

# Media Lifeline Ukraine

The Initiative Media Lifeline Ukraine aims to secure the free flow of information for audiences in Ukraine and the neighboring countries. Information can save lives.

People in Ukraine need to know where it is safe to go and where attacks are expected. International audiences - including the policymakers and politicians deciding on sanctions and relations with Russia and Ukraine - need to be informed on what is happening. Whether civilians are attacked or whether parties adhere to cease fires.

Furthermore, the war is cutting the communication infrastructures that journalists depend on for their work and audiences are being targeted by disinformation and propaganda, especially from the side of Russia.

The Media Lifeline supports practical support to journalists to ensure their safety while reporting, through provision of equipment such as safety vests and digital security (VPN codes for instance). It will also support the continuation of efforts of local media and journalists to inform the public. The support aims to set up press centers from where journalists can work safely by providing logistical support, safe work spaces, protection gear and communication lines. External support to media production enables the continuation of critical reporting in Ukraine.

Workplaces where journalists have access to secure communication are necessary in the current situation in order to maintain independent journalism and ensure safe practice of professionals.

In addition the Media Lifeline aims to set up a special monitoring infrastructure to aggregate up-to-date, verified information about major Russian state-sponsored disinformation operations trending in the region and gather this in a publicly accessible and interactive database. In doing so the Media Lifeline aims to create a more sustained effort to address Russian-sponsored disinformation and to increase the accountability of local governments and Big Tech platforms. As well as improving the ability of independent media in the region to track and recognize Russian-sponsored disinformation and to inform the public about this.

The situation changes on a daily basis and the Media Lifeline Ukraine adapts accordingly to support the needs and requests that our media and journalist partners in Ukraine express. What follows here is a list of needs, compiled on the basis of information and requests received until 8 March 2022.

The Media Lifeline is a one stop shop, one address where we aim to respond to all the needs of partners and journalists in Ukraine and neighboring countries. Coordination assures avoiding overlap and creates a central access point for Ukrainian journalists and media (but also for journalists / media from the region) to go to for support.

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# What is **needed** to set up a Media Lifeline Ukraine?

- **Funds:** Flexible core support for newsrooms and journalists that cover Ukraine daily to pay out salaries, shelter, transport etc.
- **Safety equipment:** Personal Protection Materials (PPE) such as vests and helmets, pers emblems, emergency kits with first aid essentials, water, food.
- **Reporting equipment:** Equipment such as cameras, power banks, batteries and laptops.
- **Digital security:** Keeping the digital security of our partners and journalists up to date to ensure their digital protection (e.g. assess compromised hardware, access VPN services, etc.).
- **Tech support:** We need to be prepared for the worst, if the internet is down, or websites are blocked. We need tech support on the kind of measures we can take to deal with this.
- **Safe spaces inside:** provide safe shelter within Ukraine for journalists that want to continue reporting from the country. The space will also function as a resource center for journalists in distress with psychological help and financial support for media outlets.
- **Support hubs outside:** provide safe space for coworking, meetings, recording videos and networking for exiled Ukrainian, Belarusian and Russian media professionals. Existing media outlets provide support to colleagues from Ukraine with fact-checking, video production, social media packaging, editing of content and support with spreading the news.
- **Psychological support:** Journalists in Ukraine are working 24/7 in a conflict situation. It's crucial to provide journalists with trauma and psychological support. A network of Ukrainian and Russian speaking psychologists will help the journalists to better deal with stress and/or trauma.
- **Linking journalists:** Ukrainian journalists and their stories, footage and foto's, have to be linked to European journalists to share their reports and to be paid for that. European journalists associations can support that.
- **Counter disinformation:** improve ability of independent media in the region to track and recognize Russian-sponsored disinformation to strengthen public awareness and improve the accountability of platforms to act on reports and requests;
- **Relocation:** support the temporary relocation of journalists from Ukraine that are victims of the conflict and Belarusian and Russian journalists under threat due to the escalating repression and censorship. The aim of this support is for journalists to continue their work in a safe environment or to give them the necessary time to catch their breath.

**Together we can make this happen**

**Support the **Media Lifeline Ukraine****

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