



Building Social Support in Ukraine

Report on one year of partnership and shared efforts strengthening the field of social work in Ukraine and foster resilience during the most challenging times of war



Kamjanez-Podilskyj 2023



The collaboration with International Federation of Social Workers Europe (IFSW Europe) started during a challenging period for Ukraine and Kamenets Podilsk District due to the invasion of the Russian Federation army into Ukrainian territory.

This war placed Ukrainian citizens within the conflict zone in danger, resulting in the loss of lives, homes, friends and family members.

Consequently, many were constrained to relocate to safer regions within Ukraine, incurring substantial material losses, facing uncertainty and enduring emotional distress and discouragement.

The residents of the Kamenets Podilsk District and the leadership of the Kamenets Podilsk District Council have engaged and strived to offer material, and emotional support to the internal refugees seeking safety within our district. This effort was further reinforced by the collaboration of external partners, local and regional public authorities, professional and humanitarian associations from European countries, but also far away countries as Japan. This collective support unequivocally underscored the commitment of democratic nations to stand by the Ukrainian people in their pursuit of rightful independence and freedom.

On this framework of external support, the presence of IFSW Europe within the Kamenets Podilsk district proved invaluable. Through the expertise of their specialists, IFSW Europe extended multifaceted support to those affected by the war—ranging from material support to emotional and social counseling.

However, beyond these tangible contributions, the European social workers conveyed a profound sense of empathy, offering not only their strategic and practical support but also a genuine connection that transcended the boundaries of assistance.

For this, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to our friends at International Federation of Social Workers.

Mykhailo SIMASHKEVICH
President
Kamianets-Podilskyi District Council



As we mark the one-year anniversary of International Federation of Social Workers Europe's (IFSW Europe) presence in Ukraine, we are reminded of the incredible journey we've engage in together.

This report captures a year of shared efforts, accomplishments, and the profound impact that has been achieved in strengthening the field of social work in Ukraine and foster resilience during the most challenging times of war.

IFSW Europe initiative in Ukraine was powered by the vision of fostering a community where social workers could thrive in the main interest of helping people, where their expertise could be amplified by the strength of decisions makers, and where vulnerable people and communities could receive the support they need.

Over the past year, this vision has been brought to life through tireless teamwork, innovative strategies, a strong international response of solidarity, and the desire and commitment of the community and people in Ukraine to find solutions.

Join us as we reflect on the initiatives that have taken root, the lives that have been positively impacted, and the partnerships that have been forged. Together, we uphold the cause of social justice, advocated for the weakest voices, and made the social work profession live up to its calling.

As we celebrate this milestone, I express my gratitude to each partner organisation who contributes to this effort, to social workers organisations - members of IFSW, to the Kamianets-Podilskyi President, Mr. Михайло Сімапкевич - and Council, to IFSW Europe Executive Committee, to my team in Romania and Ukraine (special thanks to Herbert Paulischin, Mihai Mihaiescu Aniuk, Alexandra Zoituc and Zsolt-Levente Rákos) and to all community members who contributed to this transformative year.

This report stands as a testament to our collective strength, resilience, and the boundless potential that lies ahead. As we look back on a year of meaningful progress, we also look forward to the opportunities that await us on this remarkable journey of collaboration and empowerment of people.

Ana RADULESCU
President
International Federation of Social Workers
Europe

SOCIAL WORK APPROACH

Every society faces social challenges and in every society there are vulnerable people who need support during their journey to find and implement solutions (loss of income and poverty, homelessness, health problems, caring for the elderly, protection for vulnerable members of society).

War dramatically amplifies these challenges and makes them visible. In order to meet these challenges, a project was started:

"Social Work Practice in Ukraine/Kamjanez-Podilskyj"

The design and implementation of the project in Kamianets-Podilskyi is managed by professional social workers that belong to IFSW Europe.

“Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledges, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing.”¹

The guiding principles of social work encompass respecting the inherent worth and dignity of people, preventing harm, valuing diversity, and advocating for human rights and social justice. In our efforts within Ukraine, we emphasize two essential principles:

Recognition of the Inherent Dignity of Humanity

Social workers acknowledge and appreciate the fundamental value and worth that every person possesses simply by being human. It emphasizes that all people have a basic right to be treated with respect, fairness, and compassion, regardless of their background, circumstances, or differences.

Promoting the Right to Self-Determination & Activation

Social workers do not make people dependent on help, but supports existing strengths and enables access to resources. Social work recognizes potential and empowers people to use it.

Social work identifies both supportive and disruptive connections and interactions, utilizing this understanding to implement solutions and drive positive changes, while mitigating harmful consequences.²



1 Global Definition of the Social Work Profession, IFSW -International Federation of Social Workers, <https://www.ifsw.org/what-is-social-work/global-definition-of-social-work>

2 <https://www.ifsw.org/global-social-work-statement-of-ethical-principles/>

HOW THE COOPERATION DEVELOPED

Since the war started, IFSW Europe has been actively involved in providing support to affected people. Through the generous contributions of social workers around the world and other donors, we made the decision to directly support the people in Ukraine, establishing a sustainable framework of support.



Our journey began in May 2022 with a visit to Kamianets-Podilskyi. This marked the initial meeting between Ana Radulescu, President of IFSW Europe, and Михайло Сімапкевич, President of the district (rayon).

One of our first activities was establishing contacts with existing local initiatives and support their work.

By October 2022, we achieved significant milestones, including finalizing the contract for our space for the “Community Centre for Social Support”, creating a team, and finalising renovations for the center.



Our dedication to fostering positive and sustainable social change culminated in the formation of the Association of Social Workers in Ukraine, which was welcomed as a member of IFSW Europe in December 2022.

In the given context, the establishment of a social market was a natural outgrowth of our principles, values, and our approach to activate the resources of the community.

The national Association of Social Workers in Ukraine (NASWU)



NASWU is member of IFSW

On October 20, 2022, we inaugurated the community center, social market, and professional association, symbolizing a united step towards empowerment. November 2022 marked the warm welcome of people at the community center. Through this, we have extended our support and engaged in meaningful dialogues to address their needs and co-create tailor solutions.

We began working closely with various partners, which increased our available resources and enhanced our ability to create long-lasting and meaningful change.



WHO ARE THE PEOPLE SEEKING SUPPORT, AND WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?



- | | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Kharkiv | Kiev | Chuhuiv | Bakhmut | Bucha |
| Kherson | Donetsk | Luhansk | Mykolaiv | Odesa |
| Sumy | Berdiansk | Maryinka | Irpin | Pokrovsk |
| Zaporizhzhia | Chornobaiivka | Kurakhove | Vuhledar | Dnipro |
| | | Vovchansk | | |



COMMUNITY SOCIAL SUPPORT CENTER

356 sessions provided for 2864 people during 40 weeks

At our Community Social Support Center in Ukraine, we offer support to people from various professional backgrounds and life experiences, each bearing unique challenges.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs): These are families, adults and children, who have been forced to leave their homes and communities due to the war, but have remained within the borders of Ukraine. Displaced from their familiar surroundings and social support networks, they often face the difficulty of adapting to new environments and rebuilding their lives from scratch.

Survivors of Violence and Trauma: Many people, adults and children, arriving at our center have experienced various forms of violence and trauma as a result of the war. This includes physical, psychological, and emotional violence that have left lasting scars. Providing them with specialized support to heal and recover is an essential part of our mission.

Families Who Have Lost Loved Ones: The tragedy of war is often compounded by the loss of family members and loved ones. Those, adults and children, who have lost relatives due to war may struggle with grief, emotional distress, and the challenges of navigating life without their support systems.

Others Affected by the War: Beyond the categories mentioned, there are numerous other ways in which people, adults and children, are affected by war. This could include people who have lost their livelihoods due to the destruction of infrastructure, children who have been separated from their families, and people with disabilities who face increased challenges in accessing services or their social network during times of crisis generate by war.

Our community center aims to address the unique needs of each of these groups and people. We provide a holistic range of services that may encompass social and psychological counselling for trauma, medical support, legal support, educational programs for children who have missed out on schooling, vocational training for those who have lost their livelihoods, and various forms of material assistance to help rebuild lives and restore a sense of safety.

The organisation and implementation of activities is a joint effort of social workers team and specialists participating in the volunteer program. They work together to carefully plan and efficiently carry out each activity.

People in need of support can join an online group established and guided by Yana Melniciuk. Within this group, they receive updates regarding the activities organised at the center and can also share their ideas.



COMMUNITY SOCIAL SUPPORT CENTER

Nurturing Resilience: Holistic Engagement for Children and Youth Affected by War

40 weeks

1.519 children

141 events

Over 40 weeks, an impressive 141 sessions were held, all designed to meet the needs of the 1,519 children participate in a comprehensive program.

A diverse range of activities has been carefully planned by social workers to provide essential support and creative empowerment to children and young people who have been deeply affected by war.

The activities are from therapeutic art sessions and engaging masterclasses to imaginative storytelling and dance workshops, these activities are designed to foster healing, skill development, and emotional well-being. Through these initiatives, we aim to empower these children and young people to overcome challenges, express themselves, and find solace in their journey towards recovery.



OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

103 children

6 events

Besides, 103 children actively took part in six organized outdoor events tailored for their enjoyment and engagement. These activities provide children affected by war (from war zone and host communities) with essential ways of harnessing for healing and growth. By engaging in a diverse range of experiences such as excursions, trips, picnics, and entertainment events, these children can find respite from the challenges of conflict, fostering positive emotions, learning, and experiencing positive and safe social interactions. These activities contribute to their overall well-being by offering moments of joy, exploration, and connection, helping them cope with trauma and rebuild their sense of safety in the midst of adversity.

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SUPPORT CENTER

Language Learning Initiatives: English and Ukrainian Language Classes

A language learning initiative engaged 183 individuals, adults and children.

English language classes

40 weeks	104 participants	50 sessions
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Ukrainian language classes

79 participants	12 sessions
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A significant number of participants were internally displaced individuals (IDPs) from regions where Russian was commonly spoken.

Their desire to seamlessly integrate into the host community motivated them to actively pursue learning the Ukrainian language. Recognizing language's crucial role in building connections and a sense of belonging, these participants aimed to become proficient in the local language.



This proficiency would enable effective communication, the establishment of relationships, and active involvement in the community's life.

This commitment showcased their adaptability and willingness to overcome language barriers and fully embrace their new environment.

There is a special program for children during the lessons for parents.



COMMUNITY SOCIAL SUPPORT CENTER

Empowering Health and Well-being

40 weeks	216 participants	31 sessions
First Aid Courses		
	143 participants	27 sessions
Sessions focused on neurology aspects		
	47 participants	3 sessions
Meeting with a Dermato-Oncologist		
	26 participants	1 session

In the challenging context of a war zone, where hospitals often face overwhelming demands and limited resources, the importance of equipping people with first aid skills becomes exceptionally critical.

With medical facilities strained to capacity and immediate access to professional medical care often impeded, having people trained in first aid can mean the difference between life and death for those in need. The ability to provide basic medical assistance on-site not only enhances the chances of survival and recovery but also alleviates the burden on already overburdened healthcare facilities.

In such circumstances, the empowerment of individuals with first aid knowledge stands as a crucial and potentially life-saving measure.



Holistic well-being was the focal point of a series of health-oriented initiatives that encompassed the following activities:



First Aid Courses: A comprehensive sequence of 27 sessions was conducted, engaging 143 participants in acquiring essential first aid skills, empowering them to effectively handle medical emergencies.

Sessions focused on neurology aspects: Tailored specifically for adults, this initiative comprised 3 informative sessions that delved into the problems connected to neurology. These sessions enhanced the understanding of neurological health among 47 participants.

Meeting with a Dermato-Oncologist: A singular session provided a platform for insightful discussions with a dermatologist specializing in oncology. With a participation of 26 individuals, this event addressed concerns related to dermatological health and skin oncology.



These activities not only nurtured informed health choices but also encouraged proactive approaches to well-being. Participants benefited by acquiring crucial skills, gaining insights into neurological health, and benefiting from expert perspectives on dermatological oncology.



COMMUNITY SOCIAL SUPPORT CENTER

Navigating Legal Challenges

Legal advice and information sessions

40 weeks

166 participants

34 sessions

In response to the evolving legal landscape and the unique challenges faced by Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Ukraine, social workers organised a comprehensive series of 34 legal advice sessions was meticulously organized. These sessions served as a crucial resource for 166 individuals, equipping them with accurate and pertinent legal guidance.

As legal frameworks continue to undergo changes, IDPs and members of host communities often find themselves grappling with new situations that require informed decision-making. In this context, the provision of legal support assumes paramount importance. Navigating the intricacies of shifting regulations can be daunting, and that's where these advice sessions come into play. By offering guidance tailored to the specific needs, these sessions enable individuals to better comprehend their rights and responsibilities within the evolving legal landscape.

The empowerment derived from accurate legal counsel is substantial. It not only enables individuals to effectively address challenges but also aids in securing entitlements that might otherwise be elusive. IDPs and members of host communities can navigate the complexities of their circumstances with confidence and clarity, ensuring their rights are upheld and their legal needs are met.



COMMUNITY SOCIAL SUPPORT CENTER

Fostering Resilience and Community: Nurturing Emotional Well-being

40 weeks	677 participants	82 sessions
Women's club "Inspiration"	44 participants	8 sessions
Masterclass for adults	251 participants	32 sessions
Tea ceremony	46 participants	4 sessions
Course "Gardening"	26 participants	4 sessions
Thematic meetings	36 participants	5 sessions
Painting	23 participants	1 session
Mandala weaving therapy	99 participants	14 sessions
Group Therapy for Psychological Support	152 participants	14 sessions

With a collective participation of 677 individuals across 82 sessions organized by social workers together with the specialists participating in the volunteer program, an impactful initiative unfolded.

This approach encompassed a diverse spectrum of activities, meticulously designed to elevate the emotional well-being of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Ukraine and members of host communities.

These activities formed a holistic social work perspective aimed at fostering resilience and equipping participants with vital coping mechanisms. Notably, these activities generated a profound sense of community, allowing participants to connect, share experiences, and lean on one another for support. In connection to adversities of war and displacement, this initiative nurtured a safe space for emotional rejuvenation, skill enhancement, and personal growth.



VOLUNTEERS PROGRAM AND THE SOCIAL MARKET

681 customers using 13620 points (equivalent of 13620 Euro) in 40 weeks



The social market is an integral part of a comprehensive activation program of volunteers. The volunteers are both people who fled the conflict zones and local residents of Kamyanets-Podilskyi.

The program is based on the assumption that each person has the necessary skills, qualifications and competencies that are needed and valuable in the host communities. The reality of PDI life does not change this assumption, but the possibilities of application through the loss of a job and living environment does. This change also has psychological effects that manifest as depression, anxiety or inactivity and loss of motivation.

The activation program created by social workers promotes motivation, self-esteem and confidence in one's own abilities to face future challenges.

The program was initiated and funded by IFSW Europe, but a number of other donors and partners also support the programme.

The program works through the use of vouchers.

Giben the context, the Social Market initiative represents a unique approach by handing out vouchers in exchange for people's contributions to the community.

The Social Market program is designed to help people from war zones stay active and engaged in the workforce. By activating their skills and providing opportunities to participate in activities, the program aims to improve their employability and overall well-being.



From social work perspective, this approach has several advantages:

Skill Utilization and Reinforcement

The program focuses on utilizing the existing capabilities and talents of individuals affected by war zones. By receiving vouchers for their work, participants increase their belief in their own abilities and skills, which can have a positive impact on their self-esteem and self-confidence. Not only does this help them retain their skills, but it also gives them the opportunity to contribute to the society.

Employability

Participation in professional activities improves participants' employability. They can acquire new skills, improve existing ones and demonstrate their ability to work in different environments.

Psychosocial well-being

Active participation in constructive activities has positive effects on people's mental and emotional well-being. It can provide a sense of purpose, structure, and social interaction.

Community Integration

The program helps individuals integrate into the community by providing opportunities to interact with others, build relationships, and create a support network.

The foundation of the program rests on the principles of dignity and self-determination. By distributing vouchers, individuals gain control over their decisions and develop a sense of dignity and empowerment in making choices about how to use the benefits they create.

IMPROVEMENT OF SHELTER CONDITIONS FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE IN THE DISTRICT of Kamjanez-Podilskyj

Social workers commitment to supporting the Ukrainian refugee centers commenced in the village of Chemerovets. This village had to establish a refugee center to accommodate internally displaced people. The center was placed in a old former school building.

IFSW Europe swiftly responded to the pressing requirements of the refugee center. In a remarkable solidarity, the social workers' organization of IFSW donated a total of 60 beds, 21 mattresses, and 10 lockers.



Through these contributions, IFSW Europe demonstrated its unwavering dedication to the well-being of refugees and its commitment to cultivating an environment that nurtures dignity, safety and personal growth.

The support given to the refugee center in Chemerovets marked the beginning of our contribution to providing adequate space for internally displaced persons, a project that was funded by the Austrian Development Agency and Volkshilfe Solidarity (NGO).

IMPROVEMENT OF SHELTER CONDITIONS FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE IN THE DISTRICT of Kamjanez-Podilskyj

The challenges faced by internally displaced people in finding suitable accommodation are significant. Recognizing this pressing need, IFSW Europe has undertaken an initiative. Through the generous funding provided by the Austrian Development Agency and Volkshilfe Solidarity (NGO), we have started a project designed to address this crucial issue.

The essence of this project lies in the renovation of two houses, which will serve as a place for refugees seeking accommodation. These renovated houses will not only provide physical shelter but also a sense of stability and security that is needed in times of displacement.

Moreover, our project goes beyond infrastructure improvements. We are committed to actively engaging with the displaced people to assess and respond to their needs. This collaborative approach ensures that the support provided aligns with their specific requirements, fostering a more holistic and effective social support system.

By undertaking this project, IFSW Europe aims to contribute not only to the immediate needs of internally displaced people, but also to their long-term well-being and stability. A binding agreement on the use of the buildings after housing the IDPs was concluded with the administration of the Kamyanets-Podilskyj Rayon. These will continue to be used for social services in the future, so that the investments for building structures and social services are secured.



The project is financed by the Austrian Development Cooperation.



volkshilfe.

 Austrian
Development
Agency

SOCIAL SERVICES

With the ongoing economic and social crisis generated by the war, but also with a weak existing system, the need for quality social services increases and is likely to become even more significant than before the war.

It is crucial to build-up the continuity, sustainability and resilience of professional social work service. Social services are supporting all people, but especially persons in vulnerable situations, to participate fully in society. They include a wide range of care and support services over the entire lifespan of persons, from early childhood to older age and they are connected with the European Social Pillar:

- Education, training and life-long learning;
- Gender equality;
- Equal opportunities;
- Active support to employment;
- Work-life balance;
- Childcare and support to children;
- Social Protection;
- Inclusion of people with disabilities;
- Long-term care;
- Housing and assistance for the homeless;
- Access to essential services.

Social workers and other professionals in social care and support services are facing a number of challenges, including a lack of recognition of their profession and frequent underfunding of services.

IFSW Europe plays a crucial role in advancing the social pillar of social rights by actively engaging in various activities that promote awareness, advocacy, collaboration, and capacity building.



INNOVATION IN SOCIAL SERVICES IN UKRAINE

Dedication Lab

The project's goal is to harness social innovation to improve Ukrainian social services and structures, particularly for those impacted by the war and lacking proper support.

The primary objective is to enhance the capabilities of 25 people. This involves creating and implementing an advanced training program using innovative techniques, with the aim of enhancing current services and generating new ones.

Additionally, the project seeks to establish a collection of inventive care service concepts from both the Danube Region and internally generated ideas. The bank of ideas will facilitate fresh and creative ways that stimulate social service providers, public authorities, students or social workers/practitioners to innovate and develop better services or products for their beneficiary.

The training program will be provided by the Federation of Social NGOs in Transylvania Romania through Dedication - Social Innovation Lab, the first social innovation lab with the topic of home care in Romania. The 6 modules (approx. 9 months) of the training will take place in the Social Work Hub in Kamianets-Podilskyi and online. We provide tailored mentorship throughout the training (depending on the needs of participants). The program included a study visit in Romania to a home care service provider in Covasna County.



Lead partner/ Applicant: Diakonie Baden (Germany)

Partner: Federation of Social NGOs in Transylvania (Romania)

This project is supported by Baden-Württemberg Foundation.



PREVENT, PROTECT AND PROVIDE SUPPORT TO CHILDREN

ERIKS and ASproAS (Association of Social Workers in Romania) have jointly undertaken a project that concentrates on providing critical emergency assistance to children disconnected to their original environment. The project's initiation involves conducting a comprehensive needs assessment and support of approximately 3,000 children within the Kamianets-Podilskyi region who were disconnected from their original environment.

Children and adolescents disconnected to their original environment will get access to essential humanitarian aid, encompassing psychosocial support, assistance in reuniting with families within Ukraine or abroad, and guidance in acquiring skills for the prevention of sexual and other forms of abuse.

This could involve social and psychological support, distributing backpacks containing essentials like clothing, footwear, hygiene items, and other requisites crucial for daily life and safety while on the move. Dignity kits will be provided to girls as per their needs.

Children and adolescents will be encouraged to participate in support groups led by social workers and social pedagogues. These groups will tackle subjects such as coping mechanisms, abuse prevention, and personal safety. Social workers organise counselling sessions for children, as well as for their foster or legal parents.

Legal entities responsible for safeguarding children's rights within Ukraine will be empowered with the capacity and tools necessary to ensure children's protection rights, including the prevention of and response to cases of sexual abuse involving migrating children.

Training and raising awareness among local authorities, encompassing social services, political leaders, law enforcement, and medical personnel. These initiatives will be grounded in the findings of the conducted needs assessment.

The project is implemented with local support of the National Association of Social Workers in Ukraine.



STRENGTHENING THE COMMUNITY CENTER FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT

The mobility provided by the bus equips social workers to respond more swiftly and comprehensively to the pressing needs of these communities, offering assistance that ranges from distributing essential supplies to providing psychosocial support to those who have endured significant hardships.

The donation of the bus from Austria (Social Initiative, NGO) not only represents a tangible resource for social workers, but also embodies the spirit of solidarity and global cooperation. It is a symbol of cross-border empathy and collaboration, showcasing how individuals and communities can come together to make a profound impact on the lives of those in need. The bus will facilitate our mission of fostering a sense of unity and togetherness within these communities.



TOYS GIFTED BY SEPSI CLUB OSK ROMANIA FANS FOR UKRAINIAN CHILDREN

The International Federation of Social Workers and Sepsi Club OSK Romania collaborated on a project where supporters brought plush toys to a match on December 9, 2022. These toys were sent to Ukraine to offer companionship to displaced children during tough times. Zsolt-Levente Rákos, social worker, organized a special program for 11 children from Ukraine to help us on this task. The toys were given as Christmas gifts to children and some were taken to the Community Center for Social Support.





Based on my experience this year at the Community Center for Social Support, I can confidently state that Ukraine needs a strong social work profession and comprehensive social services to effectively address challenges in various aspects of life. The war deeply affected all dimensions of people's lives.

However, there is also a need for social policy changes that are grounded in evidence from social work practice. On this challenge, we need a cooperation with local and district administrations. The social support we created in Kamjanez-Podilskyi serves as an example of such engagement.

Social workers play an essential role in shaping the responses to social problems and in influencing government social policies. We are already collaborating with the IFSW member organization to tackle this objective, and I am confident that the social work profession will contribute significantly to the well-being in Ukraine society.

Diana TETERIA

Social Worker

Community Center for Social Support - Kamjanez-Podilskyj, Ukraine

Member of the Association of Social Workers in Ukraine

We have seen how important it is to develop community initiatives while considering the community's resources and strengths. In Ukraine, social workers are essential to help people through such rapid changes in their social and economic situation.

Social work can and already is changing the world because it works with people to create and implement solutions that fit their specific situation. In Ukraine, people have a real desire to create changes in their own environment, to improve their family resources, and this is consistent with the essence of our profession.

To achieve this, we need social workers from other countries to share their experiences, knowledge and ideas on how we can use the potential of the social work profession for the greater good of people.



Viktoria SUBOTINA

Social Worker

Community Center for Social Support - Kamjanez-Podilskyj, Ukraine

Member of the Association of Social Workers in Ukraine

Social work responds to crises and challenges that threaten the well-being and life of individuals and communities.

Crises do not respect national borders. Therefore, solutions must also be developed across borders. The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW Europe) as professional community provides a platform for experts to share their insights, research findings, and innovative solutions.

This collective wisdom enhances the overall understanding of complex problems and informs effective strategies.

Crisis responses often require resources such as funding, technology, and expertise. International professional communities can mobilize these resources more effectively by connecting individuals, organizations, and institutions willing to contribute to solving pressing international issues.

Social workers also excel in engaging with communities to understand their unique needs and strengths. They can facilitate community-driven initiatives that promote resilience, cooperation, and self-help during challenging times.

This is exactly the approach we pursue as social workers together with our colleagues from the local administration. In response to jointly identified problems, we develop specific projects within the project framework and cooperate with local, national and international partners. The professional associations of social workers and their umbrella organization IFSW play a major role in this.

In a war situation like the conflict in Ukraine, the role of international professional communities and social workers becomes even more significant due to the complex and sensitive nature of the crisis. The combined efforts are vital for providing immediate assistance, addressing long-term consequences, advocating for human rights, and contributing to peace and stability in the region.

While our Ukrainian friends fight for military victory with tremendous effort and ultimate dedication, we take care of the people of the country and their challenges of life after the war.

The army will win this war – but we also have to win the peace!

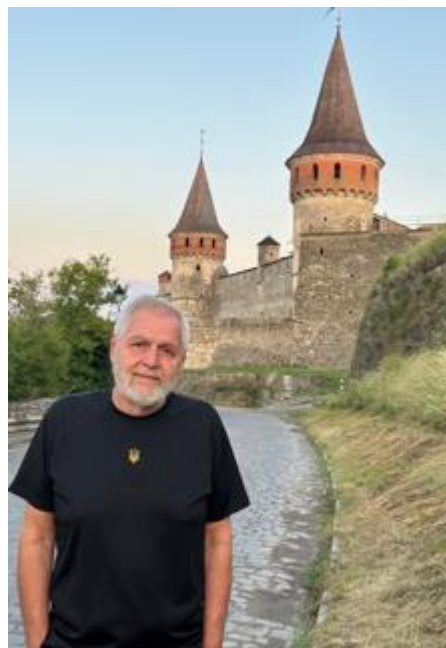
What society will the soldiers find when they return from the front?

What chances and opportunities will they and their families find in this society?

How can traumatic experiences be processed and a future of peace and social security be built?

Here is our responsibility as social workers.

With the project in Kamjanets-Podilskyj we have accepted this responsibility.



Herbert PAULISCHIN

Social Worker

IFSW Europe Project Coordinator for Ukraine

IFSW Europe Representative to United Nation

IFSW EUROPE AND ITS PARTNERS



The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) is the global body for the profession. The Federation and its national members strive for social justice, human rights and inclusive, sustainable social development through the promotion of social work best practice and engagement in international cooperation.

IFSW Europe covers all corners of Europe and represents IFSW at the EU, Council of Europe and at the UN centres in Geneva and Vienna. IFSW Europe has 50 countries as member organisations and is the legal body implementing the project in Ukraine.



volkshilfe.



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