



COOPERATIVE THREAT REDUCTION PROGRAM BIOLOGICAL THREAT REDUCTION PROGRAM UKRAINE

The Biological Threat Reduction Program (BTRP), part of the Department of Defense's Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program, is implemented by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). Since 2005, the program assisted the Ukrainian government in converting former Soviet biological weapons (BW) research facilities to support peaceful and safe biological detection and diagnostic capabilities and reduce the threats posed by dangerous pathogens, whether they are naturally-occurring, accidental, or intentional.

KEY FACTS

- BTRP's priorities in Ukraine are to help them consolidate and secure pathogens and to continue to ensure Ukraine can detect and report disease outbreaks before they pose security or stability threats. All of BTRP's efforts are peaceful in nature and subject to rigorous export-control measures and vetting processes. BTRP sponsors no gain of function research or "human experimentation."
- Ukraine is a State Party to Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC). In accordance with an August 2005 CTR agreement, the DoD has been funding security upgrades at Ukrainian biological laboratories where collections of pathogens are kept.
- BTRP has supported 46 laboratories, facilities and diagnostic sites for the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture. BTRP has also provided the Ministry of Defense with 3 mobile diagnostic laboratories, with the goal of enhancing the system of disease surveillance and emergency preparedness in the Armed Forces of Ukraine. All of this assistance improved Ukraine's COVID-19 response.
- All of these are Ukrainian facilities owned and operated by the government of Ukraine, which aims to improve human and animal health capacity for the people of Ukraine.
- On a daily basis, Russia propagates, either directly through state-run media outlets or through the use of surrogates, disinformation aimed at BTRP's laboratory and capacity building efforts in former Soviet Union countries. The Lugar Center in Georgia and the Central Reference Laboratory in Kazakhstan are the primary targets, but more recent disinformation efforts have targeted laboratories in Ukraine. Through these disinformation campaigns, Russia falsely claims the United States, and specifically DTRA, is developing biological weapons in laboratories in these countries, as well as killing local populations with purposeful releases of biological agents.
- Russia illegally took possession of two Ukrainian-owned labs that BTRP upgraded in 2014 and continues to deny Ukrainian access to these facilities. To date, we are unaware of any attempts to use these facilities for disinformation purposes.
- BTRP is just one of many organizations providing equipment and training to these facilities. Other supporters include, among others, the European Union, World Health Organization, international universities and research institutions, as well as other U.S. interagency partners.
- Even though BTRP has had an active biological engagement with the government of Ukraine since 2005, there are many Ministry of Health and Ministry of Defense facilities that have not asked for, or received equipment or training from the United States.

