



News from Ukraine 20, June 2024

Hello Bonjour Buongiorno Добрий день

Why I am involved in the ad hoc commission for aid to Ukraine

Silence about the war-torn Soroptimists and inaction were never options for us. Since the beginning of the war in spring 2022, the Soroptimist Switzerland ad hoc group has been in contact with the Soroptimist clubs in Ukraine and uses this information channel to inform you about the projects that are being supported with the donations. Who are the members of this ad hoc group? Some of us have been involved from the beginning, others have joined us recently. So there have been changes that maintain the energy to stay active. Read here who is involved today and what motivates the Soroptimists on the ad hoc committee to get involved.

Catherine Schuppli, President SI Union Switzerland 2023 – 2024



Members of the Ad-hoc Commission Ukraine meet at regular Zoom meetings, photo from 24.4.24

Catherine Schuppli, President SI Union Switzerland, Sina Stiffler (Ukraine representative), Franziska Brändli, Iris Burkhalter (finances and contact with the Union Poland regarding project support), Pia Trümpler (communication, news from Ukraine), Claudia Meister (exchange with the former SIE Task Force) Ursula Jutzi (coordination), Martine Rossier (French translations), missing from the picture.

Jolanda Frei (secretary, GSL office)



Franziska Brändli

In 2008, I was able to visit the Club Sisters in Lviv with a group of Swiss Soroptimists and follow their projects, in particular the renovation of the Bruchovici Children's Hospital. I was impressed by their work and their hospitality. In the years that followed, I remained in loose contact with Natalia. It was and is important to me to improve the living conditions of our Club sisters in Ukraine as much as possible and to show them through our commitment that we are supporting them materially and morally even under the difficult new circumstances of war. I own a small holiday flat that has been occupied by a refugee family from Kharkiv for two years. Through them, I also find out directly what their worries are. Their parents and grandparents still live in the country. This contact shows me how important our help is. The war has been going on for much longer than expected. In the ad hoc group, I can make a small contribution to ensuring that the needs of Ukrainians are not forgotten.

Iris Burkhalter

As soon as the war broke out, the European Federation convened a meeting with all the European Unions. Subsequently, Brigitte Mantilleri, past president of the Swiss Union, decided to hold a meeting with the Union board. At this meeting it was decided to form an ad hoc commission so that we could provide help efficiently and quickly. It was clear to me that we had to try to support our Soroptimists in Ukraine as much as possible. In the hope that the war would not last so long. Thanks to the generous donations from the Swiss clubs and private donors, we are able to provide financial aid. The hope remains that this war will soon come to an end and that we can help with the reconstruction.



Ursula Jutzi

As a former Union President and later Governor, I visited the clubs in Ukraine several times. I was there when the Chernihiv club was founded in 2012. My last visits to Lviv, Kiev, Chernihiv and Ushgorod were in 2019/2020. It was obvious for me to get involved in the ad hoc commission since the beginning of the war. I have personal contacts with the five Ukrainian clubs and am very impressed by how committed and dedicated the women are to mastering their situation. Thanks to generous donations, the ad hoc commission is able to support the clubs' aid projects.

Claudia Meister Iff

We women of the Soroptimist International SI Rapperswil club can look back on almost 25 years of co-operation with the SI Lviv club. The Rapperswil club was also instrumental in the founding of the club in 2000. It was my esteemed club sister Katharina Streuli who set up the Ukraine aid programme, which primarily supported hospitals and orphanages. Due to my club's close ties to the women in Ukraine, it was immediately clear to me when the war broke out that I wanted to get involved in the ad hoc commission. I am very proud of what we as Soroptimists have already been able to achieve. Thank you for your support.



*Claudia Meister Iff
Nataliya Podzorova (Club
Lviv) Sina Stiffler*



Martine Rossier-Voisard

The outbreak of war at the end of February 2022 also caused great consternation in French-speaking Switzerland. Under the leadership of Brigitte Mantilleri, President of the Union at the time, I immediately agreed to join the ad hoc commission and represent French-speaking Switzerland. I am convinced that as a well-networked, interdisciplinary team, we can achieve a lot and make a difference. Thanks to generous donations from SI clubs and private individuals, we are able to provide both moral and financial support. Thank you to everyone!

Catherine Schuppli

Due to my role on the board of Soroptimist International Switzerland, I joined the ad hoc committee for direct aid in Ukraine at the end of 2022. Initially, our work was characterised by the hope that the war would end soon. But the longer the war lasted, the greater the concern became. The unbroken will and strength of our sisters in Ukraine and the direct contacts encouraged us to continue and help. It is these contacts in the ad hoc group and the contacts with the members of the clubs in Ukraine that remind me again and again of the strength and possibilities of our organisation. It doesn't make the world a better place. But what we do nourishes our hope that our small contributions will strengthen our sisters in Ukraine. My time and my thoughts are my small contribution to the sisters in Ukraine who are confronted with the turmoil of war every day and who help others.





Sina Stiffler

In spring 2005 I travelled to Ukraine for the first time, to Kirovograd, as an English Teacher Trainer for Swisscontact. This was followed by stays in Poltava, Bar, Vinogradev and Feodosia. Since 2009 I have been responsible for the Twinning Programme of the European Federation and the SI Union Switzerland, this is the connection with the Single Clubs in Ukraine. At that time there were still 8 clubs in Ukraine, all of which I visited. We also invited Ukrainian women to our delegates' meetings on various occasions. Those were always very impressive encounters. In between, I also visited the Ukrainian Single Clubs again and again. I have many good friends in Ukraine. It is a great pleasure for me to be involved in the ad hoc group. Above all because we can work with the good Soroptimists in Ukraine on meaningful projects.

Pia Trümpler

I have been a committed Soroptimist for over 20 years. During this time, I have been able to initiate many projects in our club in Schaffhausen and realise them with the help of the club. Even when the Ukrainian refugees in our town needed support. To this day, I teach German as a second language (mostly to Ukrainians) and help the refugees to integrate. In the last two years, my personal map has shifted eastward to the Sea of Azov and when I heard that five SI clubs are active today despite the turmoil of war, it was clear to me that I also wanted to get involved for the people who stayed at home. Since last January, I have taken over the role of Communications in the ad hoc committee as Annelies Debrunner's successor. Annelies has visited the Ukrainian clubs four times in the last two years of the war and reported on them in the News. Solidarity means action. This action in favour of those affected by the war is also a matter close to my heart.



For the Ad Hoc Commission of the Swiss Union

Pia Trümpler

Register now

Golf tournament on 19 July 2024 for the benefit of Ukraine, organised by SI Club Crans-Montana with the support of the Ad-hoc Commission Ukraine.

Registration form see swiss-soroptimist.ch/event/golf-ballesteros-crans-montana/

Contact the ad hoc commission: ukraine@swiss-soroptimist.ch

We look forward to hearing from you about the news from Ukraine 20!

Donation account CHF

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