






*Apuntes Universitarios*, 2023: 13 (1), enero-marzo  
ISSN: 2304-0335 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17162/au.v13i1.1329>

## **Integración educativa de personas desplazadas forzosamente en los países de la UE**

### **Educational integration of forcibly displaced persons in the EU countries**

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**Recibido:** 28 de julio de 2022

**Aceptado:** 23 de octubre de 2022

### **Resumen**

El objetivo de este trabajo fue estudiar la política de los estados miembros de la UE sobre la integración educativa de las personas desplazadas por las fuerzas de Ucrania e identificar sus consecuencias. Se realizaron entrevistas con personas desplazadas por la fuerza de Ucrania a seis países de la UE. Se utilizó el Cuestionario de Motivación Escolar de Luskanova y la Escala de Ansiedad Escolar de Phillips. Se observó que los países de acogida tienen no solo una carga adicional de organizar y proporcionar asilo, sino también el capital humano adicional que puede contribuir a su desarrollo económico en el futuro. Por lo tanto, el tema de la rápida adaptación de las personas desplazadas por la fuerza y su integración en la educación de los países de acogida es importante. Se encontró que todos los países de la UE han tomado medidas para brindar protección a los ciudadanos ucranianos y sus hijos y muchos han creado las condiciones adecuadas para una rápida integración educativa. El principal obstáculo en la adaptación es la falta de conocimiento del idioma del país de acogida, que se supera a través de cursos intensivos de idioma, provisión de traductores, así como la creación de clases de idioma ucraniano con una transición gradual a la enseñanza en el idioma de el país anfitrión.

**Palabras claves:** Unión Europea, Ucrania, adaptación, integración, lengua extranjera, choque cultural.

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**Abstract**

The aim of this work was to study the policy of the EU member states on the educational integration of forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine and to identify its consequences. Interviews were conducted with forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine to six EU countries. The School Motivation Questionnaire, by Luskanova, and the Phillips' School Anxiety Scale were used. The hosting countries have got not only an additional burden of organizing and providing asylum, but also additional human capital that can contribute to their economic development in the future. Therefore, the issue of rapid adaptation of forcibly displaced persons and their integration into the education of the host countries is important. It was found that all EU countries have taken measures to provide protection to Ukrainian citizens and their children. Many countries have created the proper conditions for rapid educational integration. The main obstacle on this way is lack of knowledge of the language of the host country, which are overcome through intensive language courses, the provision of translators, as well as the creation of Ukrainian-language classes with a gradual transition to teaching in the language of the host country.

**Keywords:** European Union, Ukraine, adaptation, integration, foreign language, culture shock.

**Introduction**

Natural disasters, wars and conflicts, climate change (Persson, 2022) make the population of countries to forcibly displace outside their borders in search of a safe place. The whole world and Europe have already faced the problem of receiving and integrating many immigrants. In 2015, there was a "refugee crisis in Europe" associated with the forced migration of Syrians as a result of the military conflict in Syria. Turkey, Greece, Germany, Italy, Sweden, France, Spain, Austria, Norway and other countries experienced the largest influx of refugees to European countries since the Second World War. Not only the countries of origin of the refugees and their population suffer from such phenomena, but also the host countries.

It is necessary to integrate displaced persons into the host society as quickly as possible in order to reduce the negative manifestations of the forced displacement processes. This is especially true for children, since they make up almost half of the displaced persons, and the vast majority of children are of school age. For example, there were about 58,000 refugees in Greece in 2018, of which 22,500 were school children. The faster the child integrates into the educational environment of the host country, the higher will be his or her success in learning and acquiring a profession. And the acquisition of higher education, the recognition of qualifications obtained in the country of origin of refugees and their overcoming of language barriers increase their potential and contribution to the socio-economic development of the host country. Education stimulates integration (Kushnir, 2022) and is its tool (Martin & Stulgaitis, 2022). Lack of education, or

education acquired in the country of origin, but not recognized by the host country, results in the employment of skilled refugee workers in low-paying non-professional jobs (Santini et al., 2022).

### ***Literature Review***

The migration of children has been mentioned in the academic literature since 2000's only (Taskin & Erdemli, 2018). The involvement of refugee children in the educational process is currently a component of the concept of inclusive education (Ochana, 2022). Refugee children are the most vulnerable. Schooling can help them overcome stress, avoid negative influences and promote their integration (Abamosa et al., 2020). Teachers and government officials play the key role in the process of integration of refugees (Marcu, 2018; Soriano & Cala, 2019). The difference in education and income of migrants, refugees, those who returned to their native country and those who did not leave it was considered on the example of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Efendic et al., 2022).

The integration policy of different countries differs (Tarozzi & Inguaggiato, 2018). There are different integration models. The "French republican model" that appeared in the 60's of the last century is well-known (Soriano & Cala, 2019). It was based on linguistic and cultural assimilation of refugees. The model of integration in Spain, Portugal and Greece has been called the "Mediterranean model of immigration", which tried to combine elements of multiculturalism and assimilation.

At the moment, researchers are working on the development of educational programmes that should provide education in universities to improve inclusive European citizenship (Koehler, 2019). This is the way to improve education for all and ensure sustainable development (Lems, 2020). In Austria, 22 universities participated in the MORE Programme for the integration of refugee students into higher education in the host country (Bacher et al., 2020). They took into account the need to learn the language of the host country, to make up for lost time through intensive courses to eliminate educational gaps (Tzoraki, 2019), to provide didactic materials (Sarmini et al., 2020), to support refugee schoolchildren outside of school, to certify the knowledge of schoolchildren who do not have the necessary certificates, ensuring a parallel continuation of learning the native language (Tzoraki, 2019), etc.

For the other hand, technology advances have enabled educational integration online (Zlatkin-Troitschanskaia et al., 2018) and during the 2020 pandemic (Gomez, 2022). For example,

student youth who have been forced to move to another country widely use the Kiron Open Higher Education platform. Mobile devices are also widely used in the educational integration of refugee students (Drolia et al., 2020). There are also quotas for university places for foreign students, including refugees (Altinkalp et al., 2022; Grüttner et al., 2018). Scholarships are provided to future students to study the language (Schneider, 2018), because not everyone can pay for language courses, which are paid before being granted refugee status.

In light of all the previous background, the aim of this work was to analyse the changes in the policy of European states on the educational integration of forcible displaced persons in 2022 and the consequences it had. This study involved the following research objectives: 1. Determine the EU countries that received refugees from Ukraine based on the analysis of statistics; 2. study the policies of the EU member state on the educational integration of forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine; 3. conduct a survey of forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine in order to study their attitude to the educational integration of them and their children into the society of the host country; and 4. Determine the degree of adaptation of refugee children in EU schools.

## **Methods**

### ***Design***

This study has empirical character and was conducted in four stages. The first stage involved an analysis of statistics on the distribution of forcibly displaced persons in the EU countries and integration of refugee children in EU schools. The second stage provided for research of the educational integration policies followed by the EU countries that received forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine. All existing legislative and legal acts of the EU countries, which relate to the issue of displacement of Ukrainians, were studied for this purpose. The programmes of support of displaced persons from Ukraine on the path of their educational integration in the host countries were also analysed.

The third stage involved a semi-structured interview with the parents of children who were forcibly displaced from Ukraine to the EU after February 24, 2022. The fourth stage provided for determining the degree of adaptation of forcibly displaced children in the schools of the host countries. This study was free from bias and neutral. This was achieved by preliminary testing on volunteers familiar with the results and who agreed with them. The selected research tools

corresponded to the purpose and tasks set, which made it possible to achieve the validity of the research.

### ***Participants***

Only 315 people were included in the sample: 217 are school-aged children and 98 parents of those children. All of them forcibly displaced from Ukraine to the EU after February 24, 2022. More than 70% displaced not with the whole family (the father stayed in Ukraine); 11% of families moved with grandparents; 19% displaced with the whole family. The number of children in the families was as follows: 10% had one child in the family, 64% had two children in the family, and 26% had three or more children. The sample families distributed in the EU countries in the following way: 52% in Poland; 16% in Bulgaria; 12% in Germany; 8% in Italy; 6% in France; 6% in Austria.

### ***Instruments***

The study involved the following methods: statistical analysis of data from the Operational data portal: Ukraine Refugee situation, Ukraine: Humanitarian Impact Situation Report As of 3:00 p.m. (EET) on 16 March 2022 (UN); Migration management: Welcoming refugees from Ukraine (European Commission, 2022); analysis of legislative and legal documents and programmes of EU countries to support persons forcibly displaced from Ukraine since February 24, 2022.

### ***Data collection***

Semi-structured interviews were developed and conducted online with one of the parents of the displaced child, who stays with the child in the host country. The purpose of a semi-structured interview was to establish the difficulties faced by parents and their children on the way to the educational integration of children in a new country of residence. The School Motivation Questionnaire (by Luskanova) and the Phillips' School Anxiety Scale were used in order to determine the degree of adaptation of children to a new school and team under new living conditions (Table 1).

**Table 1**

*Methods of determining the adaptation of children in schools of the EU host countries*

<b>Method</b>	<b>Obtained results</b>		<b>Maximum score</b>
School Motivation Questionnaire (by Luskanova)	Less than 10 points	negative attitude to school	30
	10-14 points	the attitude towards oneself as a schoolboy/schoolgirl has not been established	
	15-19 points	positive attitude towards school, but studying is not what I like about school	
	20-24 points	the attitude towards oneself as a schoolboy/schoolgirl has almost been established	
	25-30 points	the attitude towards oneself as a schoolboy/schoolgirl has been established, high educational activity	
Phillips' School Anxiety Scale	General anxiety at school		<50 %
	Experiencing social stress		increased
	Frustration of the need to succeed		anxiety < 75
	Fear of self-expression		% high
	Fear of a knowledge test situation		anxiety
	Fear of not meeting the expectations of the environment		
	Low physiological resistance to stress		
	Fear of relationships with teachers		

***Analysis of data***

Open answers to interview questions were recorded and coded. Their content was analyzed and divided into categories. The results are presented in tables and diagrams. Reliability analysis was performed using Cronbach's coefficient, which ranged from 0.72 to 0.79, indicating high reliability. Construct validity ranged from 0.76 to 0.85. Mathematical data processing methods were also used.

***Ethical criteria***

Written consent for participation was obtained from each research participant. Participation in the pedagogical experiment was voluntary, free of charge, and anonymous. The questionnaire was conducted in compliance with all ethical standards. There was enough time allocated for answers.

## Results

In connection with the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine, Ukrainians were forced to leave their homes and look for a safer place. According to Operational data portal: Ukraine Refugee situation, 5,261,278 people were forced to move to European countries as of June 21, 2022, leaving Ukraine since February 24, 2022. At the same time, 3,514,970 requested asylum or temporary protection in European countries.

Poland received the most forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine. As of June 21, 2022, there were 1,180,677 people who requested temporary protection. This is about 33.5% of all displaced persons. Forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine requested asylum In Romania 40,202 (1.1%), Slovakia 78,782 (2.2%), Hungary 25,042 (0.7%), Germany 662,274 (19%), the Czech Republic 379,524 (11%), Italy 127,362 (3.6%), Spain 123,973 (3.5%), France 87,972 (2.5%), Great Britain 82,100 (2.3%), Bulgaria 116,581 (3.3), Austria 72,715 (2%), in the Netherlands 65,550 (1.9%) and in more than 20 European countries about 12%.

According to different data, more than 50% of forcibly displaced persons are children of preschool and school age, as well as students of educational institutions of various accreditation levels. As of October 11, 2022, 644,098 refugee children from Ukraine have been integrated into EU schools (European Commission, 2022). There are more than 700,000 Ukrainian children in Poland, who are planned to be integrated into the Polish education system. There are about 10,000 children in Austria.

Table 2 details the specifics of submitting documents for enrolling a displaced child in an educational institution of the host country. Also, these tables show that different EU countries adhere to different policies regarding the educational integration of forcibly displaced children from Ukraine. Some countries, for example, Finland, Italy, have extensive experience in the integration of refugees, which is reflected in their programmes. Other states were forced to quickly adapt their programmes to the large influx of forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine with regard to the positive international experience.

**Table 2***The procedure for enrolling a child in an educational institution*

<b>Country</b>	<b>The procedure for enrolling a child in an educational institution</b>
Poland	Submit an application to the school principal. The class (year of study) is determined on the basis of documents issued by the Ukrainian school, and in their absence —on the basis of the parents' statement only
Germany	Register the child in the coordination office in the district in which he or she lives
Austria	Write a message to the Department of Education e-mail, indicating the place of temporary residence attaching a copy of the Ukrainian school certificate (report card), if available
Belgium	Children are admitted to school regardless of their status
Bulgaria	Submit an application (in Bulgarian) to the regional education department, indicating the class the child graduated from in Ukrainian school, the child's native language, the level of foreign language proficiency, etc. The education department sends the child to a specific educational institution
Greece	Education of children starts immediately after arrival in the country
Denmark	Depending on the commune, children can be admitted to school without status. Parents should apply to the municipality of the place of temporary residence
Estonia	Submit a written application to the local self-government body, which is looking for a place for the child in school and, together with the parents, find an opportunity and develop a plan for the child's education
Spain	It is necessary to obtain a residence permit in Spain. It is necessary to contact the centres where temporarily displaced persons are received
Italy	Upon written application of parents to the nearest educational institution. Enrolment is carried out by the head of the educational institution according to the relevant instructions
Latvia	Contact the municipality's education specialists, who will help register the child for an educational institution
Netherlands	Regardless of status
Portugal	Contact the educational institution at the place of residence. Enrolment is carried out according to a simplified procedure
Romania	A child can be enrolled as an attendee in a state educational institution by applying to the school inspectorate at the place of residence
Slovakia	Provide the director with a document confirming that proceedings have been opened to grant temporary asylum or refugee status
Turkey	Child's residence permit, application, certificate from previous school
Hungary	Contact the Department of Education
Finland	Visit the Reception Centre which provides assistance to temporarily displaced persons
France	Contact the city hall
Croatia	Contact the nearest school
Czech Republic	Contact the nearest school at the place of residence
Sweden	Register with the Swedish National Migration Agency

By its part, table 3 presents the results of interviews with parents of children who were forced to displace to EU countries. The results of the student survey based on the method of determining the student's motivation to study at school (according to Luskanova) are presented in



Figure 1, that illustrates the results of schoolchildren survey using the School Motivation Questionnaire (by Luskanova).

**Table 3**

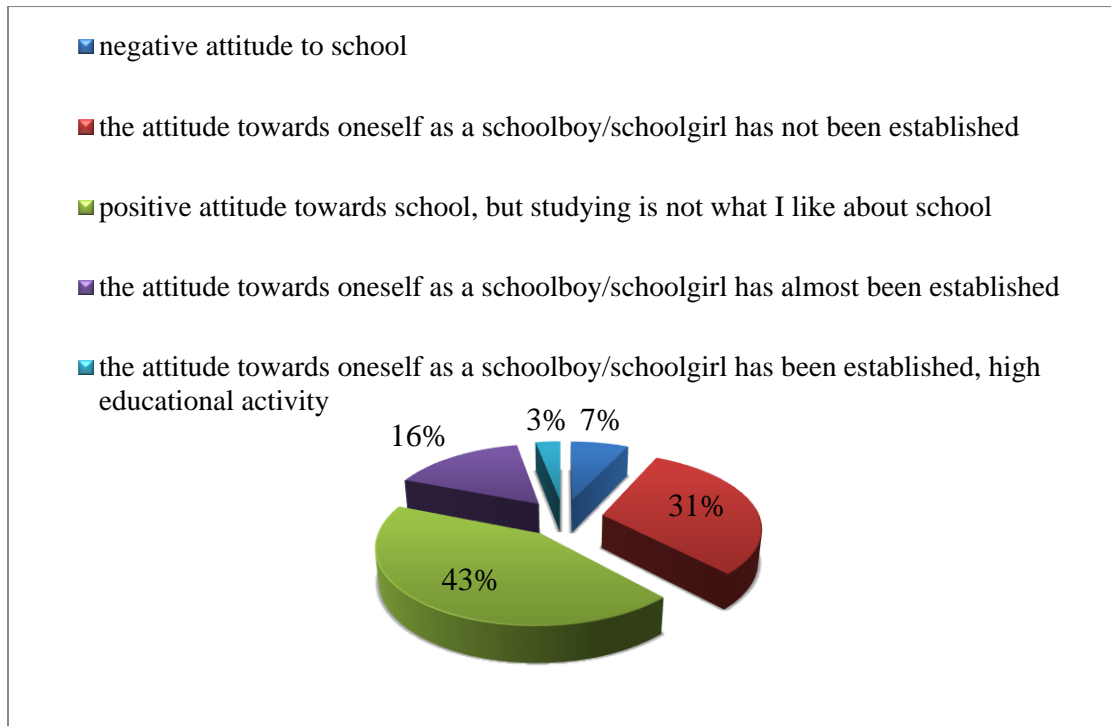
*Interview results of persons forcibly displaced from Ukraine*

Question	Share of positive answers
How long was the break in the child's education?	
up to 2 weeks	2 %
2 weeks to 1 month	6 %
1 to 2 months	82 %
Does your child study at an educational institution in the host country?	99 %
What is the form of ownership of the educational institution where your child studies in the host country?	
Public	98 %
Private	1 %
Do you attend language courses?	92 %
Do your children attend language courses?	93 %
Do your children communicate with non-Ukrainian-speaking children?	42 %
Do your children attend clubs and sports clubs?	17 %
Are there other Ukrainian-speaking children in the class where your child studies?	56 %
Has your child made new friends in the host country?	23 %
Does your child combine studies at school in the host country with online studies conducted by teachers in Ukraine?	57 %
Were you guided by the temporary situation of living in a foreign country when choosing a school and form of education?	36 %
Do you plan to return to Ukraine in the near future?	34 %
Do you plan to return to Ukraine when it becomes safe?	75 %
Do you plan to extend your stay in the host country?	67 %
What factors were you guided by when choosing the country of destination?	
Distance from Ukraine	63 %
Knowledge of the language	15 %
The education system	7 %
The opportunity to find a job	76 %

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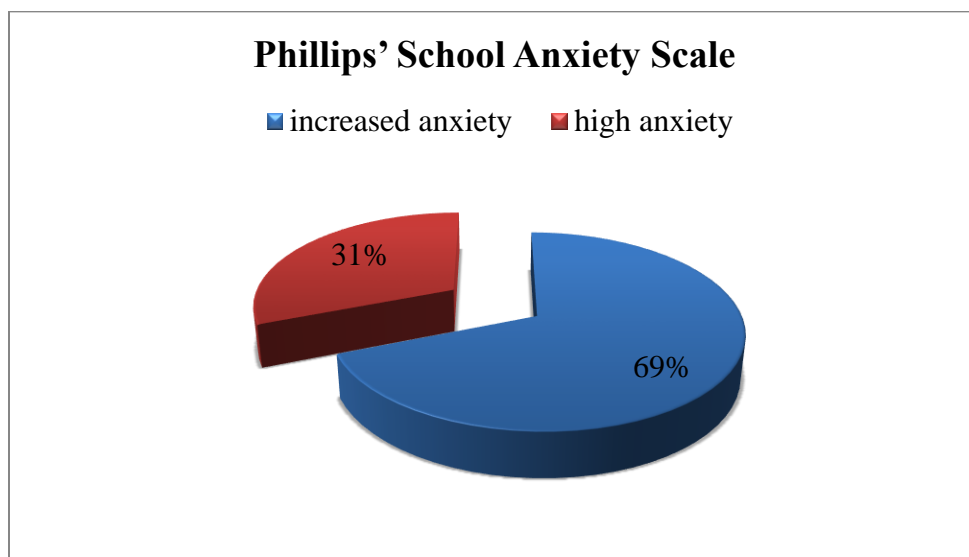
Did you know the language of the host country before you were forced to move there?	7 %
Does your child like studying at school?	29 %
Did you have any difficulties when enrolling your child to school?	31 %
Do you and your children attend Sunday school?	76 %
Have you had to receive a refusal to admit your children to an educational institution in the host country?	12 %
Do you help your children with their lessons?	66 %
How often do you visit the school where your child studies and do you communicate with his or her teachers?	11 %
Has your child experienced discrimination in the school in which he or she studies?	5 %
Did your child immediately start studying in the same class as children from the host country?	40 %
Does your child still not study together with the children of the host country, but attends integration classes?	53 %
Is it possible for your child to ask the teacher for help when he or she has difficulties caused by language barriers?	32 %
Were you required to confirm the status of a temporarily displaced person when your child entered school in the host country?	19 %
Do you think that the country in which you currently live is your home from now on?	22 %
Do your living conditions allow your child to study?	74 %
Does your child experience learning difficulties because of not knowing the language of the host country?	84 %
Did you have any difficulties in enrolling your child in a school with recognition of previous education?	13 %

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**Figure 1.** Results of schoolchildren’s survey through the Luskanova’s School Motivation Questionnaire

As Figure 1 shows, 43% of children developed a positive attitude towards the new school. However, this is only the initial stage on the way to obtaining high performance. Figure 2 presents the results of determining the level of anxiety of schoolchildren forcibly displaced from Ukraine in EU schools. The conducted research revealed some anxiety in all schoolchildren.



**Figure 2.** Results for the Phillips’ School Anxiety Scale

The research found the mean square deviations from the average percentages of the same parameters, which were evaluated in groups of forcibly displaced persons who lived in different countries. The intergroup variance, which describe fluctuations of the considered groups of forced migrants, and the intragroup variance, which describe fluctuations caused by random factors not taken into account, are unequal values. This evidences that the null hypothesis is not valid. Intergroup variance, which is the weighted sum of squares of deviations of group means from the overall mean determined by the heterogeneity of the sample, namely different living conditions and education of forcibly displaced persons in different countries, ranged from 190 to 870.

### **Discussion**

The research conducted in this paper showed that the countries of the European Union at all levels responded to the events in Ukraine in 2022. Optimum conditions have been created for the integration of forcibly displaced persons, in particular, in the education systems of the host countries. Several options were mainly used to continue the education of forcibly displaced children: education in public schools in the language of the host country and parallel language learning in courses or in Sunday schools; education in the schools of the host country in Ukrainian-language classes with a gradual transition to the language of the host country; online learning with teachers from Ukraine. All these forms contributed to the rapid restoration of the education of forcibly displaced persons, despite the stress and difficult conditions, as well as their educational integration.

Vergou (2019) proved that the accommodation of refugees in temporary camps and the attendance of schools in these camps by children do not contribute to their integration, including educational integration. The use of the Kiron Open Higher Education platform can contribute to educational integration. It allows identifying the knowledge students have at the time of their arrival in the host country and to plan further studies. Training on the platform is a preparatory, being an adaptive stage for student training in higher educational institutions of the host country. The duration of this stage is one to two years on average (Droliia, 2020). The practice of using various educational integration programmes shows positive results.

For the other hand, the use of the MORE Programme in Austria involved 85% of its participants in learning German, and 15% attended academic lectures and art classes (Bacher et al., 2020). 21% of refugee students participated in the Friends Programme, which involved meetings

of refugees and regular students. Participation in the MORE Programme enabled 14.4% of its participants to acquire the employed or self-employed statuses. And the performance of graduates of the programme was 27%. The number of refugees who found friends through this programme also increased by 46%. At the same time, assimilation was observed in 17% of cases, the friends were Austrians. Social interaction with the population of the host country was noted in 63%. This study found that 23% of children of forcibly displaced persons found new friends in the host country, and 42% communicate with non-Ukrainian-speaking peers.

The Swedish education system provides the same conditions for the development of intellectual abilities of all children, regardless of origin, social status, etc. In Germany, these factors were taken into account when providing the opportunity to study at a university. Despite the fact that higher education should be accessible to all, there are still some barriers for refugee students. One of them is the non-recognition of diplomas obtained in the country of origin and high requirements for knowledge of the language of the host country. The TIES survey, conducted in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland, found that the number of children of forcibly displaced persons who gained access to higher education varied across countries. Only 5% in Germany, and about 30% in Sweden entered a higher educational institution (Koehler & Schneider, 2019).

Finland and Sweden have good educational integration practices (Koehler & Schneider, 2019; Manhica et al., 2019). In Finland, an individual educational plan is created for each schoolchild for the year, based on the existing level of achievements. Swedish education provides for rapid inclusion in regular classes, but with the provision of assistance necessary for adaptation and integration of students. In opinion of Tzoraki (2019) found the low level of school attendance by refugee schoolchildren. Only 45% of children aged 6 to 17 attend school and receive formal education (for comparison, 56% of Greek children receive formal education). Some schoolchildren attend intercultural schools.

In the case of Soriano and Cala (2019), they revealed that the Spanish have the highest rate of acceptance of refugees. The French are less friendly to them. The Hungarians and Bulgarians were the most restrained. PISA results confirm the impact of low educational integration of refugee children on their academic performance (Ismail, 2019). This study found that the stress experienced by forcibly displaced children (69% diagnosed with increased anxiety, 31% — with high anxiety),

inadequate living conditions (26%), as well as lack of language knowledge (84%) caused difficulties in learning.

Researchers proved that learning a foreign language at the level of free everyday communication requires three to four years of intensive study on average. It takes from four to seven years on average to speak the language fluently and use it when studying various school subjects. But a study conducted among Syrian schoolchildren living in Turkey showed that it takes about ten years for them to learn Turkish at the level necessary for effective learning in a Turkish school (Sarmini et al., 2020). Among the refugees forcibly displaced to Greece, 65% chose to study English, 20% —Greek, 8% — German (Tzoraki, 2019).

In this work, we limited ourselves to studying the integration of only school-age children. However, the educational integration of preschool children and students also needs additional study. This study is of practical importance as it analyzes the positive and negative effects of the steps taken toward the educational integration of forcibly displaced children. The research results can help to improve obtaining quality education for refugee children and acquiring a profession in the future. It is reasonable to conduct further research on integrating forcibly displaced children into preschool educational institutions and students into higher educational institutions of host countries.

### **Conclusions**

The aggression of the Russian Federation against the population of Ukraine forced more than 3.5 million people to change their place of residence. The children together with their parents had to leave the country and stop studying at school. A person without education is lost to the country and society, a “lost generation.” The immediate integration of forcibly displaced persons into the educational systems of the host countries is necessary in order to avoid the loss of more than 1.5 million people to society.

Also, this study showed that all the EU countries contribute to the educational integration of forced migrants from Ukraine at a varying degree. For this purpose, children are given the opportunity to study in schools together with children of the host country. Special courses are arranged to learn the language of the host country to facilitate the understanding of the educational material. In Ukrainian classes and Sunday schools, some children have the opportunity to continue

their education online in Ukrainian schools. Such an integration policy has positive consequences. Children have the opportunity to continue their studies, begin to communicate with foreign peers.

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