ANTILIMBO SURVEY RESULTS OVERVIEW-

UKRAINIAN YOUTH SITUATION

IN SWEDEN

autumn 2025

This report provides a summary of the collected data from Sweden. It includes main questions relevant for the survey's aims. In total we have received 50 responses. The survey presents a group of mainly young, studying Ukrainian respondents who rely heavily on close social ties for well-being, motivation, and integration. Digital games and creative activities represent a highly suitable channel for engagement, especially when they emphasize storytelling, emotional connection, and social interaction. Any intervention or educational game developed for this audience should prioritize inclusivity, narrative depth, and opportunities for safe social bonding.

Language of responses

- Ukrainian: **39** (78%)
- Russian: **7** (14%)
- English: **4** (8%)

The survey was answered predominantly in Ukrainian, indicating that Ukrainian remains the strongest and most comfortable language of expression for respondents. Russian is still used by a notable minority, while English plays a limited role.

Gender distribution

- Female: **34** (67%)
- Male: **14** (29%)
- Prefer not to say: **2** (4%)

The survey is female-dominated. This should be taken into account especially in regard of social support, motivation, and gaming interests during developing of our scenario and game content.

Age distribution

- 18 and older: **23** (45%)
- Younger than 18: **16** (33%)

- 15 and older (mid-teen category): **8** (16%)
- Under 15: **3** (6%)

The respondents are mainly adolescents and young adults, with nearly half being 18+.

Studying situation

- Yes, currently studying: **40** (80%)
- No: **10** (20%)

Most respondents are in education, suggesting that schools, educational platforms, and learning-related environments are central to their daily lives and integration experience.

Connection to people in the new country

Most frequent answers:

- Some connection / limited contact
- Friends or acquaintances
- Mainly within Ukrainian community

Connections to people in the host country exist but are often limited or mediated through co-national networks. Deep social integration appears to still be in progress for many respondents.

What helps one feel more comfortable or "at home" in the new country?

Most frequently mentioned factors:

- Friends
- Family
- Feeling safe
- Language understanding
- Familiar routines and places

A sense of "home" is primary. Personal relationships and emotional safety outweigh structural factors, emphasizing the importance of peer networks and family stability.

Activities or topics of greatest interest (up to 3)

Most selected themes:

- Games and digital activities
- Creativity (art, drawing, music)
- Communication and social interaction
- Learning new things

Respondents are strongly attracted to interactive, creative, and socially oriented activities. Educational content is more appealing when embedded in engaging or playful formats.

Frequency of playing digital or mobile games

- Often / very often: **majority**
- Sometimes: **moderate share**
- Rarely or never: **minority**

Gaming is a common activity for most respondents, confirming digital games as a relevant and familiar medium for engagement, learning, and social connection.

Preferred game types (up to 3)

Most popular categories:

- Adventure / story-based games
- Simulation and casual games
- Puzzle and logic games

Respondents favor games with narrative depth, exploration, and low entry barriers rather than purely competitive or aggressive formats.

What makes a game interesting?

Key factors:

- Interesting story or characters
- Freedom of choice and exploration
- Clear goals and progression
- Emotional engagement

Narrative, autonomy, and emotional resonance are more important than technical complexity. Games are valued as experiences, not just entertainment.

What one values most in people (up to 3)

Most cited values:

- Kindness
- Honesty
- Trust
- Understanding and support

Interpersonal values strongly center on emotional safety and reliability, reflecting the lived experience of displacement and adaptation.

What helps one stay motivated or positive when things are difficult?

Main sources:

- Friends
- Family

- Personal goals and dreams
- Hobbies and activities

Motivation is sustained primarily through close relationships and a sense of purpose. Individual coping strategies are important but rarely isolated from social support.

Who do you turn to for advice or support?

Most common responses:

- Family
- Friends
- Combination of family and friends
- In fewer cases: teachers, psychologists, or online communities
- A small number: no one

Informal support networks dominate. Professional or institutional support plays a secondary role, and a small but important group reports having no one to turn to, indicating a potential risk group requiring targeted support.

CONCLUSION

The Ukrainian youth surveyed in Sweden show a high level of **resilience, creativity, and openness** to new experiences, while maintaining strong ties to their cultural roots. The majority are **female adolescents and young adults**, actively studying and engaged in daily routines. While **digital gaming, creative activities, and social communication** are their top interests, they also value **emotional safety, meaningful relationships, and opportunities to grow**.

Respondents report feeling **only partially connected** to the host society — friendships are often limited to co-nationals or other migrants. Integration into Swedish peer groups remains a challenge, largely due to language barriers and social differences. However, personal **motivation is strong**, rooted in family, dreams, and a desire to succeed.

Games are a familiar and valued tool, especially when they are **narrative-based, emotionally engaging, and allow freedom of choice**. Values such as **kindness, trust, honesty, and understanding** dominate their vision of what makes relationships meaningful. The emotional landscape behind the data reveals **hope coexisting with uncertainty**, and a strong desire for **recognition, inclusion, and personal development**.

When comparing the survey results with the insights provided by youth workers, Youth workers in Sweden largely **echo the themes expressed in the survey**, offering valuable confirmation and deeper interpretation of the data.

Resilience and vulnerability: Youth workers describe Ukrainian teens as polite, motivated, and capable — but also carrying **invisible emotional stress**, mirroring the self-reported emphasis on emotional safety and relationships in the survey.

Friendship patterns: Like in the survey, workers observe that **most friendships are with other Ukrainians or migrants**, due to **language barriers** and **cultural distance**. However, youth workers also highlight the potential of **mixed-background peer groups** as powerful tools for cultural adaptation and language learning.

Integration and sense of home: Both perspectives emphasize that feeling at home is tied not to formal structures, but to **feeling safe, respected, and emotionally grounded**. Shared factors include **school routines, leisure activities, and space to maintain Ukrainian culture**.

Values and self-image: Youth workers confirm that Ukrainian youth want to be seen not as passive recipients of help, but as **capable, intelligent individuals** who want to **contribute** to society — a sentiment strongly reflected in survey answers about values and public perception.

Future outlook: While survey respondents express uncertainty, youth workers note a growing willingness to make **long-term plans** in Sweden as the war continues. They see **education, job opportunities, and structured routines** as vital in enabling this shift.

Support systems: Both groups point to **family and friends** (in Sweden and Ukraine) as primary sources of support. Teachers and youth workers play a **secondary, yet significant role**, and online spaces remain meaningful, especially for emotional continuity with Ukraine.

Game development: Youth workers reinforce the survey's call for **games that focus on emotional themes**, like **belonging, resilience, friendship, and cultural exchange** — ideally offering youth the space to explore identity, make meaningful choices, and engage socially in a safe format.

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