

# The War in Ukraine and the Participation of St. Elizabeth University of Health and Social Work in Helping at Border Crossing Points

A. Murgova (Anna Murgova), M. Popovicova (Maria Popovicova), V. Krcmery (Vladimir Krcmery), M. Olah (Michael Olah), M. Jurasek (Martin Jurasek), P. Vansac (Peter Vansac), D. Barkasi (Daniela Barkasi), M. Gulasova (Monika Gulasova), A. Kenderesova (Alena Kenderesova), M. Dancakova (Monika Dancakova), Z. Tkacikova (Zuzana Tkacikova), M. Mackova (Maria Mackova), G. Samudovska (Gabriela Samudovska), M. Jackulikova (Maria Jackulikova), J. Sulcova, (Jana Sulcova), V. Ivankova (Viera Ivankova) T. Hudakova (Tatiana Hudakova)

Border post Ubla and Vysne Nemecke, Slovakia and Ukraine St Elizabeth Univ Refugee Program Ipp Gojdic. Inst.

Original Article

## E-mail address:

annamurgov@gmail.com

## Reprint address:

Anna Murgova  
Nam 1. Maja 1  
811 06 Bratislava  
Slovakia

Source: *Clinical Social Work and Health Intervention*  
Pages: 67 – 69

Volume: 13  
Cited references: 5

Issue: 3

## Reviewers:

Steve Szydowski  
University of Scranton School of Education, USA  
Vitalis Okoth Odero  
Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi, KE

## Keywords:

War in Ukraine. St. Elizabeth's University of Healthcare and Social studies. Solidarity. Help.

## Publisher:

International Society of Applied Preventive Medicine i-gap

CSWHI 2022; 13(3): 67 – 69; DOI: 10.22359/cswhi\_13\_3\_10 © Clinical Social Work and Health Intervention

## Abstract:

War always means sacrifice, death, forced departure, pain, sorrow and suffering. All wars leave scars on the soul. The current situation in Ukraine is very serious. The war has affected millions of innocent people. St. Elizabeth's College of Healthcare and Social Work supports calls for solidarity, an end to the war and peace. Everyone from the university contributes not only by hand but also by heart to the joint work. Suffering must end!

The day war broke out in Ukraine, the lives of the whole world changed. We do not understand. We do not believe that such thing can happen in the 21st century. After all, we took peace for granted! But the reality is cruel! We watch people seeking safety and running from the war. Fortunately, we see the solidarity of people around the world engaging in humanitarian aid to people affected by the war. St. Elizabeth's University of Health and Social Work, Presov and Michalovce workplaces, are no exception.

Our university has been involved in this help since the first day the need arose. Our founder, Professor Krcmery, was the first to mobilize teachers and students from Michalovce and Presov workplaces, who are closest to the border crossing points with Ukraine. Our task was to map the need for assistance on all crossing points from Ukraine to Slovakia and to provide the necessary help. The first day we were at the Ubla border crossing point where we consulted the need for assistance and together with the management of the border crossing we addressed strategies to help. It was not so much about professional help as it was about human companionship, human warmth. We helped people escaping from Ukraine with their luggage and their children to safety of our country, to Slovakia. At first, it was the nearest villages whose inhabitants offered refuges to stay in their own homes. It was amazing! They helped people they didn't even know with an open heart and arms. The mayors of the villages vacated the premises of the school, the cultural house, which they adapted for sleeping and resting. At the border crossing point itself, students of our university, who live relatively close, helped with luggage, children, provided transportation by car, helped with delivery to safety. Since it was very cold, they bought blankets to warm up, which they handed out right on the territory of our state, along with hot drinks, tea, coffee.

Since the Red Cross had its stand there, our nursing students immediately reported as paramedics and helped as they knew. Students of our university, from the Department of Nursing, are also employed at the hospital in Snina, which has taken over the responsibility of providing health care to people from the Ubla border crossing point. In this way, our students also participated in providing care. A similar situation was at the

border crossing in Vysne Slemencia. Here, our university students also helped as they knew. Since they had a situation mapped in the center of events, they knew what people fleeing war in Ukraine missed the most. They started to organize collections of clothes, food, hygiene supplies, etc. The commanders of the mentioned border crossings themselves evaluated that the Vysne Nemecke border crossing point which is the largest crossing, needs help to a greater extent. There was an enormous influx of people coming to our territory. Here, in cooperation with the Order of the Knights of Malta, we began to provide assistance services in continuous operation. Teachers and students in day and night shifts, who help with luggage, registration, equipping sim cards for phones, arranging transportation to other places by cars, buses, vans, but also by providing rest in heated tents and providing refreshments, food and improvised dining.

Thank God for the solidarity of all the volunteer organizations that were the first to get involved in the border crossings. We support each other, organize help and are always looking for ways to improve the care provided. The Salesian Sisters of Michalovce also work closely with us, who are also fluent in languages and interpret when and to whom it is necessary.

At the borders, it is also necessary to take care of small children who have their own specific requirements. For this purpose, our university has set up a container for mothers with children, where mothers can relax, take care of their baby, whether breastfeeding, preparing food for the baby, repacking, changing, or providing them with the necessary nursing care. The container is heated; there is a microwave, kettle, changing tables, diapers, toiletries and hygiene packages which mothers will also receive when leaving. There are also clothes and toys for children, which they enjoy very much. This baby container is available 24 hours a day. Students of the Department of Nursing ensure continuous day and night shifts.

Our St. Elizabeth's University of Health and Social Work, as it also has a branch workplace in Michalovce, also provides volunteer work in the hotspot in Michalovce where it provides services with doctors from all over the country in providing medical assistance in the tent of health professionals, also in day and night shifts. At first, it

was an inflatable tent that was heated. There were drugs, injections, intravenous infusions, bandages, disinfectants, beds, blankets, ECG device, blood pressure monitors, thermometer, oximeter, etc. Currently, it is a heated container that is stable. Doctors, in collaboration with our nursing students, provide health and nursing care to people who need it. Most commonly, people come with headaches, abdominal pain, problems with blood pressure, breathing, diabetes, but also injuries and wounds. Here they will be provided with care and, if necessary, transport will also be provided to the hospital in Michalovce. We are pleased that the doctors are satisfied with the cooperation with our university. They say that students have both knowledge and skills, as well as good communication with patients. It is also a great benefit that several students and teachers are English, German, Russian and Ukrainian speakers, so in many cases they are also interpreters.

As storage needs are also needed for humanitarian aid, the St. Elizabeth's University of Health and Social Work in Michalovce, at the initiative of the founder, Professor Krcmery, provided premises for the storage of medicines, food, hygiene supplies and clothing. Due to the very demanding and complex situation with the provision of temporary accommodation for people from the border who continued their journey to other places in Slovakia or abroad, accommodation facilities were set up in school premises, mainly for sleeping. The couches were bought; classrooms became dormitories. Also at the Presov workplace, collections of food, clothing and hygiene items were organized which were then transported to the border crossing points and to hostels where people from the border were accommodated in cooperation with the Greek Catholic Charity. We also prepared accommodations for people providing assistance at the borders who participate with our university in humanitarian aid.

Students are heavily involved in providing everything that is needed. The heads of the workplaces, the teachers, the assistants and even the cleaning lady mobilized all the forces to ensure that everything needed was secured. They were hospitable, welcoming, arranged for students to be transported to their border shifts and they keep providing all that for as long as necessary. The

psychologist provides psychological help in such a difficult, psychologically demanding situation. Everyone contributes not only by hand but also by heart to the common work.

War always means sacrifice, death, forced departure, pain, sorrow and suffering. All wars leave scars on the soul. We perceive that the current situation in Ukraine is very serious. The war has affected millions of innocent people, but we believe there is hope. After all, people who offer help to those they do not know are praying for peace in the world, for leaders and for ending the war. World leaders have long called for peace, and the Holy Father, Pope Francis, calls on both sides to reconcile. Suffering must end! St. Elizabeth's College of Health and Social Work also supports calls for solidarity, an end to the war and peace. May GOD bless good works!

## References

1. ARMER, JM, RADINA, ME (2006) Definition of Health and Health Promotion Behaviors Among Midwestern Old Order Amish Families. *The Journal Of Multicultural Nursing & Health* 12:3 Fall 2006, pp.44-53, ISSN 1043-6596.
2. KOZON V, ZACHAROVA E (2016) Stress as a risk factor in nurses. *Clinical Soc Work Health Intervention* 7. 2016 p.105.
3. JARCUSKA P, FILAKOVSKA BOBAKOVA D, UHRIN, J, BOBAK L, BABINSKA I, KOLARCIK P, DANKULINCOVA VESELSKA Z, MADARASOVA GECKOVA A (2013) Are barriers in accessing health services in the Roma population associated with worse health status among Roma? *Int J Public Health*. 2013 Jun;58(3):427-34. doi: 10.1007/s00038- https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2Fs00038-013-0451-8.pdf013-0451-8. Epub 2013 Apr 2.
4. KOVAC R, MIKLOSKOVA M (2013) The impact of early childhood to the risk of homelessness. *Int. J. Prenatal & Perinatal Psychology & Med.*, 25.2013,S1,42.
5. JOURDAN D (2011) Health education in schools. The challenge of teacher training Saint-Denis : Inpes, College. Sante en action: 144 p.