**EEA AND NORWAY GRANTS**

**FUND FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS**

**INITIATIVE PROPOSAL**

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| Title of the initiative: Supporting mental and physical health of Ukrainian children and Ukrainian refugees through cultural and sports activities in Estonia |  |
| Implementing entity *(beneficiary state entity):* Open Estonia Foundation/ SA Avatud Eesti Fond |  |
| Partner(s) *(minimum one donor state entity)*:  *Donor partner not required according to the letter of FMO, March 11, 2022*  N/A |  |
| Bilateral priority area identified by the JCBF beyond the programmes:  • promotion of core European values, such as  respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect for human rights for all people, regardless of their racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or gender identity;   * E-governance (digitalization) * eastern partnership   • equality and equal treatment   * competitive business environment, sustainable and adaptive governance (based on “Competitiveness Plan for 2020” approved by the Government of Estonia) |  |
| Allocation *(total sum)*:  *(A more detailed project budget description in the activity plan)* EUR 61 750.- |  |

**Background**

According to the Ukrainian Ministry of Health, half of the country´s population currently needs mental health support due to the war. PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), anxiety, depression, and somatization are among the mental health issues experienced by Ukrainians and Ukrainian refugees.

Ukrainian refugees, including children, are in urgent need of mental health services due to trauma, anxiety, and depression caused by the ongoing war. Some refugees feel they cannot seek mental health support because they prioritize addressing their basic unmet needs. In a new host country, barriers to receiving mental healthcare include stigma, inability to identify mental health problems or their importance, and lack of trust in the healthcare system and mental healthcare in general, including concerns over confidentiality and language barriers. In Estonia, there is a significant demand for psychologist and mental health professionals, and often, professional mental healthcare is inaccessible even to locals, due to long waiting lines and high prices.

Constant air raids, hiding, and explosions create immense stress for developing children, and Ukrainian children cannot escape from it even during their summer holidays. Children, who must adapt to constant stress and danger, suffer the most. While summer in Estonia is a vacation period and a more peaceful time of the year for many, Ukrainian children are facing their third summer of intense warfare.

**Aim**

The aim of the project is to support mental and physical health of Ukrainian children and refugees through various activities (sports camps, culinary classes and etc). The project also aims to foster the target group´s adaptation to Estonian society and create new contacts and friendships among Ukrainian refugees, local Ukrainians and Estonians.

**Project period July 1,2024 – March 31, 2025**

**The activities** of the project will be 2-fold:

* **Ternopil children's camp in Viljandi**- A summer camp in Viljandi for children from Ternopil, a city in West-Ukraine. The 7-day summer camp aims to support their physical and mental health through sports activities (football), mental health exercises and road-trips to other Estonian towns. Professional sports coaches and trauma therapists are involved in the project preparation process and implementation;
* **Cultural and sports activities for Ukrainian refugees (children and families) in Viljandi, Hiiumaa** **and Tallinn** - The goal of these events is to keep Ukrainian traditions alive also abroad, to deepen knowledge about traditional Ukrainian holidays, customs, rituals and folk games. The goal of these events is also to surround children and adults with attention, care, motivation to take decisive action, look for ways to solve problems and overcome fear and therefore support their mental health and improve their wellbeing. Additionally, the events and camps aim to support Ukrainian refugees´ adaptation and integration into Estonian society. The activities will be carried out by experienced professionals. The events will include:
  + 9 culinary master classes - Events for Ukrainian refugees in Viljandi include culinary master classes in the preparation of traditional Ukrainian dishes - sweet pastries, desserts, waffles and candies, as well as the preparation of savory dishes - Ukrainian borscht, jellied pies, potato pancake burgers, meat and fish rolls just to name a few. Each master class will be different from the previous one with a new cooking menu. Locals are also expected to take part from the master classes and therefore, it fosters creating more contacts between Estonians and Ukrainians and therefore support their adaptation and integration into Estonian society.
  + Sports camp in Hiiumaa – it is planned to organize a summer sports camp in Hiiumaa for Ukrainian refugee children. It will include wrestling and ball games and field trips to Hiiumaa. The purpose of the camp is to get acquainted with Estonian culture and information space, exchange experience and get more acquainted with Ukrainian culture. The camp will be carried out by experts with extensive experience in organizing and conducting sports and entertainment events among children in Ukraine and Estonia;
  + Photo exhibition in Tallinn and Viljandi - it is planned to organize a photo exhibition by Dmitry Chichera in Tallinn and Viljandi. Chichera, who disappeared in Mariupol on March 17, 2022, left behind a piece of Ukrainian Mariupol in his professional photographs. Today these photos help to collect donations for the repair of drones for the Armed Forces of Ukraine. And therefore, we consider it an honor to hold a photo exhibition of Dmitry Chichera in Tallinn and Viljandi with a visit to the opening of the exhibition by his wife Lyudmila Chichera and his youngest son, for whom everything connected with the name of his father and his beloved city of Mariupol is important.
  + Public book presentations - it is planned to organize a public book presentation of Almanac “12 stories of the war in Ukraine” with two living stories. At the moment, the book is being prepared for release. It will consist of 11 stories written by Ukrainian women who, as a result of the war, have experienced the loss of loved ones and homes, Russian occupation, captivity, sexual violence, etc. Alongside truthful descriptions of war and traumatic experiences, these stories will illustrate to readers how one can find ways to help others, contribute to victory in different ways, and simply not give up. The stories cover experiences from both 2014 and 2022. The authors are women of various ages from different parts of Ukraine. The book will include a separate section by a psychologist. The book was created on the initiative of the NGO [Eastern Ukrainian Center for Civic Initiatives](https://totalaction.org.ua/), which has been documenting human rights violations related to the war in Ukraine since 2014. Their work focuses on illegal detention facilities and conflict-related sexual violence. The book was developed with the mentorship and editorial participation of Ukrainian writer Slava Svitova. For Ukrainians abroad, including Ukrainian refugees, the book can provide additional psychological support and is important for maintaining the unity of Ukrainian society. Additionally, the book gives the general audience an first-hand insight to the situation in Ukraine.
  + Master class of Petrykivka painting- Ukrainian decorative and ornamental folk painting that originates from Dnepropetrovsk region in the village of Petrykivka. In 2013, Petrykivka painting was included into the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The master class gives participants a chance to connect with Ukrainian culture
  + Cross-stitching master class - cross stitch is a method of embroidering a design onto canvas using a needle and colored thread or other embroidery threads using the cross stitch technique. Cross stitch is easy to learn and for children. For them, this is not only an exciting activity, but also a hobby that helps in the development of artistic taste and a sense of beauty, which fosters perseverance and the ability to concentrate.
  + Ukrainian traditional game event titled “Cossack Entertainment” – At the event, several Ukrainian traditional games will be played. The goal is to deepen knowledge about traditional Ukrainian holidays, customs, rituals, folk games and fun, to cultivate the desire to be strong, courageous, and friendly and to introduce the folk traditions of a healthy lifestyle of Ukrainians.

**Participants**

* Ternopil´s children camp in Viljandi is meant only for Ukrainian children residing in Ukraine – boys and girls aged 10-15 and two teachers accompanying them from Ukraine to Estonia and back;
* Cultural and sports activities and events for Ukrainian refugee families and children residing in Estonia
  + Culinary master class – up to 135 people (adults and children at the age of 7-16);
  + sports camp in Hiiumaa – 10- 15 Ukrainian refugee children at the age of 13-17;
  + Photo exhibition and presentation - local Ukrainian community, Ukrainian refugees and general public;
  + Public presentation of the book “12 stories of the war in Ukraine” - local Ukrainian community, Ukrainian refugees and general public;
  + Painting master class - 10 Ukrainian children at the age of 10-19;
  + cross-stitching master classes - 10 Ukrainian refugee children at the age of 10-19 and adults;
  + Event “Cossack entertainment” – 20 Ukrainian refugee children;

**Communication and dissemination plan**

The OEF has well-established partnerships with several journalists from main media outlets (Eesti Päevaleht, Postimees) and plans to collaborate with them to disseminate project activities and results. Local media will also be targeted, as the activities will take place in Viljandi, Valga and Hiiumaa.

Additionally, project activities will be published on the Open Estonia Foundation´s website, Facebook page and Instagram and weekly newsletter. Consent from all participants will be obtained before publishing photos/videos. Donor´s logos and statement will be mentioned in all communication activities. The communication plan and strategy will be drafted in the beginning of the project.

**Activity plan:**

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|  | **Activity** | **Time** | **Location** | **Cost** | **Participants** |
| 1 | 9 culinary master classes | July 2024-March 2025 (1 class per month) | Viljandi | **17 428** | 135 people (adults and children at the age of 7-16 and locals) |
| 2 | Sports camp in Hiiumaa | July 2024 | Tahkuna | **4000** | 10-15 Ukrainian refugee children aged 13-17 |
| 3 | Ternopil children's camp in Viljandi | August 2024, 1 week | Viljandi | **11600** | Ukrainian children (from Ternopil) aged 10-15 |
| 4 | Project photo exhibition and presentation. | August, September 2024 | Viljandi, Tallinn | **5973** | Local Ukrainian community, Ukrainian refugees and general public |
| 5 | Public presentation of the book “12 stories of the war in Ukraine” | October 2024 | Viljandi, Tallinn | **6973** | Local Ukrainian community, Ukrainian refugees and general public |
| 6 | Painting master class | November 2024 | Viljandi | **2190** | 10 Ukrainian refugees aged 10-19 |
| 7 | Cross-stitching master classes | November 2024 | Viljandi | **136** | 10 Ukrainian refugees aged 10-19 and adults |
| 8 | Event “Cossack entertainment” | November 2024 | Viljandi | **400** | 20 Ukrainian refugee children |

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|  | **Activity** | **Time** | **Location** | **Cost** |
|  | Project coordination and administration | July 2024-March 2025 | Estonia | 13 050 |
|  | **TOTAL PROJECT COST** |  |  | **EUR 61 750.-** |

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| OUTPUT | INDICATOR | TARGET |
| Improved mental health and physical health of participants of Viljandi football camp | Number of participants, interviews/feedback with participants | 20 |
| Improved mental health and physical health of participants of master classes | Number of participants, interviews/feedback with participants | 100 |
| Increased knowledge of Ukrainian culture, deepened cultural contacts with Ukraine | Number of participants, interviews/feedback with participants | 200 |
| New skills acquired from participating in various classes and camps for Ukrainian refugees | Number of participants, interviews/feedback from participants | 200 |
| Increased capacity to support your own mental health | Number of participants, interviews/feedback with participants | 50 |
| Contacts/friendships created among Ukrainian refugees and locals | Interviews/feedback with participants | 20 |
| Contacts/friendships created among Ukrainian refugees residing in Estonia | Interviews/feedback with participants | 50 |
| Raised awareness of Ukrainian culture in the general audience | Number of people visiting the exhibition and book launch | 200 |
| Raised awareness of Ukrainian culture in the general audience | Articles/interviews in national/local newspaper about project´s activities | 3 |