

Call to action of NGOs from CEI region: Integrate Ukrainian women into the workforce and society

In the face of unprecedented challenges, we are at a pivotal moment to promote positive change. Integrating Ukrainian refugee women into the structure of our society and workforce is not only a moral imperative, but also a unique opportunity to enrich our cultural and economic environment.*

These women representing resilience and determination are carrying a vast pool of talent and energy. Many of them have university degrees and specializations. They are a source of potential waiting to be utilized. Integrating Ukrainian women into our workforce is not only about filling vacancies, but also about embracing diverse perspectives, fostering innovation and driving our society into the global economy.

This integration, however, goes beyond the professional sector. It is about recognizing and promoting autonomy of those women, offering them the tools for financial independence and acknowledging their role by providing opportunities for a training and personal development. Currently the majority of Ukrainian refugee women work below their qualification often due to the language barrier. Adolescent girls are not able to continue their education. Forced displacement drives girls to choose between education and immediate income. This may lead to participation in the shadow economy. There is a high risk of labor exploitation specifically for women and adolescent girls. It is crucial to provide mental health care, psychosocial support and safety when creating opportunities for them..

We call on employers to join this effort by removing barriers, creating opportunities and harnessing the power and potential of Ukrainian women.

We call for the creation of a systematic supportive ecosystem for Ukrainian women in labor market by reflecting on how companies are working to build management and employee capacity in terms of:

- Enabling Ukrainian women to access skills building and employment opportunities and get support in developing their career and implementing their professional knowledge.
- Promoting intercultural communication through establishing a practice within a company to develop effective communication strategy with women of different cultures.
- Introducing trauma-informed care by training management and staff to provide sensitive support to the needs of displaced women.
- Working on advocacy and promotion of social justice principles, including understanding of systemic barriers that refugee women face.
- Establishing “troubleshoot points” in a company managing immediate support to displaced women of different backgrounds.



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This journey does not end with the workforce. It is about ensuring that refugees' voices are heard, their needs are addressed and their contributions are valued. It is about building a society where everyone, regardless of their background, has the chance to thrive and contribute.

*TOGETHER WE CAN TURN THIS CHALLENGE INTO OUR COMMON VICTORY.
LET US EMBRACE THIS **OPPORTUNITY** TO MAKE A LASTING DIFFERENCE
IN THE WORLD.*

THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW

Join CESTY Pledge - a UNICEF call to action for private sector:

Join the pledge to support young Ukrainian women with employment opportunities that will empower and enable them to further develop their skills (internships, apprenticeships, first jobs, etc.) This pledge is a call to action for private sector companies to support refugee women aged 15-24 to fulfill their career ambitions.

JOIN THE PLEDGE

The main objective of the CESTY project is to enable all young refugees to find a path to further education or professional employment. It aims to prevent forced displacement from having a lifelong negative impact on their education and earnings. The private sector can play an important role in addressing this issue through its standard activities such as recruitment and career development.



* In November 2022, the unemployment rate for women was 6.4 % in the EU, 5.7% for men. This gap may not seem to be alarming, but it is when we take into account the refugee population. For example, in November 2022, around 230 thousand Ukrainian refugees, beneficiaries of the EU Temporary Protection scheme, were registered as unemployed in the 18 countries who provided such information. 166 000 of those were female (72%). (Eurostat).



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