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**Country Report**  
**HUNGARY**

**MHPSS Services for Refugees from Ukraine**

August 2024

# Country Report: HUNGARY

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# 1: Background

## 1.1. Introduction

Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, more than **14.33 million Ukrainian refugees have crossed borders** in search of a safer environment.<sup>1</sup> Europe is currently hosting nearly 6 million refugees, with women and children comprising 88% of this population<sup>2</sup>, and 5 million individuals have sought refuge through national protection schemes<sup>3</sup>.

The **family separation rate stands at 70%**, subjecting children to heightened risks such as sexual violence, trafficking, exploitation, abuse and gender-based violence.<sup>4</sup>

As the data shows<sup>5</sup>, **children's physical and mental health, as well as their education<sup>6</sup>, are at risk both within Ukraine and in refugee-hosting countries.** The increased risks for children put pressure on the already scarce mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS) in both Ukraine and neighbouring countries. Child helplines and their partners are playing a crucial role in national child protection systems and the response on a regional level. They are providing psychosocial support services, guidance and accurate information to Ukrainian families and children and local children concerned about the war in Ukraine.

**Child Helpline International** is the global network of child helplines, with more than 150 child helpline members in more than 130 countries and territories around the world, including 49 members from 41 countries in the European Region, with 29 of these currently using the European harmonized toll-free number for child helplines: 116 111. Throughout the war in Ukraine, with the support of Child Helpline International and others, child helplines have been expanding their services to better support children and young people, and their families and caregivers, who have been affected by the war.

1. World Vision (2023). Child Protection Multisectoral Needs Assessment - Ukraine 2023, p.1, accessed on 22 April 2024 at [Child Protection Multisectoral Needs Assessment - Ukraine 2023 - Ukraine I ReliefWeb](#)
2. For overall refugee numbers: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Operational data portal, Ukraine refugee situation, available at <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>. The 88% women and children figure is broken down as follows: 52% women, 18% girls, 18% boys. Source: UNHCR, Displacement patterns, protection risks and needs of refugees from Ukraine: Regional protection analysis #2 – Hungary, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania and Slovakia, April 2023, available at <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/100191> as cited in UNICEF (2024). Ukraine and Refugee Response, p.1
3. There is a continued lack of reliable data on subsets of the child refugee population from Ukraine. Monthly statistics can be accessed at: Temporary protection for persons fleeing Ukraine - monthly statistics, Eurostat, as cited in UNICEF (2024). Ukraine and Refugee Response, p.1.
4. Specific needs include disabilities or serious medical conditions. Source: UNHCR, Displacement patterns, protection risks and needs of refugees from Ukraine: Regional protection analysis #2 as cited in UNICEF (2024). Ukraine and Refugee Response, p.4.
5. Kaufman KR, Bhui K, Katona C. Mental health responses in countries hosting refugees from Ukraine. *BJPsych Open*. 2022;8(3):e87. doi:10.1192/bjo.2022.55, p.1
6. Education Cannot Wait (2024). Multi-Year Resilience Programme (MYRP) 2024-2026, pp.3-5

In Hungary, the Child Helpline International's member is **Kék Vonal**<sup>7</sup> (Blue Line). Since 1993, the organization has been dedicated to listening to children under 24 years of age, and providing assistance when they are in trouble. It offers free, anonymous 24/7 child helpline services for those needing to talk or seek help in Hungarian. It also supports adults, namely parents and professionals, in their efforts to help children. Despite numerous changes and expansions over the years, the core mission remains unchanged: ensuring that every child receives genuine attention, acceptance, and support from all Blue Line staff and volunteers during difficult times. Kék Vonal addresses mental health, safety and crisis situations, and offers educational materials, training and advocacy to foster a safer environment for children. Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, Kék Vonal expanded its services by establishing a child helpline in Ukrainian and Russian. These services are provided from Tuesday to Thursday from 16.00 to 20.00 through a phone line, email or chat. These efforts were supported by UNICEF, as well as Terre des Hommes Netherlands, and Børns Vilkår, Child Helpline International's member in Denmark.

The current project is called **Children's Voices Ukraine**, and is being implemented by Child Helpline International and its members in Ukraine, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Romania, supported by Terre des Hommes Netherlands. The project aims to understand and support Ukrainian children and young people who have fled to European countries as a result of the war in Ukraine.

The objectives of the project are:

1. To increase access to and use of child helpline services by children and young people (and their parents and/or caregivers) affected by the war in Ukraine.
2. To maintain and expand the capacity of child helplines to ensure quality services to children and young people in need of care and protection, with a particular focus on children and young people affected by the war in Ukraine.
3. To ensure the inclusion and amplification of children's voices and generate evidence to influence policymaking through reliable collection, analysis and sharing of national and regional data.
4. To increase coordination between regional and national actors and emphasize the role of child helplines in Ukraine and surrounding countries.

Child Helpline International conducted a mapping exercise in each country with a participating child helpline member, to generate a report to help achieve the first of the project's objective and better understand the realities of Ukrainian refugees and the needs of children and young people.

7. The website of Kék Vonal can be accessed here: [Home - For children - Kék Vonal | Gyermekkrízis Alapítvány \(kek-vonal.hu\)](https://www.kek-vonal.hu/)

Despite the availability of services in Ukrainian at child helplines in refugee-hosting countries, the data gathered by Child Helpline International indicates that Ukrainian children and young people currently residing in these countries tend not to be contacting the national child helplines. The purpose of this report is to understand the reasons for this. Specifically, the focus is to learn what **barriers exist that are preventing Ukrainian refugees from accessing local support services, especially child helpline services**. The report seeks to **identify the factors influencing engagement** with child helplines abroad by directly asking national stakeholders and young Ukrainian refugees about their needs, knowledge and experience. These factors include accessibility, awareness, stigma, the need for support and psychological readiness to accept help from the user's perspective, and the services available to offer this help from the stakeholders' perspective.

This exercise will also result in the creation of a **sub-regional service map to identify the range of services available to young refugees from Ukraine**. This map will reference the services provided by governmental and non-governmental organizations and their partners, while also examining the gap between service availability and the actual needs of refugee children. This process was achieved through the use of various methodologies, including surveys with children, in-depth interviews with relevant organizations across the project countries and secondary data analysis.

Ultimately, the report offers **recommendations for enhancing the accessibility and effectiveness of child helplines** in the four countries bordering Ukraine. Additionally, the results of this exercise will be shared with participating countries, serving as a basis for future updates and improvements to the support infrastructure for children and young people affected by the war in Ukraine.

## 1.2. Methodology

The methodology applied was **qualitative with some quantitative aspects**. The information for the report was gathered through different means, including desk research, interviews with various institutions and organizations, and information collected through surveys with young people.

The information collected from each of these groups of actors focused on the following:

- Primary data:
  - **Interviews with stakeholders** from the different sectors of refugee response in the country (multilateral agencies and civil society) to obtain information about existing services and experiences with Ukrainian refugees.
  - **Surveys for children and young people** to obtain information about their knowledge of the services offered by child helplines and their choices regarding looking for support.
- Secondary data:
  - Information on the supply and demand of child protection services, including existing helplines and hotlines in the country, analysis of demographics, and the context for refugee families/children.

There were some **limitations experienced during the development of the report:**

- **Time limitation:** The interviews and data analysis were conducted within just a short time frame. As the report informs subsequent activities of a project lasting for just one year, these had to be completed during the initial phase of the project. This put pressure on completing interviews, surveys and consultations on time and limited the number of answers that the team could collect.
- **Reduced number of inputs:** Despite several invitations for the online interviews with stakeholders, securing timeslots due to the busy schedules of different actors was difficult. Additionally, some organizations no longer support refugees, so their participation was no longer relevant.
- **Involvement of children:** When the mapping exercise was designed, the aim was to involve children in an in-person consultation. This was optional depending on the capacity of member child helplines. The Ukrainian child helpline was the only member who could take this activity forward, so the statements of children collected during in-person activities are from Ukrainian children in Ukraine. The views of refugee children were collected through an online survey.
- **Number of survey respondents:** The online surveys were released over a number of online channels. Participation in the survey was on a voluntary basis, and the number of surveys collected was small and not representative of the whole young Ukrainian refugee population. We were only able to identify six relevant Facebook groups in which to share the survey (compared to 13-19 in other countries) and most likely explains the low uptake. In addition, although only 15 young people completed the survey, 42 started it. This dropout rate also impacted the overall response rate reported here. In future, we might consider a shorter survey, or a short survey with optional questions to answer, in order to ensure a higher rate of completion.
- **Incomplete surveys:** Not all the questions in the survey were answered by every child or young people, but we decided to analyse all answers that were given, even though some respondents completed the full survey. The number of respondents who answered will differ for each question, and this will therefore be mentioned.

The following approaches were applied to collect **primary data:**

- Online surveys were conducted with 10 children, aged 13 to 29. Despite posting the survey on 18 Facebook groups and one Telegram group, uptake was low.
- Three stakeholders from different sectors relating to refugee response participated in either an online interview or written questionnaire.

Including children and adults, a total of 13 stakeholders provided their feedback through this approach.

Approach used	Age range	Total respondents
Online survey	13 years and above	10
Stakeholder interview	Adults	3

As part of the **secondary data** collection, several child protection-related documents and publications, child helpline initiatives and general information in Hungary were used. The secondary data was gathered from government, demographics and NGO websites, research documents from national and international organizations and publications, as well as reports from Child Helpline International.

### 1.3. Context analysis

#### The context in which children live

In the two and a half years since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, close to 6 million refugees from Ukraine have been recorded across Europe. Since 24 February 2022<sup>8</sup>, the number of border crossings from Ukraine into Hungary reached 5,001,818 refugees from Ukraine. While there are 60,620<sup>9</sup> Ukrainian refugees recorded in Hungary, 44,627<sup>10</sup> are registered for Temporary Protection (TP), the validity of which was extended by law until 4 March 2025, and 42% of TP holders are children<sup>11</sup>. Most TP holders from Ukraine are women and children<sup>12</sup>, but the percentage of men is steadily increasing<sup>13</sup>. 36% of households include children, and close to 6% of these are headed by elderly refugees aged 60 and above, 4% by refugees under 25 years old, and 9% by a household head with a disability<sup>14</sup>. It is important to note that, according to information provided by the interviewed stakeholders, there are refugees with dual nationalities, and from a Roma background, which further complicates their situation and may hinder access to services.

Predictably, households with individuals with disabilities depend much more on social protection benefits. It should also be noted that refugees with disabilities in Hungary do not receive government disability grants, unlike Hungarian citizens<sup>15</sup>. Many job opportunities accessible to refugees are challenging, characterized by long shifts, physically strenuous tasks and limited scheduling flexibility. Single mothers of children with disabilities also express challenges to finding jobs, given that they only have care facilities for their children during the morning<sup>16</sup>.

Based on the **protection monitoring** and profiling data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), more than a third of TP holders have requirements, such as those with disabilities or serious medical conditions<sup>17</sup>.

8. UNHCR, Operational Data Portal, Ukraine Refugee Situation in Hungary (last updated 25 June 2024) accessed at <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine/location/10783>
9. UNHCR, Operational Data Portal, Ukraine Refugee Situation in Hungary (last updated 31 May 2024), accessed at [Situation Ukraine Refugee Situation \(unhcr.org\)](https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine/location/10783)
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. UNCHR Hungary – Social Protection Brief – February 2024: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/107231>, p.1
14. Hungary: Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (December 2023) <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/105324>, p.17
15. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/105324>; Hungary: Multi Sector Needs Assessment (December 2023), p.17
16. Ibid. p.17
17. UNCHR Hungary Protection Brief Ukraine Response; <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/107231>, p.1

In regards to **education**, according to an informative UNHCR leaflet<sup>18</sup> about school enrolment of refugees, children who have temporary protection status have a right to attend kindergarten and school, like Hungarian children. In Hungary, education is compulsory between the ages of 3 and 16 years old. Compulsory education can be provided by schools, except those schools that are unregistered, community-led schools or fully online schools. It is possible to follow the Ukrainian curriculum in Hungary, and various distance learning forms are offered by the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science. Relevant statistics concerning children from Ukraine in the Hungarian education system follow:

- 79%, or close to four out of five school-aged children from Ukraine, were enrolled in school in Hungary during the 2022/23 school year, starting from 1 September 2022. Of these, 30% were also following the Ukrainian curriculum online<sup>19</sup>.
- Enrolment rates are higher in primary schools (84%) compared to secondary schools (79%)<sup>20</sup>.
- The remaining children were not enrolled in Hungarian schools, with 14% exclusively following the Ukrainian curriculum online and a 7% being out of school<sup>21</sup>.
- Other than being enrolled in an online class, the language barrier is the main reason for not attending a local school<sup>22</sup>.
- 79% of parents intended to enrol their children in Hungarian schools for the 2023/24 academic year.
- 13% of young people aged 16-24 are categorized as NEET (neither employed nor in education or training)<sup>23</sup>
- Studies have revealed benefits from continuing to follow parts of the Ukrainian curriculum for subjects that are not taught in the host country, such as Ukrainian language, history and culture, as they maintain linkages with the linguistic and cultural aspects of the country of origin<sup>24</sup>.

UNICEF implemented educational initiatives to support children from marginalized and refugee backgrounds in collaboration with seven civil society partners and four municipalities (Budapest, Debrecen, Győr and Záhony). UNICEF's Play and Learning Hub conducted play-based activities involving 85 children and recreational activities such as ice-skating, which engaged 95 children. All activities promoted physical activity and social integration<sup>25</sup>.

18. UNHCR (2024). Hungary: Back to School Campaign leaflet. April 2024. Accessed at <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/107787>

19. Hungary: Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (December 2023) <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/105324>, p.6

20. Ibid. p.6

21. Ibid. p.6

22. Ibid. p.6

23. Ibid. p.6

24. Hungary: Information material on school enrolment for parents 2023/2024: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/107791>, p.5

25. Ukraine Refugee Response in Neighbouring Countries: <https://www.unicef.org/media/154866/file/ECARO-Humanitarian-SitRep-Ukraine-Refugee-Response-26-February-2024.pdf>, p.6

In addition to this, there are other initiatives, such as:

- Through mobile outreach, Dorcas Ministries, an International NGO, connected with 167 children by customizing educational strategies for newly arrived refugees<sup>26</sup>.
- 21 new children were enrolled in after-school programmes at The Piarista Gymnasium, a secondary school, where language and parenting support were offered to 93 adults<sup>27</sup>.
- The Hungarian Reformed Church Aid crafted an education toolkit to cultivate dynamic learning among underprivileged and young primary school children who are refugees<sup>28</sup>.
- Following its expansion to 10 more schools, Calm School delivered MHPSS and stress-management training, benefiting 90 children and six school personnel through 26 sessions<sup>29</sup>.

UNICEF and Kék Vonal have backed the national “Talk About It / Beszélj róla” campaign to encourage children to seek help for bullying, suicidal thoughts, school challenges and other issues. The campaign features a dedicated webpage addressing cyberbullying and other risks, along with a bilingual helpline for refugees. It aims to empower children. Engagement on social media regarding Kék Vonal's 30th anniversary and volunteer recruitment has been substantial, particularly on TikTok and Facebook. Kék Vonal has also supported Balint House's refugee programme<sup>30</sup>, promoted a fundraising event and raised awareness about available child support hotlines<sup>31</sup>.

26. Ibid. p.6

27. Ibid. p.6

28. Ibid. p.6

29. Ibid. p.6

30. This organization supports the Jewish Community in Hungary but has also programmes for refugees.

31. Ukraine Refugee Response in Neighbouring Countries: <https://www.unicef.org/media/154866/file/ECARO-Humanitarian-SitRep-Ukraine-Refugee-Response-26-February-2024.pdf>, p.8

Health care services resumed at the Dorkász accommodation centre, offering primary and paediatric care to refugees through a mobile medical unit staffed by multilingual professionals<sup>33</sup>:

- 16 children received vaccinations, including Pentasim, with seven children receiving these shots for the first time (January 2024)<sup>34</sup>.
- UNICEF distributed 300 baby boxes, each containing 25 essential items, to refugee families and local communities, aiming to empower new parents with additional educational material on childcare<sup>35</sup>.
- Primary health care was provided to 168 women and children, while 21 received secondary or tertiary treatment from the Debrecen Health Promotion Centre<sup>36</sup> and multi-sectoral mobile units<sup>37</sup>.
- In Debrecen and Budapest, 116 children and caregivers participated in counselling sessions<sup>38</sup>.
- A network of visiting nurses and midwives, crucial for early intervention, is offering essential prenatal and child development care<sup>39</sup>.
- UNICEF works with Debrecen Basic Care and Health Development Institute (DAEFI) in Debrecen/ Hajdu County to enhance services through early childhood development (ECD) training and the sharing of best practices, significantly benefiting refugee children in Hajdú-Bihar County<sup>40</sup>.

Regarding **child protection services**<sup>41</sup>: the three most frequently mentioned risks for both genders included psychological and physical violence, along with an increased vulnerability to violence online. 682 refugees participated in the survey carried out by Multi-Sector Needs Assessment with a topic on awareness of services to report violence against children. Primarily, the services identified were the police (86%), government child protection departments (21%), helplines (17%), and child protection NGOs (7%). Additionally, 7% of respondents indicated that they were unaware of any such services.

32. More information about Dorkász can be accessed at [dorkasz.hu](http://dorkasz.hu)  
 33. Ukraine Refugee Response in Neighbouring Countries: <https://www.unicef.org/media/154866/file/ECARO-Humanitarian-SitRep-Ukraine-Refugee-Response-26-February-2024.pdf>, p.4  
 34. Ibid. p.4  
 35. Ibid. p.4  
 36. More information about the Debrecen Health Promotion Centre can be accessed at [The Move. Debrecen! movement's health promotion center is open \(debrecensun.hu\)](http://The Move. Debrecen! movement's health promotion center is open (debrecensun.hu))  
 37. Ukraine Refugee Response in Neighbouring Countries: <https://www.unicef.org/media/154866/file/ECARO-Humanitarian-SitRep-Ukraine-Refugee-Response-26-February-2024.pdf>, p.4  
 38. Ibid. p.4  
 39. Ibid. p.4  
 40. Ibid. p.4  
 41. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/105324>; Hungary: Multi Sector Needs Assessment (December 2023), p.17

In 2024, UNICEF<sup>42</sup> is enhancing the sustainability of its child protection programmes by focusing on knowledge sharing and capacity building for partner organizations. An extensive parenting curriculum, developed with the Hungarian Reformed Church Aid, is being implemented to empower parents, including refugees and ethnic minorities, with effective parenting techniques.

- 1,920 children and caregivers received MHPSS support.
- A total of 4,014 individuals, including 2,093 refugees and 708 children, were educated on reporting sexual abuse and exploitation<sup>43</sup>.
- Child-friendly spaces and hubs provided safe and secure environments for 2,406 refugees.
- Kék Vonal and the Hungarian Reformed Church Aid reached 808 people with GBV prevention programmes.
- Case management services assisted 60 children<sup>44</sup>.

#### Information about the support system<sup>45</sup>

Based on the data collected primarily online, we identified 39 services available for refugees from Ukraine in Hungary. Of these, 20 are dedicated to MHPSS, 6 address medical issues, 6 assist families with housing or humanitarian aid, 8 offer legal assistance, and 10 focus on supporting and adapting to the educational system in Hungary. Notably, one-quarter of these organizations are dedicated to helping children adapt to schools. There is also a significant number of organizations providing support for children with developmental and psychological needs in educational institutions to ensure their successful adaptation.

Out of all the services, 26 are targeted at adults, while 23 are aimed at children. This nearly equal distribution of services between children and their parents indicates a family-oriented approach to refugee assistance in Hungary. The emphasis on both children's and parents' needs highlights the comprehensive support system in place to facilitate the integration and well-being of Ukrainian refugee families.

There are certainly other services on the ground that may not be mentioned online and are not included in this report.

42. Ukraine Refugee Response in Neighbouring Countries: <https://www.unicef.org/media/154866/file/ECARO-Humanitarian-SitRep-Ukraine-Refugee-Response-26-February-2024.pdf>, p.3  
 43. Ibid. p.3  
 44. Ibid. p.3  
 45. In this report we consider support services, all services related to the protection of the rights of the child, more specifically Mental Health and Psychosocial Support, and other that support refugees, such as housing.

## 2: Analysis of primary data

### 2.1. Experiences of young people from Ukraine residing in Hungary and their awareness of child helplines: Results from an online survey

#### Demographics of respondents

We received only five responses to the survey from Ukrainian children and young people residing in Hungary. All five (100%) of them were girls. The **average age of respondents was 19.8 years** (range: 15-29).

#### Awareness of child helplines and their services

Out of seven respondents who filled out the awareness questions, four (57%) had heard of the local child helpline that provides counselling in Ukrainian. Out of these, three of them (75%) learnt about it through social media and one (25%) through friends, two knew it offered a space where children can discuss their problems with a professional and that it offered support for children from Ukraine, and one knew that it was a place where they could report abuse.

#### Help-seeking behaviour

Of the four respondents mentioned above who had heard of the local child helpline, none had ever attempted to contact it. When asked why not, three respondents (75%) indicated that they simply did not need it and one (25%) said that they didn't know that they could contact the child helpline to address their problems. We also asked about children and young people's help-seeking behaviour outside of child helplines. When in need of help, all four respondents (100%) said that they turned to a family member, three (75%) that they also might turn to a friend, two (50%) that they might try to research their issue online, and only one (25%) said that they might consider using the child helpline.

#### Future outlook: Reaching Ukrainian refugees and supporting them

We asked a series of questions to understand better how to reach and support children and young people from Ukraine who were residing in Hungary. When asked whether they thought they would contact the local child helpline in the future, should they need it, all six respondents to this question (100%) gave a positive answer. As a follow-up question, we asked what sort of help they thought they might need in the future. Their responses varied, with the most common ones indicating **potential help with mental health** (3 out of 6, or 50%) and issues with friends (3, or 50%). Other possible answers were each selected by only one out of the six respondents (representing 17% for each answer): help with homework, issues with parents, issues at school, bullying and concerns about physical health.

Participants were asked for their suggestions about what should be done to ensure that children know how to contact the child helpline. Four respondents answered this question. Their suggestions were: "dissemination of information", "advertising", "calling" and more specifically, "giving information in schools". Interestingly, respondents did not indicate that the online space would be a good way to spread awareness about the local child helpline, although all seven respondents to this question (100%) indicated that they communicated with other Ukrainians online. The most-used platforms for this communication, in order of frequency, were Instagram (7 out of 7 who responded on this question, or 100%), Facebook (6, or 86%), Viber (5, or 71%), Telegram (4, or 57%), TikTok (3, or 43%), YouTube, WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger (2, or 29%, each) and WeChat or Pinterest (1, or 14%, each). To a lesser extent, children and young people indicated engaging with other Ukrainians at school (2 out of 6 who responded to this question, or 33%) or during events provided by local organizations (2, or 33%).

### 2.2 Analysis of interviews with stakeholders

#### Overview of the organizations that were interviewed

Three organizations were available to participate in the interviews to gather information about stakeholders in Hungary. These were **UNICEF Hungary**, **UNHCR Hungary** and **Menedék**. In addition, we have included information about Child Helpline International's member, **Kék Vonal**. All these organizations had previous experience in supporting refugees or other foreign citizens in the country. Among the work of these three organizations, and according to the information they provided about other services from other organizations in the country, the following **services for refugees** in Hungary were identified:

- **MHPSS** such as:
  - Mental health support through counselling
  - Psychosocial Support Services
  - Child helpline with services in Ukrainian and Russian
- **Educational support** such as:
  - Hungarian language classes
  - School support (including formal and non-formal programmes and catch-up classes)
  - Tutoring in school subjects
  - Support families and children with school enrolment
  - Awareness raising in schools to integrate refugee children
  - Support with choosing a secondary school and getting into university
- **Case management between different institutions**  
The UNHCR RCC operates in Ukrainian, Russian, and English
- **Other services to support refugees** include the following:
  - Social work
  - Recreational activities for children
  - Playing hub for children and families
  - Legal advice and aid, that is also offered to unaccompanied children
  - Support for children that are gender-based violence (GBV) survivors
  - Housing support
  - Information provision
  - Support with job search
  - Support to unaccompanied children when they arrive
  - Training activities
  - Participation in political discussions
  - Individual case management through UNICEF partners (Terre des Hommes, Hungarian Reformed Church Aid, municipalities of Debrecen, Győr and Záhony)

Among all the services provided by the interviewees and their partners, the following were the most sought for among the Ukrainian refugee population:

- Language learning
- Support with school enrolment
- Job search

These organizations suggested that refugees should learn the language, access education for their children, and be integrated into the job market.

### Kék Vonal

Since December 2022, the emotional support service of Kék Vonal has been available in Ukrainian and Russian, so that young people fleeing the war raging in Ukraine and adults who are concerned about them have someone to turn to in their native language.

The service, which operates every Tuesday and Thursday between 16.00 and 20.00, is also available via chat, as it is easier for many to take the first step in writing, and without a Hungarian SIM card, it is difficult for many to call the free phone number +36 80 984 590 from the Hungarian network, therefore the online chat function is available on the [ua.kek-vonal.hu](http://ua.kek-vonal.hu) website.

### UNICEF Hungary<sup>46</sup>

While UNICEF primary focus remains on low-income countries and children most in need, it is presented in high-income and upper-middle income countries through National Committees. The National Committees (mainly locally registered NGOs) for UNICEF are longstanding partners and part of the wider UNICEF organization. Under the oversight of their Boards, they serve as the face and voice of UNICEF in their countries. UNICEF works closely with the National Committees as they support delivering on the UNICEF Strategic Plan and the UNICEF universal mandate, including through resource mobilization and advocacy for children’s rights domestically and globally.

Following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, UNICEF’s Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia established Refugee Response Offices in Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Czechia in accordance with a Joint Declaration between the governments of those countries and UNICEF. The UNICEF Hungary National Committee is not the same as the Refugee Response Office in Hungary, which was established in March 2022. In order to serve refugees arriving from Ukraine, UNICEF established connections with civil society organizations, international non-governmental organizations and faith-based organizations through the Refugee Response Office in Hungary. The Refugee Response Office’s interventions differ greatly from those of the UNICEF Hungary National Committee. By the end of 2024, Hungary’s Refugee Response Office will close, and in 2025 the offices in Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Czechia will close as well.

### Menedék<sup>47</sup>

For over 25 years, Menedék – the Hungarian Association for Migrants – has supported the social integration of immigrants in Hungary through various programmes. Menedék offers services such as counselling, language lessons and community activities to help migrants settle, understand Hungarian culture, find jobs and housing, and navigate administrative processes. Menedék also trains professionals working with migrants and promotes cultural openness among the general population. It provides legal advice but does not provide legal representation in court. In addition, it is also connected to schools. It has a dedicated department working with children who come from different countries, helping them to learn the language or get represented if the child is unaccompanied. Lastly, Menedék engages in political discussions in the country.

46. Information accessed and adapted from [UNICEF Hungary: How does UNICEF work in Hungary? – UNICEF](#) and from the interviews with stakeholders.

47. Information accessed and adapted from the website of Menedék at [Home | Menedék \(menedek.hu\)](http://Home | Menedék (menedek.hu)) and from the interviews with stakeholders.

### UNHCR Hungary<sup>48</sup>

UNHCR has been active in Hungary since 1989, collaborating with state entities, local and municipal authorities, UN agencies, and national partners. The Budapest office manages operations in Hungary, Czechia, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

In partnership with government bodies and national institutions, UNHCR ensures that refugees and asylum-seekers obtain essential rights, access basic services, and receive legal and protection assistance. UNHCR strives for their inclusion in national services and community support capacities. Through direct efforts and partnerships, UNHCR provides vital assistance across various basic needs and protection areas while also promoting awareness and prevention of statelessness, contributing to building public support for asylum-seekers, refugees, and stateless individuals.

UNHCR partners with organizations who provide child protection, including Menedék, the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, the Cordelia Foundation, Dévai Fogadó and other organizations providing services to Ukrainian refugees.

UNHCR, with the support of UNICC, collaborated with ServiceNow<sup>49</sup>, British Telecom<sup>50</sup> and Thirdera<sup>51</sup> to set up a Regional Call Centre (RCC) to support refugees fleeing the ongoing war in Ukraine. It is built around a solution integrated with case management, using ServiceNow’s Customer Service Management (CSM) application, to build and keep interaction records with callers and identify and refer vulnerabilities to UNHCR and its partners for follow-up and response. The service is a cost-free phone calling system, which is not only available in Hungary, but also in Poland, Czechia and Germany, and which can be scaled up to other countries in the region depending on needs. The RCC is operated by teams based in Poland and Hungary who speak Ukrainian, Russian and English. It is reachable from Monday to Friday, between 08.00 and 17.00.

In addition to this, UNHCR has recently linked the Inter-Agency service mapping to its Help page and there is a service map that is regularly updated here: <https://help.unhcr.org/hungary/partners/sectors/>

48. Information accessed and adapted from UNHCR Hungary: [Hungary | UNHCR](#) and from the interviews with stakeholders.

49. [ServiceNow](#)

50. [BT](#)

51. [Thirdera](#)

In terms of reach, the following figures were gathered through the stakeholders' consultation:

- **UNICEF Hungary** reported that a total of 64,129 children and their caregivers have been supported between 2022 and 2023.
- **UNHCR Hungary** works with several Refugee Response Plan Partners who support Ukrainian refugees in Hungary. In 2023, UNHCR and all partners (including UNICEF), supported a total of 97,627 Ukrainian refugees, with the following breakdown according to age and gender<sup>52</sup>:

Age cohort	Female	Male
60+	5,492	2,197
35-59	21,451	11,824
18-34	17,380	12,922
5-17	9,950	11,372
0-4	2,261	2,778

- **Menedék** supported approximately 1,600 people, two thirds of whom were from Ukraine. Menedék was in contact with around 300 Ukrainian children, of whom 80% were girls and 20% were boys.

#### Reaching Ukrainian Refugees

The organizations interviewed provide services directly or through partners. The **main means of providing the services** were:

- Face-to-face, and this was stated as being the modality that the majority looks for. These services can include a translator to facilitate the conversation.
- Online (email, WhatsApp, Telegram) or by phone (child helpline Kék Vonal supported by UNICEF).

In terms of the location of the services, many organizations have their **main offices in Budapest**, but some respondents have partnerships with municipalities or have team members in other locations, which allows a coverage beyond the capital. In any case, according to the respondents most of the refugees are in the capital or surrounding areas. There are also services like the child helpline, Kék Vonal, which supports children throughout the country through its phone and online services. Besides this service, UNICEF also support municipalities with mobile units with health workers, psychologists and other relevant services. Respondents also pointed out other services provided by other institutions, such as religious ones or state institutions, that also run shelters and are spread throughout the country. In some instances, when refugees stay in shelters and need to access a service outside, transport is provided.

52. Data provided by UNHCR

The **schedules** of the dedicated services vary. The UNHCR RCC line operates from Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 17:00. Other partners of the UNHCR also provide their services on workdays mostly according to similar schedules. The Budapest Information and Community Centre (operated by IOM, the Budapest Municipality and UNHCR) is open during weekends as well and accommodates activities in late afternoon/ evening. Menedék provides services at its office from 09:00 to 17:00.

According to the stakeholders interviewed, people usually came to face-to-face services, and the peak times for this was mostly in the afternoon, after work or after school. Many people also sought these services at the beginning of the week, there being less demand for them on Thursdays and Fridays. Refugees also welcomed services over the weekend. In the case of Menedék, if it was too busy and had no capacity to attend to a service request immediately, it offered the possibility for someone to make an appointment to receive the service at a pre-arranged time.

In terms of **access to information about incoming refugees**, respondents indicated that while the police released data on arrivals, it did not provide a breakdown of demographic information by age. UNHCR and IOM reported information on refugees used by other organizations. There is also a cash assistance system<sup>53</sup> to support refugees in Budapest, and information can be obtained through the number of refugees receiving this, as well as data from shelters. There is no clarity about the figures when refugees leave, which in consequence results in lack of data on the same matter for children. Sometimes, the information is collected through the number of children that are enrolling in school, but the data is not shared or accessible.

While the respondent's organizations get to know information and data about the refugees through the sources mentioned above, they were also asked **how refugees were getting to know about the services they provide for them**. The following information was gathered:

- **Word of mouth:** Information passes between NGOs and refugees through word of mouth. Schools also contact organizations and share information about the available services for children.
- **Social media:** Information is shared through Facebook, Telegram, Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok, Viber and Signal.
- **Other ways:** Information is also shared through leaflets, with links to the organizations' websites. Municipalities also use TV and radio to spread information about the services available.

Among these, the most successful communication channels mentioned, i.e. the means used most by the Ukrainian Refugees, were word of mouth, Instagram, Telegram, WhatsApp, and Facebook. Viber was also mentioned as a successful means of communication by one respondent.

53. This is the opportunity to receive financial support to help refugees with different kind of needs.

### Challenges identified

According to the respondents, there are still some challenges for refugees from Ukraine:

**Cultural taboo and psychosocial support:** Even though some respondents said refugees have no issues in receiving MHPSS services, it was mentioned by one that it is still considered taboo in some cases. This reluctance prevents many families, especially those with children who have developmental issues or disabilities, from acknowledging these problems and seeking necessary support.

**Barriers in education:** The Hungarian education system poses significant challenges for refugee children. Once granted temporary protection, children are required to attend school in Hungarian, a language very different from Ukrainian (see below). Additionally, some children are placed in a grade below their age group, causing them to repeat a year, which creates further obstacles in their educational progression. Also, the Ukrainian education system is different from the Hungarian system, and this is something that families need to understand to allow them to better navigate the education system.

**Language difficulties:** The Hungarian language itself is a major hurdle for Ukrainian refugees. As Hungarian is not a Slavic language, it is particularly difficult for Ukrainians to learn and integrate into the local educational and social systems. This language barrier further complicates their adaptation and daily interactions in Hungary. This applies to obtaining information about services as well. The websites of municipalities and the government provide information about services for refugees in Hungarian, which is not a language that refugees from Ukraine can read.

### Future work of respondents and additional insights

Two of the respondent organizations mentioned that their operations on the refugee response have decreased since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, but one mentioned they have more funding now. They want to build up trust among children and young people through clubs that are run using Ukrainian or Russian. In addition, they will continue to support refugees in terms of their labour rights.

According to the respondents, the gaps that still need to be addressed are:

- **Language support to the refugee community:** Refugees belonging to Roma Communities can speak Hungarian. Non-Roma refugees from Ukraine are of Slavic background and don't speak Hungarian; in this case, there are already language services provided by the respondents that need to be continued, but it is a gap that continuously deserves the attention of all organizations, especially by the government that doesn't provide yet this service.
- **Education gap:** once refugees apply for the temporary protection card, they are obliged to attend the Hungarian education system. This resulted in the absence of a lot of applications for temporary protection, which resulted in children not attending the Hungarian education system. It is important to address this gap by not making attending the Hungarian school mandatory as the only option, and still allowing children to attend the Ukrainian system in parallel. This could also affect the use of other services, as families want to remain unnoticed with the hope of returning to Ukraine and do not want to engage with the system until they stabilize.
- **Housing provision gap:** There is still a gap in the housing opportunities for refugees. If this gap is not addressed many families will be left in unstable living conditions. According to the stakeholders interviewed, access to accommodation was made more difficult by an amendment on 28 June to a decree on state-subsidized housing. New regulations state that refugees may only apply for shelter if they are from areas of Ukraine affected by conflict. This implies that the people living in these shelters now have to vacate by 20 August 2024.

- **Labour opportunities:** there is a gap to be filled in terms of what refugees can do to contribute to Hungarian society. There is a lack of labour force in Hungary that could be filled by the refugee, but this is impeded by the lack of language skills due to the differences between the Ukrainian and Hungarian languages as mentioned above.
- **Data gap:** There is a lack of consolidated data, including a lack of detailed breakdowns of data by age and gender. In addition to this, there is a lack of access to updated data about education.

In terms of **collaboration among the various stakeholders**, this was reported to be working well. Collaboration among various stakeholders in refugee response is carried out as part of the Rapid Refugee Response, led by UNHCR. This initiative includes members from UN agencies, international NGOs (INGOs), local NGOs and municipalities all working together to share information and coordinate efforts. One of the sub-working groups focuses on general protection and includes child protection. Quarterly meetings are held, aimed at integrating services, making referrals and managing cases effectively. These meetings provide a platform for developing and discussing topics collectively, ensuring ongoing collaboration and playing a key role in facilitating communication among the various stakeholders. It was mentioned that the core group members will meet to focus on sustainability and system strengthening.

In addition, there is a **child protection coalition** coordinated by UNICEF National Committee, and one respondent mentioned that the membership was very impressive. However, there is a noted regional gap, where discussions on child protection do not fully integrate with basic needs and other services. To address this, it is crucial to share various models and perspectives from other countries and learn from each other. There is also the fact that there is no centralized database owned by the government in Hungary, which would be important to support the efforts of the organizations supporting refugees from Ukraine. It is important to highlight that, at present, there is only a unified data portal administered by UNHCR for the Regional Refugee Response (RRR) members.

Among the biggest church organizations, five receive the most funding from the state. While there is some level of connection between other organizations and the church organizations, it is not very strong. Conversely, smaller churches offering long-term support to refugees have established good connections with the response teams.

### 2.3. Data from La Strada Ukraine

We examined the number of contacts that were received by the Ukrainian child helpline, La Strada, from children and young people residing in Hungary, whenever this information is logged.

69 calls have been received since the beginning of the war in Ukraine. 23% of these calls are between 14:00 and 20:00, and 77% of calls are between 20:00 and 07:00.




Most of these contacts are coming from children aged between 13 and 15 years (24.7%), and nearly all of them through Telegram (98%), with a small minority through Instagram (2%).





The most common concern raised in these contacts is mental health issues. It accounts for nearly a third of the contacts (30%). Bullying in new schools is raised in a quarter of these contacts (25.2%). Family relationships (especially with parents) account for a further 13.4% of contacts.

## 3: Summary and recommendations

### 3.1. Identified needs

Our findings revealed several critical needs for Ukrainian refugee children and the organizations that provide support to this community in Hungary:

- Need to increase awareness about the services of the child helpline and that children can contact it anonymously, privately and confidentially:** None of the child participants had used the child helpline service. When asked why, they said they did not need it. Although it could be interpreted as a positive indication of their wellbeing, it also raises the need to reiterate the services a child helpline offers, catering for any concern, from major to minor. At the same time, children say that family members are the ones providing them support when they need it. This highlights the need for child helplines to continue to reach out actively and target family environments and spaces where Ukrainian families gather to share information about child helpline services in Ukrainian. Family members, as a trustworthy source of information, can help convey the message about the existence of this service. In any case, when asked if they would consider contacting the child helpline, all respondents said that they would. Children who receive the Temporary Protection Status are obliged to enter the education system. Thus, it can be assumed that children might not want to use some services for fear of being traced. It is important to reiterate that the child helpline services are anonymous, and children remain untraceable.
 
- Financial support:** Adequate financial support is necessary to sustain and expand services for refugees. While some organizations have reported increased funding, others have experienced a decrease in operations. Consistent and sufficient financial backing is crucial to address gaps in housing, labour opportunities and other essential services for refugees.
 
- Translation services:** Effective translation services are essential to overcome the significant language barriers faced by Ukrainian refugees in Hungary. These services are crucial for facilitating communication in educational settings, accessing social services and integrating into the community. Continuous attention and provision of these services by all organizations, especially the government, are necessary.
 
- Options for education:** There is a need to provide flexible education options for refugee children. The current requirement for children to attend Hungarian schools creates barriers due to language differences and placement issues. Allowing children to choose between the Hungarian education system and maintaining their education in the Ukrainian system can help address these challenges and improve educational outcomes.
 

- Need for real-time data access:** Access to real-time data is essential for effectively supporting the refugee population. A centralized database that includes comprehensive information, such as age, gender and educational background would enable organizations to tailor their services more effectively and respond promptly to the evolving needs of refugees.
 
- Sustainability:** Ensuring the sustainability of refugee support initiatives is critical. This involves focusing on long-term solutions that integrate services and strengthen existing systems. Collaboration between UN agencies, NGOs and local organizations must continue, with a particular emphasis on building trust and effective communication among stakeholders to maintain ongoing support for refugees.
 
- Continuing to publicize the Ukrainian-speaking child helpline service:** Despite the efforts of the local child helpline to make itself known to the Ukrainian population, only 60% of the participants were aware of its existence, indicating that some work is still needed. Those who were aware of it mostly learned about it through social media and from their friends, suggesting these modes of advertising the services are successful and should be reinforced. Based on the responses we received to the survey for children, the most popular platforms that should be targeted for advertising are Instagram and Facebook. However, any conclusions drawn from this very small sample (n=5) should be treated cautiously.
 
- Increase mental health services:** The most frequent answer by Ukrainian respondents to the survey question on what help they might need in the future was around mental health. This could indicate that mental health is a concern for children and young people. Sufficient accessible and child and young person-friendly mental health services should be available to address those needs.
 

### 3.2. Recommendations for improved services for Ukrainian refugees

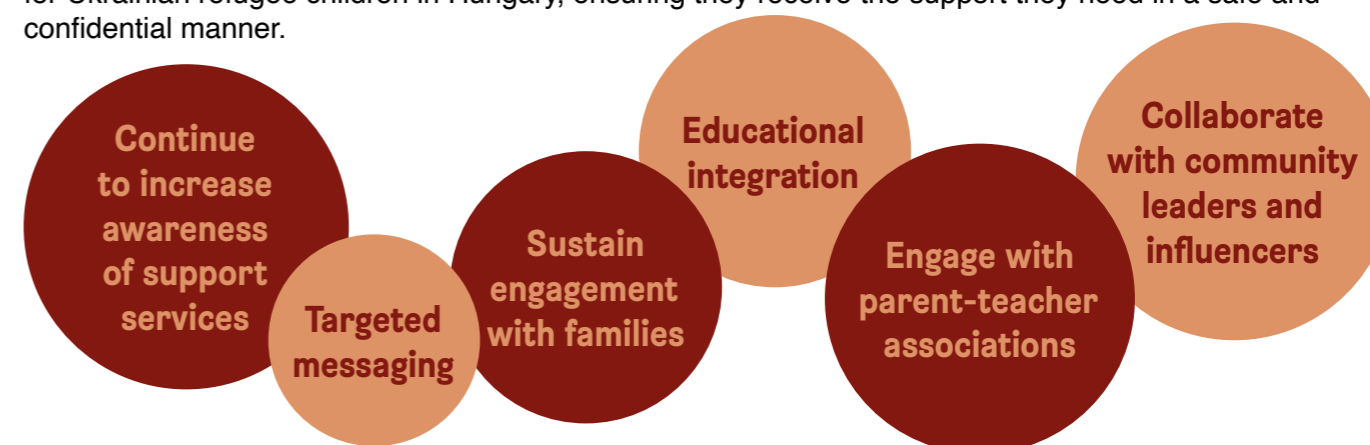
To effectively address the needs of Ukrainian refugees in Hungary, several recommendations can be drawn based on our findings:

- **Expand and improve translation services:** Ensure the availability of high-quality translation services across all sectors, including healthcare, education and legal services. This will help overcome language barriers and facilitate smoother integration into Hungarian society.
- **Enhance integration and community engagement:** Facilitate interaction between Ukrainian refugees and the Hungarian community to support social integration and language learning. This can be achieved through community events, cultural exchanges and joint activities that allow refugees to practice Hungarian and learn about local customs.
- **Strengthen language support and educational opportunities:** Provide robust language-learning programmes tailored to different age groups and educational levels. This includes Hungarian language classes for both children and adults. Additionally, flexible educational options could be offered that respect the differences between the Ukrainian and Hungarian educational systems, such as preparatory courses for university entry and bridging programmes for younger students.
- **Improve housing and financial assistance:** Develop comprehensive housing support initiatives, including rent subsidies and financial aid, to help refugees transition from collective shelters to independent living arrangements. Financial assistance should be consistent and adequate to meet the basic needs of the refugee population, which in turn increases the wellbeing of families and children.
- **Enhance employment support services:** Offer targeted employment support, including job search assistance and vocational training. Collaborate with local businesses to create job opportunities tailored to the skills and qualifications of Ukrainian refugees.
- **Establish a centralized data system:** Create a centralized database to track and manage information about the refugee population. This system should include comprehensive data such as demographics, data on education, employment status, and specific needs. Real-time data accessibility will enable better coordination and more effective support services.
- **Promote sustainable support structures:** Advocate with the government to focus on the sustainability of support programmes by integrating refugee assistance into national systems. This requires ongoing collaboration among UN agencies, NGOs, local organizations and government bodies. Building trust and maintaining open communication channels between all stakeholders is crucial for the long-term success of these initiatives.

In addition to this, **specific recommendations were identified for the child helpline:**

- **Continue to increase awareness of support services:** Continue to raise awareness about the availability of child helpline support services, through targeted outreach campaigns. Use popular social media platforms to reach the refugee community, namely Facebook, Instagram and Viber, and ensure they are informed about the resources available to them.
- **Targeted messaging:** Develop targeted awareness campaigns that clearly communicate the anonymity and the fact that the contacts from children cannot be traced. Ensure these messages continue to be conveyed in Ukrainian to reach the children and their families effectively.
- **Sustain engagement with families:** Continue to actively reach out to families in environments and spaces where Ukrainian families gather, such as community centres, cultural events and refugee shelters. Inform family members about the child helpline's services so that, as trusted individuals, they can relay this information to their children.
- **Educational integration:** Integrate information about the child helpline into school programmes and activities. Since children with TP Status are required to attend school, educational institutions can play a crucial role in disseminating information about the child helpline. In addition, workshops and seminars should be conducted in schools to educate children about the child helpline services, emphasizing their confidentiality and accessibility for any concerns, whether major or minor.
- **Engage with parent-teacher associations:** Collaborate with parent-teacher associations and school counsellors to ensure that they know about the child helpline's services and can encourage children to use them when needed.
- **Collaborate with community leaders and influencers:** Engage community leaders, influencers and other trusted figures within the Ukrainian refugee community to spread awareness about the child helpline's services. Their endorsement can help build trust and credibility among the children and their families.

By implementing these recommendations, the child helpline can become more accessible and trustworthy for Ukrainian refugee children in Hungary, ensuring they receive the support they need in a safe and confidential manner.



## 4: Conclusions

This report provides a comprehensive overview, even if not an exhaustive one, of the mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services available to Ukrainian refugees in Hungary, highlighting both the **significant efforts made** and the **areas that require further improvement**. Since the onset of the war in Ukraine, Hungary has seen a substantial influx of refugees, predominantly women and children, necessitating a robust and adaptable support system.

When looking at current challenges to be addressed, **educational integration poses a significant challenge due to the differences between the Ukrainian and Hungarian educational systems**, in addition to the challenges with opportunities to learn the Hungarian language. Many refugee children struggle to adapt, and **flexible educational programmes** – including preparatory courses for university entry and bridging programmes for younger students – **are essential to bridge these gaps**.

As mentioned above, one of the main barriers identified is the challenge of integration due to language and cultural differences. Hungarian is a difficult language for Ukrainian refugees to learn, complicating their ability to access services and integrate into society. While translation and interpretation services are available, there is a clear need for their **expansion and improvement to ensure effective communication across all sectors**. Additionally, **fostering interactions between Ukrainian refugees and the Hungarian community through community events and cultural exchanges** can significantly aid social integration and language practice.

Housing and financial stability are also critical issues. The report highlights the necessity for comprehensive housing support, including rent subsidies and financial aid, to **help refugees transition from collective shelters to independent living arrangements**. In addition, **consistent financial assistance is crucial** to meet the basic needs of the refugee population and ensure wellbeing of families and children.

Employment support is another area requiring attention. **Targeted employment assistance**, including job search help and vocational training, is **vital to help refugees secure stable employment and integrate economically into Hungarian society**. Collaboration with local businesses to create job opportunities tailored to the skills of Ukrainian refugees can be particularly effective.

In terms of significant barriers to effective service delivery, the lack of a centralized data system can be highlighted. Establishing such a system to track and manage information about the refugee population is essential for better coordination and more effective support services. **Real-time data accessibility would enable organizations to tailor their support to the specific needs of refugees**.

In response to the main question of this mapping exercise on what barriers could be preventing Ukrainian refugees from accessing local support services, especially child helplines, the following conclusions can be made:

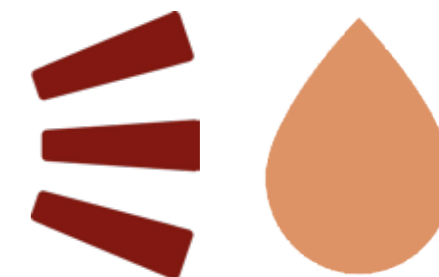
- **Anonymity:** Some families do not register for the Temporary Protection status, so their children are not obliged to attend Hungarian schools. This fact can be connected to children and young people being hesitant to use MHPSS services that can imply their permanence in the country. It is important to create awareness and understanding about anonymity and the fact that contact with the child

helpline is not traced. To overcome this, **targeted awareness campaigns need to be developed** that clearly communicate these aspects. By addressing this barrier, children will feel more secure and confident in seeking help without fear of being traced.

- **Language barriers:** These continue to be a significant obstacle for Ukrainian refugee children in Hungary. This may result in children opting to call child helplines in Ukraine rather than using local services such as Kék Vonal in Hungarian during times of the day and week when services in Ukraine from Kék Vonal are not available. The **engagement of Ukrainian-speaking counsellors at Kék Vonal is crucial** and should remain a priority to ensure that Ukrainian children feel comfortable and understood when seeking help. This could be an employment or volunteering opportunity for some of the refugees themselves.
- **Awareness of the child helpline in Ukrainian:** Kék Vonal's efforts in raising awareness and information regarding child helpline services need to continue, and be prioritized, to contribute to a higher demand for these services. To address this issue, **promoting awareness through popular social media platforms** such as Facebook, Instagram and Viber has been recommended as an effective strategy to engage younger audiences. At the same time, we found that a high percentage of children living in Hungary who contacted La Strada, the child helpline in Ukraine, were using Telegram.

As mentioned in the first part of this report, there were challenges in securing interviews and gathering data from surveys with children. A recommendation for future reports is to allow more time to secure interviews and disseminate the surveys to the Ukrainian community. Another recommendation is to request children to pass it on to friends, so as to increase the reach of the survey.

**In conclusion, while Hungary has made commendable efforts to support Ukrainian refugees, addressing these barriers through targeted strategies is crucial. Enhancing translation and interpretation services, fostering community engagement, providing flexible educational options, offering comprehensive housing and financial support, establishing a centralized data system, and engaging with families and young people to publicize the child helpline services could significantly improve the support system for Ukrainian refugees in Hungary. By implementing these recommendations, Hungary can ensure the wellbeing and successful integration of Ukrainian refugees into the community.**



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## Appendix A: Tools Used

### 1. Interview guide for Interviews with (international) non-governmental organizations, multilateral organizations, and governmental institutions

The interview can be conducted online or in person. Ensure confidentiality at the location and during the interview to create a comfortable and secure environment.

Highlight that the responses provided by your organization should be as comprehensive as possible, and thank the participants for their willingness to collaborate and contribute to this research. Consent will be obtained from the participants prior to the interview.

#### Background about the organization's services

1. What kind of assistance does your organization provide to refugees from Ukraine? (prompt options: Informational, Legal, Psychological, Humanitarian, Other)
  - 1.1. If you provide more than one type of service, which are the most often used among Ukrainian refugees?
2. Do you work with other refugee populations, other than Ukrainians, or did you do so in the past?
3. To whom is your assistance primarily targeted? (e.g., at a specific user group by age, gender, needs)
4. What is the estimated number of Ukrainian people you support on an average month (or total in the past year)
  - 4.1. Do you have this information disaggregated by age and gender?

#### Operational information (time and place)

5. In which ways do you provide your services? (e.g. services online, in-person, other)
  - 5.1. If in person, how far are the services from the communities of Ukrainian refugees?
  - 5.2. What feedback do you get about the location and accessibility of your service?
6. What are the hours of the day that are dedicated to supporting the refugees?
7. Which are the most popular times of week and day?
  - 7.1. Why do you think that is?

#### Reaching Ukrainian refugees

8. Do you have information about people seeking help when they arrive in your country? (e.g., demographics, ages, etc.)
  - 8.1. If yes, from which source / how do you obtain that data?
9. How do refugees from Ukraine learn about your organization? Prompt options:
  - social networks and messaging apps (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tik-Tok, Telegram, Viber, WhatsApp, Signal, OTHER)
  - Government structures (WHICH?)
  - Schools?
  - Partners (WHICH)
  - Word-of-mouth within the refugee community
  - Other
10. Which of these channels are the most successful for reaching refugees from Ukraine?
  - 10.1. What feedback do you get from refugees about that?
11. In what ways has your strategy of reaching refugees changed in the past two years?
  - 11.1. Why?

12. How might your strategy change in the future to enhance the visibility and accessibility of your work among refugee children and youth? (Prompt for answer: ask specifically if there are any plans to reach those in sparsely populated or remote villages and towns.)

13. Do you have regional partnerships to spread information about your services?

13.1. If yes, could you share a list of such institutions? Options:

- Other humanitarian organizations
- Local schools
- Churches
- Authorities
- Public institutions
- Other

#### Cultural differences

14. How does your organization overcome cultural and language barriers that may complicate interaction with refugee children and their families?

15. Which cultural obstacles did you experience when providing support to Ukrainian refugees?

#### Future

16. What do you think is still missing to provide better support to refugees in your country?

17. Do you think different organizations are working in a coordinated way in the country?

17.1. If not, how do you suggest to improve this?

## 2. Survey for Ukrainian young refugees

### Introduction to the survey

Hello and welcome!

We represent Child Helpline International, an organization to support children around the world. Today, we invite you to answer a few questions to learn more about the support provided to children from Ukraine in the communities they currently live in. Your opinion matters, and we want to hear your thoughts, views and experiences.

Before we begin, we would like to provide you with some additional information about the survey. Only young people aged 13 or older are eligible to participate in this survey. If you decide to participate, please note that the survey is anonymous and confidential. We want you to feel comfortable and safe in providing your answers. Here's what you need to know:

- Your answers will be totally **anonymous**. It means that no one will know the identity of a person providing certain answers. We will not ask for your name or any other information that could be identifiable with you and your answers.
- Your answers will be kept **confidential**. This means that the research team only will have access to your personal answers. Your privacy is our priority and we will not share your answers with anyone outside the research team.

You are welcome to share and discuss this survey with your parents or guardians, and to seek their advice if you need it.

We want you to feel free to express your thoughts honestly and openly. You will be bound with no obligation to take part in the survey if you don't want to, but your help will count for much. If you decide that you no longer

want to participate, that will be absolutely OK. We will respect your decision without any detriment to you. If you decide to participate in the survey, you will also have the right to choose the questions you want to answer. If you are uncomfortable answering any of the questions, you can simply skip it. Your feelings and confidentiality are important to us, so please only answer questions that you feel comfortable answering. Your answers will help us to better understand children's experiences and perspectives, and will help us to make important decisions about how to improve services for Ukrainian children in the community.

I agree to participate in the survey

- Yes
- No (the survey ends here)
- I confirm that I am at least 13 years old

We will not cover any risks associated with your participation in this survey, but if you are upset over some things about it, or if you have any questions or concerns during this survey, please reach out to us at: ana@childhelplineinternational.org (English) or nelia@childhelplineinternational.org (Ukrainian)

Thank you for your participation and for helping us make a difference in this world.

### Survey

How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

*You must be aged 13 or older to be able to participate in this survey.*

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other
- I do not want to answer

What country are you from?

- Ukraine
- Other

If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Which country do you currently live in?

- Hungary
- Poland
- Romania
- Slovakia

*Suggested routing from here onwards — we would have four routes so that the questions can use the name of the country's child helpline and the information at the end of the survey is relevant to the country they are currently living in.*

Have you heard of **Kék Vonal (Blue Line)**, a Hungarian child helpline that offers children counseling (i.e., if a child feels unsafe, misunderstood, unheard, lonely, or looking for support and protection, there will be someone for him/her to talk to) in Ukrainian?

*The helpline operates on the principles of anonymity and confidentiality by providing its services free of charge. Anonymity means that it is impossible to identify the person calling, and confidentiality means keeping the information secret.*

- Yes
- No

The navigation depends on the answer “yes” or “no” (if “no”, go to the “All children” section)

If yes,

How did you find out about **Kék Vonal (Blue Line)**?

Please choose all that apply

- At school
- At home
- From friends
- From social media
- From flyers/leaflets
- At Blue Dot Centre
- In the asylum centre
- TV
- Radio
- Other

If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Which of these services does **Kék Vonal (Blue Line)** provide?

- A space where children can discuss their problems with a professional
- Help to keep them safe
- Receiving reports on abuse
- Help when children are being treated unfairly, used or abused
- Support for children from Ukrainian
- Other

If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever contacted a child helpline?

- Yes
- No

If yes,

Have you experienced any problems when contacting the child helpline?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Why did you contact the child helpline?

- Help with homework
- Troubles with parents
- Troubles with friends
- Troubles at school
- Bullying
- Concerns about my mental health, such as feeling sad or anxious
- Concerns about personal safety
- Concerns about personal physical health
- Other

If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

If no,

If you have never contacted a child helpline, please tell us why? (Please choose all that apply)

- I don't need it.
- I do not think I should contact a helpline to address the problems I have
- I did not know that I could contact a helpline to address my problems
- I do not feel I have enough privacy to do so.
- I do not have the means of communication (phone or other device).
- I worry about how people might react to what I say.
- I am afraid that my parents might find out about what I say.
- I do not feel safe talking to local counsellors.
- Other

If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

All children

Do you think you will contact **Kék Vonal (Blue Line)**, which offers help to children in Ukrainian, in the future if you need it?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Which of the following social networks do you use?

- Facebook
- Instagram
- TikTok
- Twitter – X
- YouTube
- WhatsApp
- Telegram
- Viber
- WeChat
- Facebook Messenger
- Pinterest

Where do you communicate with other young people from Ukraine?

- Online
- Youth centres
- At school
- During events organized by local organizations
- Other

If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

What kind of help do you think you might need someday?

- Help with homework
- Troubles with parents
- Troubles with friends
- Troubles at school
- Bullying
- Concerns about my mental health, such as feeling sad or anxious
- Concerns about personal safety
- Concerns about personal physical health
- Other

If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

If you need help with any of these issues, whom you will most likely talk to?

- Family member
- Friend
- Teacher
- Private counsellor
- Child helpline
- I will research online
- Police
- Social services
- Other

If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think should be done to ensure that children know how to contact the child helpline?

\_\_\_\_\_

Is there anything else you would like to share about these issues?

\_\_\_\_\_

### Survey results

Thank you for sharing your thoughts. Your contribution will help us create a safer and happier environment for all children.

We understand that some questions may have raised difficult emotions or questions for you. Remember, you are not alone. If you need to talk to someone or seek advice, please contact **Kék Vonal (Blue Line)**. Ukrainian-speaking child helpline professionals will be available from 16:00 to 20:00 to provide support and assistance whenever you need it. Your well-being is fundamentally important and we have the resources to provide the help and support you deserve.

*The helpline operates on the principles of anonymity and confidentiality by providing its services free of charge. Anonymity means that it is impossible to identify the person calling, and confidentiality means keeping the information secret.*

Moreover, if you are unable to contact the child helpline for any reason, you can contact our consultant Nelia Troichuk by sending an e-mail to [nelia@childhelplineinternational.org](mailto:nelia@childhelplineinternational.org). She is a qualified specialist who is always ready to listen and give advice. Remember that it is absolutely normal and courageous to ask for help when you need it.

## Appendix B: Local Service Map

Based on the data collected primarily online, we identified 39 services available for refugees from Ukraine in Hungary. Of these, 20 are dedicated to mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), 6 address medical issues, 6 assist families with housing or humanitarian aid, 8 offer legal assistance, and 10 focus on supporting and adapting to the educational system in Hungary. Notably, one-quarter of these organizations are dedicated to helping children adapt to schools. There is also a significant number of organizations providing support for children with developmental and psychological needs to ensure their successful adaptation in educational institutions.

Out of all the services, 26 are targeted at adults while 23 are aimed at children. This nearly equal distribution of services between children and their parents indicates a family-oriented approach to refugee assistance in Hungary. The emphasis on both children's and parents' needs highlights the comprehensive support system in place to facilitate the integration and wellbeing of Ukrainian refugee families.

<a href="#">Bóna Fide</a>	Refers vulnerable individuals/families to resources MHPSS. Helpline operates in Ukrainian, Russian, Hungarian and English. +36 703 680 923
<a href="#">Caritas</a>	Offers the following services: maintaining social and healthcare facilities, providing various assistance programmes for families in need, holiday camps for children, school start support, special aid for Easter and Christmas.
<a href="#">Child Protection Helpline</a>	Offers assistance and support for various child protection issues, providing immediate guidance and resources to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. Available 24 hours. +36 802 12021
<a href="#">Cordelia Foundation</a>	Offers counselling, support groups, and mental health care to help refugees, children and adults, deal with the psychological impact of displacement.
<a href="#">Equal Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities Non-Profit Ltd</a>	Educational advancement for children and youth with special needs, encompassing programme creation and the enhancement of schools and institutions.
<a href="#">Family Allowance (childcare and education allowance)</a>	The parent, foster parent, guardian, or temporary caregiver of a child is eligible for a family allowance if the child is raised in their household. For children not yet of compulsory school age; for the entire duration of compulsory education; for children attending public or vocational education after compulsory education, until the end of the school year in which they turn 20, or 23 for those with special educational needs. <a href="#">Application</a> .
<a href="#">Heim Pál Children's Hospital</a>	Offers medical care for children arriving from Ukraine. Emergency Helpline can be used for any inquiries related to children's healthcare, including patient care, doctor referrals, counselling, Covid-19 vaccinations, and both missed and planned mandatory vaccinations for children. Assistance available at any time of day, with support also offered in Ukrainian. +36 80 200 223
<a href="#">Heim Pál Gyermekkórház</a>	Children's hospital, provides medical help.
<a href="#">Hungarian Baptist Aid</a>	Provides essential support including food, accommodation and camp facilities tailored for individuals from Ukraine.
<a href="#">Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta</a>	Community service initiative aimed at providing nutritious meals to individuals and families in need.
<a href="#">Hungarian Interchurch Aid</a>	Provides help and support for refugees from Ukraine. Offers humanitarian assistance such as food, clothing and shelter to those in need. In addition to physical aid, also provides emotional support and counselling services to help refugees cope with the trauma and stress of displacement.

<a href="#">Hungarian Red Cross</a>	Provides humanitarian and psychological support to individuals in need, including refugees and other vulnerable populations. Offers services such as emergency relief, healthcare, mental health counselling and social integration programmes. Helpline in Russian, Ukrainian, English and Hungarian.
<a href="#">Hungarian Reformed Church Aid</a>	Provides comprehensive support including accommodation, food and other essential services tailored specifically for refugees from Ukraine.
<a href="#">Hungarian Safer Internet Centre</a>	Helps children who are victims of cyberbullying, grooming, sexting and online harassment, or who have faced illegal or harmful content, providing them with support, resources and protection to ensure their safety and wellbeing.
<a href="#">Hungary Helsinki Committee</a>	Provides legal assistance. Protects human dignity through legal and public activities. Support extends to refugees, detainees and victims of law enforcement violence, ensuring they receive the help they need.
<a href="#">Infant and Child Care Fee</a>	Provided to women who have had insurance coverage for 365 days in the two years before child's birth. Benefit applies if the child is born during insurance period or within 42 days after it ends, or within 28 days after the end of accidental sickness benefit coverage.
<a href="#">Internet Hotline</a>	Actively implements informational support to prevent and combat cyberbullying and the dissemination of pornography, harassment and other forms of harmful content online.
IOM	Translation services for Ukrainian refugees who do not speak Hungarian. <a href="#">Form</a> .
<a href="#">Jesuit refugee service</a>	Supports school inclusion by collaborating closely with schools enrolling refugee children, focusing primarily on teaching Hungarian as a foreign language through weekly classes staffed by dedicated volunteers.
<a href="#">Kék Vonal</a>	116111 child helpline for Ukrainian children, young people and adults who make contact a child's behalf in Ukrainian (if desired and if necessary, also in Russian). Child helpline open every Tuesday and Thursday from 16.00 to 20.00, free and anonymous.
<a href="#">Lesya Ukrainka Ukrainian Language School</a>	Operates on Saturdays, providing a vital educational platform for Ukrainian children to maintain their language and cultural heritage. School's curriculum includes various subjects aimed at fostering strong sense of identity and community among Ukrainian young people living in Hungary.
<a href="#">Magyar Lelki Elsősegély Szolgálatok (Hungarian Mental First Aid Services)</a>	MHPSS Helpline: Psychological first aid (PFA) in Ukrainian and Hungarian. Refers vulnerable individuals/families to resources. 116123 (free, 24 hours).
<a href="#">Menedek</a>	Helps refugee children enrol in local schools and provides them with the necessary educational resources to succeed. Programmes aim to facilitate a smooth transition for children and their families into educational system, fostering sense of community and belonging.
<a href="#">Missing Children Europe</a>	Provides support, advice and help for children at risk of harm. 116000
<a href="#">National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing</a>	Provides valuable information for students, including refugee students. Offers guidance on obtaining residence permits, navigating legal requirements, accessing healthcare services and integrating into local community. Additionally, assists with documentation updates and provides resources for understanding rights and responsibilities during stay in the country.
National Public Health Centre	Citizens holding dual citizenship of Ukraine and Hungary can reach out to the nearest paediatrician ( <i>gyermekorvos</i> ) for assistance. +36 1 476 1100
Next Step Hungary Association	Provides psychosocial services in Ukrainian, Hungarian and English: - Raising awareness on mental health and psychosocial support - Psychological first aid - Basic MHPSS counselling 31 784 1505
<a href="#">Operational Data Portal</a>	Interactive map of services available for refugees across various counties in Hungary.

Országos Kríziskezelő és Információs Telefonszolgálat (National Crisis Management and Information Telephone Service)	Provides psychosocial support services for refugees from Ukraine. MHPSS helpline operates in Ukrainian, Russian and Hungarian, offering psychological first aid and referring vulnerable individuals and families to necessary resources: +36 80 20 55 20 (24 hours).
Paul National Institute	At the Children's Mental Crisis Outpatient Clinic at the Paul National Institute of Paediatrics, specialists are available to assist in managing the stress caused by war, bereavement, and the experience of loss and grief.
Police contact	112: In urgent cases outside of working hours contact the police.
Pszí Pont Alapítvány (Pszí Pont Foundation)	Provides psychosocial support services for refugees from Ukraine. Services in Ukrainian, Russian, Hungarian, Romanian, Slovak, English and Polish. +36 30 859 3772
<a href="#">Safe in Hungary</a>	Information page for individuals seeking refuge from the war in Ukraine in Hungary, providing essential guidance, support services and resources.
<a href="#">Safe Internet Hotline</a>	Plays crucial role as online reporting platform dedicated to addressing harmful and illegal content on the internet. Primary mission is to safeguard children from content that could potentially harm their physical, psychological and mental development. Includes swift action to remove such content from online platforms.
Traumacenter	Refers vulnerable individuals/families to resources: Community Based Psychosocial Support Activities, Focused Psychosocial Support Services. Helpline operates in Russian, Ukrainian and Hungarian: +36 70 532 6021
<a href="#">UNCHR Help Hungary</a>	<a href="#">Guidance and recommendations for children and young people</a> from Ukraine who have entered Hungary. Offers <a href="#">services to children and their parents</a> aiming to prepare them for enrolling into the host country's education system.
<a href="#">United Way Hungary</a>	Aims to ensure equal opportunities for success in digital education and school re-entry by distributing back-to-school packages to 1000 underprivileged families. Packages include essential supplies and resources necessary for children to thrive academically, bridging the gap for those facing economic challenges.

#### List of Educational Opportunities for Children with Developmental Delays and Disabilities.

Children with developmental delays and disabilities have access to specialized educational opportunities designed to support their unique needs. These organizations aim to provide tailored instruction, resources, and support services to help them thrive academically and socially.

- [Budapest](#)
- [Fejér County](#)
- [Nógrád County](#)
- [Bács-Kiskun County](#)
- [Győr-Moson-Sopron County](#)
- [Pest County](#)
- [Baranya County](#)
- [Hajdú-Bihar County](#)
- [Somogy County](#)
- [Békés County](#)
- [Heves County](#)
- [Tolna County](#)
- [Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County](#)
- [Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County](#)
- [Veszprém County](#)
- [Csongrád-Csanád County](#)
- [Komárom-Esztergom County](#)
- [Zala County](#)

#### List of volunteers' contacts

Mental health professionals, such as psychologists, psychiatrists and counsellors, providing assistance to individuals impacted by the Ukrainian refugee crisis. Services are accessible online, via phone or in person and are offered free of charge by volunteer professionals. List includes counselling and supportive conversations but does not constitute medical treatment, psychotherapy or psychiatric care.



**Every child has a voice.  
No child should be left unheard.**

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Child Helpline International is a collective impact organization with more than 150 members in over 130 countries and territories around the world.

We coordinate information, viewpoints, knowledge and data from our child helpline members, partners and external sources. This exceptional resource is used to help and support child protection systems globally, regionally and nationally, and to help our members advocate for the rights of children and amplify their voices.

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