



PORTFOLIO

Citizen engagement actions to provide humanitarian aid or educational support to Ukrainians in Estonia and Ukraine

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

GROUP 1: SURVEY	4
1. Project report	5
1.1 Background and description of the project.....	5
1.2 Basis of research.....	5
1.3 An overview of the theory.....	6
1.4 Process in Estonia.....	8
1.5 Process in Lithuania.....	10
1.6 Ukrainians in Estonia.....	11
1.7 Applying process to TLU.....	11
1.8 Integration into TLU and Estonia.....	12
2. Elements of the study	14
2.1 Selection for the study.....	14
2.2 Questionnaire for students.....	14
3. Results of the study	16
3.1 Strengths.....	16
3.2 Areas for Improvement.....	16
4. Project Summary	18
5. Action plan	22
6. Reflections From Group Members	24
6.1 Interdisciplinarity of the group.....	25
7. Stakeholders	27
GROUP 2: LANGUAGE	28
1. Project Report	29
1.1 Background and description of the project.....	29
1.2 Basis of research.....	29
1.3 Interdisciplinarity of the group.....	30
2. Action plan	31
3. Descriptions of Ukrainian participants and meetings	33
3.1 Ukrainian A.....	33
3.1.1 Study plan for Ukrainian A:.....	33
3.1.2 Description of meetings with Ukrainian A:.....	34

3.1.3 Feedback from Ukrainian A:.....	34
3.2 Ukrainian B.....	35
3.2.1 Study plan for Ukrainian B:.....	35
3.2.2 Description of meetings with Ukrainian B:.....	35
3.2.3 Feedback from Ukrainian B:.....	36
3.2.4 Photos from the meeting with Ukrainian B:.....	37
3.3 Ukrainian C.....	37
3.3.1 Study plan for Ukrainian C:.....	37
3.3.2 Description of meetings with Ukrainian C:.....	38
3.3.3 Feedback from Ukrainian C:.....	38
3.3.4 Photos from the meeting with Ukrainian C:.....	39
3.4 Ukrainian D.....	39
3.4.1 Study plan for Ukrainian D:.....	40
3.4.2 Description of meetings with Ukrainian D:.....	41
3.4.3 Feedback from Ukrainian D:.....	43
3.4.4 Photos from the meeting with Ukrainian D:.....	43
3.5 Ukrainian E.....	44
3.5.1 Study plan for Ukrainian E:.....	44
3.5.2 Description of meetings with Ukrainian E:.....	44
3.5.3 Feedback from Ukrainian E:.....	45
3.5.4 Photos from the meeting with Ukrainian E:.....	46
3.6 Ukrainians F and G.....	47
3.6.1 Study plan for Ukrainians F and G:.....	47
3.6.2 Description of meetings with Ukrainians F and G:.....	48
3.6.3 Feedback from Ukrainians F and G:.....	49
3.6.4 Photos from the meeting with Ukrainians F and G:.....	49
4. Instagram page @eestigratsioon.....	50
4.1 Materials created for Ukrainians and other learners.....	51
5. Analysis of a survey about the work of an Instagram account @eestigratsioon..	54
6. Reflections From Group Members.....	58
Attachments.....	60
Attachment 1.....	60

GROUP 3: CULTURE.....	62
1. Project Report.....	63
1.1. Description of the terms of reference and goals of the project.....	63
1.1.1. Project focus and objectives.....	63
1.1.2. Project implementation.....	64
1.1.3. Stakeholders.....	64
1.1.4. Sustainability.....	64
1.1.5. How the society benefits from our project.....	64
1.1.6. Division of roles within the team.....	65
1.2. The importance of the problem, its description and choice of methods.....	66
1.2.1. Basis of research, the importance of the problem and its description.....	67
1.2.2. Theoretical framework and best practices.....	68
1.3. Description of activities and reaching the stakeholders.....	69
1.3.1. First Event - EdTech Hack at Tallinn University (12th of November)....	69
1.3.2. Second Event - Folk Dance Workshop at Tallinna Mustamäe Gümnaasium (4th of December).....	70
1.4. Sustainability of the project.....	70
1.5. Summary of the results.....	71
2. Action plan.....	72
3. Communication to stakeholders.....	74
4. Self-reflection of team members.....	81
REFERENCE LIST.....	84

GROUP 1: SURVEY

Survey researching Ukrainian students at Tallinn University

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1. Project report

1.1 Background and description of the project

The primary aim of this project was to develop, execute, evaluate, analyze, and report support activities aimed at encouraging citizens to provide humanitarian aid and/or educational support to the Ukrainian community in Estonia.

Our group was responsible for conducting a survey among Ukrainian students currently enrolled at Tallinn University (TLU). Our foremost goal was to assess whether these students had access to adequate information about TLU before applying for their studies. Additionally, we intended to evaluate the relevance, comprehensiveness, and potential inaccuracies in the information they received. We were also keen on comprehending the effectiveness of the integration process for Ukrainian students as they transitioned from their home country to Estonia.

We investigated whether TLU offers a specialized integration program tailored for Ukrainian students arriving from war-torn regions. It is conceivable that some of these students may have experienced trauma that has not been addressed adequately to date.

As a result of this project, we presented recommendations to Tallinn University. The objective is to encourage more citizens, particularly TLU students and staff, to participate in various activities that offer humanitarian aid and educational support to the Ukrainian community in Estonia, in response to the crisis in Ukraine and to address the needs of Ukrainian refugees.

Our research is informed by the most relevant and exemplary practice we've studied so far, which is the project titled "Baltics4UA: Supporting Ukraine through Citizen Engagement at Baltic Universities." We provided an overview of this project, highlighting its significance. The project showcased diverse activities carried out by different universities to support Ukrainian students and citizens. Additionally, we conducted a comprehensive exploration of literature related to the Ukrainian crisis and the associated challenges.

1.2 Basis of research

Our work consists of several fundamental theoretical constructs: crisis, crisis response, and satisfaction. These concepts guided our research, which was designed to address the following key questions:

1. How has Tallinn University contributed to the Ukrainian crisis, particularly in terms of the support and assistance provided to Ukrainian students during the war?
2. What differences, as perceived by the university, are there between Ukrainian students with refugee status and those without such status?
3. Is the information available on Tallinn University's website adequate for prospective students considering studying at the university?

In the survey, we aimed to obtain answers to the following three questions:

4. Are there any deficiencies or issues in the integration process for Ukrainian students at the university?
5. Do foreign students struggle with legal questions (residence permit etc) regarding studying in Estonia
6. From the perspective of Ukrainian students, what additional help or support would they desire or find beneficial?

1.3 An overview of the theory

Estonia acceded to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, (hereafter collectively referred to as the “1951 Refugee Convention”) in 1997. The Estonian asylum system is therefore relatively new, particularly in comparison with many other EU Member Stat. (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2016).

Since February 2022, the full-scale invasion of Ukraine has resulted in a significant toll on civilian lives and has compelled millions of refugees to seek sanctuary in neighboring nations. These individuals are in dire need of assistance and protection, and it is vital that we do not regard them as temporary visitors. Many of them are seeking a permanent home here, and by facilitating their integration into our society, we can mutually benefit from this endeavor (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2023)

When discussing Ukrainian refugees, the foremost concern is the psychological distress they may be experiencing, including conditions such as anxiety disorders, depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). A study conducted among Ukrainian refugees in Poland revealed that a staggering 73% of respondents exhibited symptoms of these distressing conditions. (Długosz, 2023)

Ukrainians have been experiencing various kinds of extreme fear due to constant air raids and shelling, high levels of anxiety because of the power cuts, heating problems in winter, water and gas cuts, the economic crisis resulting from inflation in Ukraine of more than 40%, and the loss of many jobs, among other challenges. These sudden and profound changes have disrupted their usual way of life, forcing them to leave behind their homes, friends, jobs, housing, and often engage in less specialized forms of work. For the initial one to two years, refugees invariably find themselves grappling with the dilemma of whether to return to Ukraine or establish a new life elsewhere. This ongoing choice dilemma inhibits them from committing to a specific direction, often leaving them torn between returning home and seeking to adapt to an entirely new environment. It is also of paramount importance to establish refugee centers that provide an integrated approach, offering social, psychological, and legal assistance. The creation of such centers can serve as a focal point for people who have shared similar experiences and losses. These centers should include mutual support groups, which can be of immense help in the process of organization and navigation through the challenges of starting anew. (Beitane et al., 2023)

However, the challenges faced by refugees extend beyond these psychological issues. They encompass a spectrum of difficulties, including comprehending the intricacies of the host country's systems, navigating the education landscape, securing access to high-quality education, and attaining proficiency in the host nation's language, among other complexities. To address these issues, viable solutions could involve the organization of workshops, tutorials, culturally enriching orientation programs, and vibrant language cafes, among other initiatives.

There is no definition of refugee integration in international law. However, integration is understood as the outcome of a dynamic, multi-faceted two-way process with three interrelated dimensions: a legal, an economic and a socio-cultural dimension. Integration requires efforts by all parties concerned, including preparedness on the part of refugees to adapt to the host society without having to give up their own cultural identity, and a corresponding readiness on the part of host communities and public institutions to welcome refugees and to meet the needs of a diverse population. (UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 2002).

Legal process – whereby refugees are granted a range of entitlements and rights which are broadly commensurate with those enjoyed by citizens. These include freedom of movement,

access to education and the labor market, access to public relief and assistance, including health facilities, the possibility of acquiring and disposing of property, and the capacity to travel with valid travel and identity documents. Realization of family unity is another important aspect of integration. Over time, the process should lead to permanent residence rights and in some cases the acquisition of citizenship in the country of asylum. **Economic process** – whereby refugees attain a growing degree of self-reliance and become capable of pursuing sustainable livelihoods, thus contributing to the economic life of the receiving society. **Socio-cultural process** – whereby refugees acclimatize, and local communities accommodate refugees to enable them to live amongst or alongside the receiving population, without discrimination or exploitation, and contribute actively to the social life of their country of asylum. (Kultuuriministerium, 2020).

Baltics4UA analysis lists citizen initiatives undertaken to engage citizens in social action for Ukrainians. They consist, for example of scholarships concerning education, summer camps and workshops, charity events and exhibitions, voluntary support of collecting humanitarian aid and giving expert advice. The research emphasizes that, in the first days following the war, the most important measures taken and support given that helped the refugees came from the voluntary Polish citizens. (Oikonomou et al., 2023)

The higher education (HE) sector has a crucial role to play in mitigating the consequences of the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis in the Baltics by leveraging its own resources, as well as citizens' potential for innovation and resilience. In the current crisis, Baltic universities have been to the forefront of collective mobilizations for providing assistance and opportunities to Ukrainian refugees who wish to continue their educational journey. (Oikonomou et al., 2023)

Moreover, universities have engaged in actions that help Ukrainian refugee communities address their needs, whether they are part of the academic community or not. Hence, the social role and mission of universities is further accentuated during times of crisis in which society needs to make use of all available resources and means to address refugees' inclusion. (Abamosa, 2021)

1.4 Process in Estonia

Another important aspect is that the Estonian education system is very different from the Ukrainian one, which makes it a challenge to integrate Ukrainian pupils into Estonian schools. Ukrainians often drop out of compulsory education and opt for e-learning options.

Ukrainians lack information about education and further learning opportunities, which leads to low motivation to develop personal and professional career plans. In the context of formal education, social problems such as parental disapproval, loneliness or the desire to return to Ukraine are demotivating Ukrainians to integrate into the Estonian education system. (Beitane et al., 2023)

In addition to, Ukrainian young people tend to have a high level of education, so they adapt quite smoothly to Estonian education. To reduce the language barrier, Estonian universities offer adaptation years for language studies, organize language cafés for Ukrainians to learn Estonian, and provide mentoring and support activities for Ukrainians. There are also many differences between Estonia and Ukraine in culture, information flow, technological development, requirements, and standards in different fields including higher education. The other problem is lack of human resources in teaching section: there are not enough teachers for teaching various disciplines, moreover, there is no mechanism created, how to ensure education for those who stay in Ukraine. (Beitane et al., 2023)

Main challenges in non-formal education field include adaptation, socialization, switching into Estonian language or using Russian language in Estonia, low motivation, lack of feedback, influence of parents. To integrate Ukrainian children and young people into different educational institutions the idea is to involve mentors - cultural mediators who could help Ukrainian youth to understand the culture and discover the possibilities of participation in Estonian society better. (Beitane et al., 2023)

Language is a crucial element for successful integration into a country's education system and labor market. Estonian is the official language in Estonia, but schools also teach English and Russian. Language courses are offered to Ukrainians who have come to Estonia. However, participants noticed some issues and challenges for learning language, and these could be grouped into following categories:

- social issues like language courses take place too far from home, the family's sceptical attitude towards the need to learn the language and these leads to low participation rates in language courses,
- personal attitude and motivation issues, e.g., the benefit of learning language for Ukrainians is not emphasized, lack of information about language courses, too difficult to study, language

courses are developed without considering the needs and preferences of Ukrainians, lack of time to study, fear that the cost of the course is high,

- educational / organizational issues, e.g., too heavy workload for teachers, lack of educators, Estonian schools are not ready for teaching multicultural class. (Beitane et al., 2023)

Rent benefit is paid once to those who arrived in Estonia after 24 February and received temporary protection. Once you find accommodation, expenses (up to 1200 euros) will be reimbursed. Ukrainian refugees who come to Estonia do not receive unemployment benefits. They can only get advice and health insurance. The Estonian Refugee Council pays a one-time school allowance to all school-aged children who have received international protection or temporary protection for the first time in Estonia. A grant of 50 euros is intended for the purchase of school supplies at the child's discretion. (MTÜ Eesti Pagulasabi, na)

1.5 Process in Lithuania

In educational topics, the financial aspect is dominating. UA students expressed the need of financial support for coming to study in Lithuanian universities. The expectations of students are to study free there, and Lithuanian universities meet this need by providing tuition free studies for Ukrainians for one year. However, not only financial topics are important. Students emphasized the importance of mentorship, emotional and social support. Ukrainian people, who have left their home and came to Lithuania, feel isolated, so they are willing to have more Lithuanian friends, who could help to adapt in a new environment and be accepted into community. (Beitane et al., 2023)

Ukrainian refugees, settling in Lithuania, shared their personal experiences. The biggest challenges were too much information upon arrival, difficulties in understanding the procedure for obtaining a residence permit, lack of information in Ukrainian or Russian. Ukrainians were happy to be able to learn Lithuanian for free at A1 level. Ukrainian students said that there are a lot of information systems at KTU, so it is complicated to remember all of them. Information about university systems could be explained or presented in video in Ukrainian language, as Ukrainian students felt lost due to the large number of information systems. (Beitane et al., 2023)

Students report that the process of obtaining a residence permit in Lithuania is quite complicated. To make it easier to obtain a residence permit after spending one year in

Lithuania. More information should be available in Russian and Ukrainian at the Migration Department (Beitane et al., 2023)

When talking about accommodation, Ukrainian students explained that dormitory accommodation was free of charge only upon arrival at university, but now after a year it is possible to apply for a 40% or more discount on dormitory accommodation (Beitane et al., 2023)

Talking about financial support, the participants expressed the idea that scholarships could be awarded based on the students' academic performance. They noted that it has been more than a year since some students arrived, and there is a disconnect between highly motivated students and those who are completely unmotivated. Additionally, they suggested providing discounts on dormitory living could also be made based on academic performance. (Beitane et al., 2023)

Universities play an important role in building societal resilience to crises. HEIs community, students, teachers and researchers, have been actively involved in supporting Ukrainian citizens arriving in the country, helping them to integrate into their new environment and creating the best possible conditions for them to continue their studies. (Beitane et al., 2023)

1.6 Ukrainians in Estonia

Of the Ukrainian citizens who entered Estonia, 84657 have said at the border that they plan to stay in Estonia for some time. 35796 Ukrainian war refugees have received valid temporary residence permits on the basis of temporary protection (as of November 14). As of November 6, 9045 war refugees have started to study, 62.9% of them acquire basic education, 23.5% pre-primary education. (Siseministerium, 2023)

At this exact time it is unknown how many Ukrainians we have in Estonia and how many of them have left the country. Also there is not exact information available about how much Ukrainians are studying in Estonian universities.

1.7 Applying process to TLU

The application process for a third-country (also Ukrainian) national is described at TLU homepage under section “Application procedure for Non-EU/EEA students“. In the last two years, the application process for Ukrainian student candidates has differed from the general one. University offers them the opportunity to take the TU English language test, and they

have not required translations of their educational documents. This is in order to keep the candidate's application costs as low as possible. Ukrainian foreign student candidates have also been exempted from paying the application fee. In addition, the possibilities of traveling to Estonia are simplified for them, since they do not have to apply for a visa in Ukraine.

Complete information about the application process is available at universities homepage. If the candidate has any questions, he can contact the foreign student admissions specialist at admissions@tlu.ee.

1.8 Integration into TLU and Estonia

There is no separate integration program for Ukrainian students. An Orientation Week is organized for all foreign students from the beginning of the academic year, during which the university, study information, health care system in Estonia, migration issues (residence permits, visas), local culture, opportunities to work in Estonia and the international house, academic ethics, etc.) are introduced. Orientation Week presentations this fall can be found at TLU website: <https://www.tlu.ee/node/10499>

At the university website there is also a separate “practical matters” section with information about accommodation, health care and insurance, residence permit and all the necessary information about living in Estonia.

State support measures are also provided for persons with temporary protection, and state adaptation programs can also be used by holders of temporary residence permits.

All Ukrainian foreign students who have matriculated at TLU have been exempted from paying tuition fees starting from the spring semester of 2022. In addition, all counseling services offered to students of Tallinn University are available also to UA students. For example psychological counseling and career counseling.

In connection with traveling to a new country to study there, it also involves a certain amount of bureaucracy and communication with the state. Students who have not applied for or do not qualify for temporary protection must apply for a temporary residence permit to study. In addition, they must ensure that they have health insurance for the entire period of their studies. If the student has found a place to live, he must register his place of residence with the local government.

After students receive final acceptance letter from university, they will have to organize journey to Estonia and apply for a long-stay (D) visa at an Estonian embassy. All degree students from non-EU/EEA countries need to at one point apply for an Estonian temporary residence permit (TRP) for study. Only full-time students have the right to a TRP. After receiving the TRP they have to register their place of residence.

The university supports all foreign students, including Ukrainians, in the above-mentioned subjects within its capacity. This means that the university advises students if questions arise.

2. Elements of the study

To answer the research questions, we conducted a survey among Ukrainian students currently enrolled at Tallinn University (TLU), who are pursuing various academic disciplines. They are also direct stakeholders of this project. The quantitative survey, designed as a structured questionnaire, was aimed to reach a significant portion of this group. The Google web application (Google Forms) was used. The survey covered aspects such as information accessibility, integration experiences, and support needs. Since we wanted to protect students' privacy, we asked TLU employee, Johanna Kukk-Uuspalu, to send out the questionnaire.

2.1 Selection for the study

Our study included only Ukrainian students at Tallinn University. To our information, that was provided by TLU employee Johanna Kukk-Uuspalu, there are 81 Ukrainian students studying in Tallinn University (info from 19.11.2023).

Among the students, there are both people with Estonian temporary protection who already had a residence permit when they applied, as well as those who have moved to Estonia for studies and whose residence permit is based on studies at Tallinn University. In addition, the university has Ukrainians, whose studies began before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and who therefore do not qualify for temporary protection, as they entered Estonia before February 24, 2022.

2.2 Questionnaire for students

A quantitative study was conducted to investigate the integration process of UA students in Tallinn University. The questionnaire consisted of multiple-choice questions, the purpose of which was to collect relevant data regarding our research questions.

A questionnaire consisting of three separate questionnaires was used to collect data for the empirical study. To simplify the comparison, a 4-point Likert scale was used for all answers (1 - do not agree at all; 2 - rather disagree; 3 - rather agree; 4 - completely agree). Also we used two open ended questions for UA students personal input that can not be given in previous questions.

The study was conducted between 14.12.2023 and 22.12.2023. To conduct this research, an online questionnaire was used, because it is more effective, faster and allows a large number

of people to be interviewed. The Google web application was used to send out the questionnaire.

Research involving UA students must bear in mind some key ethical consideration. The rights and well-being of students who share their experience must be safeguarded. Therefore we explained in the beginning of the questionnaire that the report would not reveal details of who provided what information. Because sending out the questionnaire would lead to the disclosure of sensitive information (name, e-mail etc), the questionnaire was sent out by Johanna Kukk-Uuspalu. Research group only received the results.

Spreadsheet program Microsoft Excel 2021 was used for data analysis.

3. Results of the study

We had a total of 36 students (44%) participate in our survey out of 81. Among these 36 students, 27 identified as female, 8 as male, and 1 as other.

The ages of the students who took part in the survey ranged between 17 and 40, with an average age of 19 years old. The students study various fields at the university, with the most popular being humanities, politics & governance, and cultural studies.

The survey indicates a generally positive sentiment among Ukrainian students at Tallinn University, with a majority expressing satisfaction with integration processes.

3.1 Strengths

Academic Support (Average Score: 3.20):

- Many students reported having access to adequate academic support and resources, contributing positively to their educational progress.

Social Integration (Average Score: 3.23):

- A significant portion felt well-integrated socially within the university community, crediting programs that facilitate integration.

Administrative Processes (Average Score: 3.33):

- Overall, administrative processes like enrollment, visa processing, and accessing student services were perceived as streamlined.

Cultural Orientation Programs (Average Score: 3.5):

- Participation in cultural integration and orientation programs received positive feedback for aiding adjustment to the new environment

3.2 Areas for Improvement

Language Barriers (Average Score: 2.33):

- Another highlighted challenge, by students, was the lack of Estonian language courses. The survey identified language barriers as a significant challenge affecting both academic and social interactions among individuals. The findings emphasize a clear need for

enhanced language support services. Notably, during attempts to continue Estonian studies at the A2 level, two individuals encountered obstacles. Access to the class was limited to Erasmus and Legal Aspects participants, hindering their efforts to learn the language.

- Better general information about such opportunities would be beneficial for all.

Legal Procedures (Average Score: 3.08):

- The survey revealed a mixed experience among students regarding the clarity of legal requirements, prompting recommendations for improved communication and assistance in dealing with legal documentation. One participant shared a personal experience of being insufficiently informed at the start of their studies. This individual opted for a regular temporary residence permit, unaware of the benefits associated with temporary protection. While managing without these benefits, concerns about status persisted, especially given their arrival during a significant geopolitical event.

- Students also faced various visa and residence permit issues, such as the cancellation of a residence permit during academic leave and non-renewal post-graduation, added complexity. Despite challenges, the university staff provided consistent support.

Mental Health Support (Average Score: 3.17):

- The survey highlighted concerns among some students regarding a lack of information about available mental health services and counseling. Participants expressed uncertainty about where to find relevant information and noted a perceived absence of mental health support. The findings underscore the importance of enhancing awareness and accessibility to mental health resources for the well-being of students.

Information Dissemination (Average Score: 3.17):

- Some participants faced challenges in understanding university processes and policies, indicating a need for clearer communication. Improving information dissemination can positively impact the student experience. Additionally, there's a call for more details on alternative housing options, grant applications and accommodation. Enhancing communication in these areas will foster a more supportive and inclusive university environment.

4. Project Summary

The main aim for this project was to promote citizen engagement in providing humanitarian aid and educational support to the Ukrainian community in Estonia, especially focusing on Ukrainian students currently enrolled in Tallinn University (TLU), the integration process, and the existence of specialized programs for those arriving from war-torn regions. In this project our group conducted a survey to understand what possible issues students could be facing and what TLU is doing to minimize possible problems.

In the following, I will respond to the posed research questions.

1. How has Tallinn University contributed to the Ukrainian crisis, particularly in terms of the support and assistance provided to Ukrainian students during the war?

Tallinn University has actively contributed to the Ukrainian crisis by providing support and assistance to Ukrainian students during the war. The university has exempted Ukrainian students from tuition fees, offered orientation programs, and facilitated an inclusive environment through initiatives like the Orientation Week. Furthermore, the university has engaged in actions to help Ukrainian refugee communities beyond academic support.

2. What differences, as perceived by the university, are there between Ukrainian students with refugee status and those without such status?

In terms of the university, whether you are a war refugee or not is not important. Everybody has the same conditions and opportunities. They treat all UA students the same. For example all Ukrainian foreign students who have matriculated at TLU are exempted from paying tuition.

3. Is the information available on Tallinn University's website adequate for prospective students considering studying at the university?

The information available on Tallinn University's website appears to have certain deficiencies, particularly in areas such as legal procedures, integration processes, and support services. Clarifying and enhancing the information on these aspects could benefit prospective students considering studying at the university.

4. Are there any deficiencies or issues in the integration process for Ukrainian students at the university?

Deficiencies or issues in the integration process for Ukrainian students at the university include language barriers, with limited access to Estonian language courses, and challenges in understanding university processes. Additionally, there are concerns about mental health support and a need for clearer communication on alternative housing options, grant applications, and accommodation.

5. Do Ukrainian students struggle with legal questions (residence permit etc) regarding studying in Estonia?

Ukrainian students have encountered challenges related to legal questions such as residence permits. The survey indicates a mixed experience among students regarding the clarity of legal requirements, emphasizing the importance of improved communication and assistance in dealing with legal documentation.

6. From the perspective of Ukrainian students, what additional help or support would they desire or find beneficial?

From the perspective of Ukrainian students, additional help or support they desire includes improved language support services, clearer communication on university processes, enhanced mental health resources, and more details on alternative housing options, grant applications, and accommodation. Addressing these needs would contribute to a more supportive and inclusive university environment for Ukrainian students.

The analysis reveals overall satisfaction among Ukrainian students at TLU, with strengths identified in academic support, social integration, administrative processes, and cultural orientation programs. However, language barriers, legal procedures, mental health support and information dissemination require attention and improvement.

Considering that the grouped ratings obtained from the survey are on average above 3 points on a scale of 4 points, it can be concluded that Tallinn University has managed well in terms of the integration of Ukrainian students and addressing their concerns. Also, since only 36 out of 81 students responded to the questionnaire, it is not possible to make accurate generalizations of the population.

Taking everything into consideration, we can only make the following recommendations to improve the stay of Ukrainian students at Tallinn University:

Enhance Language Support:

- Offer a wider range of language courses to cater to different proficiency levels, ensuring that Ukrainian students have access to language education that suits their individual needs. This could include both Estonian language courses for better integration into the local community and additional support in academic English to facilitate their studies.
- Communication Skills Workshops - provide workshops focused on enhancing communication skills in both Estonian and English. These workshops can address specific challenges faced by Ukrainian students, such as language barriers in academic and social contexts.
- Establish language exchange programs where Ukrainian students can interact with Estonian or other international students. This not only promotes language learning but also fosters cross-cultural understanding and friendship.

Prioritize Mental Health Services:

- Launch comprehensive awareness campaigns about mental health services available on campus. Organizing awareness events, and leveraging online platforms to ensure that all Ukrainian students are informed about the support available.
- Conduct counseling workshops to educate students about the importance of mental health and equip them with coping strategies. These workshops can address the specific stressors and challenges that Ukrainian students might face during their studies.
- Ensure that counseling services are easily accessible, with clear information on how to schedule appointments and seek assistance. Consider expanding counseling staff to meet the potential increase in demand.

Refine Information Channels:

- Enhance the university's website interface to provide a user-friendly experience, making it easier for students to navigate and find relevant information. This includes a dedicated section for international students with detailed guides on university processes, policies, and resources.

- Establish regular newsletters or bulletins that are sent directly to Ukrainian students email addresses. These communications can highlight important updates, deadlines, and any changes in university policies, ensuring that students are well-informed.

These recommendations aim to create a more supportive and inclusive environment for Ukrainian students at Tallinn University by addressing key areas that impact their overall well-being and integration.

5. Action plan

Tasks	Deadline	Student(s) responsible
Create a messenger group	05.10.2023	Volodymyr
Register to mid-term report presentation	10.11.2023	Volodymyr
Create and submit action plan	12.10.2023	Volodymyr
Contacting Tallinn University and Student association to ask about conducting a survey among UA students in TLÜ	15.10.2023	Volodymyr, Artem
Meeting with whole group	18.10.2023 14:00-16:00 Life area	Volodymyr, Taavi, Iris
Creating first version of mid-term report	18.10.2023	Volodymyr
Finish mid-term report and powerpoint presentation - the length of the text should be at least 5 pages (excluding references). Report has to be sent to the supervisor three days before mid-term session.	22.10.2023	Volodymyr, Taavi
Mid-term report presentation	26.10.2023 14:00-16:00 A-325	Taavi (presenter), Volodymyr, Iris
Reading scientific literature regarding this topic. Writing down theoretical overview and developing methodology.	29.10 – 30.11.2023	Volodymyr, Taavi

Meeting with whole group - the process of planning activity; getting the feed-back; reporting the activity	27.11.2023 14:00-16:00 M-135	Volodymyr, Taavi, Artem
Developing questions and creating survey	01.12 -13.12.2023	Artem
Sending out a survey	14.12.2023	Volodymyr, Artem
Analyze the results	26-31.12.2023	Iris, Volodymyr
Writing a summary + making suggestions to TLÜ how to integrate UA students more successfully	01.01-05.01.20 24	Iris, Volodymyr
Creating and submitting portfolio	07.01.2024	Volodymyr
Meeting with whole group	08.01.2024 12:00-14:00 Life area	Volodymyr, Taavi, Artem, Iris
Final presentation (slideshow and presentation)	11.01.2024	Taavi
Self – reflection	January 2024	Everyone
Presenting the final report	January 2024	Volodymyr, Taavi

6. Reflections From Group Members

Volodymyr Kostiak - The given project personally interested me because I wanted to learn how integration challenges are addressed at Tallinn University. Having participated in various group projects, this was the most challenging as many lacked the will and initiative to engage with the tasks. Consequently, some members had to exert more effort and invest extra time. Despite this, I learned to be patient and maintain an open-minded communication. Certainly, a significant challenge was the international group, requiring communication in English. The set goals, in my estimation, were achieved at a satisfactory level, as time constraints limited the presentation of more substantive work.

Taavi Kuuse – Before the project, I was not very familiar with the issues of Ukrainian students. I have followed the situation in the country related to the war, but my exposure was limited to what was reported in the media. By now I am more familiar with the subject. Creating research and theory as a group is not an easy task and requires a lot of dedication and effort. Especially if communication is in a foreign language. When working with smaller groups, each person's role is very important, and the absence of a member has a noticeable effect. It was very important to follow the originally prepared schedule. From my own point of view, engaging in group work to this extent in the first semester was not a good idea, and I feel that my contribution could have been greater. At the moment, we have learned about the goals of the project from the students' point of view. As a result of the survey, it is worth supplementing the topic by adding the point of view of the project managers, this would create added value for the University in making improvements.

Artem Bondarenko – In this report, I reflect on the valuable skills I have acquired recently, particularly in the areas of creating surveys and teamwork. Learning to construct effective surveys has been an insightful experience. It involved understanding the target audience, framing questions that are both clear and unbiased, and designing a layout that is user-friendly and engaging. This skill is crucial for gathering accurate and relevant data, which is essential in many professional contexts.

Equally important was the experience of working in a team. Collaborative efforts allowed for a diverse range of ideas and skills to be brought together, enhancing the quality of our work. I learned the importance of communication, flexibility, and mutual support within a team setting.

However, a challenge we faced was the reliability of team members. Despite assigning tasks with clear deadlines, Krystian Lapka failed to fulfill his obligations, particularly noticeable at critical moments such as the final day before a deadline. This situation emphasized the need for contingency planning and the importance of individual responsibility in a team. It was a valuable lesson in managing team dynamics and the unpredictability of group projects. Overall, these experiences have significantly contributed to my personal and professional development.

Iris Katariina Parikka – After getting to know more about TLU’s process with the Ukrainians it was really interesting to try to come up with questions to ask the students in the survey. The aim was to ask questions about their experiences after arriving in Estonia. Being a foreign student as well, it was interesting to see how they experienced the move. My original task was to do the summary, but after Krystian resigned from the group I offered to do the analysis as well. Analyzing the information obtained from the survey was surprisingly easy. All the data was put to excel form. There I calculated the average scores etc. Doing the summary was fairly easy, although time consuming.

Krystian Lapka – He attended only the first meeting for project introduction and group allocation. After that, he skipped all seminars and project updates. While he participated in our group discussions online, he showed no interest and lacked initiative. He offered no assistance to other group members. He was assigned to analyze the results by the end of 2023. He later informed us on December 30, 2023, that he was removed from the project due to passivity, and thus, he won't complete the analysis. At this point, it's essential to highlight that the group was expecting the work he was assigned to be completed in order to proceed with the project. Consequently, the rest of the group had to quickly redistribute the tasks.

6.1 Interdisciplinarity of the group

In essence, interdisciplinarity in our project involves bringing together knowledge from diverse fields to comprehensively address the central problem of providing humanitarian aid and educational support to Ukrainian students in Estonia. This integrated approach enhances the project's ability to create well-informed recommendations and initiatives that cater to the multifaceted needs of the Ukrainian student community at Tallinn University and Estonia as a whole.

Our group consisted of four members, two of whom are master's students in organizational behavior, and two are law students from abroad. Since the task of our group was to conduct a

study among Ukrainian students at Tallinn University, it did not require specific expertise from anyone but rather open-mindedness and initiative. The more resource-intensive tasks included compiling a theoretical overview and analyzing the results, which the group managed satisfactorily. All members of the group fulfilled various tasks, leading to the successful completion of the assignment.

7. Stakeholders

Ukrainian students who are enrolled in TLU are direct stakeholders of this project, since the main project is about providing humanitarian aid or education support to Ukrainians in Estonia and Ukraine.

Indirect stakeholders are administration of Tallinn University (officials, administrators, and support staff involved in student affairs and international programs) and academic community (faculty members, researchers, academic support staff and other students). This may also include all other international students, as they may face similar issues, or even local students in Estonia.

Since we conducted a questionnaire, we don't have illustrative materials to present. Instead, we will provide the project supervisors with a final report to plan future activities for improving the conditions and stay of the target group based on the findings. If the supervisors believe that a brief article could be written based on this study and shared, for example, in the university newsletter, we would certainly like to do that. It would bring attention within the university community to the potential challenges faced by Ukrainian students on a daily basis, and perhaps bystanders would be more aware about these issues and offer assistance.

GROUP 2: LANGUAGE

“Spend a Day with Me” project

Participants: Katre Sofia Palm, Eliisa Vihljajeva, Adriana Semjonova, Kristina Rabtsevitš, Elizaveta Andropova

1. Project Report

1.1 Background and description of the project

The “Spend a Day with Me” initiative, dedicated to supporting Ukrainian refugees, is a heartwarming project that extends a welcoming hand to those in need. How it works is that Ukrainian refugees get to choose one of our team members to spend a day with them in a normal setting to learn Estonian. This immersive experience provides refugees the unique opportunity to engage with the Estonian language in everyday scenarios, such as local cafes, shops, and museums, fostering language acquisition and easing cultural adaptation. Informed by a small survey conducted among Ukrainian students studying at Tallinn University, it is evident that language studies are a critical need. Consequently, our project not only addresses these language and cultural barriers but also acts as a kick-starter for forming personal bonds and cultivating empathy between Estonian locals and Ukrainian refugees. This fosters a profound sense of community and belonging. As organizers of this endeavor, our group plays a vital role as facilitators, resource providers, advocates, data collectors, and champions of empathy, bridging the gap between these two communities and enriching the integration process in Tallinn.

1.2 Basis of research

The presence of Ukrainian refugees in various European countries due to Russia's war in Ukraine has highlighted the significant challenge of language barriers they face. Language barriers hinder refugees' access to the labor market and their ability to handle daily tasks such as shopping, seeking medical care, and attending school. (Vlasenko, 2023)

Similar mentoring/ language learning programs have been implemented in Germany with refugees. They have received positive feedback both in terms of language learning and integrating into society. Interestingly, they noted that most mentors in Germany were well educated young women, which is also the case for our project so we hope it will lead to a similarly positive outcome. The analysis of the German mentorship program also brought out that there was a high correlation between success rates and mutual interests. This is why we have chosen young people to be the target group for our project, we feel like it will be easier to connect with each other. (Krieger et al., 2020)

Moreover, some studies have shown that the majority of people around the world are visual learners. Therefore, when learning a language, it is exemplary for them to approach it with an image-heavy learning format and use visual media such as images, objects, videos etc. (Jawed et al., 2019) For that specific reason our team would like to have tête-à-tête meetings with individuals to teach them new vocabulary and expressions via showing them objects in real life. That way we hope to achieve faster learning results for beginners.

1.3 Interdisciplinarity of the group

Our team has members from pedagogical fields, which we believe will help them become good mentors and language teachers to refugees. In addition to this liberal arts student adds cultural sensitivity and a deep understanding of societal and historical contexts. This knowledge is essential in shaping cultural exchange activities and developing educational resources. Social work students possess skills in counseling, case management, and support services, offering essential assistance to refugees in dealing with emotional and practical challenges they may face during their integration journey. Students studying law on the team contribute legal expertise, ensuring that the project adheres to relevant regulations and requirements. They can offer guidance on immigration and refugee law, assisting participants in navigating legal aspects of their integration. Physical education promotes inclusivity and cooperation, ultimately enhancing the sense of community and belonging among project participants.

The collaborative efforts of this interdisciplinary team ensure that the project is well-rounded, legally compliant, culturally sensitive, and comprehensive in its evaluation and support services.

2. Action plan

Activity and short description	Timeframe	Person (name + study field) of team responsible
Action plan and budget	12/10/2023	Everyone, Kristina (physical education field) works on the budget
Come up with specific ideas where to take Ukrainians to spend a day with them (shop, cafe, zoo, etc)	20/20/2023	Everyone
Finding Ukrainians	20/10/2023	Everyone (may be from the personal contacts as well)
Initial meeting with Ukrainians to find out who they would like to spend a day with, introduce the project to them	Did not happen	Everyone
Midterm report	19/10/2023	Katre Sofia (pedagogical field)
Midterm session (create a slideshow and be ready to present to other projects)	23/10/2023	Everyone is ready to present, Elizaveta (liberal arts field) and Kristina (physical education field) create the presentation
Spend a day with me/ Actual activity of the project	Specific to person, but all meetings done by mid-December	Everyone
Instagram for basic Estonian vocabulary (to support Ukrainians during and after the project dates)	During the whole project, hopefully continues after the project	Everyone helps create the content, Eliisa (law field) is the manager of the account
Analysis of how the project went, writing a short summary of our project which can be shared	December	Everyone
Portfolio	End of December	Everyone

Presentation day (slideshow and presentation)	January	Adriana (social work field) creates the slideshow, Eliisa (law field) comes up with the content, everyone is ready to present
Self-reflection	December/ January	Everyone

3. Descriptions of Ukrainian participants and meetings

During the project we managed to meet face-to-face with 8 Ukrainians. Some of them had specific preferences about the place they would like to meet in as well as the vocabulary they would like to get to know and learn, some were more abstract with their preferences. Nonetheless, we managed to interest and teach something to each of them. In this part we will describe each participant, their stories, meeting with them as well as the results we came to.

3.1 Ukrainian A



Ukrainian A - A came with his family from Ukraine to Estonia a little over a year ago. He lives in Tallinn and is finishing high school in Ukraine through online classes. A's hobby is cooking and baking, and he would like to turn it into his profession. For that, he needs to learn terms in Estonian. In addition to vocabulary, he is interested in information about further education opportunities in Estonia. He believes that finding this information on his own can be quite challenging.

3.1.1 Study plan for Ukrainian A:

1. Visit a grocery store together - Learn about what specific products are called in Estonian. There are other ways to learn about produce words, but as a grocery store is a familiar surrounding to A and is a place that he will continue to visit, we decided to conduct our meeting in a store.
2. Cook together - Prepare a dish with the ingredients we spoke about in the grocery store. Learn about words for preparing foods (e.g. slice, dice, chop etc).
3. Create a list of vocabulary words he has learned in our two meetings so he has something to refer back to whenever he needs.

3.1.2 Description of meetings with Ukrainian A:

Date	Place of meeting	Description
05/12/23	Zoom	Katre Sofia and Ukrainian A spoke about the essence of this project and what A would specifically like to learn about. Came up with a plan of how we will reach our goals and how to ensure that he would be able to keep the vocabulary (we will create a specific vocabulary list for him that we went through in our meeting so he can refer back to it).
11/12/2023	In person	Katre Sofia and Ukrainian A went to the grocery store together and after that baked gingerbreads together. In the grocery store we spoke about different product names, tried to memorize some specific words (but A found it quite difficult, maybe there was too much going on), so we created a list of the words with pictures, so A could go over them at home.
19/12/2023	Zoom	As A is finishing school soon, Katre Sofia and Ukrainian A spoke about the Estonian school system and types of schools he could apply to. A found it useful, as he had problems finding the material in the past. We also went over the words we learned last time, A seemed to have memorized them better, the list seemed to have helped.

3.1.3 Feedback from Ukrainian A:

After the meetings, Ukrainian A provided feedback where he stated he was pleased with the project. He was especially grateful that we spoke about the school system, because now he knows where he wants to apply to and what he needs for it.

3.2 Ukrainian B



Ukrainian B - B moved to Estonia from Ukraine in April of 2022. In the beginning, she did not have a chance to go to the Estonian language courses because she was a minor, so she slowly started learning on her own and remembers some common words/phrases just from seeing/hearing them a lot every day. She currently lives in Tallinn and studies Law at Tallinn University. She had an Estonian A1 and Estonian Culture course at the university. B feels like she has enough of the vocabulary for her daily experience and does not need any “specific lexicon”. Nonetheless, B believes she needs a general improvement of her level of Estonian and plans on taking a university language course for an A2 level.

Since Ukrainian B did not know precisely what vocabulary she needed, it was spontaneously decided to go with her to the places where she could learn new words by observing and having a chance to talk.

3.2.1 Study plan for Ukrainian B:

1. Visit the Raamatukoi bookstore in the Old Town together - Learn what are some famous Estonian books and characters. Try to read, understand and translate some sentences in books.
2. Go to the Tallinn Christmas Market together - Learn some Christmas related vocabulary, listen and try to understand some Estonian songs and try to order drinks in Estonian.
3. Go to the Town Hall Pharmacy (Revali Raeapteek) museum together - Learn some vocabulary related to medicine and get to know about the development of the Estonian medical sphere.

3.2.2 Description of meetings with Ukrainian B:

Date	Place of meeting	Description

04/12/23	Tallinn Old Town	<p>Ukrainian B got to know about famous Estonian books and characters such as Sipsik by E. Raud, Truth and Justice by A. H. Tammsaare, Naksitrallid by E. Raud, Kalevipoeg by F. R. Kreutzwald and many others. Together with Eliisa she read several pages of Kalevipoeg and with a little help managed to understand the meaning and translate the text. She later found a book Suur Tõll by A. Kivirähk in Russian as well as</p> <p>Johnny's seven friends (Jussikese seitse sõpra) by S. Väljal and some others in Ukrainian and had a chance to look through them.</p> <p>In the same bookstore they found a huge stack of old signed postcards from different years. With a little help, B read a few of them and learned some Christmas and New Year's wishes.</p> <p>At the Tallinn Christmas Market, B and Eliisa listened to some Christmas songs and Eliisa explained their meaning. Ukrainian B also learned some new celebration related vocabulary and learned to pronounce some known words correctly. She had a chance to order a drink by herself in Estonian and did really well.</p> <p>At the Town Hall Pharmacy museum Ukrainian B learned some Estonian ancient ways of health treatment that sometimes seemed funny and, therefore, it was more simple to remember the vocabulary related to that.</p>
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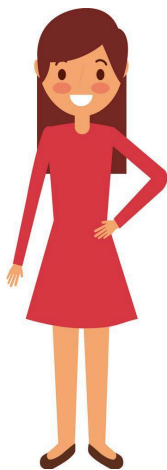
3.2.3 Feedback from Ukrainian B:

After the meeting, Ukrainian B provided feedback where she said that she enjoyed the meeting and found it especially interesting to learn about Estonian tales and well-known characters. She now feels more confident in what she says in Estonian in her daily life.

3.2.4 Photos from the meeting with Ukrainian B:



3.3 Ukrainian C



Ukrainian C - C moved to Estonia in August of 2022 to study Law at Tallinn University and she currently lives in Tallinn. Last year she had an Estonian A1 and Estonian Culture course at the university and she works part-time as a bartender in one of the Tallinn Old Town bars, so she knows a sufficient amount of vocabulary related to that. Her hobbies are reading and drawing. C sometimes has a struggle understanding the names of products in the store as well as how to correctly pronounce them, so she would like to improve her vocabulary in this field. She is also planning to continue learning Estonian language and take courses at the university.

3.3.1 Study plan for Ukrainian C:

1. Visit a grocery store together - Learn what some grocery items mean and how to correctly read and pronounce them.

2. Visit a shopping center - Learn all the products' names C is interested in.

3.3.2 Description of meetings with Ukrainian C:

Date	Place of meeting	Description
14/12/23	Selver grocery store	<p>Ukrainian C got to know what some food products mean and how to correctly pronounce them. For instance, she had difficulties understanding the ingredients in buns, sweets, and other grocery items, so Eliisa explained it to her. Moreover, C got to learn how to read some compound words and what each part of a word means. For instance, hapukapsasupp (sour cabbage soup) = hapu (sour) + kapsa (cabbage) + supp (soup).</p> <p>They also discussed the meaning of the names of Estonian candies since they oftentimes have an interesting meaning.</p>
17/12/23	Viru Keskus shopping center	<p>C had an opportunity to ask Eliisa all questions related to the products' names she was curious about while shopping for Christmas gifts. She got to know new vocabulary related to clothes, make up and other goods. She also had a chance to talk to the consultant by herself in Estonian while buying products and did great.</p>

3.3.3 Feedback from Ukrainian C:

After the meetings, Ukrainian C provided feedback where she said she enjoyed the meeting and found it especially interesting to learn about the meaning of some grocery items she was curious about, meaning of Estonian candies, and how to pronounce compound words. She was very amused that for over a year she thought the name of the candies Kirju Koer meant “evil dog”, but, in fact, this was “spotted/colorful dog”. She now feels more confident in her

language knowledge at the grocery store. C is also curious and would like to know some vocabulary related to religion, church and prayers in Estonian.

3.3.4 Photos from the meeting with Ukrainian C:



3.4 Ukrainian D



Ukrainian D - D arrived in Estonia a year ago, aspiring to enroll in the creative faculty at BFM in TLU. Currently, he is working part-time to save up for his education. D is passionate about contemporary art and wants to learn the terms used in Estonia. He's curious to understand how art influences Estonian culture and aims to become more observant of the creativity surrounding him.

3.4.1 Study plan for Ukrainian D:

Artistic Vocabulary Building:

1. Provide a list of essential art-related terms in Estonian for D to familiarize himself with.
2. Practice pronunciations and use them in the context of the exhibition.

Visit to Contemporary Art Exhibition:

3. Explore the exhibition together, pointing out various art pieces.
4. Introduce D to Estonian terms related to art, such as "kaasaegne kunst" (contemporary art), "maali" (painting), "skulptuur" (sculpture), etc.

Discussion Session:

5. Engage in discussions about the artworks, encouraging D to express his thoughts.
6. Teach phrases like "Mulle meeldib see maal" (I like this painting), "See skulptuur on huvitav" (This sculpture is interesting), etc.

Creativity Exploration:

7. Spend time exploring various creative spaces in Estonia.

Observation Exercise:

8. Encourage D to observe his surroundings and describe what he sees in Estonian.
9. Teach phrases such as "Linnaruum" (urban space), "loomulik valgus" (natural light), enhancing his ability to appreciate the artistic elements in the environment.

Expressing Emotions Through Art:

10. Encourage D to create his own artwork and express emotions.
11. Learn phrases like "See töö väljendab minu tundeid" (This work expresses my feelings), fostering a personal connection to Estonian art.

3.4.2 Description of meetings with Ukrainian D:

Date	Place of meeting	Description
14/12/2023	Instagram/Video	Adriana and Ukrainian D discussed the essence of this project and what specifically D would like to learn. It was decided that before visiting any art-related place, a small set of words, terms, and phrases would be prepared so that, during the creative location meeting, D could use and practice them.
16/12/2023	Instagram/Video	D received prepared phrases and words, and also chose a meeting place at the PoCo Pop And Contemporary Art Museum.
17/12/2023	Meeting 1: Visit to Contemporary Art Exhibition	<p>D and Adriana visited a contemporary art exhibition in Tallinn. Adriana introduced D to essential Estonian art terms such as "kaasaegne kunst" (contemporary art), "maal" (painting), and "skulptuur" (sculpture). They actively discussed artworks using learned phrases like "Mulle meeldib see maal" (I like this painting) and "See skulptuur on huvitav" (This sculpture is interesting), enabling D to engage with the exhibits and connect with Estonian artistic culture.</p> <p>After the exhibition, they discussed artworks in Estonian, delving into topics like artistic techniques and cultural influences. The focus shifted to reinforcing Estonian art terminology, improving D's ability to articulate observations. For instance, they explored phrases like "See kunstiteos räägib palju" (This artwork tells a lot) and "Kas märkasid värvide kontrasti?" (Did you notice the contrast of colors?). Their conversations added depth to the terms, making</p>

		them more meaningful and applicable in real-life scenarios.
18/12/2023	Post-Exhibition Correspondence on Unfamiliar Terms	After the exhibition, D and Adriana exchanged messages to address any remaining uncertainties or terms he wished to explore further. D shared specific phrases that puzzled him, and Adriana provided explanations and additional context. This exchange facilitated a more comprehensive understanding of Estonian art terminology.
20/12/2023	Meeting 2: City Exploration for Creativity	The next meeting involved a stroll through the city, seeking creativity in various forms. They observed urban spaces, discussed "linnaruum" (urban space), and explored how "loomulik valgus" (natural light) influenced the artistic elements around us. D actively contributed to the conversation, applying his newfound vocabulary to describe the creative aspects of the city.
02/01/2024	Meeting 3: Day of Personal Creativity	D dedicated a day to his own artistic expression. Using paints and paper, he created a piece while immersed in music. In Estonian, he described his process, saying, "See töö väljendab minu tundeid" (This work expresses my feelings). This personal exploration allowed D to integrate his emotions into his artwork, connecting him even more deeply with the local artistic culture.

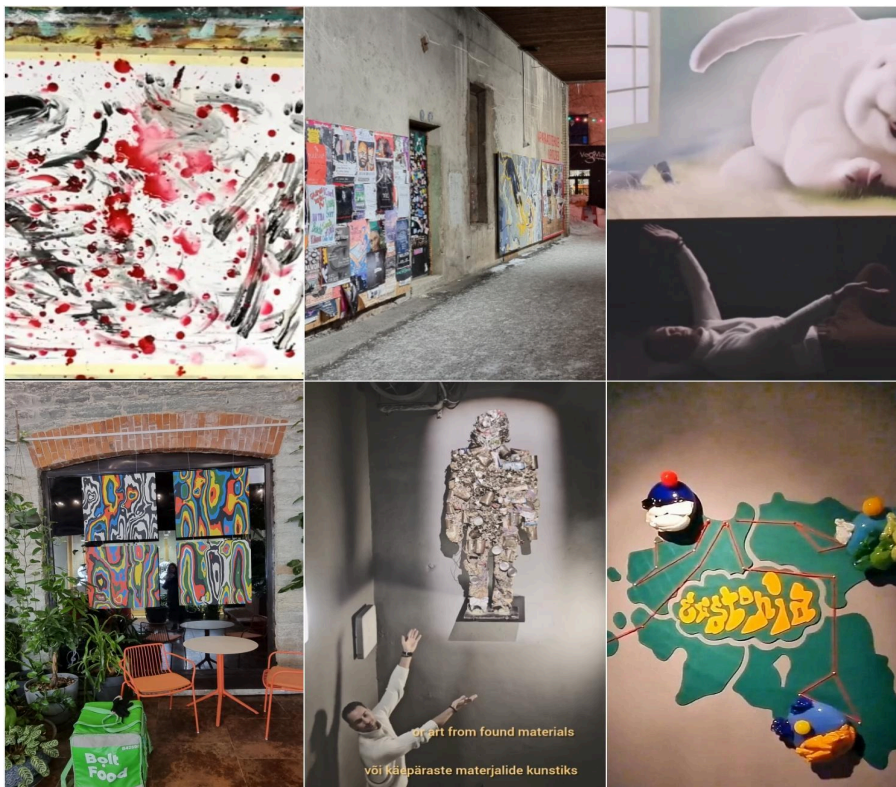
3.4.3 Feedback from Ukrainian D:

Ukrainian D wanted to express gratitude for the interesting and fruitful time together. He was pleasantly surprised that, in addition to learning the language, Adriana delved into fascinating aspects of abstract art. Exploring Estonian words related to art added an intriguing dimension to his understanding, and it was remarkable how language and art intertwined.

The assistance Adriana provided with his admission letter and benefit documents was highly valuable. Learning Estonian, especially art-related terms, was both challenging and captivating. Expressing his creative ideas in a new language was an enriching experience.

D also appreciated that, leveraging Adriana's background in media studies and her current education in social work, she not only helped him grasp the Estonian language but also supported him in expressing his creative ideas. Some aspects of the language were more demanding, but Adriana's guidance made the learning process smoother. Overall, this journey has not only enhanced his language skills but has also opened up new avenues for artistic expression.

3.4.4 Photos from the meeting with Ukrainian D:



3.5 Ukrainian E



Ukrainian E - E and her mother moved to Estonia from Ukraine in March 2022 - almost immediately after the start of the war. It turned out that E's grandfather had distant relatives in Estonia, so they fled from Chernihiv to Narva, where they were helped with housing and everything necessary. E is a 22- year-old female, so in the spring of 2022, she was finishing university, but had to do it online, being 1500 km away from her hometown. E understands that she needs to find a job in Estonia and plans to work in the IT field, so it will be useful for her to study the topic of jobs in Estonian to navigate more easily, for example, in job advertisements. Also, E was actively involved in tennis, so she likes to discuss the sports topic.

3.5.1 Study plan for Ukrainian E:

1. Attend a sports event - expand vocabulary in the field of sports.
2. Listen to Estonian speech (which is not often heard in Narva) - gain a deeper understanding of the Estonian language and its peculiarities.
3. Discuss the most common mistakes made by people for whom Estonian is not a native language - receive useful tips and advice for language learning.
4. While walking around the city - enrich vocabulary on various professions and topics related to job searching in general.

3.5.2 Description of meetings with Ukrainian E:

Date	Place of meeting	Description
09/12/23	Narva Jäähall	Ukrainian E and Kristina attended a hockey match in the city of Narva. The teams playing were Narva PSK and Tallinn HC Panter. The match was intense, and during breaks, Kristina shared information about the names of sports in Estonian. They deliberately sat in the stands

		<p>designated for fans of the capital team, hoping to hear Estonian speech, as it is not commonly heard in Narva. Ukrainian E noticed that the Estonian language is very beautiful and melodic. She immediately asked Kristina to send her a list of songs in Estonian. However, they were able to listen to them soon after the match, while driving to the Town Hall Square. Ukrainian E listened to several songs by Ivo Linna, Anne Veski, Alike Milova, Nublu, the duet of Elina Born and Stig Råsta, Liis Lemsalu, and others. She even added a couple of songs to her playlist.</p>
09/12/23	Narva Town Hall Square (Narva Raekoja plats)	<p>While strolling through Narva's Town Hall Square, in addition to various conversations on different topics, E learned more about professions and their Estonian names. She also received information about platforms where she could look for work and what skills and characteristics are worth mentioning in her CV.</p> <p>In addition to that, E discovered several interesting facts about Estonia and the Estonian language, including its nuances. She became highly intrigued by a game involving interesting and unusual Estonian words, where Kristina would say a word in Estonian, and E would try to guess its meaning. The game turned out to be very entertaining for both, starting with simple words like "snow" and "hat," and progressing to more complex ones such as "Jõululaululaulja" (a singer of Christmas songs).</p>

3.5.3 Feedback from Ukrainian E:

After the meeting, E expressed gratitude to this project for the opportunity to integrate into Estonian culture and language. The hockey match left a strong impression on E; she was surprised to learn that people eagerly anticipate this day to support local athletes with their families. There, she experienced a sense of unity that was very important and valuable to her. E noted that she learned a lot of useful information that she could not have easily found on the

Internet or would not have thought to look for, but learning it was not in vain. She added several Estonian songs to her playlist and continues to explore new ones.

3.5.4 Photos from the meeting with Ukrainian E:



3.6 Ukrainians F and G



Ukrainians F and G - F and G are familiar with each other, so they wanted to have a meeting together. They both know A1 level Estonian and are interested in the topic of Christmas. They expressed interest in the history of the Old Town

Ukrainian F moved to Estonia a little over a year ago. He works in the field of public utilities, but in his social circle almost no Estonian is spoken. He would like to learn more about Estonian culture and practice basic phrases.

Ukrainian G moved to Estonia earlier than her friend. She is studying at university and has had a course in basic Estonian. However, she is also in a situation with no active speaking practice. She feels that exposure to Estonian culture can improve her motivation to learn the language and wants to practice basic communicative situations such as ordering in a café.

3.6.1 Study plan for Ukrainians F and G:

1. Meet at Freedom Square - Conduct a short guided tour, paying special attention to original names and inscriptions in Estonian. Give the tour participants an understanding of the Old Town's layout.
2. Visit a cafe - Practice ordering in Estonian language. Learn and write Christmas wishes in Estonian and Ukrainian on a prepared piece of paper.
3. Go to the Christmas Fair - Play an educational game to learn some new Christmas-themed vocabulary. Hang wishes on the Christmas tree together.
4. Go to a bookstore - Find books that can help with A2 level language learning, practice reading.

3.6.2 Description of meetings with Ukrainians F and G:

Date	Place of meeting	Description
22/12/23	Tallinn Old Town	<p>Elizaveta, F and G met at Liberty Square and walked to the Old Town. There were several stops in front of the sights, where Ukrainians learned about the history of the buildings and interesting facts about them. The route with explanations helped them to better navigate in the Old Town, they had new associations with certain places, for example, that St. Olaf's Church was one of the tallest buildings in the world and was often struck by lightning. They also visited Raeapteek, where the Ukrainians read some of the information about the Museum in Estonian. Elizaveta translated the titles of the items they found interesting.</p> <p>After that they went to a café where G had a short conversation with the waiter in Estonian. Elizaveta, F and G wrote Christmas wishes in both Estonian and Ukrainian on pieces of paper.</p> <p>At the Christmas market they learned the words "Jõuluvana, jõulupuu, jõulutuled, küünal, ingel, kingitus, piparkook, verivorst, hapukapsas, ahjukartul" while playing.</p> <p>After the game they went to a bookstore and found a section of literature for Ukrainians. Several books suited their level and they read fragments from these books. Having a large amount of literature specifically aimed at supporting adaptation helped to create motivation for further learning Estonian.</p>

3.6.3 Feedback from Ukrainians F and G:

After the meeting, Ukrainians F and G thanked Elizaveta and gave her feedback. They said that they liked everything and had a good time. They especially remembered the part with the Christmas tree, as it helped them to have a festive mood and feel better about using Estonian in everyday situations. They also enjoyed the walk around the Old Town, as they had never been on a tour there before and did not really know much about the history. F expressed a suggestion for Instagram posts to cover the topic of holidays, G said that she lacks vocabulary and would like more posts with beginner level words.

3.6.4 Photos from the meeting with Ukrainians F and G:

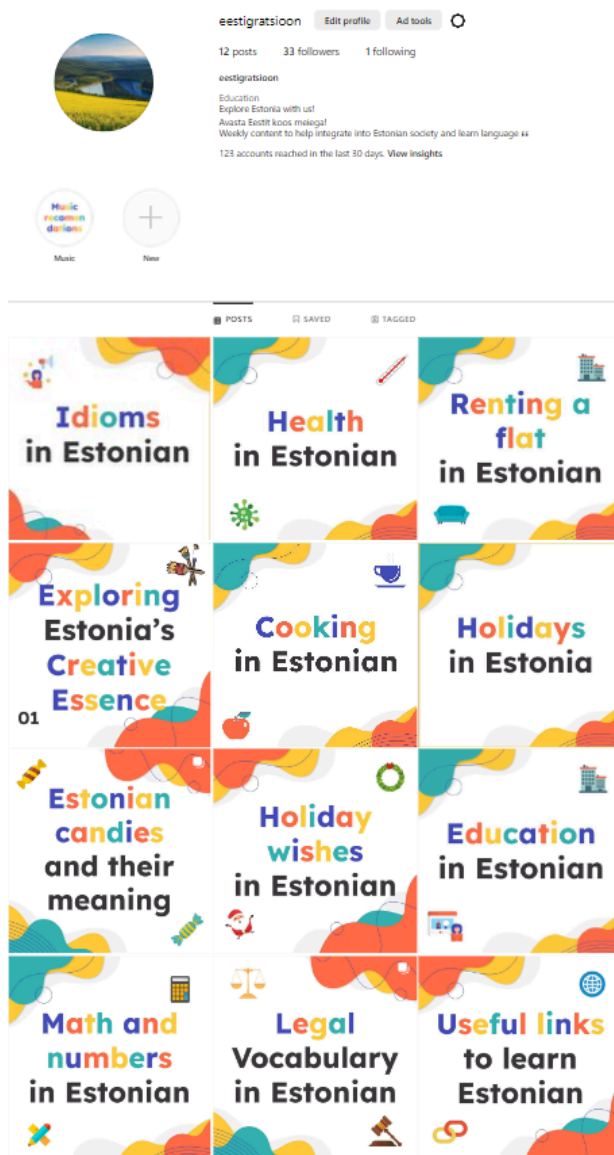


4. Instagram page @eestigratsioon

In addition to the face-to-face language studying, our group has created an Instagram page (*@eestigratsioon*), which is dedicated to learning Estonian and documenting our project and we hope it will help with learning Estonian during and after this project. We also considered the creation of the page vital since we realized we could not meet vis-à-vis with a big amount of people, but we truly wanted to help as many people as possible who are learning Estonian as well as the ones that are not Ukrainians since it would be a common good for all learners. The page was managed by Eliisa and the first posts were created solely by her, but later everyone created content for it. The page can be found by the link: https://www.instagram.com/eestigratsioon?utm_source=ig_web_button_share_sheet&igsh=OGQ5ZDc2ODk2ZA==.

It was decided to make posts that would reflect more common topics related to learning Estonian, but in a creative way. Nonetheless, we have some posts related to our study fields in case someone would be interested in learning that vocabulary. Moreover, some posts focus on the topics that were discussed during the personal meetings with Ukrainians and seemed to be the most interesting.

So far the account looks the following way:



4.1 Materials created for Ukrainians and other learners

All posts created by the group during the LIFE project can be found on Instagram page ([@eestigratsioon](https://www.instagram.com/eestigratsioon)). Below is a brief description of each post:

Useful links to learn Estonian post recommends websites that may be useful for learning Estonian language not only for beginners but also more advanced learners.

Legal Vocabulary in Estonian post suggests some vocabulary related to law as well as some useful links in case a person decides to read a specific Act of Estonia both in Estonian or English.

Exploring Estonia's Creative Essence post delves into the vibrant artistic landscape of Estonia, offering a glimpse into the country's rich cultural tapestry. This post could cover visits

to art exhibitions, introductions to renowned Estonian artists, and insights into the influence of art on Estonian culture. Additionally, it may provide relevant vocabulary and phrases to enhance the understanding of artistic expressions in the Estonian language.

Math and numbers in Estonian post introduces learners to the vocabulary related to Maths, numbers as well as different shapes in Estonian.

Education in Estonian post gives an overall idea of what types of schools exist in Estonia, vocabulary of subjects, grading and some general vocabulary. The inspiration for this post was Ukrainian A, who did not know a lot about Estonian education system and needed to know more as he is planning on applying to schools in Estonia.

Holiday wishes in Estonian post gives learners ideas on how to make Christmas and New Year's wishes to someone. Most of the ideas were taken from the post cards found at the bookstore during the meeting with Ukrainian B.

Estonian candies and their meaning post describes what some Kalev candies' names mean as well as talks about diminutives in Estonian and how to use them. The inspiration for this post was Ukrainian C who was surprised to get to know the actual meaning of the names of the candies.

Holidays in Estonia post gives an idea of when and what holidays are celebrated in Estonia. It is intended to familiarize people with the culture of the country and expand their vocabulary. The post is inspired by a request from Ukrainian F.

Cooking in Estonian post gives an overview of basic vocabulary used in the kitchen (verbs for cooking food, utensils and appliances found in the kitchen). The inspiration for this post was Ukrainian A, who is interested in cooking and who learned similar words while making gingerbreads.

Exploring Estonia's Creative Essence post introduces readers to basic vocabulary related to art. It was created after an inspiring meeting with Ukrainian D.

Renting a flat in Estonian post talks about useful links and vocabulary related to finding and renting living space in Estonian. The concept was invented during a meeting with Ukrainian E.

Health in Estonian post provides some basic vocabulary and phrases about health. The post is inspired by a request from Ukrainian G.

Idioms in Estonian post talks about different popular expressions that Estonians may use in everyday speech.

In addition to the posts, from time to time our team would create stories with less serious, but also educational content. For instance, we have a highlight “music recommendations” where we share some Estonian songs starting from songs by Anne Veski and finishing with Villemdrillem. It is scientifically proven that exposure to a language's rhythm leaves a lasting impact on a person's ability to segment speech patterns (Patel, A. D., 2010). Listening to foreign language songs can help learners memorize new words, patterns and phrases more easily.

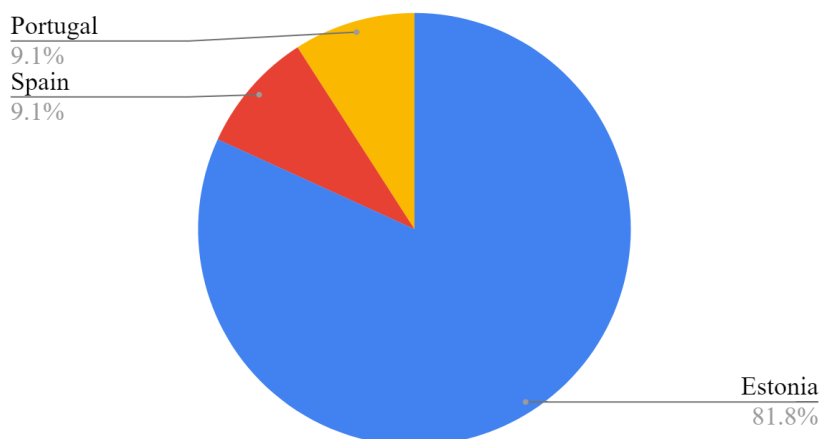
5. Analysis of a survey about the work of an Instagram account @eestigratsioon

At the end of the work, the team created a questionnaire that could be answered by not only the Ukrainians taking part in the project but also everyone who viewed the account. We had guessed before that most of the audience were our acquaintances, but we still wanted to understand how they assessed our work. Therefore, the Google form was compiled (watch attachment 1).

The questionnaire was sent to Ukrainians participating in the project, posted on the Instagram page, and also sent to friends of team members. In fact, more people received the form, but only 11 volunteers responded, more than half of whom were of Ukrainian origin. Besides this, there were also 3 Estonians, 1 Polish and 1 Russian person.

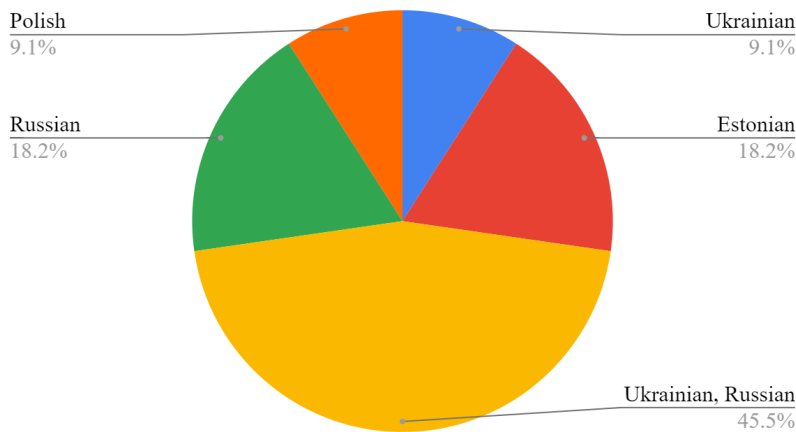
At the moment, the majority of respondents live in Estonia, so it can be assumed that many have to deal with the Estonian language on a daily basis.

Your country of residence (at the moment) (11 answers)



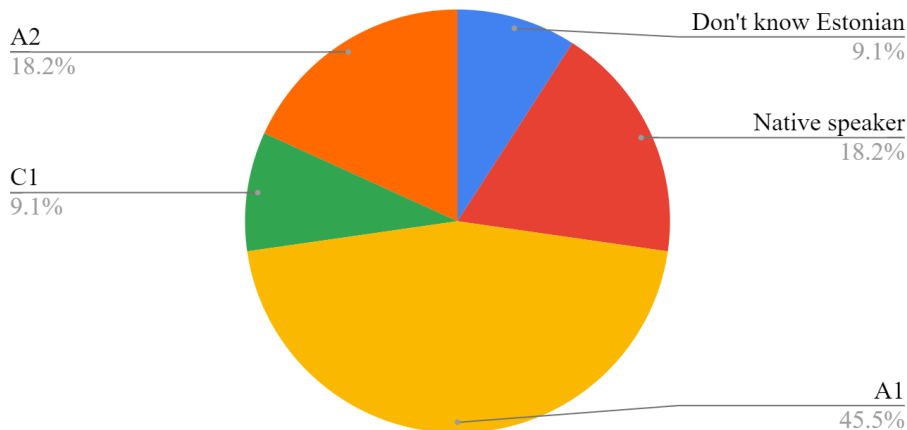
As it can be seen from the graph, the majority of respondents have 2 native languages - Ukrainian and Russian. There are also people whose native language is only Ukrainian and only Russian, and people whose native language is Estonian and Polish. From this it can be concluded that the majority of respondents hypothetically should have a need to learn Estonian in order to make their living in Estonia more comfortable.

Your native language (11 answers)



Many respondents have different levels of knowledge of Estonian language. Some do not know it at all, most have a beginner level, and there are also people who are fluent in the language. This is useful to know, because everyone can evaluate the performance of the Instagram page by comparing it with their own experience of learning the language or identifying special points that are visible only to advanced Estonian language users.

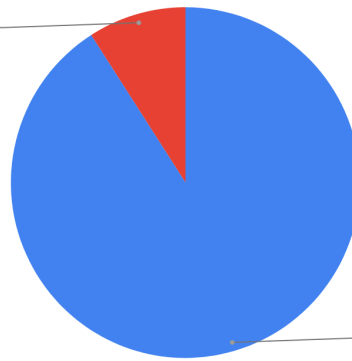
Your level of Estonian (11 answers)



Our team also wanted to know how respondents found out about our page. It was concluded that the majority were people to whom we had personally told about our work. Perhaps we still need to think about how to attract more unknown users who would be interested in the language topic.

How did you find out about our Instagram account? (11 answers)

It was suggested on Instagram.
9.1%

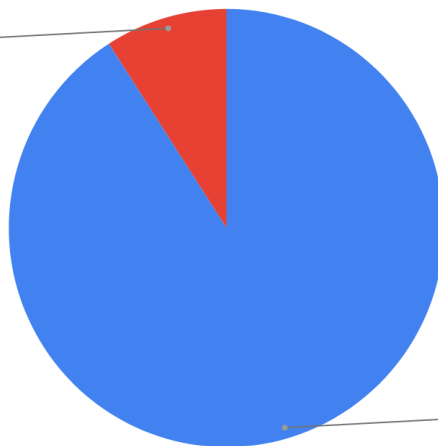


Team member of this project recommended it to me.
90.9%

Almost all respondents found the account useful and would recommend it to their friends or colleagues. Perhaps the person who was unsure thinks that we could change something in our account to make it more effective.

Do you find the topics discussed in this account useful? (11 answers)

I'm not sure
9.1%



Yes
90.9%

When asked what respondents like the most about our account, people wrote about the very idea of language lessons in this format, its convenience, structure, simplicity and visualization. Many also responded that they liked the design and found the themes interesting.

About what respondents would change in our account, they answered that they would like to learn more about our team and so that more content would be published more often. Several people advised us to switch to YouTube or TikTok, because nowadays “the attention span of many users is about 15 seconds” and that way we could attract more viewers. There was also an advice to create a “word of the day” rubric and interactives in form of short tests in Stories.

Some would like to learn about Estonian slang and memes, while another respondent would like to see more serious topics like what was done with Legal Vocabulary in Estonian. They would also like to see content about “where to search for a job / a place to rent etc.”, but it is not really related to language topics. Nonetheless, our team will consider all suggestions and will come up with new ideas to satisfy as many viewers as possible.

6. Reflections From Group Members

Katre Sofia Palm - I chose this project because I felt I wanted to help those Ukrainians who are already here in Estonia. I feel like we as a group achieved this goal by spending time with them and teaching them Estonian, which helps them to integrate into Estonian society. In addition to this, we as a group definitely learned about how to work together, after some trouble in the beginning we seemed to get the hang of this better and were able to complete the project. I feel confident that our group managed to fulfill the expectations of the course and personally I feel proud of what we accomplished.

Eliisa Vihljajeva - In the beginning of the project, I made a questionnaire for my Ukrainian friends in Estonia to understand what help they needed and language learning and integration emerged as key concerns.

I was for common learning events, but the benefits would only be for the duration of the project, so I prioritized long-term support by establishing an Instagram page. For this reason, I took over the management of the Instagram page and created a lot of posts.

To be perfectly honest, at some stages of our work, it was difficult for me to work because not everyone was showing enough effort and I felt like I was talking to the brick wall, but in the end we were able to cooperate.

A new role of a language teacher during meetings with Ukrainians brought me joy, and overall, I feel accomplished in this project.

Adriana Semjonova - Participating in this project has been a fulfilling experience. I'm pleased to contribute to helping others and proud of overcoming initial challenges with the group. Recruiting participants, organizing engaging activities, and establishing connections were significant efforts. While maintaining an Instagram presence became a collaborative effort, sustaining a unified vision poses challenges. Nevertheless, I am optimistic about achieving cohesion post-project. Overall, this initiative taught me the importance of persistence and adaptability. I look forward to the continued success of our project and its positive impact on the community.

Kristina Rabtsevič - The goal of this project resonated with me as soon as I saw its name. For me, as a person whose mother comes from western Ukraine, it was important to make my own contribution, perhaps not significant compared to large volunteer organizations, but still a

contribution to supporting refugees. The most difficult thing was to clearly understand what exactly we would do, since you always want to help in any way you can, but here it was necessary to clearly understand what format we would promote. So we realized that a personal informal meeting for language learning is the best solution for effectively assimilation of the information that we want to provide to those who need it. Indeed, during precisely such meetings, each of us understood what exactly interests Ukrainians, which is why it was impossible to fully plan the meeting; new topics, new questions always aroused - and that was wonderful. I was lucky with the team and I thank them for the work we have done.

Elizaveta Andropova - I joined the project to help Ukrainian refugees in Estonia, because of my family's experience as refugees in Moldova. Initially I hoped to share my insights on adapting to Estonia with people who could find it helpful. In our team, we had some communication issues, but we overcame them with clear rules and, as a result, everyone has made sufficient input. Despite some hesitations, I contributed to organizing an event and managing Instagram posts. Finding people for the event was the biggest challenge for me, but also a part from which I have learned the most. Next time I will evaluate my strengths better and take more initiative. The project was a valuable experience, teaching me to address communication issues, so now I am eager to continue helping the people I met.

Attachments

Attachment 1

Google Form “@eestigratsioon performance assessment”:

Your nationality

- Ukrainian
- Estonian
- Russian
- Finnish
- Other:

Your country of residence (at the moment)

- Estonia
- Ukraine
- Other:

Your native language

- Ukrainian
- Estonian
- Russian
- Other:

Your level of Estonian

- A1
- A2
- B1
- B2
- C1
- C2
- Native speaker
- I don't know Estonian at all

How did you find out about our Instagram account?

- One of the team members of this project recommended it to me.
- Someone else recommended it to me.
- I came across this account as it was suggested on Instagram.
- Other:

Do you find the topics discussed in this account useful?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

Would you recommend this account to a friend or colleague?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

What do you like the most about this account?

Short answer

What would you change in this account?

Short answer

GROUP 3: CULTURE

Folk Dance Workshop

Participants: Darja Jefimova, Miriam Linda Cecilia Kalenius-Turu, Nataliia Koval, Eliise Niitay, Andra Pahkma

1. Project Report

1.1. Description of the terms of reference and goals of the project

Our project operates within the framework of a larger Baltic initiative called Baltics4UA, which is co-funded by Erasmus+. The overarching goal of Baltics4UA is to enhance the social responsibility of universities in the Baltic States by fostering civic engagement to address the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine within the Baltic States (Baltics4UA, 2023).

The focus of our project is on meeting the needs for effective integration of young Ukrainian refugees in Estonia and developing strategies to respond to humanitarian crises, particularly the lack of academic research on the integration of young Ukrainian refugees in the region.

1.1.1. Project focus and objectives

Our team's objective is to establish meaningful social bonds by using shared interests in national culture. Specifically, our approach is based on coordinating events centred on activities for Estonian and Ukrainian children's folk dance groups. Through this shared interest, we aim to empower both Ukrainian and Estonian children, nurturing a sense of cultural pride and promoting an open attitude towards diversity.

To realize our objectives, we decided to prototype, test, and implement a folk dance workshop tailored for Estonian and Ukrainian children aged 9-14. The event occurred at Tallinn Mustamäe Gymnasium on December 4, 2023. The objective was not only to empower the participating children but also to contribute to the exchange of culture between Estonia and Ukraine. The event was designed to encourage traditional art and folk dances as a means of enriching cultural experiences and strengthening ties.

Folk dance refers to traditional dances that have originated and evolved within a specific cultural or ethnic community. These dances are often passed down from generation to generation and are deeply rooted in the customs, history, and social traditions of a particular group of people. Folk dances are characterized by their connection to the cultural heritage of a community, reflecting the values, rituals, and celebrations unique to that culture (Folk Dance, n.d.).

Folk dance workshop is a structured and interactive learning session that focuses on teaching participants traditional folk dances. Led by experienced instructors or dance experts, these workshops involve step-by-step guidance on various folk dance forms. Participants have the opportunity to interact, collaborate, and form connections with others.

1.1.2. Project implementation

The event involved the Estonian folk dance group "Leigarid" and the Ukrainian song and dance group "Volya." The folk dance workshop took place at Tallinn Mustamäe Gymnasium, located at Keskuse 18 (Tallinn), on December 4, 2023.

1.1.3. Stakeholders

The primary focus of the project was on young Ukrainian war refugees (aged 11-14) in Estonia and Estonian residents (aged 9-11). The project extended its impact to the families of the participants, influencing the family members of the young refugees. Key collaborators included folk dance groups and their teachers, who were actively involved in planning and executing the program.

1.1.4. Sustainability

The folk dance workshop was created while keeping in mind the possibility of occurring periodically, fostering an ongoing cultural exchange between Estonia and Ukraine. This approach sought to encourage traditional art and folk dances as vehicles for enriching cultural experiences and strengthening ties.

The success of the initiative was measured through feedback gathered via questionnaires, team self-reflection, and comprehensive reporting on the outcomes of the folk dance workshop.

1.1.5. How the society benefits from our project

Firstly, the project facilitates cultural exchange between Estonian and Ukrainian children, fostering a deeper understanding of each other's traditions, values, and ways of life. This cultural enrichment contributes significantly to creating a more diverse and inclusive society.

Secondly, by organizing folk dance workshops that bring together Estonian and Ukrainian children, the project actively encourages the formation of social connections and friendships. Through the shared activities and relationships cultivated during these workshops, refugees discover a supportive environment that enhances their sense of connection and value.

Thirdly, the project addresses a critical gap in academic research on the integration of Ukrainian refugees in the Baltics. By offering open-access materials to society, the initiative provides valuable insights that can guide future policies and practices related to refugee integration.

In summary, the project's impact extends beyond the immediate participants, positively influencing societal dynamics. Firstly, it promotes cultural awareness and understanding. Secondly, it strengthens social bonds and connections. Thirdly, it contributes to education and research, ultimately fostering integration and enhancing the overall well-being of both Estonian and Ukrainian communities.

1.1.6. Division of roles within the team

Our group members, with diverse backgrounds in sociology, communication management, psychology, well-being, and health behaviour, successfully organized and managed the folk dance workshop project.

Darja was responsible for communication and agreements with all dance ensembles, with direct and indirect stakeholders and overseeing organizational aspects regarding dance workshop. She took on the additional responsibility of organizing the Ukrainian dance group performance for EdTech Hack 2023 (application, rehearsal and performance itself) and all team members provided support and assistance.

Eliise played a crucial role in tracking deadlines, managing mandatory documents, combining our teams portfolio parts together, formulating the results, communicating with the supervisor and other project groups on behalf of our team and also assisting everyone. She was one of the presenters for our mid-term evaluation.

Miriam focused on preparing the research-based approach and theoretical framework for integrating refugee children, and she also was responsible for the presentation of our work during the mid-term evaluation and final presentation day.

Andra took charge of creating mid-term report slides and developing marketing content for the participating children and their families, she also documented the activities performed in writing.

Nataliia led the final communication with event participants, including children, parents, and teachers in Ukrainian, and was responsible for inviting people while disseminating relevant information. She also wrote the article to raise awareness of our project results.

Each team member played a vital role, ensuring the success of the project and actively contributed to filling out necessary documentation and every team member contributed to the contents of this portfolio.

1.2. The importance of the problem, its description and choice of methods

Citizen engagement actions to provide humanitarian aid or educational support to Ukrainians in Estonia are important for several reasons.

Firstly, offering assistance to Ukrainians in need reflects a sense of humanitarian solidarity and empathy. It shows that citizens in Estonia care about the well-being of their fellow human beings and are willing to help those facing difficult circumstances. Secondary, humanitarian aid and educational support maintain the principles of human rights and dignity. Every individual, regardless of nationality or background, deserves to be treated with respect and have access to basic necessities, including education. Thirdly, educational support is a powerful tool for empowerment and rebuilding communities. By providing educational opportunities to Ukrainians in Estonia, citizens contribute to the long-term development and resilience of the affected population. Lastly, engaging in humanitarian actions also facilitates cultural exchange and understanding. It creates opportunities for people from different backgrounds to interact, share experiences, and build bridges of understanding. Citizen engagement sets an example for others, including future generations. It teaches the importance

of compassion, generosity, and global responsibility, encouraging a culture of active citizenship.

Cultural integration projects for Ukrainians in Estonia are vital for building an inclusive, diverse, and socially cohesive society. By recognizing the benefits of cultural diversity and implementing initiatives that support integration, Estonia can create a more welcoming environment for all its residents, fostering a sense of unity and shared identity. Our folk dance workshop encouraged Ukrainian children's language learning as proficiency in the local language is essential for effective communication and integration. It was a setting, where Ukrainians had a chance to practice Estonian with native speakers, fostering linguistic and cultural understanding.

The folk dance workshop was organized by both the Ukrainian and Estonian communities to foster social integration and connections. It introduced Ukrainians to Estonian culture, customs, traditions, and social norms and it was a possibility to meet and connect with Estonians who share similar folk dance interests. Our workshop acknowledged that a multicultural society is richer and more vibrant and Ukrainians bring unique cultural perspectives, traditions, and experiences that can enhance Estonia's cultural landscape. Cultural understanding reduces the likelihood of social isolation, discrimination, and misunderstanding. These kinds of integration projects help newcomers feel a sense of belonging in their new country (Copelj et al., 2017). Feeling accepted and valued contributes to a positive sense of identity and connectedness to the community.

Cultural integration is a diverse process that involves mutual adaptation and understanding between the host culture and the individual seeking integration (Scardigno, 2019). It's important to recognize that cultural integration is a two-way process, involving efforts from both the host society and the individual seeking integration. Cultural integration projects facilitate better communication and understanding between different cultural groups.

1.2.1. Basis of research, the importance of the problem and its description

Ukrainian crisis is the largest civil protection operation to date in EU (Europa.eu, 2023; Ociepa-Kicińska & Gorzałczyńska-Koczkodaj, 2022) and it is a worldwide concern to provide care and support to refugee children and their families. According to Pritchard et al. (2019)

there is only some research concerning young refugee children and more studies must be conducted to receive more information.

The most positive integration process is societal and psychological, and it means a situation where refugees develop relationships with the new society while maintaining their own culture (Phillimore, 2011). Using a cultural lens while delivering care is justified to be vital to improve the behavioural health outcomes of refugees.

According to the literature review conducted, we felt that it was important to conduct our cultural-related project in a way where Ukrainians can create relationships with the new society while still maintaining their own culture. Meeting new people and exploring a new culture through a mutual tradition and hobby - folk dancing can be an interesting and fun way to learn Estonian culture as well as language. The research we found maintained, that to understand the integration and settlement experiences of young refugee children, requires that the impacts of three key domains (language and learning, social integration, and wellbeing) that affect the integration process must be considered, and that is why we wanted to integrate language and learning, social integration, and wellbeing into our folk dance workshop.

1.2.2. Theoretical framework and best practices

While planning our project it was important to rely on relevant theoretical constructs to guide the design, implementation, and evaluation of the initiative. We knew that integrating theoretical constructs from the beginning into the project planning process can enhance the effectiveness, sustainability, and cultural relevance of the cultural integration provided to young Ukrainian folk dancers in Estonia. It was important to tailor the approach to the specific needs and context while fostering collaboration and empowerment.

The main theories applied in our project were Cultural Competence Theory and Social Integration Theory. Cultural competence theory emphasizes the importance of understanding, respecting, and responding effectively to the cultural needs of individuals or groups (Purnell, 2002). We incorporated cultural competence principles into project planning to ensure that the educational support is culturally sensitive and relevant to the needs of Ukrainians in Estonia. Social integration theory examines the processes through which individuals become part of social networks, institutions, and communities (Ware et al., 2018). As a result, we designed an

intervention that was supposed to ease the social integration of Ukrainians into Estonian society by promoting positive interactions and building social connections.

Applying both Cultural Competence Theory and Social Integration Theory to the project aimed at providing both educational support to Ukrainians in Estonia, and to creating a comprehensive framework that addresses the cultural aspects and social dynamics involved in the integration process. This integrated approach aimed to create a project that is not only culturally competent but also promotes meaningful social connections, collaboration, and a sense of belonging for Ukrainians in Estonia.

Studying best practices related to the project provided valuable insights and guidance. The key best practices we applied are language support and training, mentorship and peer support, cultural exchange, and awareness. Our workshop provided language support in Ukrainian and Estonian languages to facilitate effective communication and integration. The purpose of establishing peer support initiatives was to help Ukrainian folk dancers navigate the cultural, educational, and social aspects of the Estonian community. Cultural exchange fosters positive interactions, breaks down stereotypes, and builds bridges between communities. Studying and adopting these best practices contributed to the success and sustainability of our project focused on providing cultural integration to young Ukrainian folk dancers in Estonia. It was essential to tailor these practices to the specific context and needs of the target group while remaining adaptable to evolving circumstances.

1.3. Description of activities and reaching the stakeholders

Two important events were arranged under the initiative "Citizen engagement actions to provide humanitarian aid or educational support to Ukrainians in Estonia and Ukraine" in order to teach folk dancing to children from Estonia and Ukraine and foster cultural exchange.

1.3.1. First Event - EdTech Hack at Tallinn University (12th of November)

Ukrainian children showed off their skills by doing a folk dance performance at Tallinn University's EdTech Hack. An exciting and upbeat atmosphere filled the entire auditorium as the eagerly awaited audience responded with cheers and claps. In addition to giving the

EdTech Hack an unforgettable touch, this exchange of cultural expressions encouraged a sense of gratitude and solidarity among the many participants, resulting in an environment that was both genuinely inclusive and enjoyable.

1.3.2. Second Event - Folk Dance Workshop at Tallinna Mustamäe Gümnaasium (4th of December)

The second event took place at Tallinna Mustamäe Gümnaasium, where Estonian and Ukrainian children actively engaged in practising each other's folk dances. The folk dance workshop facilitated the exchange of dance routines, techniques, and cultural experiences, fostering friendships between students from Estonia and Ukraine. Additionally, the event had the overarching goal of preserving national identity for both groups simultaneously. By organising this workshop, the project sought to promote the integration of Ukrainian children into Estonian educational institution and society.

15 Estonian and 17 Ukrainian children took part in the folk dance event. The cultural exchange also had an indirect impact on parents and family members of the participating children. Furthermore, the project indirectly influenced broader local communities in Estonia and Ukraine by enhancing awareness and understanding of each other's cultures. The individuals who were responsible for instructing and guiding the children in folk dance activities significantly contributed to the educational aspect of the project. Additionally, the educational support component of the project indirectly impacted the institutions where the participating children studied.

The project targeted children of specific age groups, fostering cultural exchange and education tailored to their developmental needs.

1.4. Sustainability of the project

A key component of the sustainability plan is thorough communication with local stakeholders. This calls for constant communication with educational institutions and local authorities. We, the organizers, and the children all have an interest in the project's longevity. Hope for many more events is fostered when all parties agree to keep planning gatherings where kids can practise folk dance together. Our effort will be sustained and successful thanks

to this cooperative commitment, which also leaves a lasting impression on the community and offers continuous chances for cultural interaction and exchange.

1.5. Summary of the results

In summary we managed to successfully fulfill our main goal which was to foster cultural exchange between Estonians and Ukrainian refugees by organizing the workshop event based on the children's mutual interest in folk dancing. The folk dance workshop gained positive feedback from all the participants with interest for participating in similar activities in the future. We have managed to provide informational materials for future researchers and policymakers for generating possible ways of integrating Ukrainian refugees in the Baltic states and we have shown the willingness of Estonians and Ukrainians to work together for the benefit of a more diverse and integrated society.

2. Action plan

Tasks	Deadline	Student(s) responsible
Establishing communication channel for team	05.10	Darja
Communicate with ukrainian folk dance group Ukraina Noorsoo Liit Eestis, Ukrainian song and dance group "Volya"	09.10	Darja
Define project tasks in action plan	12.10	Eliise
Search online for ukrainian children groups who would be interested in folk dancing	12.10	Nataliia
Communicate with estonian folk dance groups Folk Dance Group "Soveldaja" Folk Dance Group "Sõprus" Folk Dance Group "Viisuveeretajad" Folk Dance Group "Leigarid"	13.10	Darja
Science part. Preparing the research based approach and theoretical framework for the Cultural Project regarding Integrating Refugee Children.	17.10	Miriam
Search for info about folk dancing groups in Ukrainian social media groups	19.10	Nataliia
Compile all the group members' work into the mid-term report as a cohesive text	21.10	Eliise
Create mid-term report slides	24.10	Andra
Communicate with folk dance group teachers to agree on event activities	27.10	Darja
Organize ukrainian dance group performance in TLU for EdTech Hack 2023	09.11	Darja
Create event agenda for the dance performance at EdTech Hack (according to Erasmus+ template requirements)	09.11	Andra
Communicate with TLU EdTech Hack 2023 organisers for hosting the ukrainian children	09.11	Darja
Create notification content for all the children and their families taking part in the event (e-mails)	30.11	Andra
Translate informational materials into ukrainian	30.11	Nataliia

Final communication with event participants (children, parents and teachers)	30.11	Darja
Modify Erasmus+ post-event survey questionnaire to suit our specific event and participants	02.12	Eliise
Create event day plan with dance teachers	03.12	Darja
Translate Erasmus+ post-event survey questionnaire into estonian	03.12	Andra
Translate Erasmus+ post-event survey questionnaire into ukrainian	03.12	Nataliia
Print out Erasmus+ post-event questionnaire in both languages	04.12	Darja+Eliise
Create event agenda for the folk dance event (according to Erasmus+ template requirements)	04.12	Darja
Participate in event 04.12	04.12	Everybody
Take photos and videos during event for marketing purposes	04.12	Nataliia
Post-action survey for all the children and teachers participating (according to B4UA requirements)	04.12	Everybody
Erasmus+ Participant list (list of participants with their names and signatures on day of event)	05.12	Darja
Insert estonian post-action survey results manually to Google Forms survey	15.12	Andra
Insert ukrainian post-action survey results manually to Google Forms survey	15.12	Nataliia
Have meeting about dividing portfolio sections	18.12	Everybody
Create marketing material for news outlets (after event)	24.12	Nataliia
Post short article of event for B4UA website	31.12	Eliise
Create project portfolio content	31.12	Everybody
Compile the groups portfolio work into one unified document	05.01	Eliise
Create project portfolio slides	06.01	Everybody
Submit project portfolio on 07.01	07.01	Eliise
Present our groups project outcomes at LIFE presentation day	11.01	Miriam, Nataliia + others

3. Communication to stakeholders

Our team completed work on a project for the cultural integration of Ukrainian and Estonian children into each other's cultures, so that both cultures worked together and mixed with each other, sharing experiences. Among the number of tasks that we have successfully completed:

1. Organization and Planning of the Workshop Event:

- Development of the concept of a folk dance workshop, taking into account the goals of integration and cultural exchange.
- Planning a timeline of events, including dance performances.
- Coordinate with students, teachers and parents to ensure participation and support.

2. Cultural Exchange and Integration:

- Organizing a folk dance workshop with professional instructors.
- Conducting meetings and exchanges between Ukrainian and Estonian children to strengthen mutual understanding and friendship.

3. Dance Performances:

- Supporting Estonian and Ukrainian children in creating and rehearsing their own dance performance.
- Providing sound equipment for successful performances.

4. Promotion and Communications:

- Development of information materials and communication with stakeholders to attract attention to the event and interest in participating in it.
- Interaction to disseminate information. <https://baltics4ua.eu/15c42-web-agency-gb-news/>
- We also published an article about the workshop event on Baltics4UA webpage <https://baltics4ua.eu/uncategorized/tallinn-university-students-hosted-a-folk-dance-workshop-that-united-estonian-and-ukrainian-children/>
- The dance groups posted themselves on Facebook. Below are photos of these posts

5. Rating and Feedback:

- Conducting surveys and collecting feedback from participants.
- Analysis of results and preparation of a report on the event.

These works collectively contributed to the success of the folk dance event, creating a positive experience for participants and promoting the message of cultural diversity and understanding.



Rahvakunstiselts Leigarid · Jälgi


5. Detsember kell 16:12 · 🌐




Keskmisel koolirühmal käis külas ukraina laste tantsurühm [Ukrainian song and dance group "Volya"](#) - koos tehti trenni ja õpiti üksteise tantsu, oli põnev ja lõbus!



Picture 1. Screenshot of Rahvakunstiselts Leigarid post on Facebook

 **Ukrainian song and dance group "Volya"** 😊 tunneb end suurepäraselt kohas nimega **Mustamäe**.
6. detsember kell 14:13 · 🌐

Український ансамбль пісні і танцю "Воля" разом із [Rahvakunstiselts Leigarid](#) провели спільну репетицію з українського та естонського народних танців. Це стало цікавим досвідом та мотивацією на майбутнє 😊

Ukraina laulu- ja tantsuansambel "Volya" koos rahvatantsu ansambliga "Leigarid" tegid ühise eelproovi ukraina ja eesti rahvatantsudest. Sellest sai huvitav kogemus ja motivatsioon edaspidiseks.

Üritus toimus [Baltics4UA](#) projekti toel, ja me täname Andra Pahkma Darja Jefimova Eliise Niitav Miriam Kalenius Natalia Koval abi eest kohtumise korraldamisel ja läbiviimisel 🙏

Vaata tõlget



Picture 2. Screenshot of Ukrainian song and dance group Volya post on Facebook

Materials from the event:



Picture 3. Ukrainian group dancing folk dance (own photo)



Picture 4. Estonian group watching the performance (own photo)



Picture 5. A dance teacher from Ukraine and a girl from a Ukrainian dance group tell Estonian children about their dance. The girl translated from Ukrainian into Estonian and vice versa. She was the connection for everyone (own photo)



Picture 6. Dancers waiting for instructions from teachers (own photo)



Picture 7. Estonian and Ukrainian dancers practising Ukrainian folk dance (own photo)



Picture 8. Folk dance workshop where Estonian and Ukrainian children had the opportunity to unite in a common group (own photo)

The children's response to the folk dance workshop event was inspiring and positive, highlighting the importance of cultural exchange and understanding. Their feedback highlighted the following positive aspects:

1. The Joy of Sharing Culture:

- Many children expressed delight at the opportunity to see and participate in traditional dances of another country.
- They emphasized that the workshop event was a unique experience for them to enrich their knowledge about the culture and traditions of Ukraine and Estonia.

2. Strengthening Friendship and Tolerance:

- Children highly appreciated the opportunity to communicate and exchange experiences with children from another culture.
- They emphasized that the workshop event contributed to strengthening friendships and understanding how similar they are despite cultural differences.

3. Emotional Engagement:

- The children actively participated in folk dance workshop, showing interest in learning traditional dances and rejoicing at the opportunity to express themselves through the art of dance.
- Enthusiastic reviews indicated that the children were influenced by positive emotions and inspiration.

4. Desire to Participate in Similar Events:

- Many children and their parents expressed hope for holding similar events in the future.
- Participation in the folk dance workshop aroused keen interest and stimulated the desire to continue to participate in cultural events.

The general sentiment of the participants emphasized not only the importance of cultural exchange but also the positive impact of such initiatives on the development of children, contributing to their educational experience and the formation of an open worldview.

4. Self-reflection of team members

Darja Jefimova

My learning experience during this project was incredibly enriching. Being part of the Cultural integration group allowed me to witness the power of collaboration. Working with this team has been a fortunate experience for me. Each team member demonstrated a high level of proactivity and responsibility throughout the project. The enthusiasm and commitment of my team made the learning experience enjoyable and productive, providing a positive working environment. I am very grateful for the valuable efforts made by each member.

Engaging with Ukrainian and Estonian folk dance groups provided insights into the significance of cultural activities in promoting understanding and unity. I was pleasantly surprised by their solidarity and friendliness. Witnessing representatives of two distinct cultures communicating, united by a shared passion for folk dances, brought immense joy and served as a powerful source of inspiration. I would like to organize more additional events that promote cultural exchange through the universal language of dance.

Nataliia Koval

I decided to take part in this project primarily because I was interested in participating in it, based on the fact that I am also Ukrainian and I was very pleased to also make an effort and help children integrate so that their life in the new society would be more interesting and they would find new friends due to the situation in our country. My personal goal was to contribute and help.

I carried out the tasks assigned to me, made a final presentation, participated in discussions and decision-making, and also created the necessary material in Ukrainian, communicated with children in Ukrainian and helped fill out questionnaires. I also wrote an article that we published after the events, did photos and video materials. I evaluate that we successfully carried out this project and our contribution to it was worthwhile, because the project also influences the strengthening of cultural ties between Ukraine and Estonia, influences the integration and exchange of culture between the two countries, helps children build friendships and exchange cultural experiences.

Andra Pahkma

When I think back on our combined efforts to plan an event for children from Estonia and Ukraine, I'm happy to praise the outstanding teamwork that was essential to our success. Our primary aim was to create an outstanding event and I'm confident in saying that we not only achieved but surpassed that goal.

One key factor in our success was how well we stuck to our timelines. Everything went more smoothly because everyone was on time. We worked together to overcome obstacles. The positive atmosphere in our team encouraged creativity and made our planning even more effective. I want to express gratitude for the diverse skills and perspectives brought by each team member that enhanced the planning process and produced a more thorough and significant event.

Looking back, our project's success can be attributed to the outstanding teamwork and collective commitment to our shared vision. I'm proud of our achievements and look forward to future opportunities to collaborate with such a capable and enthusiastic team.

Eliise Niitav

Taking part in this project gave me the opportunity to collaborate with people from different cultural backgrounds, to work on developing strategies to support Ukrainian refugees' integration in Estonia. I am very pleased to have worked on a project that has an actual tangible and positive effect on our society, specifically the Ukrainian and Estonian children who participated in our folk dance workshop. In addition to working on a socially responsible project, I have gained new insights into working in a team and as a team managing all the tasks a project consists of. Most importantly, I am very proud of our team for managing all of our individual schedules and different interdisciplinary backgrounds, to jointly put all our efforts into communicating with different stakeholders, researching relevant academic works, developing a strategy for cultural exchange through an activity and eventually organizing the folk dance workshop and all the materials documenting our work as a result. In my opinion, we have succeeded in meeting the project goals of developing and organizing activities to support Ukrainians in Estonia and I personally am very grateful to have witnessed the friendly and supportive atmosphere of our participants during our folk dance event and even happier that our team managed to do exactly what we set out to do - cultural exchange in a lighthearted but impactful way.

Miriam Kalenius

As a team member on the cultural integration project, I significantly enhanced my teamwork skills and improved my communication skills through regular team meetings. The challenges we faced in meeting tight deadlines, increased my ability to prioritize tasks and manage my time effectively. Working collaboratively with cross-functional teams allowed me to develop a deeper understanding of team dynamics and build strong professional relationships. I want to express my sincere appreciation for the exceptional efforts of our team during the recent project. Everyone's commitment to excellence was evident in every aspect of our work. The collaborative spirit within the team has undoubtedly contributed to our project's success, and the team members dedication has not gone unnoticed. The experience was very interesting and motivating, especially as I feel that we reached the goals that we have aimed for.

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