



JDC Emergency Assistance in Ukraine

Update of Activities February 25 – March 9, 2022

As of this writing, Ukraine is under heavy fire with profound damage to infrastructure and human life. As mayhem ensues and we step deeper into the unknown, extraordinary measures are being taken to provide humanitarian relief to the Jews of Ukraine in their time of frightening uncertainty.

One thing is certain: JDC is the lifeline for vulnerable Jewish elderly and children across Ukraine. Our priority is to provide safety and continued humanitarian assistance for Jews in need throughout this crisis — and we will continue to stand with victims of this crisis when rehabilitation is possible.

Background on Ukraine's Jewish Community

- Ukraine is home to 200,000 Jews, one of the largest Jewish communities in the world.
- JDC's provides humanitarian aid to 37,000 elderly Jews and supports programs for over 2,500 younger members of the Jewish community.
- Over the past decade, JDC has built a volunteer force of 3,400 individuals who assist 13,000 people across Ukraine.
- JDC has four field offices (in Dnipro, Odesa, Kyiv, and Kharkiv) and 18 Hesed centers reaching poor Jews in 1,000 locations across the country.
- This infrastructure enables us to address existing needs and respond quickly and efficiently in times of emergency.

Assisting Displaced Jews

- JDC, in collaboration with Ukrainian Jewish leaders, the Jewish Agency for Israel, Chabad, and others, has evacuated over 4,000 Jews, helped 3,000 refugees and provided shelter for 1,500 displaced Jews in Europe
- At this time, JDC is prepared to house over 10,000 displaced Jews throughout Europe.
- JDC, together with local Jewish communities in Eastern Europe, will continue to welcome and care for those who are fleeing from harm's way. In the Kharkiv region, we have evacuated 165 people from the city of Sumy, hoping to continue as much as the situation allows.
- Thus far, refugees have been housed in hotels, private properties, JDC, or Jewish community properties, and JDC and its partners are constantly working to secure additional accommodations. Currently, refugees are being housed in:
 - Hungary: Budapest, Nyiregyhaza, Debrecen
 - Poland : Lublin, Kazimierz Dolny, Śródborów, Kielce, Warsaw, Lodz
 - Romania: Bucharest
 - Ukraine: 2 accommodations in western Ukraine, housing 70 people



Emergency Hotlines/Outgoing Calls

- JDC has launched emergency hotlines in five different languages, catering to Ukraine, Poland, Moldova, Romania, and Hungary. Additional emergency hotlines are operated by JDC's local community partners in Estonia, Latvia, and Slovakia.
- As of March 10, JDC has received up to 1,000 calls per day on Ukrainian hotlines, last two days down to approximately 500 per day. Over 70% of the requests are for food, medicines and evacuation (other needs include: equipment loans, warming products, psychological support, requests for information, and more). Most calls are from and to our clients, some are from other community members.
- In addition to the incoming calls to the emergency hotlines, some 8,000 outgoing calls have been made to clients in Ukraine. The focus is first directed towards lonely elderly, with priority locations being those with active fighting.

Providing Food and Medicine to the Most Vulnerable

- 21,500 elderly Jews in Ukraine live on approximately \$4 a day. Ukraine's turbulent economy and skyrocketing inflation, has dramatically decreased their ability to purchase ample food and medicine.
- In an effort to offset inflation and ease war-related stress and angst, JDC is providing food and medicine to the most vulnerable Jews in Ukraine. Homecare is also still being provided - in some locations to all clients, and in other locations - such as in the eastern cities of Kherson and Kharkiv that have sustained heavy damage - to the most vulnerable clients. At the same time, JDC volunteers continue to do what they can.
- Prior to the invasion, JDC advanced three months' worth of financial assistance, so that the most vulnerable Jews in Ukraine have a financial anchor as they weather this horrible storm

Extraordinary Needs and Lifesaving Measures

Thus far, we have received no reports of death or injury from Hased clients and JDC staff, although there have been reports of damage to the homes of clients. As part of our commitment to keeping Jews safe and strong, JDC's emergency response team is:

1. Providing transportation to safe locations inside Ukraine and beyond
2. Operating and facilitating safe facilities and accommodations for fleeing displaced Jews
3. Sustaining displaced Jews not in camps/shelters with basic necessities (food, medicine) and providing financial assistance to newly vulnerable individuals (new poor)
4. Staffing key border crossings along with European community partners and volunteers to embrace, inform, and assist refugees fleeing harm's way
5. Providing urgent basic needs, like food and medicine, to elderly and families (existing and new clients) who are in financial turmoil as a result of Ukraine's turbulent and uncertain economy
6. Working with Europe Jewish communities and volunteer corps to coordinate shelter, home hospitality, and provide assistance to Jewish refugees crossing the Ukraine border
7. Launching emergency hotlines in collaboration with local Jewish communities Ukraine, Poland, Moldova, Hungary, Romania, Estonia, Latvia, and Slovakia
8. Allocating financial war-time support for Jewish community organizations in Ukraine
9. Creating an SOS fund for extraordinary individual needs



10. Working with the members of the Ukrainian Jewish community to build and launch a non-sectarian response alongside our current operation

JDC Activities in FSU and Across Europe

Moldova

- Some 2,500 Jewish Refugees have entered Moldova since March 1st (as of March 8th). Over 1,300 accommodation spots available in total.
- JDC initiated and convened a round table for all Jewish and Israeli organizations currently operating on the ground in Moldova, which includes 22 such organizations at the moment. A WhatsApp group was created to coordinate the efforts, which has already enabled faster and more coordinated response to different issues faced by refugees.

Poland

- JDC and local community partners answer some 50 calls a day, with numbers increasing.
- Local volunteers and staff at the border are distributing flyers and information, working the reception centers, answering particular calls for assistance, and reaching out to collect them as they cross.
- So far 200 people have been offered shelter, and 1,000 Jewish refugees have received some form of assistance (food, transportation, etc).

Hungary

- In Hungary, the hotline is receiving some 100 calls a day, and there are approximately 150 local volunteers supporting the operation.
- There are 5 border crossing stations/info points, and printed material is being shared as is information and guidance at the border and reception centers.
- JDC, in cooperation with Chabad, JAFI and other partners have offered shelter to about 500 Jewish refugees and we continue to develop new placements for additional people arriving.
- In total approximately 700 Jewish refugees have received support.

Romania

- In Romania, there are approximately 100 calls per day received on the hotline, and some 20 employees and local volunteers who are involved at the border and with other tasks.
- At 3 different border points, JDC together with the local community opened welcome tents, including Siret, the largest crossing, where thousands of people are crossing the border daily.
- At the Siret border, JDC and the community have set up a 24/7 operational tent, with volunteers and staff, working in shifts, offering hot soup, coffee, tea, information and medical help for any refugee passing by.
- Short term hotel accommodation, transportation and meals for the Jewish refugees is also available.
- So far 800 Jewish refugees have been offered shelter, and some 3,000 refugees have received some support.

Videos:

- Refugee Voices: A Mother and Daughter's Story:
<https://youtu.be/ZUd-mXMvZYY>



- Ecaterina helping refugees on the border:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KU9QnchNDI>
- Polina, JCC Mykolayiv staff, comparing war now and then:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0Ft-7KLwtY>
- Ariel Zwang on the Poland-Ukraine border (night):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8ScrLQaC5I&t=3s>
- Jewish teen sings "Od Yavo Shalom Aleinu" over a photo montage of Kharkiv:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TXXTHAzjzQA&t=2s>
- Eli, JDC Coordinator in Kyiv, shares his pride in the strength of community:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6MCffTofLM>

Particularly Poignant Press Coverage:

- Jerusalem Post [digital article](#) on JDC's work in Poland.
- **CBS News** published a [digital story](#) and [video](#) on JDC's work with Holocaust survivors in Ukraine.
- **Insider** published a profile on one of the Jewish refugees JDC has been aiding in Moldova.
- **Jerusalem Post** published a major feature on JDC's work in Romania and Poland with Jewish refugees.