

THE WAY HOME PROJECT

Ukrainian Child Rights Network (UCRN) is a public union that unites 33 Ukrainian and international organizations and charitable foundations working throughout Ukraine to secure children's rights and well-being. We direct our joint efforts to ensure that every child grows up in a happy, healthy, reliable family environment in which his personality and rights are respected.

We promote the best interests of the child during the formation of state policy through advocacy, lobbying for reforms of the social services system, decentralization, developing a national monitoring system, and representing our interests and the interests of children and families in state authorities.

Even during wartime, we focus on the needs and interests of the child. Now we are working with government, non government organization on the return of children who were abducted and forcibly resettled by Russia.



UKRAINIAN CHILD
RIGHTS NETWORK



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
UKRAINE



MinReintegration



Save the Children



MEDIA
INITIATIVE
for Human Rights



Омбудсман України
Ombudsman of Ukraine

THE CONDITIONS OF THE DEPORTATION OF CHILDREN TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE TEMPORARILY OCCUPIED TERRITORY

Children in the occupied territories/Russia whose parents were killed or captured during the efforts to evacuate.

children who were in institutions at the beginning of the full-scale war and were sent to Crimea, other territories occupied in 2014, and then - some of them - to the territory of the Russian Federation;

orphans or semi-orphans who were students of professional colleges at the beginning of the full-scale war, which were very quickly occupied after 24 February 2022;

children who were sent to relatives for security reasons at the beginning of the full-scale war;

a specific category of children whose parents are in the Armed Forces or work in government structures.

135 children were returned by our team



Kherson - Skadovsk = 64 km
64 km = distance in a week



children STORIES



Bogdan
13 y.o

Returning from Anapa(rf) to
Kharkiv(UA)

He was in the camp in Anapa, but legal representative was shocked how changed her road. When she was moving, her direction had changed from Anapa on Eisk and then on Voronezh. All time we supported her, and in the end, Bogdan is at home.

Changes on the way: Anapa-Eisk-Voronezh

Veronika
14 y.o

Returning from rf to Kyiv (UA)

She spent a year and a half in russia, where her aunt illegally took her. The girl was not allowed to call her mother, was made a witness to criminal proceedings, intimidated, forcibly subjected to a medical examination, and kept in the isolation ward of the educational center because she wanted to return home.

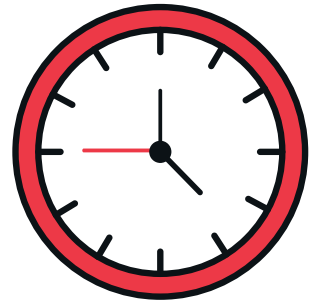
Pavlo
12 y.o

Returning from Luhansk to
Dnipro(UA)

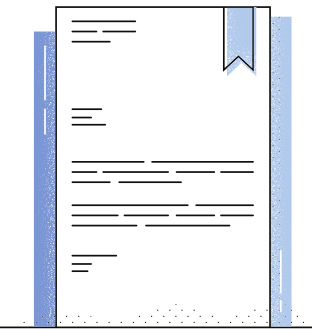
During the occupation, the boy buried his father and grandfather. He was taken under the care of relatives then placed in a shelter. From there, he was taken to russia and put into a foster family. His half-sister came to the russian federation for him. When everything was ready to cross the Ukrainian border, the russian border guard issued a verdict: 'We cannot let you pass. The child is a citizen of Russia.' Even Pavlo himself did not know about this.

PROBLEMS

In process of returning



TIME – perhaps the most formidable weapon of Russia. Each new day moves us further away from the possibility to return a child – russians change the identity of Ukrainian children.



The russian side always asks for additional documents for parents or guardians to be able to pick up the child, and it is a long distance and time to deliver those documents.



Changes in the return process, which may include changes in the child's location and circumstances.



Children and their parents do not have accommodation, because their own is either under occupation or destroyed, so they have no place to live.



While the children were under occupation or in Russia, they missed a lot of classes, so they need help with their studying - tutors, enrolment in educational institutions, etc.



Rehabilitation and psychological assistance is what they need in the first place in terms of long-term support.



PROPOSITIONS



The mechanism developed in international humanitarian law **is not effective** due to russia's disregard for the legal system.



We propose establishing a Hub in a third country where returned children, their parents/legal representatives, and representatives of international organizations with a mandate for child return would meet, documenting requests and returns.

THANKS FOR WATCHING



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