

P R E S S E M I T T E I L U N G

Millions of children exposed to illnesses like hypothermia as big freeze hits Ukraine, says Save the Children

12 March 2022 – Millions of children both inside Ukraine and fleeing to neighbouring countries are at risk of hypothermia, hunger and even death, as temperatures could plummet to -20°C degrees this weekend, Save the Children warned today.

The past week has seen an extreme Arctic cold blast strike Eastern Europe, including Ukraine, where the current conflict entered its third week, forcing millions from their homes.

At least one million children have now fled Ukraine, and millions more are displaced within the country.

Irina Saghoyan, Save the Children's Eastern Europe Director, said: *“As temperatures plummet, children who have been forced from their homes are trekking through the brutal cold, with high winds and snow, carrying whatever they could grab before they fled. At night they are sheltering wherever they can, often exposed to the harshest of elements. Some of these children are completely alone.*

“For those staying put as the conflict escalates around them, there is already not enough food to eat, enough clothes to keep them warm, or resources to repair and heat their homes.

“These are incredibly dangerous conditions for a child to be exposed to. Newborn babies and small children are at particular risk of getting very cold very quickly and of hypothermia, as they are still developing and less able to regulate their body temperatures. Freezing temperatures make it harder for breastfeeding mothers to produce milk, leaving babies at risk of starving.

“This is before we even begin to think about the mental anguish children will already be going through trying to process what has happened to them over the past two weeks. We must see an immediate end to the violence – it is the only way to protect children.”

Save the Children has been operating in Ukraine since 2014, providing humanitarian aid to children and their families. This includes supporting access to education, distributing winter and hygiene kits, and providing cash grants to families. Our specialists support children to overcome the mental and psychological impacts of their experiences of conflict and violence and increase their ability to cope with stress in their daily lives.

More content available [here](#)

Notes to editors

- Save the Children is working through local partners in Ukraine to distribute essential items including blankets and winter kits to displaced families.

- Save the Children staff and volunteers are distributing food, water and hygiene kits to displaced people inside Ukraine and refugees arriving at the Romania-Ukraine border and in reception centres.
- In Poland and Romania, we provide Child Protection services including targeted support for unaccompanied and separated children, psychosocial support and access to legal services.
- Save the Children works with refugee and migrant children inside and outside of Europe, aiming to support vulnerable children with the greatest needs.
- Individuals should not attempt private adoption as such services are unregulated. The best place for a child in an emergency is with their families and communities.

Unterstützen Sie Kinder in der Ukraine mit Ihrer Spende:

Save the Children Bank für Sozialwirtschaft

IBAN: DE92100205000003292912

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Stichwort „Spendenaufruf Ukraine“

www.savethechildren.de/spenden/ukraine

Bei Interviewanfragen wenden Sie sich bitte an unsere Pressestelle. Folgen Sie uns für aktuelle Informationen auch auf Twitter @SaveChildrenDE.

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Über Save the Children

Im Nachkriegsjahr 1919 gründete die britische Sozialreformerin und Kinderrechtlerin Eglantyne Jebb Save the Children, um Kinder in Deutschland und Österreich vor dem Hungertod zu retten. Heute ist die inzwischen größte unabhängige Kinderrechtsorganisation der Welt in rund 120 Ländern tätig. Save the Children setzt sich ein für Kinder in Kriegen, Konflikten und Katastrophen. Für eine Welt, die die Rechte der Kinder achtet. Eine Welt, in der alle Kinder gesund und sicher leben und frei und selbstbestimmt aufwachsen und lernen können – seit über 100 Jahren.