

# **Executive Summary**

**Empowering Education:  
Understanding Teachers' Needs  
in Multicultural Classrooms**

The report *Empowering Education: Understanding Teachers' Needs in Multicultural Classrooms* was prepared by the British Council based on research materials conducted by the Stocznia Foundation, aimed at understanding the situation of Ukrainian students in Polish schools during the second year of the war in Ukraine. The opinions presented in the report were gathered during a conference organized by the British Council in Warsaw in December 2023. Nearly 100 professionals, including English language teachers, directors, intercultural assistants, and representatives of international organizations, participated in focus groups, where they were asked about issues related to the education of students with refugee experiences.

The report proposes an insight into the complex challenges faced by the Polish education system in light of the need to integrate student refugees from Ukraine. It presents an analysis of existing problems, such as teacher shortages, increased stress among students, and an excessive focus on grading and exams, painting a picture of a system under pressure. The report identifies

key challenges on various fronts, including difficulties in integrating classrooms, language barriers, the complex perspective of multicultural assistants, and the mental well-being of students and teachers.

To meet these challenges and mitigate associated risks, the authors of the report propose 12 recommendations. These recommendations include systemic reforms and targeted actions, such as using English as a bridging language for integration, strengthening mechanisms for psychosocial support, and creatively utilising multicultural assistants and teachers from Ukraine. Special attention is given to creating inclusive, multicultural educational spaces to establish a supportive environment for all students and strategically adapting the curriculum to alleviate pressure on both teachers and learners.

The main message of the recommendations is a call for a coherent, encompassing entire school community strategy that not only addresses its immediate educational needs but also lays the groundwork for developing resilience in the longer term.