

## Press release

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### **European Kolping Associations provide emergency aid for Ukraine**

**With Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Kolping Associations in Europe have mobilized their forces to help people suffering from the war and fleeing from Ukraine. KOLPING INTERNATIONAL coordinates the humanitarian measures of the associations and supports them with funds from its Ukraine donation campaign.**

Since the beginning of the war, numerous levels of the International Kolping Society have been working throughout Europe to provide humanitarian aid to the people in Ukraine and in the neighboring countries where they are seeking refuge. In Ukraine, the local Kolping Association with about 600 members immediately converted its social institutions into refugee shelters. Where once children, seniors or people with autism were supported, now internally displaced persons find shelter and are fed. The centers are located in western Ukraine, in Chernivtsi, Lviv, Uzhgorod, Sharhorod, Ivano-Frankivsk and Vinnytsia, which have so far been spared the effects of war. During the past two weeks, several hundred refugees have already used the emergency shelters. "They are mainly women with children who spend one or more nights in the hostels and receive help for their onward journey if they wish," reports Vasyl Savka, executive director of KOLPING Ukraine. Some sites additionally offer psychological care and special structures for families with disabled children. Also other relief actions have already arisen out of the need: in Chernivtsi, for example, a soup kitchen where Kolping members cook up to 400 warm meals for the population every day.

The Kolping Associations in the neighboring countries Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Hungary also provide emergency shelters for refugees. With the support of volunteers, they take care of the often traumatized arrivals, pick them up from the borders, provide sleeping places and food. This is done in close exchange with their Ukrainian colleagues, with whom they coordinate escape routes. In addition, the Eastern European Kolping Associations are in constant action to organize transports of relief supplies and to provide the Ukrainian Kolping brothers and sisters and their emergency shelters with urgently needed things such as food, blankets, camp beds, warm clothing and medicines.

These humanitarian aid measures are financed to a large extent by KOLPING INTERNATIONAL. For this purpose, an emergency aid donation campaign was started together with the Kolping Society of Germany, which has received extremely great solidarity: KOLPING INTERNATIONAL could already provide 400,000 Euros for the Ukraine emergency aid. And also other European Kolping levels are very committed to collect donations as well as material donations and to organize relief transports. The first larger deliveries of relief supplies from Romania and Poland have already reached the various locations of KOLPING Ukraine.

"It is really remarkable and admirable what all European Kolping levels - be it national or diocesan Kolping Associations or even individual Kolping Families - have put together in the two weeks since the beginning of the war", says Dr. Markus Demele, General Secretary of KOLPING INTERNATIONAL. "We are proud and grateful that we can use our associational structures so quickly and efficiently for joint humanitarian aid for Ukraine in this crisis. This also shows that our decades of work to build structures in the civil societies of the individual countries has really succeeded. And not only within the countries, but internationally networked." Msgr. Christoph Huber, General Praeses of KOLPING INTERNATIONAL, adds:

*Wir glauben an Dich!*

"Our associations in Europe work hand in hand for one goal. Uniting prayer and fellowship are currently releasing forces for this that are unimaginable. "

**Those who would like to support KOLPING INTERNATIONAL's Ukraine emergency aid can do so by donating to the following account:**

**KOLPING INTERNATIONAL Cooperation e.V.**

**IBAN: DE74 4006 0265 0001 3135 00**

BIC: GENODEM1DKM

DKM Darlehnskasse Münster eG

Keyword: Ukraine-Hilfe

<https://www.kolping.net/en/donate/ukraine-help-for-people-in-need/?donationonline/prompt>

*KOLPING INTERNATIONAL is a Catholic social association with around 400,000 members in 60 countries, founded in 1850 by the priest and social reformer Adolph Kolping and headquartered in Cologne. Our vision is a just world in which everyone can live a life in dignity. With the help of its specialist organization for development cooperation, the association has been helping to fight poverty and build strong civil society structures worldwide since 1969: in Africa, Latin America and Asia as well as in Central and Eastern Europe.*