



# RECEPTION AND INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES FROM UKRAINE: THE VOICE OF SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

November 2022

## WHO ARE WE?

Eurodiaconia is a network of social and health service providers across Europe, founded in the Christian faith and advocating social justice.

Many Eurodiaconia members work in the area of reception and integration of refugees and migrants, facilitating their access to social services, education, housing and the labour market. Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, they have also directed their efforts towards beneficiaries of temporary protection.

## WHY THIS TOPIC?

The Russian invasion of Ukraine prompted the massive displacement of Ukrainians to the EU, triggering the activation of the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD), which was aimed at reducing pressure from national asylum systems. The continuation of the war and the prospect of a new displacement wave during this winter show that there is a necessary transition from a humanitarian response to a long-term integration process. This process requires the identification of existing gaps in the implementation of the TPD, lessons learned from the current state of play, and reflection on potential upcoming challenges.

## WHAT DO OUR MEMBERS SAY?

The activation of the TPD has been welcomed, however, our members have reported inconsistent **implementation** among Member States, which has undermined an equal access to rights of displaced Ukrainians. They have identified **administrative barriers** for registration and the creation of **special categories of social welfare** for beneficiaries of temporary protection, which are less beneficial compared to what is received by permanent residents.

Our members have also reported a **lack of a long-term approach** concerning the provision of sustainable **accommodation**, assistance to **access employment**, **psychological support** for both refugees and volunteers working with refugees, and services for **vulnerable groups** and persons with special needs. Finally, our members emphasise that there is a problematic double standard that has been created regarding the treatment of non-Ukrainian refugees and their ability to access social rights.

# KEY RECOMMENDATIONS



## Recommendations for EU institutions

- The Solidarity Platform should formalise the involvement and input by civil society on the implementation of the TPD, both from national and EU level
- The Solidarity Platform should be utilised to ensure that rights under the TPD are respected and harmonised by national governments, however, this should be supplemented by putting in place more stringent, binding monitoring mechanisms, with particular concern for equal treatment of refugees
- The Safe Homes Initiative should focus on long-term housing solutions and put forward specific, practical guidance for Member States to decrease their dependence on temporary hosting of Ukrainian refugees in private homes
- The EU institutions and Member States should not detract their focus from the situation of other refugees or create a two-tiered system of reception, but should utilise best practices from the TPD scheme including free movement and full and effective access to a variety of social rights
- The European Commission should make funding available beyond funds previously allocated under ESF and other funding mechanisms for refugee integration to ensure that other vulnerable groups are not de-prioritised, additionally, information and access to funding for CSOs should be clear and transparent

## Recommendations for Member States

- Member States should ensure that the rights under the TPD are respected and fully implemented, by lowering administrative barriers and providing clarity on the rights given under the TPD, the benefits of registering for temporary protection, and the ability of recipients to return to Ukraine or move to another Member State and maintain their status
- Member States should make every effort to identify and safeguard vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, UAMs, women and children, and people from Roma ethnic background
- Social benefits should be adequate to live and at the same level of residents, to prevent Ukrainian refugees from being lured into situations of trafficking or exploitative work before they have the chance to integrate, learn the local language, and enter the formal labour market
- EU funding should be allocated to NGOs and grassroots organisations who are already active and providing services on the ground delivering front-line support, humanitarian aid, and long-term integration assistance to refugees and migrants



**Read our full policy paper!**

You can also contact our Policy and Membership Development Officer,  
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