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CARE Ukraine Crisis Update

Winter's onset, deteriorating conditions spur second border surge



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As attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure continue and winter approaches, Ukrainian refugees are surging to the Polish border once again. CARE-supported accommodation centers remain full, while other centers have closed, forcing some refugees to sleep on frigid train platforms without knowing what will happen next.

At the beginning of the war, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian refugees came through the train station in Przemyśl, a small historic city near the Ukrainian border. Ukrainian House, a cultural center in the center of town, quickly responded, turning their facility into a temporary accommodation center by rolling bunks into their theater, constructing new bathrooms, and converting their meetings rooms into an impromptu Ukrainian consulate.

"Two or three months ago, from 200 to 300 people would come to Przemyśl on a train," says Igor Horków, chairman of Ukrainian House. "Now, there are from 500 to 600 people coming on one train, and there are several trains coming from Kyiv, Odessa, Zaporizhzhya every day."

"Two or three months ago, the accommodation center was full after the trains for the day arrived, by 8 or 9 pm." Igor explains. "Now the center is completely full by noon. After the first train, it is full."

"In the last few days there were from 100 to 200 people sleeping at the train station either waiting for the next train or waiting until the place in accommodation center is free."

Ukrainian House staff and volunteers – mostly Ukrainian themselves – have been working since the war began to help refugees with problems ranging from severe illness to immigration, housing, and employment issues. Together with CARE and Polish Humanitarian Action, Ukrainian House provides multipurpose cash assistance in the form of cash cards for refugees. They also provide meals, transportation and housing assistance, psychosocial assistance, language courses, and other services.

To date, over 5.5 million refugees have crossed the border into Poland, with 1.4 million registered for protection in Poland, the most of any nation in Europe or elsewhere. The team at Ukrainian House often assisted refugees to find longer-term accommodation options in Poland or elsewhere.

A longer version of this story is available at [CARE.org/news-and-stories](https://www.care.org/news-and-stories).

A mother's tale: 'We want to go back to our lives'

This story, told by an anonymous Ukrainian mother, was collected by a CARE-financed communication project in Romania called "The Suitcases of Abandonment." This project connects Romanian society, donors, and international supporters to the experiences of Ukrainian refugees, generating empathy and understanding.

I don't know if people realize how hard it is to have your own child see you in a helpless state. Maybe you had to move at some point. Maybe you went through a divorce. Or relocated for a better job. Your kids are watching you, and to them you're responsible for everything.

"Mum, I don't want to move to another school, I don't want to live in another house." But you know it's better for them. I moved my children nine times in the last six months. Never for their own good, but for their physical health. But I couldn't offer anything good enough to comfort them at the next destination and at the next.

Their father was not able to say yes to their requests. We couldn't take him with us. Nor could we take their friends, their grandparents, their bedroom.

It seemed absurd that before, when she was a happy child, with many friends, I was teaching her not to enter the elevator next to strangers. She did not understand this advice, while I was being very serious. Or not to cross

"Once they were afraid of the monster under the bed. Now that's where they hid when the first explosion was heard. This is stealing their childhood away."

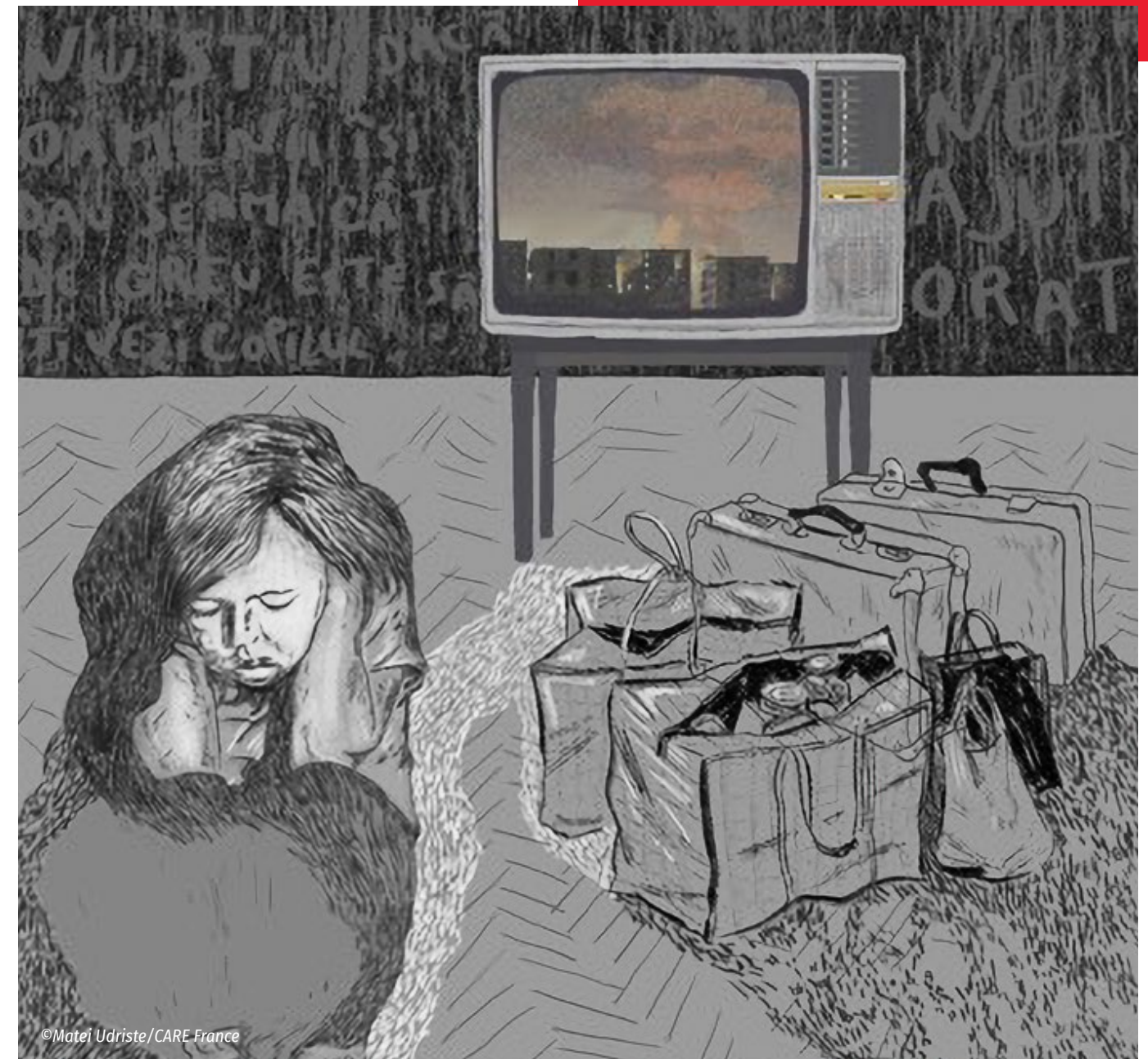
the street without making sure. She was not aware of dangers. Now we're teaching them to run inside the dirty basement of the apartment building when they hear explosions.

I wrote my phone number, their names, and dates of birth on their soft skin. With an ugly black marker. While only two months ago, I thought what was dangerous to them was not to eat too much sugar at their grandparents'. Now I don't know if they'll ever see them again.

I was guiding myself to raise my child properly. Not to miss school. Up until a month ago I was not sure if they would ever go to school again, if there's any use to it, if it would be possible. Now the teacher teaches the children on Zoom to take cover during the class if the sirens go off. Some of them are still there, in Ukraine, in the safe areas (is there such a thing?), and when the sirens go off all of them get scared. The Romanian kids as well. Where is the sound coming from, the pad or the window?

I used to teach my girl not to say bad words, not to be mean with her classmates, to share. In the basement, while walking to the border, in the crowded train, at Romexpo, I swore all the time. I couldn't do it another way. I cursed them, I asked God to forgive me, I wished

In Romania, CARE partners with a coalition of 29 local associations who have already supported 12,000 refugee children with various activities: psychological help and educational projects, protection services, and emergency distributions.



the worst for whoever killed people in Bucha. And she heard me. She told me: "But mum, we don't use that language," and I said: "we're in a war." I was sorry, I still am. Her brother is too young. He only cries when his feet hurt.

The people around us are kind. But they're tired of our problems. They have their jobs, their needs, their

expenses. And we're not starving anymore; we're not a concern anymore. We're starting to be seen as an inconvenience. And it's natural. But we don't want this either. We want to go back to our lives, the lives that were stolen from us.



BY THE NUMBERS

15,107,523

refugees fleeing Ukraine since Feb. 24¹
(Up 7.67% from Oct. 11 update)

6.5 million

internally displaced²
(Up 4.84% from Aug. 23 update)

Neighboring countries receiving refugee influx:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Poland: 7.43M ¹ | 4. Romania: 1.49M ⁴ |
| 2. Russian Federation: 2.85M ³ | 5. Slovakia: 919K ¹ |
| 3. Hungary: 1.71M ¹ | 6. Moldova: 685K ¹ |
| | 7. Belarus: 17K ⁵ |

9,972

civilians injured⁶
(Up 6.41% from Oct. 14 update)

663

healthcare facilities damaged
or destroyed⁷ (Up 9.23% from Oct. 10 update)

2,528

education facilities damaged
or destroyed⁸ (No new reporting since Sept. 21.)

SOURCES

¹UN High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR), Nov. 8, 2022; ²International Organization for Migration (IOM), Oct. 27; ³UN High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR), Oct. 3; ⁴UN High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR), Nov. 6; ⁵UN High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR), Nov. 7; ⁶UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR), Nov. 13; ⁷World Health Organization (WHO), Oct. 10; ⁸Multiple Sources, Sept. 21

