



## Helping our Culture Flourish

### *Policy Recommendations on Multiculturalism*

Canadians of Ukrainian descent have always nurtured their traditions, culture, and language while contributing to the development of Canadian values—alongside Indigenous, British, French, and other ethno-cultural groups—as a founding people of Canada.

Ukrainian Canadians were at the forefront of the movement supporting Canada's policy of multiculturalism, which was announced at the Triennial Congress of Ukrainian Canadians by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in 1971, and affirmed in legislation by the Canadian Multiculturalism Act in 1988 by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney.

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) remains a strong advocate of multiculturalism, both as a practical tool to preserve minority languages and cultures, and as a source of strength uniting our diverse Canadian nation.

Through broad-based cultural programming, the Ukrainian Canadian community has a remarkable record for maintaining its culture through the arts (dance, literary arts, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts), heritage (museum exhibits, archives, and related programs), community festivals, and language education (from early childhood care, to weekend language schools, to post-secondary Ukrainian studies and beyond).

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) together with its member organizations, provincial councils and local branches supports the renewal and expansion of investments in multiculturalism and heritage programming, including robust arts and culture funding, support of heritage education including language instruction, and addressing historical injustices against ethno-cultural groups that took place in Canada.

#### **OUR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Support for Early Learning
- Revitalize Heritage Language Schools
- Support Ukrainian Education in School Boards
- Provide Opportunities for Youth Work Experiences
- Broaden Opportunities for Amateur Artists
- Establish a Day of Commemoration for Ukrainian Internment
- Establish Ukrainian Canadian Heritage Month

## **Recommendations**

### *Support for Early Learning*

Support of early learning in the form of high quality, affordable child care, including nursery and pre-schools, is critical to the well-being and success of young Canadian families. Ethno-cultural early learning programs can further support Canadian families by educating children in a culturally-sensitive environment, helping to instill heritage language acquisition, and establishing meaningful connections to their communities.

The UCC advocates for engagement with stakeholders and all levels of government to study ways in which ethno-cultural early learning can be supported.



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mosaic*

### *Revitalize Heritage Language Schools*

Language is a fundamental aspect of cultural expression and identity. Ukrainian Canadians have long supported the preservation of minority languages in Canada, as they add not only to the richness of Canada's multicultural mosaic, but maintain a critical connection to history. Community-run schools now reach only a fraction of youth and most exist in urban areas only; more must be done to ensure that retention of the Ukrainian language as a mother tongue, as well as Ukrainian as a Second Language (USL) instruction is available, accessible and affordable for families.

The UCC calls on the Government of Canada to renew the formerly available federal tax credit for community-based heritage language instruction.

### *Support Ukrainian Education in School Boards*

In the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario, some elementary school boards offer bilingual education in Ukrainian and English, supported by their provincial ministries of education. However, in recent years, some school districts have encountered challenges that negatively affect the delivery of these programs.

The UCC supports a coordinated approach among its members and provincial councils to advocate for the structural integrity and longevity of Ukrainian education in school boards across Canada.

*Provide Opportunities for Youth Work Experiences*

The UCC believes it is critical to provide youth with opportunities to gain work experience and develop the skills they will need in today's competitive job market. Many of our provincial councils, local branches, and member organizations help youth apply for the Canada Summer Jobs Program, which helps provide valuable experience and skills that lay the foundation for a successful career.

The UCC will work with the Government of Canada to ensure that the Canada Summer Jobs Program and the broader Youth Employment Strategy take into account the needs of youth in ethno-cultural communities and organizations, and will continue working to ensure access to these programs.

*Broaden Opportunities for Amateur Artists*

The Ukrainian community in Canada has always had a vibrant arts and culture presence. We believe that supporting a robust arts and culture ethos should include funding for both professional and amateur artists, particularly in ethno-cultural communities where dance, music, and visual arts are most often transmitted by community-based non-professionals.

The UCC calls for a broad-based evaluation of the grants funded through federal, provincial and territorial governments, to ensure that amateur artists are provided full access to a range of funding opportunities.

*Establish a Day of Commemoration for Ukrainian Internment*

During the First World War, 8,579 Ukrainians and other Europeans were unjustly interned in 24 camps across Canada, enduring hard labour, long periods of separation from their families, and harsh physical conditions. Recognizing this dark chapter in Canadian history is a critical component of how we work together to end prejudice and discrimination wherever they appear.

The UCC calls on the Government of Canada to table legislation recognizing October 28 as the annual day of commemoration of Canada's First National Internment Operations (1914-1920).

*Establish Ukrainian Canadian Heritage Month*

For over 125 years, Ukrainian Canadians have made important contributions to Canada's social, economic, political and cultural fabric. The establishment of a national Ukrainian Canadian Heritage Month would provide an opportunity to celebrate the inspirational role that Ukrainian Canadians have played and continue to play across Canada. The UCC calls on the Government of Canada to establish September as the annual Ukrainian Canadian Heritage Month.

