



ISKCON RELIEF FOR UKRAINE

WEEK 8

ISKCON RELIEF – FIGURES

Devotees from Europe and also other parts of the world have tirelessly continued their sincere endeavours to help devotees and refugees from Ukraine to find shelter, care and support. The following figures are for week 8 of this devotee care / relief effort

ISKCON Relief – Food Distribution, Week 8	Quantity
Czech Republic	25,500
Germany	10,000
Hungary	3,050 plates + bread, sweets and fruits
Poland	2,800

Country	Refugees being Hosted
Bulgaria	42 (incl. 20 children)
Czech Republic	76 (incl. 35 children)

Denmark	31 (incl. 12 children)
Germany	180
Hungary	45 (incl. 16 children)
Ireland	7 (incl. 4 children)
Italy	17
Poland	46 (incl. 16 children) Over 1,300 transited in total from week 1 to week 8
Slovakia	18 (incl. 8 children)
Spain	53
Sweden	32

ISKCON RELIEF – REPORTS

Important General Message:

The following centres have now reached full capacity and cannot receive any more refugee devotees until further notice:

1. ISKCON Germany
2. ISKCON Spain
3. ISKCON Hungary - (only 5 more places left)

Poland:

The Poland Team have started working with one foundation that deals with the relocation of refugees, mostly mothers with children. They organize free transport and find places for them in countries such as Switzerland and the Netherlands.

Last week groups of refugee devotees from Ukraine arrived who were engaged in Food for Life in Ukraine, looking after others in both temples and surrounding communities. They really did not want to leave Ukraine but considering the safety and the future of their children they decided to pack up and despite their aching hearts, they left. The next day the mothers got up, cleaned up the temporary house and made pierogi (kind of samosas) for everyone.

There was one day when there were so many new arrivals with literally no space for anymore, when Rasikendra das got a call from a devotee refugee to pick up her and her parents who are in their 80s at the station. The request was to accommodate them for one night before leaving to Paris and somehow Rasikendra das found a room for them. It turned out that both father and mother were amongst the top leading scientists in the Soviet Union, and they had travelled a lot and met a lot of interesting people.

When they arrived at the train station the mother took out an old pile of black and white photos and showed them to Rasikendra and then she started pointing at different photos and giving a commentary. "Look, this is me and Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman in space and a really good engineer, we did some work together. And that's me and my husband with Fidel Castro, have you heard of him? He was from Cuba. We were sent and had to do some work for him." The family was very grateful for the help of the devotees in Poland and wrote many messages to Rasikendra with words of gratitude.

This story shows how many different people pass through our hands and how diverse ISKCON in Ukraine is. (See picture of the family below)

Croatia: In Croatia the government is covering the costs of accommodation for refugees. As a result of that funding, the devotees got 4 individual flats for refugee families through the city council who also know the devotees. This allows the refugees in these flats to be independent and take care of themselves. ISKCON Croatia has provided them with some initial financial assistance with 200 Euros per family and 100 Euros for individuals. The government's social security service also paid approximately 500 euro per family and approximately 270 euro for individuals. Three refugee devotees in Croatia have now also found employment.

Ireland: The devotees in Ireland have accommodation in the temple for Ukrainian devotees. Please get in contact with them for more information. The temple is though part of the UK, even though it's located in Ireland and thus visas are unfortunately required.

ISKCON RELIEF – PHOTOS



The scientist family who met with Fidel Castro, on their way to Paris.

ISKCON RELIEF – RESOURCES

The Four Stages of Relationships

Dealing with emotional issues while caring for refugees.

A very helpful analyses given by Rambhoru devi dasi at one of her weekly meetings.

Stage 1: “The Honeymoon”

We can do this; we can help them all; welcome everyone; we are here to serve you; all wonderful devotees coming from a country of family values but where all men have to fight for their country, sending their women and children away to be safe; and such an amazing yatra; 20,000 devotees wow!

Stage 2: “The disillusionment”

We start to see some cracks! They are just people! They have been through major trauma, but also they have their baggage, their way of doing things we don't always like; they certainly can't stay in my house for too long... I mean they are nice, but I just can't do it... Because it's so different to what I like and know

Stage 3: “Tolerance”

We learn skills to communicate; we understand we are not as emphatic as we thought we were, but we committed to this, so how do we coexist in this situation?

Stage 4: “Appreciation”

We start to appreciate strengths and weaknesses, learn how to be, see the good in the people and also the reality of the people. We make it work!

Please join the weekly sessions by Rambhoru dd:

Crisis Management Support

Compassionate Listening Circles with Rambhoru Devi Dasi.

Every Sunday 8:00 – 9:30 pm CET on Zoom.

Contact and registration: Rambhoru@gmail.com

Relocation Services

The ISKCON Relocation Services is run by Loka Pavani Devi Dasi and three of her Vaishnavi colleagues. They work tirelessly to put together useful and updated information about available help which can be accessed in different European countries. Such information includes government benefits, government accommodations, relocation in temples and devotee's homes, or a list of ISKCON centres especially equipped in helping women and children to get safe facilities. Refugees can find different options, and make informed decisions on where to go. You can find all this information at the ‘Country Specific Fact Sheets for Ukrainian Devotees’ at

<http://eurorgb.org/ukraine-crisis-resources/>.

Crisis Management Team

The Crisis Management Team has appointed local coordinators for several countries. These local coordinators offer help to refugees and the assisting devotees. Don't hesitate to contact them.

A list of the national coordinators for several countries can be found at:

<http://eurorgb.org/ukraine-crisis-structure/>



The International Society for Krishna Consciousness
Founder Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada