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## **Protecting the Rights of Disabled People in Ukraine**

The members of the Scottish Independent Living Coalition (SILC) are deeply concerned by the growing humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and are calling on support to ensure that disabled people are not abandoned.

There are approximately 3 million disabled people in Ukraine. Reports are highlighting that disabled people are finding it difficult to access a safe means of evacuation and shelter. Disabled people are disproportionately impacted in emergency situations and are more likely to be left behind due to factors such as inaccessible transport and infrastructure. Disabled people can lose access to vital medication, equipment and mobility aids in conflict. There can also be barriers in finding safe places to stay, as some disabled people are unable to reach shelters located in underground metro stations and bunkers. If information is not provided in accessible formats, then disabled people may have limited awareness of available humanitarian support.

To ensure that disabled people in Ukraine are protected, all engaged parties must respect their responsibilities under international humanitarian law and human rights law. Article 11 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified by both Russia and Ukraine and United Nations Security Council Resolution 2475, create clear obligations, that cannot be suspended, even in a state of emergency, to ensure equal protection and safety for all disabled people.



In addition, SILC fully support the actions outlined by the European Disability Forum, to ensure that disabled people in Ukraine:

- Have full access to all humanitarian aid
- Are protected from violence, abuse and ill treatment
- Are provided with accessible information about safety and assistance protocols, evacuation procedures and support
- Have full access to basic services including water and sanitation, social support, education, healthcare, transport and information
- Are accounted for and not abandoned: it is also essential that measures are in place which fully include people living in institutions or orphanages; and relocation and evacuation measures should not force more disabled people to live in such institutions
- Are meaningfully involved in all disaster planning and humanitarian actions through their representative organisations

SILC also supports its colleagues in the European Network on Independent Living. In their campaign '[Leave no-one behind](#)', amongst many practical things, they call on receiving countries to ensure their disabled citizens, and their respective organisations, are involved in the process of welcome and resettlement, as happens in Sweden. This is crucial, to identify everyone's needs and ensure appropriate action is taken.

SILC members extend our solidarity to the people of Ukraine during this time of crisis.

For those who wish, donations can be made to the Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal, led by the UK's Disasters Emergency Committee:

[www.dec.org.uk/appeal/ukraine-humanitarian-appeal](http://www.dec.org.uk/appeal/ukraine-humanitarian-appeal)

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## Notes to editors:

The Scottish Independent Living Coalition exists to unite across a common goal: disabled people's equal enjoyment of our rights to independent living including our full human rights to equal and active participation and involvement in our communities. These rights are enshrined in law. However, there are persistent barriers which prevent our enjoyment of them including political, attitudinal, societal, and financial barriers, structures and managerialism and a lack of resources and opportunities for disabled people to collectivise and coproduce change.

### Members are -

- Disability Equality Scotland [www.disabilityequality.scot](http://www.disabilityequality.scot)
- Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living [www.gcil.org.uk](http://www.gcil.org.uk)
- Glasgow Disability Alliance [www.gda.scot](http://www.gda.scot)
- Inclusion Scotland [www.inclusionscotland.org](http://www.inclusionscotland.org)
- Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living [www.lothiancil.org.uk](http://www.lothiancil.org.uk)
- People First Scotland [www.peoplefirstscotland.org](http://www.peoplefirstscotland.org)
- Self-Directed Support Scotland [www.sdsscotland.org.uk](http://www.sdsscotland.org.uk)

SILC is chaired by Dr Jim Elder-Woodward OBE and convened by Inclusion Scotland.