

Conflict in Ukraine

Situation Report #1



24 February 2022

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Russia launched a full-scale invasion on Ukraine, shortly after 5am local time, with attacks coming from the North, East and South.
- Explosions and heavy fire have escalated throughout the day across the country.
- Thousands of Ukrainians have already fled to the neighboring countries of Romania, Slovakia, Moldova and Poland and more are expected to arrive as fighting continues.
- Project HOPE is coordinating with the Health Cluster in Ukraine, led by the World Health Organization (WHO) to respond to priority needs.
- Project HOPE is mobilizing an emergency response team, medicines and medical supplies to respond to pressing health and humanitarian needs within Ukraine and among refugees in neighboring countries as the situation evolves.



Map of Feb 24 airstrikes or attacks on Ukraine as of 8:53am EST. Source: [NYTimes](#)

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Russia has launched a multi-effort attack on Ukraine, crossing the border from several points on the eastern and northern border as well as through southern ports and Crimea, with focus on military installations and airports. The offensive has prompted massive displacement from the capital of Kyiv and other parts of the country, with several thousand people entering Moldova and neighboring countries on high alert for continued displacement.

Kyiv has instituted a daily curfew, and public transportation stations have opened as shelters as Russian forces attack nearby military bases and airports, and air raid sirens have sounded across the capital since the attacks began on the evening of February 23rd. Ukraine's ambassador to the United States told reporters today that the Ministry of Health has stated hospitals have been attacked by Russian forces, although this has not been confirmed from other sources.ⁱ

According to Ukrainian officials, Russian forces entering Ukraine from Belarus have captured the radioactive Chernobyl exclusion zone.ⁱⁱ The 1,000-square-mile protective zone lies in the direct shortest path from Belarus into Kyiv. Ukrainian forces attempted to defend the storage unit containing nuclear dust, that if disturbed, could cover Ukraine, Belarus, and other countries in the European Union.

TIMELINE

- Dec. 2021 – Russia began moving military forces along the border, focusing on Russian-backed separatist regions, Donetsk and Luhansk in eastern Ukraine.
- Jan. 2022 – Russian military forces moved into Belarus along Ukraine's northern border.
- Feb 19, 2022 – intense artillery fire broke out across the front line in separatist regions.
- Feb. 24, 2022 – Russia launched full-scale invasion of Ukraine from the North, East and South.

QUICK FACTS

- 2.9 million in need of humanitarian assistance in Ukraine
- 1.52 million in need of humanitarian health care
- 2.5 million people in need of WASH assistance

*Sources: NYTimes; OCHA Ukraine Situation Report (17 Feb 2022)

The port city of Odessa incurred significant shelling overnight, with emergency services struggling to extinguish fires and rescue citizens. Ukrainians near the conflict zones are lining up to access cash and fuel, and although communications and cell towers are reportedly functional for now, citizens are preparing for significant disruptions to supply chains, health care, and road access.ⁱⁱⁱ

Ukraine declared independence following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, and the country has had a complicated relationship with Russia since then. In 2014, Russian forces annexed Crimea, and have maintained control of the peninsula since then. A few months later, Russian-backed separatists in Donbas took control of the region, and Russia's President Vladimir Putin recognized Donetsk and Luhansk earlier this week as he paved the way for extensive military action in Ukraine.^{iv}

HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

Prior to the current fighting, there was an estimated 2.9 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and protection in Ukraine, largely due to the past eight years of armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, where the most recent outbreaks of fighting began.^v According to the World Health Organization (WHO), of those in need of aid, approximately 1.52 million are considered in need of humanitarian health care, with the elderly accounting for 31% of this population. Humanitarian health needs were only further exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic and are expected to drastically increase as the conflict continues. Existing health threats in country include COVID-19, vaccine-preventable diseases such as polio, noncommunicable diseases such as cardiovascular disease, and disruptions to health programs such as childhood immunizations, Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. Access to primary health care and medicines in particular is a significant gap and contributor to poor health outcomes, particularly in eastern Ukraine.

Other humanitarian needs in Ukraine include child protection, care for the elderly, and psychosocial support. Active hostilities will further devastate already damaged infrastructure, restrict movement and disrupt essential services including water, power, transportation and banking.^{vi}

Thousands of Ukrainians have already fled to neighboring countries, seeking refuge from the conflict. Romania, Poland, and Slovakia have already noted increases in foot traffic at border crossing points with Ukraine as people seek safety.^{vii} More than 4,000 people, mostly women and children, have crossed into Moldova as fighting in the southern part of Ukraine has intensified over the last 12 hours.^{viii} These numbers will continue to increase and fluctuate as fighting continues. Ukraine's defense minister estimated a week ago that a violent invasion of the country could lead to 3-5 million people fleeing conflict zones. The United States government estimated this could result in 1-5 million people seeking refuge in neighboring countries. A mass movement of people at those levels has not been seen in Europe since World War II.^{ix}

PROJECT HOPE RESPONSE

Project HOPE is mobilizing to provide health and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons in Ukraine as well as refugees in neighboring countries fleeing the ongoing invasion. Project HOPE is in contact with the WHO Health Cluster in Ukraine, which has noted critical needs in primary health care. Early response activities at this time include:

- Activating an emergency response team in Ukraine to provide immediate health and humanitarian relief.
- Mobilizing a regional emergency response team to support health needs of refugees in countries along the border of Ukraine, in collaboration with established coordination mechanisms.

- Sourcing and shipping essential medicines and medical supplies for primary health and trauma care to affected areas. Project HOPE is currently readying two interagency emergency health kits (IEHKs) to ship within the next 48 hours which will be handed over to the WHO Health Cluster in Ukraine.

Project HOPE will continue to closely monitor the situation as it unfolds in order to respond to the most pressing health and humanitarian needs among affected populations.

SOURCES

ⁱ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/world/europe/oksana-markarova-ukraine.html>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/chernobyl-power-plant-captured-by-russian-forces-ukrainian-official-2022-02-24/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.bbc.com/news/live/world-europe-60454795>

^{iv} <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/02/21/what-is-donbas-donetsk-luhansk-conflict/>

^v <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/irc-calls-urgent-diplomatic-solution-crisis-ukraine-avert-potential-humanitarian#:~:text=There%20are%20almost%203%20million,the%20suffering%20it%20will%20produce.>

^{vi} <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/renewed-conflict-ukraine-would-trigger-massive-displacement>

^{vii} <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/leaving-behind-posessions-and-pets-ukrainians-flee-to-poland/ar-AAUfkXI>

^{viii} <https://www.bbc.com/news/live/world-europe-60454795>

^{ix} <https://www.newsweek.com/ukraine-invasion-could-spark-massive-refugee-crisis-opinion-1679608>

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