

UKRAINE

UNHCR EXTERNAL UPDATE ON THE SITUATION OF DISPLACED PERSONS

10 July 2014

KEY FIGURES

Internal displacement (as of 9 July)

79,362 Ukrainians are internally displaced

Applications for international protection in Russia (as of 7 July)

20,184 Ukrainians applied for refugee status or temporary asylum in the Russian Federation

Applications for international protection in other neighbouring countries (as of 2 July)

Poland: 558 applications
Belarus: 108 applications
Romania: 23 applications
Hungary: 14 asylum applications
Moldova: 18 applications
Slovakia: 4 applications

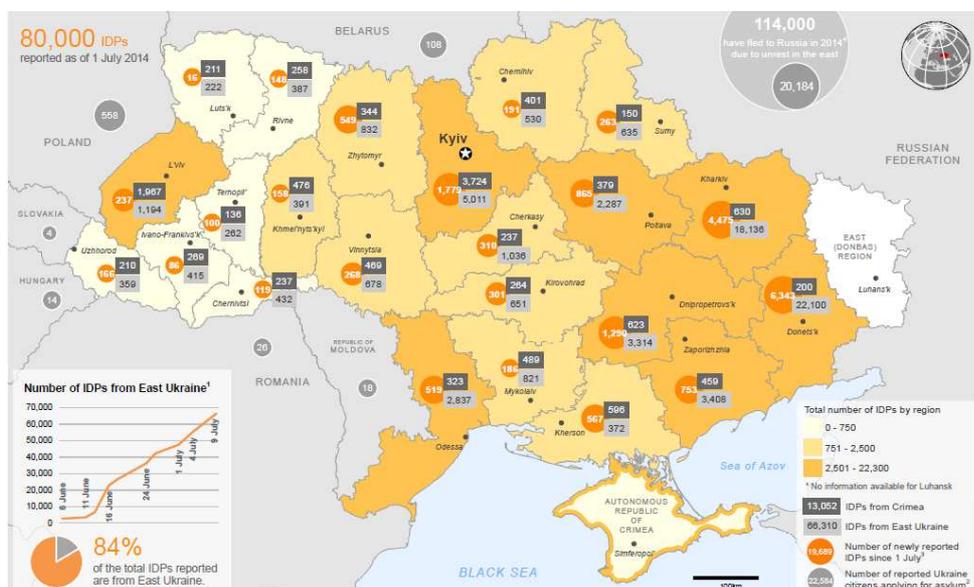
PARTNERS

- Central and local authorities:** Government (Cabinet of Ministers, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Social Protection, Interior Ministry, Ministry of Regional Development, Parliamentary Human Rights Committee, State Migration Service, State Border Guards Administration), Regional administrations
- UN Agencies:** UNICEF, OCHA, OHCHR, IOM, WFP, WHO, UNFPA, UNDP
- NGOs and community-based organizations:** Caritas, Red Cross Society, MSF, "Crimea SOS", "Vostok SOS", "Dom druzei" "Almenda", CBO "Crimean Diaspora", CBO "Crimean Wave", "Etalon", Youth Administration of Ivano-Frankivsk, "Employment Centre for Free People", "Doctors of Maidan" and many other NGOs in various regions of Ukraine.

This update is issued on a bi-monthly basis and provides further information on the current situation of displaced persons and their protection needs. It is intended to be complementary to the [Situation report](#) issued by OCHA.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) reached over 79,000 across Ukraine.
- The Ukrainian authorities nominated Mr Volodymyr Groysman, Deputy Prime Minister as the coordinator on all IDP matters.
- During the last coordination meeting on IDP matters, the authorities decided on the establishment of a registration system and on the drafting of new legislation on IDPs in line with international standards.
- UNHCR undertook missions to Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Lviv, Kherson and Odessa to monitor the situation of new arrivals, assess reception conditions, and advise local authorities on the response to the displacement situation. A mission to Svyatogorsk, Sloviansk and Kramatorsk will take place once the security situation allows.
- UNHCR and the Ukrainian Ministry of Social Policy started the implementation of a cash assistance programme to support 2,000 vulnerable IDPs.
- The Ukrainian State Emergencies Service (SES) leads a coordination centre to evacuate IDPs from the East and a transition camp in Kharkiv region aimed at providing temporary shelter in schools for a maximum number of 2,000 people.
- In Russia, UNHCR assessed the situation of displaced persons in Rostov, Bryansk, St. Petersburg and Voronezh, and met the local authorities.



* Due to the lack of a centralized system of registration, the real figure of IDPs is unknown and is likely to be higher, as local authorities and civil society register only those who approach them. Various organizations report that some displaced persons from the East are reluctant to apply to the authorities because they fear retaliation, want to maintain a low profile, and moreover, see little benefit in identifying themselves as there is no special reception procedures established for them. ** The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Creation date: 9 July 2014. Sources: Figures reported to UNHCR by local government and NGOs (9 July 2014); Figures reported to UNHCR by Government Asylum Authorities and the Russian Federal Migration Service (1 June - Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia; 1 July - Belarus, Moldova; 7 July - Russia); also includes figures for Czech Republic; Figures reported to UNHCR for the period from 1 to 9 July 2014; UNHCR (4 July 2014). Feedback: ocha.im.ukraine@gmail.com

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Internal Displacement

In July, UNHCR observed a sharp increase in the number of IDPs, especially from the eastern regions of Luhansk and Donetsk. As of 9 July, the authorities had reported a total of 79,362 IDPs across Ukraine, including 13,052 IDPs from Crimea and 66,310 IDPs from the eastern regions. UNHCR estimates there are some 22,000 displaced persons in Donetsk region, including 16,000 IDPs in Sviatohorsk, 5,000 IDPs in Krasniy Lyman and 1,100 IDPs in Novoazyskiy district. Between 4 and 9 July, UNHCR observed an increase of almost 12 000 in the number of displaced persons. IDPs from eastern Ukraine report that they have left home due to security concerns. Cases of extortion and harassment are also being reported, as well as risks of being caught in crossfire. Some political activists and journalists are afraid of persecution. Most IDPs left Crimea due to uncertainty¹ or loss of livelihoods. Other people have mentioned as their main reason for leaving fear of persecution for reasons of religion.

The displaced persons from Crimea are mostly Tatars, but also include ethnic Ukrainians, ethnic Russians, mixed families, refugees, asylum seekers and foreigners married to Ukrainian citizens. IDPs from the East include ethnic Ukrainians and Russians, Roma and also foreign students. The IDP population is disproportionately made up of women and children.

External Displacement

In the EU and neighbouring countries

The number of Ukrainian citizens applying for international protection in the EU, Norway and Switzerland increased by 25% in May compared to April this year. Since the beginning of the year, 2,444 Ukrainians have applied for international protection across the EU.

725² Ukrainians have applied for international protection in Poland, Belarus, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Moldova since the beginning of the year. 558 of these applications were registered in Poland, where the authorities are preparing a contingency plan for a potential large influx. 108 applications were registered in Belarus.

Most Ukrainian citizens leaving their country have sought to obtain a different legal status, such as a residence permit or a work permit. For example, Poland has issued three different types of residence permits to 5,559 Ukrainians since the beginning of the year. The number of visas that it has issued has increased by 22% since the beginning of the year, compared to the same period in 2013.

New arrivals are mostly fleeing violence. Those who have applied for international protection come from all regions of Ukraine, and include ethnic Ukrainians, Russians, Tatars, Christians and Muslims. The majority of applicants are males between 20 and 45 who fear conscription. Most applicants have secondary/university education.

In the Russian Federation

In the Russian Federation, 20,184 Ukrainians have applied for refugee status or temporary asylum as of 7 July. According to the authorities, a further 114,000 Ukrainians have applied for other forms of legal stay in Russia, such as residence permits, citizenship and the “compatriots’ resettlement programme”. The number of

¹ Owners of small businesses and professions such as accountants, lawyers or pharmacists are unsure about the possibility to acquire Russian professional licenses. Many students have had to interrupt their studies as certain courses are abolished or Ukrainian language tuition was cancelled.

² The figure is based on the data provided by the competent authorities in respective countries. As of 04 July the reported number of asylum applications (including other forms of international protection) was: 108 in Belarus, 558 in Poland, 4 in Slovakia, 14 in Hungary, 23 in Romania, and 18 in the Republic of Moldova. The figures include only the Ukrainians that applied for a form of international protection and are subject to change.

Ukrainians present on the territory of the Russian Federation may however be higher as many individuals reportedly stay in the country under the visa-free regime.

The Russian authorities took a number of measures to support Ukrainian citizens arriving on its territory. These measures include provision of accommodation and other necessary assistance, and unconditional extension of residence permits (upon application) for as long as the crisis in Ukraine continues. Moreover, Ukrainian citizens are allowed to extend their stay for an unlimited period of time, once their 90-day visa-free period expires. At regional level, the authorities in Rostov and Volgograd have introduced a state of emergency to enable specialized services to operate effectively and provide the displaced with all necessary assistance. According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, over 12,900 Ukrainians have arrived in Rostov between 1-20 June, including some 4,900 children. Most Ukrainians arriving in Rostov are accommodated in private houses, while 4,600 are staying in municipal buildings or camps. According to the authorities, the available accommodation capacity reached its limits, therefore all the newly arrived Ukrainians are being redirected to other regions.

Following recently completed assessment missions in Rostov, Voronezh and Bryansk, UNHCR can confirm that the situation is well-managed and that temporary accommodation facilities are of a good standard.

During the reporting period, UNHCR Moscow also assessed the situation of displaced Ukrainians in St. Petersburg and met the authorities there. The team observed that the increased number of Ukrainians entering Russian territory rely on volunteers to cover their basic needs. The authorities in St. Petersburg are in the process of developing a scheme to provide employment opportunities to as many Ukrainians as possible.

Legislation

UNHCR continues to work with the Ukrainian counterparts to ensure that IDPs enjoy the same rights and freedoms as other citizens of Ukraine.

Ukraine's Ministry of Justice is currently working on a special law to facilitate the registration of residence for IDPs. Currently no draft is available, but UNHCR will be invited to submit its comments once the draft is ready. Previously, the Ukrainian Parliament had on 19 June adopted the law "*On the legal status of persons who were forced to leave their place of residence as a result of the occupation of AR Crimea and of the conditions connected with the conduct of the ATO on the territory of Ukraine*". UNHCR has expressed its concerns about that law, which does not contain sufficient provisions for the protection of IDPs. Its entry into force remains pending, as it is yet to be signed by the President.

The Government of the Russian Federation is deliberating on the possibility of introducing a Decree to grant temporary protection to all asylum-seekers from Ukraine on a *prima facie* basis. The Russian authorities are also discussing the possibility of including Ukrainians who have applied for asylum in the compatriots' program, which will *inter alia* allow for simplified acquisition of Russian citizenship.

Protection

In the light of developments in Ukraine and considering the increased number of Ukrainians seeking international protection, especially in neighbouring countries, UNHCR updated the [International Protection Considerations](#) paper which makes a number of recommendations, including:

- Applications for international protection from Ukrainian citizens should be analyzed in fair and efficient asylum procedures on an individual basis.
- In cases where Ukrainians benefit from stay on grounds other than international protection (e.g. different types of visa or residency status), UNHCR recommends that such stay continues to be extended until the situation in Ukraine becomes stable.
- UNHCR also recommends removing Ukraine from the "safe country of origin" lists and considers the designation of Ukraine as "safe third-country" not appropriate.

- In relation to third country nationals, UNHCR advises caution in relation to the readmission agreements and recommends that third country nationals who receive international protection be also referred to the national asylum procedure in the country where they seek international protection.

Current needs and challenges

Displaced persons from the East arrive with few personal belongings. Some of the most vulnerable IDPs need assistance, such as food, medicines and various non-food items (NFIs). Local communities have managed so far to cover the basic needs of the displaced. However, it is unclear how long such charitable action can be sustained, especially if the numbers of the displaced continue to increase.

Registration continues to be a challenge for some IDPs. The lack of proper registration makes it impossible to have access to banking services and social benefits, or to register a new business. The Ukrainian Government issued a Decision³ which establishes a centralized body to deal with the registration of displaced Ukrainians. It also gives IDPs the right to receive free legal assistance. The newly established body will also deal with social protection issues, such as social benefits or assistance with access to employment opportunities.

Due to security concerns, UNHCR has so far been unable to access the displaced persons within the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, making the direct and independent assessment of their needs and delivery of assistance impossible. UNHCR however plans to organize a mission in the area as soon as the security situation allows.

Response

UNHCR continues to coordinate with local authorities, NGOs and UN agencies to assess the current needs of IDPs and address their situation. An inter-agency Joint Proposal for Preparedness and Response in Ukraine was launched on 12 June, outlining the needs of UN agencies until the end of 2014, with an estimated budget of approximately USD 9 million, including USD 3.7 million of UNHCR requirements. UNHCR's assistance includes the following actions:

- A cash assistance program to support most vulnerable IDPs in Lviv region including 449 members of 137 families and 95 students. The program is currently being developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Policy.
- Delivery of humanitarian aid (food and NFIs) to some 3,200 most vulnerable IDPs, accommodated in the city of Sviatohorsk in Donetsk region through and in addition to assistance by Kharkiv local authorities. Additionally, NFIs (mattresses, linen, kitchen sets and household appliances) were delivered to 3 sanatoriums hosting 230 IDPs in Kyiv region.
- Provision of social and legal assistance to IDPs through local partner NGOs.
- Settling grants for 30 most vulnerable families in Vinnytsia region.

³ Decision on "Social security services for citizens of Ukraine displaced from temporary occupied territory and anti-terrorist operation area"