

# Fundamental rights of children displaced in the EU following the Russian war of aggression

Ireland

June 2023

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# 1. Children fleeing Ukraine

## 1.1. Data on children fleeing Ukraine

**Table 1 Children fleeing Ukraine**

Category of child	Registration system Y/N	Number of children (as disaggregated as possible) (as of 30 April 2023 unless otherwise specified)
Overall number of children	Y	<p>In Ireland, 24,413 children were allocated Personal Public Services Number (PPSN) up to 30 April 2023, of which 21,101 remain active service users of public services.<sup>1</sup> Data from the Department of Social Protection show that parents or guardians of 19,154 children under 18 years old from Ukraine qualified for increased child dependent allowance, and of these, 14,216 children under 16 years old were associated with a payment for child social welfare benefits the week ending 29 June 2023.<sup>2</sup> Data is not disaggregated by category. PPS numbers are provided for all children on application by a parent/guardian or by Tusla, the Child and Family Agency.</p> <p>The Department for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth confirmed that state-supported accommodation is currently provided for 16,181 children under 18 with their families (excluding any children in state care), of which 14,434 were under 16</p>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Social Protection (29 June 2023) UA38 PPSN allocations of arrivals from Ukraine April 2022 – June 2023. Central Statistics Office.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Social Protection (29 June 2023) UA30: Beneficiaries of social welfare payments among arrivals from Ukraine - Type of Beneficiary of Social Welfare Payment March 2022 – June 2023. Central Statistics Office.

		years old. <sup>3</sup> Data is disaggregated by age and sex.
Arrived accompanied by mother, father or another legal guardian	Y	No disaggregated data for this category is available.
Arrived without parents, but with other family members, neighbours or family friends	Y	No disaggregated data for this category is available.
Arrived unaccompanied	Y	Tusla the Child and Family Agency has confirmed that up to 26 May 2023, 311 unaccompanied minors have been registered to date, of which 235 were taken into care of the State, of whom 75 remain in care. There is no statistical information available about why the others were not taken into care. In some cases, family members were located. <sup>4</sup>
Arrived within a group of children, as an organised evacuation from Ukrainian institutions or foster carers (with or without an appointed legal guardian)	Y	In Ireland, Tusla the Child and Family Agency has confirmed that no such groups have arrived. <sup>5</sup> Preparations were made for their arrival at the outbreak of the war by the Health Service Executive (HSE), Ireland's national health system.
Arrived within a group of children, through private initiatives, such as football clubs (with or without an appointed legal guardian)	Y	In Ireland, Tusla the Child and Family Agency has confirmed that only one such group has arrived. The Candle of Grace charity brought 23 women and 59 children, of whom 30 were unaccompanied minors, to Ireland in May 2022. <sup>6</sup>

Source: [Type your source here.](#)

<sup>3</sup> Department for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Breakdown of 4accommodated children, 3 July 2023. Data provided on request.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with representative of Tusla, 9 June 2023.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with representative of Tusla, 9 June 2023.

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<http://debatesarchive.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/debateswebpack.nsf/takes/dail2023022100083#WRZ01000>; Interview with representative of Tusla, 9 June 2023.

There is no single centralised system to register children fleeing Ukraine. The Department of Social Protection registers children only where a parent or guardian has registered them for a Personal Public Services Number (PPSN) for the purposes of accessing public services and social welfare payments. Data on children is available only in respect of the relevant public services they use (e.g. education), and included within DSP numbers if a parent/guardian continues to access public services or draw down payment, or where they are in the care of the state. Data on all Ukrainians in Ireland since the outbreak of war is compiled weekly by the Central Statistics Office for the interdepartmental Senior Officials Group. Government departments receive a detailed Cross Department Weekly Situation Report which is not published to the general public but selected data is available through the Central Statistics Office website ([www.cso.ie](http://www.cso.ie)).

The [full list of tables](#) is:

- Summary metrics for eligible PPSNs issued
- Number and location (based on PPSN allocations data) of arrivals from Ukraine by Local Education Authority (LEA)
- Number and location (based on PPSN allocations data) of arrivals from Ukraine by county
- PPSN allocations of arrivals from Ukraine by sex and age
- Temporary Protection granted to arrivals from Ukraine
- Medical cards issued to arrivals from Ukraine
- Unaccompanied minors from Ukraine referred to Tusla
- Number of employments of arrivals from Ukraine by NACE sector
- Employments and employees among arrivals from Ukraine
- Beneficiaries of social welfare payments among arrivals from Ukraine
- Arrivals from Ukraine who enrolled in education by level of education
- Allocation of DCEDIY accommodation for Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BoTPs)
- Marital status of arrivals from Ukraine aged 18 years and over

Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, will register a child only if they are asked to review concerns about the child's welfare. The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth collect data on the age and sex of children benefitting from short-term state-provided accommodation – this does not include any child in private accommodation. The International Protection Office registers children only where there is an application for international protection made by/for them outside the Temporary Protection Directive.

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## 2. Child protection – legal, policy framework and procedures in place

### 2.1. Responsibilities of child protection authorities

#### 2.1.1. Individual children, including unaccompanied and separated children

In **Ireland**, Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, is a statutory organisation established in January 2014 under the Child and Family Agency Act 2013. Tusla has the responsibility to promote the safety and well-being of children. According to Section 8 of the Act, Tusla is mandated to support and promote the development, welfare, and protection of children, as well as support and encourage the effective functioning of families. Additionally, Tusla provides information and advice on a regular basis and on request to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth on matters pertaining to its various areas of responsibility.<sup>7</sup>

According to the Minister for Children, Tusla plays a crucial role in the State's response by providing support to individuals displaced from Ukraine due to the war.<sup>8</sup> Children fleeing Ukraine, without a parent or caregiver, who are under Temporary Protection, are referred to Tusla through a Border Management Official or the Irish Police, under arrangements by the International Protection Office, to receive necessary protection. A Tusla Social Worker will meet the child in question on the day of referral. A comprehensive plan will be developed, taking into account the child's needs, and suitable accommodation and support will be arranged to ensure their safety and well-being. Tusla Social Workers will conduct an assessment to gain a better understanding of the child's requirements. This assessment will encompass information regarding their journey to Ireland, family background, health, education, and interests. One of Tusla's objectives is to facilitate family reunification whenever

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<sup>7</sup> Child and Family Agency Act 2013, <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2013/en/act/pub/0040/index.html>

<sup>8</sup> Houses of the Oireachtas, (21 June 2022) Unaccompanied Minors and Separated Children, Dail Debate, [Unaccompanied Minors and Separated Children – Tuesday, 21 Jun 2022 – Parliamentary Questions \(33rd Dáil\) – Houses of the Oireachtas](#)

possible, providing assistance and support in this process.<sup>9</sup> If children are unable to be reunited with their family or friends, they are provided with care services by the State.<sup>10</sup>

In **Ireland**, Tusla the Child and Family Agency is responsible for providing services to all unaccompanied children fleeing Ukraine. The category of unaccompanied children not only includes children who arrive without any accompanying adults but also encompasses what is known as a 'separated child.' A separated child refers to a child who arrives in Ireland accompanied by relatives or known (non-related) adults. In some cases, these adults may have been authorised by the child's parent(s) to travel with the child and/or provide temporary care. This can include situations where the child stays with an adult relative, is placed in a foster family, or is under the care of a person who looks after the child during their journey of fleeing.<sup>11</sup>

However, the current regulations governing Tusla's involvement specifically pertain to two situations. The first is when a child arrives in Ireland without any accompanying adults. The second situation addresses cases where a child has been separated from the adult they were initially with upon their arrival in Ireland, and subsequently, the child is now alone.<sup>12</sup> As the regulation is silent about those children who are accompanied by an adult relative, there is no specific requirement in place regarding the referral of a separated child, as defined broadly,<sup>13</sup> to Tusla the Child and Family Agency. However, it is evident that Tusla conducts screening assessments and takes appropriate follow-up actions to ensure that the adult accompanying the child is a relative.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Tusla the Child and Family Agency, Ukraine Response, <https://www.tusla.ie/ukraine-response/>

<sup>10</sup> Houses of the Oireachtas, (21 June 2022) Unaccompanied Minors and Separated Children, Dail Debate, [Unaccompanied Minors and Separated Children – Tuesday, 21 Jun 2022 – Parliamentary Questions \(33rd Dáil\) – Houses of the Oireachtas](#)

<sup>11</sup> Temporary protection directive, Article 16 (2). See the Frequently Asked Questions on Registration, Reception and Care for the Unaccompanied and Separated Children fleeing from war in Ukraine, for definitions and more info on the different categories.

<sup>12</sup> European Council Of Refugees and Exiles (ECRE),(31 March 2023) Information Sheet – Measures in response to the arrival of displaced people fleeing the war in Ukraine, <https://ecre.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/ECRE-Update-November-2022-Implementation-of-the-TPD.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Temporary protection directive, Article 16 (2). See the Frequently Asked Questions on Registration, Reception and Care for the Unaccompanied and Separated Children fleeing from war in Ukraine, for definitions and more info on the different categories.

<sup>14</sup> For example, see: Child Law Project (July 2022) Emergency care order for suspected child victim of trafficking from Ukraine, <https://www.childlawproject.ie/publications/emergency-care-order-for-suspected-child-victim-of-trafficking-from-ukraine/>

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## 2.1.2. Children evacuated from Ukrainian institutions

In Ireland, Tusla the Child and Family Agency has confirmed that no children were evacuated from Ukrainian institutions to Ireland.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Consultation, 9 June 2023.



## 3. Guardianship/legal representation arrangements for unaccompanied and separated children fleeing Ukraine

### 3.1. Arrived unaccompanied

In **Ireland**, third-country national children who seek international protection are typically referred to Tusla the Child and Family Agency through a Border Management Official or the Irish Police, under arrangements by the International Protection Office. However, individuals fleeing Ukraine in the wake of the Russian invasion, including children, fall under a Temporary Protection arrangement. Consequently, children below 18 years of age who come to Ireland for temporary protection without a parent or caregiver are instructed to present themselves to a Border Management Official or the Irish Police upon their arrival at an airport or port. They may also present at the International Protection Office. These officials then refer the child in question to Tusla who will arrange a same-day interview with a social worker and make the necessary arrangements for providing the required protection to the child. A comprehensive plan will be developed, taking into account the child's specific needs, and appropriate accommodation and support will be considered to ensure the child's safety and well-being. Tusla Social Workers will conduct a thorough assessment to gain a better understanding of the child's situation and needs. This assessment will encompass various aspects, such as information about the child's journey, family background, health, education, and interests.<sup>16</sup>

An unaccompanied minor accepted by Tusla into their services is presumed to be a child and the Child Care Acts 1991 to 2013, the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 and other enactments relating to the care and welfare of persons who have not attained the age of 18 years apply accordingly. Section 15(4) of the International Protection Act 2015 permits Tusla to make an application on behalf of the child. The IPO has specially trained caseworkers to process these applications. Tusla will support the minor throughout the process, including attending at their interview. Not all unaccompanied minors referred to Tusla will make an application for international protection. Some may be inappropriate referrals, others may not be brought into the care of Tusla, and a number will be reunited with their families, who then have

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<sup>16</sup> European Council Of Refugees and Exiles (ECRE),(31 March 2023) Information Sheet – Measures in response to the arrival of displaced people fleeing the war in Ukraine,<https://ecre.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/ECRE-Update-November-2022-Implementation-of-the-TPD.pdf>

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responsibility for submitting a protection application or other immigration application.<sup>17</sup>

In June 2023, Tusla confirmed that to date 333 unaccompanied minors from Ukraine had been referred to Tusla, of which 252 were taken into care/accommodated by Tusla and of those, 74 remain in Tusla care/accommodation.<sup>18</sup>

Ukrainian children make up 29% of all unaccompanied minors in the care of Tusla. The Ombudsman for Children’s Office noted that unaccompanied minors from Ukraine have all been accommodated under section 5 of the Childcare Act 1991, which is a voluntary care order and does not constitute removal from parents, but also does not provide for a legal guardian or clear judicial oversight.<sup>19</sup>

### 3.2. Arrived without parents, but with other family members, neighbours or family friends

In **Ireland**, Tusla is responsible for assessing situations related to child protection. It addresses cases where a child arrives in Ireland without a parent or caregiver, as well as cases where a child has been separated from the adult they were with upon arrival and is now alone. However, the regulations do not specifically mention children who arrive without parents but are accompanied by other family members or family friends.

If concerns are raised on arrival into the country about legal guardianship, the police can refer the child to Tusla. If there are no concerns raised at this point, there will be no registration of the child as being without a legal guardian. Tusla established a full time presence at Dublin airport in March 2022

In order to receive a Personal Public Services Number, personal details have to be provided for the child, including the relevant adult guardian. Tusla will only become

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<sup>17</sup> Minister for Justice (2023) Unaccompanied Minors and Separated Children, Dáil Éireann Debate, 20 June 2023 – Written answer, <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2023-06-20/465/speech/627/> (Accessed 6 July 2023)

<sup>18</sup> Tusla (2023) UA19: Unaccompanied minors from Ukraine referred to Tusla, April 2022 – June 2023. Last Updated: 05/07/2023. Central Statistics Office.

<sup>19</sup> Ombudsman for Children (2023) General Scheme of the Child Care (Amendment) Bill 2023. Observations by the Ombudsman for Children’s Office. June 2023 [https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/33/joint\\_committee\\_on\\_children\\_equality\\_disability\\_integration\\_and\\_youth/submissions/2023/2023-06-28\\_submission-dalila-pinto-policy-officer-ombudsman-for-children\\_en.pdf](https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/33/joint_committee_on_children_equality_disability_integration_and_youth/submissions/2023/2023-06-28_submission-dalila-pinto-policy-officer-ombudsman-for-children_en.pdf) (Accessed 1 July 2023)

involved if queries are raised about the child's wellbeing. No data is available on how many Tusla investigations have related to children in this specific situation.

### 3.3. Arrived within a group, from Ukrainian institution or foster carers (with or without an appointed legal guardian)

In Ireland, Tusla the Child and Family Agency has confirmed that no such groups have arrived. Preparations were made for their arrival at the outbreak of the war by the Health Service Executive (HSE), Ireland's national health system.<sup>20</sup>

### 3.4. Arrived within a group, through private initiatives, such as football clubs (with or without an appointed legal guardian)

In **Ireland**, Tusla is responsible for assessing various situations involving the arrival of children, including cases where they arrive as part of a group. For instance, on May 10, 2022, Tusla became aware that an Irish organisation called Candle of Grace Charity at Dublin Airport, which brought 59 Ukrainian children to Dublin from Poland. The charity previously routinely brought children from Chernobyl to visit Ireland, and responded quickly to the outbreak of the war. Tusla social workers conducted screening assessments and took appropriate subsequent steps, including reaching out to the children's parent(s) whenever possible. The Minister for Children confirmed that all of these children entered the country with their parents' full knowledge and consent. Some have returned to Ukraine. Those who remain from that group are currently placed with host families vetted by Tusla and maintain regular communication with their parents.<sup>21</sup> Officials from UNHCR have urged volunteer groups who intend to bring unaccompanied children from Ukraine to Ireland to collaborate and cooperate with Tusla.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Interview with Tusla representative, 9 June 2023.

<sup>21</sup> Houses of Oireachtas (21 Feb 2023) Unaccompanied and Separated Minors, Dail debate, available at <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2023-02-21/500/>

<sup>22</sup> UNHCR-Ireland (13 May 2022) UNHCR statement on protecting children fleeing Ukraine, Press Release, <https://www.unhcr.org/ie/news/press-releases/unhcr-statement-protecting-children-fleeing-ukraine>

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## 4. Information and practical challenges in access to basic services for children fleeing Ukraine

### 4.1. General information and challenges

In **Ireland**, the Department of Education has confirmed that as of March 31, 2023, a total of 15,282 Ukrainian students have been registered in schools throughout Ireland. Among this count, 9,877 students are attending primary schools, while 5,405 students have enrolled in post-primary schools. Data collected in April 2023 reveals an enrolment rate of 90% among Ukrainian children aged 5 to 18.<sup>23</sup>

Children below the age of 18 who have been granted Temporary Protective Status have a right to access education under the same conditions as nationals, as well as other important social services.

In March 2022, the Government invited submissions from a range of organisations regarding the main challenges which children from the Ukraine were likely to face in Ireland, and received detailed submissions from the Children’s Rights Alliance and Irish National Teachers’ Organisations amongst others, who identified housing, language, access to health care and school resources as areas for policy and resource.<sup>24</sup> There have been no published updates in 2023 to these submissions by the named organisations.

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<sup>23</sup> Department of Education (April 2023) Department of Education confirms 15,282 Ukrainian pupils currently enrolled in Irish schools, Press Release, <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/7698f-department-of-education-confirms-15282-ukrainian-pupils-currently-enrolled-in-irish-schools/> [Accessed 30 June 2023]

<sup>24</sup> Children’s Rights Alliance (2022) Initial submission on the reception and integration of Ukrainian children and young people arriving in Ireland. 15 March 2022. [https://www.childrensrights.ie/sites/default/files/submissions\\_reports/files/Children%27s%20Rights%20Alliance%20Initial%20Submission%20on%20the%20reception%20and%20integration%20of%20Ukrainian%20children%20and%20young%20people%20arriving%20in%20Ireland.pdf](https://www.childrensrights.ie/sites/default/files/submissions_reports/files/Children%27s%20Rights%20Alliance%20Initial%20Submission%20on%20the%20reception%20and%20integration%20of%20Ukrainian%20children%20and%20young%20people%20arriving%20in%20Ireland.pdf) [Accessed 5 July 2023] ; INTO Submission to Joint Committee on Education, Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Education and Supports Provision for Displaced Ukrainian Students May 2022 [https://www.into.ie/app/uploads/2022/05/20220506\\_Oireachtas-submission\\_Supports-for-Ukrainian-children16.pdf](https://www.into.ie/app/uploads/2022/05/20220506_Oireachtas-submission_Supports-for-Ukrainian-children16.pdf)

## 4.2. Challenges for children at multiple risk/disadvantage

While the Temporary Protection explicitly encompasses asylum seekers and stateless persons fleeing Ukraine, UNHCR Ireland has expressed concerns regarding the need to pay attention to asylum seekers and stateless persons, who may not be adequately addressed within the current scope.<sup>25</sup> It appears that there are concerns regarding the treatment of Roma, stateless children or those who were in the asylum-seeking process in Ukraine within the Temporary Protection system.

In **Ireland**, Roma individuals, including children, who are fleeing Ukraine, face instances of discrimination. The Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre reported the difficulties encountered by Ukrainian Roma individuals in obtaining Temporary Protection.<sup>26</sup> In response, the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission intervened and provided legal assistance to a Ukrainian national who is a member of the Roma community. This assistance was related to their application for Temporary Protection in Ireland under section 60 of the International Protection Act 2015.<sup>27</sup> Difficulties in obtaining Temporary Protection for Roma families can directly impact Roma children's access to all services, including education services.

Furthermore, disabled children are particularly at the high risk of trafficking and exploitation when fleeing Ukraine. In **Ireland**, the Child Law Project reported a court case involving a trafficked teenager from Ukraine suspected to have an intellectual disability. Upon arrival, the minor exhibited cuts and a bruise on her face and was in the company of a man who was not her relative but was known to her. Tusla contacted a friend of the family by phone and was advised to remove the girl from his care. The District Court issued an emergency care order (ECO) for the girl to remove her

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<sup>25</sup> UNHCR-Ireland (13 May 2022) UNHCR statement on protecting children fleeing Ukraine, Press Release, <https://www.unhcr.org/ie/news/press-releases/unhcr-statement-protecting-children-fleeing-ukraine>

<sup>26</sup> Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre (29 November 2022), Ukrainian Roma Refugees Need Equal Protection under the Temporary Protection Directive, <https://www.paveepoint.ie/ukrainian-roma-refugees-need-equal-protection-under-the-temporary-protection-directive/>

<sup>27</sup> Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (29/11/2022) Refugee Secures Right to Temporary Directive Following IHREC Intervention, <https://www.ihrec.ie/refugee-secures-right-to-temporary-directive-following-ihrec-intervention/>

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immediately into the care of the state for up to 8 days. No follow up information is available.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Child Law Project (July 2022) Emergency care order for suspected child victim of trafficking from Ukraine, <https://www.childlawproject.ie/publications/emergency-care-order-for-suspected-child-victim-of-trafficking-from-ukraine/>

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## 5. Policies in place

### 5.1. Dedicated action plan and/or integrated measures

In Ireland the Temporary Protection Directive (2001/55 EC) was adopted into Irish law by Section 60 of the International Protection Act 2015.<sup>29</sup> However, the Directive was activated for the first time in March 2022 in response to the war in Ukraine by EU Council Decision (EU 2022/382), to provide immediate protection in EU countries for people displaced by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.<sup>30</sup> In Ireland, the Temporary Protection was given effect following this decision by the EU Council, and government support provided to Ukrainians fleeing Russian invasion after 24 February 2022. Its protection extends to nationals of a third country (other than Ukraine) or a stateless person who would have benefited from international protection (for example: Refugee status) or an equivalent national protection status in Ukraine and were residing there before 24 February 2022. The protection includes families of the two protected categories mentioned earlier if their family already existed in Ukraine, prior to 24 February.<sup>31</sup>

Following the activation of the Temporary Protection system in **Ireland**, the Irish government assigned responsibilities for the provision of support services to various departments and organisations, led by the Department of the Taoiseach and Cabinet subcommittee on Ukraine, and coordinated by a Senior Officials Group meeting

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<sup>29</sup> Department of Justice, Information on Temporary Protection for People Fleeing the conflict in Ukraine, <https://www.irishimmigration.ie/information-on-temporary-protection-for-people-fleeing-the-conflict-in-ukraine/>

<sup>30</sup> Official Journal of the European Union (March 2022) Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 of 4 March 2022 establishing the existence of a mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine within the meaning of Article 5 of Directive 2001/55/EC, and having the effect of introducing temporary protection, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32022D0382>

<sup>31</sup> Department of the Taoiseach, (10 March 2022, updated Oct 2022) Temporary Protection, <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/Of773-temporary-protection/>

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weekly. DCEDIY also meets monthly with an NGO stakeholder group since May 2022.<sup>32</sup>

In order to fulfil the requirements of Temporary Protection, policies were formulated within relevant agencies and necessary measures were implemented:

#### **Child protection:**

In terms of child protection, Tusla, The Child and Family Agency in **Ireland**, was delegated responsibilities to provide child protection services to children who have been displaced from Ukraine as a result of the war and have arrived in Ireland.<sup>33</sup> In addition, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth established a Ukraine unit in response to the Ukraine crisis.<sup>34</sup>

#### **Healthcare Services:**

In **Ireland**, the Health Service Executive (HSE) National Service Plan 2023 provides oversight and guidance on the provision of healthcare support, nationally and regionally in order to meet the needs of relevant groups, including people arriving from Ukraine.<sup>35</sup> Ireland provides universal access to community health care services for children up to 18 years and a medical card is not required for children to access these supports.

Additionally, the HSE developed planning and service delivery strategies for displaced persons from Ukraine. It sets out the Framework how incoming Ukrainians can be supported to access public healthcare services.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Minister of State Joe O'Brien (2023) Speech – Departmental Communications. Dáil Éireann debate - 30 May 2023, Vol. 1039 No. 3. <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2023-05-30/speech/209/> (Accessed 5 July 2023)

<sup>33</sup> House of Oireachtas (21 June 2022), Unaccompanied and Separated Children, Dail Debates, <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2022-06-21/636/>

<sup>34</sup> Houses of Oireachtas, (17 May 2022) Joint Committee on Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Debate, [https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/joint\\_committee\\_on\\_children\\_equality\\_disability\\_integration\\_and\\_youth/2022-05-17/2/](https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/joint_committee_on_children_equality_disability_integration_and_youth/2022-05-17/2/); Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Assistant Secretary General, Ukraine Programme Management Office, <https://www.gov.ie/en/role/08e03-assistant-secretary-general-ukraine-programme-management-office/>

<sup>35</sup> The Health Service Executive (HSE) National Service Plan 2023, <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/serviceplans/national-service-plan-2023.pdf>

<sup>36</sup> Ukrainian Health Response High Level Update for HSE Board May 2022, <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/board-members/board-meetings/may-2022/3-2-f-i-board-briefing-ukraine-health-service-response-may-2022.pdf>



The HSE has developed a systematic programme to deliver age-appropriate catch-up immunisations for all migrant children and young adults up to the age of 23 years in line with the Irish Primary Childhood Immunisation Schedule. All Community Healthcare Organisations are now engaged in the delivery of Catch-up Vaccination Services, as a priority public health programme.<sup>37</sup>

The HSE mental health supports for Ukrainians refugees (children and adults) reflect the layered care approach to mental health support for the wider population. These range from self-help and education to GP support and onward referral to specialist mental health services where necessary. Details of services and pathways to support for Ukrainian refugees are available on '[Getting Healthcare In Ireland](#)' [HSE webpage](#) in both the Ukrainian and Russian languages. In addition, the HSE funds *My Mind Centre for Mental Wellbeing* to provide free one-to-one counselling and psychotherapy (in person) for adults and children affected by the war in Ukraine. Five dedicated therapists are available to provide this service in the Ukrainian language.

SafetyNet, a medical charity whose services are commissioned by the HSE Social Inclusion Unit and, in the National Transit Centre, by the HSE Health and Wellbeing Unit, contrast the "rapid establishment of Ukrainian interpreting" to the gap in services provided to other refugees/migrants needing interpreted healthcare, since access to interpreting in other languages is not available as a standard for Primary Care across Community Health Organisations.<sup>38</sup>

### **Overall number of children from Ukraine eligible/registered for health services.**

At the end of 25th June 2023:

- 22,960 under 18 (30% of arrivals).
- 18,879 children were issued Medical Cards.
- 3,193 Acute attendances for children 15 years old and younger.
- The Individual Health Indicator (IHI) is now the primary indicator, at national and European level, of the volume of Ukrainians eligible to access healthcare services in Ireland. An IHI has been assigned to 19,334 children.

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<sup>37</sup> Correspondence from Health Services Executive (HSE) Ukrainian Refugee Coordination Group, "[EU Fundamental Rights Agency / Data Request / 04 July](#)", 7 July 2023.

<sup>38</sup> Safetynet (2023) Opening Statement by Dr Fiona O'Reilly. "Challenges facing refugee and migrant children in Ireland". Oireachtas Joint Committee on Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Tuesday, 27 June 2023.

[https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/33/joint\\_committee\\_on\\_children\\_equality\\_disability\\_integration\\_and\\_youth/submissions/2023/2023-06-27\\_opening-statement-dr-fiona-o-reilly-chief-executive-officer-safetynet-primary-care\\_en.pdf](https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/33/joint_committee_on_children_equality_disability_integration_and_youth/submissions/2023/2023-06-27_opening-statement-dr-fiona-o-reilly-chief-executive-officer-safetynet-primary-care_en.pdf)

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## Education Services:

In **Ireland**, the Department of Education has developed a range of additional resources for schools and parents to support students from Ukraine.

Regional Education and Language Teams (REALT) were established from 25 March 2022 to support existing structures in supporting the needs of Ukrainian and International Protection applicant children accessing education.<sup>39</sup> The REALT are hosted by the 16 existing Education and Training Boards (ETBs) across the country.<sup>40</sup> The primary role of REALT is to assist in allocating children to school places and to support schools in accessing resources and supports for additional capacity, wellbeing, language and educational needs, and ensure that clear, accessible information flows are in place between schools, local education support services and national support structures in relation to Ukrainian arrivals.<sup>41</sup>

The Department of Education Inspectorate has developed and published a number of guidance and advice notes for primary and post-primary schools, including advice for schools on the placement of pupils and students in classes and year groups and a description of the Ukrainian education system. Information notes in both Ukrainian and Russian have also been published for parents/guardians and pupils/students on the language of instruction in Irish schools.<sup>42</sup>

The Department has published guidelines for schools on supporting children and young people from Ukraine, enrolled in post-primary schools, who wish to engage with the Ukrainian curriculum.<sup>43</sup> Schools are encouraged to discuss engagement with the online Ukrainian curriculum with students and parents to ensure that students are not under undue pressure or that their integration and inclusion in Ireland is not adversely affected.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> House of Oireachtas (December 2022), Departmental Policies, Dail Debates, <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2022-12-13/340/?highlight%5B0%5D=investment&highlight%5B1%5D=investment&highlight%5B2%5D=investment&highlight%5B3%5D=2022&highlight%5B4%5D=investment&highlight%5B5%5D=investment>, Department of Education (28 March 2022-Updated 8 May 2023) Information for schools – Ukraine, <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/48639-information-for-schools-ukraine/>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.etbi.ie/regional-education-and-language-teams-for-ukraine/>

<sup>41</sup> Correspondence from the Department of Education, 4 July 2023

<sup>42</sup> Correspondence from the Department of Education, 4 July 2023

<sup>43</sup> Department of Education (January 2023), Supporting children and young people from Ukraine, enrolled in post primary schools, who wish to engage online with the Ukrainian curriculum, 'https://assets.gov.ie/243168/406e74f7-e96e-400b-9e81-b17ce9a20a95.pdf

<sup>44</sup> Correspondence from the Department of Education, 4 July 2023

The National Education Psychology Service works with these structures to gather information on the Ukrainian and other refugee experiences through interaction with their psychologists working in schools and attendance at REALT meetings. NEPS has developed bespoke psycho-educational advice and support, with guidance, webinars and other resources, and NEPS psychologists are actively engaging with school principals to provide advice and support.<sup>45</sup>

In August 2022, due to the rapidly increasing arrival of Ukrainian refugees, additional temporary special education supports were put in place to support schools with large enrolments, granting additional special education teaching (SET) resources to schools with 10+ Ukrainian pupils and additional special needs assistants (SNAs) to schools with 15+ Ukrainian pupils. The Department of Education estimated in June 2023 that almost 600 posts in schools have either been newly allocated or retained in schools due to increased numbers of new Ukrainian arrivals. A total of almost 550 schools received additional temporary SET hours and almost 330 received additional temporary SNA supports. The same level of resources are available under a separate process to support schools who have enrolled a significant number of international protection children.<sup>46</sup>

All children and young people, up to the age of 18 years irrespective of status have access to free primary and post-primary education in the same way as Irish nationals. This includes all migrant children, including children of international protection applicants, refugees, migrant workers and unaccompanied minors. While The European Union (EU) has put in place a Temporary Protection Directive to allow Ukrainian citizens and others fleeing Ukraine to move through the EU as EU citizens, the rights to education for all arrivals in Ireland remain the same. A school must admit all students applying where it is not oversubscribed, and places are available. Schools must also include an admission statement in its admission policy stating that the school will not discriminate in its admission on any of nine specified grounds, including race and religion.

The Department of Education has confirmed that as of June 2023, 15,619 Ukrainian students have been registered in schools throughout Ireland. Among this count, 10,135 students are attending primary schools, while 5,484 students have enrolled in post-primary schools.

School enrolments as a percentage of PPSNs issued increased from 76% on 29 September 2022 to 94% by 1 December 2022, and then decreased in 2023 to 86% on

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<sup>45</sup> Correspondence from the Department of Education, 4 July 2023

<sup>46</sup> Houses of the Oireachtas, Joint Committee on Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth debate - Challenges Facing Refugee and Migrant Children in Ireland: Discussion, Tuesday, 27 Jun 2023. [https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/joint\\_committee\\_on\\_children\\_equality\\_disability\\_integration\\_and\\_youth/2023-06-27/2/](https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/joint_committee_on_children_equality_disability_integration_and_youth/2023-06-27/2/) [Accessed 7 July 2023]

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15 June 2023.<sup>47</sup> These enrolment figures are very strong when compared with emerging figures from other countries across Europe. The best available data at EU level indicates that Ireland has the highest percentage of Ukraine enrolments for school-going children in the Union.

#### **Further and higher education supports:**

Once a Ukrainian refugee is granted Temporary Protection under the EU Directive, they are entitled to seek employment or self-employment and vocational training education activities in Ireland. A range of new measures were introduced to provide access to further and higher-level education for the academic year 2022/2023 to displaced Ukrainian students living in Ireland, where they will be treated as European students and will not be subjected to international fees. The national Erasmus grant allocation will also be used to fund financial supports for qualified persons who undertake full-time studies in Higher Education Institutions, as well as displaced academic staff. Displaced Ukrainian students will also be eligible to access the Springboard+ programme and PLC courses.<sup>48</sup>

#### **Income support services:**

The Department of Social Protection in **Ireland** has expanded its services to encompass children who have fled Ukraine due to the Russian invasion, in line with the requirements of Temporary Protection. Consequently, these children are eligible for child benefits, which entail monthly payments to their parents or guardians for children below the age of 16. The Child Benefit amount is €140 per month per child, and it can also be granted to children aged 16 and 17 if they are engaged in full-time education, full-time training, or have a disability that hinders them from financially supporting themselves. Additionally, an income support payment may include supplementary allowances for dependent children.<sup>49</sup> People arriving from Ukraine under the Temporary Protection Directive have access to a wide range of social welfare benefits. Parents can claim Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance, and One-Parent Family Payment (for lone parent with child under 7 yrs), Jobseeker's Transitional payment (for lone parents with a child 7-13 yrs), or Working Family

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<sup>47</sup> CSO Ireland, UA36 Summary metrics for eligible PPSNs Issued – source: Department of Social Protection. 28 June 2023. Available at: <https://data.cso.ie/table/UA36> (last accessed 3 July 2023)

<sup>48</sup> Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (21 June 2022) Press release: Minister Harris announces new measures to provide access to further and higher education for displaced Ukrainian students, <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/a0741-minister-harris-announces-new-measures-to-provide-access-to-further-and-higher-education-for-displaced-ukrainian-students/#>

<sup>49</sup> Department of Social Protection (January 2023) Social Welfare supports for those arriving from Ukraine under the EU Temporary Protection Directive, <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/abf3e-social-welfare-supports-for-ukrainian-citizens-arriving-in-ireland-under-the-temporary-protection-directive/>

Payment depending on income levels. Other income supports include Jobseeker's Allowance, Disability Allowance, Carer's Allowance, State Pension (Non-Contributory) and Rent Supplement.<sup>50</sup>

### **Housing:**

An initial Government accommodation scheme in spring 2022 supported by An Garda Síochána, the Irish Red Cross, and Tusla, involved a vetting process for donors offering shared accommodation through the.<sup>51</sup> This is no longer in place. Since July 2022, the Government has made a monthly payment of €800 to anyone providing accommodation to a person or people who arrived in Ireland under the EU Temporary Protection Directive, regardless of whether the person is hosted in a shared accommodation or in an empty property. It requires no vetting.<sup>52</sup>

## 5.2. European Child Guarantee

In compliance with **Ireland's** responsibilities under the EU Child Guarantee, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth led the creation of a new National Action Plan, which was approved by Government on 31 May 2022 for publication and submission to the EU Commission.<sup>53</sup> The foreword to the National Action Plan acknowledges the context of the Ukraine crisis, but the Plan contains no specific measures relating to children fleeing Ukraine (and only 2 specific references to migrant children), nor has it been amended since.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> <https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving-country/ukrainian-refugees-in-ireland/social-welfare-supports-for-ukrainian-refugees/>

<sup>51</sup> Dail Debate (30 March 2022) Government Response to Situation in Ukraine: Statements, <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2022-03-30/13/>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/cfd95-accommodation-recognition-payment/>

<sup>53</sup> Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (15 June 2022) Ireland's EU Child Guarantee National Action Plan, <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/95dcc-irelands-eu-child-guarantee-national-action-plan/>

<sup>54</sup> Correspondence from Department Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, 3 July 2023.

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## 5.3. Budget

In Ireland, Tusla the Child and Family Agency has been allocated a funding of €31 million for the provision of services related to children from Ukraine in 2023. This funding is part of the Agency's overall gross non-capital determination for 2023.<sup>55</sup>

In December 2022, the Minister for Community Development and Charities announced funding of €10 million for Local Development Companies delivering supports to people arriving from Ukraine.<sup>56</sup> The funding, allocated as part of Budget 2023, is in addition to the €44.3 million for the Government's Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) for 2023.

The Department of Education spent €75 million on support for Ukrainian children in Ireland in 2022 and an allocation of €45 million is provided in the 2023 allocations additional funding available from a central contingency reserve.<sup>57</sup>

The Government set aside €2 billion for 2023 overall for the costs related to Ireland's humanitarian response to the war in Ukraine for the provision of accommodation, health, education and welfare supports for Ukrainian refugees in Ireland, and €2.5 billion for 2024.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Tusla the Child and Family Agency, Business Plan 2023, page 22.

[https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Tusla\\_Business\\_Plan\\_English\\_2023.pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Tusla_Business_Plan_English_2023.pdf)

<sup>56</sup> Department of Rural and Community Development (15 December 2022) Minister Joe O'Brien announces funding of €10 million for social inclusion programme to support people arriving from Ukraine, <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/4b818-minister-joe-obrien-announces-funding-of-10-million-for-social-inclusion-programme-to-support-people-arriving-from-ukraine/>

<sup>57</sup> Minister for Education (2023) Ukraine War - Written answer. Dáil Éireann Debate, 21 February 2023. <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2023-02-21/440/?highlight%5B0%5D=2022#> (Accessed 5 July 2023)

<sup>58</sup> Government of Ireland. Summer Economic Statement, July 2023. <https://assets.gov.ie/262514/b3ce6b37-b05c-4439-8620-25ab7a5a60e1.pdf> (Accessed 5 July 2023)