



#EyesOpen



**I WILL
KEEP
MY EYES
OPEN**



ADULTS AND CHILDREN FLEEING THE UKRAINE

As of September 2023, over 5 million refugees have been recorded in Europe according to the [UN Refugee Agency](#). Of those 5 millions, [Save the Children](#) estimates that 40% are children. These children have had to leave their whole lives behind - family, friends, school, everything they held dear - to start over again in a new place. Although the Russia's aggression against Ukraine began in 2022, it remains vital that we continue to keep our eyes open to the challenges faced by these children and support their integration in their host countries.

For many of these children, their experiences at school are their primary contact with their host country. They are meeting local children there, children who may not understand what is happening in Ukraine or how to be sensitive to their new classmate.

'THE GIRL WHO KEPT HER EYES OPEN' CHILDREN'S BOOK

The heartfelt children's book 'The Girl Who Kept Her Eyes Open' aims to raise awareness of the challenges faced by people fleeing war and their rights. The European Commission has teamed up with renowned Ukrainian illustrator, [Anna Sarvira](#), whose illustrations have been exhibited worldwide. Most notably, her depiction of everyday Ukrainian life under the threat of war was featured by the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) [New York](#).

The book tells the captivating story of a Ukrainian refugee child meeting a particularly observant little girl in her new school. Through their inspiring journey, the book beautifully and simply illustrates the importance of paying attention to others and offering them support in uncertain times, such as war.

The book was conceptualised as an extension of the European Commission's 'Keep your eyes open' campaign to raise awareness on victims' rights in the EU. The overarching campaign is part of the first-ever EU strategy on victims' rights, which aims to ensure that all victims of all crimes understand how to exercise their fundamental rights and where to go for support.

AUDIENCE AND TARGET COUNTRIES

Hardcover versions of the 'The Girl Who Kept Her Eyes Open' will be distributed to various stakeholders across the 10 campaign focus countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Romania and Slovakia). The publication has been adapted from English to 12 languages (Ukrainian, French, Dutch, Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Estonian, Hungarian, Latvian, Polish, Romanian and Slovak). The book is available digitally via the 'Keep your eyes open' campaign website. Please see [here](#) to download the book.

The key target audiences include:

- Children aged 7-10 years old from the 10 focus Member States
- Ukrainian refugee children aged 7-10, living in the 10 focus countries
- Primary education teachers across the EU
- Parents (Ukrainian and EU citizens) aged 25-44





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HOW YOU CAN HELP - SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO USE THE BOOK

- Host an in-person reading of the book OR a live reading of the book via social media.
- Record readings of the book and share on social media.
- Showcase the book in a public space, office, book fair etc.
- Facilitate conversations about the book and its message.
- Use the book as a learning tool within the school curriculum.
- Share the online version of the book via social media.
- Include information about the book in a newsletter (paper or digital version).

When promoting the book, it's important to keep in mind that the book ends with a message to children to be kind, to support those who need it and to speak up if they witness any bullying. The book should not be used to engage in conversations on politics related to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Emphasis should remain on the impact the war has on victims and how EU citizens can support them.

The book is intended to help the readers in their interactions with victims of war, what to look out for and how to approach a victim of war, specifically child victims of war. Although the target audience is children from ages 7-10, the book can be read, and its message understood, by children and people of all ages. If a reader or listener (child or adult) feels triggered by the contents or message of the book, approach the situation with kindness and understanding.

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