

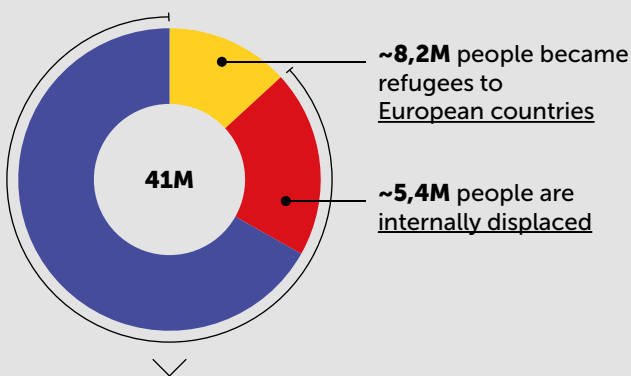


USAID HealthLink Project "Accelerating Ukraine's Efforts to End HIV"



January-April 2023

14 MONTHS OF WAR. GENERAL SITUATION IN UKRAINE



~14,5M people are estimated to need health assistance

~50% of healthcare facilities in the eastern and southern regions are partially or completely non-functional



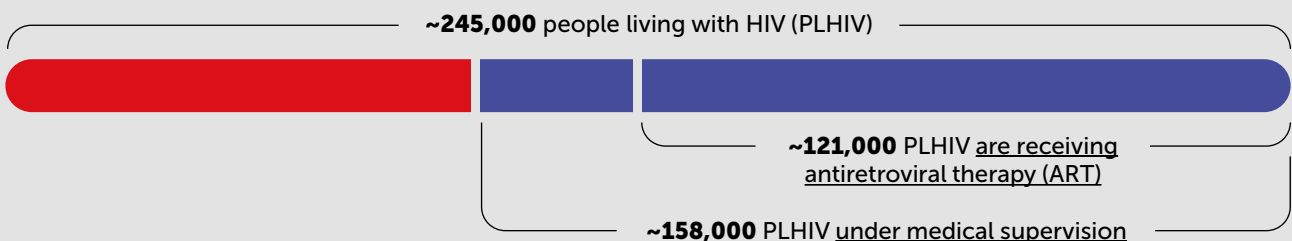
~23,000 civilian casualties, including ~8,700 killed

~5,000 missile strikes, ~3,500 air attacks, ~1,100 drone attacks

~959 attacks on HCFs, warehouses, transport, supplies

~1,300 HCFs were damaged, 174 of them cannot be recovered

>65% of PLHIV get HIV through sexual contact



No person living with HIV left behind: how patient organisations work during the war



**ФАКТИ
ЗДОРОВ'Я**

The war left tens of thousands of PLHIV remained at risk of treatment interruption. Prolonged air raids and shelling, forced relocations and loss of contact with their doctors, complicated logistics of drug delivery, and lack of access to health care in temporarily occupied territories and war zones. Despite everything, however, testing and identifying of PLHIV continued thanks to one of the largest public health projects HealthLink "Accelerating Ukraine's Efforts to End HIV".



214

HCFs provide HIV-related services within the Project



10,398

oral HIV tests were distributed

~44,000 people had HIV testing

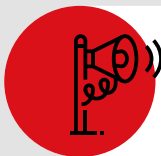
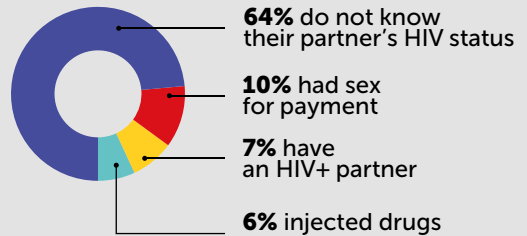
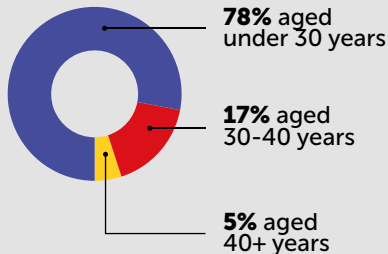
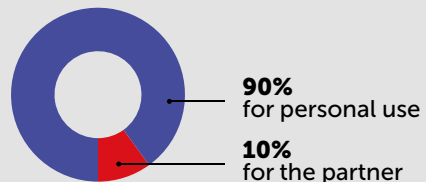
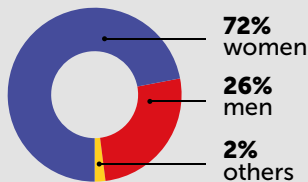


ORDERING ORAL HIV TESTS THROUGH [PROZDOROVIA.IN.UA](https://prozdorovia.in.ua)



1,796

orders



more than 350,000 people have been reached with information about HIV and related health themes through facebook.com/USAID.HEALTHLINK.PROJECT and prozdorovia.in.ua

The stories of four strong women who continue to care for HIV-positive people during the war

"We have worked all this time, non-stop. Our main goal is to do our best to ensure that people on antiretroviral therapy do not stop receiving it. And they came on foot, they came on bicycles for 20 km. Those who were not registered in Chernihiv were ready to make their way to Kyiv through the woods to avoid treatment interruption. For me, this was the greatest recognition of the work of our social workers, because it means that they succeeded in strengthening people's adherence to treatment."




Reporters.

WE TEACH

Training for family doctors in Lviv

- 300 primary care doctors in Lviv have already been trained in HIV testing and counselling — and received the corresponding points under the continuing professional development programme
- we want every resident of the Lviv region to have the opportunity to find out their HIV status quickly, confidentially and free of charge
- more than 250,000 IDPs live in the region

 will last until mid-summer
we plan to attract 600 doctors







Partners:

- [Your family doctor](#)
- [Second Medical Association of Lviv](#)
- [Lviv City Council](#)
- [100% LIFE. LVIV Charity Association](#)

Mentoring communications programme

- a series of webinars for regional partners was launched in order to strengthen quality communication with patients in HCFs, including in crisis situations and war

EVENTS WE PARTICIPATE IN

USAID Health IP Meeting		Kraków		January 2023
Joint meeting on PEPFAR planning for Ukraine and the Global Fund's National Dialogue		Warsaw		March 2023
National Conference on Primary Medical Care		Lviv		March 2023

CURRENT RESEARCH

The impact of the war on primary HCFs providing HIV Services		in progress		July 2023
Implementation of self-testing as part of the HealthLink Project		in progress		September 2023

WE RECOMMEND

 **Online course for primary care doctors**

- 5 points under the continuing professional development programme
- developed in partnership with the [Academy of the National Health Service of Ukraine](#) and the [Public Health Centre](#) to learn more about HIV and provide effective support to patients

 **Guidelines for Healthcare Professionals**

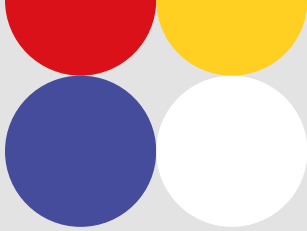
to better understand their patients and influence their behaviour change in HIV prevention and treatment

 **Online course for nurses**

to improve their professional qualification and the quality of providing medical care for PLHIV

 **Guidelines for NGO Workers**

to plan communication activities reasonably and interact effectively with target audiences



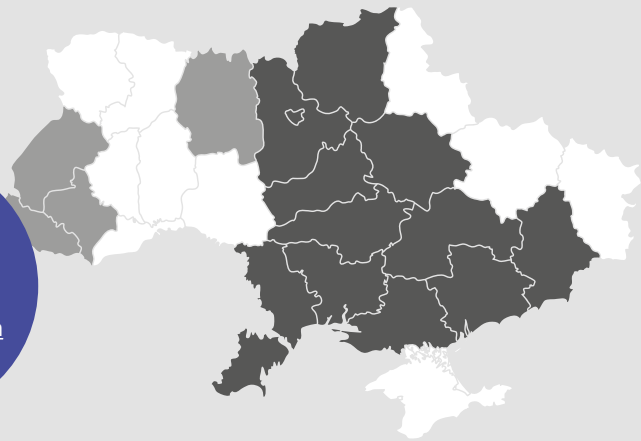
HealthLink: "Accelerating Ukraine's Efforts to End HIV"



one of the largest and most effective public health projects in Ukraine

supported by the US Agency for International Development (USAID)

in partnership with the Alliance for Public Health



- since October 2017
- every third newly diagnosed PLHIV in the country was tested within the HealthLink Project

■ project regions since 2017
■ joined in October 2022

for 5 years

~920,000 people were tested

~23,000 people learned about their HIV+ status for the first time

~19,000 people received ART

~27,000 partners of PLHIV were tested, of which **~4,500** people were tested positive

~92,000 oral HIV tests were distributed

~1,000 people received PrEP for the first time

~43,500 safe boxes were distributed

~810,000 tests were carried out by healthcare professionals

~600 HCFs, 27 NGOs, ~10,000 professionals

>600 community testing sites



World Health Day: Importance of screening for HIV, hepatitis and TB



**ФАКТИ
ЗДОРОВ'Я**

For World Health Day, held on 7 April, in partnership with the Public Health Centre, we prepared a list of diseases for which Ukrainians should be tested today. See the full list of recommended medical examinations and vaccinations in the [Healthy Person Calendar](#).

How did we work?

Inspiring stories



HE LEARNED ABOUT HIS HIV-POSITIVE STATUS DURING THE WAR AND CONTINUED TO DEFEND UKRAINE

36-year-old Denys and his wife have been together for 12 years. There was always trust in their relationship; they made many plans for the future. Now the man is fighting in the Donetsk region. He recalls how his wife complained on the phone that she had suddenly lost weight and had an on-and-off fever. Denys insisted that she go to the family doctor for an examination. This is how the woman found out that she had HIV and started treatment. She called Denis and said, ***"Please find an opportunity to take an HIV test. You and I have dreamed of having a son. We still have a future."***

Denys didn't wait for the rotation to get tested. ***"I googled where to test for HIV in the Donetsk region, found the contact details of the Ukrainian Resource Centre, and went there. The test result was positive. I reacted calmly because my wife had already told me about the medicines, which are free and available even in wartime. I was registered, and ART was prescribed."***

The man was worried that he wouldn't be able to continue his military service. However, he was simply transferred to a place where contact with blood could be avoided. Denys is constantly in touch with a social worker and, whenever possible, comes to the organisation's office or her home to collect medication.

"My wife and I have been dreaming of a son for a long time. Now, as the war rages on, our dreams are even more steadfast; life has more value. We both take ART and know that we will have a healthy child," says Denys.



"THE HEALTHLINK PROJECT TEAM SAVED ME AND MY BABY"

Olesia lives in Kramatorsk. She was pregnant when the war started. Under bullets and rocket fire, the woman had to undergo important medical examinations, including HIV testing. Since the regional AIDS center was forced to evacuate due to the war, the woman was tested at the Ukrainian Resource Centre, a regional partner of the HealthLink Project. The result was positive.

After confirming the diagnosis, Olesia was explained that she could live a full life with HIV and give birth to a healthy child if she received antiretroviral therapy. However, instead of starting treatment, the woman disappeared and stopped answering calls. The social worker tried everything to reach Olesia.

"Finally, miraculously, Olesia answered my call and listened to me. I insisted on receiving ART. 'If you want to give birth to a healthy child, start taking medication. Right now, the fate of your baby is in your hands,' were the words that moved the woman. The very next day, she was in our office."

Olesia received help with getting registered and started treatment. In the summer of 2022, the woman gave birth to a healthy baby girl.

"It was so hard for me. I thought life had ended. Only now do I realise that if I hadn't started treatment then, I would've harmed my child. I'm so grateful to the HealthLink Project team that saved us," says Olesia.