



FICE Special Task Force “Hand in Hand”

Overview

FICE International (International Federation of Educative Communities) is a network of professionals and organizations from 35 countries dedicated to child and youth care. Members come from social pedagogy, social work, psychology, and education. They aim to provide high-quality care and promote the well-being and development of children and young people.

To help vulnerable children during emergencies, such as the crisis in Ukraine, FICE has established a task force called "Hand in Hand." The primary focus of this task force is to enhance the safety and well-being of children who have been displaced from their homes, those in alternative care institutions, and other crisis-affected children.

Their first mission was to aid young people, teenagers, and children affected by the war in Ukraine and in other countries, to which the children and teens were forced to move.

The current situation has been especially difficult for children who have endured severe trauma, lost loved ones, or been forced to leave their homes because of the ongoing conflict. As a result, they have experienced high levels of stress, fear, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). In addition, their ability to access education has been disrupted, and they have faced challenges with remote learning due to power outages and internet disruptions.

Ever since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, the Hand in Hand task force has been working hard to support vulnerable children affected by the crisis. The task force provides essential social-emotional resources and ensures access to education and other necessary services, significantly impacting the lives of these children and young people.

The page comprehensively overviews the task force's history, operations, objectives, activities, and plans. It highlights the organization's crucial role in promoting the well-being and development of children and young people in crises.

Leadership

Alexander Schneider, Ph.D. (co-author, An Educator and Educational Researcher, Co-chair of Hand in Hand FICE Special Task Force

Email:

drschneidera@gmail.com

++972542300671

Marianna Bilyk, Program Director at Ukrainian Educational Platform (UEP) and Co-chair of Hand in Hand FICE Special Task Force

Email: director.hds@ukredu.org

++380985771131

Partners

Ukrainian Education Platform (UEP), a non-profit organization, aims to create a cross-sectoral network throughout Ukraine, unify and strengthen regional capacities, and implement social initiatives and educational programs.

Revived Gymnasiums of Ukraine Association (RGU) works with educators, principals, and teachers throughout Ukraine.

Hand in Hand group members See Annex C.

Target Audience

- Educators
- Specialists or officers working in the field of child protection
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Primary beneficiaries: Teens and children and their parents

Objectives:

- Expanding the representation of the working group in Ukraine by involving representatives from NGOs, educators, and social work specialists.
- Providing Specialists and officials working in child protection the opportunity to participate in one exchange of experience and one international internship and engage in activities organized by the Hand in Hand working group.
- Improving the safety and mental health support of 8,000 children by providing training and facilitating experience-sharing for social workers and educators.
- Disseminating information about the current state of Ukrainian children in Ukraine and abroad through educational activities.

“Hand in Hand” work plans for future activities 2024-2026:

1. Conduct roundtable meetings with educators, teachers, and principals to discuss educational challenges. For topics, see (Annex A).
2. Research the main challenges Ukrainian children face in other countries' education and welfare systems.
3. Provide recommendations for the educational processes of Ukrainian children in other countries.
4. Host an open discussion on the topic of institutionalization in Ukraine.
5. Support the establishment of Ukrainian Resilience centers with a focus on emotional literacy.
6. Establish a database detailing the psycho-emotional and social status of Ukrainian children to create a plan for their reintegration into Ukrainian society upon their return and to evaluate the impact of such reintegration.
7. Hold regular working meetings for the task force leader, scheduled once every week or two.

8. Organize discussions for educators and professionals to plan topics and dates for a two-year training program. Develop a systematic manual for them
9. Establish a partnership with the Education Ombudsman Office and Science of Ukraine and create a Memorandum of Cooperation.
10. We also aim to organize an international seminar/course for caregivers. (see annex B)

Background

The Russian-Ukrainian full-scale war began on February 24th, 2022. Russia launched air strikes and ground invasions from three different fronts - north, south, and east. Russia claimed to be protecting the Russian-speaking minority in Ukraine from alleged persecution by the Ukrainian government, whereas Ukraine denied these allegations and defended its territorial integrity and sovereignty. As a result of this invasion, millions of Ukrainians have been displaced, and humanitarian crises have emerged, resulting in massive casualties.

The ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine has also had a devastating effect on children and teens who have been exposed to violence, trauma, displacement, and disruption of their education. According to various sources, some of the impacts include:

- Many children lose their parents, relatives, friends, or homes in the war
- Millions of children were forced to flee their towns and villages or live in areas under constant threat of shelling and shooting.
- Children experience high levels of stress, fear, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a result of the war.
- Children's access to education has been severely interrupted as schools and kindergartens have been closed for safety reasons or moved underground.
- Power outages and internet disruptions have hampered remote learning.
- Children's physical health and nutrition have been affected by the lack of food, clean water, and medical care in the war zone and temporarily occupied areas.

6,471,600 Ukrainians have fled the country due to the Russian-Ukrainian war, including approximately 1.3 million children

As for children (for 8th of September, 2024))

- 574 have been killed
- 1593 wounded

- 1917 missing
- 19546 deported and forcibly displaced
- 15 victims of sexual violence

In response to the crisis in Ukraine, FICE International has initiated efforts to help the young people impacted by the conflict. This led to the Hand in Hand task force, which focuses on providing specific assistance to children displaced from their homes, those residing in alternative care institutions, and other children affected by the crisis. The task force's primary objective is to improve the safety and well-being of these children and their families, and they have successfully achieved this goal.

The Principles of Establishing a Task Force

The FICE executive committee recognized the importance of the task force's involvement in providing support in a specific conflict. To ensure effective intervention, a mission of the task force was defined, and partners related to the area of the crisis event were invited to join the permanent team.

Recommendation for forming a task force during an Event: the

task force sets a recommended list of actions that the task force team should perform during an event:

- A decision to establish a task force dedicated to a specific conflict.
- Define the mission of the task force.
- Add partners to the selected task force team who are related to the area of the crisis event.
- Form a process of joint learning of the crisis.
- Identify topics and activities that the task force and representatives of member countries can carry out.
- Formulate an action plan and determine activities for the task force based on the data collected.
- Monitor all economic support and operations of groups related to FICE
- Present the action plan and proposed task force activities to the FICE Forum for approval.

After establishing a plan to meet the requirements, a "Hand in Hand" FICE special task force for Ukraine was formed.

Establishing Date: FICE International established the "Hand in Hand" task force in August 2022 to assist in the crisis in Ukraine.

Task force Aim and Mission: The task force's primary aim is to build effective communication among professionals worldwide who work in child and youth care. The team was established to assist in crises in general, with the situation in Ukraine being the first event, and to recommend ways to help and support the current situation.

Ukraine Status Report: FICE International conducted a session on the Ukraine Status Report on August 9th to introduce the task force. The concept of the team was presented in two dimensions, with the first relating to how the team operates in general and the second explicitly dealing with the Ukraine crisis and recommending ways to help and support the current situation. With the hope that by providing essential support and resources, the task force will significantly impact the lives of vulnerable children affected by the crisis in Ukraine. Having firsthand information about the situation and challenges the Ukrainian education and welfare systems face is crucial.

The road map: The road map for the future and recommendations presented during the session were critical in addressing these challenges and ensuring that vulnerable children in Ukraine have access to the care and support they need. Experts, humanitarian aid representatives, educators, parents, and young people from the west to the east of Ukraine were heard at the meeting, and a few short video clips were presented.

Leadership and partnership: The established task force led by Dr. Alex Schneider from FICE Israel and Marianna Bilyk from FICE Ukraine consists of FICE members from various countries, which began activities in August 2022. Also, the essential partners of the “Hand in Hand” are the “**Ukrainian Education Platform**” (UEP), a non-profit organization that aims to create a cross-sectoral network throughout Ukraine, unifying and strengthening regional capacities and implementing social initiatives and educational programs. And the **Revived Gymnasiums of Ukraine Association (RGU)**, which works with principals and teachers throughout Ukraine. RGU is an essential part of The FICE Special Task Force “Hand in Hand,” which organizes the online round tables for teachers.

Primary objective: the task force's primary purpose is to support children and teenagers affected by the war in Ukraine, help young individuals cope with the impact of the war, restore their sense of normalcy and hope, and enable them to enjoy their childhood while pursuing their dreams.

Action plans: The task force developed an action plan and activities based on the collected data. The group also monitored all economic support and operations related to FICE and presented the action plan

and proposed task force activities to the FICE Forum for approval.

These steps have ensured that the task force's efforts are well-coordinated, effective, and aligned with FICE's overall mission.

The action plan taken to establish the special task force to Adapt to the Ukrainian Realities included:

- Having regular and continuous contact with representatives of FICE Ukraine to examine the current situation
- Forming a complete picture of the activity of FICE elements in the crisis area
- Monitoring all activities carried out by FICE representatives in various countries, such as the Netherlands and Germany
- Monitoring all economic support operations of groups related to FICE
- Initiating aid and support operations such as support centers for treating post-trauma victims by FICE Members.
- Increasing the involvement of FICE representatives in host countries receiving refugees by gathering data and transferring information, addressing emerging challenges, and raising ideas based on what is happening on the ground.

First mission: The task force's first mission is to work on the specific ways in which FICE can provide support in emergencies, such as in Ukraine, and enhance the well-being of children, who are the most vulnerable group in these events. This is with the hope of improving the safety of children and families “on the move” (since they were forced to leave their homes and move to other towns or countries), children in alternative care institutions, and children in different crises.

Joint learning: the task force established a process of joint learning about the crisis and identified topics and activities that FICE could carry out through the task force and representatives of member countries. The aim was to help these young individuals cope with the impact of the war, restore their sense of normalcy and hope, and enable them to enjoy their childhood while pursuing their dreams.

Hand in Hand's main areas of activity: the main areas of activity are welfare, child protection, and education. It trains specialists, professionals, and volunteers who work with traumatized children. It also enhances educational and psychosocial activities among young people and increases the proficiency of educators who

operate in crises. The task force also spread information about the status of Ukrainian children, including the tragic events of forced deportation to Russia. Hand in Hand believes that every action can make a difference in the lives of children affected by war.

Educational activities include conducting indirect psychological and educational programs for young people, such as teenagers and youth, and enhancing educators' skills to handle crises efficiently. The group attempted to collaborate with the European Youth Foundation to launch a new project that would directly support the mental health of teenagers and youth. Unfortunately, they did not receive support for this project but are looking into other possibilities.

Briefs, seminars, and lectures for welfare staff and educators to help them support young people in crises are conducted regularly. However, when the group tried to organize lectures and workshops in English to assist professional care workers in Ukraine, they faced a language barrier. Upon analysis, the task force realized that guidance and crisis instruction should be conveyed in the participants' native language to avoid language barriers. The significance of proper verbal translation between individuals of different cultures cannot be sufficiently emphasized. Verbal translation ensures that individuals

can communicate with each other even though they speak different languages. This helps bridge the gap and allows for meaningful conversations in personal interactions, business negotiations, or healthcare settings. The translation goes beyond linguistic conversion, fostering understanding by encouraging cultural exchange. When people communicate effectively, they gain insights into each other's customs, traditions, and ways of thinking. This understanding promotes tolerance and reduces misunderstandings. In our interconnected world, translation is critical in enabling the exchange of ideas, which is vital for global progress. Therefore, they decided to provide all content in their native language to ensure effective communication and understanding. Due to the generous support of Rolf Widmer, the group has been able to provide translation services as required.

The "Hand in Hand" special task force is involved in initiatives like hosting online round tables for teachers. The Hand in Hand Special Task Force believes that every action can make a difference in the lives of the children affected by the war. It was essential to prioritize the well-being of children, who are often the most vulnerable group in crises. The task force has worked to enhance the safety of children

and families who have been forced to leave their homes and move to other towns or countries hastily, as well as to support children in alternative care institutions by:

1. Providing emotional support to children and families affected by the crisis.
2. Ensuring access to education and other necessary services, including healthcare, nutrition, and psycho-social support.
3. Creating safe spaces for children to play and interact with their peers.
4. Developing targeted interventions for children with special needs or disabilities.
5. Building resilience centers to provide children and families with long-term support.
6. Facilitating cross-border cooperation and networking to enhance the safety and well-being of children affected by the crisis.
7. Advocating for children's rights and promoting child protection policies.

The workgroup has developed the following main areas of activities to include:

- Working with parents and specialists who work with families, such as the courses on welfare, child protection activities for social workers and educators
- Training specialists, professionals, and volunteers working with traumatized children
- Enhancing educational and psychosocial activities among young people (youth and teenagers)
- Increasing the proficiency of educators to operate in crises
- Spreading information about Ukrainian children's status (including the tragic events of forced deportation to Russia)

Adapting the Force to the Ukrainian Realities: The action plan taken to establish the special task force included:

- Having regular and continuous contact with representatives of FICE Ukraine to examine the current situation
- Forming a complete picture of the activity of FICE elements in the crisis area
- Monitoring all activities carried out by FICE representatives in various countries. Such as the Netherlands and Germany

- Monitoring all economic support operations of groups related to FICE
- Initiating aid and support operations such as support centers for treating post-trauma victims by FICE Members.
- Increasing the involvement of FICE representatives in host countries receiving refugees by gathering data and transferring information, addressing emerging challenges, and raising ideas based on what is happening on the ground.

Hand-in-Hand Actions since its establishment: To date, the task force has conducted activities that include several general group meetings oriented on welfare and education systems and several weekly online meetings to examine limited topics oriented on the issues of welfare and education systems. The sessions aimed to gain firsthand information from experts, humanitarian aid representatives, welfare professionals, and educators about the situation and challenges of the Ukrainian education and welfare systems and to find ideas to help improve the situation.

The meetings involve interaction between different organizations and people to support Ukraine, and Ukrainians represent organizations from all over Ukraine. They are a platform for developing best

practices, researching ways of implementing them in Ukrainian realities and building efficient and effective communication between the task force members to achieve the best results in supporting Ukraine.

The task force established forums where teens and children can communicate by sending messages of hope and solidarity to children in Ukraine (such as the World Project). It also enables them to write letters, draw pictures, or make videos expressing their support and encouragement for the children living in the war and distribute the “My Life Journey” book among the children who left Ukraine and IDP children in collaboration with FICE Netherlands. They conduct and host a series of training courses for social workers to enhance their skills and knowledge in working with traumatized children in cooperation with Mulberry Bush. The classes are designed to provide valuable skills and knowledge that will aid social workers in working with traumatized children.

Current Activity

The "Hand in Hand" task force regularly communicates with FICE Ukraine representatives to fully grasp the situation on the ground.

Additionally, it closely monitors FICE activities in different countries and the economic support operations of groups associated with FICE.

The task force is also taking proactive steps, such as establishing support centers for treating post-trauma victims and enhancing the participation of FICE representatives in countries hosting refugees.

The main activities of the task force include:

Operation Meetings: The FICE special task force coordinates meetings weekly and monthly. The Hand in Hand task force co-chairs hold weekly meetings to organize, prioritize work plans, and assess the current situation. This level of organization and planning is crucial to ensure that the task force can provide practical support to vulnerable children affected by the crisis in Ukraine. Through regular evaluations, the task force can keep track of its progress and make necessary adjustments to its approach to ensure it meets its objectives efficiently.

Strategic meetings The "Hand in Hand" task force held four general strategic meetings with other participants and guests. These meetings aim to establish the main objectives of Hand in Hand and discover the

possibility of cooperating with other organizations, which is a crucial step towards achieving the task force's goals. Collaborating with other organizations ensures that vulnerable children affected by crises receive the care and support they need. By working together, Hand in Hand and other organizations can combine their resources and expertise to provide comprehensive assistance to needy children. The meetings were successful and paved the way for future collaborations and partnerships.

Professional Development: On December 29th, 2022, Dr. Irit Ben Mordechai and Dr. Bob Chernick delivered a lecture on "Understanding Children's Coping Mechanisms: A Model for Dealing with Traumatic Events." The lecture provided more than 60 participants in the social sphere all over Ukraine with valuable insights into working with children in traumatic situations and the central resources available to support them. Social workers must remain informed and equipped to provide the best possible care for vulnerable children. By attending these lectures, they have enabled themselves to impact the well-being of the children and young people significantly they work with. The knowledge gained from these

lectures provides a unique opportunity to improve the quality of care for vulnerable children.

In March 2023, a group of Ukrainian school principals, representatives from educational departments of communities, and the UEP program director visited Israel. The head of the child protection department of the UEP accompanied them. The purpose of the trip was to visit educational institutions in Israel and learn from their experiences on how to organize educational services during and after wartime. The goal was to provide the participants with information on improving educational services during wartime and to familiarize them with Israel's best practices, which they could implement in their respective communities and schools

Lifebook for Youth (May 2023) was created by FICE Netherlands, which shared it with the UEP, which distributed it among Ukrainian children who were forced to leave their homes because of war and its consequences. The Lifebook for Youth can give them a new and expanded view of their past, from which they can draw strength and confidence for their future. Also, Ukrainian children who relocated to Poland and Italy can work with the book.

Round Tables Beginning in November 2023, a series of Round Tables on “Educational Dialogue” has been conducted for Ukrainian educators. These events are organized by the FICE International "Hand in Hand" working group, FICE Israel, and the Revived Gymnasiums of Ukraine Association to develop best practices and research ways of implementing them in the Ukrainian education system. These events aim to acquire knowledge and ideas that can be used to bring about qualitative changes in the Ukrainian education system. Hitherto, several Round Tables have been conducted, as described below:

"Psychosocial state of students and applicants during the educational process: methods and ways of monitoring."

"Realization of children's rights in the education system of Ukraine (from kindergarten to secondary school)."

"Educational process during war: practical experience of educators."

"Preservation and maintenance of the emotional state of teachers: strategies to combat professional burnout."

Emotional Literacy 40 Ukrainian educators working with children in 1st-4th grades received training on social-emotional learning by Dr. Alex Schneider, essential to providing children with the necessary

tools to understand and manage their emotions. The fact that they could adopt Israel's experience and implement these practices in their educational process is a significant step forward in promoting social-emotional learning in Ukraine. The following topics were discussed at the meetings: cross-bordering communication between children via a regular approach (peer-to-peer communication), closer contact between children worldwide, supporting families in protecting children and increasing future security and connections of the children.

Cooperation with the Office of the Educational Ombudsman: In collaboration with the Office of the Educational Ombudsman, we conducted teacher training on the topic of 'Social and Emotional Literacy.' The trainer was Dr Alex Schneider, who shared essential knowledge about the role of emotions in children's learning. More than 60 teachers attended the training, prepared homework, and received additional credits for their professional development.

Professional Development conducted by Mulberry Bush:

Mulberry Bush conducted and hosted a series of training courses for social workers to enhance their skills and knowledge in working with

traumatized children. The sessions were designed to provide valuable skills and expertise to aid them in this work.

At the end of 2022, the TC Elders from Mulberry Bush organized a **therapeutic community seminar** for ten social work specialists who work with children and families in Ukraine. The seminar focused on using the TC Elder methodology for group therapy and supervision, which has yet to be widely known and practiced in the country. Despite the challenges, the seminar was successfully held to improve the quality of care for children and families.

Mulberry Bush training sessions for social workers in Ukraine started in April 2022. The first social worker training was in April 2022, and more than 40 professionals took part to understand the theoretical origins of attachment theory. Attachment theory briefly introduces the four main attachment styles and their relevance to children's learning, behavior, relationships, and stress response systems.

In 2023, Mulberry Bush presented a series of webinars, “**Working with Childhood Trauma - Theory and Practice,**” as part of the work of the Special task force “Hand in Hand.” This event was targeted towards social workers and psychologists. The purpose of the event was to improve the professional competencies of specialists

working with children and families who have had traumatic experiences related to war or other adverse events. It included an Introduction to the theory, behavior as communication, working with trauma, and a practical part.

In April 2023, Mulberry Bush conducted a training course on “Reflective Practice, Behaviour as Communication, Attachment Theory, and Working with Trauma.” Sixty people participated in the course and received new, beneficial knowledge and skills.

In 2024, a new course on “Supporting ourselves, colleagues, and those we care about in our communities” began, designated for 100 social workers from all over Ukraine. The topics include resilience, communication skills, child behavior, and reflective practice. The sessions include group work, sharing professional practices, and discussing the training sessions and their implementation at work.

By working with Mulberry Bush, we plan and aim:

To increase awareness of trauma psychology among parents and others.

To enhance the resilience of individuals in Ukraine through specialized resilience centers.

To improve understanding of trauma among teachers, social workers, psychologists, etc.

To combine three different types of activities:

- A "Trauma and Resilience" course consists of 4-5 sessions tailored for social workers, psychologists, teachers, etc.
- A reflection group for 6-8 TC Elders who have encountered challenging cases at work and wish to find solutions.
- A meeting was designed for youth and volunteers from various organizations and churches to discuss tools for emotional literacy, including identifying those who need support and helping them better understand their emotions.

International Relations:

January 24, 2023, Mrs. Tanya Zhornitska, principal of School No 26 in Odesa and vice president of the Ukrainian High School Principals' Association, was invited to the Israeli leadership convention of the Israeli Teachers Union in Tel Aviv to share her experience leading a school with 650 children from the beginning of the war in Ukraine

until then. This was an opportunity to present firsthand the situation of children and youth and their educators during the war.

In March 2023, Professor Emanuel Grupper (president of FICE Israel), Sarah Israeli from the ITU, and Nahum Rintzler, the Neve Haddasa Youth Village director, organized a reception dinner and a musical performance. Fifteen teenagers from several Youth Villages in Israel were invited. It was essential to have the young Ukrainian teens' voices heard.

In May 2023, a Joint statement on the forcible transfer, deportation, and adoption of children from Ukraine by Russia was published. A collective effort has been made by FICE International and the UEP, along with 35 other countries, to release a Joint Statement in this regard. The statement highlights the critical issue of children being taken away from their families and their home country against their will. This joint statement aims to bring attention to this matter and call for action to prevent such unjust practices from occurring.

UEP, with the invaluable support of FICE International, has spearheaded a significant information campaign for Children's Day titled "Country of Responsible Adults." This campaign, which took

place in Warsaw and Lviv, was a collective effort that underscored the pivotal role of adults in shaping the lives of children.

During the FICE General Assembly and the Jubilee Conference held in Serbia in September 2022, Marianna Bilyk, co-chair of the Hand in Hand task force, presented the status of Ukrainian children during the war. She shared a video highlighting children's needs in Ukraine and explained how the FICE special task force “Hand in Hand” has been working to respond to those needs since August 2022. Together with other FICE members, they planned the task force's activities to support vulnerable children during emergencies such as the crisis in Ukraine. The Hand in Hand task force has been making commendable efforts to enhance the safety and well-being of children displaced from their homes, those in alternative care institutions, and other crisis-affected children. The primary focus of the task force is to address the needs of these children who are at high risk of developing stress, fear, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The Hand in Hand task force has provided essential social-emotional resources and ensured access to education and other necessary services to support these children. They have also established resilience centers to support and promote the affected

children's well-being. Overall, the Hand in Hand task force's work aligns with FICE's mission to ensure that every child and young person has access to high-quality care and support.

The task force is taking initiatives to provide aid and support to those in need. It has established support centers for treating post-trauma victims and increased the involvement of FICE representatives in host countries that receive refugees. The task force positively impacts the lives of vulnerable children and young people by gathering data, transferring information, identifying emerging challenges, and raising ideas based on what is happening on the ground.

Friends from around the world

Since the first days of the full-scale invasion, members of the FICE International network have assisted the UEP. Our partners have offered to find shelter for children abroad, provided the opportunity to create additional beds in the western regions, feed people and children, and deliver medicines and hygiene kits. The assistance from the network members continues to come in the form of expert support

and increased awareness of child protection during the war in the form of friendly encouragement, regular meetings, consultations, etc. This support is significant for the Hand in Hand working group, the UEP, and Ukraine.

FICE Canada: Ms. Marianna Bilyk received an invitation from Professor James Anglin, the head of FICE Canada, to present the state of affairs concerning children in Ukraine at a round table discussion scheduled for May 2023.

FICE Croatia: One of our sessions shared Ms. Lucija Vejmelka's and Petra Hrvoj's experiences working with children in alternative care in Ukraine. They highlighted challenges such as integration, language, and education as significant barriers many children face in similar situations. It is heartening to hear that Croatia has taken steps to help these children integrate into society by forming sports groups and providing education opportunities. It is also commendable that FICE Croatia actively seeks to work with children from alternative care in Ukraine and help them integrate into the Croatian educational system. Nonetheless, it is essential to prioritize the safety and well-being of all

involved in such situations, especially in ongoing conflicts. Unfortunately, the planned training session for social workers had to be canceled. Nevertheless, ensuring everyone's safety in such situations is crucial.

FICE Germany: Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Lisa Albrecht, the head of FICE Germany, and Ms. Sophia Chabursky, a colleague from the Deutsches Jugendinstitut organization, the first-round table for educators was held with featured speakers. During the event, Ms. Chabursky presented research on Ukrainian adolescents living in Germany.

FICE International: The special task force “Hand in Hand” closely cooperates with FICE International. The following passage is a heartfelt tribute to the FICE individuals who offered their unwavering support and assistance right from the start with open hearts and a willingness to help. It is essential to acknowledge their contribution to the success of this endeavour. The FICE President, Dr. Anna Schmidt; the late Professor Emmanuel Grupper, who was FICE Vice President; FICE Secretary, Mr. Patrick Reason; and FICE Treasurer, Mr. Rolf Widmer, played pivotal roles in ensuring everything ran smoothly. Additionally, the three FICE Technical Assistants, Katerina Ivanova,

Margarita Ihtimanska, Cristina González, and Rosa Núñez, have provided exceptional support.

FICE Israel, led by late Professor Emmanuel Grupper, played a significant role in establishing the FICE special task force "Hand in Hand." They were instrumental in suggesting the appointment of Colonel (IDF Res) Dr. Alex Schneider to lead the task force. Additionally, members of FICE Israel (Yosi Zaguri and Ira Konstinsky) were actively involved in organizing and conducting events for "Hand in Hand." FICE Israel has provided support in various forms, such as organizing round tables, training, lectures, and publishing articles. FICE Israel has also provided expert assistance in the Resilience Centre's work in Ukraine and methodological materials. It is commendable to see the level of involvement and support FICE Israel has supplied in the Hand in Hand task force's efforts to help vulnerable children affected by the Ukraine crisis.

FICE Netherlands: Ms. Martine Tobe, the head of FICE Netherlands, together with Mr. Peter Van de Pol, provided support to children who were forced to flee from the war in April-May 2022. One of the initiatives that FICE Netherlands has implemented is the My Life Journey Book (a product of the cooperation of FICE NL and

Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (the University of Groningen). This activity book is designed to strengthen children's resilience by making them aware of their strengths and sources of support. The book includes games and questions about their journey, daily life in Ukraine and the host country, and things that make them happy, such as their favorite music, food, and superheroes. It is a great way to help children cope with their challenges and remind them of the positive aspects of their lives.

FICE USA: As an active member of the FICE special task force "Hand in Hand," Mr. Charles Hooker, the head of FICE USA, organized a meeting on deinstitutionalization in Ukraine. The meeting was highly informative for our team, and we look forward to continued collaboration with the participating experts.

FICE Romania: Elena Matache has provided valuable consulting support, and we expect to share our experience in creating social services in communities, following the example of Concordia, which works in many European countries.

FICE Serbia has provided a platform for discussing the war in Ukraine and its consequences for Ukrainian children. Thanks to

Zeljka Burgund, FICE Ukraine and Hand in Hand presented their work and met in a live meeting with the FICE International team. As part of the General Assembly, Marianna Bilyk (a representative from FICE Ukraine) and the co-chair of Hand in Hand were elected as FICE Europe Board members.

FICE Switzerland has been doing a great job of incorporating child refugees from Ukraine into its public school system. Many of these children receive extra language classes and follow the Ukrainian school program through distance learning, which shows their commitment to providing quality education. Although there are challenges, such as building new relationships and dealing with trauma, the responsible authorities provide supervision, and the civil society offers professional support to the families and children. We hope the Ukrainian ministries will also offer special protection to these children regarding their care and legal frameworks. Switzerland's efforts to support these children and families are commendable, and we believe they will continue to do so. The task group discovered a language barrier during initial attempts to organize lectures and seminars in English to assist professional care workers in Ukraine. After analyzing the lessons learned from these attempts, it

was agreed that there should be no language barrier in guidance and instruction on delicate matters such as dealing with crises. Therefore, all contents should be conveyed to the participants in their native language. Mr. Rolf Widmer helped us by providing the necessary funds for this two-year mission.

The president of FICE International joined the “Hand in Hand” meeting and shared the following information with the participants: As of 18 February 2023, Switzerland has counted 18,200 refugee children from Ukraine aged 4 - 15. They were all integrated into the Swiss public school system. Funds were also donated to our partner organization, Peaceful Sky, which provides warm lunches to the refugees in the region. The funds were directed to preparing 500 portions of the children's menu.

Annex A

roundtable meetings plan program

4th Round Table:

Preservation and maintenance of the emotional state of educators: strategies to combat burnout.

Question:

- What methods and tools can be used to support the emotional state of educators and prevent burnout?
- How can educators increase their self-awareness regarding their emotional state and develop self-help and self-support skills?

Potential speaker from Ukraine: Svitlana Roiz, a child and family psychologist specializing in child psychology, parent-child relationships, and solving problems with teenagers.

5th Round Table:

Combating bullying and violence during the online and offline educational process -

Questions:

- How can bullying and student violence be effectively identified and prevented in both online and offline learning environments?
- How do we raise the awareness of students, parents, and teaching staff about the consequences of bullying and violence and include them in the joint fight against these phenomena?

Potential speaker from Ukraine: Larissa Gretchenko, lawyer, mediator, head of the "Child Advocate" Center of the Higher Academy of Sciences of the National Academy of Sciences, Head of the Committee on Family Law of the National Academy of Sciences

6th Round Table:

Stimulating the Interest and increasing the Motivation of male and Female Students in the Educational Process: challenges and Modern Approaches

Questions:

- What modern methods and approaches can stimulate students' interest and activity in the educational process?
- What roles do teachers and parents play in promoting positive motivation for learning, and how can they encourage self-motivation among students?

Potential speaker from Ukraine: Anton Atamanchuk - primary school teacher blogger.

7th Round Table:

Working with children with special educational needs. Creating an accessible environment for children with special educational needs.

Question:

- How to ensure inclusiveness and create favorable conditions for children with special educational needs in educational institutions: adaptation of academic space and innovative technologies.

Potential speakers from Ukraine:

- Olha Nabochenko, state expert of the expert group on out-of-school and inclusive education of the directorate of preschool, school, out-of-school and inclusive education of the Ministry of Education and Culture, candidate of pedagogical sciences;
- Nelya Koretska, Head of the Department of Education of Children with Special Needs of the Main Department of Out-of-School and Inclusive Education.

8th Round Table:

Non-traumatic communication about the war and its consequences with students of different age groups, taking into account life circumstances.

Questions:

- How educators can create a safe space for students who have encountered war and its consequences.
- How can students' life circumstances be considered when conducting lessons and discussions about the war to ensure non-traumatic communication?

Potential speaker from Ukraine: Khrystyna Shabat, head of the Center for the Dignity of the Child of the Ukrainian Catholic University and co-founder of the network of kindergartens "Ptashenya. Children's space."

9th Round Table:

Integration of youth into the system of higher education.

Question:

- How can school education prepare male and female students for admission to a higher education institution?
- What opportunities for self-development and professional growth exist for young people who do not want to enter higher education institutions ("Gap Year," non-formal education)?

Potential speakers from Ukraine:

- Yevgenia Mateychuk - Acting Head of the Ukrainian Leadership Academy,
- Khrystyna Saveyko is head of the executive board of the Ukrainian Student League.

10th Round Table:

The importance of introducing sex education classes in educational institutions.

Question:

- How can sex education contribute to the formation of a healthy approach to one's own body and relationships among students?
- How do we ensure that sex education meets the age characteristics of students?

Potential speaker from Ukraine: Yuliya Dombrovska — tutor on sexual education, sociologist, Ph.D. student. programs of Taras Shevchenko Kyiv National University,

11th Round Table:

Positioning of gender roles in the modern educational environment.

Question:

- How do stereotypes about gender roles affect the well-being development of students and their choice of professional path?
- How can educational institutions contribute to breaking gender stereotypes and support a non-discrimination approach?

Potential speaker from Ukraine: Yana Pekun - expert on gender equality and inclusion.

12th Round Table:

Creating a safe environment for abused children.

Question:

- What methods and tools should be used during the educational process to identify cases of child abuse, as well as the system of support and response to them?
- How do we promote children's active participation in creating a safe environment?
- How can organizations and institutions work with an educational institution to create a compelling and safe environment for abused children?

Potential speaker from Ukraine: Ann Fitak, an expert on combating violence and the author of the manual "School Free of Violence."

13th Round Table:

Topic: Information hygiene for educators

Questions:

1. How can implementing information hygiene improve learning effectiveness and help develop critical thinking when perceiving and processing information?
2. In what ways can educators contribute to the development of students' skills in independent study and information analysis?

Potential speaker from Ukraine:

Oksana Moroz is a video blogger, lecturer, and writer. She is also the author and presenter of radio and TV programs on information hygiene and the founder of the volunteer initiative "How Not to Become a Vegetable." Oksana Moroz has been a regular guest speaker at the Kyiv-Mohyla Business School since 2015.

Annex B

A caregiver's seminar on supporting Ukrainian youth (plans for the 2025)

In partnership with FICE Switzerland, the task force is organizing an international symposium to empower professionals to support children in care and foster children from Ukraine. The seminar addresses the out-of-home education sector's challenges, including required resources, coordination, and guidance. It will serve as a platform for exchanging best practices, fostering collaboration, and building a support network for educators and caregivers.

The seminar will focus on:

- Sharing best practices and lessons learned to enhance education quality for Ukrainian youth.
- Collaborating to identify partnerships and resources to support educators and caregivers.

- Establishing a support network for professional growth and mutual assistance.

An action plan with four key objectives will be developed:

1. Identify needs and priorities within Ukraine's out-of-home education sector.
2. Draft a guide to address cultural differences, trauma, resilience, and integration for displaced teenagers.
3. Plan for the safe return of children living abroad, with clear criteria for their transition.
4. Develop standardized tools to assess each child's unique needs, with host country representatives to clarify these needs.

The seminar will provide tools and guidance to support twice-displaced children, fostering trust and enhancing their opportunities despite the challenges of displacement due to war.

Participation and input from various stakeholders are crucial for the success of this initiative.

Annex C

Hand in Hand group members

Lucija Vejmel	Croatia	FICE Croatia
Julia Kuokkanen	Finland	FICE Finland
Caroline Rose	G.B	Senior Advocacy
Judith Issac	G.B	Mulberry Bush
Maria Hemmings	G.B	Mulberry Bush
Lisa Albrecht	Germany	FICE Germany
Ira Kostinsky	Israel	Ministry of Education
Yossi Zagury	Israel	Ministry of Education
BatHen Weinhaber	Israel	Israeli Teachers Union
Alex Schneider	Israel	Fice Israel
Amos Hermon	Israel	Jewish Agency
Anna Poliak,	Israel	School principal
Bella Bassan	Israel	School principal
Gadi Lahave,	Israel	Educational Adviser
Robert Chernick	Israel	Psychologist
Sara Israeli	Israel	Israeli Teachers Union
Uri Yaniv	Israel	Israeli Teachers Union
Yafa Ben David	Israel	Israeli Teachers Union

Fred Verboon Netherland European Principle Association

Eugen Simion Romania FICE Romania

Rolf Widmer Suisse Association tipiti www.tipiti.ch

Chaya Wolff Ukrain Chabad Odessa

Vitalii Pazdrii Ukrain Educational adviser

Aliona Zorina Ukraine UCPN

Irene Danysh Ukraine NGO Ukrainian Education Platform, lead
of active citizen direction

Iryna Shemechko, Ukraine NGO Care in action, head of the
organization

Julia Kirillova Ukraine RGU Representative school no 26
Odessa

Khrystyna Shabat, Ukraine, NGO Centre for the Dignity of the Child
at Ukrainian Catholic University

Marianna Bilyk, Ukraine NGO Ukrainian Education Platform,

Sosnovskaya Maria Ukraine Translator

Tatyana Zohar, Ukraine Vice President RGU

Vasylyna Dybaylo , Ukraine NGO Partnership for every child,
head of organization

Yeroslave Turiansky , Ukraine President RGU

Yuliya Kokoyachuk	Ukraine	Ministry of Social Policy
Yuri Yabok	Ukraine	Borispol School principal
Егор Мельниченко	Ukraine	Student
Albert Feldman	Ukraine	Kiev Golda Meir istetution
Khrystyna Kupcheva	Ukraine	
Natalia Honcharova	Ukraine	
Solomiia Kamad	Ukraine	
Celina Jensen	USA	