



SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL SWITZERLAND

SI-CH | News from Ukraine No. 9 December 2022



DEAR SOROPTIMISTS – DEAR INTERESTED FRIENDS!

At the end of November, Annelies Debrunner, Past President SI Union Switzerland and member of the Ad-hoc Commission "Solidarity Ukraine", travelled to Ukraine at her own expense at the invitation of Nataliya and the Club Lviv to get an idea of the situation and the support needed. Her travel report shows how urgently needed help from Switzerland still is and will remain:

All our friends in Lviv were very happy about my visit. In these days, after a war of more than nine months, with an unforeseeable end, and accompanied by many fears and deprivations, this visit was particularly welcomed. Because just in the dark month of November, the electricity goes out every day for several hours!

Many of the Lviv Soroptimists work from morning to night in order to respond to as many calls for help as possible. With the finances, those from Switzerland, Denmark, Luxembourg and the SIE they handle economically. There are still around 20,000 francs in the account that

the Union has transferred. I asked: What are your most important areas where help is being provided?



The Soroptimists of Club Liviv (from left to right): Ahead: Nadiya Kharchenko, Nataliya Podzorova.

Back: Olha Shpak, Valentyna Hladilova, visitor Annelies Debrunner. Club Kreuzlingen, Tetiana Shtus, Nataliia Almazova, Halyna Drozhzhay, Svitlana Koval, Olha Shvechkova, Kateryna Zayats, Olha Talanchuk.

In general – says Nataliya, founding and current president, every day is different and priorities are constantly shifting. For example, there is currently enough food in Lviv. These do not have to be purchased in Poland. My question: From Nataliya's point of view, what would be the most urgent purchases to make?

1. **Installing generators in the Lyvchiky orphanage** would be extremely important. The cost estimates are pending.
2. **Due to the emergency situation and the fighting situation in the eastern part**, the danger of a heat and electricity supply shortage continues to intensify in Lviv. Many children therefore come from the east to the orphanage Lyvchyky, which is located near Lviv. It is possible to take in even more orphans – up to 80 in total. However, it is urgent to create a center for psychological trauma management there.
3. **Continuation of dental treatment of children and women.** The medical goods required for this must be imported, as domestic production was destroyed in the war.
4. **Improving the living conditions of visually impaired single women.** They suffer from the lack of necessary comforts, e.g. easily walkable floors.

Insights into two homes

The director of the **Orphanage Lyvchyky** leads us through the facility. We get an insight into the work of the professionals who sing, dance and make music with the children between the ages of six and 17 on this Saturday morning. The noticeably cheerful mood makes the children forget for a moment that they lost their parents in the war or to the turmoil of life.

Even on this dark day, the colored rooms, fabrics, pictures and the many plants stand out – here they are particularly important! It is a home that has existed for almost two decades through our relief efforts. It was initiated by the clubs of Rapperswil and Kreuzlingen, as well as the "Help for Ukraine" of Father Hotz and the Streuli Family. The director, who has been working for 17 years, guides us through the facility as if he had all the time in the world for us. He does not hide from us that it is sometimes unavoidable to admit children to psychiatry. Or that children wet themselves again and again after all their bad experiences. When asked what he considers as important help, he mentions the construction of a solar system and a hippotherapy station. There would be enough space on the six-hectare site to set up a stable for horses! "You have to do something in your life," says the tireless head of Lyvchyky, who heads 50 employees. And "his" refugee and orphans are the weakest members of this war.



In the **Outpatient Clinic and Family Centre of the Lyubyn Velyky Region**, led by the Koval couple with family doctor Svitlana Koval, a Soroptimist with heart and soul, all Soroptimists of the Lviv Club are guided through the rooms. Initial diagnoses are made there on weekdays. Among other things, it is about dental treatments, gynecological examinations and treatments as well as vaccinations. They also strive to provide psychosocial support. Here, too, rooms are constantly being renovated and/or medical equipment upgraded according to financial

Clubmeeting in the Family Center

Clubmeeting in the Family Center

It's Sunday noon – an ideal day for a guided tour, because everyday life is hectic here. We even have the possibility to hold the meeting in the small hall. What joy for the Soroptimists from Lviv! Unfortunately, four women are missing due to illness, but all the others are there! Some younger women, recently members of the Soroptimists, are also committed to our values. They all enjoy being together, after many months of retreat into private life, during which no meetings were possible, because all too often they had to flee to the air-raid shelters when the alarm sounded.

And before that, the Corona restrictions caused them problems. Now even chatting and singing is possible, and cheerfulness spreads. However, I noticed that two club sisters seem absent. I learn that their husbands are at war and gradually realize what depresses the women.

Another topic is the flight of many well-off people – Serhey, Nataliya's son, had already pointed this out the evening before during a conversation at the kitchen table. Thus, a lot of

work rests on the shoulders of those left behind. The NGOs also feel that the state has less and less money available for the most urgent tasks.

The Soroptimists help where they can. There are more projects waiting for them! But the fragility of the burden, noticeable by many, is also expressed. They have assured me several times how much our solidarity gives them strength – they were happy to take one of our Christmas cards home with them!

Our Christmas Action!



A set of 5 Christmas cards with different subjects, designed by Ukrainian artists, can still be ordered at our shop for the price of SFr. 20.-.

[www.swiss-soroptimist.ch/
produkt/weihnachtskarten-set/](http://www.swiss-soroptimist.ch/produkt/weihnachtskarten-set/)

On our website www.swiss-soroptimist.ch/solidaritaet-ukraine you will find the **blog of the Union President Brigitte Mantilleri** as well as other current short **news about the Ukraine war!**

Contacts with our Ad-hoc Commission: ukraine@swiss-soroptimist.ch

We are looking forward to echoes of the news from Ukraine 9!

Konto in CHF

Soroptimist International Union Schweiz
Aargauische Kantonalbank
Kt. Nr. 6412.5358.2002
IBAN CH 770076 1641 2535 82002
SWIFT/BIC: KBAGCH22
Hörnliweg 5, CH-5304 Endingen

