



A Europe free of AIDS, TB, and viral hepatitis - and no one left behind

CSF Ukraine Regional NGOs Response Coordination Call¹

23 March 2022, 11-12:00 CET

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1. Follow-up Action Points

- **WHO (World Health Organization) and EACS (European AIDS Clinical Society):** informed that the **clinical care recommendations and protocol for cross-border patient information sharing** are underway and soon to be completed.
- **WHO and CHIP** are working on an expansion of the European Test Finder to also sites for ART, OAT and TB sites (viral hepatitis?). Treatment sites in countries neighboring Ukraine will be the first to be added but it will be expanding to remaining European countries afterwards. WHO will validate sites with country representatives. WHO will ask regional networks to help cross-checking community sites. WHO suggest sending the list to EATG (European AIDS Treatment Group) and then EATG would coordinate with other
- **EMCCDA sent** out a survey to **Reitox network of national focal points** in EU (European Union) Member States to collect information on OAT services and other treatment sites, central contacts and help lines. Half of the network of national focal points has already responded. Relevant information will be shared with WHO next week.
- **Action point 1:** When finalised, WHO will share the list with EATG, CSF on drugs and EHRA (Eurasian Harm Reduction Association) to coordinate with other regional networks so that the list is cross-checked and includes community sites.

2. Health Communication Campaign for Risk Groups Fleeing the War from Ukraine (People Living With HIV, TB, HBV, HCV, And/ Or Needing OAT): Presentation and Feedback

- **EU Delegation project:** A project of the EU Delegation in Ukraine in collaboration with **WHO, DG SANTE** and the **Public Health Centre of the Ukrainian Ministry of Health** is gathering, verifying, and providing through different channels reliable information to Ukrainian refugees Europe on treatment, care, and support for specific health conditions. It was agreed that HIV, TB, Hep

¹ This is a report from the CSF Ukraine regional NGOs response call. The information shared is reported as heard. The report was not run by speakers. Please treat this report with caution as the situation and actions of different actors evolve rapidly and because personal data is shared to help link people to care and for no other purpose.

and OAT are the priorities. Information should cover legal and administrative requirements and barriers on receiving treatment, care, support and information on facilities, contacts, institutions that can provide treatment, care, and support to Ukrainian refugees. Support includes mental health support, travel subsidies, health mediators, interpreters, and home care.

- The national focal points, in collaboration with National Ministries of Health and other relevant institutions will be engaged, when possible, information will be made available in English, Ukrainian, Russian, and local languages.
- Currently, information available from Eastern Member States (**Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Moldova, Hungary**): Additional informal groups on social media that provide *ad hoc* information. Countries in other parts of Europe are less prepared in terms of information. The project would fill the gap in the coming weeks.
- The Euro guidelines in Central and Eastern Europe Network Group (ECEE) provided ART sites in Central Europe EU Member States.
- Discussed with DG SANTE to include ECDC (European Centre for Disease Control) and EMCCDA focal points networks Information might be further used by decision-makers to change some of those barriers and obstacles. One of the channels for the dissemination of information is going to be the **Public Health Centre of Ukraine**. There is the possibility of creating a **dedicated website**.
- Intention to develop **hard copies** of information for refugee campuses.
- Intention to establish a **regular exchange of information**.
- Intention to establish a **communication platform** to gather all the partners, NGOs, networks, associations that participate in the information exchange for Ukrainian refugees.

Action point 1: connect with **CHIP** (WHO Collaborating Centre in Copenhagen): working on the expansion of the Test finder to treatment sites and the Alliance of Public Health/EECA platform led **services database**
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1rNun6Qe8kPHuecoOdBvU-YTnVILHiYM7iPB-jF4RoGg/edit#gid=1622742568>

3. Funding

- **Funding needs:** there is great need for funding for basic subsistence needs in Ukraine. In countries neighbouring Ukraine also, there is a need for municipal support and sustainable funding to harm reduction centres, to ensure shelters for people who use drugs.
- **EU Civil Protection Mechanism:** was activated all 27 EU countries, plus Norway and Turkey, have offered in-kind assistance (e.g., medical supplies and shelter items, to specialised equipment, vehicles, and fuel). Specialised medical equipment, like ultrasound diagnostic devices, oxygen concentrators, patient monitors, infusion pumps and ventilators, but also protective material, like masks and gowns was sent to Ukraine from rescEU medical stockpile. European Commission additional funding for humanitarian aid programmes in Ukraine and Moldova. There can also be support in case of shortages. More info here https://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/europe/ukraine_en
- Funding for NGOs was highlighted as a gap during the ECDC/WHO meeting with country focal points.
- **Global Fund** did approve APH proposal to fund an organisation in Poland (EU member states) some support possible as subcontractors/sub-granting to support Ukrainians in EU countries.
- Resources can be used in other EECA (Eastern Europe and Central Asia) countries

Action point 2: Increase awareness of the possible use of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism for humanitarian funding at country level.

Action point 3: Follow up with DG SANTE on mechanisms to support NGOs in EU member states where the need is significant. It was suggested to draw list of needs/tasks for which funding could be used.

4. Country Updates: Issues & Solutions

- **AIDES (France):** The head of a network of HIV clinics Prof. Jean Michel Molina contacted AIDES asking about what is planned for refugees going to France because the numbers in hospitals have been increasing. Necessity to establish a partnership **between doctors and community-based organisations**.
- **HIVNorge (Norway):** Refugees living with HIV have started arriving they are sent to the University hospital to receive free treatment. Support after receiving the medication might be more difficult because HIV centres tend to be in Oslo or major cities.

- **HIV Finland:** According to government documents, treatment and care are free of charge but instructions on the procedure are lacking.
- Administrative barrier: when you register, 4 weeks are needed before you receive the card for the services you are entitled.
- In contact with the Ukrainian Voluntary Association in Helsinki for translations of materials to be delivered to refugee centres and organisations.
- **AAE (AIDS Action Europe) (Germany):** There is access to ART but there are issues with OAT: it is complicated to have access in Germany and people arrive with zero OAT compared to ARVs. Language barriers at a local level.
- **ESWA (European Sex Workers Alliance):** Information received from **SWAN** (Sex Workers and Allies Network) about **support for LGBTIs, sex workers and people living with HIV migrants and refugees in Turkey**. The “Increasing the Access of the Most Vulnerable Refugee Groups to Protection Services” project is providing legal assistance, psychosocial support, information counselling, and gender-based violence case management services, face to face and remotely, referrals to external services, accompaniment as well as translation/interpretation support, sexual and reproductive health services short term HIV medication. Contact for Refugee Support Line (0850 888 0 539) or via <http://instagram.com/refugeesupportpage>. See annex for more information.
- **ILGA-Europe:** Russia and Belarus: there is information **LGBTQI+ people trying to flee**: there are resources available for people who are at risk of political persecution in the Russian context to get out. Receiving a lot of requests, but resources are not exhaustive. Contact Cianán Russell (cianan@ilga-europe.org) to connect with **relocation support via Dignity For All** (<https://www.dignitylgbti.org/> - who has emergency grants). ILGA-Europe is the regional hub. Contact Cianán Russell, then the person is required to fill a form for verification by ILGA Europe and then the process moves quickly forward.
- **Update on transition-related medicines:** a mapping has been completed on where trans persons in Ukraine are to encourage humanitarian agents to deliver transition-related medicines and humanitarian packages. It is unclear who can buy and to who to donate support.
 - à **WHO recommendation:** WHO delivery channels can be used. For donations, make sure you have the **waiver** (letter of acceptance of a certain donation of medicines or supplies) for a year. For smaller quantities, quicker to use NGOs.
 - à **Centralised procurement agency (CPA)** for Ukraine (procurement and donations) work faster (<https://medzakupivli.com/en/pro-mzu-eng/novini-eng/3553-the-state-enterprise-medical-procurement-of-ukraine-got-the-opportunity-to-conduct-procurement-for-public-customers-as-a-cpa>).
 - See annex: Ukraine–Humanitarian crisis: importation and customs procedures for getting items to Ukraine, to Poland, Romania etc and OCHA’s monitoring of the regulations related to medicines. https://vosocc.unocha.org/GetFile.aspx?xml=5033i2la_l1.html&tid=5033&laid=1
- Working to capacitate NGOs in neighbouring countries on making small shipments and deliveries across the border to trans people who are not able to leave Ukraine. Currently working with Pharmacists Without Borders (Germany) who have permission to ship regulated drugs and testosterone is regulated in most of Europe. Involving Slovakia in the following days – if it works, this would be a more functional option.
- Trans people arriving in reception countries face an additional barrier: **face extensive delays for assessments before they get permission for endocrinologists for treatment**. On-going conversations with networks of transition-related doctors to map providers willing to bring people quickly into services. Inability to continue their care when they arrive in reception countries.

5. Next CSF Ukraine Regional NGOs Response Coordination Call

30th March 2022 – 11:00-12:00 CET

6. Additional Links and annexes

Free online consultations for people living with HIV in Ukrainian and Russian (Tetiana Kyrychenko)	https://help24.org.ua/uk/registration-info
OAT Italy: Villa Maraini Foundation	www.villamaraini.it
EU Civil Protection Mechanism	https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism_en
Information on Access in Germany in Ukrainian, Russian and German	https://www.aidshilfe.de/ukrayina-dopomoga-bizhencyam
Resources accessible to refugees and migrants in Turkey	https://swannet.org/for-those-who-are-affected-by-the-conflict-in-ukraine-and-currently-in-turkey/

Access to harm reduction services in countries	https://harmreductioneurasia.org/support-ukraine/
EU Health Policy Platform, Supporting Ukraine, neighbouring EU Member States and Moldova	https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/hpf/
Medicines procurement/donation in Ukraine	https://medzakupivli.com/en/pro-mzu-eng/novini-eng/3553-the-state-enterprise-medical-procurement-of-ukraine-got-the-opportunity-to-conduct-procurement-for-public-customers-as-a-cpa
OCHA monitoring of the regulations related to medicines.	https://vosocc.unocha.org/GetFile.aspx?xml=5033i2la_11.html&tid=5033&laid=1
Ukraine–Humanitarian crisis: importation and customs procedures for getting items to Ukraine, to Poland, Romania	See annex
WHO calculator of needs for HIV and TB services for displaced people from Ukraine that reach specific countries	See annex
Estimating the needs in antiretroviral treatment for refugees from Ukraine (version 5.0 DRAFT)	See annex
ALLIANCE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH: response to challenges caused by the Russian aggression against Ukraine (Situational report №3, as of 21.03.2022)	See annex