

ADVOCACY DIGEST

APRIL – JUNE 2025

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the second 2025 edition of the Ukrainian Red Cross (URC) quarterly **digest**, designed to keep our partners and stakeholders informed about our activities in the field of humanitarian operations and diplomacy. **This edition highlights our key achievements and key advocacy events from April to June 2025.** The fourth year of the war in Ukraine allows to outline URC's preparedness for and response to the international armed conflict. This unique experience was achieved through a coordinated humanitarian response among all the Partner National Societies involved in the humanitarian response in Ukraine.

OPERATION IN UKRAINE

Volunteer work is an integral part of the URC's activities. With the start of full-scale invasion in February 2022, the URC had to manage **spontaneous volunteers**, community members who offered their assistance but were not associated with the URC. Over time, the URC launched separate training for these volunteers, whose number has now reached 1000. **24 Emergency Response Teams** operate throughout Ukraine, they consist of URC volunteers who assist affected population, participate in humanitarian operations, such as first aid, medical, social and psycho-social support, evacuation, organizing camps for temporary accommodation of those affected.

Since the start of the full-scale invasion, the URC has achieved the following milestones in volunteering:

Total number
of volunteers:

8 000

ERT
Volunteers:

456

Permanent
volunteers:

455

Spontaneous
volunteers :

+1 000



MOVEMENT PARTNERSHIP – BEST PRACTICES

PARTNER NATIONAL SOCIETIES IN UKRAINE: PREPAREDNESS PRACTICES

Austrian Red Cross



The Austrian Red Cross (AutRC) began its partnership with the URC in 2014 engaging in health, social care and livelihoods across the eastern oblasts. In the immediate aftermath of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, AutRC responded swiftly by deploying technical delegates to Ukraine to work alongside URC teams.

These efforts supported the delivery of emergency relief supplies, cash and voucher assistance, ensuring that life-saving assistance reached those most in need. Early support also included shelter reconstruction **for internally displaced people (IDPs), WASH activities and the expansion of Mobile Health Units (MHUs)** from eastern oblasts to other conflict-affected oblasts, enabling URC to meet urgent health and social service needs.

As the humanitarian situation evolved, URC with support of AutRC and other partners, shifted its focus toward **longer-term programming and National Society Development**. This included strengthening the quality and sustainability of URC services, providing strategic guidance for core programmes, and launching the REDpreneur initiative, an innovative livelihood and business support programme empowering **both vulnerable individuals and URC branches** to develop and successfully implement their own social initiatives.

Now entering the fourth year of conflict, with the humanitarian situation continuing to evolve, cooperation between URC and AutRC continues to deepen with a strong focus on **resilient core programmes** such as **community-based services in health and social care, disaster management, and livelihoods**, while ensuring that URC remains equipped to respond swiftly to changing needs.

German Red Cross



The German Red Cross (GRC) has worked in Ukraine for many years, with a longstanding presence in Kramatorsk.

But in late February 2022, as concerns grew around Russia's military build-up, GRC made the decision to deploy an additional staff member to Kyiv. Since then, the GRC has been working hand-in-hand with URC as part of its nationwide emergency response. Early evaluations with colleagues in western Ukraine led to a joint focus on strengthening the capacity of the **Lviv, Rivne, and Volyn regional branches of the Ukrainian Red Cross**. One of the first areas of support was Home-Based Care – a programme that scaled up rapidly to meet urgent needs – and GRC support has since grown in line with the expanding scope of URC's response.

By mid-2022, partnership between URC and GRC extended further south to **Odesa** and later to **Zaporizhzhia**, deepening the shared commitment to reach communities in need. Now in 2025, GRC supports URC across a wide range of strategic programmes: **Long-Term Care, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), Rehabilitation, Disaster Management, Mobile Health Units, Health Promotion, Emergency Response Teams, and First Aid** – all underpinned by capacity-building through the Bravo initiative. GRC's focus remains in Rivne, Volyn, Odesa and Zaporizhzhia, where its delegates work side by side with committed URC teams every day. Over the past 18 months GRC also started working more closely with the National Committee of the URC units in specific programmatic areas – Disaster Management, Community Centres and more recently Rehabilitation, as part of a wider package of collaboration.

Danish Red Cross



Røde Kors

Danish Red Cross (DRC) has been present in Ukraine since 2014, supporting the URC focusing on **preparedness, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), international humanitarian law (IHL), and branch development.**

DRC immediately scaled up operations by deploying surge personnel, establishing a logistics pipeline, and supporting the delivery of food, hygiene kits, temporary shelter, and psychosocial support.

As the conflict has evolved into a protracted crisis, DRC continues to support URC in meeting immediate humanitarian needs, while also placing growing emphasis on **recovery and preparedness**. This includes the expansion of MHPSS services across the country, investments in local branch development and leadership training, youth engagement, ongoing disaster preparedness efforts, as well as support in health and rehabilitation. This integrated approach aims to ensure that both URC and affected communities are better equipped to respond to current challenges and future emergencies.

Luxembourg Red Cross



Since 2022, the activities of the Luxembourg Red Cross (LRC) in Ukraine have experienced **significant expansion**. Prior to the onset of the current phase of armed conflict, LRC's efforts were primarily focused on implementing humanitarian projects within the Donetsk region.

However, in recent years, the scope of LRC's interventions has broadened considerably to include **Kyiv, Sumy, Dnipro, and Mykolaiv oblasts.**

The number of **medical and social infrastructure facilities** receiving assistance for rehabilitation and repairs — aimed at restoring infrastructure damaged by hostilities — has increased markedly. Over the past three years, a total of 42 facilities, including 38 healthcare centers, 2 educational institutions, and 2 community centers, have been restored with financial support from the LRC. Additionally, numerous institutions have been supplied with building materials, enabling them to carry out reconstruction works utilizing their own labor resources.

Furthermore, humanitarian support in the form of medical equipment and medicines has also seen a substantial rise — to date, assistance has been provided to 66 institutions. In addition, more than **300,000 individuals** benefited from emergency aid, including food and non-food items such as hygiene kits and winterization supplies.

HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY SPOTLIGHT

HIGH-LEVEL LESSONS LEARNED EXCHANGE ON PREPAREDNESS FOR INTERNATIONAL ARMED CONFLICT

A **two-day international forum** organized by the URC took place on **17-18 June in Kyiv**. The forum aimed to strengthen the preparedness of Movement partners, enhance the auxiliary role of National Societies, and share the URC's experience during the ongoing war in Ukraine, particularly in providing coordinated and effective assistance during times of crisis.

Over the two days, participants — under the moderation of Hugo Slim, Senior Research Fellow at the University of Oxford — engaged in the following activities:



Shared experiences of emergency response and collaboration with government and civil society at various levels;



Analysed models of conflict preparedness, with insights from Finland, Lithuania, Estonia, the United Kingdom, Germany, and others;



Developed practical skills in “experience exchange laboratories”, where URC representatives presented best practices in logistics, communications, psychosocial support, restoring family links, international humanitarian law, disaster management, and emergency response.

The event brought together representatives from national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, government officials, the State Emergency Service of Ukraine, humanitarian partners, and academic experts.

HIGH-LEVEL LESSONS LEARNED EXCHANGE ON PREPAREDNESS FOR INTERNATIONAL ARMED CONFLICT:

 MENTIONS IN SOCIAL MEDIA



Toni Jokinen • 2e

Head of International Aid Support and Co...
1 sem. •

Tänään alkoi valitettavan ajankohtainen kokous Kiovassa. Ukrainan Punainen Risti jakaa kokemuksia sekä keskustelee niin Punaisen Ristin liikkeen ... plus



Ukrainian Red Cross

9 926 abonnés

Maksym Dotsenko: "The Ukrainian Red Cross demonstrates that a national society is capable not only of delivering humanitarian aid, ... plus

Afficher la traduction



1/20



Lithuanian Red Cross/Lietuvos Ra...

2 770 abonnés

1 j • Modifié •

Birželio 17-18 d. Lietuvos Raudonojo Kryžiaus darbuotojų komanda **Ingrida Damulienė, Vytautė Stankevičienė, Toma** ... plus



1/5



Danish Red Cross in Ukraine

2 488 abonnés

4 h •

When crisis strikes, who shows up first? Lessons from Ukraine's Red Cross on real preparedness ... plus



1/4



Eesti Punane Rist / Estonian R...

102 abonnés

5 j • Modifié •

Sel nädalal osalesime Ukraina Punase Risti kutsel Kiievis toimunud kõrgetasemelisel kriisivalmiduse teemalisel kohtumisel "High-Level Lessons ... plus



1/3



“The example of the Ukrainian Red Cross shows that even in the darkest of times, humanitarian assistance is not only an expression of compassion, but also a vital force for change,” said Hugo Slim, International Relations Adviser at the British Red Cross.



High-Level Lessons Learned Exchange on Preparedness for International Armed Conflict. June 2025, Kyiv. Credit: Ukrainian Red Cross.

THE EUROPEAN HUMANITARIAN FORUM IN BRUSSELS

The European Humanitarian Forum, held for the fourth time in **Brussels on 19–20 May**, has become **an important and inclusive platform for dialogue between European institutions and both international and local partners**. This year's programme focused on humanitarian diplomacy as a means of safeguarding the space for aid delivery and ensuring respect for international humanitarian law. It also aimed to foster cross-sector cooperation and identify sustainable solutions in the face of growing global instability.

Maksym Dotsenko, Director General of the URC, presented the organization's key achievements since the onset of the full-scale invasion and outlined its main challenges and priorities for 2025. He emphasized that more than **13 million people have received assistance from the URC**, including evacuation support, psychosocial care, humanitarian and financial aid, medical services, and support for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and healthcare facilities. **In the coming year, the organisation will focus on strengthening the emergency response system, improving access to social services, and supporting the most vulnerable.**

Forum participants called for enhanced cooperation between governments, humanitarian actors, and non-governmental organisations to better support those affected by armed conflict. Joint action, knowledge sharing, and partnerships with European institutions are seen as essential for both effective emergency response and post-war recovery.



The European Humanitarian Forum. May 2025, Brussels. Credit: Ukrainian Red Cross.

THE EUROPE CIVIL SECURITY FORUM IN WARSAW

On 21–22 May, the Europe Civil Security Forum took place in Warsaw, bringing together key institutions involved in security, humanitarian response, and civil society across Europe. Participants included Civil Protection Services from EU Member States, the Association of Local Governments of the EU, and other international partners.

The event was attended by representatives of local self-government bodies from Ukraine and several European countries, Members of the Parliament of Ukraine, and the leadership of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine.

The panel discussions covered the following topics:

- Ukraine's experience in ensuring the safety of citizens in the context of hybrid warfare.
- The role of the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism in countering hybrid challenges in Europe.
- Key challenges in the field of civil protection during wartime.
- Poland's experience in addressing threats and the strategic importance of cooperation between Ukraine and Poland in security projects and projects aimed at strengthening resilience.
- Estonia's preparedness for challenges in the field of civil protection, and more.

The URC was represented at the event by Andrii Pozniakievych, Head of the Disaster Management Department. During a panel discussion, he shared Ukraine's experience in engaging the public sector in emergency preparedness, involving volunteers in response activities and assistance to those affected, and the URC's participation in creating and operating **Volunteer Fire Brigades**.



The Europe Civil Security Forum. May 2025, Warsaw.

Credit: Ukrainian Red Cross.

HUMANITARIAN ARCHITECTURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CIVIL PROTECTION SYSTEM IN UKRAINE

On 11-12 June, a two-day forum on Humanitarian Architecture and Development of the Civil Protection System in Ukraine was held in Kyiv. The event was organised by the URC in partnership with the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SES).

The forum marked an important practical step forward, bringing together representatives from parliament, government agencies, academia, international partners, and civil society to strengthen national emergency response capacity and enhance cooperation among all stakeholders in civil protection, particularly in support of the affected civilian population.

The forum identified **priority areas for further action in the field of civil protection:**

- **Deepening cooperation and trust between all participants in the civil protection system** — including the state, civil society organisations, academic institutions, and international partners. Coordination and complementarity of efforts, rather than competition, are key to an effective response.
- **Institutional recognition of the role of civil society** — volunteer initiatives and humanitarian organisations should be fully integrated into the national response system at all levels, from the community to central government.
- **Alignment with European standards** — adapting the Ukrainian civil protection system to the requirements and approaches of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism through the involvement of civil society in joint programmes, exercises, and events.
- **Strengthening local capacities** — developing security infrastructure, establishing security centres and voluntary civil protection units, alongside systematic work with the population to improve emergency preparedness.
- **Building a unified response architecture** — creating a sustainable and coordinated system based on transparency, openness, mutual responsibility, and a focus on people's needs.



Humanitarian Architecture and Development of the Civil Protection System in Ukraine. June 2025, Kyiv. Credit: Ukrainian Red Cross.

#EU4HEALTH EVENT IN BRUSSELS

On 18–19 June, the final event of the **#EU4Health** project — one of the largest initiatives launched in response to the humanitarian crisis caused by the war in Ukraine — took place in Brussels.

The project was initiated by the European Union in partnership with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and 28 National Red Cross Societies. Its aim was to provide high-quality, timely mental health support to people affected by the war, both in Ukraine and abroad. During the final session, the URC presented its key achievements, serving as a powerful example of an effective and adaptive response in the field of psychosocial support.

URC experts shared their experience of working with communities and various target groups, including children, young people, older adults, internally displaced persons, and families affected by the war. They also presented approaches to training volunteers and staff, covering everything from psychological first aid skills to preventing emotional burnout and supporting vulnerable groups.

The event served as a platform for sharing experiences and discussing policies and strategies for the long-term implementation of mental health and psychosocial support at the European Union level.



#EU4Health event. June 2025, Brussels. Credit: Ukrainian Red Cross.

URC VISIT TO FINLAND

Illya Kletskovskyy, Deputy Director General of the URC, paid a working visit to Helsinki, the capital of Finland, where he took part in the “Humanity in Crisis” discussion event in June 2025.

In his speech, he shared the URC’s experience responding to the full-scale war and highlighted the ongoing challenges faced by millions of Ukrainians.

“Ukraine is suffering not only from attacks but also from the daily impact of war on everyone’s lives — children who wake at night to the sound of explosions, people who have lost their jobs or homes,” said Illya Kletskovskyy. *“Access to basic medical care has become much more difficult as the system is extremely overloaded. This affects not only physical health but mental health as well.”*

He also emphasised the vital role of volunteers and civil society in Ukraine, recognising them as the driving force behind evacuations, first aid provision, and the distribution of humanitarian aid.

During the visit, Illya Kletskovskyy expressed gratitude to our Finnish partners and the people of Finland for their ongoing support and assistance to Ukraine:

“We are deeply grateful for all the support. It is incredibly important for us to know that we are not alone.”

The meeting formed part of a wider dialogue on the challenges faced by humanitarian organisations worldwide and provided a platform to strengthen international partnerships. The Ukrainian Red Cross continues to share its experience, build collaborations, and work tirelessly for people, even in the most difficult conditions.



The European Humanitarian Forum. June 2025, Brussels. Credit: Ukrainian Red Cross.

NEWS ABOUT URC HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY:



Drawing hard but valuable lessons from the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine

Published by Red Cross EU Office on 30 June 2025

“Three years since the escalation of the international armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine, the Ukrainian Red Cross Society has adapted and expanded its humanitarian operations at an unprecedented scale. During a two-day high-level conference, hosted by the Ukrainian Red Cross Society in Kyiv on 17-18 June, more than 200 people from across the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, governments and academia convened to reflect on practical lessons, shared challenges and how to improve collective readiness for future crises...”

UPCOMING ADVOCACY-RELATED EVENTS:



**Ukraine Recovery Conference,
on 10-11 July 2025.**



**High-level visit to Singapore
Red Cross, in August 2025.**



**High-level visit to Australian
Red Cross, in September 2025.**



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