



The Jewish Federations®
OF NORTH AMERICA
Israel Office

JEWISH FEDERATIONS AND THE CRISIS IN UKRAINE

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After a month and a half of fighting, the war continues in Ukraine. Millions of Ukrainians, including tens of thousands of Jews, have fled the country and millions of others are internally displaced. Jewish Federations and our partners continue to work together to ensure that urgent relief reaches the neediest.

(For background on the crisis, as well as for information on the Jewish community in Ukraine, see [here](#)).

THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

- The U.N. issued its first official report on the war's devastation, finding that 1.4 million people in eastern Ukraine have lost access to running water. The report also details the war's effects on the global economy and its interruption of the flow of food, energy and water around the world.
- The Russian Moskva warship in the Black Sea sank. Ukrainian military forces claim that they struck the ship with a missile, while Russian sources claim that the ship exploded due to a fire on board. According to media, the Moskva is the flagship vessel of Russia's Black Sea Fleet.
- On Wednesday President Biden committed to sending an additional \$800 million in weapons and other security aid to Ukraine. On Tuesday, he called the war in Ukraine a "genocide" for the first time. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau told reporters, "I think as President Biden highlighted there are official processes around determinations of genocide, but I think it's absolutely right that more and more people be talking and using the word genocide in terms of what Russia is doing, what Vladimir Putin has done."
- Reports of devastation out of the southeastern Ukrainian city of Mariupol continue. The mayor of Mariupol claims that tens of thousands of civilians have been killed in the city. Russian air strikes continue on the city.
- According to the UN Human Rights Council, approximately 4.7 million refugees have fled Ukraine since the beginning of fighting. The largest influx of refugees is in Poland, with approximately 2.7 million, followed by Romania with approximately 470,000. According to the UN Human Rights office, at least 1,964 Ukrainians have been killed and 2,613 injured since the breakout of fighting on February 24th. The office notes that the actual figures are likely considerably higher, as the relaying of information is often delayed especially in areas of intense fighting.

ISRAEL

Israel's President Isaac Herzog announced that he will host lone soldiers and recent olim from Ukraine at his seder at the President's Residence in Jerusalem.

4,000 individuals have been treated to date at Israel's "Shining Star" Field Hospital in Ukraine. Israel is the only foreign country operating a field hospital in Ukraine.

Israel's national emergency medical and ambulance service Magen David Adom sent another six ambulances to Ukraine, in addition to the four that have already been deployed, in response to a request from the Ukrainian Health Ministry and its Jewish community. The all-terrain vehicles will transfer sick and injured patients out of the war zone for medical care. Three of the vehicles will be used by the Health Ministry and three by the Jewish community.

Israel's "Safe Haven Project" provides services to the approximately 15,000 Ukrainian refugees in Israel who are not eligible to make aliyah. These individuals are on 3-month tourist visas and have been sponsored by family or friends to enter the country. The Safe Haven project was initiated by the Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs and is being run in partnership with The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC). The Safe Haven distributes food vouchers, receives approximately 800 daily calls on its hotline, offers mental health support through Natal and private providers and provides health insurance, accommodations and various activities and other services through Israeli volunteer agencies.

REFUGEES, FEDERATIONS, AND PARTNERS ON THE GROUND

Jewish Federations have collectively raised \$50 million for Ukrainian relief efforts over the past one-and-a-half months since the fighting began. [Click here](#) to see the latest update on the allocations process and decisions.

The relief efforts are being undertaken by 35 NGOs including our Jewish Federation partners, The Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI), The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), and World ORT; as well as by United Hatzalah, Hillel International, Nefesh B'Nefesh, HIAS, the Israel Trauma Coalition, Hadassah Medical Organization, Chabad, Shma Yisrael, Project Keshet, JCC Krakow, the Emergency Volunteer Program and others.

Funds allocated have already had impact in the following ways:

- 12,100 refugees have been fed and housed
- 7,000 refugees have received on-the-ground support in Ukraine
- 5,500+ Jewish Ukrainian refugees have arrived in Israel
- 7,800 beds have been rented
- 55,000+ calls have been received at various hotlines
- Served as the lifeline for 18,000 Jewish elderly and 2,500 poor Jewish children

Jewish Federations host half-hour webinars twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays, to update audiences about the rapidly evolving situation in Ukraine. If you missed Monday's webinar, which focused on Ukraine's Jewish community, you can [click here](#) for the recording. Thursday's webinar featured Eugene Rumer, Director and Senior Fellow of the Russia and Eurasia Program at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, speaking on the broader geopolitical impact of this war, analysis of Putin's strategy and what may happen in the short, medium and long term. We will NOT hold webinars next week during Passover, but they will resume on April 25th. [Click here](#) to register.

Jewish Federations have brought over 100 Jewish communal leaders from around North America to the Poland-Ukraine border on a series of humanitarian aid delegations, to provide relief to refugees and to evaluate the ongoing needs on the ground.

Jewish Federations launched the creation of a first-of-its-kind central volunteer hub in support of refugees fleeing Ukraine. The first cohorts are on the ground in Poland, Budapest and on the Ukraine-Poland border providing humanitarian assistance, aiding olim in their immigration process and working with children. The initiative is being run in partnership with JAFI, the JDC and IsraAID. Volunteers have shared their meaningful experiences thus far with the [Associated Press](#), Fox News, [NBC](#), [i24 tv](#) and local Jewish media outlets.

Greensboro Jewish Federation lay leader Alina Spaulding was born in Kharkiv and resettled in the U.S. in the 1970's thanks to the support of Jewish Federations. She is one of the Jewish Federation volunteers in Budapest, where she will help lead a seder for 200 refugees. "The Almighty has willed that there are two hands in tzedakah. One gives and one receives. I have certainly been on the receiving end and now it is just an honor to be on the giving side," she shared.

To volunteer for this program (please note that only those who speak Russian and/or Ukrainian are being selected at this time), [click here](#). For a list of FAQ's, [click here](#). For more information, email [Sarah Eisenman](#).

Global Jewry has mobilized to send Passover provisions to Ukraine and neighboring countries and make seder preparations and **Jewish Federations** are proud to be at the frontline of these efforts.

Jewish Federation of Columbus CEO Joel Marcovitch and board member Max Brickman recently took part in one of the **Jewish Federation** aid delegations to the Poland-Ukraine border and were so moved by the needs they witnessed on the ground that they committed to raising funds for a communal seder with refugees in Poland. They returned from the mission and partnered with the Jay and Jeanie Schottenstein Foundation in order to make a seder in Warsaw a reality. The Jewish Agency will host the seder with 150 refugees, in addition to a seder in Hungary with 200 refugees and one in Romania with 80. **Jewish Federation** volunteers together with Jewish Agency shlichim will help lead preparations for the seders in Warsaw and Hungary. The JDC is hosting 9 seders with refugees in Moldova, Hungary and Poland. JDC is also organizing over 15 online seders for Jews in Ukraine who cannot leave their homes. Thousands of special haggadot in Russian and Hebrew have been sent to JDC and the Jewish Agency for use at the seders, in partnership with **Jewish Federations**, the Harold Grinspoon Foundation's PJ Library and Israel's Ministry of Aliyah and Integration. A model seder was hosted earlier this week with refugees on the Poland-Ukraine border together with Israeli and **Jewish Federation** volunteers, in partnership with **UJA-Federation of New York**, JDC, Natan and the JCC of Krakow. The Jewish Agency will also host seders for recent Ukrainian olim in absorption centers around Israel.

JDC has shipped more than two tons of matzah, over 400 bottles of grape juice and over 700 pounds of kosher for Passover food for refugees in Poland, Moldova, Hungary and Romania. The organization is also providing nearly 16 tons of matzah to tens of thousands of Ukrainians, in addition to special holiday material assistance for food. The distribution of matzah will be carried out by JDC's Hesed social service centers and Jewish volunteer corps and is supported by **Jewish Federation** funds together with the Claims Conference and the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews.

The Jewish Agency and JDC have both established [emergency hotlines](#) to assist the Jewish community in Ukraine. For more about JDC's efforts, see [here](#); for those of the Jewish Agency [here](#).

Jewish Federations have activated our emergency protocols and are working closely with the Government of Israel and our partners to do everything in our power to support efforts that ensure the safety and well-being of the entire Jewish community in Ukraine, as well as to provide as much general humanitarian aid as we can.

For more information, please contact: JFNA's Alisa Bodner alisa.bodner@jewishfederations.org