MAY NEWSLETTER: SUPPORTING EDUCATION IN UKRAINE

Dear Members,

The Coalition is responding beyond the COVID-19 pandemic to support the continuation of education in many contexts. This month, we look at how some members are supporting the Ministry of Education and Science in Ukraine and ensuring that #LearningNeverStops.

GLOBAL EDUCATION COALITION

Dear Partners,

The humanitarian crisis in Ukraine has forced many people to uproot their lives. According to the UNHCR, over 6 million people have fled their homes in Ukraine for neighboring countries since the conflict began at the end of February 2022. The first line of humanitarian crisis response is often monetary support for food, shelter, and healthcare. However, access to job-relevant education and work opportunities are equally paramount to rebuilding one’s livelihood.

Collaboration among higher education institutions, businesses, and governments will be critical to ensuring educational continuity for Ukrainian learners, supporting instructors in the shift to digital learning, and adapting solutions quickly to new contexts.

With campus closures and learning disrupted across Ukraine, Coursera and our community of over 250 university and industry partners joined the Ukraine Ministry of Education and Science to offer Coursera for Campus for free to all Ukrainian higher education institutions and their students. Universities and colleges in Ukraine can sign up to provide all of their enrolled students access to 5,000 courses and 2,500 Guided Projects from top universities and companies including the University of Pennsylvania, University of Michigan, Google, and IBM.

Since the launch, approximately 10,000 students from 130 Ukrainian universities and colleges have enrolled in the initiative. Students have amassed over 20,000 course enrollments and spent over 85,000 hours learning online in fields such as business, technology, and data science. Many have pursued skills like English language communication, leadership and management, computer programming, mathematics and statistical programming.

In addition, our Coursera for Refugees program is available for free to nonprofits including those actively working to support Ukrainian refugees such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Rescue Committee. We are offering individual learners the ability to receive financial aid or a scholarship waiver through the Coursera platform.

We believe learning is the source of human progress. We are deeply inspired by these learners who remain hopeful about positive change despite facing enormous hardship, and we’re grateful to have the support of our community and partners, including Coalition members, in helping them realize their visions for a better world.

Regards,
Jeff Maggioncalda,
CEO, Coursera
Ukraine: Overview of education disruption on the ground

According to data from UNESCO’s Institute for Statistics, Ukraine’s total school-age population from pre-primary to tertiary education is 6.84 million. This represents 1.05 million in pre-primary, 1.72 million and 2.54 million respectively at primary and secondary levels, and 1.53 million in tertiary education.

Based on the latest figures by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as of 13 May, 2022, more than 6 million people have fled Ukraine for other countries. Teachers are among those who have been displaced, creating gaps in the education system of the country. Thousands of places of learning have also been damaged or destroyed. As of 13 May, the Ministry of Education and Science reports that:

- 1,748 educational institutions have been damaged from bombing and shelling, and 144 have been destroyed.
- This includes the complete destruction of 26 preschool education institutions while 566 have been damaged.
- 95 professional pre-higher and higher education institutions have been damaged; nine more have been destroyed.
- The buildings of 9 vocational and education training institutions have been destroyed and 96 have been damaged.

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Support to Ukraine authorities and mapping exercise

On 15 March 2022, UNESCO convened a Global Education Coalition meeting with Arthur Seletskiy, Deputy Minister of Education and Science for Ukraine, other officials and Coalition members. Dmytro Zavgordnii, Head of the Ministry’s Digital Department, explained that Ukraine boosted its distance learning system during COVID-19 through the development of the All-Ukrainian School Online platform and the Laptop for Every Teacher Initiative.

The Ministry is building on these initiatives to ensure that learning continues for students in Ukraine and those who have fled to neighboring countries. All-Ukrainian School Online – an e-platform for distance and blended learning for grades 5-11 – now has almost 80,000 users.

The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine requested support to create additional content for primary school; provide advanced training and laptops for teachers, and an e-exam and admissions platform for university applicants. Following the call, 25 GEC members have made offers of support which are at various stages of consideration and implementation by the Ministry (see some initiatives below).

Meanwhile, UNESCO has also been mapping how host countries are supporting and providing education to Ukrainian refugees. The mapping will allow stakeholders to take stock of concrete steps taken to integrate and support Ukrainian learners and teachers fleeing the war, including international students enrolled in Ukrainian higher education institutions. The aim is to promote the exchange of good practices and facilitate common approaches to support the education of all those compelled to leave Ukraine.
Education actions for Ukraine

In addition to Coursera, several other Global Education Coalition members are already implementing actions to support learning initiatives among those impacted by the conflict in Ukraine.

- Amazon Web Services are facilitating the use of public systems accounts for Ukraine. They also support refugees in neighbouring countries with skills training.
- Through its online campus, EdX is offering all Ukrainian education institutions access to over 1,400 online courses – to date, 46 institutions have participated. EdX is also supporting the Ministry’s online admissions and assessment work.
- Google is working with the Ministry of Education and Science, alongside manufacturers, to explore the possibility of providing a comprehensive package of support, including access to Google Workspace for Education for K-12 and Higher Education Institutions and more.
- Khan Academy has translated its math and science courses into Ukrainian and is in the process of translating practice exercises and other content. The organization has also added a Ukrainian translation of the parent guide for Khan Academy Kids - an early learning mobile app for ages 2-8.
- Microsoft is working with the Ministry of Education and Science and Coalition partners to develop a package of support including help to All-Ukrainian School Online.
- University of the People is providing 1,000 Ukrainian students with scholarships to pursue their studies online. The University is also opening all its courses to Ukrainian students whose universities have closed. One advantage is that only a basic, even sporadic, internet connection is needed for its courses – no broadband is required.
- YouTube is developing a Ukrainian Learning Hub with curated digital content aligned to the Ukrainian curriculum and All-Ukrainian School Online. This Learning Hub will point users to this online platform for a more comprehensive learning experience.
- KPMG is supporting the Ukrainian chapter of the Global Education Coalition with team support, seconding a project manager and digital coordinator from KPMG Ukraine to join UNESCO’s team, for which we are most grateful.

Call for support

Given the additional needs of the Ministry of Education and Science at this time, we invite members to reach out and share how your organization may be able to provide support.

The Ministry is prioritizing, among other things, support in providing new books to learners in grades 5 and 6, preparing teachers for new standards, delivering psychological support and training, as well as modernizing vocational education and training (VET) for future workforce needs. More details on the current needs can be found here.

Save the date

On 24 May, the Transforming Education Summit Secretariat will hold a consultation for Private Sector Engagement. The online event, which will start at 3.00 pm Paris (CEST), will include discussions around an Action Plan for the Private Sector and there will be opportunities to submit suggestions and questions. The event is one of a number of consultations organized by the TES Secretariat to ensure public engagement and contribute to the Summit’s outcomes. Register here to join the event.

On 25 May at 1.30 PM (CEST), UNESCO’s Global Education Coalition will organize a virtual Forum to celebrate Africa Day and the opportunities to harness technology to rebuild education systems that are more inclusive, equitable and effective in learning outcomes. The event will also serve as a regional consultation ahead of the Transforming Education Summit which will take place in September.

Save the date and register here for Global Education Coalition for Africa Day. In the next week, we will share more information on this event.

Contact us

For more information - or should you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please reach out via email to the Global Education Coalition team. For additional news, you may also refer to the Global Education Coalition website.