

COVID-19 PUTS CONFLICT-AFFECTED PEOPLE AND SMALL ENTREPRENEURS UNDER STRAIN



U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration

Seven kilometres to the nearest pharmacy, eighteen kilometres to the nearest hospital... These are the realities people living along the contact line in Ukraine's Eastern Conflict Area revealed in an IOM survey. To assess the impact of COVID-19 crisis on populations in Donetsk and Luhansk regions and on small entrepreneurs who had been previously supported by IOM across Ukraine, IOM conducted three express surveys.

Eighty-one per cent (81%) of surveyed beneficiaries of IOM Ukraine livelihood programmes from nine regions* reported a significant impact of quarantine measures on their business operations. Almost a half (47%) reported a full shutdown and 34 per cent reported partial shutdown.

Eighty-seven per cent (87%) of respondents interviewed in 5-km area along the contact line in government-controlled areas and 70



An IDP who started a carpenter's shop with IOM support, Krasnohorivka, Donetsk Region
Photo: IOM / Volodymyr Shuvayev

per cent of returnees interviewed by phone in non-government-controlled areas noted an increase in food prices.

The surveys were conducted with funding from the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration

(PRM). Findings will be used by IOM to respond to the most immediate needs or affected target groups.

Read more at: <https://bit.ly/COVIDexpress-survey>

UKRAINIANS STRANDED ABROAD NEED ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION

As countries around the world introduced travel restrictions and closed the borders to prevent the spread of COVID-19, many Ukrainian nationals remained stranded abroad. In March, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Ukraine launched Zakhyst (Protection) Programme to assist Ukrainians abroad through the efforts of embassies and consulates. IOM Ukraine has offered to MFA its expertise in Migrant Protection and Assistance and has mobilized resources to support the most vulnerable migrants.

Almost **16,000 Ukrainians** Ukrainians have registered through the Zakhyst Programme and the needs evolve daily.

"We anticipate that as countries prolong lockdowns, the needs of Ukrainians abroad will grow, and the savings will run out. This can lead to increased vulnerability and may even push into situations of exploitation or abuse," said Anh Nguyen, Chief of Mission at IOM Ukraine.

The first family assisted through IOM Ukraine and MFA partnership is a couple of Ukrainian circus performers and their three-year-old child who couldn't leave from Malaysia, where the couple had been working for a year before the COVID-19 outbreak. They had tickets to go back to Ukraine, but on their departure date the travel was banned, and the border closed. Since the family could not afford paying the rent of the apartment as their savings were spent for some medical treatment, IOM, in coordination with the Embassy of Ukraine in Malaysia, covered the rent for an additional month.

The next call for assistance has reached IOM from a Ukrainian tourist stranded in Brazil where he was robbed. His family in Ukraine has sent him some money but has no means to support him further. IOM Ukraine assistance will cover for his basic needs in food.

In a view of growing needs and vulnerabilities, IOM Ukraine calls for additional international and business resources to assist Ukrainians stranded abroad.

* The interviews were conducted among IOM grantees living in including Donetsk, Luhansk (GCA), Kherson, Kyiv, Lviv, Odesa, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhia regions

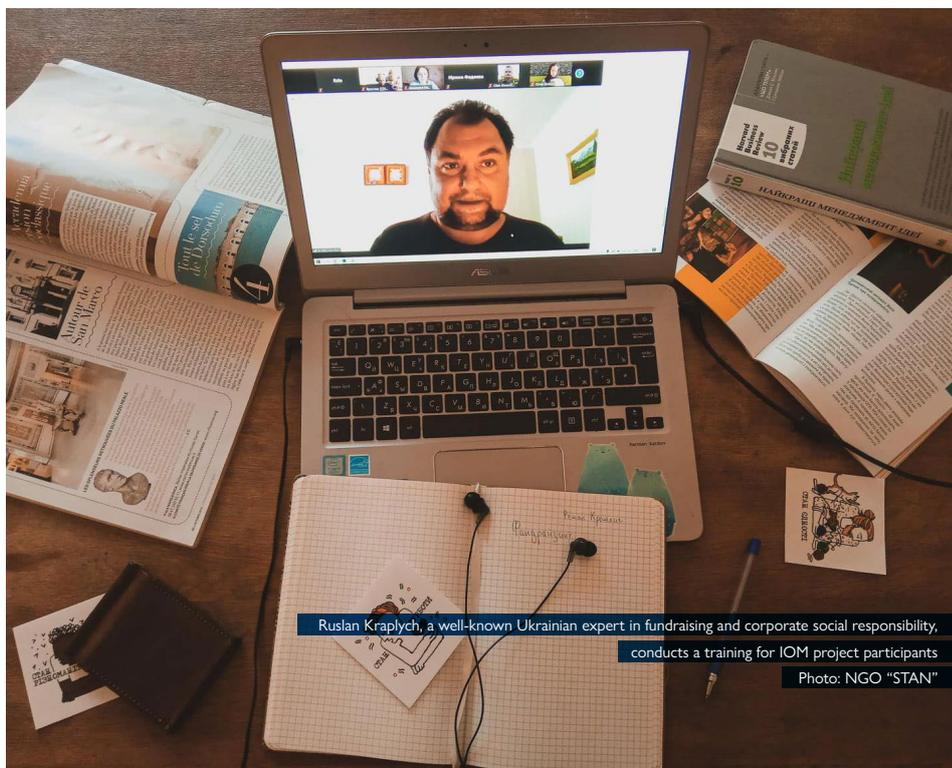
IOM PARTNER NGOs GO ONLINE TO SUPPORT VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES



MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

About **100 veterans**, their family members, and volunteers working with veterans in Lviv, Dnipropetrovsk and Kyiv regions participated in a 10-day series of webinars on project and brand management, fundraising, leadership and critical thinking in times of crises. The online marathon was organized by IOM implementing partner, NGO “STAN”, in the framework of an EU-funded project on veterans’ reintegration. The project has been supporting veterans’ business and social cohesion initiatives since January 2020. With the imposture of quarantine due to COVID-19, the project team tried their best to adjust to the new realities.

“Due to COVID-19 restrictions, people have lost their local connections. There are many online opportunities in Ukraine now, but people from remote communities and small towns often lack information and need additional support to be able to see that their situation is not unique and that they are not alone,” said Yaroslav Minkin, head of “STAN”.



Another IOM partner NGO, Centre for Mental Health and Traumatherapy “Integration”, conducted online webinars on primary psychological support in crisis for 30 mental health and psychosocial support workers, previously trained within the

project and working with local communities. Now these trained psychologists support their community members with webinars and counselling on countering stress and panic.



The IOM Mission in Ukraine assists the Government of Ukraine to mitigate the COVID-19 impact in coordination with the United Nations Country Team and in line with IOM’s Global Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID-19. To learn more and contribute please contact us at iomkievcomm@iom.int.

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