

UKRAINE

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

23 April – 13 May 2016

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Situational overview:** During the reporting period, the security situation in eastern Ukraine has improved, though ceasefire violations continue to be reported in some areas.
- **Protection concerns:** Freedom of movement across the line of contact remains a primary concern. The suspension of social and pension payments to IDPs until their residential addresses are verified remains a key concern.
- **Legislation update:** The Government adopted a law amending existing laws to determine a procedure to ensure the right to education of people whose place of residence is within the “Anti-terrorist Operation” area.
- **Assistance provided:** Since 23 April, UNHCR provided non-food items (NFIs) and emergency shelter assistance to more than 3,300 people.



In March 2014, Oleksandr moved from Crimea to Lviv. He previously lived in the city for five years, during his studies at the Ukrainian Academy of Printing. As a student, he managed to combine the theory and practice of printing and worked part-time in a printing house where he went from working as a porter to chief marketing officer. Professional education, contacts in the publishing industry and understanding the needs of customers in Lviv helped Oleksandr to start his own business. Now he runs an advertising agency that offers printing services, functioning as an intermediary between clients and printing companies. Taking advantage of the opportunity to receive a UNHCR grant, Oleksandr purchased computers for his office, hired a talented graphic designer and now takes first steps toward implementing of his goals.

Photo: UNHCR/Anton Shevelovov

KEY FIGURES

72.9 per cent

of people crossing the line of contact are concerned about insecurity

61.5 per cent

cross by private car

45.5 per cent

are aged 40-65

74.3 per cent

travel to visit relatives

58 per cent

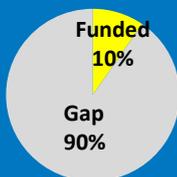
cross the line of contact every month

Source: UNHCR crossing the line of contact survey (Apr. 2016)

FUNDING

USD 34.8 million

requested for the operation in 2016



PRIORITIES

- Leading the Protection and Shelter/NFI Clusters.
- Supporting the Government of Ukraine on IDP and refugee/asylum issues.
- Advocacy on freedom of movement, humanitarian access, and other concerns.
- Provision of humanitarian assistance, especially around the line of contact and NGCA.

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

The security situation in eastern Ukraine has improved following implementation of a ceasefire negotiated by the Trilateral Contact Group that came into effect on 30 April. The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission [reported](#) a decrease in the number of ceasefire violations during the reporting period. Nonetheless, fighting continued on the line of contact in Donetsk region between Donetsk airport and Avdiivka and in the vicinity of Horlivka. Novotroitske checkpoint has been closed since 27 April due to shelling in the area. Improved conditions in Luhansk region led to the reopening of the pedestrian crossing point on the line of contact at Stanytsia Luhanska.

Freedom of movement of people across the line of contact remains a primary concern. The holiday period at the beginning of May led to long queues and long waiting times at most checkpoints on the line of contact. Queues of more than 900 vehicles were observed during the reporting period, with many people waiting overnight to pass checkpoints that already had difficulty meeting regular demand. In some cases people cross the line of contact via unofficial routes, exposing themselves to the risk of landmines and other explosive remnants of war.

The suspension of social assistance and pension payments for IDPs by the Ministry of Social Policy (MoSP) continues to pose a problem for many IDPs. The Ministry suspended payments to IDPs in February pending verification of residential addresses. While many of those affected have been able to go to MoSP offices and prove their address, vulnerable people such as the elderly and disabled may have difficulty to go to the offices. The process for address verification is not stipulated in legislation, which has led to some confusion regarding the process. Access to social assistance by IDPs has also been disrupted following amendments to the Law on Rights and Freedoms of IDPs, which came into effect on 13 January, cancelling the requirement for the State Migration Service (SMS) to stamp renewed IDPs certificates. Following a decision of the Cabinet of Ministers on 22 February, SMS was again required to stamp IDP certificates. Practice now varies from office to office, leading to confusion among authorities and IDPs.

Humanitarian access to non-government controlled areas continues to be problematic pending “registration” with de facto authorities. In the non-government controlled area of Donetsk UNHCR conducts its activities through partners including People in Need (PiN), Donbas Development Centre (DDC), Maximal and Most. In the area of Sievierodonetsk, UNHCR monitoring missions to communities near the line of contact revealed problems due to mine contamination and lack of public transportation to places with social infrastructure. Lack of access to healthcare services is a particular problem. Medical institutions in the non-government controlled areas have limited resources. According to information received from various sources, the greatest medical needs in non-government controlled areas are antibiotics, antiviral, antiallergenic, sedatives and insulin. These medicines are either in short supply or too expensive for most people to buy.

On 5 May, UNHCR and other UN agencies held their first meeting with Mr. Vadym Chernysh, the recently appointed Minister for Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs. The participants discussed the mandate of the Ministry, its resources and infrastructure as well as areas for possible future cooperation with UN agencies. The statute of the Ministry is being finalized for approval by the Government.

External Displacement

UNHCR continues to monitor the refugee situation in neighbouring countries. According to government sources in receiving countries, the total number of Ukrainians seeking asylum or other forms of legal stay in neighbouring countries now stands at 1,363,868, with the majority going to the Russian Federation (1,092,212) and Belarus (130,056). In other neighbouring countries, 261 Ukrainians sought asylum in Moldova, 76 in Romania, 67 in Hungary and 26 in Slovakia. As of 13 May, since the beginning of the crisis, in the top five receiving countries of the European Union there were 6,540 applications for international protection in Germany, 6,522 in Italy, 4,880 in Poland, 2,687 in France and 2,532 in Sweden.

The OSCE Observer Mission monitoring the Gukovo and Donetsk checkpoints on the Russia-Ukraine border inform that total average cross-border traffic decreased at both checkpoints during the latest reporting period, from 10,597 to 10,508 crossings per day. There was a daily average net flow of 1,112 people entering Ukraine from the Russian Federation. This represents a significant increase of the number of people entering Ukraine at these checkpoints, most likely due to the May holidays.

Data source: Respective national asylum authorities

Achievements



Protection Cluster

- The Protection Cluster led by UNHCR, continued its advocacy to stop the arbitrary suspension of social payments and benefits to IDPs as well as to de-link social payments and pensions from IDP registration. The procedure of verification and renewal is applied inconsistently in different regions, the process unclear and time consuming, impacting disproportionately on those with limited mobility, including the elderly, the disabled and single-headed households. Advocacy efforts included a briefing for the international community, including ambassadors and key stakeholders such as ECHO, to explain the impact the suspension is having on IDPs, and provide key protection advocacy messages.
- The Cluster provided a briefing to the high-level delegation from the USAID Europe and Eurasia Bureau on protection challenges faced by IDPs and affected population residing along the contact line and in the NGCA.
- Cluster members participated in the Protection Information Management Training. Participants obtained the tools and knowledge that will allow to enhance the collection, processing, sharing and analyzing protection information. This training is the first in a set of trainings organized by the Protection Information Management Training team and will be further replicated in other IDP operations.

Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- The suspension of social assistance and pension payments to IDPs continues to be a problem. The payments were originally suspended in February on the orders of the Ministry of Social Policy (MoSP) based on a list of recipients produced by the State Security Service. Payments were to be reinstated once the residential addresses of IDPs were verified. UNHCR partner the Right to Protection (R2P) presented initial results of thematic monitoring conducted in five regions on the suspension of payments. The results revealed that the majority of IDPs included on the suspension lists have not changed their place of residence after initial displacement and that they were unaware of the reason why they were included on the list. The majority of IDPs surveyed stated that social payments were their primary source of income, underlining the importance of the suspension of payments to IDPs.
- R2P presented the results of monitoring in Zaporizhzhia region on the implementation of changes introduced by law no. 2166, "On the introduction of amendments to certain legislative acts of Ukraine to strengthen the guarantees of the rights and freedoms of IDPs." The results of monitoring showed the absence of unified approach among local offices of social protection regarding registration of IDPs, since the law came into effect on 13 January 2016. The main reasons named were gaps in legislation and unadjusted bylaws not yet in line with the amended legislation.
- On 19 April, Parliament adopted the law "On amendments to some laws of Ukraine regarding the right to education of persons whose place of residence is the territory of the 'Anti-terrorist Operation.'" The law, through amendments to the laws "On temporary measures for the period of the 'Anti-terrorist Operation'", "On Higher Education" and "On General Secondary Education," determines a procedure for ensuring the right to education of people whose place of residence is within the "Anti-terrorist Operation" area. The law provides state certification on completion of secondary education in non-government controlled areas (for the duration of the "ATO"). It establishes additional opportunities for admission to higher educational institutions located in government controlled areas of Luhansk and Donetsk regions as well as to higher education institutions evacuated from the "ATO" area and temporarily occupied territory, subject to passing competitive entrance exams.
- During the reporting period, UNHCR partner the Norwegian Refugee Council provided 94 consultations and provided legal assistance in 10 cases, while R2P provided assistance in 87 legal cases. Stantsia Kharkiv provided 950 general consultations, 281 legal consultations and 360 psychosocial consultations. The NGO also provided training on SGBV response to 20 IDPs. UNHCR partner Slavic Heart provided 847 general consultations, 1,186 legal consultations and 276 psychosocial consultations. Around 63 per cent of the consultations were provided to female beneficiaries. Main concerns raised were the suspension of social payments and pensions for IDPs, humanitarian assistance, civil

¹ [International Protection Considerations Related to the Developments in Ukraine – Update III](http://www.refworld.org/docid/56017e034.html)
<http://www.refworld.org/docid/56017e034.html>

documentation, medical assistance, IDP rights, legislation, crossing the line of contact and the Crimean administrative border, housing, land and property, employment and children. In April, UNHCR partner CrimeaSOS provided consultations to 637 people and took part in 37 court cases. Main concerns were the suspension of social assistance and pension payments to IDPs, civil documentation, access to social services, humanitarian assistance, crossing the line of contact, medical issues, housing, employment, depression and child-related issues.

Shelter and Non-food Items (NFIs)

Emergency Shelter and NFIs Cluster

- The Shelter Cluster led by UNHCR and co-chaired by People in Need (PiN), conducted monitoring to update information on the collective center situation in government controlled areas.
- There are currently 219 operating collective centres in the government controlled area. Of the 271 collective centers originally recorded, 52 have closed since the beginning of the crisis. There are currently over 6,500 people residing in collective centers, of which 73 per cent are women and children. Vulnerable people comprise 13.2 per cent elderly; 7.9 per cent single headed households; and 7.8 per cent disabled.
- The highest occupancy rates are in Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia regions. Overall, there is a trend of declining occupancy rates since mid-2015, though occupancy has increased in large urban centres and their vicinities. In remote rural and semi-urban places, 50 per cent of places are vacant.
- Many collective center managers, especially those near the line of contact and large urban centres, report that IDPs tend to stay at collective centres for short periods, often only a few nights.
- The majority of collective centres are privately owned; only 38 per cent are public or communal. During the past year, many public and communal collective centres closed, while closure rates of private collective centers are significantly lower.
- More information on collective centres in Ukraine can be found in the [factsheet \[pdf\]](#) produced by the Cluster.

Collective centres overview map (April 2016)



In April, UNHCR facilitated a two-week mission to strengthen inclusion of disabled people in all areas of protection and assistance programming. A lack of sustainable housing options, access to disability benefits and need for information were identified as key concerns during focus groups. While IDPs and refugees with disabilities have a strong desire to work, many face barriers including negative attitudes from employers and the broader community. A lack of accessible transport remains an obstacle to going to work, medical care and social networks. Furthermore, disabled people would like to have a stronger voice in decision-making about their lives and the lives of their families and communities. “A very important issue is that we all have to play an equal role in social activities to make sure that the most isolated people are informed and included,” said one disabled woman who attended in the UNCHR workshop in Sievierodonetsk. *Photo: UNHCR/Iva Zimova*



Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- During the reporting period, UNHCR NFI and shelter materials were provided to some 3,300 people. The UNHCR Field Office in Mariupol distributed over 2,000 buckets and 1,000 jerry cans to people living in areas near Mariupol experiencing problems with water supply. The office also provided 220 plastic sheets to people in Avdiivka for emergency shelter repairs. The Field Office in Kharkiv provided NFIs to 220 people and shelter materials to UNHCR partner ADRA. The UNHCR Field Office in Sievierodonetsk provided NFIs to the NGO People Living with HIV for distribution to beneficiaries.
- In non-government controlled areas, the UNHCR provided NFIs to 250 vulnerable families in the Mala Verhunka district of Luhansk City. UNHCR also provided NFIs to 21 families in Ternovoe village. Shelter material was distributed to eight families temporarily accommodated in a barracks in Kreshevatoe village. Winter fuel and NFI distributions have now been completed in Donetsk, following extensive delays due to restrictions on implementation imposed by de facto authorities in the area.



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Working in partnership

The humanitarian response to the internal displacement situation in Ukraine is a coordinated effort by international organizations, the Government, local and international NGOs. UNHCR works with eight implementing partners and other partners providing assistance to internally displaced people through protection and legal assistance, policy development and capacity building and the distribution of emergency shelter materials and non-food items. UNHCR co-leads the Shelter and Non-food Item Cluster and co-leads the Protection Cluster.

UNHCR implementing partners (IDP operation): [Adventist Development and Relief Agency](#) | [CrimeaSOS](#) | [Desyate Kvitnya](#) | [Donbass Development Centre](#) | [Donetsk Region Charitable Foundation](#) | [HelpAge International](#) | [Most](#) | [Maximal](#) | [Norwegian Refugee Council](#) | [People in Need](#) | [Slavic Heart](#) | [Stantsia Kharkiv](#) | [Right to Protection](#)

Key Shelter and Non Food Items Cluster partners: [Adventist Development and Relief Agency](#) | [Caritas Ukraine](#) | [Chesna i Svyata Kraina](#) | [CrimeaSOS](#) | [Danish Refugee Council](#) | [Donbas reconstruction and development agency](#) | [Dopomoha Dnipra](#) | [HIA Hungary](#) | [IOM](#) | [Mercy Corps](#) | [Ministry of Regional Development, Construction and Communal Living](#) | [Ministry of Social Policy](#) | [Norwegian Refugee Council](#) | [People in Need](#) | [Save the Children UK](#) | [Save Ukraine Organization](#) | [State Emergency Service](#) | [Ukrainian Red Cross Society](#) | [UNDP](#) | [Vostok SOS](#) | [World Jewish Relief](#)

Key Protection Cluster partners: [Danish Refugee Council](#) | [Crimea SOS](#) | [Crimean Diaspora](#) | [HelpAge](#) | [IOM](#) | [Norwegian Refugee Council](#) | [OHCHR \(HRMMU\)](#) | [OSCE](#) | [People in Need](#) | [Right to Protection](#) | [Save the Children](#) | [The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights](#) | [UNICEF](#) | [UNDP](#) | [UNFPA](#) | [Vostok SOS](#)

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

UNHCR is very grateful for the financial support provided by donors, particularly those with un-earmarked and broadly earmarked funds. UNHCR's total financial requirement in 2016 for the Ukraine situation is **US\$ 34.8 million**. This covers UNHCR's financial needs for providing protection and assistance to those displaced by the conflict inside Ukraine, as well as those externally displaced in the neighboring countries in Belarus, the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation. Contributions recorded so far represents **10 per cent** of the total financial requirements.

Donors who have contributed:

- Canada
- Estonia
- Japan
- Private Donors
- Sweden

Funding (in million USD)

A total of **3.6 million** has been contributed

	Funded	Gap	Total Requested
Ukraine	3.6		34
Belarus	0	0.1	
The Russian Federation	0	0.08	
Rep. of Moldova	0	0.05	
Regional Costs	0	0.05	

Contacts:

Nina Sorokopud, Public Information Officer, sorokopu@unhcr.org, Tel: +38 044 288-9710 ext.116

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