Resources in Support of Ukraine

statement & call to action, protection from violence and hate

Latest update: 22 March 2022

TGEU condemns the Russian military aggression in Ukraine. We are also deeply concerned with the consequences of the war for human rights in Ukraine and all across Europe and Central Asia. As the COVID-19 crisis showed once more, in times of crises, those at the margins are left unprotected. We know that all people in Ukraine and surrounding countries will be deeply affected by the consequences of the war. There are several groups that are at particular risk, and this includes trans and gender-diverse people.

TGEU has been in touch with our Ukrainian member organisations as well as civil society outside Ukraine to support LGBTIQ shelters in Western Ukraine, fundraising, donations, as well as efforts helping trans people navigate Ukraine or wanting to leave the country. We are raising awareness with international institutions about the specific situation of trans women being stuck and not able to move to safer parts of Ukraine or leave the country. TGEU is aware of several dozens of trans people who need to leave Ukraine urgently.

We are continuously assessing the situation and will frequently provide updates on the situation and how best to provide support.

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General update

On 24 February 2022, Russia launched a full-scale military invasion into Ukraine. For the past days, cities have been bombed and civilian infrastructures destroyed. The number of civilian victims, including children, continues to rise. At least 2,510 civilian casualties, including 953 deaths, have been confirmed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). People are forced to flee and take refuge in Poland, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Moldova. According to the UNHCR, over 3.5 million people have already crossed into neighbouring countries, with millions more expected to flee the country in the coming days.

We are particularly concerned about vulnerable groups, including trans people and specially those who are further marginalised. Discrimination makes these groups more likely to suffer from the disproportionate impact of the war and the resulting humanitarian crisis. We urge decision-makers and supporters to also consider the following groups and the specific challenges they are facing:

- Migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in Ukraine

- Black people and
- People of Colour
- People living with HIV
- Disabled people
- Drugs users.

Trans-specific impact and needs

Trans people with identification documents not matching their gender identity cannot pass internal check-points, as activists on the ground told TGEU. This considerably reduces their chances to flee areas of conflict, makes them vulnerable, and threatens their lives and physical integrity.

Trans people are currently not allowed to leave Ukraine if they are of fighting age and either perceived as male or having an official "male" gender marker. Trans women and non-binary people registered "male" at birth, as well as trans men, are considered "men" and, as potential recruits, are not allowed to leave Ukraine. If recruited, trans people face a higher risk of harassment and violence.

Trans people in Ukraine having to show a biometric passport to enter the EU are at particular risk. Many trans people in Ukraine do not have a travel passport, let alone a biometric passport that correctly reflects their gender identity. The process of obtaining official recognition of one's gender identity in mainland Ukraine has been difficult even in peacetime. Non-matching documents increase trans people's risk of arbitrary arrest, physical, psychological, sexual violence, and extrajudicial killings.

Trans people further fear losing access to crucial HIV-medication or hormone replacement therapy during the military action. TGEU has received reports of people in shelters in Western Ukraine who are out of medication for antiretroviral therapy (ART) for HIV/AIDS, as well as hormone replacement therapies (HRT). Pharmacies in bigger cities are reportedly closed, severely limiting access to live-saving medication. Both ART and HRT need to be administered life-long, and rupture can have severe health consequences.

Trans people might be excluded from civil defence measures, like shelters or humanitarian aid, if based on presenting ID. Access to food banks, shelters, and other basic essentials often requires a valid identity card. Mismatching ID documents can lead to denial of service, besides suspicion of fraud, ridicule, harassment, and violence. Fearing discrimination, a trans person might forgo their right to seek assistance.

How to support?

There are several ways in which you can support and where you can direct your support.

Support trans and LGB organisations in Ukraine

There are several groups providing direct help to LGB and trans people in Ukraine distributing food and medicine, organising shelters and transport to safer regions.

- **Support Ukrainian trans and LGBTIQ NGOs financially and share the fundraisers**
  - **Insight LGBTQ:** helps with temporary housing, relocation to safer areas, food, medicine, offers psychological and legal support. Donate.
  - **NGO Cohort:** provides direct assistance to trans Ukrainians and monitors best ways to protect the community. Follow on Facebook and Instagram.
  - **Trans*Generation:** supports trans people with emergency relocation, provides with basic necessities and psychological support. Follow on Facebook and Instagram.
  - **NGO Fulcrum:** Supporting relocation, shelter, emergency aid to LGBTI persons. Donate.

- **KyivPride:** Created a group chat in Russian for LGBTI+ people who want to ask or offer help, post opportunities about settlement and transportation, and support each other. Donate. If you seek help and want to access the chat, register here.
- **Gender Z:** Based in Zaporizhzhia, Gender Z are inviting donations to help them support community members who have not left and need emergency assistance, such as shelter, basic needs support, etc. Donate.
- **Teenergizer:** Peer support spaces and services for young people living with HIV in Ukraine. Donate.
- **Sphere:** Based in Kharkiv, Sphere works closely with the queer community and young people and is actively engaged in queer organising in the region and across Ukraine. Donate.
- **Egalite Intersex Ukraine:** Raises awareness and visibility of Intersex people in Ukraine. Donate.

- **Support other key Ukrainian organisations**
  - Korporaciya montsrov odessa: Provides medical, social and humanitarian help for children and elderly people in Odessa.
  - Fight For Right: Support for Ukrainians with disabilities in emergency.
  - Roma Women Fund Chirikli: Raises awareness and advocates for Roma women's rights in Ukraine. They collaborate with Roma communities on a regional level.
  - Support African students leaving Ukraine. Donate.
  - Legalife-Ukraine: A member organisation of the Sex Workers' Rights Advocacy Network (SWAN) is in need of support.

- **Support the needs for accessing trans-specific healthcare:** we are at the moment clarifying how to send hormones to overcome shortages in hormone-replacement therapy.

Support helping organisations in neighbouring countries

LGB and trans organisations in countries neighbouring Ukraine are setting up shelters and providing help to LGBTIQ refugees who are able to cross the border.

- Send money to fundraisers in neighbouring countries
  - In Poland: Lambda Warszawa supports Ukrainian LGBTIQ refugees in the country.
- Support LGB and trans organisations in Ukrainian bordering countries to support evacuation and shelter. The below organisations are offering support for incoming refugees:
  - ACCEPT (Romania)
  - Gender-Doc M (Moldova)
  - TransAkcija (Slovenia)
  - TransFuzja (Poland)
  - TransFuzja (Slovakia)
  - TransVanilla (Hungary) – Transvanilla is able to support with emergency accommodation, food, shopping and transport as well as any other services needed. Reach out to them!

Support Ukrainian LGB and trans refugees in your country

Refugees from Ukraine have already arrived in Western Europe. It is expected that they will need to stay for a considerable period, at least a couple of months. Many of them are heavily traumatised. Thus, it is of utmost importance to start now preparing short-term as well as long-term accommodation and support structures. LGB and trans refugees need psychological, legal support, and safe accommodation.

- Reach out to your governments to convince Eastern EU neighbouring countries to let Ukrainian refugees pass through their territory. Urge your government, federal state, and municipality to put in place concrete

solidarity measures to welcome trans refugees and/or support trans people fleeing from Ukraine.
- For organisations based in the EU: Urge your governments to activate the "Temporary Protection Directive" and allow for any Ukrainian refugee to enter the EU.
- Equip your organisation to offer support to trans asylum seekers and refugees. Community support can mean simple steps you can take to give trans asylum seekers and refugees strength, hope and safety. Check what practical steps you could take right away in TGEU's brochure "Welcome to Stay".
- Coordinate with other initiatives supporting Ukrainian refugees and asylum seekers.

You are a trans person from Ukraine and need help??

Please find below resources for trans people who are in Ukraine or have recently left Ukraine. The information is being updated.

If you need help:

- With various requests, you can reach out to Telegram bots and activists there will advise you what to do and where to find what you need:
  - ??????? LGBT Ukraine Bot — for LGBTQ people from Ukraine
  - Hotline operated by Trans* Coalition (Telegram bot and email: tchelp2022@gmail.com) — for trans people from Ukraine as well as other countries of the Caucasus, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia in need of help as a result of the war.
- Reach out to trans and LGBT organisations in Ukraine:
  - Food, basic necessities: Cohort, Gender Z
  - Financial support: Cohort, Trans* Generation
  - Medication, including hormone replacement therapy: Cohort, Insight
  - Transport, safer housing, relocation, evacuation: Insight, Trans* Generation, Gay Alliance Ukraine, Alliance.Global, MenSpace
  - Psychological help: Insight, KharkivPride
  - Legal help: Insight

You can also reach out to us at tgeu@tgeu.org and we will do our best to support you.

What is happening?

There is still a lot we don't know about the current situation nor how it will evolve. We urge activists to be careful with information when sharing. Please make sure to share verified information as much as possible. For general news, we encourage you to follow the below official media sources:

- The Kyiv Independent
  Twitter: @kyivindependent
- Ukrayinska Pravda
  Twitter: @ukrpravda_news
- Euromaidan Press
  Twitter: @euromaidanpress
- SPRAVDI
  Twitter: @stratcomcentre
- Ukraine World
  Twitter: @ukraine_world