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# HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE FOR UKRAINE

03.05.2022



MÉDECINS DU MONDE – GREECE

# HIGHLIGHTS

1. MdM-Greece initiated operations at the border point of Siret in Romania, on 10.03.2022.
2. A Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) has been deployed to Siret as well as a team of medical and programmes' staff including one GP, one gynaecologist and one paediatrician. To date, a total of **40 health volunteers in teams of 4**, have taken turns supporting the operation of the MMU.
3. MdM-Greece provides comprehensive PHC support & protection (*including emergency aid and MHPSS support*) on the Siret border while it also visits and supports **7 hospitality centers** for civilians fleeing the war in Ukraine, set up in the vicinity of Siret. Up to now, MdM-Greece's field medical team has catered for a total of more than **1.500 patients in transit**. These include cases with mild symptoms (*cold, flu, faint, etc*), emergency situations (*wound care*) but also chronic patients in need of more complex treatment and medication.
4. MdM-Greece has collected **approx. 60 tons of NFIs** (*mostly medicines and medical consumables*) so far and has already dispatched **6 humanitarian missions** to Ukraine, escorting the relief items.
5. The largest delivery took place on 24.03.2022, when Médecins du Monde – Greece **delivered 30 tons of humanitarian aid** to the internally displaced people in Ukraine, in coordination with the Lviv Region and HELPUKRAINE.
6. MdM-Greece in collaboration with the **Hellenic Aid Department of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs** has supported the southern-eastern region of Odessa, transferring loads of humanitarian aid (*NFIs, medicines and medical consumables*) in early April.
7. MdM-Greece collaborates with Lviv and Chernivtsi local authorities and with HELPUKRAINE regarding the dispatching of relief items to hospitals and health centers inside Ukraine.
8. More than **1.300 internationally displaced people** arriving in Greece have received support and health services in Athens and Thessaloniki (*including social counselling and orientation, connection to the NHS and distribution of NFIs and food kits*).
9. So far, **13.000 people** have been directly benefited due to MdM-Greece's intervention, while the organization's catchment is estimated at **~400.000**.





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## BACKGROUND

The Russian Federation launched a military offensive against Ukraine on 24 February 2022. In total, due to the extensive military operations, more than **7.1 million people** are estimated to be internally displaced within Ukraine, while **5.5 million** have already fled the country.<sup>1</sup>

An estimated **18 million people** have been affected in the areas hardest hit by the war within Ukraine. The escalation of conflict has triggered an immediate and steep rise in humanitarian needs, both within the country as well as in the neighbouring countries receiving refugees. Many people remain trapped in areas of escalating conflict and, with essential services disrupted, are unable to meet their basic needs including food, water and medicines.

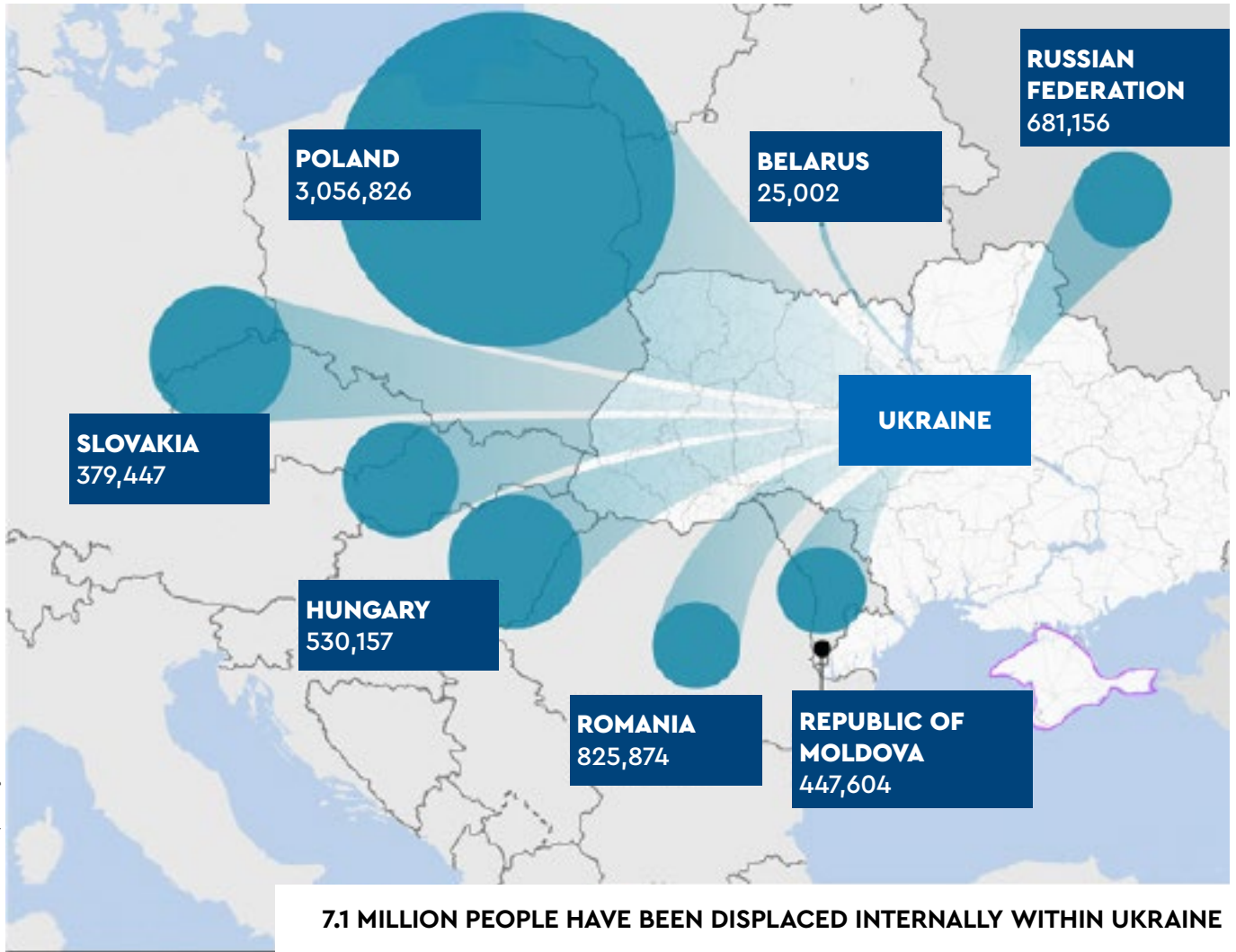
During the first two weeks of April, hostilities intensified in eastern Donetsk, Kharkiv and Luhansk regions and in the southern Kherson region. Fighting is resulting in civilian casualties and significant damage to infrastructure and buildings, especially in Mariupol and Chernihiv cities. Missile attacks were reported around Kherson, Kyiv, Mariupol and Mykolaiv, as well as in the western city of Lviv on 18 April. Mariupol is expected to be completely cut off and the situation in Kherson remains dire.<sup>2</sup> The civilian toll of the ongoing military offensive continues to grow. As of 7 April, **the number of civilian casualties stands at 3.893 – including 1.626 killed** – according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> UNHCR, 2022 (Source: <https://www.unhcr.org/ukraine-emergency.html>)

<sup>2</sup> UNHCR, Flash Update #9, 2022 (Source: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-situation-flash-update-9-21-april-2022>)

<sup>3</sup> UNHCR, Flash Update #7, 2022 (Source: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-situation-flash-update-7-6-april-2022>)

## WHICH COUNTRIES ARE UKRAINIANS FLEEING TO?



## RECEPTION COUNTRIES

As of **May 3rd 2022**, more than **5.5 million refugees** have fled Ukraine with the vast majority seeking protection in the neighbouring EU countries: **Poland** (3.056.826) **Romania** (825.874), **Hungary** (530.157) and **Slovakia** (379.447), while a significant number of refugees has moved to the **Republic of Moldova** (447.604) to the **Russian Federation** (681.156) and to **Belarus** (25.002), while an additional **7.1 million people** remain displaced internally, within the country<sup>4</sup>.

The majority of people fleeing their country are vulnerable cases such as elderly people, mothers traveling with their children, people with disabilities, since the Ukrainian parliament declared martial law, prohibiting men aged 18 to 60 from leaving the country.

<sup>4</sup> UNHCR, Data Portal (Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>)

# ROMANIA:

## SUCEAVA, RADAUTI, MILISAUTI & SIRET

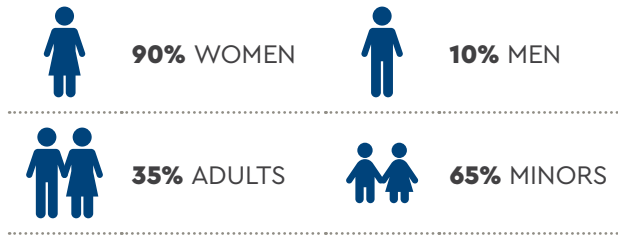
So far, the situation in Northern Romania remains well organized and the border area is functioning as a crossing or a redirection point. A significant number of cases among the traveling population need emergency psychological support (PFA) due to stress and panic attacks. As days go by, MHPSS related needs, challenges and gaps become more acute. Priority needs expressed by people on the move include subsequent transportation, transit accommodation, first aid and the provision of personal protective equipment. These needs are currently being met by humanitarian actors present at the borders and in the temporary transit centers.

In addition to patients with chronic, non-communicable diseases such as cardiac problems and diabetes mellitus, there is a need to support patients with diagnosed epilepsy and mental disorders who are experiencing a sudden interruption of their treatment.

**Daily incidents may vary, while they mostly include:**

- Chronic patients (*diabetes, high pressure*) that haven't been able to buy/find their medication
- Bacterial infections
- Patients presenting with dehydration from long driving/waiting hours
- Children with respiratory problems
- People of ROMA origin

In early April, there has been a further decrease in the flows entering from Ukrainian territory to Siret, with the refugee flows' number now being a little higher than **1.000 people per day**. There are new building facilities that have now been established in close proximity to the border station, but remain vacant/underutilized for the time being.



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However, MdM-Greece is currently the only organization/agency that has a doctor in the field, with the consistency of **7 days/week**. All other Civil Society Organizations that offer medical services (*Hellenic Red Cross, Medici per Diritti Umani, Maltez Romania*) do so without doctors, and by using instead a couple of paramedic volunteers. Following our consecutively provided health services and our field team's overall work and presence, the border's site coordinators have requested from MdM-Greece to serve as the coordinator of all medical services that are offered in the border area of Siret, in collaboration with the responsible authorities.

Due to the rise of prices inside Ukraine, internally displaced people that remain in southern Ukraine have been noticed to pass the borders with Romania, in order to replenish gas and essential goods, as well as find simple medication, and then return back to Ukraine.

Upon MdM-Greece's field team visits at the Siret local Hospital, the following have been observed:

- The hospital receives **approx. 30 referrals** on a daily basis, concerning people who have fled Ukraine (*15–20 adults, 5–10 minors*).
- Most incidents concern cardiovascular diseases or minor traumas.
- Due to a lack of medical equipment they are obligated to refer patients to other hospitals in the area, further inside Romania.

**Up to now, MdM-Greece's MHU team has supported a total of 1.300 people in transit, with an average of 25–30 people on a daily basis.**



## INSIDE UKRAINE: CHERNIVTSI

Chernivtsi is the largest city in the south of Ukraine, with a permanent population of **250.000 people** located 45 km away from the border point of Siret/Romania. Currently it is estimated that **around 300.000 IDPs** have relocated to Chernivtsi, while the long convoys of the previous weeks have reduced significantly. Now the waiting time to enter Romania can last 15–20 minutes when at the end of March was estimated to be up to 3 hours.

Following the bombing of a convoy on 18 March, which resulted in **2 deaths**, shelling also took place as near as 40 km from the town of Chernivtsi. Extensive bombings have continued throughout the month of April, even in close proximity to large urban areas. During the last week of April there was bombing in a 70 km radius around the Chernivtsi region, causing deep concerns in terms of people safety living in the area.

Currently, people on the move seem to belong to poorer social strata while economic hardship is now more evident as Ukraine's economy is facing an overall inflation in prices. In addition, travel bans have been stepped up, while the Ukrainian authorities are also banning the wounded and those without passports from leaving the country.

**These conditions have led to the overcrowding of thousands of displaced people in the city of Chernivtsi**, who reside scattered in the camps that have been set up in the surrounding area.

Problems across the country remain in terms of infrastructure, administrative procedures and delays in movement, including in the Ukrainian south. As long as the armed conflict in the west continues, further challenges for people on the move are expected. Registration offices have been set up inside the

city of Chernivtsi, in charge of registering IDPs arriving from other cities. Medical equipment (*including ambulances and vehicles*) have also been transferred to the eastern part of Ukraine, leaving hospitals and medical facilities in the south and the west rather under-equipped. It is also reported that there are shortages of medicines, injectables and insulin, primarily in the north of Ukraine.

MdM-Greece's field team has established a communication channel with the city of Chernivtsi assessing the internally displaced population's needs as well as an insight to the expected refugee flows into Romania from the Siret border point. So far, MdM-Greece has found that the main needs in local health centers and hospitals concern: **Mobility (ambulances), Medical Equipment, Medicines, Medical Staff** (*more specifically gynecologists, pediatricians*). To be also noted that medical equipment and staff from the area have been moved to Eastern Ukraine to respond to the increasing health needs there, because of the armed conflicts.



## INSIDE GREECE

As of **28th April 2022**, more than **24.000 refugees** from Ukraine have fled to Greece, with most of them being temporarily hosted by relatives and members of the local Ukrainian community in the country, whose capacity to support the refugee families in the mid/long term remains uncertain.

When it comes to the needs for the families that have been recorded and seen by MdM-Greece, they mainly face significant material deprivation, stress and anxiety, precarious housing conditions and a significant risk of social exclusion and poverty. While the internationally displaced population holds generally the feeling of returning sooner rather than later back to their homeland, there are some cases that have expressed the willingness to be employed even temporarily in Greece, in order to provide the basics to their families (*to be noted that the vast majority consists of women with underaged children*).

In the beginning of April, Greek public services officially launched the process for temporary protection at the regional asylum offices in Athens, Thessaloniki, Patras and on the island of Crete and introduced a dedicated jobsite and other platforms offering information to refugees from Ukraine. According to the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum, those who are eligible have the ability to make an appointment online through an ad hoc digital platform that has been set up. In order to proceed with the digital application, refugees are only asked to provide an email address at this early stage. The procedure is being run by staff of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum's Service in extended working hours, and with the assistance of the European Union Agency for Asylum.





## MDM-GREECE'S ACTIVITIES EXTEND TO A 3-FOLD RESPONSE PLAN:

**1. HEALTH & PROTECTION AT THE BORDER-CROSSINGS:** MdM-Greece has remained and wishes to maintain its presence and health operations (*first aid, essential primary healthcare and information*) at the border point of Siret, while continuing to assess other border crossings in north-eastern Romania and Moldova in view of scaling up their presence and support.

**2. CROSS-BORDER OPERATIONS:** MdM-Greece has already successfully **delivered 6 shipments of humanitarian material assistance** for the people in need inside Ukraine, in collaboration with Lviv local authorities (*in the west*) and Chernivtsi local authorities (*in the south*). In collaboration with other chapters of the MdM International network, MdM-Greece also plans to scale up (*material*) support to hospitals in need inside Ukraine. The most recent delivery inside Ukraine took place on 20.04.2021.

**3. EMERGENCY SUPPORT OF REFUGEES ARRIVING IN GREECE:** MdM-Greece has already set up a **Help Desk** with a direct interpretation to and from Ukrainian/Russian inside its premises in Athens and Thessaloniki. The desk is manned by experienced social workers and psychologists and tasked to pro-

vide urgent, needs-tailored support to Ukrainians arriving in Greece. So far more than **1.300 displaced citizens** from Ukraine have received services from MdM-Greece's facilities in Athens and Thessaloniki, including:

- **Primary health care** and treatment
- **Information and administrative guidance** to public services: Issuance of social security number, tax number, unemployment card, disability certification, etc.
- **Social counselling:** briefing/orientation, housing support, employment promotion
- **Interpretation** from Ukrainian or Russian to Greek and vice versa
- **Health awareness** and promotion of routine immunization
- **Covid-19 protection**, vaccination and support
- **Provision of material assistance** (*Food and NFIs*)
- **Provision of accommodation**

On May 1st, MdM-Greece launched the operation of **Covid-19 Vaccination Centers within its Open Polyclinics in Athens and Thessaloniki**, aiming to **increase access to vaccination for vulnerable groups in order to protect their health and to reduce the spread of the pandemic.**





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