

SESAME WORKSHOP

Welcome Sesame



Rapid Early Childhood Development (ECD) Needs Assessment for Ukrainian Families in Poland and Ukraine

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Research Questions

In May 2022, Sesame Workshop conducted a needs assessment with Ukrainian caregivers, host community caregivers and educators in both Ukraine and Poland to understand the following research questions:

- What are the most urgent ECD needs for Ukrainian IDP and refugee children?
- What type of educational content do caregivers want their children to see and on what platforms?
- What platforms do caregivers and their children currently prefer to use for accessing educational content?
- What are language preferences for educational content?
- How do caregivers define and teach their children about identity?
- In what ways can Sesame Workshop contribute to existing activities and programs? What type of supplemental content is currently needed for children in the conflict?

Study Locations



Sampling

- Data collection - May 29 and June 8, 2022
- Quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews were conducted face-to-face with caregivers and educators
- The sample was primarily married women between the ages of 30-39 years old. A majority of the sample has a bachelor's degree or higher. Full-time employment varied; Ukrainians (15%) and Polish (96%)

Location	Quantitative Survey			In Depth Interviews (IDIs)	
	Ukrainian Caregivers	Polish Caregivers	Total	Ukrainian Educators	Polish Educators
Lviv, Ukraine	100	-	100	6	
Lublin, Poland	100	-	100	-	-
Warsaw, Poland	50	50	100		7
Total	250	50	300	6	7



Caregiver Sample

Country	City	Region of Ukraine	Age of Children	N	Total
Ukraine	Lviv	Eastern & Southern Ukraine	3-5 years old	24	100
			6-8 years old	27	
		Central & Northern Ukraine	3-5 years old	25	
			6-8 years old	24	
Poland	Lublin	Eastern & Southern Ukraine	3-5 years old	24	100
			6-8 years old	23	
		Central & Northern Ukraine	3-5 years old	27	
			6-8 years old	26	
Poland	Warsaw	Polish nationals (host community)		50	100
		Ukrainian Refugees		50	

Education Stakeholder In-Depth Interview Sample

Country	Location	Profession	Gender	N	Total
Ukraine	Lviv	Teacher of 3-5 year old students		2	6
		Teacher of 6-8 year old students		1	
		NGO Chairperson		2	
		Child Psychologist		1	
Poland	Warsaw	Teacher of 3-5 year old students		2	7
		Teacher of 6-8 year old students		1	
		NGO Chairperson		1	
		NGO Chairperson	M	1	
		NGO Facilitator		1	
		Social Worker		1	
					13

Note: Stakeholders and educators in Ukraine spoke from the perspective of their students still in Ukraine, and educators in Poland spoke from a host community perspective on needs for Ukrainian students now enrolled in Polish schools.

Data Collection

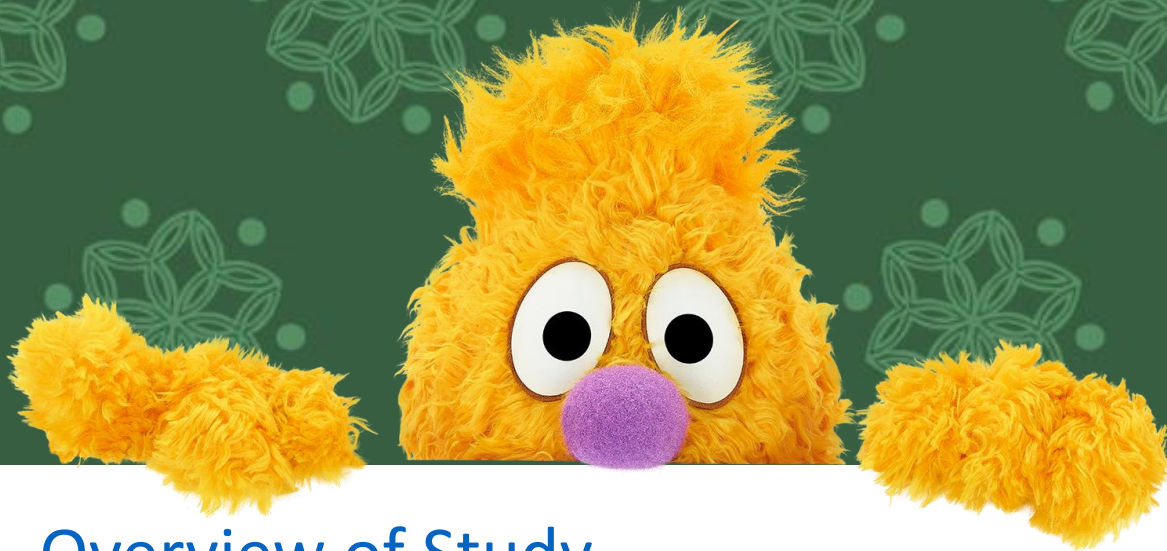
- **Data Collection Teams**
 - Quantitative field teams included 11 Polish interviewers, 2 Polish supervisor, 13 Ukrainian interviewers and 4 Ukrainian supervisors
 - Qualitative field teams included 1 Polish field manager, 2 Polish moderators, 1 Ukrainian field manager and 2 Ukrainian moderators
- **Training:** May 27 and May 30
- **Recruitment:** Interviewers used snowball sampling and started at the following points for first contacts:
 - Volunteer centers
 - State social security centers
 - State district administrations
 - Consulate
 - Other public places (parks, shopping malls)
- **Methodology:** face-to-face Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI)
- **Interview Location:**
 - Respondent's home (20%)
 - Private location in public space (80%)



Covid-19 Procedures

- To ensure interviewers & participant safety, researchers in Ukraine and Poland:
 - Wore personal **protection equipment** (masks, gloves, antiseptics, etc.)
 - Conducted a **temperature screening** before each departure.
 - Maintained and complied with local **social distancing** guidelines.
- Before data collection, interviewers confirmed they **had not**:
 - Been in close contact in the last 14 days with anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 or who had symptoms of COVID-19;
 - Tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days;
 - Experienced any symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

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Caregiver Demographics

- Most respondents (95%) are female
 - Slightly higher percentage of male caregivers in the Polish host community (18%)
- Over half (56%) are between the ages of 30 and 39
 - Average age: 35
- The majority of respondents (80%) are married
 - More Ukrainian refugees in Warsaw (82%) and Polish host community members (98%) were married than Ukrainians in other locations
 - More single female caregivers in Lviv and Lublin because men aged 18-60 are not allowed to leave Ukraine
- Most have at least a bachelor's degree
 - 62% of Ukrainian refugee/IDPs and 74% of Polish host community respondents have completed bachelor education or higher
- Employment varies by nationality
 - 14% of of Ukrainian refugee/IDPs are employed full time and 32% are full-time caregivers
 - 96% of Polish host community respondents are employed full time

Ukrainian Refugee/IDP Status

- The majority of Ukrainian refugee and IDPs moved in **March 2022** and came from Northern Ukraine (40%) and Eastern Ukraine (37%)
- 37% of Ukrainian respondents left because of **active war** 29% of Ukrainians left their home because the **war was coming too close**
- **56% of Polish host community** respondents have refugee families living in their neighborhood, and all of these refugees are from **Ukraine**.



Household Demographics

- **Number of children:** Average of 2 children under the age of 18; Polish host community average was 1 child
- **Average age of child:** 6 years old
- **Gender of children:** Girls (52%) represented a slightly larger proportion of children (3-8) than boys (48%)
- **Education status of children:**
 - 47% of children (3-8) attend school in-person
 - 21% attend online classes
 - 31% do not currently go to school

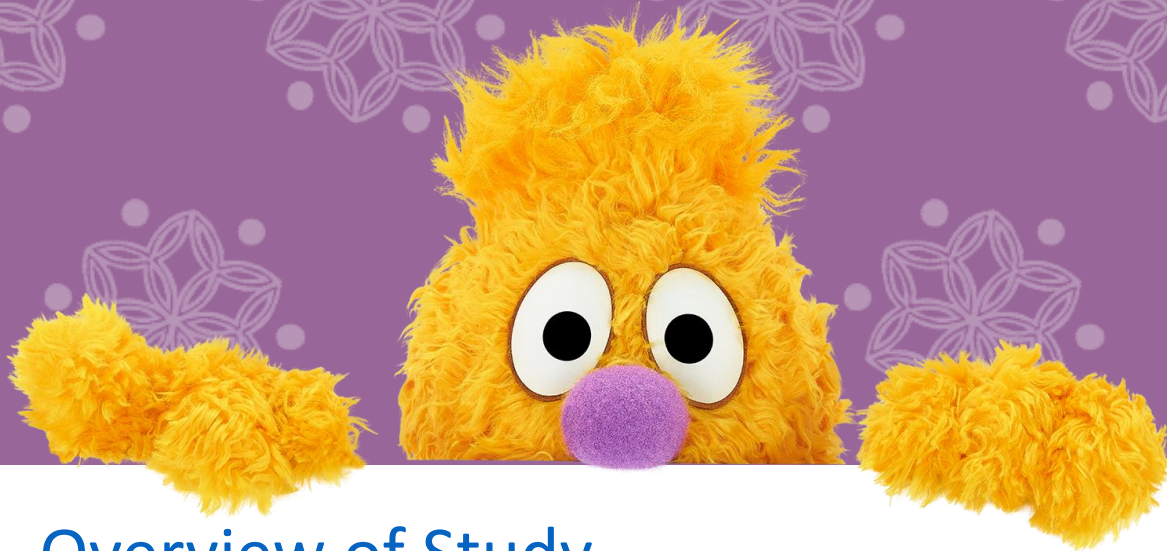


Education Stakeholder Demographics

- **Gender:** 92% women, 8% men
- **Average age:** 42 (Poland: 48, Ukraine: 36)
- **Age range:** 26-57
- **Education:** 92% have a university degree or post-school qualification, 8% have a secondary degree
- **Student age:** 23% were working with children in pre-primary school, including kindergarten, 38% were working with children 6-8, and 38% were working with children in both age groups
- **Job title:** 38% were **teachers**, 31% were **NGO employees**, 15% were child **psychologists**, 8% worked as a **school counselor** and 8% worked as a **social worker**

School/Organization	Lviv, Ukraine	Warsaw, Poland
Ryasne Family Center		1
School of the Free and Indifferent		1
Secondary School #41		1
Urban Re-Public		1
Center for Professional Development of Teachers		1
All-Ukrainian Zlagoda Foundation		1
A.R.T. Foundation	1	
Stowarzyszenie Praskie Patrz sercem Association	1	
Multicultural Center	1	
Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Dzieci (The Society for the Protection of Children)	1	
Polish Primary School	2	
Preschool	1	
Total	7	6

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Key Findings – Content

- Caregivers are interested in content that helps children learn, with a focus on **cognitive development** and **socio-emotional learning**, including communication skills, critical thinking and independent decision making
- Caregivers believe the top priority for children right now is to have an outlet for playfulness and cheer, and that **processing trauma** needs to come before educational achievement
- Caregivers want to see content that **celebrates Ukrainian songs, dance and music**. There is a gap to be filled with TV shows that **represent national identities, both Ukrainian and Polish**
- Aesthetically, both educators and caregivers would like content to be **bright, cheerful** and in a **game or interactive** format

Key Findings – Ukrainian IDPs and Refugees

- Caregivers prefer to see content on **YouTube**, followed by broadcast TV
- Ukrainian families want to see content in **Ukrainian**
 - While some speak Russian, Ukrainians want to preserve their language
 - Language is especially important to Ukrainian refugees in Poland. Given that they may perceive their stay in Poland to be temporary, preserving their language is particularly important to them.
- **Language, family history** and **food** are the top markers of identity. Song and music also play an important role in Ukrainian identity. Contemporary anthems (like the Eurovision Song Contest winner ‘Stefania’) are especially important for Ukrainians today
- Ukrainian feel their identities are **under-represented on television**. Their **favorite television shows** include Fixies, Masha and the Bear, Winx, Ukraine’s Got Talent, Barboskini

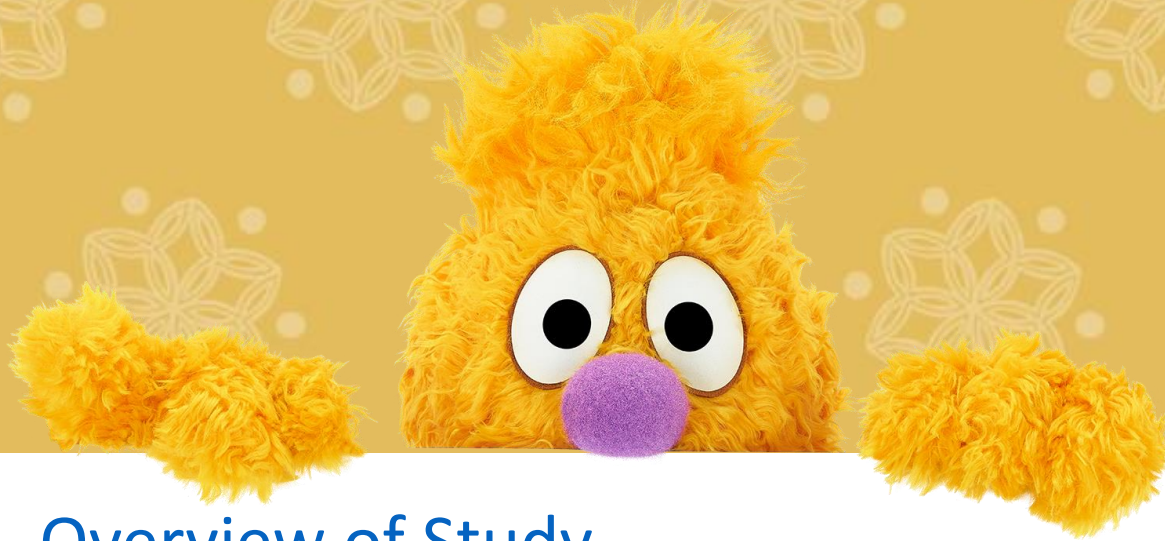
Key Findings – Polish Host Community

- Caregivers prefer to see content on **television**, followed by Netflix
- Polish families **prefer content in Polish**, with Ukrainian subtitles or translations for refugees
 - Host community members also feel strongly that for Ukrainians to integrate they need to develop Polish language proficiency
- **Family history, place of origin, nationality, and place of residence** are top markers of identity
 - Identity elements tied to place, location, and nationality are particularly important for Polish host community members
- Polish families feel their identities are **under-represented on television**. Their **favorite television shows** include PAW Patrol, Cat House, I Have Talent, Masha and the Bear, Madagascar

Key Findings – Educators and Stakeholders

- Polish educators prioritize **teaching Polish**, facilitating **integration with Polish children** and teaching **strategies to cope with trauma** for Ukrainian children. They also expressed a need for teaching Polish through **interactive video content**.
- Ukrainian educators prioritize **teaching Ukrainian, helping children feel safe**, facilitating **integration into a new environment**, and teaching **strategies to cope with trauma** for Ukrainian children.
- While some educators expressed concerns about the amount of media children are already consuming, they believe videos can be an effective platform for sharing vital messages and lessons, including coping with trauma and instilling joy and playfulness.

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Children's Academic Needs and Priorities

Changes to Education Policy in Poland & Ukraine



- In **Poland**, education policies are being amended to **expand class sizes to accept Ukrainian refugees**, and no fees are required.
- Some refugee children face administrative barriers to enrolling in school. Students need passports and PESEL (national Polish identification) numbers to enroll, which has presented some challenges for parents and for students.



- In **Ukraine**, IDP students are accepted into schools broadly, as long as their parents can provide a birth certificate.

"So, for them to become a part of our class, they had to come to school, their parents submitted a request to be admitted to the class, and this was all it took. They also had to submit a copy of a birth certificate. And that was it, nothing more."

Educator of 6-8 year olds, Female, 55, Lviv

School Attendance

- Overall, 47% of children (3-8) attend school in-person; 21% attend online and **31% do not currently go to school**
 - Ukrainian IDPs in Lviv had the highest rate of children (3-8) **currently not in school** (59%), followed by Ukrainian refugees in Lublin (22%) and Ukrainian refugees in Warsaw (22%)
 - 96% of Polish host community children (3-8) were enrolled in in-person school
- The majority of children 3-8 (85%) attending school were in government schools
- Reasons children do not currently attend school were based on location and refugee status
 - Children of Ukrainian IDPs in Lviv didn't attend school because the child was being educated at home
 - Children of Ukrainian refugees in Lublin and Warsaw didn't attend school primarily because they did not speak the language of the local school

Educators Views: School in Ukraine

- Where school is taking place in Ukraine, it is serving many functions at once and becoming a place **for bonding, catharsis, and escape**

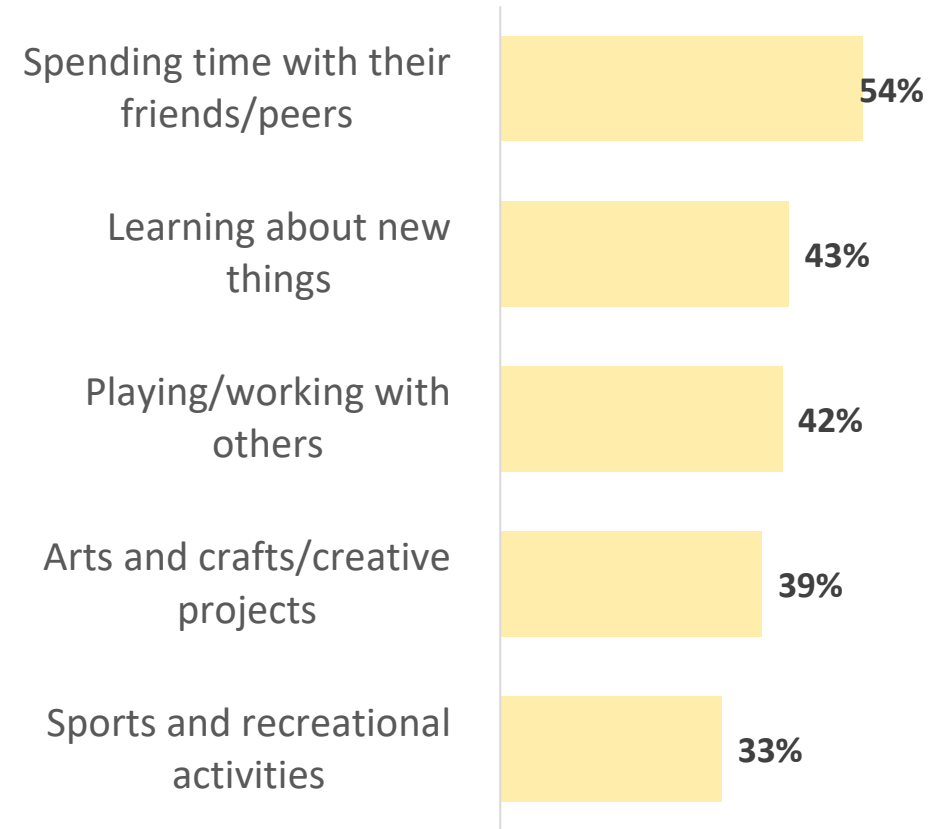
“We want to integrate as much as possible kids who are temporarily moving to our city. To tell them about our traditions, to get acquainted with our local children. They already have friends of their own. They already see each other on the playgrounds. Also, the task is to maximize classes with some interesting activities and experiments as much as it is possible. So that children will want to come and forget about all those moments of horror that surrounded them. We have such a rule that we meet in the morning and share about feelings.” - Educator of 3-5-year-olds, Female, 31, Lviv

Caregivers Views on Why Children Like School

- **Spending time with friends** was the top reason for enjoying school across all locations and regardless of refugee status
- **Sports and recreation** was a top reason for enjoying school among the Polish host community. Ukrainians did not, likely because Ukrainians are enrolled in online school at a higher rate and lack an outlet for sports and recreation



Reasons Students Like School

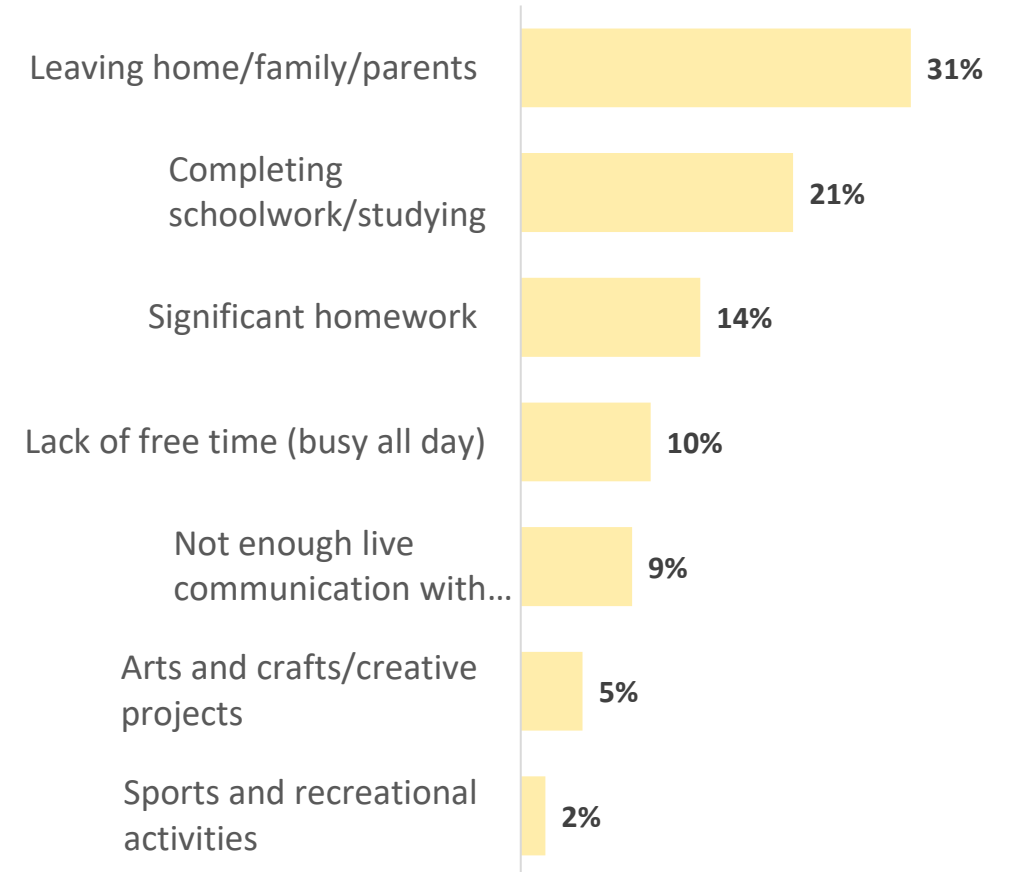


Caregivers Views on Why Children Dislike School

- **Leaving the home** was the top reason children dislike school, particularly among Ukrainians in Lviv
- **Completing schoolwork** was a frequently cited reason for disliking school among **Polish** caregivers but not among Ukrainians



Reasons Students Dislike School



Educators Views: Saying Goodbye

- Teachers have witnessed students **experiencing distress while saying goodbye** to their parents, especially older children with greater situational awareness

“We have one boy who’s really taking it very hard when he has to be without his mum for several hours at school. He was unable to last one lesson without calling her. Me and my colleague tried to work on how we can divert his interest, spark his curiosity, so that his thoughts don’t center on his home. He was missing his father all the time as his dad stayed in the Ukraine. And he was missing his mother, who was giving him a sense of safety. For the first two weeks, he was really crying daily.” - Educator of 6–8-year-olds, Female, 54, Warsaw

Socio-emotional Learning Priorities

- Caregivers prioritize **communication skills** for their children (14%)
- 21% of Ukrainian IDPs in Lviv prioritized the **ability to learn, unlearn and relearn** as the most important skill for their children, compared to Ukrainians in Lublin (9%) and in Warsaw (6%)



Most Important Life Lessons for Children



Language Barriers in Poland: Challenges

- The **language of instruction** for classrooms in Poland is **Polish**, even if Ukrainian children are in the class
- According to Polish teachers, Ukrainian children are not having trouble playing and finding non-verbal ways to communicate with their Polish classmates but have concerns that **language barriers will prevent educational progress** in the long term
- Young children are learning Polish quickly and integrating more easily in **Polish classrooms that are mostly play-based**. Older children find lessons challenging without Polish language proficiency.

“You know, these children are often sitting in on these classes and understand nothing. That’s the worst thing ever. They sit there for 7-8 hours and don’t understand a word. Worst thing you can do to a child, really hurts their wellbeing.”

- Social Worker, Female, 42, Warsaw

“If we’re focusing on their social contact, they are managing quite well. But in education – they are not managing at all, as they don’t know the language.”

- Educator of 6–8-year-olds, Female, 54, Warsaw

Language Barriers in Poland: Solutions

- To overcome the challenges posed by lack of Polish proficiency, Polish schools are hiring **Ukrainian translators**, hiring (paid) **Ukrainian women to aid in classrooms**, and **hosting additional Polish classes after school**.
- Teachers recognize these resources as helpful but insufficient and repeatedly express the need for more bilingual materials.

“The biggest issue I think is Polish. Would be great if there were extra activities with translations. And extra lessons and materials for foreigners to teach Polish. Free didactic materials for learning Polish.”

- Educator of 6–8-year-olds, Female, 57, Warsaw

“I dream of materials in two languages on both pages. So that the students, through comparison and going back and forth can understand what it’s about. But also, so that they can have some material in Polish on the same topic.”

- Educator of 6-8 year olds, Female, 54, Warsaw

Educators Views: Children's Needs

Children need to feel secure in their new environment

"What I consider most important is the socialization and safety of the kindergarten. For the children to feel safe, and for the parents to know, that the children are safe and well cared for."

- Educator of 3-5-year-olds, Female, 53, Warsaw

Children need help integrating in their new communities

"These children need to feel comfortable here, in Poland. And then integrating with the Polish. Through cultural classes, like, going kayaking together, or going to the movies or theater together, through that. This will also be very important for the Polish children as well."

- NGO - Chairperson, Female, 56, Warsaw

Children need help mitigating the manifestations of their trauma

"Ukrainian children sometimes can respond with aggression towards their peers. Or you have situations like these sirens on holidays where children can suddenly burst with crying or stress and Polish kids don't understand. In one preschool, a girl from Ukraine heard the sirens and she pulled out her hairs. She had these bald spots, as she was pulling out her hairs. This is a trauma for these children and their parents."

- NGO Chairperson, Female, 40, Warsaw

Educators Views: Caregivers Needs

Caregivers need translation Assistance

“I have a list of the Ukrainian parents and I send them information about support groups. Or that there’s this new Ukrainian lady hired at the non-public psychological clinic in the area that they are doing consultations with the parents about parental issues in Ukrainian. I share information about vaccinations and the healthcare system.”

- Educator of 6–8-year-olds, Female, 54, Warsaw

“What I’d like someone to do, is for someone to translate into Ukrainian the information that I want to give to the parents. Someone should publish it as well. Someone should help create a handbook about our preschool, written in Ukrainian, so that I can give it to the parents that need it and feel all right.”

- Educator of 3-5-year-olds, Female, 53, Warsaw

Caregivers need psychological Support

“We offer a support group. It’s about working with trauma. However, specialists tell us that right now we’re actually dealing with a crisis. Because the trauma is the next step.”

- NGO Chairperson, Female, 46, Warsaw

“We worked with the parents, but only if they wanted, but this is more about a psychological aid. Parents and adults are reluctant to seek help.”

- Educator of 3-5-year-olds, Female, 42, Lviv

Content Preferences



Children's Favorite Television Shows

- Caregivers named over 250 distinct favorite TV shows of their children, but their favorites were **Fixies (15%)**, **PAW Patrol (12%)** and **Masha and the Bear (11%)**.
 - Fixies was popular only amongst Ukrainian refugees and IDPs
 - PAW Patrol was more popular amongst the host community (22%) than Ukrainians (10%)
 - Masha and the Bear was more popular amongst Ukrainians (13%) than the Polish host community (4%)
- The majority of TV shows cited were English-language original shows and movies popular in the US or the UK, such as Peppa Pig, Frozen, Shrek, Barbie, My Little Pony and Harry Potter



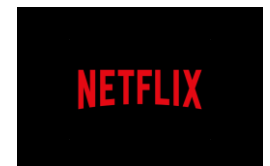
The top platforms used to watch TV are:

YouTube (89%)

Television (37%)

Netflix (17%)

Television is primarily used by Polish host community respondents (74%) while YouTube is primarily used by Ukrainian refugees and IDPs (95%).

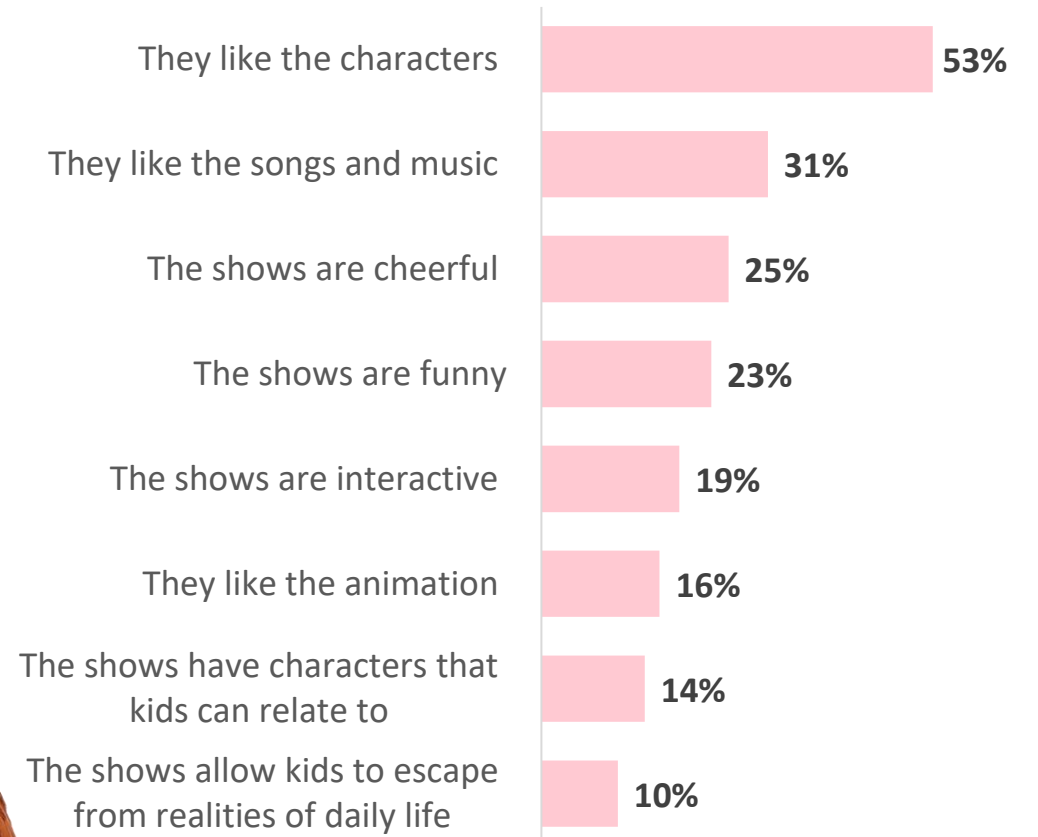


Reasons Children Like Their Favorite Shows

- Children like their favorite TV shows because they like the **characters, songs and music**.
 - **Liking the characters** was most pronounced for Ukrainian IDPs in Lviv (70%) compared to Ukrainian refugees in Lublin (46%) or in Warsaw (32%).
 - Ukrainian refugees in Lublin responded more strongly to the **songs and music** (42%) than in other areas



Reasons Children Liked Their Favorite TV Shows



Caregivers Favorite Television Shows

- Caregivers' favorite TV shows included **Master Chief (8%)**, **Telegram news (6%)** and **Facts (6%)**
 - Master Chief was popular only with Ukrainian refugees and IDPs, especially amongst those in Lviv (15%)
 - Telegram News was only popular amongst Ukrainian refugees in Lviv
 - Facts was popular amongst the Polish host community (32%)
- Favorite TV shows were a mix of American or British shows and Ukrainian or Russian. Different news programs were consistently popular.



The top platforms used to watch TV are:

YouTube (72%)

Television (66%)

Netflix (21%)

Facebook (2%)

Television is used more by Polish host community respondents (90%) while YouTube is primarily used by Ukrainian refugees and IDPs (77%)

 YouTube



Caregivers Recommendations for a Children's Show

- Caregivers value shows based on how **educational, informative** and **enriching** they are.
- Respondents also prioritized the development of **socio-emotional learning skills**, particularly critical thinking and independent decision making.
- Content recommendations by Ukrainian caregivers included **Ukrainian traditions, culture and history** through song or story.
- Stylistic recommendations included **bright colors, animation and game format**.

Recommended Platforms

YouTube (86%)
Television (40%)
Netflix (20%)
Facebook (12%)

Television is recommended by **Polish host community** (76%) while **YouTube** is recommended by **Ukrainian refugees and IDPs** (93%).

Recommended Languages

Ukrainian (86%)
English (38%)
Polish (40%)
Russian (23%)

All Polish host community respondents recommend **Polish**, but only 40% of Ukrainian refugees in Lublin and 18% of Ukrainian refugees in Warsaw. 98% of **Ukrainian** refugees in Lublin and 96% in Warsaw recommend **Ukrainian**

Nursery Rhymes and Songs at Home

- **68% of Ukrainian refugees and IDPs sing to their children**, compared to 8% of than Polish host community caregivers
- Two Ukrainian songs have become anthemic in the midst of the war: 'Stefania' and 'Oh, Red Viburnum in the Meadow'



'Stefania' is a song by the Ukrainian band Kalush Orchestra. Originally written about a band member's mother, the lyrics took on new meaning after the outbreak of the war, and the song became a symbol of hope and positivity. It recently won the Eurovision Song Contest, which served as a morale boost across the country.

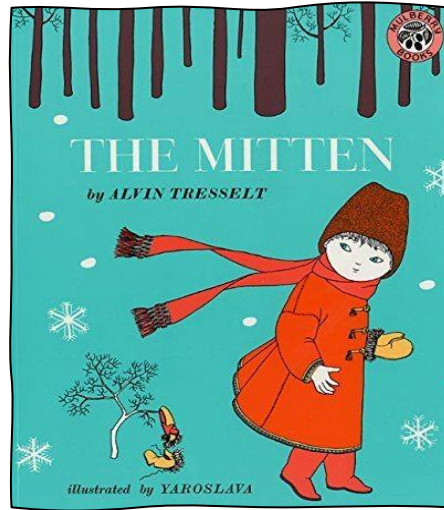


'O, the red viburnum in the meadow' is a simple Ukrainian folk song sung to radiate patriotism and honor. The song was covered by Andy Khlyvnyuk and has been popularized since. The song was originally created for the Sich Rifleman, a Ukrainian military formation. The red viburnum is a national treasure and fruit of Ukraine.



Sharing Stories and Legends with Children

- 49% of caregivers share or read **stories** or **legends** with their children. Ukrainian refugees or IDPs shared these more often (66%) than Polish host community members (14%).
- 17% of Ukrainians share fairy tales, 8% share stories from their own lives and 3% shared legends of the Cossacks.



The Mitten is a popular Ukrainian folk story that caregivers frequently referenced.

The story starts with a young boy wanting white mittens made by his grandmother. She is hesitant that the boy will lose white mittens, as they are the same color as the snow, but proceeds to make them anyway. As the boy is walking in his new mittens, he drops one, losing it. While the young boy may have lost his warm, comfortable mitten, it has become the new home to a wide range of wildlife. The well-crafted mitten stretches to cover the animals and keep them warm in the cold winter months.

Respondents also frequently tell their children the **legend of the creation of Kyiv**, which holds that three brothers, Kyi, Shchek, and Khoryv, along with their sister, Lybid founded the city and proceeded to name it after their own family, which was known to be legendary and pristine.



Identity and Inclusion



Caregivers Perceptions of Identity

- Top elements of family identity for **Ukrainian caregivers**
 - Language (30%)
 - Family History (25%)
 - Food (25%)
- Top elements of family identity for **Polish host community caregivers**
 - Place of Residence (46%)
 - Family History (42%)
 - Country of Origin (42%)
- Song figures more prominently in Ukrainian identity (16%) than Polish identity (6%)
- Language is a more important cultural indicator for those in Lublin (35%) than in Lviv (22%)

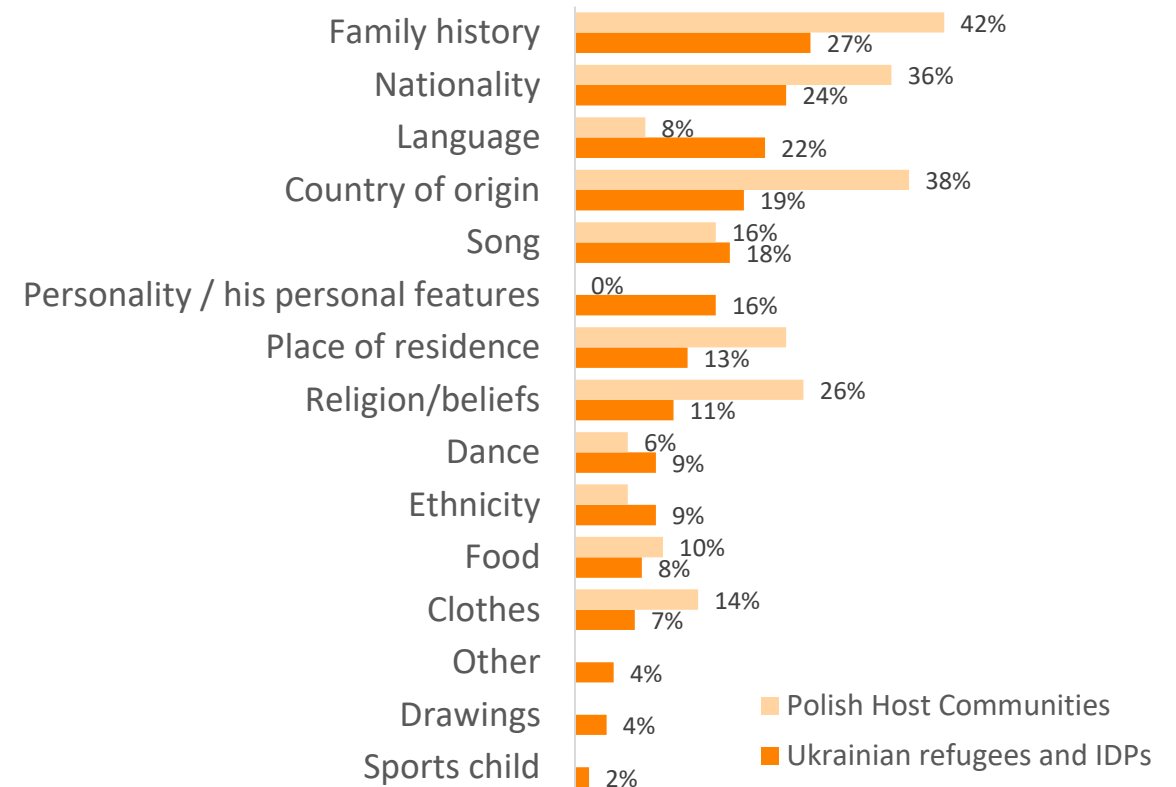
Most Important Parts of Family's Identity



Discussing Family Identity with Children

- Ukrainian caregivers define cultural identity as **family history** (27%), **nationality** (24%) and **language** (22%)
- Ukrainian refugees in Lublin feel more strongly about markers of identity rooted in **country and nationality** compared to IDPs in Lviv
 - 35% in Lublin would use country of origin to describe family identity compared to 5% in Lviv
- 59% of Ukrainian and 22% of Polish parents (53% total) openly discuss aspects of identity with their children. 27% **feel that their child is too young** to understand this discussion and 8% feel they do not know how to talk to their children about this topic.

Most Important Parts of Family's Identity



Expressions of Ukrainian Identity: Dress

- Only 7% of Ukrainian refugees and IDPs named clothing as an element of identity, but the topic of **Vyshyvanka Day** was discussed frequently as an important celebration of **Ukrainian culture and heritage**
- **Vyshyvanka** is the name for an embroidered shirt in Ukrainian culture (pictured right).
 - The stitching is unique by region, so the origin of the garment can be determined by examining its pattern
 - To honor this garment and its tradition, Vyshyvanka Day is celebrated on the third Thursday each May.



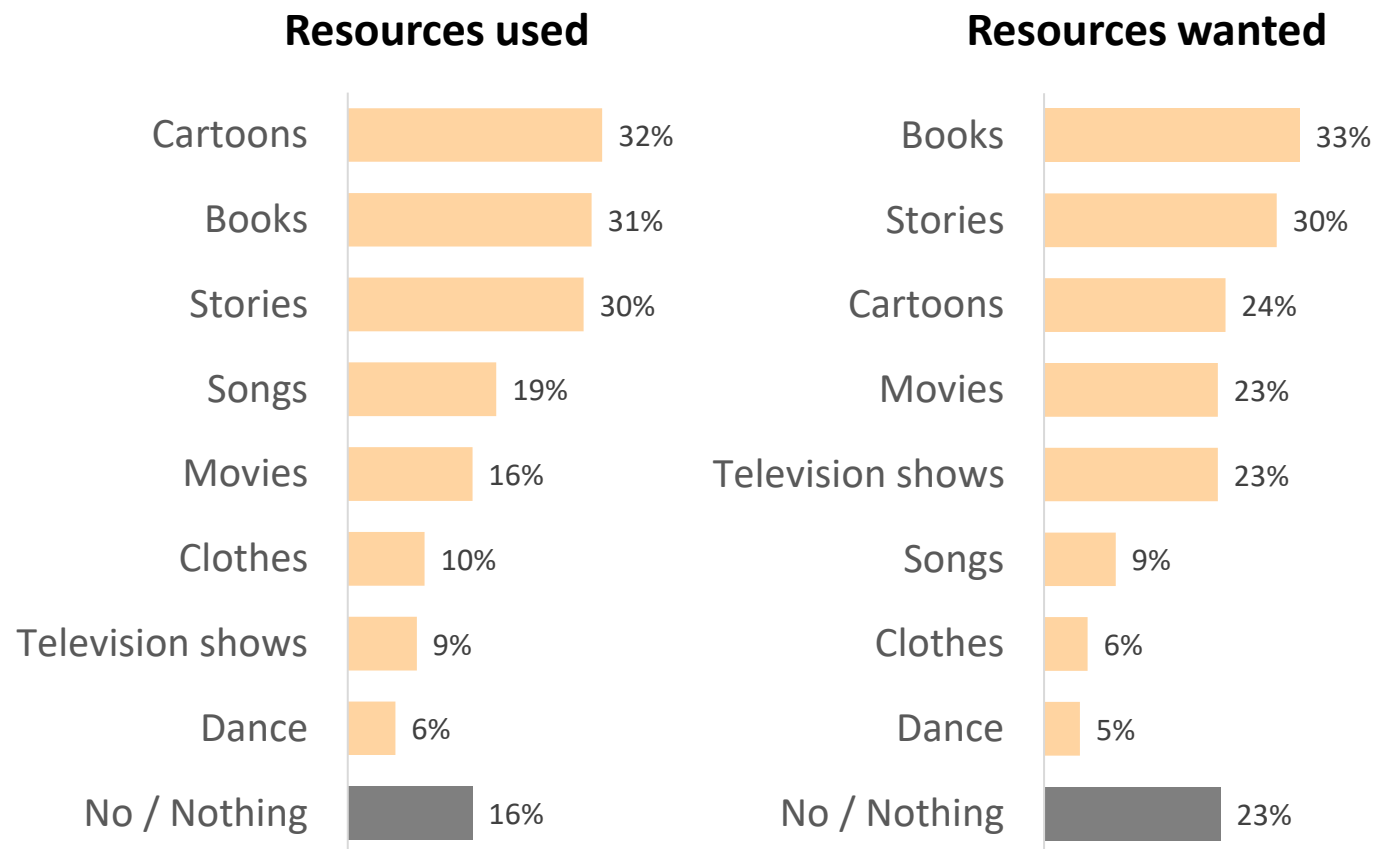
Ukrainian women don the Vyshyvanka during a Vyshyvanka Day celebration.

Along with the Vyshyvanka, Pysankas are a beacon of cultural identity among Ukrainians. These decorated eggs are hunted similarly to how those who celebrate Easter search for Easter eggs.



Resources to Discuss Identity with Children

- Respondents use **cartoons, books and stories** to discuss issues of identity with their children
 - Ukrainian IDPs in Lviv use cartoons the most (52%) compared to those in Lviv (28%) or the Polish host community (12%)
- Respondents want more of the same types of resources, especially books and stories, to **better discuss identity with their children**



Identity Representation on Television

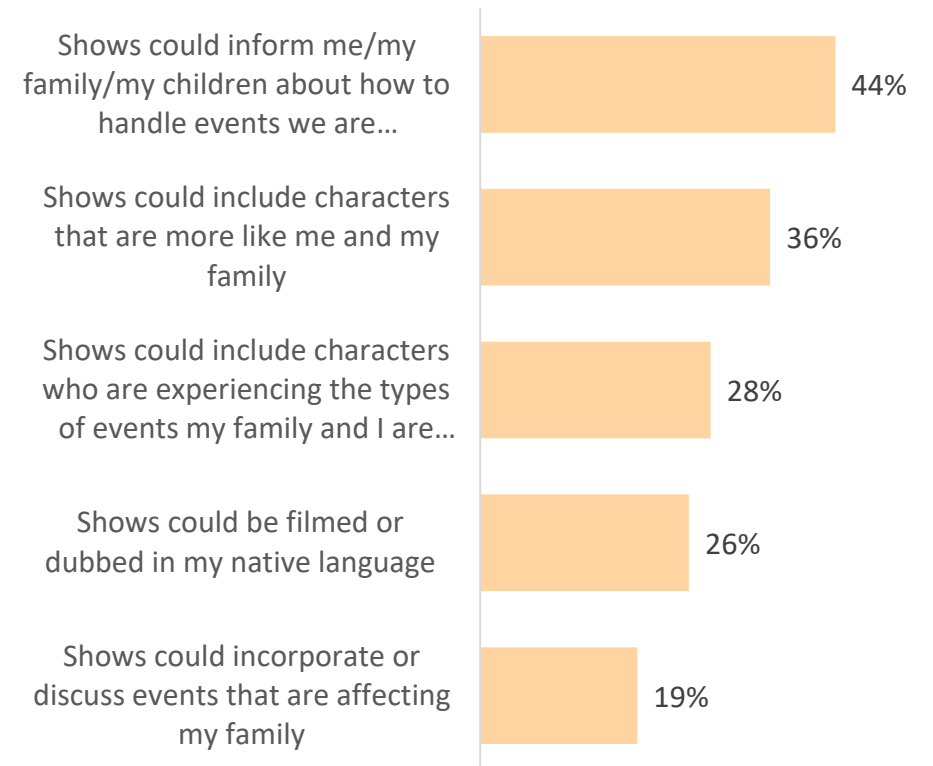
- Only 1 in 5 caregivers (20%) feel that TV shows their children watch **represent their identities well**
 - Polish host community families (8%) and Ukrainian refugees in Warsaw (10%) feel the biggest lack of representative TV shows
- Talent shows like **“Ukraine’s Got Talent,” “Voice of the Country”** and **“X factor”** represent family or cultural identity in Poland and Ukraine
- Ukrainians also mentioned **Smeshariki** and **Master Chef**, while Polish respondents named **Bolek** and **Lock**



Solutions for Better Representation on TV

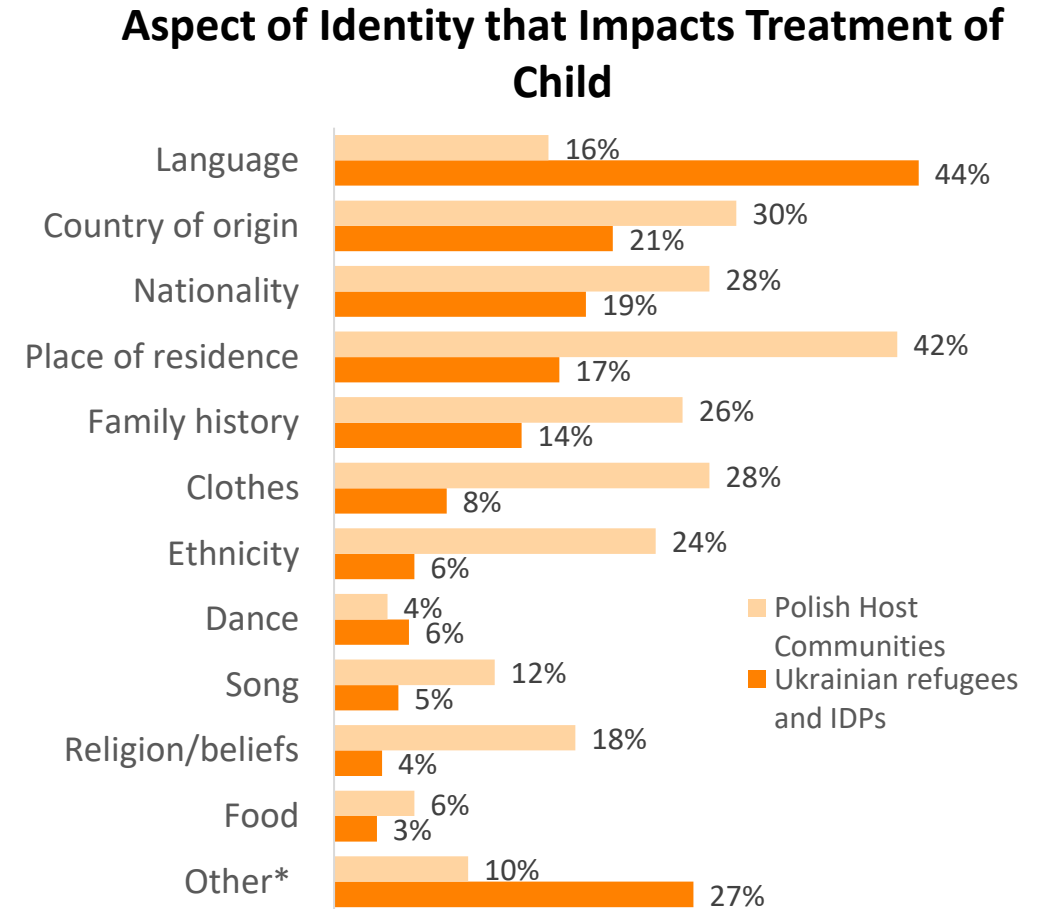
- For Ukrainians, TV content should showcase **pride in Ukrainian nationality, traditions and customs** and highlight value placed on **family time** in nature and at home as well as **music and singing**
- Content should also represent:
 - Shyness exacerbated by **Polish language barriers**
 - Enjoyment of activities like **music** and being **active**
 - Children with **physical or mental disabilities**
- Relatability of events and characters is an important aspect of representation

How TV Shows Could Better Represent Family Identity



Caregivers' Perceptions of Differences

- 30% of all caregivers felt that their **identity made a difference** in how their child was treated by others
 - Ukrainian refugees in Lublin (43%) agreed more than caregivers in any other location
- Ukrainian caregivers identified **language** as an important cultural indicator that **affected how their child was treated**. This was more acute for Ukrainian refugees in Lublin and Warsaw than for IDPs in Lviv.
- The Polish host community instead felt that **place of residence** was the most important cultural indicator.
- For all groups, elements like dance, song and food were **less important** than country of origin, nationality and place of residence.



*The majority of those who said "Other" said no aspect of identity impacts treatment of child

Host Community Perception of Refugees

- 56% of Polish host community respondents have refugee families living in their neighborhood and all of these refugees are from **Ukraine**
- **24% of caregivers in the Polish host community** believe that **refugees have an overall positive impact** on their community.
 - 46% believe refugees have neither a positive nor a negative impact
 - 28% feel that refugees have an overall negative impact on their communities
- Positive impacts of refugees include their **contributions to the economy** and their expansion of **community diversity**
- Negative impacts of refugees include the **draining of social services** from the community and **clashes between host community and refugee culture**

Educators Views: Negative Sentiment Toward Refugees

- Educators are going to extra lengths to meet the needs of Ukrainian refugee/IDP children but feel this is not a sustainable solution.
- Some teachers express an **undercurrent of resistance to prioritizing Ukrainian children:**

“We’re either taking care of the Ukrainian kids, or the Polish kids. I can’t be filling the knowledge gaps of the Ukrainian kids, as I’m responsible for the education of our kids, the Polish kids. I can’t dedicate my complete time to the Ukrainian children.” – Educator of 6–8-year-olds, Female, 57, Warsaw

- One educator acknowledged there are **traces of xenophobia** among the Polish host community:

“I dare say that in our backwards country of Poland, we say ‘yuck’ to anything that’s different. Different means dangerous. It’s like in that old song – I see a mouse, I must kick it. We don’t know, therefore we’re scared and we reject.” – Educator of 6-8-year-olds, Female, 54, Warsaw

Educators Views: Negative Sentiment Toward Refugees

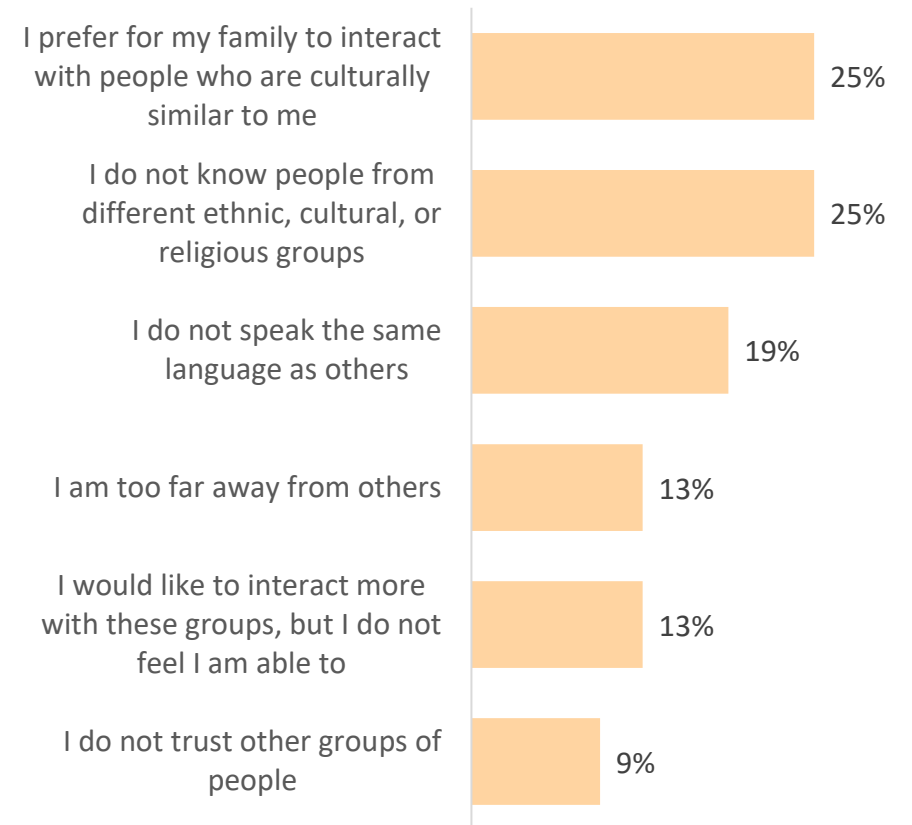
- Another potential root of negative sentiment is the **temporary nature** of Ukrainians' presence in Poland
- Some acknowledge that investing in structural changes and adjustments is a moot point since many will **return to their cities of origin** in the near future.

“When Ukrainian children come to us in the morning, we want them to connect to their Ukrainian schools and have their lessons like that. These lessons are well-matched to their level. They work in their educational system, until they learn Polish. Because I can say that based on my experiences with Ukrainian war refugees, 80% of the people I hear about, they want to go back to Ukraine. It’s all temporary. So, for them online studying is ideal, as they can continue with their system.” – NGO Facilitator, Female, 45, Warsaw

Interactions with Other Groups

- Over half of Polish caregivers have Ukrainian refugees in their neighborhoods, but **only 36%** interact with people from different groups
- 2 in 3 believe that it is important for children to be raised around **other types of people**
- Of those who have interacted with other groups, **almost all have engaged with Ukrainian refugees** and other immigrants and feel that it's important to do so regularly or at least sometimes
- Those who do not interact with other groups attribute this to the **language barrier** and a preference for interacting with **their own culture**. Others note they have not met anyone from another culture but wish to do so.

Reasons for not interacting with other groups



Educators Needs and Experiences



Educational Priorities

- Teachers' general priorities include **developing curiosity, positive social skills, and positive self-concept**

“Preschool has 3 basic goals. We are a care-providing, didactic and upbringing institution. It’s just about filling the little minds with knowledge.” – Educator of 3-5 year olds, Female, 53, Warsaw

“Exploring themselves, understanding themselves, being able to resolve conflicts, being able to build relationships with other people is a basic skill. We do not prioritize a school success, but success as a person, a sense of self.”

– School Psychologist, Female, 26, Lviv

- The most important priority was making sure children **feel safe, secure, and have a space to play, interact, and be children**

“These are really young children and pardon my French, but screw education! And in particular the teaching of our values. First of all, we need to provide them with a sense of security. After that, we should engage them in playing and socializing. If we can get that, then we can perhaps focus on learning the material.”

– Educators of 6-8 year olds, Female, 54, Warsaw

Existing Services for Refugee/IDP Children (1)

Service	Format	Example
Polish language classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After-school, in-person language classes for Ukrainian children enrolled in Polish schools 	<p><i>“There are extra Polish classes. Two hours a week. And if the child shows up, they can benefit from the classes.”</i></p> <p>- Educator of 6-8 year olds, Female, 57, Warsaw</p>
Psychological support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special counseling sessions for Ukrainian children experiencing trauma Music & art therapy Discussion circles at the start of each class to express feelings 	<p><i>“The first thing we did was to find a Ukrainian counsellor online. Because of the war, she also came here to Poland. We sat down and talked about our resources, capabilities and what kind of offer we can prepare. And therefore, we have an offer of specialized support, so dealing with trauma, crisis and all. But then there were very many kids who at first didn’t go to school, so we activated an art therapy group for the youngest kids.”</i></p> <p>-NGO Chairperson, Female, 46, Warsaw</p>

Existing Services for Refugee/IDP Children (2)

Service	Format	Example
'Cultural Translators'	Polish schools with a significant number of Ukrainian children receive a 'cultural translator' to help with verbal translation and to act as a liaison between Ukrainian children and Polish teachers	<p><i>"If you reach a certain number of Ukrainian kids in your school, the government appoints you a 'cultural translator.' A person who is assigned to the group of Ukrainian kids, to translate things. But it's usually for the older children. Because the younger ones, they feel alright, but the older ones don't have that comfort. They are really having a hard time going through all of this, as they can understand more of what is happening."</i></p> <p>– Educator of 6-8 year olds, Female, 57, Warsaw</p>
Play and socialization	Formalized spaces and settings for children to play and interact with one another outside of school	<p><i>"What they do now is play football, they have field games, really a broad range of things. Then there's dancing classes, Zumba, sewing classes, cooking workshops with [a Polish celebrity chef]. These children learn and bond through these classes."</i></p> <p>– NGO Facilitator, Female, 45, Warsaw</p>

Existing Services for Refugee/IDP Caregivers

Service	Format	Example
Psychological support & counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma counseling • Support groups 	<p><i>“The project that we launched is called the center for support during migration crisis. We have this schedule and... we have 3 psychologists now, 1 lawyer, 2 people giving career advice. To provide support so they can join the job market.”</i></p> <p>– NGO Facilitator, Female, 45, Warsaw</p>
Career advice & support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job counseling • Occupational therapy 	
Polish language classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polish language tutoring and classes for adults 	<p><i>“We also have Polish and English classes. We decided that the language learning would be professional and also online. We have the equipment for it.”</i></p> <p>– NGO Facilitator, Female, 45, Warsaw</p>

Helpful Resources for Educators

1. Bilingual materials in Polish and Ukrainian to facilitate language absorption

“If someone is going to adapt the coursebooks, there should be footnotes with translations into Ukrainian. Like a normal coursebook, with a Ukrainian translation.” - Educator of 6-8 year olds, Female, 57, Warsaw

2. Bilingual guides for parents to share vital information

“What I’d like someone to do, is for someone to translate into Ukrainian the information that I want to give to the parents. Someone should publish it as well so that I don’t have to struggle explaining the opening and closing times, the teachers. Someone should help me create a handbook about our preschool, written in Ukrainian, so that I can give it to the parents that need it.” - Educator of 3-5 year olds, Female, 53, Warsaw

3. Training and leadership around curriculum and materials

“As a Ukrainian people we need a guide - a leader. Some leadership in this issue is what I need, I need a person who would be able to make the optimal pick of all the available resources, something that is the most important, and then train it to our teachers. Because everything seems to be similar and redundant.” - Educator of 6-8 year olds, Female, 55, Lviv

Pros and Cons of Multimedia Content

Pro: Interactive, fun content spurs learning and inspiration

“I’m all in favor of following multimedia education – games, and other things, stuff that will inspire the children. Because when something inspires you, you learn faster.”

- Social Worker, Female, 42, Warsaw

“It is necessary to combine all possible types of material presentation. If you just read the story or fairy tale for the whole lesson, they will no longer perceive it. If you read and show them, the perception will be different.”

- Educator of 3-5 year olds, Female, 31, Lviv

“I think the video can be used as an introductory step for the coming class. This can both work as a trailer or a preview, this can be guiding us along the same lines as the topic of our event.”

- NGO chairperson, Male, 33 Lviv

Con: New content could exacerbate media oversaturation

“Most institutions often asks us about multimedia. But the children nowadays are so overstimulated on these screens.

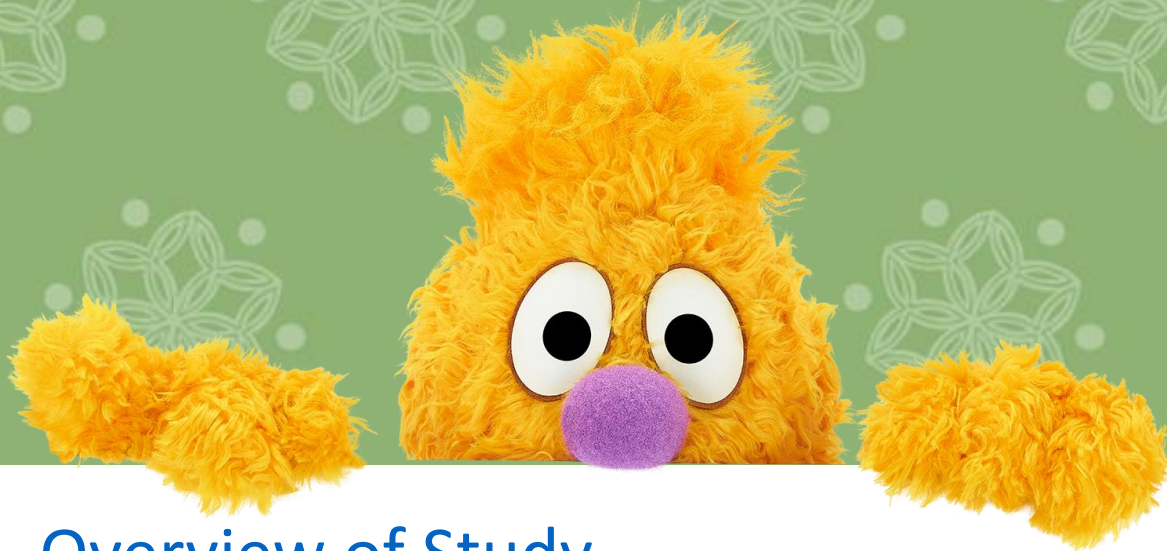
And we have an interactive display screen, we have projectors, a magic carpet, we completely don’t need these multimedia materials. Honestly, I would prefer for someone to offer a sensory path for our garden, things you don’t need multimedia for.”

- Educator of 3-5 year olds, Female, 53, Warsaw

“Absolutely not! Not multimedia! Kids are so oversaturated with what the adults are shoving into their hands, or what they are using, and the children, it’s like second-hand smoking.”

- Educator of 6-8 year olds, Female, 54, Warsaw

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Conclusions

- **Parents want to celebrate and preserve Ukrainian culture:** Ukrainian refugees and IDP caregivers seek to celebrate their language, culture and traditions and to share them with their children. Caregivers note that these elements are important to the identity of their family, despite some xenophobic reactions from the host community.
- **Children need help adjusting to new school settings:** Ukrainian children will continue to enter Polish schools and the school will play an important role in children's sense of inclusion, as well as safety and security. Language barriers are another aspect of school that could pose a challenge to childhood development. Ukrainian caregivers prioritize content and learning in Ukrainian to ensure that their children will maintain their Ukrainian identity.
- **Children need help processing their trauma:** Caregivers and educators note that some students dislike school because leaving their home can resurface trauma they have experienced due to the war. At the same time, Polish children need support in understanding what their new classmates are experiencing.
- **Inclusivity is a challenge in communities with refugees and host families:** Some host community families do not encourage their children to interact with people of different groups. If the war continues and refugees remain in Poland, children will continue to attend school alongside the host community and increased feelings of xenophobia could arise.

Strategic Recommendations – General Priorities

	Findings	Recommendations
1	Caregivers have a high demand for informative, educational content that teaches cognitive and socio-emotional skills	Sesame Workshop can respond to this gap. Basic reading, math and science content would address the educational demands, and content that allows children to focus on critical thinking and decision making would address the ask for cognitive development. Game formats were a strong recommendation from caregivers and educators and could help children learn these skills in a fun manner.
2	Children enjoy cartoons, especially American and British shows. Caregivers want content that helps children step away from their stress and trauma.	We recommend cartoons or other animated content, or something similar that would evoke a happy atmosphere. Content should be bright, cheerful and easy to follow, and should encourage feelings of safety and security in the messaging. In general, teachers emphasized creating content about joy, play, socialization, and no one recommended directly talking about war or trauma.

Strategic Recommendations – IDPs in Ukraine

	Findings	Recommendations
1	Playing/working with others is valued, especially for those in online school	Content should focus on children playing together, especially those with different backgrounds. Given that some Polish children have not had the opportunity yet to play with others from a different background, this could help increase social cohesion while emphasizing of the reasons that children like attending school.
2	YouTube is the preferred platform of Ukrainian IDPs.	Content should be optimized on YouTube for greater dissemination.
3	Loveable characters are the reason kids most like their favorite shows. Caregivers feel their identities are not well represented on TV.	Sesame Workshop could consider developing a visiting Sesame Street Ukrainian character with whom children might be able to relate. That character could be adapting to life in a new city, making new friends, going to a new school, and experiencing negative emotions like sadness and fear from time to time.
4	Ukrainian songs and music are popular and well-known, and an integral part of Ukrainian identity. Caregivers often sing these songs to their children.	Well-known and loved songs, stories and legends can help connect children to their Ukrainian identities while also providing a familiar and safe space. Music and dance competition songs are very popular, and content could take note of that. Characters could sing the songs and perhaps incorporate dance or traditional costumes, for example the Vyshyvanka.

Strategic Recommendations – Refugees in Poland

	Findings	Recommendations
1	Language barriers exist in Polish schools and affect children's interactions and learning. At the same time, Ukrainians want to protect and celebrate their language	Sesame could experiment with content produced bilingually in Ukrainian and Polish. Some teachers recommended having Polish content with Ukrainian subtitles or thought bubbles; others recommended using Polish to explain everyday activities/motions/behaviors children easily recognize to help them learn basic everyday vocabulary.
2	YouTube is primarily used by Ukrainian refugees	Content should be optimized on YouTube for greater dissemination. Even if it is aired on TV, episodes should also be available on YouTube.
3	Loveable characters are the reason kids most like their favorite shows. Caregivers feel that their identities are not well represented on TV.	Sesame could consider developing a visiting Sesame Street Ukrainian character to whom children might be able to relate. That character could be adapting to life in a new country, making new friends, learning a new language, going to a new school, and experiencing negative emotions like sadness and fear from time to time.
4	Ukrainian songs and music are popular and well-known, and an integral part of Ukrainian identity. Caregivers often sing these songs to their children.	Well-known and loved songs, stories and legends can help connect children to their Ukrainian identities while also providing a familiar and safe space. Music and dance competition songs are very popular, and content could take note of that. Characters could sing the songs and perhaps incorporate dance or traditional costumes, like the Vyshyvanka.

Strategic Recommendations – Polish Host Community

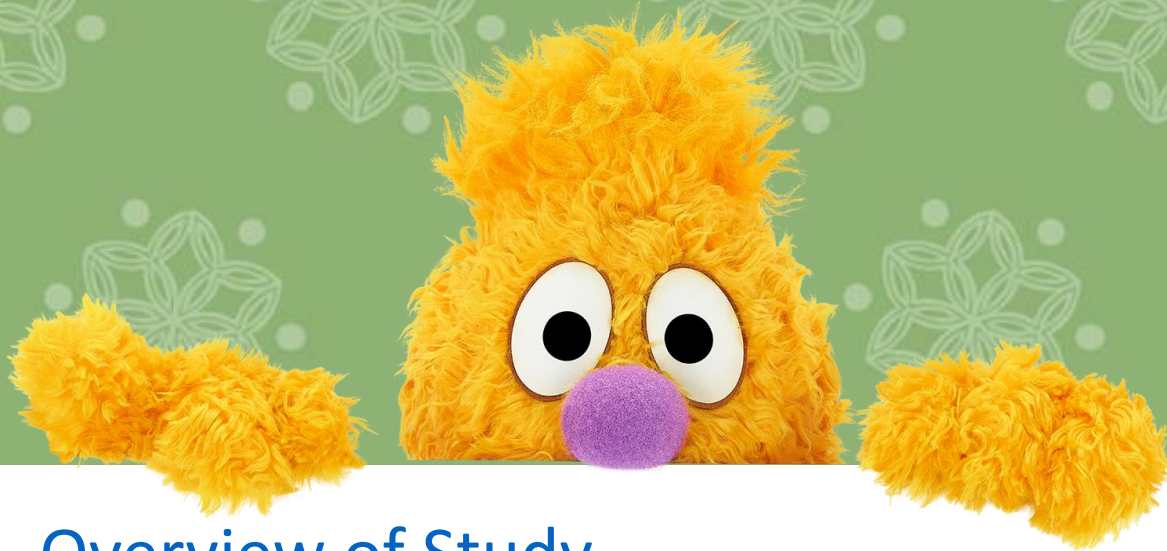
	Findings	Recommendations
1	Caregivers feel that their identities are not well represented on TV, and some caregivers and educators express that there is a fear of the 'other' in Poland. Loveable characters are an important reason children enjoy TV shows.	Sesame could consider developing episodes with Polish and Ukrainian characters becoming friends, learning to communicate with one another despite cultural and linguistic differences, and sharing experiences with one another to show that there are more similarities than differences between them.
2	Television is the preferred format for Polish children	Content should be optimized for and aired on television

Next Steps

As a result of these findings, Sesame Workshops' Ukraine response will:

- Explore methods and partnerships to leverage YouTube and TV channels for mass distribution of ECD learning resources for Ukrainian families
- Create training materials for both educators and caregivers with topics including on social cohesion (including identity and social-emotional skills) and coping with trauma
- Explore ways to create and share teaching and learning resources, such as books, stories, and cartoons, in multiple languages
- Explore the development of new teaching and learning resources that address social cohesion, including topics on identity through focus on language, nationality and customs. These resources will be cheerful, fun, musical, playful, and child-centered

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Challenges and Limitations

- Recruitment of displaced persons from North and Central Ukraine in Lviv was challenging as conditions have grown safer over the last month (June 2022), people have started to return to Kiev and Chernigiv. To address this challenge, the quota from 50% IDPs from North and Central Ukraine and 50% IDPs from East and South Ukraine to 40%/60%.
- The sample of educators is primarily women (92%) because women are overrepresented in the field of education compared to men.
- The nature of the war affected the demographic composition of the sample. Men aged 18-60 are not allowed to leave Ukraine. Therefore, among migrants there are more unmarried or divorced women.

Contact Information:

Samera Zaidi, Director of International Research and Evaluation

Samera.Zaidi@sesame.org

