

OUTRIGHT'S UKRAINE LGBTIQ EMERGENCY FUND IMPACT UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2022

A CALL TO ACTION

Within hours of Russia's assault on Ukraine in February, OutRight Action International ("OutRight") began mobilizing support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) groups across the country as our partners reached out to us for help. **In times of wars and other crises, LGBTIQ people may face higher risks yet are often left behind or excluded from humanitarian relief efforts.** During the first six months of the war, millions of people living in Ukraine fled their homes - and many who stayed were forced to shelter in place, with little or no access to running water, power, heating, medical care, or mobile phone service.

Whether they stay in Ukraine or attempt to leave the country, LGBTIQ people have faced a range of threats to their security and human rights. For instance, the EuroCentralAsian Lesbian* Community (EL*C) has highlighted the needs of queer women both in Ukraine, where they contend with lesbophobic violence and struggle to access humanitarian assistance, and in neighboring countries, where their families are not recognized. Insight, a Kyiv-based organization, has documented how transgender people in Ukraine are struggling to access hormones and other medical treatment. Many trans people have faced additional challenges, as martial law has barred all people with male documents aged 18 to 60 from leaving the country and requires them to register for military service. Both trans women and trans men have reported being turned back at the border or experiencing difficulty getting exempted from the draft.

Activists across the region have also been concerned about protecting the rights of LGBTIQ people, since Russia has a long track record of targeting human rights defenders and of state-sponsored homo- and transphobia.

In response to the invasion, many queer groups within Ukraine transformed themselves overnight. Most of these groups were previously focused on advocacy and community building; they rapidly had to learn how to provide emergency humanitarian aid. LGBTIQ activists have stayed - many in war zones - to help their communities survive by opening shelters for the displaced, creating programs to distribute food, medicine, and other aid, and offering psychological and legal help. As soon as the war began, our partners required immediate financial support to ensure the survival of LGBTIQ people and the movement itself throughout this war.

Six months into the war, these organizations are still providing emergency support to LGBTIQ people, despite the tremendous toll these efforts have taken on their staff and volunteers - and the war rages on. Likewise, OutRight continues to provide financial and other types of support, directly and in partnership with coalitions that are forming to secure the survival of LGBTIQ people and the movement longer-term.



We invite you to read more below about:

- How OutRight is supporting LGBTIQ groups and people in Ukraine and surrounding countries
- Voices from partners providing frontline, life-saving services to LGBTIQ people in and around Ukraine
- The Fund's impact to date
- The humanitarian challenges and emerging trends, six months into the war
- How you can partner with OutRight to support LGBTIQ people impacted by the war



HOW WE ARE HELPING

As of August 15, 2022 OutRight has distributed USD \$1.6M to 39 local LGBTIQ-serving partners in Ukraine and surrounding countries that are delivering humanitarian aid to LGBTIQ people. More than 70% of grants from OutRight have been issued to groups in Ukraine. While OutRight has supported a number of LGBTIQ groups outside of Ukraine working with displaced LGBTIQ people and LGBTIQ refugees fleeing or that have fled from Ukraine, we have prioritized groups working in Ukraine, where many LGBTIQ people remain.

Contributions have provided emergency assistance to LGBTIQ people who need safe shelter, food, medical supplies (including medications), financial assistance, transportation for distribution of support and helping people reach hospitals, relocation assistance for those who are fleeing, mental health support, and other types of humanitarian assistance. The Fund is also supporting basic organizational operating and staffing expenses so that grassroots LGBTIQ organizations can keep their doors open, and services going.

Taking into consideration the protracted duration of this war, and that funders have begun exiting and pulling support from the space, OutRight is making multiple grants to organizations, and continues to assess requests from new partners that need assistance.

THE FUND'S IMPACT

\$1.6M+ FUNDS DISTRIBUTED

\$22.1K AVERAGE GRANT SIZE

OF 100% LGBTIQ-SERVING GRANTS ISSUED

18% OF GRANTS TO TRANS-FOCUSED PROJECTS

9% OF GRANTS TO LBQ-FOCUSED PROJECTS

39 GRANTS DISTRIBUTED TO LGBTIQ & FEMINIST ORGANIZATIONS

28 IN UKRAINE **11** IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

26,000 ESTIMATED NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ASSISTED

Gender Stream:

With OutRight's help our team has not only survived but continues to help to survive other LGBTQI+ refugees from Ukraine. We continue to provide consultations on legal ways of evacuation from hotspots for transgender people, humanitarian aid and psychological help as well as safe shelters in Ukraine and in EU. Since the full scale Russian invasion of Ukraine we have already helped more than 150 LGBTQI+ people - 60 transgender people among them. Thank you for your great financial support, which is converted into saving lives!



LGBTIQ refugees at a shelter just outside Ukraine run by the organization Gender Stream, March 15, 2022. Photo by J. Lester Feder.

Trans*Generation:

We want to thank you for supporting us and the entire Ukrainian community in this difficult time. We constantly contact trans people who stayed in Ukraine and those who left the country and try to be as flexible as possible, taking into account their needs. Thanks to OutRight's support, we can continue our work with the community and respond to their needs.



NGO Cohort:

Thank you for your help in such a difficult time, we appreciate it and express gratitude from the trans people of Ukraine. You were the first to respond to the help of trans people in Ukraine.*



Miłosz Przepiórkowski, Board Member, Lambda Warsaw



T*South Initiative Group:

*On behalf of the T*South initiative group, I express my deep gratitude for the funds provided. We organized a shelter for transgender people, in which there are currently 7 people and we provide humanitarian assistance to transgender and non-binary people in Ukraine. The humanitarian situation in Ukraine is not improving, and many people are still homeless - those who had to leave the hot spots affected by the war. Also, most people have lost their jobs and their financial situation is very difficult. With your help, we have been able to help many trans* and non-binary people in Ukraine, we have been doing this since receiving the grant and we see that the program needs to be continued.*



Lenny Emson of Kyiv Pride speaks at a press conference ahead of joint Warsaw-Kyiv Pride, June 25, 2022. Photo by J. Lester Feder.



Olha Polyakova, Executive Director, Gender Stream



EMERGING TRENDS

Ukrainian LGBTIQ organizations that were forced to fill the humanitarian assistance gap at the onset of the war are now at a crossroads to decide whether to continue humanitarian work (and in what form) or go back to the human rights advocacy work that they were established to undertake. The humanitarian crisis in Ukraine is far from over and could in fact worsen over time. As the war continues, it could impact different and additional areas in Ukraine; it is also possible that essential infrastructure could stop functioning at a certain point as a result of Russia’s targeted attacks on transport, storage and energy supply points. Reports to OutRight further indicate that some activists have left the country or are internally displaced, office space and infrastructure can’t be maintained, and historical sources of advocacy funding for LGBTIQ organizations have dried up as donors exit on the assumption that no human rights advocacy can be done in Ukraine at the moment. The latter is a gross misconception, as LGBTIQ organizations begin to resume their advocacy work where they left off on February 24, 2022, while simultaneously continuing to deliver humanitarian assistance.

Put bluntly, their very survival is at stake. OutRight encourages the philanthropic sector to maintain their support of Ukrainian civil society organizations. OutRight is also advocating that mainstream humanitarian organizations ensure LGBTIQ-inclusion in their work.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Please help OutRight spread awareness about the experiences of LGBTIQ people living in or that have fled Ukraine as a result of the invasion. Share this Impact Brief with your networks by email and social media: Facebook | Instagram | Twitter | LinkedIn

Learn more about how we advocate for LGBTIQ rights and how we prioritize and amplify the needs of the most marginalized within our community in the following:

- **World Economic Forum:** How to Respond to the Humanitarian Crisis in Ukraine: 4 NGOs Explain
- **Teen Vogue:** Trans People Leaving Ukraine Face Danger and Transphobia. This Organization Is a Safe Haven
- **Mail and The Guardian:** African Governments Must Stop Harmful Conversion Practices to ‘Cure’ Sexual and Gender Diversity
- **Vanity Fair:** The Fight for Ukraine Is Also a Fight for LGBTIQ Rights
- **Open Democracy:** US Christian Right Group Accused of Promoting Anti-LGBTQ ‘Conversion Therapy’
- **Reuters:** LGBT+ Conversion Therapy Thrives Even as Bans Gather Pace

Help OutRight continue to support frontline responders. **Donate today.**

Making a gift is simple: here is how you can make a one-time or recurring donation to the Ukraine Fund:

- online in most currencies
- stock
- crypto
- send a gift by check or from a donor advised fund (make check payable to OutRight Action International, write “Ukraine Fund” in memo, mail to OutRight Action International, Ukraine Fund, 216 East 45th Street, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10017, USA
- ask your employer if they **match donations**
- scan the QR code >>>



FUND SUPPORTERS

OutRight is moved by the global outpouring of support and care for LGBTIQ people in Ukraine and the region. More than 7,800 people from over 75 countries have contributed to OutRight’s Ukraine Fund, along with partners such as MacKenzie Scott & Dan Jewett, Ukraine DAO, Together Rising, Google.org, Choose Love Foundation, GiveOut, Capital Group, RELI3F, SumOfUs, The Giving Block, Looking Out Foundation, Johnson Family Foundation, Grindr 4 Equality, Beamery, Horizons Foundation, Zalando, GoFundMe, PinkNews, Antidote Magazine, DWF Law Foundation, Kendo Brands Kares, WoW Tech, Blackline, Clearway, Triodis, NYLife Foundation, Gitcoin, Elevate Prize Foundation, Endaoment, FxHash, Versum, Objkt, Art for Ukraine and countless others.

IN THEIR VOICES



Photos by EL*C Eurocentralasian Lesbian Community.



Paralegal Networks:

People lose their work because of war, which leads to the problems of paying for apartment rent and food and medicine bills. Officially in Ukraine now more than 50% of people lost their jobs, and more than half of our applicants for assistance were people who needed to change their place of living because of war. Many also have disabilities or health issues (HIV, mental disorders etc), or need to take care of elderly disabled relatives. We gave priority to people from destroyed or occupied cities, and also from small villages where there is no infrastructure or/and social help services/ projects. So far we provided help for 56 people, thanks to your support.



Sphere & Kharkiv Pride:

Thanks to the generosity of our donors and partners, we have been able to successfully keep running the programme of financial support to help the community. The most essential categories of needs were food, medical treatment (examinations, medication, psychotherapeutic care) and accommodation (rent, utilities). We and the entire [LGBTIQ+] community of Ukraine sincerely thank our donors, pride organisations and various international funds from around the world that provided us [the] means and support to run this programme!

EuroCentralAsian Lesbian* Community (EL*C):

We are now managing 4 safe-houses near the borders, receiving on average 20 calls from refugees per day (those who are planning to cross the border in the coming days and those who are on the way to cross), and the needs are huge and increasing with each day. With three of our cars we are driving on average between 500-1000 km per day, picking people up from different borders and taking them to our houses. We have directly supported 69 lesbians* and several trans persons and their families and pets in our safe houses, and have assisted many more by providing information and guidance, or redirecting them to our member organizations in Romania, Moldova and Hungary.



ChemBrothers:

May I address our gratitude that your organization has been the first to respond to our call to support GBMSM community's needs because of the war in Ukraine. Not for a single day do we stop our volunteer activities. Unfortunately, the war is still going on. We ask you to continue to support our efforts to save people from the terrible consequences of the war in Ukraine. Thanks to your support, we have saved many lives.



A group of LGBTIQ refugees pose for a portrait inside a shelter just outside Ukraine run by the organization Gender Stream, March 15, 2022. Photos by J. Lester Feder.