Ukrainian Pupils in Czech Schools and History Lessons – A Current Challenge for Our Education System Survey Results[1]

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The study presents selected results from a survey focused on the teaching of history to Ukrainian students (who arrived in the Czech Republic due to the conflict following February 24, 2022) in Czech schools. It analyses which history topics are challenging for Ukrainian students considering the current international situation, whether teachers need to moderate or adjust certain history lessons with Ukrainian students in mind, and whether teachers encounter instances of Ukrainian students disputing their presentation of historical topics. The analysis also examines the support provided to history teachers in teaching these students. Additionally, it outlines other types of difficulties teachers face when integrating Ukrainian students in subjects beyond history. The findings are contextualized within another research.

Keywords: *History, school subject, Ukrainian students, war.*

[1] This study was developed as part of the project *Selected Current Political, Social, and Cultural Issues of Europe and the World in the Context of Forming Historical Awareness and Civic Education* (MUNI/A/1542/2021).

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Introduction

The tensions and conflicts between Ukraine and Russia escalated in 2014, when armed conflict began in eastern Ukraine, resulting in the annexation of eastern Ukraine and the Crimean Peninsula by the Russian Federation, contrary to international law. Although fighting continued in eastern Ukraine, this issue gradually faded from the public eye. However, on February 24, 2022, Russian forces launched a major offensive, extending into other areas of Ukraine. This sparked the largest armed conflict in Europe since World War II, occurring relatively close to the borders of the Czech Republic. The violence also impacted civilians, with uncertainty around where and when the Russian military would be stopped. One consequence of this aggression was the mass displacement of Ukrainian civilians, many of whom sought refuge in countries like the Czech Republic. By April 1, 2023, the Czech Ministry of the Interior had issued over half a million temporary protections to Ukrainian refugees. Approximately one-third of these individuals returned to Ukraine (or terminated their temporary protection voluntarily or moved to another EU country), thus as of April 1, 2023, 325,742 Ukrainian refugees (individuals with temporary protection) were residing in the Czech Republic. Of this population, roughly 68% were of working age (65% of whom were women and 35% men), while 28% were children and 4% were seniors.[3]

Data published by the UN at the beginning of April 2023 shows the situation in other European countries. At that time, over 8.1 million Ukrainian refugees were registered across Europe, with approximately five million holding temporary protection or similar status. Poland issued the most special permits, followed by Germany and the Czech Republic. When adjusted for population size, the Czech Republic had the highest number of Ukrainian refugees per capita (43 Ukrainian refugees per thousand inhabitants). Poland and Estonia were similarly positioned in terms of refugee intake per thousand residents. Moldova, outside the European temporary protection system, also ranked similarly in these statistics.[4]

A significant portion of the Ukrainian refugees arriving in the Czech Republic were children. Ukrainian students began enrolling in Czech schools already in the second semester of the 2021/22 school year. For the following school year, the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MEYS) published data on the number of Ukrainian students in Czech schools as of September 30, 2022. On that date, 39,478 Ukrainian students were enrolled in basic schools, representing 3.9% of all basic school students. Additional data released by the Ministry as of March 31, 2023, reported

[3] Ministerstvo vnitra České republiky. V České republice je aktuálně 325 tisíc uprchlíků z Ukrajiny. [online]. Retrieved from: https://www.mvcr.cz/clanek/v-ceske-republice-je-aktualne-325-tisic-uprchliku-z-ukrajiny.aspx (accessed July 13, 2023).

[4] Člověk v tísni. Ukrajinská uprchlická krize: aktuální situace. [online]. Retrieved from: https://www.clovekvtisni.cz/ukrajinska-krize-v-historickem-kontextu-8589gp (accessed 13. 7. 2023).

39,680 Ukrainian students in Czech basic schools (still accounting for 3.9% of the total basic school population).[5] By September 30, 2023, the number of Ukrainian students in basic schools rose to 47,858, constituting 4.8% of all basic school students.[6] However, an estimated 8% of Ukrainian students were not attending mandatory basiceducation in March 2023.[7]

The authors approach the received data with strict neutrality, ensuring that neither their personal perspectives nor their philosophical stance on historical objectivity influence the interpretation or presentation of the findings in this article.

Overview of the Situation and Existing Methodical Support for Teachers

Czech teachers have been faced with a new and significant challenge: educating students who speak a different language and come from a distinct cultural background. This situation applies to teachers across all subjects, but in this study, we focus on history classes, given the numerous specific challenges this subject presents. Our perspective is informed by personal experience indicating that integrating Ukrainian students into lessons brings about a range of new situations with which educators must contend. Although assistance has been gradually provided, this support has sometimes appeared somewhat disorganized.

Numerous institutions have responded proactively to this challenge, progressively creating a wide range of resources, including texts, methodical portals, teaching materials, studies, academic and media articles, and podcasts, all exploring the education of Ukrainian students from different perspectives. Many schools deserve an appreciation as they have contributed or still are contributing by publishing or sharing their own teaching materials or tools for working with Ukrainian students. Key institutions involved in providing

[5] Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy. Počty ukrajinských dětí se ve školách oproti září téměř nezměnily. [online]. Retrieved from: https://www.msmt.cz/ministerstvo/novinar/pocty-ukrajinskych-deti-ve-skolach-se-oproti-zari-temer (accessed July 13, 2023).

[6] Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy. Aktuální počty ukrajinských uprchlíků na českých školách. [online]. Retrieved from: https://www.msmt.cz/ministerstvo/novinar/aktualni-pocty-ukrajinskych-uprchliku-na-ceskych-skolach (accessed December 30, 2023).

[7] Cf. Kavanová, M. – Prokop D. – Duarte J. – Kunc M. – Levínský M. – Ostrý M. – Škvrňák M. (2023). Integrace ukrajinských uprchlíků: rok poté. Shrnujeme úspěchy i přetrvávající výzvy. Jak se Česku podařilo vypořádat s integračními výzvami. PAQ Research [online]. Retrieved from: https://www.paqresearch.cz/post/integrace-ukrajinskych-uprchliku-rok-pote/ (accessed December 30, 2023).

educational materials or guidance include ČT EDU,[8] which offers modified exercises for Ukrainian students on its website. The National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic (NPI)[9] also provides multifaceted support for educators, from addressing language barriers to offering subject-specific resources. An interesting development worth mentioning is a newly established methodical portal for teaching at elementary art schools, prepared by the Artistic Council of Elementary Art Schools in the Czech Republic.[10] Additionally, other portals now exist, including the MEYS's methodical portal,[11] the Pedagogical Chamber's website,[12] and the Inclusive School portal.[13]

This topic has also resonated widely in the media, and every major media platform contains articles on Ukrainian students. Major news sites such as *Seznam Zprávy*, *iDnes.cz*, *Česká televize*, and specialized educational sites like *EDUin* and *Zapojme všechny* include articles, reports, videos, and podcasts, covering themes like their arrival in Czech schools, integration, entrance exams for secondary schools, and related topics. Furthermore, the MEYS publishes statistical data on Ukrainian students, as well as studies on educational opportunities, such as research from The National Institute for Research on Socioeconomic Impacts of Diseases and Systemic Risks (abbreviated as SYRI).[14] The Czech School Inspectorate (CSI) also addresses this issue; for instance, its comprehensive report for the 2021/22 school year details the success of integrating Ukrainian students into Czech schools.[15] Additionally, the National Institute of Mental Health offers educational interventions

[8] ČT EDU. Pro žáky z UA [online]. Retrieved from: https://edu.ceskatelevize.cz/pro-zaky-z-ukrajiny (accessed October 11, 2023).

[9] Cf. e.g., NPI. Pomáháme školám zvládnout začlenění ukrajinských dětí. [online]. Retrieved from: https://ukrajina.npi.cz/ (accessed October 11, 2023).

[10] Umělecká rada základních uměleckých škol České republiky. Ukrajina [online]. Retrieved from: https://www.ur-zus.cz/inspiromat/121-ukrajina/ (accessed October 11, 2023).

[11] EDU.CZ. Vzdělávání ukrajinských dětí v ČR [online]. Retrieved from: https://www.edu.cz/methodology/vzdelavani-ukrajinskych-deti-v-cr/ (accessed October 11, 2023).

[12] Pedagogická komora. Aktuální téma: Výuka ukrajinských žáků [online]. Retrieved from: https://www.pedagogicka-komora.cz/2022/03/aktualni-tema-ukrajinske-deti-v-ceskych.html (accessed October 11, 2023).

[13] Inkluzivní škola. Ukrajina [online]. Retrieved from: https://inkluzivniskola.cz/kdo-jsou-nove-prichozi/ukrajina (accessed October 11, 2023).

[14] SYRI. Adaptace ukrajinských žáků na vzdělávání v českých základních školách [online]. Retrieved from: https://www.syri.cz/data/uploadHTML/files/PUBLIKACE/adaptace-ukrajinskych-zaku-na-vzdelavani-v-ceskych-zakladnich-skolach-syri.pdf (accessed October 11, 2023).

[15] Novosák, J. – Andrys, O. – Zatloukal, T. – Pavlas. T. – Spitzerová, M. (2022). Průběžná zpráva o integraci a vzdělávání ukrajinských dětí a žáků. Tematická zpráva, 2021/22. Praha: Česká školní inspekce. [online]. Retrieved from: https://www.csicr.cz/cz/Aktuality/Tematicka-zprava-Prubezna-zprava-o-integraci-a-vzd (accessed October 11, 2023).

for Ukrainian children and their parents residing in the Czech Republic, as well as for their Czech peers, teachers, and other education professionals.[16]

The SYRI Institute's findings on integrating Ukrainian students in Czech schools are particularly relevant. Based on their research conducted between October 2022 and February 2023, several factors have been identified as barriers to the integration of Ukrainian students in Czech schools. The study highlights the lack of methodical support and unclear expectations among various educational stakeholders regarding effective adaptation processes. Inconsistent approaches to teaching Czech language across schools have also impacted Ukrainian students' progress in further learning in other subjects taught in Czech. A common negative issue reported was a form of ethnic segregation, where Ukrainian students sometimes remain on the periphery of their peer groups, in their own isolated clusters within classes or entirely excluded. While this is not the case in all schools, it is expected to be an issue in several. The final issue that emerged from the research, which we will further explore in our study, is the presence of varying expectations for Ukrainian students. This stems from the lack of professional preparedness among most teachers to work with students who have a different native language. Directly related to this are negative factors such as lower expectations, more lenient grading, reduced class participation, and similar issues. This can lead Ukrainian students to perceive Czech schools as "easier".[17]

A broad spectrum of articles, publications, and studies focuses on the topic of integrating foreign students or students with different native languages. These range from scholarly papers and specialized articles to undergraduate and graduate theses, as well as resources shared by teachers on social media. Although the quality of these sources varies, it is clear that this topic is of ongoing societal importance. While the topic of foreign students in Czech schools is not new, the scale of interest in the current unprecedented situation has greatly increased. For example, schools in border regions, particularly those near Poland, likely have more experience with students of different nationalities than do schools in more central regions like the Vysočina region.

Besides the recent influx of Ukrainian students, Czech schools have historically encountered students whose native language is not Czech (e.g., children from Vietnam, Mongolia, Russia, Poland, Slovakia, and other countries). Thus, the topic remains relevant, and the educational community and individual schools must continuously work to improve conditions

[16] Národní ústav duševního zdraví. Podpora duševního zdraví dětí, rodičů a učitelů v ČR ovlivněných válkou na Ukrajině [online]. Retrieved from: https://www.nudz.cz/pomahame-ukrajine/podpora-dusevniho-zdravi-deti-rodicu-a-ucitelu-v-cr-ovlivnenych-valkou-na-ukrajine (accessed December 30, 2023).

[17] SYRI. Adaptace ukrajinských žáků (accessed October 11, 2023).

for the integration of students with a different native language.[18] The integration process involves various factors, including family background, students' motivation to learn Czech, and classroom climate, which can influence foreign students' performance either positively or negatively.

In larger cities, there are schools specifically focused on educating students with different native languages. As the principal of the faculty elementary school of the Charles University Faculty of Education in Prague 13, PhDr. Petr Vodsloň, stated on the portal *Inkluzivní škola*, mastering the Czech language is the first and essential step for integrating foreign students into the Czech school environment.[19] Although language proficiency is not the only prerequisite for successful integration, it is undeniably a critical factor in gradually incorporating non-native Czech speakers into the educational system.

Research Goals and Methodology

The goal of this research is to analyse the state of history education as it pertains to Ukrainian students in Czech primary schools, specifically those who joined these schools after February 24, 2022. This study is part of a broader research effort.[20] We posed the following research questions:

RQ 1: Which history topics may be problematic for Ukrainian students given the current international situation (the war in Ukraine)?

RQ 2: What history topics' presentation may need to be adjusted or moderated by teachers with Ukrainian students in mind?

RQ 3: Which historical events are challenged by Ukrainian students because of their presentation or interpretation by the teachers?

RQ 4: How do history teachers assess the support provided in teaching Ukrainian students?

RQ 5: What other difficulties did the teachers encounter in integrating Ukrainian students in subjects beyond history?

To gather the data needed to achieve these goals, we conducted a quantitative study using a questionnaire. The aim of this method was to collect a sufficient volume of data from primary school teachers (as described below). It was also

[18] Cf. e.g., Janík, M. – Goldberger, M. (2024). Homogenization through inclusion: exploring language regimes at four multilingual schools in the Czech Republic. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 27(3), pp. 285–300.

[19] Inkluzivní škola.cz. Integrace žáků cizinců do prostředí české školy [online]. Retrieved from: https://inkluzivniskola.cz/content/integrace-zaku-cizincu-do-prostredi-ceske-skoly (accessed December 12, 2023).

[20] Cf. Jireček, M. – Bednář, M. – Moravec, J. (2023). Ukrajinští žáci na českých školách a dějepis. Vybrané výsledky dotazníkového šetření. *Dějiny a dějepis* 37(1–2), pp. 22–38; Jireček, M. – Bednář, M. – Moravec, J. (2023). Ukrainian Pupils in Czech Schools and History Lessons – Teaching Materials, Knowledge, Testing and Assessment. *Czech-Polish Historical and Pedagogical Journal* 15(1–2), pp. 49–76.

essential to determine whether teachers' approaches to Ukrainian students varied across predefined groups (see below). Similar methodologies have been employed in Polish research,[21] where researchers sought to map the main challenges and Ukrainian students' satisfaction with their integration into the Polish school environment. This issue is as relevant in Poland as it is in the Czech Republic, given the high number of newly arrived Ukrainian students in both countries. The same approach was used in a multinational study examining public opinion on Ukrainian refugees in five EU countries.[22] Similar use of this data collection method has appeared in other studies, such as those exploring public attitudes and sentiments associated with terminology surrounding immigrants.[23] In the Czech context, research by the national SYRI Institute on employer perspectives regarding Ukrainian refugees,[24] as well as studies on the integration of Ukrainian students into Czech social settings,[25] provide additional context.

Research Sample

To analyse the state of history education, we conducted a survey. In pursuit of the most representative results, we distributed the questionnaire to all basic schools with lower secondary grades across the Czech Republic (regardless of the type of school administration). In the 2022/23 school year, when the survey was conducted, there were 2,632 such schools.[26] The request to complete the questionnaire was sent during the second semester of the 2022/23 school year to the schools' contact emails, with a request to forward it to history teachers at each school. In total, we received responses from 476 respondents, of which 473 were deemed relevant for our study (see below). We consider this number of respondents our core sample. The relatively high response rate

[21] Rataj, M. – Berezovska, I. (2023). Addressing challenges with Ukrainian refugees through sustainable integration: response of the educational community in Poland. *Journal of Further and Higher Education* 47(9), pp. 1221–1227.

[22] Moise, A. D. – Dennison, J. – Kriesi, H. (2024). European attitudes to refugees after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. *West European Politics* 47(2), pp. 356–381.

[23] De Coninck, D. (2020). Migrant categorizations and European public opinion: diverging attitudes towards immigrants and refugees. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 46(9), pp. 1667–1686.

[24] Coufalová, L. – Fumarco, L. – Mikula, Š. Ukrajinští uprchlíci očima zaměstnavatelů. Národní institut SYRI. Retrieved from: https://www.syri.cz/data/uploadHTML/files/PUBLIKACE/SurveyUA.pdf (accessed February 15, 2023).

[25] Lintner, T. – Diviák, T. – Šeďová, K. – Hlaďo, P. (2023). Ukrainian refugees struggling to integrate into Czech school social networks. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communication* 10(409), pp. 1–11.

[26] We would like to thank Ing. Jaromír Nebřenský from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports for kindly providing the data and helping us navigate the system.

indicates that teachers are interested in this topic and feel affected by it. It also adds a degree of representativeness to our research.[27]

Our first question aimed to verify that the participating teachers indeed teach history (to exclude any respondents who may have mistakenly received the questionnaire). Out of 476 responses, 473 were from history teachers, forming our core sample. We also gathered data on demographic and professional categories (by qualification, gender, length of teaching experience, and school size) to allow for comparative analysis. In terms of qualification, respondents were divided into two groups (qualified, not qualified). For gender, there were two groups (male, female); for settlement size, there were five groups (under 2,000 residents, 2,000–20,000 residents, 20,000–100,000 residents, 100,000–1 million residents, and Prague); and for teaching experience, there were four groups (up to 5 years, 5–10 years, 10–20 years, and over 20 years).

The results show that of the 473 history teachers in our sample, 373 (78.9%) were qualified. Among the respondents, 336 were female teachers (71%). All experience levels were represented: 75 teachers (15.9%) had up to 5 years of experience, 63 (13.3%) had 5–10 years, 116 (24.5%) had 10–20 years, and 219 (46.3%) had over 20 years of experience. Our final introductory question asked about the size of the community where respondents taught. A total of 105 teachers (22.2%) taught in communities with fewer than 2,000 residents, 188 (39.7%) in communities of 2,000–20,000 residents, 105 (22.2%) in communities of 20,000–100,000 residents, 26 (5.5%) in communities of 100,000–1 million residents, and 49 teachers (10.4%) taught in Prague, the only Czech city with a population over one million.

The research sample for this specific study consists of 354 respondents—teachers who, from the larger sample of 473 history teachers, currently teach Ukrainian students. We arrived at this number as follows: 90.1% of the schools in our sample (426 respondents) have Ukrainian students. Specifically, 83.1% (354 respondents) of the history teachers surveyed currently teach Ukrainian students in their history classes. Thus, the research sample for this study consists of the aforementioned 354 respondents.

The purpose of these preliminary questions was to determine whether our research sample roughly corresponds to the broader population of history teachers in Czech schools. Given the sample size and its distribution across various categories, we can conclude that our sample is representative. For each of the categories described above (qualification, gender, experience level, and community size), we conducted comparative analysis to identify potential differences in opinions and to determine which areas exhibit the greatest opinion divergences. Based on the data analysis, we found no statistically significant differences across any of the research questions within the categorized groups.

[27] We want to avoid duplicating data in the text and in the charts, so we use charts and tables primarily in cases where they effectively expand on the text and provide new information.

Therefore, in the following sections, we present the results as a unified response from history teachers, without breaking down the categories individually.

Research Results

History Topics Problematic for Ukrainian Students in Light of The Current International Situation (The War in Ukraine)

(RQ 1)

Ukrainian students came (or continue to arrive) to the Czech Republic due to Russian aggression and the ongoing violent conflict in their homeland. The impact of this war on them and their families varies depending on the region they come from, the time they left Ukraine, and whether family members are directly involved in the fighting. Given that history is often associated with various armed conflicts and events that may evoke memories of the current conflict, certain history topics may be problematic for Ukrainian students. By this term we understand a state in which the teaching of certain topics may evoke a sense of discomfort or other emotional challenges for Ukrainian pupils, given their specific circumstances. Our research sought to understand Czech teachers' views on this issue. We asked the question in a closed format, allowing responses in three categories (some topics are considered problematic, no topics are considered problematic, or unable to judge). Nearly half of the participating teachers (see Table 1) do not consider any history topics to be problematic for Ukrainian students in light of the current international situation. Conversely, over a third of respondents view the situation differently, identifying specific topics in school history that they believe may be problematic for Ukrainian students. The remaining teachers were unable to assess the situation.

Table 1: Occurrence of Problematic Topics for Ukrainian Students in School History

Problematic Topics for Ukrainian Students in History	**Number of Respondents**
I consider some topics problematic	123
I do not consider any topics problematic	175
Unable to judge	56

For those teachers who indicated that they view certain history topics as problematic considering the current international situation, we asked which topics they considered problematic. We categorized the responses into six subgroups (see Table 2). Modern history and, specifically, the topics of wars and Russian history clearly dominate these responses.

Table 2: Problematic Topics in History Education

Problematic Topics in History	Number of Respondents
Wars	78
History of Russia and the Soviet Union	42
20th-Century History	16
Ideologies	7
Historical Parallels	3
Other	5

A total of 78 respondents consider **war**-related topics (expansion, conquest, war trauma, battles, violence) problematic for Ukrainian students considering the current international situation. Some teachers specified further, with 30 mentioning that they find teaching about World War II particularly problematic (each of the following were mentioned by one respondent: the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, the Lidice massacre, the Soviet Union during this war, and Russian-Polish-Ukrainian relations during this conflict). Teachers also mentioned other conflicts, including World War I (5 mentions), the Cold War (5 mentions), and the Crimean War (4 mentions). Others generally referred to wars in modern history or the 20th century (5 mentions), or wars broadly associated with Russia and the Soviet Union (2 mentions). This category also includes the perceived sensitivity of topics like the Holocaust (6 mentions) and genocide (1 mention). Additionally, there was one mention each of the "Balkan question" and the expulsion of Jews from Jerusalem (in the context of history repeating itself).

The second most mentioned problematic topic was **the history of Russia and the Soviet Union**, identified by 42 respondents as problematic. Some teachers elaborated on specific periods or events in Russian and Soviet history. These included the Kievan Rus (1), Russia during the reign of Peter I the Great (2), Russia under Catherine II (3), the Enlightenment in connection with Russia (1), 18th- and 19th-century Russia (1), the rise of the USSR (1), the Stalin era (1), the Holodomor in Ukraine (3), gulags (1), the Soviet Union under Khrushchev (1), and others.

The second most frequently mentioned problematic topic in school history, according to respondents, is **the history of Russia or the Soviet Union**. A total of 42 respondents were viewing this topic as problematic for teaching Ukrainian students. Some teachers provided more detail in their responses, listing specific eras or events in Russian and Soviet history that could fall into this category. Below is a chronological overview with the number of mentions in parentheses: Kievan Rus (1), Russia during the reign of Peter I the Great (2), Russia during the reign of Catherine II the Great (3) (including one mention specifically regarding the annexation of Crimea), the Enlightenment in connection with Russia (1), Russia in the 18th and 19th centuries (1), the Napoleonic Wars

in relation to Russia (1), the establishment of the USSR (1), Stalin's rise to power (1), the Holodomor in Ukraine (3), gulags (1), and the Soviet Union under Khrushchev (1). Other mentioned topics are more challenging to arrange chronologically, so here we simply list them: the development of Russian-Ukrainian relations (2), relations with the Soviet Union (1), 20th-century history in relation to Russia and the Soviet Union (1), Russian figures (1), the relationship between Czechoslovak and Soviet history (1), the rise of the Russian-Ukrainian oligarchy (1), all matters concerning Eastern Europe (1), the situation in Ukraine (1), contemporary Russia (1), and the issue of Crimea (1).

As is evident from the overview above, the history topics identified by our respondents as problematic for teaching Ukrainian students are predominantly those related to **the 20th century**. In addition to the mentions listed above, there were other responses that also fall within this period (in this category, we include answers where respondents indicated a time period rather than a specific topic): modern history (contemporary history, 20th-century history) (10 mentions), post-war history (after World War II) (5 mentions), and contemporary history (1 mention).

Other responses to this question concerned **ideologies**. Some of our respondents consider the teaching of totalitarian and authoritarian regimes to be problematic (2 mentions), specifically communism (3 mentions) and Nazism (1 mention). This category also includes "Stalinism" (1 mention).

Another interesting category we can highlight in this context is historical **parallels**. These were mentioned three times in connection with the occupations of Czechoslovakia in 1938 and 1968 (linked both to the question of whether we should have defended ourselves, and, in the second case, to the issue of the involvement of Ukrainian soldiers).

Apart from the categories listed above, our respondents also mentioned other topics they consider problematic for teaching Ukrainian students in history: international relations (1 mention), the historical development of the political map of Europe (1 mention), Czech history (1 mention), poverty (1 mention), and political trials (1 mention).

Some statements from our respondents suggest that the question posed is relevant and presents teachers with various situations they must address. Among these were mentions of Ukrainian students having tears in their eyes or displaying angry expressions (crossed arms) during certain history topics (another respondent noted that problematic moments tend to occur especially when Ukrainian students do not fully understand). In this context, our respondents pointed out that they must carefully phrase their statements to avoid causing harm to students and that it is essential to consider what these students have experienced (which teachers may not always know) and to approach topics with sensitivity. Another respondent mentioned the difficulty of using videos with historical war footage, as the teacher feels uncomfortable showing images of atrocities that are still being committed in Eastern Europe today (students are

allowed to leave the room, or the activity may be changed). Some respondents also expressed that Ukrainian students hold subjective views on certain topics, making it challenging to guide them toward historical objectivity. One respondent noted that, reportedly, joint history with the Soviet Union is not taught in Ukraine. Some teachers mentioned that Ukrainian students have difficulty accepting anything related to Russia, even if positive (e.g., Peter the Great), or even, for example, identifying the Black Sea on a map. Another respondent remarked on the general lack of an "evaluated expert's interpretation/opinion and resources applicable in schools" for this issue.

Adjusting the Teaching of History Topics with Ukrainian Students in Mind (RQ 2)

In the next question, we asked teachers whether they had encountered situations where they needed to moderate or adjust their teaching of certain history topics with Ukrainian students in mind (see Table 3). More than three-quarters of respondents indicated that they had not. The remaining teachers acknowledged that they had experienced such situations. This group was asked to briefly describe these situations.

Table 3: Adjustments in Teaching History Content with Ukrainian Students in Mind

Adjustment in Teaching Due to Ukrainian Students	Number of Respondents
Yes	83
No	271

Responses from teachers who adjusted their teaching with Ukrainian students in mind can be divided into two categories: taught topics and used materials. Regarding **the topics**, teachers most frequently felt the need to adjust or moderate their presentation specifically on the subject of wars, mentioned in various forms by 47 respondents. Some teachers elaborated that students showed different emotional responses, such as changes in facial expressions, pale reactions, or, particularly among female students, instances of crying when these topics were discussed. Teachers noted that these issues were especially sensitive shortly after Ukrainian students arrived in the Czech Republic.

The range of conflicts mentioned by respondents was extensive. Nine teachers, without specifying any particular conflict, described problematic aspects such as the portrayal of the behaviour of invading armies in occupied areas, the impact on civilian populations (atrocities and cruelties), the use of weapons, and references to bombings. Other teachers specifically mentioned various historical wars. Among these, World War II was the most frequently

cited as sensitive, with 20 mentions. One respondent mentioned the difficulty of "praising the Red Army" in the context of this topic. Further responses detailed specific aspects of World War II, such as the German attack through Ukraine (1), the role of Ukrainians in World War II (e.g., issues related to Bandera supporters, who some students view as national heroes) and alleged massacres of Czechs, the treatment of Jews by some Ukrainians following the German occupation of Ukraine (3), the Soviet campaign across Ukraine during World War II (2), the Holocaust (2), Polish-Ukrainian relations at the end of the war (described as "civilian massacres") (1), the liberation of Czechoslovakia by the Red Army (2), Vlasov's army (1), and post-war situations (1). Other conflicts where teachers adjusted their teaching included World War I (3) and trench warfare (1). The only historical conflict outside the 20th century mentioned as requiring moderation was "wars in the 6th grade," such as those in ancient Greece (terms like tyranny and oligarchy) (1).

Teachers employ various strategies to address the sensitivity of war-related topics, such as avoiding detailed descriptions (e.g., of casualties), deviating from the central theme, minimizing emotional content, and trying not to evoke students' memories. Some teachers allow students to leave the classroom during the most dramatic moments or direct them to language tutoring sessions.

Another topic mentioned as requiring adjustment with Ukrainian students in mind is the history of Russia and the Soviet Union, cited 22 times. Four respondents mentioned this issue with only geographical reference, with one teacher noting, "a girl spits at any mention of Russia." The most frequently cited specific topic was the Holodomor in Soviet Ukraine (6). Teachers also noted the need to moderate or adjust their teaching on Russian imperial history without specifying the period (4), the teachings on Peter the Great and Catherine II (3, with the expansionist policies and access to the Black Sea cited as problematic), relations between Russia and Ukraine in the past (3, once referred to as the "domination of Mother Russia"), the Soviet invasion of Poland – Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (1), and the personality of J.V. Stalin (1). Respondents noted that they simplify their teaching on these subjects, attempt to present them as objective facts without drawing connections to contemporary Russian policies, and explain Russia's acquisition of access to the Black Sea during Catherine II's reign "carefully," so that students do not perceive the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 as justified. Teachers also offer Ukrainian students the option to leave the classroom when these topics are discussed.

Some responses to the question on moderating history lessons also mentioned teaching about Ukraine's own history. One respondent highlighted general challenges in teaching the history of this country, mentioning its allegedly less developed society (in terms of living standards and lifestyle). Other mentions included modern Ukrainian history (1) and the topic of Crimea as a conflict hotspot (1). One teacher, without further specifics, noted that they pay more attention to Ukrainian history when teaching Ukrainian students.

Other topics mentioned in relation to moderating history lessons with Ukrainian students in mind primarily concerned Czech national history and its intersections with "the East" (a total of five mentions). Topics included Carpathian Ruthenia (the standard of living during the First Republic and today) (1) and the Soviet Union's influence on Czech events in 1948 (1). Three respondents mentioned the topic of 1968 – one respondent noted the difficulty of drawing a parallel between the occupation of Czechoslovakia that year and the current situation in Ukraine, while another noted a challenging situation in which a Ukrainian student was pleased to recognize the year, remarking that "their soldiers came to liberate us."

One teacher indicated that teaching 9th-grade history as a whole required moderation or adjustment for Ukrainian students. Another respondent mentioned the topic of disinformation (civics), noting the challenges associated with misinformation about Ukrainian refugees.

In addition to the responses mentioned above, teachers shared general comments on how they manage situations where Ukrainian students find a history topic distressing. They use various strategies, such as informing students in advance about the lesson content, allowing students to leave the classroom, avoiding associations with the current war (to prevent retraumatization), and striving to create a comfortable environment for Ukrainian students, which sometimes involves "simplifying" complex topics.

The second category that emerged from the responses on adjusting history lessons for Ukrainian students was related to **the materials used**. Our respondents mentioned 16 instances that fall into this area. Of these, 13 responses concerned the selection of video clips (segments from documentaries and war films). Teachers noted that Ukrainian students are more sensitive to depictions of violence, which teachers attributed to students' varying personal experiences with war, including witnessing tanks, soldiers, bombed cities, injuries, and fatalities, or even the death of a father on the front lines. These video clips, especially at the onset of the war in Ukraine, evoke fear, sadness, and traumatic memories among these students. Teachers allow Ukrainian students to leave the room during these screenings, provide separate space for individual work with an assistant, or limit the use of such documentaries. Teachers also mentioned historical photographs as problematic materials (3 mentions).

Disputing History Lessons Content by Ukrainian Students (RQ 3)

Another question we asked our respondents was whether they had encountered situations where Ukrainian students, for some reason, disputed their presentation of historical content. Only three teachers in our survey reported

encountering such a situation. We asked these teachers to elaborate and provide specific examples.

One teacher mentioned that, when discussing the causes of the 1917 Revolution, they used the term "Russia." The Ukrainian students corrected the teacher, saying that it should be referred to as the "Russian Empire." The teacher accepted this correction and praised the students, noting that it was good for them to have such insights. Another respondent shared that a Ukrainian student (or students, without specification) disputed the teacher's explanation, claiming that "Ukrainian soldiers liberated us in 1968." The third respondent who encountered a similar situation mentioned that students disputed the "significance of the USSR," specifically by exaggerating its role as the primary liberator during World War II (see above). Without further details about this situation, it is difficult for us to interpret this response in more depth.

Support for History Teachers in Teaching Ukrainian Students (RQ 4)

Our research also explored the support that history teachers feel they receive when teaching Ukrainian students. Respondents rated various institutions or components of the system (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS); Czech School Inspectorate (CSI); school administration; colleagues at school; online resources) on a scale commonly used in schools (1 – best, 5 – worst). They could also select the option "unable to assess." The responses are summarized in Table 4.

Applying the school grading scale, our respondents awarded three "2s," and in two cases, their ratings averaged between a "3" and a "4." The highest rating was given to school colleagues (average rating of 1.97), which can be explained by the regular contact they have in the workplace, allowing them to immediately consult and share experiences. This interaction also facilitates the exchange of materials, tips, advice, and strategies for working with students, often allowing for a high level of individualized instruction for specific Ukrainian students since these colleagues work with the same students.

Close behind was school administration, with an average rating of 2.03, reflecting a similar situation to that of fellow teachers. Internet resources followed with an average rating of 2.04. These resources have been steadily growing in number, are relatively easy to find, and can be adapted as needed. One example is the support portal ČT Edu (see below).

Our respondents rated support from the MEYS (average rating of 3.49) and the Czech School Inspectorate (average rating of 3.62) significantly lower. It should be noted, however, that assistance from these institutions is likely more challenging to assess and less directly accessible, as shown by the number of

responses where teachers indicated they were "unable to assess" the support provided by these institutions (see Table 4).

In response to a follow-up question (see below), one respondent added that they feel a lack of "flexibility from the MEYS, for example, in the admissions process" for Ukrainian students. Another noted that "guidelines on assessing Ukrainian students (from the Ministry) often arrive at the last minute." Teachers, caught up in the day-to-day demands of their work, often do not have the opportunity to review and properly study these documents in a timely manner.

Table 4: Support for History Teachers in Teaching Ukrainian Students

Institution/System Component	**Number of Ratings**						**Average Rating ("Grade")**
	1	2	3	4	5	Unable to assess	
MEYS	12	36	72	47	63	124	3,49
CSI	11	28	60	39	70	146	3,62
School Administration	128	103	55	18	16	34	2,03
Colleagues at School	134	104	57	21	8	30	1,97
Internet Resources	107	125	54	20	8	40	2,04

Note: Rounded to two decimal places.

We also included an optional question asking respondents if there was any other institution whose assistance they would like to acknowledge or comment on. We received a total of 35 relevant responses. The most frequently appreciated institution was the non-governmental organization META, which supports foreigners in gaining equal access to education and labour integration and operates the portal *Inkluzivní škola.cz*. This institution or its mentioned portal was cited by 11 of our respondents, with comments such as appreciation for free Czech textbooks for Ukrainian students.

The support provided by Czech Television, specifically through its ČT Edu website, was also valued by teachers who completed our survey. Eight respondents mentioned and praised this resource, which offers quality videos supplemented with materials such as worksheets, to expand educational activities. Some respondents specifically appreciated videos with Ukrainian subtitles and worksheets in Ukrainian.

Another recognized institution was the National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic, mentioned six times (with one mention directly acknowledging Mgr. Pohořelý[28] and his webinars). The non-governmental organization People in Need (Člověk v tísni)[29] was praised twice. Additionally,

[28] Head of the Department for the Organization of Preschool, Primary, and Basic Arts Education
[29] Available at: https://www.clovekvtisni.cz/

individual respondents appreciated the following institutions, personalities, or system components: the non-profit organization Post Bellum;[30] the F Point Jihlava association[31] (a volunteer, non-profit, non-governmental group); Educational-Psychological Counselling Centers; research lessons from the Dějepis+[32] project (appropriate level of difficulty); the Hravá dějeprava[33] portal by Olga Kovaříková; school counselling centres (special educators and Ukrainian assistants); Ukrainian assistants and teachers; and the efforts of classmates to help foreign students in the classroom.[34]

Other Types of Difficulties Associated with the Integration of Ukrainian Students into Teaching in Other Subjects (RQ 5)

Our research also addressed the challenges in subjects other than history by asking our respondents whether they encountered different types of difficulties in these other subjects compared to the primary subject being studied. About one-fifth of respondents answered affirmatively, while a clear majority indicated that they did not face different types of issues in other subjects (see Table 5).

Table 5: Difficulties Associated with Integration into Teaching in Other Subjects

Difficulties Associated with Integration in Other Subjects	Number of Respondents
I have encountered difficulties in other subjects as well.	73
I have not encountered difficulties in other subjects.	281

We asked respondents who answered "yes" to the previous question to specify these difficulties. Their responses were quite varied. Some mentioned that history was the most challenging subject to address. Others listed specific subjects and the types of issues they encountered within them. In the following section, we provide an overview of these responses. It is worth noting that the frequency of responses may be influenced by the "second qualification" of history teachers who participated in our research. In the Czech education system, teachers at the observed type and level of schools are predominantly trained to teach two subjects. Therefore, the term "second qualification" refers

[30] Available at: https://www.postbellum.cz/
[31] Available at: https://fpoint.cz/
[32] Available at: https://dejepisplus.npi.cz/
[33] Available at: https://hravadejeprava.blogspot.com/
[34] All of the above mentioned are companies, sites or groups aiming to help people in need and history teachers with their classes.

to the "secondary" subject specialization of our respondents, alongside their qualification to teach history.

The most frequently mentioned subject, in connection with additional types of difficulties associated with integrating Ukrainian students, was clearly Czech language and literature. This was noted by 28 of our respondents, who described a wide range of problems they encountered when teaching this subject to Ukrainian students. They cited issues such as limited vocabulary, difficulties understanding the material, and challenges with basic spelling and grammar concepts (students are relearning foundational material while also learning new content). Respondents pointed out the complexity of the situation, especially since this material is required for secondary school entrance exams. They also noted the time-consuming nature of individualized instruction for Ukrainian students, difficulties in teaching students who plan to return to Ukraine, and challenges in communicating with the legal guardians of Ukrainian students.

Our respondents also frequently mentioned foreign languages. Nine of them cited English as a subject with challenges. They noted a significantly varied level among individual Ukrainian students, limited vocabulary, and a lack of understanding of grammatical rules. They also pointed out the need for home preparation for this subject, which Ukrainian students are reportedly unaccustomed to. Among other foreign languages, one respondent mentioned German (with the explanation of a "lack of effort," as students are not motivated), and another mentioned French (citing reluctance to learn an additional foreign language alongside Czech and English).

Six respondents each mentioned geography and civics (or citizenship education) as subjects with unique challenges. In geography, they noted difficulties in teaching about Eastern Europe, international conflicts, etc., as well as the complexity of teaching about the Czech Republic (many place names—cities, rivers, mountain ranges, companies—are unfamiliar to Ukrainian students). Respondents also cited lower motivation to learn this content, as students may anticipate an eventual return to their homeland. In civics (citizenship education), they highlighted the issue of disinformation in media literacy and the difficulty of addressing topics such as "home, citizen, democracy, family, values, etc." within the context of a diverse classroom.

Two respondents noted difficulties in physical education (a problematic attitude among Ukrainian students who do not want to exercise, do not bring gym clothes, etc.) and music education (a reluctance to participate actively due to the language barrier; students would prefer to sing Ukrainian songs with the class, but these are unfamiliar to Czech students). One respondent each mentioned difficulties in biology, physics, chemistry (without specific details), and mathematics (noting issues with mathematical terminology). Two other respondents felt they encountered different types of challenges in (almost) all other subjects.

Additional responses to the question about difficulties outside of history did not focus on specific subjects. Eleven respondents mentioned problematic attitudes and motivation among Ukrainian students (lack of effort and interest, failure to study or complete homework, problematic attendance, limited effort to understand and use Czech, and failure to bring required materials). Some teachers attribute this to the students' intention to return to their homeland. Another five respondents noted the insufficient vocabulary of Ukrainian students (language barrier, technical terms, etc.). One teacher identified a lack of foundational knowledge, limited foreign language skills, and lack of familiarity with Czech culture as challenges for Ukrainian students. One respondent saw the "completely unreasonable setup of entrance exams for foreign students applying to secondary schools" as an issue, suggesting that the Czech language exam be replaced with an interview. Another teacher highlighted the transition to secondary schools as problematic, observing that Ukrainian students "significantly overestimate their abilities and knowledge."

Additional Research Conclusions

In the final voluntary question of our survey, we asked respondents if they had any additional comments regarding the topic of Ukrainian students in Czech schools. This was an open-ended question, and many teachers took the opportunity to provide further insights. It's evident that respondents often used this question to express what they find most challenging about integrating Ukrainian students into Czech schools. Let's attempt to categorize their responses: a group of teachers (11) used this question to praise Ukrainian students, while an equal number (11) expressed frustration with difficulties they encounter in teaching these students, identifying the problem as stemming from the students themselves. Another group of respondents (four openly) saw the problem at the systemic (state) level. Some respondents (19) offered recommendations or advice to help address the situation. Other respondents described the current state of teaching Ukrainian students at their schools. Let's analyse their responses in more detail.

Teachers who used this question to praise Ukrainian students highlighted their challenging circumstances (being without a home or stable support), noting that the situation is time- and emotionally demanding. They commended Ukrainian students for their efforts to integrate into lessons, their determination, interest, and focused work, as well as their quick acquisition of basic Czech. They also appreciated the conditions created to facilitate their integration into classes, with some teachers valuing the opportunity for Czech language tutoring.

Teachers who responded critically about Ukrainian students cited issues they observed in some students' attitudes, such as reluctance to integrate into the class, forming their own groups, lack of interest in learning the language or other subjects, lack of motivation, apathy, and low knowledge levels. Most of these

respondents indicated that this applies to only a portion of students, mentioning factors such as family influence, intelligence, or the temporary nature of their stay and desire to return to their home country. In one case, a respondent noted that large concessions and excessive leniency led to a group of Ukrainian boys forming a gang that bullied Czech students (with the parents of these students not cooperating with the school).

Respondents who pointed out deficiencies on the part of the state mentioned in one case that they view state support as nearly non-existent, leaving teachers to manage everything on their own. Another respondent, more moderately, noted a lack of support programs from the MEYS. One teacher stated that while "all sorts of promises" were made by the MEYS, "almost nothing works in practice. We are a small rural school with a total of 200 students, 50 of whom are Ukrainian. We lack equipment, textbooks, desks, but no one cares, and no one helps, so we have to manage on our own and look for financial reserves." If Ukrainian students indeed make up such a high percentage of students at a single school, it is clear this is an extreme case and a very complex situation that deserves special attention.

Other respondents attempted to offer advice or recommendations on how to address the current situation. Of the 19 teachers who provided recommendations, ten focused on the issue of language preparation for Ukrainian students. These teachers suggest that Ukrainian students should receive intensive Czech language education and general acclimatization before being integrated into regular classes (mentioning options such as preparatory "Ukrainian" classes or schools, an "integration year" etc.), and only then be placed in standard classes. In this context, the role of teaching assistants for Ukrainian students was positively mentioned, as they help improve the students' Czech language skills, although other teachers complained about the absence of assistants.

Some respondents call for at least an increase in Czech language instruction hours, mandatory attendance in Czech language courses for Ukrainian students, or tutoring arranged by the family (with some viewing participation in online classes at Ukrainian schools negatively in this regard). There were opinions that it is unacceptable to have foreign students in the classroom who have been here for a long time but whose level of Czech proficiency is not improving. Teachers also mentioned the need for a glossary of terms that Ukrainian students encounter across various subjects in Czech schools. Greater support in Czech language instruction, according to some respondents, would also help improve the chances of Ukrainian students being accepted into secondary schools.[35]

[35] According to the *Voice of Ukrainians* (Hlas Ukrajinců) survey conducted by PAQ Research and the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Ukrainian high school students are the most at-risk group. See, for example, Hronová, Z. (2023). Průzkum: ukrajinské děti mají problém se začleněním. *Chrudimský, Svitavský, a Orlický deník*, August 17, 2023, p. 2. For more details on the survey, see PAQ Research. Hlas Ukrajinců. [online].

This is yet another topic that appeared in the responses (specifically from three respondents), interestingly in different contexts. One mention was neutral ("the issue of graduating students" without further specification), one viewed it from the perspective of Ukrainian students (due to initial difficulties in balancing language and coursework, "they do not have equal opportunities, and even though they might handle grammar school or university studies, they are unable to access them"), and one took the opposite view (alleged unequal treatment and stricter criteria for Czech students, who have less chance of being accepted into their desired programs, partly due to the increased number of applicants from Ukrainian students, for example, in healthcare schools).

Other comments related to Ukrainian students in Czech schools and the work with them also appeared in the responses. For example, one opinion expressed was that there is a lack of a generally established concept for a comprehensive approach to educating Ukrainian students (defining goals and determining what is unnecessary to teach them). One respondent pointed out that there is no consideration given to the fact that these students have experienced war and that they do not receive psychological support (especially those who have witnessed bombings) to help them overcome mental health issues. Another respondent expressed concern that having a Ukrainian assistant is contingent upon having at least five Ukrainian students. The responses also revealed a division of opinion, with some respondents expressing critical views toward Ukrainian students. One respondent noted weak integration of Ukrainian students and alleged significant advantages they receive, which, in their view, have a counterproductive effect. Another respondent suggested that after a certain period (six months to a year), Ukrainian students should take more responsibility for their lives, "not act as if they are on vacation." In a similar vein, another respondent expressed that the differential treatment of war refugees (according to the "Lex Ukraine" law) compared to other foreign students who may have been in the country for the same amount of time but are required to be assessed in all subjects without leniency after six months, is unfair.

One response suggested that students who are not interested in education in the Czech Republic and want to return home should not be required to attend school (according to the respondent, these students generally only "show up" in class). The opinion that the motivation of Ukrainian students depends on whether they intend to stay in the Czech Republic or return to their home country appeared repeatedly in the responses. According to another respondent, there is a difference in the attitudes of younger versus older Ukrainian students (no further specifics provided).

Some respondents' statements did not offer advice or recommendations but simply described the current situation, so for completeness, we include them

Available at: https://www.paqresearch.cz/tema/hlas-ukrajincu/ (accessed December 30, 2023).

here. One respondent mentioned the complexity of the situation, noting that attention must also be given to children who have experienced isolation due to COVID-19 and to students included in classes through inclusion programs. This makes the situation challenging even for children who do not belong to these groups. Another teacher similarly pointed out the difficulty of having a high proportion of Ukrainian students in "overcrowded" classrooms (which also include many other children who need additional support). In their view, this situation makes it more difficult for Ukrainian students to assimilate.

Summary and Interpretation of Results

The results show that most Czech teachers are supportive of Ukrainian students and strive to handle the situation responsibly. However, it is also evident from the responses that history teachers' views on integrating Ukrainian students into education vary widely – both in terms of attitudes toward Ukrainian students (ranging from unequivocal support rooted in understanding the complexity of their situation, with responses like "it takes time," to clear scepticism and criticism over the perceived lack of interest in education on the part of Ukrainian students) and in terms of the methodological support teachers feel they need (some say they do not need any support, while others appreciate all the assistance they can get). Scepticism among some teachers partly stems from the feeling that the responsibility for resolving the situation was largely left on them, with insufficient support provided. A common criticism is that Ukrainian students are not sufficiently engaged in learning because they plan to return to Ukraine. This raises the question of whether a differentiated approach and set of expectations should be applied to Ukrainian students depending on whether their stay is intended to be permanent or temporary.

History teaching brings certain specific challenges to the education of Ukrainian students, particularly when addressing sensitive and problematic topics, especially wartime themes and the history of Russia or the "East" in general. We consider it a particularly interesting finding that some Czech teachers are making efforts to connect Czech and Ukrainian history (evident in their request for materials on Ukrainian history). This initiative is not required of them, yet some teachers have taken it up, which can be seen as a very accommodating step that may help engage Ukrainian students in history.

As previously mentioned, in the context of history education, it is nearly impossible to avoid certain topics that Ukrainian students may find sensitive. Ukrainian students bring their war-related experiences into history lessons, which manifest in their emotions, associations, and reactions to certain topics. As noted by Petr Winkler, director of the National Institute of Mental Health, Ukrainian students "struggle (...) with trauma related to the war, forced migration, and language barriers. Only ten percent of them are able to

communicate in everyday situations. For these reasons, they practically do not participate in extracurricular activities."[36]

It is therefore essential to consider the traumatic experiences of Ukrainian students. Since topics that may trigger negative reactions in students are an integral part of the history curriculum, these topics still need to be addressed in lessons, but in a way that does not harm the mental well-being of students with negative war experiences. According to a study focusing on children fleeing Syria, such individual experiences can result in toxic stress. Children should be exposed to low levels of stress to develop effective coping mechanisms for managing stress. Excessive levels of stress can hinder appropriate psychological development.[37] The same approach can be applied to Ukrainian students, which must be considered by everyone involved in the educational process. Our data indicate that many teachers are doing this through their approach to sensitive topics or the choice of didactic materials. The issue of stress is also discussed in the publication *Adverse Childhood Experiences and Their Life-Long Impact,*[38] which explores this subject and aligns with the interpretations mentioned above.

The attitudes and behaviour patterns of Czech teachers toward Ukrainian students and war-related and trauma-related topics are shared by Polish teachers, who also take into account certain controversial topics, such as Polish-Ukrainian relations throughout history.[39]

The data we obtained further suggest that teachers need to work carefully with language, not only to ensure comprehension of the topic but also to avoid presenting it in a way that might create undue stress or pressure on Ukrainian students. Students may then react negatively to these topics, as shown by some of the responses collected from teachers. Polish teachers similarly recognize the importance of communication between teachers and students.[40] Teachers in Poland not only try to build a positive relationship with incoming students but also strive to create a warm environment in which students feel comfortable. Another study confirms this situation in Poland.[41]

In our research, we also analysed how various institutions or other alternatives support teachers. The results show that teachers perceive

[36] Cerqueirová, A. (2023). Víc než polovina deváťáků trpí psychickými poruchami. *Chrudimský, Svitavský, Orlický deník*, October 12, 2023, p. 2.

[37] Murray, J. S. (2017). Toxic stress and child refugees. *Journal for Specialists in Pediatric Nursing* 23(1).

[38] Rokach, A. – Clyton, S. (2023). *Adverse Childhood Experiences and Their Life-Long Impact.* York University.

[39] Bartnikowska, U. – Parchomiuk, M. – Ćwirynkało, K. – Antoszewska, B. (2023). Adjusting the teaching process for refugee students from Ukraine. The perspective of Polish teachers. *The New Educational Review* 74, pp. 9–20.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Herbst, M. – Sitek, M. (2023). Education in exile: Ukrainian refugee students in the schooling system in Poland following the Russian–ukrainian war. *European Journal of Education 58*(4), pp. 575–594.

the greatest support from their colleagues. Next in line are school administration and internet resources. On the other end of the spectrum, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) and the Czech School Inspectorate (CSI) provide the least support. A similar issue was addressed in the previously mentioned study focused on the Polish environment. Their findings align with those of Czech teachers, as Polish teachers also see support from their colleagues as crucial for adapting to the rapid changes needed after the arrival of Ukrainian students.[42]

We also attempted to determine whether teachers encounter different types of difficulties in subjects other than history. Most responses from this group of teachers concerned the language barrier and language instruction for Ukrainian students. Czech was the most frequently mentioned language, but teachers also cited English, German, and French. It is essential to note that the subject specialization of teachers involved in the research may play a role here. Nevertheless, the language barrier is a significant factor in the integration of Ukrainian students. Shortly after arriving in the Czech Republic, only 7% of refugees spoke Czech well, while nearly two-thirds spoke very little or none at all.[43] Overcoming the language barrier can be considered a critical step in successfully integrating incoming students into the Czech environment. The conclusions drawn from the data regarding the language barrier can be supported by data from the European Commission,[44] EMN,[45] and UNICEF.[46] This problem is similarly acknowledged in research[47] and by teachers in both Czech[48] and Polish[49] settings.

The survey generated a solid level of interest among participating teachers (evident in both the number of responses and the quality and amount of time some respondents devoted to answering open-ended questions). From this, we conclude that this is a highly relevant issue for Czech teachers, and they are interested in discussing it and finding solutions to help them manage

[42] Bartnikowska, U. – Parchomiuk, M. – Ćwirynkało, K. – Antoszewska, B. c. w.

[43] Palata, L. (2022). Kdo je ukrajinský běženec? Vysokoškolačka 35 s dětmi. *Chrudimský, Svitavský, Orlický deník*, October 4, 2022, p. 8.

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[47] Kavanová, M. – Prokop D. – Duarte J. – Kunc M. – Levínský M. – Ostrý M. – Škvrňák M. (2023). c.d.

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[49] Herbst, M. – Sitek, M. (2023). c. w.; Rataj, M. – Berezovska, I. (2023). c. w.

the situation. Although significant attention is given to this issue (as we have tried to demonstrate above), it is rarely addressed in a way that is specifically focused on history as a school subject.

The research naturally encounters limitations in its approach – it represents the perspective of Czech teachers. In the future, it would be beneficial to compare these conclusions with findings gathered directly from Ukrainian students or their Czech classmates. The questionnaire format could be expanded to include structured interviews. It should also be noted that these findings are valid as of the time of the research (spring 2023), and in some areas, the situation and teachers' attitudes are evolving. It will therefore be interesting to compare the results with new findings conducted in the future. Another possibility would be to compare these attitudes internationally, which could bring additional insights to the issue based on different experiences and approaches.

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