FOR INCLUSION

Monitoring and Evaluation Report - 2024
TOY for Inclusion Play Hubs

1 January to 31 December 2024

International Child Development Initiatives

ROMANI EARLY YEARS NETWORK

INTERNATIONAL STEP by STEP ASSOCIATION

ASSOCIAZIONE 21 LUGLIO ONLUS

EDUCATION INITIATIVES CENTER FOR

PONTON

KORAK PO KORAK

PARTNERSHUNGARY ALAPÍTVÁNY

PEDAGOŠKI INŠTITUT

Škola Dokorán Wide Open School n. o.

LHSI Labor and Health Social Initiatives

TOY FOR INCLUSION

Promotes inclusive community-based ECEC and brings services for children and their families to where they are needed.

PLAY HUBS

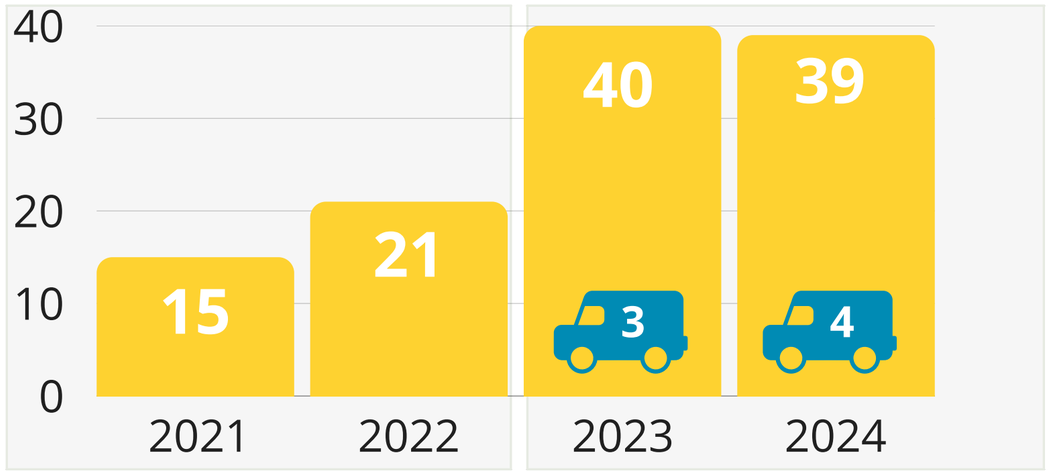
Non-formal, high-quality Early Childhood Education and Care centres

8 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic and Ukraine.

ACTIVE PLAY HUBS

PLAY HUBS + MOBILE PLAY HUBS



2024

Play Hubs

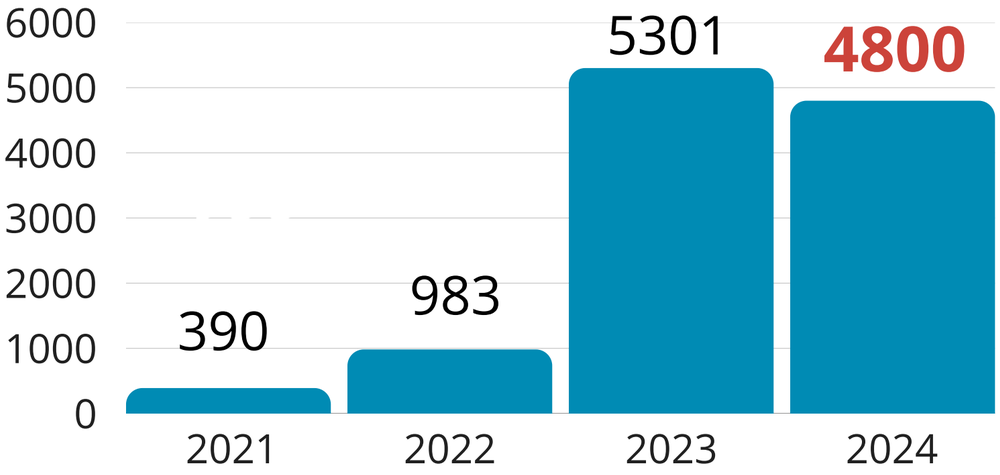
Mobile Play Hubs

The number of Play Hubs have steadily grown since 2019, nearly tripling over this period with a peak of 40 in 2023 due to a rapid expansion of Play Hubs in Slovakia and Hungary.

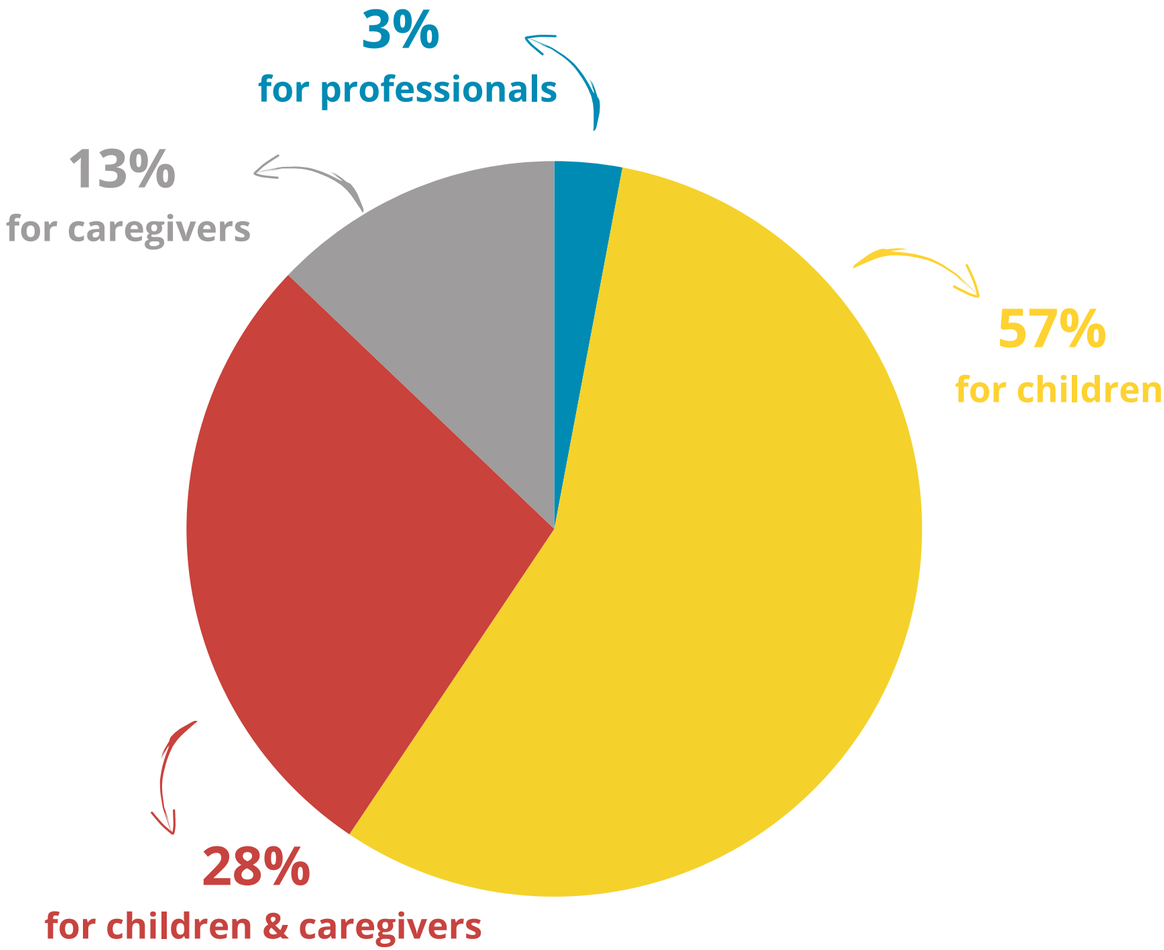
In 2024, this decreased to 39 due to the discontinuation of funding for Ukraine-response initiatives.

ACTIVITIES

Organised activities

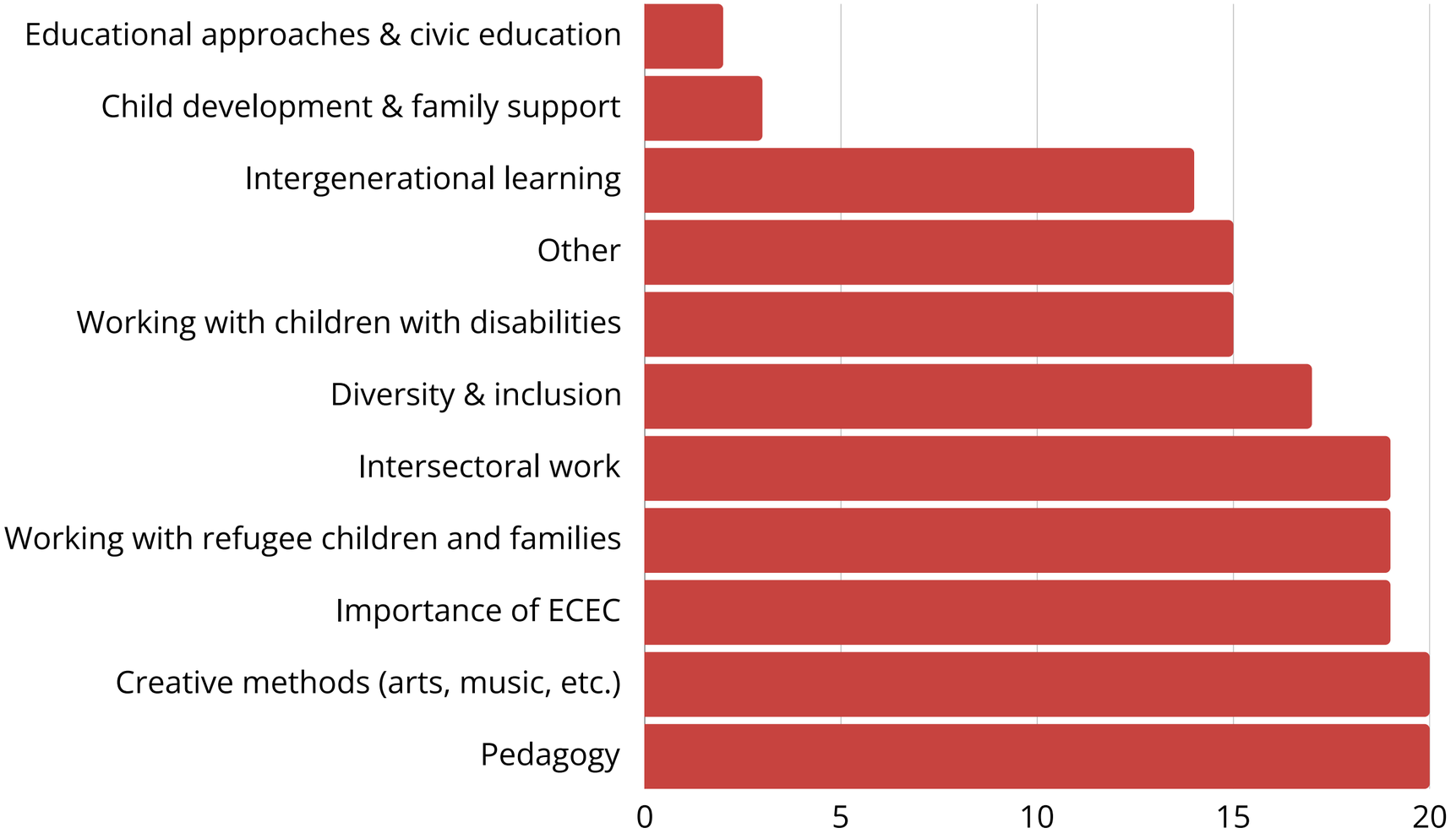


Target group



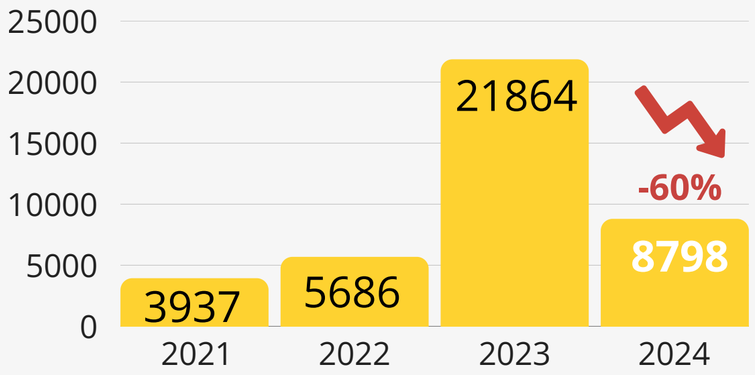
TRAINING SESSIONS

Topics covered at Play Hubs

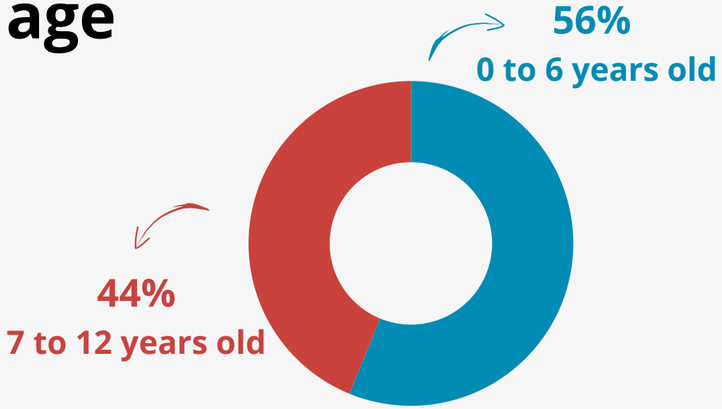


PARTICIPANTS - CHILDREN

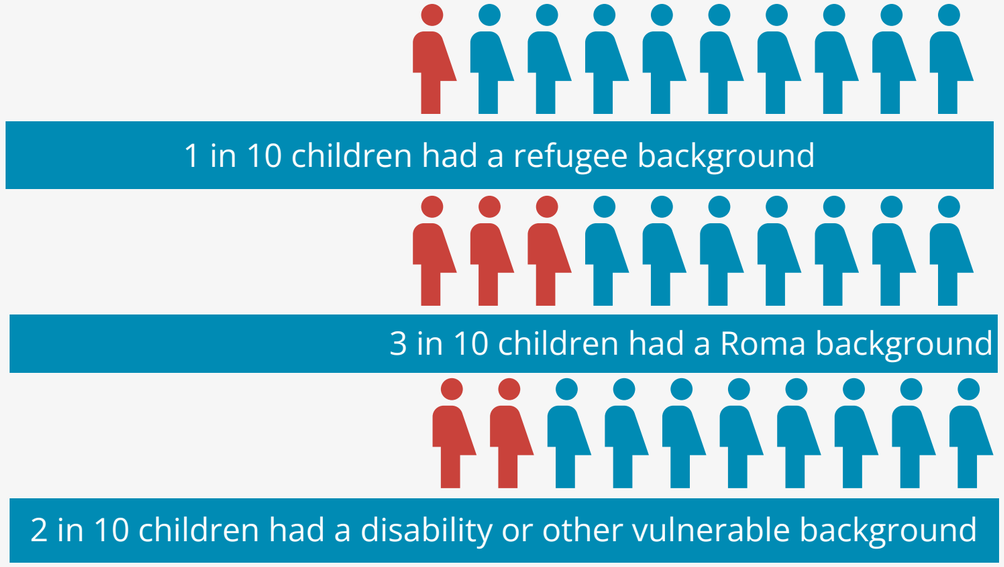
Children



Children's age



Background

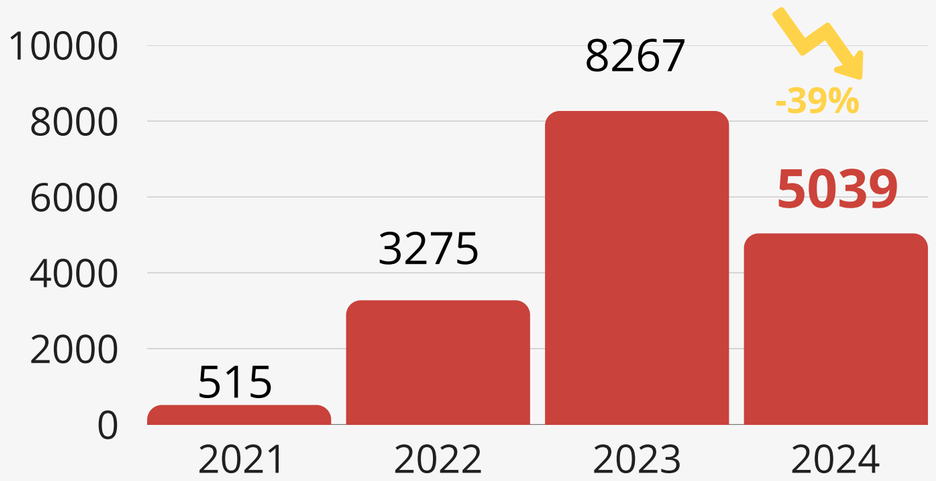


The decrease in numbers in 2024 reflects the end of international funding for Ukrainian refugee support.

PARTICIPANTS - ADULTS

The decrease in numbers in 2024 reflects the end of international funding for Ukrainian refugee support.

Adults



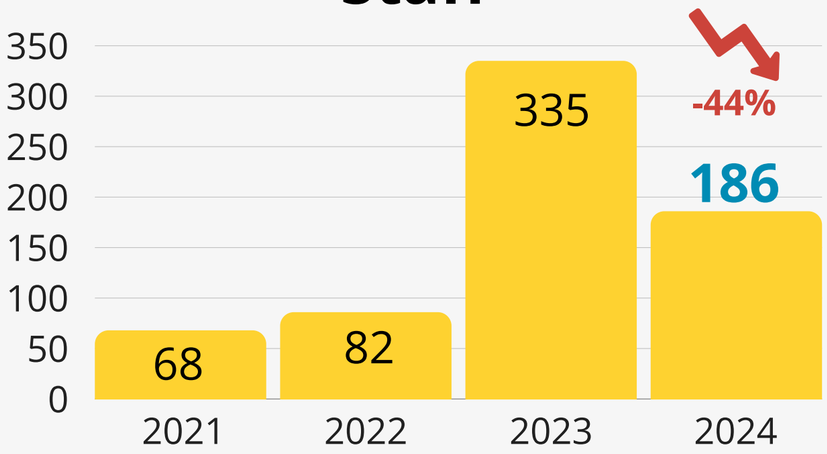
Background

1,5 in 10 adults had a refugee background

2 in 10 adults had a Roma background

STAFF

Staff



The decrease in numbers in 2024 reflects the end of international funding for Ukrainian refugee support.

Background

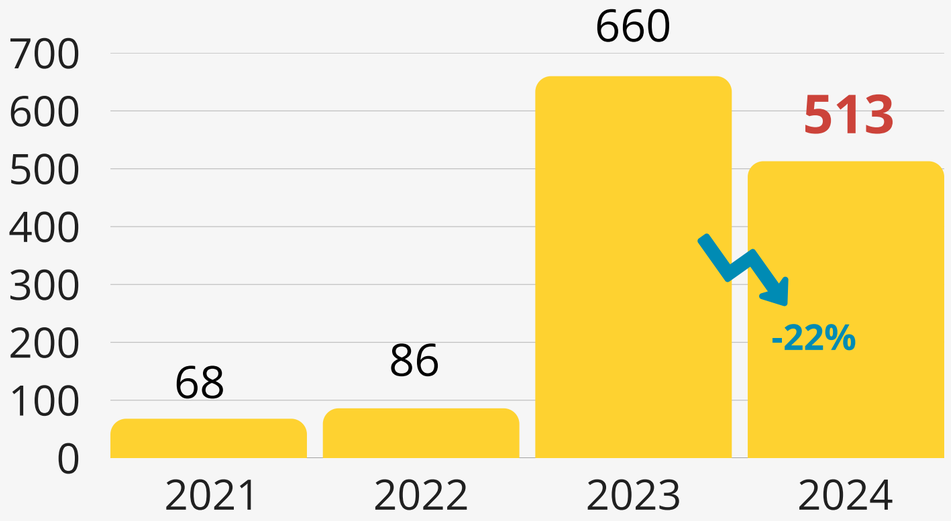
2 in 10 staff members had a Roma background

0,5 in 10 staff members had a refugee background

VOLUNTEERS

The decrease in numbers in 2024 reflects the end of international funding for Ukrainian refugee support.

Volunteers



Background

1,5 in 10 staff members had a Roma background

2 in 10 staff members had a refugee background

MAIN SUCCESSES

Child-friendliness

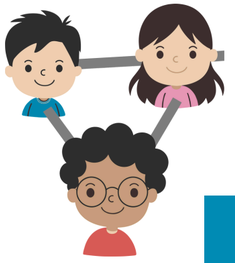
In the Play Hubs all children of all ages and backgrounds are welcomed and experience trusting and authentic interactions.

Safety, health, and protection

The Play Hubs operate with high safety standards and clear emergency protocols. Because of empathetic staff, there is a secure psychosocial environment.

High quality staff

The Play Hubs have highly competent, child-focused staff, including teachers and volunteers. This increases through ongoing informal training, as well as strengthening interpersonal relationships and team cohesion.



Connectedness

There is active parental involvement, especially in areas with strong Roma engagement. There is effective outreach via events, leaflets, and informal communication.

Activities

Children are able to co-design activities and select materials to build their autonomy. Flflexible programming allows activities to be adapted to the children's interests.

Although participation in 2024 decreased compared to the large jump in 2023, participation levels were still higher than pre-2023 levels.

MAIN CHALLENGES

For children and caregivers

- Accessibility issues for some families (poor infrastructure e.g., no streetlights or transport)
- Space constraints and material shortages limit full participation.
- Low educational levels of parents reduce capacity to articulate needs or engage meaningfully.
- Behavioural issues (e.g. ADHD, aggression) hinder participatory practice.

For staff and LAT members

- Economic sustainability (chronic underfunding for the Play Hubs, with no reliable long-term financial commitments)
- Staff turnover and a shortage of volunteers.
- Need of support from local authorities.
- Training gaps and inconsistent professional development.
- Closure of Play Hubs - especially in Slovakia and Hungary.
- Bureaucratic constraints can limit donations and public-private cooperation.

NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS FOR 2025

Sustainability

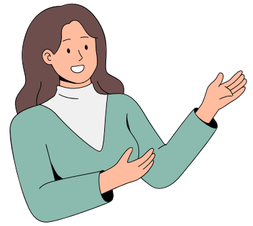
Building sustainability by diversifying funding resources, investing in workforce development, strengthening municipal support, and ensuring quality assurance across all Play Hubs

Engagement and Development

Continue engaging families, professionals, and volunteers, by offering more targeted activities, continuing to build resilience with LAT engagement, and fostering strong collaboration with partner institutions

Long-Term Impact

Broadening long-term impact by working towards integrating Play Hubs with public education and linking them to national ECEC systems



To prevent further closures of the Play Hubs, it is important to focus on diversifying funding channels and working increasing sustainability.

FOR INCLUSION

www.toy4inclusion.eu