



**Group of the Progressive Alliance of
Socialists & Democrats
in the European Parliament**

European Parliament
Rue Wiertz 60
B-1047 Bruxelles
T +32 2 284 2111
F +32 2 230 6664
www.socialistsanddemocrats.eu

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Dear President von der Leyen,
Dear President Michel,

We call for the urgent establishment of an EU Ukraine Child Protection Package to protect children fleeing Ukraine.

The war continues to have a devastating impact on the lives of the people of Ukraine and poses a severe threat to the lives and well-being of all children. Many of Ukraine's 7.5 million children are in desperate need of safety, protection, humanitarian aid and psychosocial care, and the number of children in need is only growing larger by the day. The S&D Group calls for immediate action to protect the rights of the child in this crisis and step up all efforts to support the children in need.

Based on experience from crises and conflicts around the world, we know that children are severely and often disproportionately affected. Due to the ongoing war in Ukraine, more than 1.5 million children have fled Ukraine and many more are displaced within their own country. There is a need for nutrition, shelter and basic health care for people on the move, as well as for those who are staying in their homes. Families risk being separated and children are especially vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and trafficking during emergencies and armed conflicts.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which all EU Member States have ratified, must guide our support for Ukraine. Every child in Europe and across the world should enjoy the same rights and live free from harm, discrimination and intimidation of any kind. The overarching ambition of the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child is to build the best possible life for children in the European Union and across the globe. The protection and promotion of the rights of the child is a core objective of the EU's work and in the strategy the Commission has committed to mainstreaming a children's rights perspective in all relevant policies, legislation and funding programmes. The EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child and the European Child Guarantee propose concrete actions to protect, promote and fulfil children's rights in today's ever-changing world. These actions are crucial as a result of the war in Ukraine.

We call on the Council and the European Commission to urgently agree an EU Ukraine Child Protection Package with the Ukrainian government to protect and assist the children in and from Ukraine who are impacted by the war.

The EU and its Member States must deliver on the UNCRC, the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child and the European Child Guarantee to ensure that a children's rights perspective is mainstreamed in all relevant policies and funding connected to the war in Ukraine, including in asylum and migration processes. Children must, at all times, be protected against any harm; hence, child protection must be a priority for all involved actors assisting people impacted by the war in

Ukraine. Particular focus on protecting children from abuse, exploitation and trafficking is crucial due to the risks emerging from the crisis. As the family and caring adults around the child are vital to ensure the well-being and protection of children it is crucial to make sure that families are fully supported.

Furthermore, we ask for emergency relief essentials for child refugees and internally displaced children, including shelter, safe water, food, hygiene kits, medical services as well as child-friendly spaces that give children a safe space to rest, play, learn and receive psychosocial support. Access to safe, inclusive, quality education must be a priority, both for the refugees and the children in Ukraine.

The UNCRC, the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child, and the European Child Guarantee must guide our action in the Ukraine war. Because children's rights are human rights.

Finally, our Group intends to raise this issue as a debate in an upcoming Plenary Session of the European Parliament.

We thank you for your attention to this matter of great importance.

Yours sincerely,



Iratxe García Pérez
President
S&D Group
European Parliament



Helène Fritzon
Vice-President responsible for children's rights
S&D Group
European Parliament