring the principle that inclusive education should cater to all students, regardless of their abilities or requirements. The presentation highlights the critical need for educational systems to adapt their culture, policies, and practices to meet the diverse needs of students. It points out significant challenges to achieving inclusive education, including the segregation of education and barriers such as lack of data, stigma, discrimination, unprepared teachers, linguistic and cultural obstacles, resource constraints, and the absence of effective collaboration between special and regular schools.

Pasic identifies key populations facing substantial challenges in accessing inclusive education: children with disabilities, Roma children, refugee and migrant children, and those from low socio-economic backgrounds. These groups encounter unique barriers

that hinder their full participation in education systems, emphasizing the importance of targeted interventions to address their specific needs.

To combat these issues, UNICEF's contribution to inclusive education reforms is structured around several focal areas: national legislation and policies, financing, data systems, teacher professional development, whole-school approaches, community-based services, and fostering social and behavioral change at the community level. The key advocacy messages include the need for a comprehensive approach that includes policy and legislation reforms, teacher education, the adoption of whole-school approaches, the transformation of specialist schools, the enhancement of accessibility and assistive technology, and the improvement of data monitoring and evaluation. This holistic strategy aims to ensure that education systems are inclusive and equipped to support the learning and development of every child, paving the way forward for more equitable and inclusive educational opportunities across Europe and Central Asia.

2.3 SITUATIONS AND PROSPECTS OF EDUCATION AND LEARNING OF THE UKRAINIAN CHILDREN – IHOR KHVOROSTIANYI, GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF SCHOOL EDUCATION, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF UKRAINE (VIDEO MESSAGE)

Video message **Situations and Prospects of Education and Learning of the Ukrainian Children**

Ihor Khvorostianyi

General Director of the Directorate of School
Education
Ministry of Education and Science
Ukraine



In the video message titled "Situations and Prospects of Education and Learning of the Ukrainian Children," Khvorostianyi Ihor, General Director of the School Education Directorate Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine, provides a poignant overview of the state of Ukrainian education amidst the ongoing war. He highlights the resilience and adaptability of the educational system during nearly two years of conflict, emphasizing the significant challenges it faces, including damage to nearly 4,000 educational institutions and the shift of 1.9 million children to remote or hybrid learning environments.

Khvorostianyι acknowledges the profound impact of the war on all Ukrainian children, particularly those in border areas who are subjected to frequent assaults and security challenges. He describes how education continues under dire circumstances, sometimes in shelters or underground facilities, to ensure children’s safety and educational progress. To address the digital divide and support online learning, the Ministry, in collaboration with First Lady Olena Zelenska’s Foundation and the Ministry of Digital Transformation, initiated the Devices Coalition. This project aims to provide children and teachers with over 120,000 necessary gadgets for online learning, with 50,000 already pledged by partners.

Khvorostianyι also discusses the international Ukrainian school program, which offers accredited Ukrainian education through distance learning to over 900,000 children, allowing them to stay connected to their homeland and culture. Efforts to reintegrate returning students and adapt foreign grades to the Ukrainian educational system are underway to ensure no child is left behind.

He expresses gratitude to host country governments and international partners for their support and underscores the universal value of education. Khvorostianyι calls for continued collaboration to support the education of Ukrainian children in alignment with Ukrainian standards, highlighting initiatives like the Devices Coalition.

In closing, Khvorostianyι thanks all partners for their contributions to the educational advancement of Ukraine, emphasizing the collective effort to not only rebuild but enrich educational spaces, allowing children to learn, grow, and envision a future where every child has the opportunity to learn, regardless of their circumstances.

2.4 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE HOSTING COUNTRIES - KLÁRA ŠIMÁČKOVÁ LAURENČÍKOVÁ, HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONER, CZECHIA

Challenges and Opportunities in Inclusion of Ukrainian Children in Education

**Klára Šimáčková
Laurenčíková**

Human Rights Commissioner
Czechia



The presentation by Klára Šimáčková Laurenčíková, the Human Rights Commissioner of Czechia, addresses the challenges and opportunities arising from the inclusion of Ukrainian children into the Czech education system. She provides basic data on the Ukrainian refugee situation, noting that Czechia has taken in 380,000 refugees, including 97,000 children across various age groups, with a significant number in emergency accommodation or receiving humanitarian benefits. The education distribution is also outlined, showing that many of these children have been integrated into the Czech elementary, preschool, and secondary education systems.

Šimáčková Laurenčíková discusses Lex Ukraine, legislation that initially provided emergency help and later amendments aimed at integration, including compulsory school attendance and educational benefits. The current focus is on supporting refugees' independence and integration, with a forthcoming challenge regarding their future residence status in Czechia. She uses the term magnifying glass to describe how the presence of Ukrainian refugees has highlighted existing deficiencies in Czech social systems, suggesting that efforts to assist refugees can also lead to overall system improvements.

The presentation identifies four pillars crucial for the effective inclusion of Ukrainian children in education: socio-economic security of families, language support for children, psychosocial support, and support of schools. It emphasizes the need for comprehensive support, including moving families to standard housing, ensuring safe employment, assessing children's needs and language skills, and providing individual support and assistance, as well as psychosocial support for the children.

Finally, Šimáčková Laurenčíková outlines the successful measures already in place: over 70% of Ukrainian children have been included in Czech schools, language support has been established, Ukrainian teaching assistants have been employed, and the number of Ukrainian classes is on the rise. Mobile support teams are providing targeted aid to schools with high numbers of Ukrainian children, and psychosocial support services have been initiated. This holistic approach demonstrates Czechia's commitment to integrating Ukrainian refugee children into its educational system and society at large.

THEME II:

INCLUSION OF UKRAINIAN REFUGEE CHILDREN IN HOST COUNTRIES

3.1 PANEL 1 - LANGUAGE ACQUISITION FOR LEARNING MODERATED BY ANDREA NALETTO, EDUCATION SPECIALIST UNICEF ECARO

Moderator: Andrea Naletto, UNICEF ECARO

Czechia: Halka Smolová Závorová, National Pedagogical Institute (NPI)

Poland: Kamila Dembińska, SOK Foundation

Switzerland: Judith Hollenweger Haskell, Zürich University of Teacher Education

Czechia/Ukraine: Discussant - Oksana Demchenko, Ukrainian Teacher, Teaching Assistant in Primary School Prague

Language Acquisition for Learning



MODERATOR

Andrea Naletto, UNICEF



Halka Smolová Závorová
Main guarantor of support
for teachers working with
foreign children/pupils
National Pedagogical
Institute
Czechia



Kamila Dembińska
Language Program Director
SOK Foundation
Poland



Judith Hollenweger Haskell
Professor for Diversity and
Education, Zürich
University of Teacher
Education
Switzerland

DISCUSSANT



Oksana Demchenko
Ukrainian Teacher, Teaching
Assistant in Primary School
Prague 9



The session on Language Acquisition for Learning, moderated by Andrea Naletto from UNICEF's Europe and Central Asia Regional Office, showcased an in-depth discussion on the vital role of language in integrating Ukrainian refugee children into host countries' educational systems. Highlighting the overarching theme of inclusive education, Naletto set the stage for a conversation enriched by experiences, challenges, and innovative solutions from various perspectives.

Halka Smolová Závorová, representing the Czech Republic's National Pedagogical Institute (NPI), elucidated the comprehensive measures undertaken to facilitate Czech language learning among Ukrainian refugees. Following the onset of the Ukrainian crisis, the NPI swiftly mobilized resources to support pedagogical staff and develop integration strategies. Závorová detailed the dual approach of providing immediate interpreting services and financial support for integration coordinators, followed by a focus on capacity building for teachers in Czech as a second language. This multi-faceted initiative underscored the flexibility and dedication of Czech educators in adapting to the challenges posed by a sudden influx of refugee children, transitioning from basic language learning to a more nuanced development of academic language skills essential for full integration into the educational system.

From Poland, Kamila Dembińska of the SOK Foundation shared the foundation's proactive approach to addressing the dual needs of Ukrainian refugee children: language acquisition and emotional support. The SOK Foundation's strategy centered on empowering Polish teachers through intensive online courses, which equipped over 3,500 educators with the skills to teach Polish as a second language and provide emotional support. Dembińska highlighted the project's scale and its focus on practical training, illustrating the significant impact of enhancing teacher competencies on the integration of refugee children into the Polish educational system.

Oksana Demchenko, a Ukrainian teaching assistant in a primary school in Prague, shared poignant reflections on her firsthand experience assisting Ukrainian refugee children in Czechia. Demchenko underscored the lengthy and complex nature of adaptation, highlighting effective measures such as compulsory education and initial separation combined with gradual integration into standard classes. She pointed to the importance of ongoing language support and the presence of Ukrainian adults in schools as critical to the mental health and overall adjustment of refugee children. Demchenko's personal narrative provided a compelling testimony to the resilience of educators and students alike in facing the challenges of integration.

Judith Hollenweger Haskell from Zurich University contributed insights into Switzerland's responsive and inclusive approaches. Haskell emphasized the swift integration of refugee children into the education system, facilitated by Switzerland's decentralized structure, allowing for immediate school registration and access to language classes in German, French, or Italian. A key focus of her contribution was the distinction between individualized language instruction and the more systemic, school-based approach through the Quality in Multicultural Schools (QIMS) program. QIMS aims to reduce educational inequality by providing targeted support to schools with a significant number of non-German-speaking students, showcasing a model that has seen success and replication in other European contexts. Haskell also highlighted innovative programs like the Heritage Language and Culture program, which maintains children's connections to their native languages and cultures, and the Future Kids program, where Swiss university students mentor migrant children, aiding both language acquisition and social integration. Concluding her remarks, Haskell underlined the importance of context and relationships in motivating language learning. She noted the diversity within Swiss classrooms and the essential role of building relationships in creating a supportive learning environment for refugee children. Through these points, Haskell provided a comprehensive overview of Switzerland's multifaceted and successful strategies for refugee language education, demonstrating the impact of well-structured support and integration programs.

The session concluded with final thoughts that reaffirmed the critical importance of language in the well-being and integration of refugee children. Each panelist's contribution, from strategic initiatives to personal experiences, painted a comprehensive picture of the multifaceted efforts required to support Ukrainian refugee children. The emphasis on supporting educators, understanding diverse classroom contexts, and fostering relationships underscored a collective commitment to creating inclusive educational environments. Through the lens of language learning, the session not only addressed immediate challenges but also highlighted the broader implications for community integration and cultural understanding, embodying Chomsky's reflection on the profound significance of language as a unifier of communities and cultures, "A language is not just words. It's a culture, a tradition, a unification of a community, a whole history that creates what a community is. It's all embodied in a language."

3.2 PANEL 2: WELLBEING AND SAFE, WELCOMING SCHOOLS MODERATED BY TANJA RANKOVIC, CHIEF OF EDUCATION UNICEF SLOVAKIA

Moderator: Tanja Rankovic, Chief of Education UNICEF Slovakia

Poland: Mrs. Elżbieta Neroj, Director Inclusive Education Department, Ministry of Education

Slovakia: Matej Sapak, Ministry of Education, Research, Development and youth

Czechia: Petr Winkler, Director, National Institute for Mental Health

Hungary: Discussant - Ábel Lukács Kiss, Dorkas Ministries

Wellbeing and Safe, Welcoming Schools

Moderator: Tanja Rankovic, UNICEF

Elżbieta Neroj,
Director
Inclusive Education
Department, Ministry of
Education
Poland

Matej Sapak
Project Manager
Ministry of Education,
Research, Development
and Youth
Slovakia

Petr Winkler
Director
National Institute for
Mental Health
Czechia

Discussant: **Ábel Lukács Kiss**
Managing Director
Dorkas Ministries
Hungary

At the panel on Wellbeing and Safe, Welcoming Schools, experts from across Europe discussed the critical need for inclusive education and the integration of refugee children into the education system amidst the Ukrainian crisis. Elżbieta Neroj from Poland underscored the imperative of transitioning from traditional, medical models of education to more inclusive systems that are prepared for diversity, including neurodevelopmental

differences. This includes the development of new laws and training programs aimed at equipping educators to better handle a diverse learning environment. Matej Sapak from Slovakia brought attention to the unique challenges posed by the influx of refugees, drawing parallels to the experiences schools had with integrating Roma children. He emphasized the importance of language support, mental health considerations, and the sharing of best practices, especially through regional coordinators, as key to successful integration.

Petr Winkler from Czechia highlighted that schools have become a crucial point of contact for mental health and psychosocial support, a role that has only recently been recognized due to the pandemic. However, he noted that schools are often ill-prepared to manage mental health issues, indicating a need for evidence-based programs and approaches. In Hungary, Ábel Lukács Kiss discussed the efforts to provide basic needs and education to Roma refugees from Ukraine through initiatives like 'School to Success', which also served as a platform for counseling and life skills training.

The panelists agreed on the necessity of a whole school approach that not only supports teachers but also includes cross-sectoral cooperation to offer a comprehensive range of services from various sectors, including civil society and NGOs. This holistic approach is seen as essential in addressing the basic needs of children and providing a supportive educational environment. Teachers were recognized as agents of change who require adequate training, resources, and a belief in the possibility of change to make a significant impact.

The discussions concluded with a consensus on the critical role of schools in not just academic learning but also as pillars for the mental health and overall wellbeing of students. By supporting teachers, embracing evidence-based approaches, and fostering a collaborative environment, schools can become resilient hubs that facilitate the integration and personal growth of all students, particularly those facing the adversities of displacement and conflict.

CLOSING OF DAY 1

4.1 REVIEW OF DAY 1 MARTINA BĚŤÁKOVÁ, DEPUTY STATE SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH AND SPORTS, CZECHIA

Closing of Day 1

Martina Běťáková

Deputy State Secretary
Ministry of Education Youth and Sports
Czechia



Martina Běťáková, Deputy State Secretary at the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports of the Czech Republic (MoEYS), reflects on the success of the first day of the conference, particularly noting the impressive Czech language proficiency displayed by youth during the 'Youth Voices' session. Her remarks encapsulate the essence of resilience and the power of emotional connections, such as love and trust, in providing the courage and determination needed to face and stand up to challenges.

Běťáková acknowledges the varying levels of experience among different countries in dealing with large influxes of refugees and the associated pressures on educational systems to support both teachers and students. She credits UNICEF with providing rapid learning opportunities for Czech schools, which were initially unaccustomed to working with foreigners and implementing inclusive education. These experiences have not only equipped the Czech educational community to be more empowered and ready for new challenges but also emphasized the importance of supporting every child's education.

Looking forward, Běťáková expresses a vision for Ukraine to emerge as a rich and diverse country, emphasizing the dual role of education in both teaching children and equipping them to contribute to Ukraine's recovery. She is confident that the progress made, with the considerable support of UNICEF, is both visible and tangible within schools and communities.

THEME III:

CONTINUOUS AND FLEXIBLE LEARNING PATHWAYS IN EUROPE

5.1 EUROPEAN EDUCATION AREA - ULRIKE STOROST, UNIT ON SCHOOLS AND MULTILINGUALISM IN THE EU DG-EAC

Promoting inclusive education in the European Education Area (EEA)



Ulrike Storost

European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture



Ulrike Storost's presentation delves into the European Education Area's (EEA) initiative to promote inclusive education across member states. This initiative is geared towards ensuring quality, equity, inclusion, and gender equality within the educational systems, in addition to addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by the green and digital transitions. It emphasizes the critical role of teachers and trainers, the significance of higher education, and the importance of lifelong learning and mobility, alongside considering the geopolitical dimensions that impact education.

The presentation outlines several strategic EU-level targets to be achieved by 2030, such as increasing the participation of children aged 3 and older in early childhood education and care (ECEC) to at least 96%, reducing the percentage of low-achieving 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics, and science to less than 15%, and decreasing early leavers from education and training to less than 9%. These targets are part of a broader effort to measure progress in making education systems more inclusive, particularly for students with migrant backgrounds. The governance structure of the EEA and the Open Method of Cooperation facilitate this process through ministerial meetings, the Education Committee, and various sector-focused and issue-focused working groups.

Central to the presentation was the EU's comprehensive approach to supporting the educational biographies of migrant and refugee pupils, including those displaced from Ukraine. The presentation highlighted initiatives such as the Council Recommendation Pathways to school success and the Expert Group on promoting supportive learning environments and well-being at school. It underscores the EU's mobilization of resources to support member states in integrating displaced children into their education systems, offering policy guidance, peer learning, online platforms, and funding tools. The EU action plan on integration and inclusion for 2021-2027, with its focus on education, employment, health, and housing, aims to foster strong partnerships, enhance EU funding, encourage participation, utilize digital tools, and monitor progress to ensure the successful inclusion of all learners, demonstrating the EU's commitment to a holistic and inclusive approach to education across Europe.

5.2 COUNTRY EXPERIENCES:

5.2.1 AUSTRIA: MARKUS BENESCH, HEAD OF THE GROUP FOR GENERAL EDUCATION, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

Preparatory courses and programmes to facilitate entry to national education systems

Markus Benesch

Head of the Group for General Education,
Ministry of Education, Science and Research
Austria



The presentation by Markus Benesch focuses on Austria's efforts to integrate Ukrainian refugee children into the Austrian education system amidst the ongoing crisis. It provides a comprehensive overview of the demographic diversity in Austria, highlighting the significant presence of individuals with migration backgrounds, including a substantial number of Ukrainians. The presentation delineates the challenges and strategies employed by Austria in the wake of the Ukrainian crisis, contrasting it with the refugee crisis of 2015/16. Notably, the Ukrainian crisis has seen a majority of female migrants with children requiring immediate educational integration, unlike the primarily young male refugees from the earlier crisis.

The main points underscore Austria's proactive measures in addressing the educational needs of Ukrainian refugee children, including the adaptation of existing structures for integration within the educational system, the enactment of the Integration Law, and the implementation of various programs for labor and educational training. The presentation outlines the significant steps taken, such as compulsory school attendance, support measures for local school placement, and the adaptation of programs to cater to the Ukrainian children's needs, including language support classes and the hiring of Ukrainian teachers to leverage their experience and language skills. Furthermore, it highlights Austria's long-term objectives and challenges, such as the integration into the labor market and the educational system, managing relations between different groups of migrants, and public opinion on the war in Ukraine. The presentation concludes on a note of resilience and determination, emphasizing the necessity of succeeding in these integration efforts amidst the uncertainty of the war's duration and the settling process of Ukrainian refugees in Austria.

5.2.2 GERMANY: MOSTAPHA BOUKLLOUÂ, HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR INTEGRATION THROUGH EDUCATION, MUNICIPAL INTEGRATION CENTERS, NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA MINISTRY OF SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

Supporting educational biographies of migrant and refugee pupils in the German school system

Mostapha Bouklouâ

Head of the Department for Integration through Education, Municipal Integration Centers
North Rhine-Westphalia Ministry of Schools and Education
Germany



N.B: presented by Akihiro Fushimi, Chief of Education and ECD, UNICEF Refugee Response Office, Czechia

The presentation by Mostapha Bouklouâ at the Regional Conference on Inclusive Education and Continuous Learning for All Children focuses on the strategies and policies adopted by Germany, particularly in North Rhine-Westphalia, to support the educational integration of migrant and refugee pupils within the German school system. It emphasizes the significance of language proficiency and school education as crucial elements for the successful integration of migrant pupils into society, referencing the declaration by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs

(KMK) from October 2016. The presentation outlines the legal framework that ensures the right to education for all children living in Germany, regardless of their citizenship or legal status, and provides an overview of the demographic distribution of pupils with a migrant background, highlighting the substantial increase in numbers following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

The integration process for newly migrated pupils is described in detail, including initial steps focused on language acquisition through various organizational forms such as welcoming/international classes, semi-integrated models, and fully integrated models. The presentation also covers the subsequent steps aimed at integrating pupils into the regular school system and providing them with a school degree, alongside additional support measures to improve language skills and other competencies. A notable aspect of the integration policy in North Rhine-Westphalia is the provision of heritage language classes, which supports over 104,000 pupils in learning 30 different languages, thereby fostering multilingualism as a vehicle for learning German and other foreign languages. This approach underlines the importance of recognizing and fostering pupils' biographies, identities, and natural language skills as part of their educational journey in Germany.

5.2.3 SWITZERLAND: JUDITH HOLLENWEGER HASKELL, PROFESSOR FOR DIVERSITY AND EDUCATION, ZÜRICH UNIVERSITY OF TEACHER EDUCATION

Building learning ecosystems: Thinking across physical, digital and social learning spaces

Judith Hollenweger Haskell

Professor for Diversity and Education
Zürich University of Teacher Education
Switzerland



In her presentation at the Regional Conference on Inclusive Education, Professor Judith Hollenweger Haskell from Zürich University of Teacher Education addressed the concept of building learning ecosystems that integrate physical, digital, and social spaces. She underscored the importance of counteracting the fragmentation of learning experiences, especially for Ukrainian children and youth displaced abroad. The presentation delved into the Landscape Model of Learning, which advocates for a student-centered approach where an ecosystem includes the student's identity and context, the horizon represents their goals and aspirations, and the pathway is the chosen route towards those aspirations.

Haskell emphasized the roles of feedback, feed up, and feedforward as critical components of co-creating knowledge and guiding learning. She highlighted the need for open and distributed learning environments that go beyond traditional classrooms to include various physical, digital, and social spaces, such as museums, libraries, virtual reality environments, and community centers. To support learners in navigating these diverse spaces, she suggested the use of moderators, learning coaches, and peer counseling.

The River of Life method was introduced as a tool to help visualize and understand the learning landscape from a young person's perspective, facilitating the exploration of expectations, fears, and hopes. This method can help identify challenges and opportunities, forming the basis for developing personalized learning plans and goals. Professor Haskell concluded by offering examples of mentorship programs and resources, like the NADIYA app, designed to aid families in addressing trauma and enhancing life skills.

THEME IV: THE ROAD TO INCLUSION – NEXT STEPS

6.1 PANEL DISCUSSION: COOPERATION BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND UKRAINE MODERATED BY MAIDA PASIC, REGIONAL EDUCATION ADVISOR, UNICEF ECARO

Moderator: Maida Pasic, Regional Adviser Education, UNICEF ECARO

Czechia: Martina Běťáková, Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

Poland: Marcin Miedziński, Deputy Director of Education, City of Wroclaw.

Slovakia: Alžbeta Štofková Dianovská, Chief School Inspector, State School Inspection.

Moldova: Daniela Tîrsîñă, Chief Adviser, Department for General Education and Lifelong Learning Policies, Ministry of Education and Research.

Ukraine: Roman Shyyan.

Cooperation between the European Countries and Ukraine



MODERATOR

Maida Pasic, UNICEF



Martina Běťáková
Deputy State Secretary
Ministry of Education,
Youth and Sports
Czechia



Roman Shyyan
Deputy Director of the
Reform and Recovery
Support Team
Ministry of Education and
Science
Ukraine



Marcin Miedziński
Deputy Director of
Education
City of Wroclaw
Poland



Alžbeta Štofková Dianovská
Chief School Inspector
State School Inspection
Slovakia



Daniela Tîrsîñă
Chief Adviser
Department for General
Education and Lifelong
Learning Policies - Ministry of
Education and Research
Moldova



The panel discussion moderated by Maida Pasic at UNICEF ECARO centered on the critical issue of supporting Ukrainian children abroad while preparing them for their eventual return home. This session brought together experts from Czechia, Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia, and Moldova, each sharing unique insights and strategies from their respective countries on integrating Ukrainian children into their educational systems amidst the challenges posed by the ongoing conflict.

Martina Běťáková from Czechia highlighted the need for improved language preparation and a stronger support system for schools, including mental health services for teachers and families, to address teacher burnout post-COVID. She also emphasized the importance of supporting Ukrainian children's patriotism and national identity. Alžbeta Štofková Dianovská from Slovakia noted the initial motivation of Ukrainian children and the subsequent need to adapt educational approaches for refugees, emphasizing inclusion and learning from other countries' experiences.

Marcin Miedziński of Poland detailed the stages of response, from emergency aid to focusing on special needs and talents, demonstrating a dynamic approach to providing quality education and integration. Daniela Tîrsîna from Moldova shared the challenges of integrating refugees into the education system, including language barriers and the need for psychological support, underscoring the importance of international collaboration and support from organizations like UNICEF.

The session underlined the diversity of challenges faced by different countries but also their common determination to provide inclusive and quality education for Ukrainian children. It highlighted the necessity of adapting educational strategies to meet the evolving needs of refugee children, including language preparation, entrance exams, school leadership support, and a focus on children with special needs. Roman Shyyan from Ukraine reflected on these discussions, emphasizing the adaptation of the Ukrainian curriculum to EU concepts and the importance of preparing children for their return by ensuring the recognition of learning outcomes and attention to transitional education stages.

This session illustrated the complexities of providing education to refugee children but also the collaborative efforts and shared commitment across European countries to support Ukraine. The insights shared by the panelists underscore the importance of flexibility, adaptation, and international cooperation in addressing the educational needs of children affected by conflict.

6.2 KEY INSIGHTS; REGINA DE DOMINICIS, REGIONAL DIRECTOR, UNICEF EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA REGIONAL OFFICE (ECARO)

Key insights

Regina De Dominicis

Director

UNICEF Europe and Central Asia Regional Office



Regina De Dominicis, UNICEF Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, closed the Regional Conference on Inclusive Education with remarks that emphasized the collective commitment to the education and well-being of Ukrainian children displaced by war. Despite the third year of displacement, a significant number of these children remain outside the national education systems of host countries, missing critical opportunities for learning and community integration. De Dominicis pointed out that these children are central to the future recovery of Ukraine, necessitating continued investment in their education.

Reflecting on the conference, De Dominicis highlighted the insightful discussions and shared experiences aimed at enhancing education for Ukrainian refugee children and other vulnerable groups. She commended the Czech government for integrating nearly 50,000 Ukrainian children into their education system and employing refugee teachers as teaching assistants, which has led to over 2,000 new assistants in Czech schools. Lessons from various countries, including Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Poland, and Slovakia, showcased the importance of maintaining children's linguistic and cultural heritage and prioritizing well-being in schools, which is essential for effective learning.

Looking ahead, De Dominicis urged the continued pursuit of inclusive education for all children, including those with disabilities and from marginalized backgrounds. UNICEF stands ready to support the building of inclusive and resilient education systems. She stressed the need for innovative solutions for adolescents and youth, citing the Cesty Initiative in Czechia as an example combining skills development with employment to support young people's potential and future contributions to the economy. In her closing words, De Dominicis expressed gratitude to the conference organizers and participants, calling for ongoing collaboration to create education systems that leave no child behind.

6.3 CLOSING; MIKULÁŠ BEK, MINISTER OF EDUCATION, YOUTH AND SPORTS, CZECHIA (MOEYS)

Closing remarks

Mikuláš Bek

Minister of Education, Youth and Sports
Czechia



In his closing remarks at the Regional Conference on Inclusive Education and Continuous Learning for All Children, Mikuláš Bek, the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, extended heartfelt thanks to all participants and outlined the Czech Republic's contributions to supporting Ukrainian refugees. He highlighted the approaching two-year mark since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which led to significant displacement and the Czech Republic's swift response in providing refugees with access to education. The ministry's collaborative efforts with UNICEF resulted in comprehensive teacher capacity building and the implementation of support systems like a dedicated website, helpline, and legislation to facilitate the inclusion of approximately 50,000 children into schools.

Minister Bek commended the collective effort in achieving this and acknowledged the challenges that remain, such as capacity issues and language barriers. He outlined future initiatives aimed at improving foreign pupils' language skills through universal testing and enhanced teacher training. The conference served as a platform to share knowledge and experiences, with Minister Bek emphasizing the importance of inclusive education for children and the cooperation between Ukraine and European countries. He expressed gratitude for the ongoing support from UNICEF and the commitment to work towards common goals, like enhancing mental health support and social network management. In closing, Minister Bek reflected on the profound changes in the world, particularly for those displaced by the conflict, and praised the spirit of solidarity and the critical sharing of expertise, signifying an enduring dedication to supporting those in need.

