



Supporting Ukrainian (UA) Refugee Women's Socio-Economic Integration and Wellbeing

PROJECT FACTSHEET#1

Duration: April 2025 - October 2026

Target Population: Employable refugee women, displaced from Ukraine after February 2022, and their dependents. WISE aims to reach 200 Ukrainian refugee women in the four Holistic Support Centers.

Implementation sites: Sofia (Bulgaria), Milan, Rome, Turin (Italy).

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The **WISE** project combines mental health and psychosocial support with employment services to improve the socio-economic inclusion of Ukrainian refugee women in Italy and Bulgaria.

By scaling up **Holistic Support Centres**, WISE helps enhance employability, access to services, and overall wellbeing through a trauma-informed, gender-sensitive approach..

KEY OBJECTIVES



Support access to **host labour markets** and potential reintegration into Ukraine's job market.



Improve **access to social and public services**, including childcare.



Enhance **mental health, well-being, and social connectedness**.



Raise awareness and promote the adoption of the **Holistic Support Centre model**.

APPROACH & METHODOLOGY



Empowering to **access jobs** now — with future relevance for voluntary return to Ukraine.



Gender-sensitive support rooted in **Women & Girls Safe Space** methodology



Combined **mental health and employment services** tailored to refugee women.



Tested, refined, and shared across local and EU levels through **multi-stakeholder engagement**.

CORE COMPONENTS

- Individual support
- Employment preparation
- Learning pathways
- Empowerment groups
- Mental health
- Cultural mediation
- Childcare
- AI Tools
- EU-level engagement[



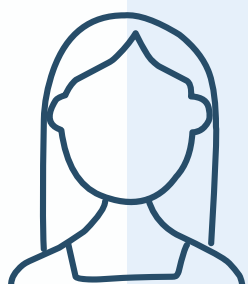
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STORIES OF CHANGE



Olena arrived in Italy at the beginning of 2022 from Mariupol, after being forced to flee the war in Ukraine. She was welcomed in Rome in an SAI facility and, since February 2024, has been actively participating in the Safe Space for Women and Girls run by the International Rescue Committee in Rome.

As part of the WISE project, Olena has taken part in over 30 hours of group activities, attended five job placement sessions, and completed 12 individual case management meetings. Through this tailored support, she received guidance in her job search and access to internship opportunities. Recently, she was offered an internship through a new women's empowerment initiative led by social services in Rome, with the prospect of long-term employment. [Read more.](#)



N. arrived in Italy from Ukraine at the outbreak of the war with her teenage son, a small suitcase, and the belief that they would stay only for a week. Faced with uncertainty and displacement, she began ethnopsychotherapy sessions at the PENC Centre through the WISE project.

Over time, these sessions created space to move beyond survival and begin reflecting on the future-not as a fixed plan, but as a growing sense of possibility. Supported by ethnopsychological care and linguistic-cultural mediation, N. gradually rebuilt confidence and a sense of personal agency.

Her story shows how WISE provides more than support-it creates the conditions for women to process change, regain stability, and begin imagining a future again.



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PROJECT RESULTS



4

HOLISTIC SUPPORT CENTRES

Rome • Milan • Turin • Sofia



200+

UKRAINIAN REFUGEE WOMEN SUPPORTED

through personalised holistic support tailored to individual needs and integration goals



70%

REPORTED INCREASED SELF-CONFIDENCE

after participating in structured psychosocial support activities

WHAT WISE COMBINED



EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

employment guidance and job-readiness training



CASE MANAGEMENT

personalised support and tailored pathways



PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

group and individual support to strengthen wellbeing and resilience



CULTURAL ORIENTATION

information and activities to support integration and participation

WHAT WE LEARNED



EMPLOYMENT + WELLBEING

Employment support is most effective when combined with psychosocial support.



PERSONALISED SUPPORT MATTERS

Holistic and personalised support increases engagement, confidence and employability.



BARRIERS REMAIN

- Language barriers
- Access to childcare
- Recognition of qualifications