



**European Committee  
of the Regions**



**Concept of summer activity camps for children and young people from Ukraine**  
*organised jointly by*  
*the European Committee of the Regions and the Association of Ukrainian Cities*

For whom:

- for children and young people of primary, secondary and high school age (from 6 to 17).
- for accompanying caregivers (one adult per 10 children).

Objective of the initiative:

It is important for children fleeing the war in Ukraine to stay with their peers and receive targeted psychological help to stabilize their emotional state and distract them from traumatising experiences. The overall aim is to create a space where they will be able to feel safe and find normality through a balanced daily routine that could contribute to restoring confidence in the future. Outdoor activities, sports and rehabilitation activities would help to improve physical and mental health. Development classes will enrich the knowledge of each child or young person and provide the experience of communicating in a foreign language.

What for:

- distraction from traumatic factors of war,
- reduction of psycho-emotional load,
- provision of organised recreation,
- cultural exchange and insertion,
- recovery and personal growth;
- educational purposes: acquiring language and other skills during school holidays in a safe environment.

Duration: 4 -5 weeks (or more, depending on the availability of local organisers)

Fees (practical arrangements):

The camps would be free for children, young people and those accompanying them from Ukraine. All the costs of the children's stay in the camp, including the journey and activities during the camp, will be covered by the host local/regional authority with potential involvement of local private partners host party.

### Coordination aspects by the Association of Ukrainian Cities:

It is important for children to be with their peers, split into different age groups and do things together in order to stabilise their emotional state and help distract them from the traumatic experiences of the conflict.

In the camp, children will be able to feel safe, with a daily routine, helping them to regain confidence in the future. Children will meet the same boys and girls with whom they will be able to communicate in an informal setting. It is recommended that priority be given to the physical and mental safety of the children rather than being an intercultural experience, and therefore activities during the camp should be carried out by the Ukrainian adults accompanying the children. If case activities are carried out in the language of the host community, interpreting services should be carefully considered.

Outdoor activities, sports activities, cultural, recreational and rehabilitation activities will help to improve physical and mental health. Development classes will enrich the knowledge of each child and provide the experience of communicating in a foreign language. Organised and unobtrusive psychological help (in the form of rituals "morning friendly circle", "evening friendly circle", art therapy, etc.) should form a key pillar of the programme, and professional psychological support should be available in the children's mother tongue. A description of available facilities and materials would be expected from the hosting party, possibly with a proposal for a programme of activities.

It should be clearly agreed whether the Ukrainian adults or the host party should plan a suitable and educational programme, with due consideration given to requirements linked to age and gender of the children. The hosting authorities could consult relevant organisations with prior and ongoing experience in organising activities for children from war zones.

Conditions of children's stay at the camp: what should be provided by the local/regional hosting authority:

- accommodation in boarding houses or similar facilities in groups;
- 3 or 4 meals a day as well as sufficient water, tea, etc.;
- regular opportunity for contact with relatives;
- psychological assistance and counselling in their mother tongue;
- health insurance;
- support equipment of all kinds - depending on the respective needs of the receiving children/young people and the planned activities;
- clothes, spare shoes, hygiene products, towels.

### Examples for organised recreation:

Sports, teambuilding and active games; master classes; trainings sessions, classes in arts and crafts, design, photography, directing, etc., trips and city tours, organised psychological assistance (any categories of existing camps: sports, language, scouts, creative, etc.)

### Travel:

The host party authority organises the transportation of the group of children from the Ukrainian border to the final destination and back, while the Ukrainian partners would be in charge of safely accompanying persons from the children/youth to the agreed pick up points at the border.

### Documents and Information:

The Association of Ukrainian Cities in close cooperation with the European receiving authorities should ensure that all necessary documents and administrative procedures needed for the journey, as well as the stay in the host authority, are provided in a transparent, coordinated and timely manner.

The Association of Ukrainian Cities (AUC) collects the needs of each municipality and processes proposals from European countries. It connects specific foreign municipalities ready to facilitate summer camps for host children from the Ukrainian communities. It gives clear instructions to the mayor of the community to maintain confidentiality and not to disseminate information about the details of the children's departure.

The European Committee of the Regions disseminates the information amongst its members willing to host summer camps. From each country where such a camp will be organised, AUC gets a list of documents required for children to go abroad (passport, certificate, power of attorney from parents, form to fill out, etc.) and the necessary documents and requirements of the accompanying persons, and sends it to the municipalities in Ukraine where the children will come from.

If necessary, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will assist in the preparation of documents. The list depends on the country where a camp will be organised. The list should include a description of risks (potential possibility to prolong the stay of children in the camp in case of unforeseen worsening of the situation in Ukraine, obligation from relatives to take care of the child in case of death of both parents, etc.). The host party is responsible for the life and health of the children while in the host camp.

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