



Emergency Relief

As reports emerge of families being displaced by the recent attacks in Ukraine, Catholic Relief Services is helping Caritas teams prepare to respond to urgent humanitarian needs across the country—including for evacuation, food and safe shelter—while taking every precaution to ensure the safety of their staff.

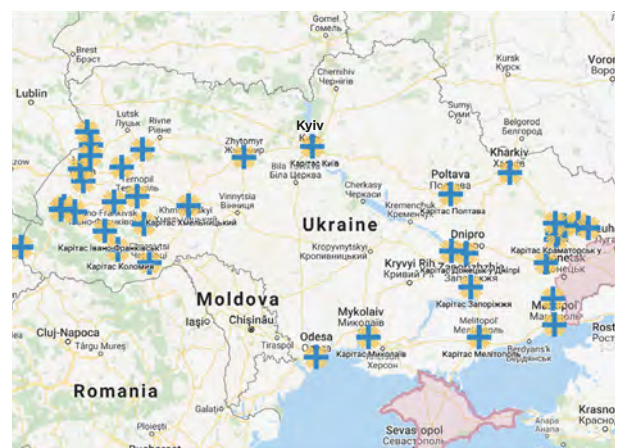


Ukrainian family members arrive at the border with Poland.
Photo courtesy of Philip Spalek/Caritas Germany

OVERVIEW

Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in late February, 4.6 million people have fled the country, and another 7.1 million displaced within Ukraine. One quarter of Ukraine's entire population has been displaced. Reports of horrific violence and brutality are emerging from within Ukraine as families try to stay safe and alive. Shelves are empty of food and supplies. Significant numbers of Ukrainian refugees are now present in countries throughout Europe.

Within Ukraine, CRS has supported partners Caritas Ukraine and Caritas Spes to assist 646,039 people since the start of the conflict. Across the region, CRS is supporting Caritas partners to assist hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian refugees in 10 countries, including Moldova, Poland, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Croatia and Montenegro.



CRS supports Caritas Moldova and other Caritas partners in the region to provide safe shelter for Ukrainian families.

Photo courtesy of Caritas Internationalis



CRS AND CARITAS RESPONSE

Within Ukraine and across 10 neighboring countries, CRS is supporting Caritas partners to assist hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians with safe shelter, food and water, information, transportation, hygiene, and counseling and emotional support. The commitment of staff is remarkable in the highly volatile conditions. For example, Caritas Spes was active in Bucha within days of the reported atrocities there.

CRS has helped coordinate the transport of 857 tons of cargo from neighboring Caritas partners to Caritas Ukraine and Caritas Spes. No other organization – national or international -- is responding at the level or scale our Caritas partners inside Ukraine. Priorities for support include:

Food and Urgent Relief

- Assisting field kitchens and Caritas centers in providing families with hot meals and food they can bring with them in transit.
- Recruiting and training volunteers for a range of activities, such as packing food and relief kits.
- Providing cash assistance to displaced Ukrainians so they can buy key supplies at local markets and while in transit.
- Supporting host communities as they assist Ukrainian refugees.
- Coordinating with our regional partners to organize cross-border humanitarian convoys that will move desperately needed food and living supplies into Ukraine

CRS' ONGOING SUPPORT FOR CARITAS UKRAINE

CRS is working in close partnership with Caritas inside Ukraine as well as Caritas Moldova, Caritas Romania, Caritas Poland, Caritas Hungary and Caritas Slovakia. To strengthen and expand the capacity of our local partners, we have deployed dozens of staff members who specialize in technical areas like logistics, protection, human resources, finance and shelter. CRS has supported Caritas Ukraine since the conflict began in 2014, and helped to provide shelter, food and livelihood assistance to displaced families and people affected by crisis. Prior to this crisis, CRS had a modest presence in Moldova, where we supported programs focused on the well-being of vulnerable children.

Safe and Dignified Housing

- Offering shelter and services at Caritas centers, such as food, showers, children's activities, information and safe places to rest.
- Coordinating with local parishes to make hosting arrangements for displaced families.
- Offering safe transportation to and from Caritas centers.
- Providing mattresses, blankets, kitchen kits, hygiene items and basic supplies to people living in temporary, government-run centers.
- Coordinating with local governments to provide shelter at multiple border crossing points for displaced and unaccompanied children.
- Assisting host families and offering vulnerable hosts incentives for their support.
- Adapting and rehabilitating buildings that can offer safe, dignified shelter to displaced families.

Emotional Care & Support Services

- Establishing reception centers at Caritas offices, train stations and other locations for families in transit and continuing support for these centers, which are providing critical help and information to families about what services and options are available to them.
- Establishing and supporting child-friendly spaces at accommodation centers as well as government facilities at border transit areas.
- Offering counseling referrals to displaced Ukrainians of all ages to address issues of grief, stress and trauma.
- Training staff members and volunteers in psychological first aid.
- Providing emotional care and support for staff members and partners in Ukraine and across the region



CRS and other agencies are planning to receive Ukrainian refugees in neighboring countries. CRS is helping Caritas Moldova and Caritas Romania prepare for people fleeing across the border.