



This week's big news

DID YOU KNOW?

From 1922 to 1991, Ukraine and Russia were part of the Soviet Union, a group of 15 countries run as one state.



Young people in the Netherlands show support for Ukraine.

Ukrainians to stay in US



On March 3, the US announced that about 30,000 Ukrainians temporarily in the US will be allowed to stay while fighting continues in their country. Usually, Ukrainians visiting or traveling in the US would return home after 18 months. The US Department of Homeland Security will give them Temporary Protection Status.

War in Ukraine enters second week

For a second week, Russian troops continued their invasion of Ukraine, with fighting taking place across the nation. About 2 million people have fled the country since the conflict began on February 24, creating the largest flow of refugees since World War Two (1939–1945).

What is happening?

When *The Week Junior* went to press, Ukrainian troops and volunteer fighters were holding off Russian troops near the capital, Kyiv, and in some other areas. In the south, Russian troops seized one city (Kherson) and attacked at least two others (Mykolaiv and Mariupol). They also attacked non-military sites such as hospitals and apartment buildings throughout the country. Hundreds of thousands of residents were sheltering in place, in some cases without electricity, heat, or sufficient food and water. Many others tried to board buses and trains to leave the country or get to safer parts of Ukraine. Russia agreed to “humanitarian corridors,” which would allow Ukrainians to leave and enable aid groups to send in food and medicine, but did not stick to the agreement. The United Nations (UN) reported that at least 1,100 civilians have been injured and 474 have died, though these numbers are likely higher.



A map of the region

What is Vladimir Putin saying?

Russian President Vladimir Putin has justified the war, which he called a “special military operation,” by saying Ukraine wants to harm Russia and its people. Putin has said that Ukraine is part of Russia, not an independent nation. Leaders in Ukraine and other countries say Putin is wrong and that his goal is to weaken Ukraine’s relationship with nations in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO, a military alliance of 30 countries, mostly in Europe and North America). Putin tightly controls Russian politics, laws, and media, making it difficult for people to challenge him. On March 4, Russia shut down access to social media and foreign news and threatened to imprison anyone spreading “false information.” This prevents Russians from hearing anything about the war except what the government tells them.

What are other nations doing?

More than 20,000 foreign volunteers have signed up to join the fight against Russia, including about 3,000 Americans. More than 20 countries, including the US, Canada, Lithuania, and the UK, are sending weapons to Ukraine. Israel and Germany are setting up temporary field hospitals in the region. As Ukrainians flee to neighboring countries, many

nations have offered to take them in. Countries around the world are trying to punish Russia financially by blocking transactions with Russia’s central bank and other financial institutions. Some of the world’s largest companies, including Apple, Nike, and Visa, cut off business with Russia.

How are people reacting?

The UN and humanitarian organizations are sending food, water, and medical supplies to people in areas under attack, those who have fled to safer parts of Ukraine, and those who have left the country. The UN’s refugee agency has received more than \$40 million in donations from people and businesses to support these efforts. In Russia, thousands of people are protesting their government’s actions. More than 4,400 protesters were arrested in at least 56 Russian cities on March 6.

What will happen next?

On March 7, Ukraine’s president, Volodymyr Zelensky, released a video to the world asking for more help. The next day, he spoke to the UK Parliament (similar to Congress) and said, “We will not give up, and we will not lose.” As *The Week Junior* went to press, President Joe Biden said the US would impose stricter economic penalties on Russia. UN representatives and other world leaders continued to hold talks with Russia, trying to negotiate humanitarian corridors as well as peace.