

***** MEDIA RELEASE *****

One year on, devastation and displacement remain in Ukraine

23 February 2023

After twelve months of conflict in Ukraine, the toll on civilians has been catastrophic. Thousands have been killed, many more injured, millions forced to flee, and homes and vital infrastructure have been destroyed.

“One year into this war and the people are weary, but incredibly hope remains. Ukrainians have endured, and continue to endure, intense hostilities, and they’re currently facing extraordinary levels of trauma and isolation,” said Damaris Pfendt, Caritas Australia’s Humanitarian Emergencies Lead for Ukraine.

Over the past year, over 8 million Ukrainians have been forced from their homes by the ravages of the war, fleeing to neighbouring countries in Europe like Poland, Czech Republic and Moldova. A further 5.4 million have sought refuge in other parts of Ukraine, where they face the threat of further violence and forced displacement.

There has been extensive destruction of essential services, including energy, water infrastructure, and heating. Over 10 million people have been left without power, heating and water for days on end across Ukraine, particularly through the brutal winter cold, as the government tries to ration the existing resources and energy.

Since the escalation of the conflict on February 24 last year, Caritas Ukraine has assisted more than 2.1 million people, while Caritas Spes Ukraine has supported more than 2.9 million people affected by the war through a joint emergency response. With the support of our partners Catholic Relief Services, over 10,000 Ukrainian refugees are now living in safe, dignified transitional accommodation in neighbouring Moldova.

“We have always said that we want to do more than give a box of food or a hot meal. So, from the start, we have been providing psychological support for trauma, and support with medicine, shelter or blankets,” said Odarka Bordun, Fundraising Manager at Caritas Ukraine.

“We also distribute things like clothes and other goods, because very often people who have fled just take documents and cash, that’s it. They arrive in another city, and they have nothing. So, we have programs to support them and get them the basics that they need.”

Summary of our response

- More than 1.9 million people have received food distributions.
- More than 330,000 people have received access to clean water and sanitation.
- Over 100,00 people have received support for health services including lifesaving medication and first aid kits. More than 690,000 have received hygiene kits.
- More than 290,000 people have received protection services, including psychological support, Child-Friendly Space, home care visits for the elderly and people with disability, and information to prevent exploitation and human trafficking.
- Over 95,000 people have received multipurpose cash assistance to help them buy basic goods.
- Shelter services have been provided to more than 350,000 people in Ukraine.

The Catholic agency for international aid and development

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- Through the support of our partner Catholic Relief Services, over 10,000 Ukrainian refugees are now living in safe, dignified transitional accommodation in Moldova.

Caritas Australia has recently committed an additional 1 million in funding to our partners Caritas Ukraine and Caritas Spes Ukraine to continue their vital humanitarian activities in the country.

Donations can be made at: www.caritas.org.au/ukraine

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Note: Damaris Pfendt, Caritas Australia's Humanitarian Emergencies Lead for Ukraine is available for interview.

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