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## **Return of Ukrainian children forcibly transferred and deported by Russia**

### **European Parliament resolution of 8 May 2025 on the return of Ukrainian children forcibly transferred and deported by Russia (2025/2691(RSP))**

(C/2026/581)

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine,
  - having regard to the UN Charter, the European Convention on Human Rights, the Geneva Conventions and their additional protocols, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the UN Convention on the rights of the child, and the Genocide Convention (CPPCG),
  - having regard to Rules 150(5) and 136(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas since February 2022 around 20 000 Ukrainian children have been forcibly deported to the Russian Federation and Belarus or detained in temporarily occupied Ukrainian territories, with only 1 293 returned and 624 confirmed dead, according to President Zelenskyy's 'Bring Kids Back UA' initiative; whereas according to the Yale Humanitarian Research Lab (HRL) the real figures are probably much higher, as these transfers and deportations continue;
- B. whereas international law prohibits forcible transfer to an occupied territory or deportation from an occupied territory to the territory of the occupier, which is a war crime under the Rome Statute and may amount to genocide under the CPPCG;
- C. whereas on 17 March 2023 the ICC issued arrest warrants for Vladimir Putin and Maria Lvova-Belova for their responsibility for the war crime of unlawful transfer and deportation of Ukrainian children;
1. Strongly condemns the violent actions of the Russian Federation and the complicity of Belarus in the mistreatment of Ukrainian children, including murder, forced transfer and deportation, illegal adoption, sexual abuse and exploitation, forced Russification and militarisation; stresses that these acts form part of a genocidal strategy to erase Ukrainian identity;
  2. Urges the EU to hold those responsible to account and to sanction individuals and entities implicated in these crimes;
  3. Demands that these crimes cease immediately and that Russia reports the identities and whereabouts of all deported Ukrainian children and ensures their well-being and safe and unconditional return;
  4. Urges Russian federal and local authorities to grant international organisations, such as the ICRC, OHCHR and UNICEF, access to all deported Ukrainian children;
  5. Regrets that the ICRC is failing to fulfil its mission to protect Ukrainian children deported to Russia and Belarus or located in temporarily occupied Ukrainian territories;
  6. Denounces the forced imposition of Russian citizenship on deported children and their state-sponsored adoption by Russian families as part of a deliberate policy of forced assimilation;
  7. Calls for the EU to closely cooperate with and support Ukrainian authorities, international and non-governmental organisations in their efforts to document all missing and deported Ukrainian children; urges the international community, including the United States, to maintain HRL's funding and the EU to ensure its continuation;
  8. Emphasises that any genuine peace deal must include the repatriation of these children and accountability for forcible transfers and deportations;
  9. Urges the international community to hold Russia accountable by reinforcing coordination through the ICC, the ICJ, and the Special tribunal for the crime of aggression against Ukraine;
  10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the VP/HR, the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the President, Government and parliament of Ukraine, and to the United States, Russia and Belarus.