

Chapter 5: Programmatic Approach Recommendations

5.1. Overview

This report has focused on medium-term risks to community cohesion. While we present a range of overarching recommendations to facilitate the Ukrainian and host communities to get to know one another better and in turn develop strong relations and trust, other recommendations are more operational. In addition, our research demonstrates that many of the concerns that host communities expressed—and, with them, incendiary and misleading narratives shared by actors with malicious intent as well as some segments of the population—are rooted in longstanding issues such as a strained healthcare or housing system, which the arrival of Ukrainian refugees has highlighted. Indeed, their arrival could speed the resolution of some of these issues, which have become even more visible, and because in some cases different sources of funding might become available to address them, which could improve the situation for both Ukrainians and host communities.

The research team selected the potential approaches noted below based on desk-based research and a survey circulated to key experts. The survey focused on the key five tensions in each country, the potential effectiveness of the proposed mitigation approaches, and lessons learnt from existing programmatic interventions in each country.

5.2. Cross-cutting programmatic approaches

Some best practice programmatic approaches can be integrated across programme interventions and funding streams to better understand and reduce potential tensions between Ukrainian refugees and host communities.

Conduct conflict and context analysis: A cornerstone of cohesive and conflict sensitive programming is a solid conflict and context analysis.⁶⁷⁶ A conflict analysis can take a variety of forms and cover different elements, but at a minimum it should include: (1) a situation profile or an overview of the historic, economic, security, socio-cultural, and environmental contexts; (2) causal analysis of conflict factors, including the proximate causes and intermediate factors and potential triggers of conflict; (3) a mapping and analysis of stakeholders and their relationships that might directly or indirectly influence or be affected by the topic; and (4) conflict dynamics or drivers of change, including outlining the interactions between causes of conflict and the actors.⁶⁷⁷ To be effective, conflict and context analyses must examine various points of view, including those of women and marginalised groups. Analyses, which can be performed at various levels (from the intervention or project level to entire sectors), should outline current political, economic, and social factors, as well as historical contexts and conditions that may contribute to conflict. Some factors that should be taken into account in the context of refugee and local population community cohesion include: (1) the medium-term macroeconomic context, including volatility in housing prices and inflation rates; (2) the relative strength of public services, including the strength of the education system and the contrasting weakness of the health system; (3) analysis of who stands to gain or lose

⁶⁷⁶ Saferworld (n.d.). [Conflict Analysis, Chapter 2](#), accessed 28 March 2023; UN (2016). [UN Conflict Analysis Practice Note](#), accessed 28 March 2023; World Bank (n.d.). [Conflict Analysis](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁶⁷⁷ UN (2016). [UN Conflict Analysis Practice Note](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

from various changes; (4) internal dynamics around social exclusion and the ways in which responses to refugees can affect existing excluded populations; and (5) political factors, including the prevalence of Russia-aligned rhetoric.

Share positive stories through social media: Social media is used as a tool to disseminate incendiary and misleading discourses about Ukrainian refugees, as discussed in Chapter 3.⁶⁷⁸ This use of social media corresponds with wider literature showing that it can be an effective conduit for misinformation and disinformation.⁶⁷⁹ In part to counter this tendency, sharing positive stories on social media would support the creation of a countermovement to mobilise communities to come together. There is evidence that counter-messaging can be effective, particularly when coupled with local in-person activities and activism.⁶⁸⁰ Dynamics around sharing stories, including which ones to share, by whom, and through what outlets, should be planned around the most effective ways to penetrate current information bubbles. Findings from business research show that sharing positive stories can improve morale;⁶⁸¹ there is also evidence that social cohesion or ‘glue’ can form around social media messages and stories.⁶⁸² Positive stories and messages can and should be developed both around the contributions of Ukrainians to the host economies and society, and the hospitality of host communities toward Ukrainians. For example, stories could build on findings such as those of a 2023 GLOBSEC survey which found that Slovaks are open to having Ukrainians as neighbours, close friends, and colleagues,⁶⁸³ along with positive individual stories. Positive messages should be developed within the context of a strong context analysis, including existing political attitudes and preconceptions. For example, a workshop participant in Poland pointed out that what was meant as a positive story about medical support for Ukrainian refugees received hundreds of negative comments within hours, suggesting that local citizens were suffering while Ukrainians received treatment.⁶⁸⁴ Building stories on a solid understanding of local sensitivities and testing messages to ensure the framing of the message is optimal can help minimise similar situations.

Implement strategic communications to reach target audiences and penetrate information bubbles: A range of tools is available to counteract misleading and incendiary discourses, including those that support proactive efforts to ‘pre-bunk’, or increase society’s resilience to misleading content. Tactics can include campaigns to raise awareness supporting resilience to disinformation and to build networks.⁶⁸⁵ Reactive efforts to ‘de-bunk’ could include counter-narratives, crisis communications, and policy responses.⁶⁸⁶ These should be tailored and targeted to specific audience groups and their interests, values, language, norms, and beliefs. While providing accurate information to audiences is important—for example, by engaging dedicated fact-checkers—the dissemination of facts is usually not sufficient to change attitudes and behaviours around sensitive issues.⁶⁸⁷ An ODI report on understanding public attitudes toward refugees and migrants suggests that communications should clarify that the situation is manageable and emphasise shared values.⁶⁸⁸ Fact-checking, while particularly important in the context of policy debates and strategy, should be accompanied by other strategies that may

⁶⁷⁸ See also, as an example, Walter, J. (2023). [Fact Check: How propaganda denigrates Ukrainian refugees](#), DW, accessed 28 March 2023.

⁶⁷⁹ Bunse, S. (2021). [Social media: A tool for peace or conflict?](#) accessed 28 March 2023.

⁶⁸⁰ Bunse, S. (2021). [Social media: A tool for peace or conflict?](#) accessed 28 March 2023.

⁶⁸¹ Cecchi-Dimeglio, P. (2020). [Why sharing good news matters](#), MIT Sloan Management Review, accessed 26 March 2023.

⁶⁸² Duffy, A. and Ling, R. (2020). [The Gift of News: Phatic News Sharing on Social Media for Social Cohesion](#), Journalism Studies, accessed 26 March 2023.

⁶⁸³ GLOBSEC (2023). [Ukrainian refugees in Visegrad countries: Societal Attitudes and Challenges of Accommodating People Fleeing the War](#)

⁶⁸⁴ Warsaw research workshop 9 February 2023.

⁶⁸⁵ Government Communication Service (2021). [Resist 2: Counter-disinformation toolkit](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁶⁸⁶ Government Communication Service (2021). [Resist 2: Counter-disinformation toolkit](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁶⁸⁷ Dempster, H., and Hargrave, K. (2017). [Understanding public attitudes towards refugees and migrants](#). London: ODI.

⁶⁸⁸ Dempster, H., and Hargrave, K. (2017). [Understanding public attitudes towards refugees and migrants](#). London: ODI.

resonate with diverse groups of people. These might include: (1) framing messaging to align with the target audiences' moral values (which has been proven to shift attitudes on highly sensitive and often politicised topics);⁶⁸⁹ (2) appealing to emotions, which are strong drivers of decisions and behaviours and result in content that is more likely to be accessed and remembered;⁶⁹⁰ and (3) shifting social norms or using normative messaging regarding the expectations of behaviour (or its frequency) to promote desired behaviours.⁶⁹¹

When factual information is used to counter specific falsehoods, it should be repeated multiple times in targeted fora. Repeated statements are shown to be easier to process and therefore are perceived as more truthful, even for those with prior knowledge of the facts.⁶⁹² Thus, repeating facts is crucial, because doing so can counter falsehoods that audiences have been exposed to multiple times. Research indicates that misinformation and disinformation can be promoted through specific media outlets that local and foreign actors use to influence public opinion.⁶⁹³ After information is disseminated, it can be taken up by individuals who do not actively question the information they receive, since there is a global bias toward believing 'fake news' is something that affects other people.⁶⁹⁴ Finally, it is crucial that the target audience consider the messenger credible; therefore as much care should be taken to select the messengers as the message.⁶⁹⁵ In the Czech Republic, for example, there are active efforts to counter disinformation and engage in positive strategic communications, such as the Czech Elves, a citizens' group that focuses on this topic.⁶⁹⁶

Organise joint activities that enable refugees and host populations to get to know each other: Due to daily pressures related to work, family life, and the broader challenges mentioned in Section 4.7, host country and refugee communities might not engage socially. All types of stakeholders—governments, municipalities, NGOs, or citizens' groups—could organise activities to bring the host and refugee communities together socially and build informal networks. Such activities have been observed to reduce prejudice.⁶⁹⁷ A workshop participant from the Czech Republic shared that a community held film screenings with short 'chat to your neighbour' intervals designed to help people who watch the movie get to know each other, with the movie providing a basis for conversation.⁶⁹⁸ In Slovakia, some NGOs noted that activities designed to bring Ukrainian and host community youth together were poorly attended. However, one NGO shared that their activities usually attract equal numbers of local and refugee children, but they do not advertise them as opportunities to meet Ukrainians but rather focus on the games or activities that the children enjoy. They also advertise to Ukrainian and Slovak youth separately, using posters in the two languages.⁶⁹⁹

Offer additional free or affordable after-school activities: Support for after-school activities—whether free or highly subsidised—has multiple benefits. First, they can help to bridge the gap between the school day and the workday, enabling mothers to work without seeking childcare and/or incurring additional costs. Second, they

⁶⁸⁹ Feinberg, M., and Willer, R. (2015). *From Gulf to Bridge: When Do Moral Arguments Facilitate Political Influence?* *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 41(12), 1665–1681.

⁶⁹⁰ Brady, W., Gantman, A., and Van Bavel, J. (2020). *Attentional capture helps explain why moral and emotional content go viral.* *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 149, 746–756. 3.

⁶⁹¹ Petit, V., and Zalk, T. N. (2019). *Everybody Wants to Belong: A Practical Guide to Tackling and Leveraging Social Norms in Behaviour Change Programming.* UNICEF and PENN SoNG.

⁶⁹² Fazio, L. K., Brashier, N. M., Payne, B. K., and Marsh, E. J. (2015). *Knowledge does not protect against illusory truth.* *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 144(5), 993–1002.

⁶⁹³ Citizens' Association "Why Not" (2019). *Disinformation in the online sphere: The case of BiH*, accessed 26 March 2023.

⁶⁹⁴ Ipsos (2018). *Fake news, filter bubbles, post-truth and trust*, accessed 26 March 2023.

⁶⁹⁵ RAN C&N Academy (2019, 19 December). *Effective Narratives: Updating the GAMMMA+ model*

⁶⁹⁶ Centre for European Policy Analysis (2021). *Czech elves battle in the disinformation forest*

⁶⁹⁷ Pettigrew, T. F., and Tropp, L. R. (2019). *A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory.* *J Pers Soc Psychol*, accessed 28 March 2023.

⁶⁹⁸ Prague research workshop 1–2 February 2023.

⁶⁹⁹ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

create opportunities for Ukrainian and host country students to meet, get to know each other, and build trust and mutual understanding. Third, they could include language classes, which Ukrainian students need. They can also facilitate organic language learning by bringing Ukrainian and host community children together for in joint activities. Fourth, after-school activities can be beneficial for young people's mental and physical health.⁷⁰⁰ Participants in project workshops in all five countries noted that teenagers were particularly vulnerable to social isolation and poor mental health; some noted potential risks of youth engaging in harmful behaviours if they do not have hobbies or take part in other activities.

Train search engines and generative artificial intelligence to recognise bias and potential abuse: Digital advances, including social media platforms, have enabled more rapid spread of messages and disinformation, facilitating the creation of echo chambers that can reinforce confirmation bias.⁷⁰¹ Research has shown that false information can spread more quickly than facts, potentially due to the novelty and emotional reactions the false stories can evoke.⁷⁰² On the other hand, some technological advances, such as ChatGPT, have built-in safeguards to limit the spread of negative rumours about refugees. When asked to generate negative headlines about Ukrainian refugees, ChatGPT instead provided recommendations for how to approach news stories about refugees 'with empathy and sensitivity, and to give a voice to those who are often marginalized and underrepresented in the media'.⁷⁰³ The programme also appears to use built-in mechanisms to recognise false assumptions, as demonstrated in the example below. Search engines, for example, could use similar notices to seek to minimise the spread of falsehoods about refugees.

Request: Why do Ukrainian refugees in Poland not want to integrate?

GPT-3: I'm sorry, but I cannot provide an answer to this question as it is based on a false assumption. The majority of Ukrainian refugees in Poland do want to integrate and establish a new life in their host country. Like any other refugees, they face significant challenges in terms of language, culture, and finding employment, which can make integration difficult. However, many Ukrainian refugees actively seek out language classes, job training, and other resources to help them integrate successfully.

5.3. Legal status, welfare, and benefits

Any changes to (re)registration processes and procedures should be simple and communicated clearly to refugees via a range of media. Digital literacy support could help vulnerable groups understand and use online services. Processes and procedures for Ukrainians that streamline the complexity and length of time required to

⁷⁰⁰ Nabors, et al. (2022). [A University and Community-Based Partnership: After-School Mentoring Activities to Support Positive Mental Health for Children Who Are Refugees](#)

⁷⁰¹ OECD (2022). [Disinformation and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine: Threats and governance responses](#), accessed 31 March 2023.

⁷⁰² Vosoughi, S., Roy, D., and Aral, S. (2018). [The spread of true and false news online](#), Science, accessed 31 March 2023.

⁷⁰³ General guidelines for how to do so were also provided:

1. Avoid sensationalism: Avoid using inflammatory language or sensational headlines that can stigmatize refugees or perpetuate stereotypes.
 2. Use person-centered language: When reporting on refugees, refer to them as individuals rather than as a monolithic group. Use person-centered language that acknowledges their humanity and individual experiences.
 3. Provide context: Provide context for why refugees are fleeing their home countries and the challenges they face in their host countries. This can help readers understand the complexities of the issue and challenge any misconceptions or misperceptions.
 4. Interview refugees and stakeholders: Seek out perspectives from refugees themselves as well as experts and stakeholders in the field. This can help humanize the issue and provide more nuanced and accurate reporting.
 5. Highlight stories of resilience and hope: Highlight stories of refugees who have overcome challenges and made positive contributions to their host communities. This can help counter negative stereotypes and give a more balanced perspective of refugees' experiences.
- Remember that every person has inherent dignity and deserves to be treated with respect and compassion.'

prove they qualify under the refugee definition could be provided to other refugees fleeing war and persecution who are eligible under the 1951 Refugee Convention.

Phase programmes (focusing on the most vulnerable): Phasing programmes involves changing targeting approaches to support more vulnerable people, as would be done for longer-term conflicts. Phasing is an underlying principle of ‘nexus’ programming that brings together humanitarian, development, and peace actors and links relief, rehabilitation, and development programming. Shortcuts associated with quick assistance—notably, status-based targeting with little analysis of needs (for example, providing the same assistance to all people granted TP)—are likely to be used during the initial phases of a crisis. However, as time passes, it is possible to change the structure of support to ensure equitability and access. This might involve extending more support to those who are most vulnerable and need additional assistance (e.g., the disabled or unemployed), in line with national benefit systems. Across all countries, respondents have expressed concerns about the degree to which Ukrainians are in need. Adopting needs-based targeting criteria is likely to be an effective method of mitigating such tensions. Phasing programmes can help manage potential tensions associated with communities’ resentment of refugees who receive support while poor host populations continue to struggle.⁷⁰⁴ It helps to demonstrate that refugees who receive benefits are in need, and that determinations of their needs are in line with the evaluation of national citizens’ eligibility for benefits.

Link humanitarian cash to social protection: Concerns about inequity between Ukrainians and host country citizens can be mitigated in part by linking the humanitarian system to the national government benefits system.⁷⁰⁵ A range of tools have been developed to do just this in response to COVID-19.⁷⁰⁶ One key well-documented weakness in linking humanitarian cash and social protection, however, is coordination.⁷⁰⁷ In all host countries analysed in this report, several contributory benefit schemes are in place for both healthcare and housing. Humanitarian support that expands the system horizontally to include host country citizens and Ukrainian refugees helps alleviate concerns about inequity as all individuals are subject to the same type of means testing and will receive benefits through the same systems. Implementing this recommendation will require humanitarian actors and national governments to develop streamlined systems and for humanitarian assistance to be delivered through existing government social protection systems to support egalitarian distribution of support.

Utilise inclusive beneficiary accountability and feedback mechanisms: Beneficiary accountability and feedback mechanisms developed and implemented by INGOs, the UN system, and other stakeholders should focus on inclusivity to ensure that any complaints from both the host community and refugees are registered, for instance within the education systems. Such mechanisms could be linked with a wider effort to monitor tensions at the community level regularly.⁷⁰⁸

⁷⁰⁴ Analysed in more detail under Sections 3.2 and 4.6.

⁷⁰⁵ CALP Network (2020). [State of the World's Cash 2020](#), accessed 17 April 2023.

⁷⁰⁶ SPACE (2020). [Social Protection and Humanitarian Cash and Food Responses to COVID-19: Needs, Coverage, and Gaps](#), accessed 17 April 2023.

⁷⁰⁷ SPACE (2020). [Social Protection and Humanitarian Cash and Food Responses to COVID-19: Needs, Coverage, and Gaps](#), accessed 17 April 2023.

⁷⁰⁸ International Alert (2020). Donbas: [Taking stock of Peacebuilding](#), accessed 30 March 2023.

Safer World (2019). [Dip Beyond Box Ticking](#), accessed 30 March 2023.

5.4. Healthcare

Overarching recommendations to mitigate potential tensions related to healthcare revolve around addressing the operational challenges related to an overstretched healthcare system,⁷⁰⁹ which predated the arrival of Ukrainian refugees in Europe. The inflow of Ukrainians could be seen as further stressing already weak healthcare systems. It may be possible to mitigate some of these tensions by channelling part of the funding for Ukrainian refugees to broader, existing efforts to reform or improve the health system.⁷¹⁰ In the short term, this report makes the recommendations below.

Streamline staffing processes to involve skilled Ukrainians in the health sector: Programmes that identify Ukrainians with appropriate health sector qualifications and skills, support them with language or other needed training, and place them in local health systems could be beneficial. Such programmes would likely involve outreach to identify qualified Ukrainians, processes to speed recognition of skills and qualifications, tailored language training, and placements in national hospitals and clinics. In the Czech Republic, UNICEF is conducting similar programming with the Institute for Post Graduate Medical Education in Prague and the Centre for Nursing and Other Healthcare Professionals in Brno to support Ukrainian healthcare professionals to obtain required accreditations.⁷¹¹

Increase the number of interpreters: Evidence shows that poor health outcomes, including low vaccination rates, are driven in part by a lack of interpreters in healthcare settings.⁷¹² Indeed, the presence of interpreters is a best practice for provision of healthcare to refugees, supporting cultural sensitivity and helping to ensure that refugees understand both their health issues and the procedures and systems they engage with. Investment in interpreters could reduce the strain on doctors who are already stretched and by making it easier for them to communicate with their patients.

5.5. Housing

Tensions around housing often relate directly to a stretched rental market and public rental housing infrastructure. At an overarching level, addressing the operational challenges of the lack of affordable housing, including social housing,⁷¹³ would help mitigate tensions related to housing and could benefit both Ukrainians and host communities. National governments are making efforts to invest in housing; to the degree possible, housing aid to Ukrainians should be harmonised with these programmes and efforts.⁷¹⁴ In addition, this report specifically recommends the programmatic approaches below.

⁷⁰⁹ Discussed in Section 4.3 of this report.

⁷¹⁰ Channeling international support to health care through national systems can help to alleviate pressure on the social services system in a way that also mitigates tensions between host communities and refugees. In the Czech Republic, the international community is providing support for healthcare; the European Investment Bank is providing 200 million EUR to the Czech government. Similar on-budget support could be considered in different countries. Such an approach would be targeted at the systemic improvement of the healthcare system and could support an integrated approach that improves outcomes both for Ukrainian refugees and for host country citizens. European Investment Bank (6 February 2023). [EIB and Czech Republic take steps to mitigate the impact of the Ukraine war](#), accessed 29 March 2023.

⁷¹¹ UNICEF (2023). [UNICEF Refugee Response in the Czech Republic: Initial Results and Priorities](#), accessed 10 March 2023.

⁷¹² Ganczak, M., Kalinowski P., Pasek, O., Duda-Duma, Ł., Sobieraj, E., Gołowski, J., Biesiada, D., Jansen, D., Vervoort, J.P.M., Edelstein, M., Kowalska, M. (2022). [Health System Barriers to Child Mandatory and Optional Vaccination among Ukrainian Migrants in Poland in the Context of MMR and HPV Vaccines-A Qualitative Study](#). Int J Environ Res Public Health.

⁷¹³ OECD (2020). [Social housing: A key part of past and future housing policy](#), Employment, Labour and Social Affairs policy briefs, accessed 26 March 2023.

⁷¹⁴ International actors can support housing availability and system resilience by (1) providing funding dedicated to supporting national actors to coordinate; (2) channelling housing and rent support through the government housing allowance and subsidies

Provide viable opportunities for people to live, work, and go to school outside of major cities: Choosing whether to live in large or smaller cities or in rural areas often poses a dilemma for refugees. Larger cities have more employment opportunities, more options for education, and often greater proximity to healthcare facilities, but smaller cities have more affordable housing options. One workshop participant in Poland cited a pilot project offering relocation to smaller villages or towns, with both housing and employment offers and funding to renovate old homes.⁷¹⁵ This kind of scheme could be expanded across countries to ease housing pressures in cities. Good practice also exists around companies (including in the private sector) providing well-rounded support to refugees. For example, PepsiCo provided support to 900 Ukrainian PepsiCo associates and their families to relocate to Romania, arranged for the employees to continue working for PepsiCo after relocation (in addition to recruiting other Ukrainian refugees), arranged housing, and established the PepsiCo learning centre—a Ukrainian school for refugee children, employing Ukrainian teachers.⁷¹⁶ Such holistic multi-sectoral models that enable Ukrainians to participate meaningfully in work could be explored, and policies could help address the barriers that companies might face in moving operations from Ukraine to host countries.

Support social intermediaries in rental processes: A social rental agency model could be piloted. In this model, a non-profit intermediary would negotiate between property owners and people in need of housing.⁷¹⁷ The intermediary would guarantee rent payments and minimum tenancy standards to owners, who, in turn, would discount rents and guarantee stable, affordable, and quality accommodation to the tenant. The intermediary could help mitigate challenges and issues associated with discrimination against Ukrainian tenants and could support the management of concerns and issues related to Ukrainian refugees' short-term housing needs. Habitat for Humanity founded the Social Rental Agency in Poland, which provides such housing and employment services.⁷¹⁸ The approach could be leveraged to support the provision of housing to refugee groups, particularly those who are more likely to experience discrimination and stigma, such as Roma. Social intermediaries can act as interlocutors between Ukrainian tenants and landlords to mitigate stigma; they may also be able to act as guarantors to protect against risks associated with short-term tenancies.

5.6. Education

Education can be a source of tensions if places, particularly in kindergartens, are scarce, and some families are turned away. On the other hand, joint classes for local and refugee children can help build relationships between different communities and therefore increase trust and cohesion. Investment in kindergartens and early childhood education may be useful in the five countries of research, as it would support parents to find jobs and work standard hours and encourage contact between host communities and Ukrainian children and their parents. This would lay a foundation for longer-term positive perceptions. To enable this, this report recommends:

Provide language support for Ukrainian children: Language classes were the most significant need identified by Ukrainians looking to engage with the national education system across several multi-sectoral needs

systems (i.e., using mechanisms associated with linking cash and social protection and adapting them to the housing market); and (3) supporting and investing in new housing developments. All activities should take place in line with, and ideally directly through, existing government mechanisms to enhance housing infrastructure and access to housing. See OECD (2021). [Housing Affordability in the Czech Republic: Chapter 2](#) Housing 2030 (2023). [Slovak State Housing Policy](#); and Spirkova, D. (2018). [Housing Policy in the Slovak Republic](#).

⁷¹⁵ Warsaw research workshop 9 February 2023.

⁷¹⁶ PepsiCo (2022). [The story behind PepsiCo's school for displaced Ukrainian children](#), accessed 27 March 2023.

⁷¹⁷ Habitat for Humanity (n.d.). [Introducing Social Rental Agencies in Poland](#), accessed 27 March 2023.

⁷¹⁸ Habitat for Humanity (n.d.). [Introducing Social Rental Agencies in Poland](#), accessed 27 March 2023.

assessments.⁷¹⁹ Language classes have not been identified as a key need for students enrolled in the Ukrainian online system—but lack of language skills could create challenges with integration in the medium to long term.

Embed mental health support in the education system: Mental health issues are prevalent and likely to be undertreated among Ukrainian refugees, with studies demonstrating the high incidence of mental health issues in Poland, the Czech Republic, and Romania. Integration of more mental health services into the school system could provide mental health support to children and identify parents who need support (and it could be possible to provide support to parents at school). As the amount of time spent in displacement extends, and given that children’s mental health situation is particularly fragile, embedding mental health in schools is highly promising.

Train teachers and educational staff to better support Ukrainian students: Training teachers in how to support Ukrainian refugees would be useful across the different contexts examined in this research. Specifically, training could address mitigating conflict, managing and providing support for psychosocial issues, and tailoring pedagogical methods to language learners. There are some indications, primarily from a project conducted by International Alert in Lebanon, focusing on Syrian refugees, that training for social services workers (teachers, health workers, and others) can generate positive community cohesion benefits.⁷²⁰ Trainings include analysis of the context with social services workers, development and implementation of tailored capacity development programmes, accompanying service providers in their work, and raising awareness around the impacts of psychosocial issues and health requirements of refugees.⁷²¹ The results of this programme were demonstrable: shorter waiting times, more willingness on the part of refugees to discuss issues and problems, and the return of host community members to service centres that they had left.⁷²² In several countries hosting Ukrainian refugees—notably Romania and Slovakia—programmes should respond to the fact that teachers receive low pay and have little institutional support; these programmes should use a relatively light touch.

Provide spaces in schools, libraries, and community centres for refugee children to follow the Ukrainian curriculum online in a social setting: Continuing education in a Ukrainian online school is the preferred option for many children, although it carries risks of social isolation. Making spaces available in schools, libraries, or community centres could facilitate social interaction and the building of social bonds among both Ukrainian and local students. This approach could also enable parents to work more easily. The Moldova Inter-agency Refugee Education working group found that 48 percent of parents polled named making opportunities to socialise among their top priorities, demonstrating demand for these services.⁷²³ Individual and pilot programmes of this sort already exist, as well as resources that could be easily adapted; for example, UNICEF, in collaboration with municipalities and local civil society organisations, opened six ‘Spilno Hubs’ around Poland ‘to provide comprehensive and longer term support on integration, mental health, legal assistance, protection and educational and social activities to the most vulnerable refugee children and families who have fled war in Ukraine’

⁷¹⁹ REACH (2022). [Romania: Multi-sectoral Needs Assessment 2022](#)

⁷²⁰ International Alert (2020). [Model on integrating conflict sensitivity and social stability into services provision](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁷²¹ International Alert (2020). [Model on integrating conflict sensitivity and social stability into services provision](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁷²² International Alert (2020). [Model on integrating conflict sensitivity and social stability into services provision](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁷²³ UNICEF and the Government of Moldova (2022). Education Rapid Needs Assessment: Moldova Inter-Agency Refugee Education Working Group.

and 'to provide a safe space to connect with the local community'.⁷²⁴ UNICEF launched similar 'Blue Dot' hubs in Romania.⁷²⁵

5.7. Employment and income

While potential tensions related to high inflation and the cost of living were significant in all countries, respondents noted a range of other possible tensions associated with employment and income. Approaches to alleviate these tensions would be broad-ranging: higher-level macro-economic approaches and further engagement with multilateral organisations for macroeconomic support on imports and exports, approaches to ensure and communicate equity in the distribution of resources among the Ukrainian and local populations that are in need, and boosting labour market participation and entrepreneurship. Shorter-term recommendations are explored in more detail below.

Establish employment creation programmes with flexible work structures: Several efforts have been made to establish employment creation programmes to support peacebuilding and conflict mitigation initiatives.⁷²⁶ Such programmes could address areas with labour shortfalls, such as healthcare and construction. Flexible work structures could include work-from-home arrangements and flexible work hours so, for instance, mothers can pick up their children from school. It will be critical to tailor employment opportunities to the skills of the target populations.⁷²⁷ One programme in the Czech Republic, for example, integrated language courses into employment placement programs.⁷²⁸ A good practice could also be taken from Turkey and Jordan, where employment creation programmes systematically included host and refugee communities, with host community beneficiaries often representing 50 percent of those supported.⁷²⁹

Increase day care provision, possibly by employers: Provision of day care could support refugees' engagement in the labour market. Possibilities include (1) subsidising childcare for refugee children; (2) supporting the start-up of daycare centres by Ukrainian refugees, which would support both businesses and day care needs; and (3) encouraging businesses to provide daycare, together with conflict sensitivity training.

Offer community facilitators and peer support groups for parents: It can be challenging for refugee parents arriving in a host country to engage in the labour market. The provision of community facilitators could ease entry into the labour market. One option, through group work, is for facilitators to meet with groups of refugees to discuss common issues and solutions or provide individual coaching and mentorship. Groups could be set up for parents to discuss challenges associated with leaving children at home. Lessons could be learnt from current programmes. For example, the WHO has recruited and deployed cultural mediators who raise awareness of health systems among refugee communities,⁷³⁰ building on the recognised profession of cultural mediation, which has a base in Romania. The programme could offer lessons and possibilities for greater effectiveness for other countries and sectors, including employment.

⁷²⁴ UNICEF (2023). [UNICEF launches six Spilno Hubs in five months to support Ukrainian refugees and integration of local communities](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁷²⁵ UNICEF Romania (n.d.). [Blue Dot – providing critical support to refugees from Ukraine](#), accessed 3 April 2023.

⁷²⁶ Cramer, C., Goodhand, J., and Morris, R. (2016). [Rapid Evidence Assessment for Conflict Prevention](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁷²⁷ International Alert (2019). [Consolidating peace through inclusive access to livelihoods in Nepal](#), accessed 28 March 2023; International Alert (n.d.). [Practice note 2: Integrating conflict analysis into peace-conducive economic development programming](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁷²⁸ Deutsche Welle (2023). [Well integrated: Ukrainian refugees in the Czech Republic](#)

⁷²⁹ Meraki Labs (2022). [Gender Analysis of Programming in Jordan for Caritas](#).

⁷³⁰ WHO (2023). [The crucial role of cultural mediators in Romania's Ukrainian refugee response](#).

Increase job advertising in Ukrainian, or offer language and job counselling support programmes to enable refugees to respond to advertisements and interview for jobs: Participants in workshops repeatedly commented that they did not know where to look for jobs that were suitable for Ukrainians⁷³¹ despite efforts by governments to support Ukrainian engagement in the labour market⁷³² and entrepreneurial activities. Other support is provided by multilateral organisations, such as the European Bank of Development and Reconstruction online platform and business guide ([ghidul afacerii](#)) to facilitate the establishment of start-ups.⁷³³ Support to Ukrainian refugees to access job advertisements could help them enter the labour market. However, advertising and recruitment processes should be tailored. Information should be available in both Ukrainian and the host country language, and websites should be widely promoted among Ukrainian refugee communities. In addition, linkages with employers are needed to ensure that there are sufficient jobs to support long-term credibility. In one context, over 9,000 refugees registered on an online platform to seek work, but only 2,200 employers were on the platform.⁷³⁴ Tailoring the platform and outreach to different segments (e.g., employers) could support the effectiveness of job advertisement programmes.⁷³⁵ Counselling support programmes for Ukrainians looking to respond to job advertisements could also be useful. Some services have been established, including on [Layboard](#) and [JobAidUkraine](#); and, in some contexts, such as in Romania, the private sector has taken an active part in setting up independent job boards. Programmes to make job boards available could also include coaching. One workshop participant shared the example of their employer, a private sector company, hosting workshops with Ukrainian refugees to help find job opportunities and subsequently supporting them with interviewing, which can be daunting in an unfamiliar language.⁷³⁶

Develop codes of conduct for organisations that work in politics, data, and media: Developing and disseminating a code of conduct could limit the effects of disinformation in Central European countries. Signatories of the code are likely to include academics and civil society organisations; but they could also include media outlets, trade associations, fact checkers, and politicians. Such an initiative would clearly spell out obligations and minimum standards. A code of conduct would be particularly timely in Moldova, where the prohibition of Russian television stations in summer 2022 and some Moldovan stations in December 2022 provoked protest and accusations of political bias and censorship⁷³⁷ pointing to regulations that were intended to curb disinformation.⁷³⁸ Given the highly political nature of these decisions, public and private sector interest in implementing a code of conduct on disinformation would be valuable to drive broad-base support for such an initiative.

Train business leaders and managers in conflict sensitivity: A small but promising amount of work has been conducted on the linkage between business and conflict. International Alert studied business and conflict in East Africa and Nepal.⁷³⁹ While the findings are context-specific, some lessons can be generalised. For example, the

⁷³¹ Chisinau Research Workshops 1–2 March 2023.

⁷³² See Section 2.6 of this report for details of online platforms established.

⁷³³ European bank of Reconstruction and Development (2023). [EBRD Business Guide](#), accessed 29 March 2023.

⁷³⁴ Romania Insider (2023). [Jobs for Ukraine: 9,000 users active on recruitment platform launched in Romania for Ukrainian refugees](#)

⁷³⁵ Romania Insider (2023). [Jobs for Ukraine: 9,000 users active on recruitment platform launched in Romania for Ukrainian refugees](#)

⁷³⁶ Bucharest research workshop 15–16 February 2023. Lack of employment options or knowledge of employment options, as well as language barriers, were also identified as two of the top reasons for livelihood challenges by REACH/UNHCR survey respondents. UNHCR REACH (2022). [Multi-sector needs assessment Romania December 2022](#)

⁷³⁷ Reuters (2022). [Russia denounced Moldova's ban of TV channels as 'Political Censorship'](#), accessed 28 March 2023

⁷³⁸ Veridica (2023). [FAKE NEWS: The government in Chisinau bans Russian press at the behest of the West](#), accessed 29 March 2023.

⁷³⁹ International Alert (2020). [Business and peace Dossier: It takes two to tango](#), accessed 29 March 2023; International Alert (2019). [Consolidating peace through inclusive access to livelihoods in Nepal](#), accessed 28 March 2023; International Alert (2022).

studies pointed to the need for businesses to be engaged in and conduct conflict analyses themselves; the findings also suggested that job opportunities need to be matched to both the skills and the constraints of the conflict-affected and host communities.⁷⁴⁰ The importance of fair recruitment practices, peace-sensitive investments, and good business practices was also highlighted. In Central Europe, conducting conflict sensitivity training for business leaders and managers may be important to support businesses in adapting employment practices to Ukrainian refugees and identifying investments for which Ukrainian refugees may provide value.

Introduce and publicise incentives to start businesses: A more favourable environment to start businesses could reduce potential challenges associated with unemployment and contribute to economic growth. Literature on best practices for supporting small business start-ups suggests focusing funding on innovation labs rather than investing directly in small businesses.⁷⁴¹ Multilateral organisations' learnings recommend (1) profiling migrants' and refugees' skills, their complementary to host community skills, and associated entrepreneurship possibilities; (2) clarifying and simplifying the regulatory environment for refugee businesses, including by removing restrictions on ownership of property, access to finance, and right to work; (3) strengthening synergies amongst education initiatives (e.g., vocational training) and entrepreneurship opportunities; and (4) developing digital 'bazaars' to support the export of products and exchange of information.⁷⁴² To date, initiatives to support Ukrainians in host countries have focused on job search platforms, but there are indications from other countries that providing support for new businesses could be profitable and support integration.⁷⁴³

Engage with businesses and organisations to make the most of a more diverse workforce: For decades, business research has suggested that a diverse workforce boosts creativity and innovation, enhances problem-solving and understanding of consumers' diverse needs, leads to better decisions, and can have reputational benefits and reduce prejudice.⁷⁴⁴ These benefits in turn can boost the economy.⁷⁴⁵ The Ukrainian population, and particularly Ukrainian professionals, can help catalyse such benefits for national businesses. To take full advantage of the benefits of a more diverse workforce or candidate pool, it would be useful to train businesses on working in diverse environments and identifying and addressing potential bias in recruitment processes. This might also include working to reduce challenges that skilled Ukrainians face in accessing employment, such as through language training and workplace activities that engage both Ukrainian and national staff.

Streamline procedures to recognise qualifications: Ukrainians have skills that could be useful in the host country labour market; in particular, staff with health qualifications would be greatly valued. Ukrainians with other

[Mobilising the Private Sector for Peace: The role of private sector actors in peace and conflict dynamics in Kenya and Somalia A peace and conflict analysis](#), accessed 29 March 2023; and International Alert (n.d.). [Practice note 2: Integrating conflict analysis into peace-conducive economic development programming](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁷⁴⁰ International Alert (2020). [Business and peace Dossier: It takes two to tango](#), accessed 29 March 2023; International Alert (2019). [Consolidating peace through inclusive access to livelihoods in Nepal](#), accessed 28 March 2023; International Alert (2022). [Mobilising the Private Sector for Peace: The role of private sector actors in peace and conflict dynamics in Kenya and Somalia A peace and conflict analysis](#), accessed 29 March 2023; and International Alert (n.d.). [Practice note 2: Integrating conflict analysis into peace-conducive economic development programming](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁷⁴¹ E.g., Newman and Christensen (2021). [Doing it Right, but Getting it Wrong](#); Bizri, R. (2017). [Refugee Entrepreneurship: A Social Capital Perspective](#); Meister & Mauer (2019). [Understanding refugee entrepreneurship incubation – an embeddedness perspective](#). Fong et al. (2007). [Pathways to self-sufficiency: Successful entrepreneurship for refugees](#)

⁷⁴² European Commission (2018). [Policy Guide on Entrepreneurship for Migrants and Refugees](#), accessed 2 April 2023.

⁷⁴³ CzechInvest (2022). [CzechInvest and partners launch the Jobs4ua.cz platform for employing Ukrainian workers](#), accessed 5 April 2023; SylversFollow, E., and Papachristou, L. (2022). [From Pizzerias to Tech Startups, Ukrainian Refugees Trickle Into Europe's Labor Market](#)

⁷⁴⁴ E.g., Brodock and Massam (2016). [How and Why to Hire a Diverse Workforce: What You Need to Know](#); Rosenzweig, P. (1998). [Managing the New Global Workforce: Fostering Diversity, Forging Consistency](#); Ely, R.J., and Thomas, D.A. (2020). [Getting Serious About Diversity](#). Moon, K.K., and Christensen, R.K. (2020). [Realizing the performance benefits of workforce diversity in the US federal government: The moderating role of diversity climate](#)

⁷⁴⁵ E.g., Brunow, S. and Brenzel, H. (2012). [The effect of a culturally diverse labour supply on regional income in the EU](#). Shaban, A., and Khan, S. (2022). [Cultural diversity, human capital, and regional economic growth in India](#).

high-level qualifications could contribute to the labour market, thus supporting both economic growth and the wellbeing of refugees. Many Ukrainians work in jobs below their qualification level, largely due to the complexities of recognising qualifications. Streamlined and fast-tracked procedures to enable refugees and other immigrants with in-demand skills to enter the host country labour market more quickly would be beneficial. Some programmes to support qualification recognition, with the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees are being piloted in Romania.⁷⁴⁶ The degree of success of these interventions is not clear, but additional resources and focus could be beneficial.

Engage with multilateral organisations (such as the World Bank) for macroeconomic support on imports and exports: The World Bank is committed to supporting forcibly displaced populations, including governments in central European countries that struggle with inflows. The EU Investment Bank developed a programme with the Czech government that targets health care specifically.⁷⁴⁷ The European Council's recent decision to grant European Union Candidate Country status to Moldova is expected to facilitate greater economic investment, which will be supported by the 2023–27 World Bank Country Partnership Framework's investment in regulatory reform, human capital development, and the energy sector.⁷⁴⁸ Similar programmes could be developed to support the expansion of economic growth, imports, and exports, and to manage inflation.

Provide education about decent labour conditions, including agency contract risks: International Alert's studies on business and conflict in East Africa and Nepal⁷⁴⁹ point out the importance of appropriate use of outcome-based contracts⁷⁵⁰ to minimise exploitation and of analysing the effect of investments on different communities before making final business decisions. Pre-investment considerations (e.g., a factory is built) should include a conflict analysis, considering matters such as how the investment will affect host and refugee communities and who the suppliers will be. In multiple workshops, participants noted that Ukrainian refugees have been exposed to risks associated with output-based contracts and that they felt pressured to accept these opportunities to avoid financial insecurity.⁷⁵¹ Education for business leaders and refugees about decent labour conditions and contract types, risks, and mitigation could reduce vulnerabilities.

5.8. Community, social, and political life

Potential tensions in community, social, and political life are diverse, as discussed in Section 4.7. A range of tensions could escalate if appropriate mitigation measures and prevention measures are not put in place. The approaches below, in addition to the cross-cutting measures suggested at the start of this chapter, could be particularly useful.

⁷⁴⁶ Council of Europe (2022). [European Qualifications Passport for Refugees \(EQPR\) supports Ukrainian refugees' access to job market in Europe](#)

⁷⁴⁷ European Investment Bank (2023). [EIB and Czech Republic take steps to mitigate the impact of the Ukraine war](#), accessed 5 April 2023.

⁷⁴⁸ World Bank (2022). [The World Bank in Moldova](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁷⁴⁹ International Alert (2020). [Business and peace Dossier: It takes two to tango](#), accessed 29 March 2023.; International Alert (2019). [Consolidating peace through inclusive access to livelihoods in Nepal](#), accessed 28 March 2023; International Alert (2022). [Mobilising the Private Sector for Peace: The role of private sector actors in peace and conflict dynamics in Kenya and Somalia A peace and conflict analysis](#), accessed 29 March 2023.; and International Alert (n.d.). [Practice note 2: Integrating conflict analysis into peace-conducive economic development programming](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁷⁵⁰ Where an individual is paid a certain amount for a job done but the wages per hour or day might be very low, often below minimum wage, if the contracts are drawn up in an exploitative manner and the refugees are not aware of how long a task is likely to take.

⁷⁵¹ Chisinau research workshop 1 March 2023; Prague research workshop 1–2 February 2023; Bratislava workshop 7–8 March 2023.

Establish an infrastructure to support refugees’ dialogue with local and national governments: A significant amount of literature discusses infrastructures for peace; these can take place in a bottom-up fashion⁷⁵² or through top-down mechanisms. Such infrastructure could allow for clearer and more open discussion amongst representatives of disadvantaged local groups, such as the Roma and rural communities, and refugees. Top-down mechanisms are those in which formal structures for discussion and engagement are built between a host country government and a displaced community, often involving local and national institutions. The advantages of a top-down approach are that a government agency has a clear mandate for conflict resolution, accountability mechanisms can be established, and media coverage and strategic communications can take place around established peacebuilding efforts. The disadvantages include reliance on the willingness of the national government and the possibility that the process might become excessively bureaucratic.⁷⁵³

Foster community dialogues: Community dialogue programming refers to targeted efforts to bring different elements of a community together to exchange information, experiences, and stories around specific topics.⁷⁵⁴ These dialogues may be organised around sources of tension such as fear of insecurity and war, Ukrainian history and culture, distribution of resources between disadvantaged host community populations and refugees, and the realities of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. The goal would be the development of mutual understanding and mitigation of emerging issues. Community dialogue programmes have been used across geographies including the Balkans, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia.⁷⁵⁵ Benefits include the ability to scale up over time, leverage local resources, and put forward practical small-scale solutions; cost-effectiveness and relevance to local contexts. Challenges include the possibility of sabotage, lack of sustained funding, and reliance on volunteers.⁷⁵⁶ The literature indicates a slight but positive relationship between the presence of community dialogues and mitigation of local tensions.⁷⁵⁷ Dialogues can be accompanied by community efforts to develop and engage in longer-term activities that encourage interaction between Ukrainians and local populations.

Address tensions through radio and TV programming: Radio and TV dramas have been used as peacebuilding tools over decades and in many contexts. In general, there is evidence that such dramas can affect attitudes and counteract negative messages,⁷⁵⁸ although they do not significantly affect deep-seated beliefs. Challenges associated with setting up radio and TV drama programmes relate to the willingness and interests of media owners; lack of audiences for peace stories compared to those on violence and conflict; resource constraints; legal and regulatory restrictions; and lack of media outreach.⁷⁵⁹ Stabilisation funding might be used to be used to overcome some of these hurdles. Radio and TV dramas and mass campaigns can be aired in collaboration with governments, academic institutions, and civil society. This joint engagement can focus on reconciliation around historical tensions.

⁷⁵² For example, through community dialogues, as discussed below.

⁷⁵³ Cramer, C., Goodhand, J., and Morris, R. (2016). [Evidence Synthesis: What interventions have been effective in preventing or mitigating armed violence in developing and middle-income countries?](#) London: Department for International Development, accessed 29 March 2023.

⁷⁵⁴ Cramer, C., Goodhand, J., and Morris, R. (2016). [Rapid Evidence Assessment for Conflict Prevention](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁷⁵⁵ Bolton, L. (2020). [Lessons from conflict resolution interventions](#), accessed 29 March 2023.; Cramer, C., Goodhand, J., and Morris, R. (2016). [Rapid Evidence Assessment for Conflict Prevention](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁷⁵⁶ Bolton, L. (2020). [Lessons from conflict resolution interventions](#), accessed 29 March 2023.; Cramer, C., Goodhand, J., and Morris, R. (2016). [Rapid Evidence Assessment for Conflict Prevention](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁷⁵⁷ Bolton, L. (2020). [Lessons from conflict resolution interventions](#), accessed 29 March 2023.; Cramer, C., Goodhand, J., and Morris, R. (2016). [Rapid Evidence Assessment for Conflict Prevention](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁷⁵⁸ Cramer, C., Goodhand, J., and Morris, R. (2016). [Rapid Evidence Assessment for Conflict Prevention](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁷⁵⁹ Cramer, C., Goodhand, J., and Morris, R. (2016). [Rapid Evidence Assessment for Conflict Prevention](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

Work with the media to avoid spreading incendiary messages: Quality journalism that does not contribute to the spread of incendiary discourses should be supported, including by providing journalists evidence of what works and what does not to debunk misinformation, as this is not always obvious. For example, directly countering ‘fake news’ by repeating it brings it to the attention of audiences again—and can therefore reinforce acceptance.⁷⁶⁰ Countering disinformation also requires strong collaboration between multiple actors and a variety of actions—mapping and tracking disinformation actors, providing intelligence reports, and conducting information literacy activities. It is possible to build or leverage coalitions among media, civil society, and government entities that would allow access to disinformation tracking mechanisms and promote information sharing amongst different types of actors (specifically, mapping and analysis by civil society, academia, and government actors that influence policy).

Review school curricula, including in history and digital literacy: Various organisations have recognised the role of history education in helping students to better understand the past, approach information critically, and reduce risks of prejudice and discrimination.⁷⁶¹ During the research workshops, participants discussed the need for longer-term engagement of young people in critical analysis—including through mainstream education curricula—to proactively prevent polarisation, misinformation, and prejudice.⁷⁶² Apart from the curricula themselves, history and/or social sciences education can be used effectively to improve critical thinking and source analysis. A 2021 publication by the OECD that examined digital literacy among young people found that only 54 percent of students reported receiving training at school on identifying bias in information sources.⁷⁶³ However, the European Commission has recognised the role of education, particularly in source literacy, in combatting misinformation.⁷⁶⁴

Increase opportunities for Ukrainians and host community members to meet and help each other learn languages: ‘Conversation cafes’ are amongst many approaches to support host communities and refugees to interact. Such initiatives for Ukrainian and host communities could support further engagement.

⁷⁶⁰ Pennycook, G., Cannon, T. D., and Rand, D.G. (2018). [Prior exposure increases perceived accuracy of fake news](#). Journal of Experimental Psychology.

⁷⁶¹ UNESCO (2020). [A future we can all live with: how education can address and eradicate racism](#); Brookings Institute (2022). [Learning to live together: how education can help fight systemic racism](#)

⁷⁶² Warsaw research workshop 9 February 2023.

⁷⁶³ OECD (2021). [Twenty-first century readers: developing literacy skills in a digital world](#)

⁷⁶⁴ European Commission (2022). [Commission steps up action to tackle disinformation and promote digital literacy among young people](#)