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The EU supports education projects for children in conflict.

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Learning to Live Together

EU supports education in emergencies for conflict-affected children and youth in Ukraine

Kiev/ Brussels, 17th March 2016 – Today, the European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos Stylianides has visited one of the EU Children of Peace projects in Ukraine in a school in Konstantinovska/ Ukraine. The project was launched in November 2015 by the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) Ukraine and is aimed at providing psychosocial support to children in the east of Ukraine and ensuring their attendance of educational programmes. Schools and education facilities in Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts benefit from the project.

The EU Children of Peace project Learning to Live Together“, supported by the European Commission“, aims to develop life skills and provide psychosocial support to children, adolescents, and families that suffered from the conflict in Ukraine. Due to the conflict, there is a growing need to address the psychological distress of a vast number of children suffering from the displacement and tensions reported in school, including bullying.

The project is implemented by the Children’s Fund “Health through Education” activities and the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy to develop schoolchildren’s life skills, facilitating positive integration to new environments and providing psychosocial support to children and families to build resilience.

4,000 educators, 450 practicing psychologists and 100 social workers will receive training on the basics of emotional communication; creating an environment of trust in the classroom, which is safe, open to children and parents and favourable for developing relationships and provides protection from the aftermath of social disasters. Over the project’s life approximately 300,000 children and their parents will take part in the psychosocial support programme. This comprehensive programme provides psychological counselling and specialized psychotherapeutic care to children at the family and community levels.

Additionally, 1,550 educators and 230 practicing psychologists from the five eastern oblasts have already been trained and around 26,000 children have already benefited from the programme of psychosocial support.

“Providing educational opportunities for children and addressing the trauma many children displaced by the conflict have experienced is a priority of EU humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, explained Mamar Merzouk, head of the European Commission’s humanitarian aid office in Kiev. “We should not allow hundreds of thousands of displaced children to become a lost generation”

Another part of the project will be the training of 735 preschool teachers and 2,505 school teachers for teaching courses within the component “Education based on life skills“ – a new, innovative part of the curriculum. Over 170,000 children will take part in workshops on building life skills of effective communication, self-control, stress management, problem- and
conflict-solving. Such skills will increase their ability to address challenges in their lives, facilitate their adaptation to new environments, help find new friends and restore peace of mind.

“The support of the European Union through the life-skills and peace building courses will equip children and young people with the necessary skills and tools to actively participate in their communities, while the psychosocial support will strengthen their resilience, helping them to lead full lives”, said Giovanna Barberis, UNICEF Representative in Ukraine.

To support the project, the preventive education portal (autta.org.ua) offers pedagogic material to educators and psychologists, as well as check the project’s progress and provide feedback from participants. A computer course for educators has also been developed, which will allow for this course to be taught by any educational institution in the future.

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About UNICEF: UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) promotes the wellbeing of every child and every family throughout Ukraine since 1997. UNICEF is a world champion in protecting children’s rights and interests. Together with our partners, we work in more than 190 countries to protect and support children from their birth until they become adults. UNICEF activities are funded from voluntary contributions of individuals, companies, organizations and governments. For more information visit: www.unicef.org.ua. Join us on Twitter, Facebook and ВКонтакте.

About EU Humanitarian Aid: The European Union and its Member States are the world’s leading donor of humanitarian aid. Relief assistance is an expression of European solidarity towards people in need all around the world. It aims to save lives, prevent and alleviate human suffering, and safeguard the integrity and human dignity of populations affected by natural disasters and man-made crises. The European Commission ensures rapid and effective delivery of EU relief assistance through its two main instruments: humanitarian aid and civil protection. The Commission, through its Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO), helps over 120 million victims of conflict and disasters every year. With headquarters in Brussels and a global network of field offices, ECHO provides assistance to the most vulnerable people solely on the basis of humanitarian needs. For more information, please visit ECHO’s website.

About the National University of "Kyiv-Mohyla Academy": National University "Kyiv-Mohyla Academy" creates, keeps and disseminates knowledges in the natural, social, humanitarian and technical research fields. Mohylianka is a community that forms highly nationally conscious, honest, caring, creative personality, able to think independently and responsibly act in accordance with the principles of good and justice, for the development of an open and democratic society. For more information visit http://www.ukma.edu.ua/

About the Children’s Fund “Health through Education”: Children’s Fund “Health through Education” is a non-governmental organization that carries out activities in the field of development and mainstreaming educational programmes based on developing life skills that help children to deal with challenges of everyday life and adapt to life in the changing world.

Our organization works together with UN agencies (UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA), WHO, German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), USAID, and US Peace Corps in Ukraine. Our partners at the national level are the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, National Academy of Pedagogic Sciences of Ukraine, regional institutes of post-graduate pedagogic education, national NGO “National Union of Teachers and Trainers” (VSESVIT). Our website: http://helte.org.ua; for more information, please visit autta.org.ua, Facebook.

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