

UKRAINE EMERGENCY / CARITAS INTERNATIONALIS NETWORK MOBILIZES FOR VICTIMS OF CONFLICT

Caritas Internationalis network - of which Secours Catholique is a member - is united in the face of the events affecting Ukraine. It mobilizes to ensure protection and humanitarian aid to the suffering population. Since the beginning of the hostilities, Secours Catholique - Caritas France has been in continuous contact with Caritas Europa and Caritas Internationalis to participate in this mobilization in the most adapted and efficient way. At operational level, on the recommendation of Secours Catholique - Caritas France, a coordination has been set up between national Caritas organisations, led by Caritas Europa and Caritas Internationalis, to provide

- o support to Ukrainian Caritas (Caritas Ukraine and Caritas-Spes Ukraine) on the humanitarian needs caused by the conflict ;
- o support to neighbouring Caritas that are on the front line to welcome refugees, 3,489,644 people as of March 20, 2022 according to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

MEDIUM AND LONG TERM HUMANITARIAN AID FROM SECOURS CATHOLIQUE – CARITAS FRANCE

Together with our partners, we are studying the possible responses to accompany population in the face of migratory and economic consequences, according to the needs and their evolution. We are collaborating with Caritas Europa, its network, and in particular border Caritas to define a strategy and implement actions.

To maximize flexibility and efficiency, Secours Catholique - Caritas France encourages cash donations. They allow supporting local sourcing, managed by experienced operators and according to already established aid circuits. Using local suppliers enables rapid adjustment according to the needs and reduces the length of the supply chain and the environmental footprint.

The donation will be used:

With Ukrainian Caritas for emergency needs:

- o basic needs (food, health, hygiene kits, clothing, night shelters)
- o psychological support

With border Caritas (Poland, Slovakia and Romania) for refugees:

- o setting up of food distribution points
- o reuniting families
- o accompaniment to registration by local authorities
- o transport of women and children to the centers or to host families
- o psychological support

In France, once the government protocols will be known:

- o emergency accommodation in connection with the public facilities
- o fraternal accompanying

UPDATE ON THE WORK OF UKRAINIAN AND BORDER CARITAS AS OF MARCH 21, 2022

In **Ukraine**, the 20 diocesan Caritas that make up Caritas Ukraine continue their work almost 24/7. In addition to the emergency relief, staff coordinate volunteers who produce humanitarian kits, visit people in need, and take hundreds of calls a day. 400 tons of goods (medical materials, medicine, food, hygiene products, tents) have been distributed to almost 70,000 people. Caritas Ukraine is intensifying its operations and recruiting staff.

In **Poland**, there are 2,083,854 refugees from Ukraine (UNHCR data as of 21 March 2022). Thousands of people are still arriving. "Tents of hope" have been set up at the border crossings of Przemyśl, Zosin, Hrebenne, Lubaczów and Dorohusk. Refugees have the opportunity to rest, receive food, tea, coffee, warm clothes, hygiene items and medicine.

See the video testimony of Dominica Chylewska, Caritas Poland:



In **Moldova**, 365,197 people have arrived from Ukraine. This figure includes those remaining in Moldova and those crossing into another country (UNHCR data as of 20 March 2022). Caritas Moldova is providing a clean and safe place for Ukrainian families. Caritas is also planning a large-scale project that will register refugees for cash assistance, social services, and additional needs they may have.

In **Romania**, there are 535,461 refugees from Ukraine (UNHCR data as of March 20, 2022). Caritas Romania continues to set up refugee centers in various cities to provide shelters, meals and transportation. Caritas also alerts refugees to remain vigilant about those who offer transportation and private accommodation to refugees. There are signs of active organized crime on both sides of the border and the risk of human trafficking is high. Many families continue their journey after one or more nights at the Caritas center to stay with relatives or travel to another country. In Sighetu Marmatia, a social center offers

counseling, internet access and access to a laundromat. In Bucharest, a Caritas team accompanies refugees (people who were foreigners in Ukraine and are trying to return home) from the train station to the embassy, to shelters or to the airport.

In **Slovakia**, the number of refugees is estimated at 250,036 (UNHCR data as of 20 March 2022). Caritas staff and volunteers in four dioceses are trying to coordinate their response to this migration crisis.

Caritas **Czech Republic** is also focusing on helping Ukrainian refugees. The number of refugees in the country is around 200,000 and this number is expected to increase. Before the crisis, the Czech Republic had many immigrants from Ukraine on its territory. Now, efforts are being made to facilitate the reunification of families. Caritas Czech Republic distributes food and clothing, but also other items such as cell phone chargers, cell phones and SIM cards. It also helps refugees find safe housing. The Caritas team also helps refugees apply for visas and other documents they need.

Caritas **Hungary**, in cooperation with the Caritas Diocese of Nyíregyházi and the Caritas Diocese of Debrecen-Nyíregyháza, welcomes refugees at the BarabásMezőkaszony border crossing. There, people fleeing Ukraine can rest in a warm place until relatives come pick them up or they reach a reception center. The number of refugees from Ukraine who have crossed into Hungary has reached 312,120.

Meanwhile, Caritas **Bulgaria** staff and volunteers, through its three diocesan offices in Sofia, Rusa and Vitana, are assisting the arriving families, women and children with shelter, food and hygiene items, and psychosocial support.

CREATION OF A PLATFORM TO SUPPORT CITIZEN MOBILIZATION FOR THE WELCOME OF REFUGEES

With our partners Jesuit for Refugees France (JRS France), Fédération de l'Entraide Protestante (FEP), Service National Mission et Migrations, we have decided to create a « Platform to support citizen mobilization for the welcome of refugees ». This platform, by pooling our strengths and skills, aims at supporting and providing advice and tools to all those who wish to invest themselves concretely in these actions of solidarity and mutual aid.

This platform has three main missions

- o A "Resources" function: development, sharing and provision of tools, reference documents, etc. for our respective networks;
- o An "Operational support to the action of our networks" function. It will be a question of accompanying the "citizen mobilization", in the reception and the accompaniment, mainly by the coordination and the linking of the actors on the territories;
- o An "Advocacy" function to be exercised with the public authorities, but also in support and advice for the advocacy action of our networks in the territories.

This platform, constituted by our four associations and services, will be open to other partners who share the same principles of action, which are as follows

- o Complement the actions of public authorities, but not replace or parallel them,
 - o Conceive welcome within the framework of a partnership and a global accompanying of exiled and refugee people, integrating the notion of duration,
 - o Support and participate in initiatives that allow the articulation of actors (State, local authorities, social operators and services, associations and citizen initiatives, church services, social partners, etc.),
 - o Guarantee that these actions are unconditional, refusing any discrimination based on origin, religion or any other identity criteria,
 - o Ensure that the natural emotion and solidarity that develops in favor of people fleeing the war in Ukraine does not develop to the detriment of other people in precarious situations, whether they are migrants or not, regardless of their origin.
- To be an actor of peace and fraternity, refusing all discrimination and stigmatization.

For the moment, we are in the middle of the structuring phase of this platform. We lack information to elaborate in a few days precise tools and references. The current events are indeed taking an exceptional turn and this invites us to carefully build a system over time.

The uncertainties are of different kinds:

On the number of people who will be received in France. The UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) predicts that there will be 5 to 6 million refugees in the coming weeks. If most of them are currently in neighboring countries (Poland, Romania, etc.), it is likely that each European Union member country will contribute to this reception. Even if France receives only 5%, this would represent 250,000 people, a figure on a scale not seen since the end of the Algerian war.

There are also uncertainties about the duration of this exile. Unfortunately, it is likely that the people who have fled will not be able to leave again soon. The organization of this reception must therefore be anticipated and planned for the long term.

The European Union and France have decided to activate the « Temporary Protection » directive dating from 2001, which has never been used. This directive, which was subsequently transcribed into the legislation of each country, provides for very specific measures, outside the usual asylum application and refugee reception system. In France, the practical details (rights and conditions of access to rights) and the administrative organization (between ministries, prefectures, local authorities) are not yet sufficiently known. The central administrations convene meetings on an almost daily basis, and the overall architecture has yet to be refined.

We hope to be able to develop the first tools to be distributed in the coming days.