

UKRAINE

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

October 2016

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Situational overview:** During the reporting period, the security situation in eastern Ukraine remains volatile. The overall level of violence has decreased following a ceasefire on 1 September.
- **Protection concerns:** Freedom of movement across the line of contact remains a primary concern. The suspension of social and pension payments to IDPs until verification of their residential address takes place is an ongoing concern.
- **Legislation update:** The Council of Ministers adopted resolution no. 646, introducing procedures on the establishment, maintenance and access to a consolidated database of IDPs.
- **Assistance provided:** In September, UNHCR provided non-food items (NFIs) and emergency shelter assistance to more than 1,900 people.



To improve living conditions in Zhovanka, UNHCR and its partners advocated for, and facilitated the establishment of a bus service which now operates twice a week connecting the village with Bakhmut (former Artemivsk). 82-year old Oleksandr Ivanovich was one of the first passengers on the bus. “I went to buy food mostly. In Zhovanka there is no electricity, which means refrigerators don’t work. I have already forgotten how some foods tastes. It is great we have a bus now, and I want to say thank you to everyone who made it possible”. Head of the UNHCR Sub-Office in Dnipro, Mulusew Mamo, says “the bus project is in line with UNHCR’s protection mission to promote mobility and freedom of movement. It will reduce the degree of isolation experienced by those living in the area. It also helps reduce displacement, as difficult conditions incite people to leave their residence”. *Photo: UNHCR Ukraine/Donetsk region/September 2016*

KEY FIGURES

78 per cent

of people crossing the line of contact are concerned about long queues at checkpoints

27 per cent

of people crossing the line of contact are concerned shelling

39 per cent

Travel to visit relatives

18 per cent

are concerned about difficult conditions while queuing at checkpoints

15 per cent

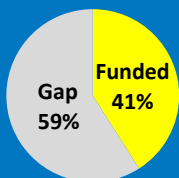
of people travelling by car were unable to cross due to long queues

Source: Foundation.101 crossing the line of contact survey (August 2016)

FUNDING

USD 42.3 million

requested for 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 near the line

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

Since a ceasefire was agreed on 1 September, the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) [reports](#) a decrease in the level of violence. There have been occasional flare-ups resulting in a volatile situation, with the majority of incidents occurring on the Donetsk sector of the line of contact, in the area of Donetsk airport, Yasynuvata and Avdiivka. The situation in Luhansk remained comparatively calm. The presence of explosive remnants of war (ERW) and landmines continues to pose a threat in areas near the line of contact.

Freedom of movement across the line of contact remains problematic, with long queues and long waiting times of up to 6-8 hours reported at crossing points on the line of contact. The waiting time at all operational checkpoints increased following a reduction of the operating hours on 1 September. Crossing points are now open from 0700 to 1830. Delays mainly occur at government-controlled checkpoints due to lack of capacity of control points. According to statistics provided by the State Border Guard Service (SBGS) on 18 September, an average of 25,500 people and 4,300 vehicles cross the four operational checkpoints in Donetsk region per day. This represents an increase compared to previous data received on 4 September, which showed daily average movements of 19,400 people and 3,800 vehicles across the line of contact. Lack of toilet facilities and access to drinking water remains a problem at the checkpoints. UNHCR partner CrimeaSOS reports an increase in the number of enquiries regarding the renewal of passes to cross the line of contact as passes issued following the launch of the current system in July 2015 begin to expire. The lack of available information from the Government has given rise to intermediary services assisting applicants for a fee. On 30 September, UNHCR together with its partner NGO Foundation.101 and government stakeholders presented monitoring results on the freedom of movement across the line of contact, emphasizing the need to facilitate and simplify procedures at the crossing points.

The suspension of social assistance and pension payments for IDPs pending verification of residential addresses remains a key protection concern. Suspension have affected some 500,000-600,000 IDPs, of which half have not yet had their entitlements reinstated. UNHCR's partners assist IDPs with advice on how to reinstate the payments. The re-registration process is more difficult for those living in non-government controlled areas due to the necessity to cross the line of contact and lack of available information, particularly for the elderly and other vulnerable groups. The procedure for reinstatement from the moment of application to the receipt of payments takes approximately one month.

The eviction of IDPs from collective centres is a worrying concern. On 29 September, 22 elderly IDPs, including two disabled persons, were evicted from the Kuaialnyk sanatorium in Odesa. A representative from Odesa regional administration stated that the management of the sanatorium had cut of utility supplies on 26 September due to non-payment of bills. The IDPs were sent to Donetsk city in the non-government controlled area of Donetsk region. At present, there are some 270 such collective centres housing over 10,000 people with around 700 IDPs at risk of eviction and further displacement. While collective centre accommodation is only intended as a temporary solution, many IDPs have remained in them for extended periods. UNHCR is advocating for sustainable housing solutions for these IDPs.

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 1,481,377, with the majority going to the Russian Federation (1,154,212) and Belarus (148,549). In other neighbouring countries, 286 Ukrainians sought asylum in Moldova, 80 in Romania, 71 in Hungary and 26 in Slovakia. As of 1 September, since the beginning of the crisis, in the top five receiving countries of the European Union there were 7,967 applications for international protection in Germany, 7,267 in Italy, 5,423 in Poland, 3,176 in France and 2,742 in Sweden.

The OSCE Observer Mission monitoring the Gukovo and Donetsk checkpoints on the Russia-Ukraine border reported little change to movement compared to the previous reporting period. The most recent weekly report showed that that daily average cross-border traffic slightly decreased at both checkpoints, from 10,915 to 10,396 crossings per day. There was a daily average net flow of 187 people leaving Ukraine for the Russian Federation, continuing recent trends of more exits to Russia.

Data source: Respective national asylum authorities

Achievements



Protection Cluster

- The Protection Cluster led by UNHCR, gave a presentation on Key Protection Challenges at the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) retreat to ensure that protection concerns are central to the humanitarian planning process for 2017. The Cluster worked closely with REACH team members to analyse data and develop key protection messages for the inter-agency vulnerability assessment (IAVA) report in preparation for the HCT retreat.
- A [map](#) has been developed by the Cluster showing mobile teams providing free legal assistance to IDPs and the conflict affected population by region.
- Cluster partners sent a letter to the Government asking that it amend legislation regulating the procedures for the reinstatement and receipt of social benefits and payments to make it easier for IDPs to access these benefits.
- The Cluster assisted with the translation of the Minimum Standards on Age and Disability Inclusion into Ukrainian and Russian, which was undertaken by HelpAge International.
- The Protection Cluster participated in the internal UNHCR IDP meeting, as well as in the Global Protection Cluster annual retreat.

Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- On 22 September, the Council of Ministers adopted resolution no. 646 “*On approval of establishment, maintenance and access to the consolidated information database of IDPs*”. The resolution introduces procedures on the establishment, maintenance and access to a consolidated database of IDPs for the use of central authorities, Departments of Social Protection, IDPs or their legal representatives, NGOs and charitable organizations assisting IDPs. Implementation of the resolution will facilitate IDP registration procedures and identification of their needs and their intentions. The database will be administered by the Ministry of Social Policy (MoSP). International organizations are not specifically mentioned as entities allowed database access, though UNHCR may also request information regarding general database statistics. NGOs will not be able to access personal data of IDPs, which may restrict use of the database to assist the delivery of assistance. However, information available from the database may aid the understanding of regional needs. Central authorities, including the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs (MTOT-IDP), may have access to the database upon written request.
- During the reporting period, in the government controlled area of Donetsk region, UNHCR partner Stantsia Kharkiv provided 942 general information consultations, 204 legal consultations, 277 psychosocial consultations, social consultations were provided to 344 people and employment consultations to 63 people. UNHCR partner Slavic Heart provided information assistance to 255 people, 143 legal consultations, 196 psychosocial consultations, 238 social consultations and 248 employment consultations. Proliska provided 1,718 information consultations and assisted 107 people with individual case management. In all cases, the majority (between 67-91 per cent) of consultations were provided to women. Main concerns raised included legislation relating to IDPs, humanitarian assistance, housing, employment, winterization, reinstatement of social assistance, civil documentation, crossing the line of contact, family issues, anxiety and depression. In the government controlled area of Luhansk region, the NRC ICLA team provided information consultations to 245 people, legal counselling to 89 people and legal assistance to 8 people during the first half of September.
- In central and western Ukraine, UNHCR partner CrimeaSOS provided 624 legal consultations. Main concerns included the suspension of social payments and financial assistance for IDPs, crossing the line of contact and the administrative border with Crimea and civil documentation.
- In the non-government controlled area of Donetsk, UNHCR partner Maximal provided legal assistance to 1,420 people. The majority of consultations related to civil documentation and property. PiN began a community-based project to renovate a community centre for elderly people in Donetsk city. In the non-government controlled area of Luhansk, UNHCR Protection Unit provided 35 legal consultations (primary) and 25 telephone consultations.

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>

Shelter and Non-food Items (NFIs)

Emergency Shelter and NFIs Cluster

- Members of the Shelter Cluster, led by UNHCR and co-chaired by People in Need (PiN), provided light repairs for 318 homes, medium repairs for 137 homes and heavy repairs for 21 homes. 270 homes received emergency repairs.
- Guidelines on winterization have been produced focusing on the key priorities in each area of operation including northern Donetsk and Luhansk, southern Donetsk and non-government controlled areas of Donetsk Luhansk. The recommendations are structured around four key areas including personal insulation, heating, stoves and fuel, preparing shelters for winter, communal facilities and infrastructure. A map illustrating winterization coverage by cluster partners has also been produced. The Cluster has also liaised with Donetsk and Luhansk regional administrations to complement fuel and heating subsidies provided to families.
- The Cluster continued to analyze damage reports provided by Luhansk Regional Administration and partners to assess the affected population, progress of repairs and presence of secondary damage due to the enduring nature of the conflict. Three partners including DRC, NRC and PiN have finalized the selection of 120 homes for structural repairs supported by UNHCR.
- Cluster partners, regional and municipal authorities are discussing the challenges related to providing social housing for the most vulnerable deprived of housing due to the Ukrainian conflict. It is planned to hold a special session of the Structural Repairs Technical Working Group on 25 October.

Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- During the reporting period, UNHCR NFIs and shelter materials were provided to over 1,900 people. In the government controlled area of Donetsk, UNHCR partner ADRA provided light and medium shelter assistance to 159 households. UNHCR partner People in Need (PiN) provided shelter assistance to 28 households in the area. NGO Vozrozhdenie distributed UNHCR NFIs to 29 families living in Avdeevka, near the line of contact. DRC conducted light and medium shelter repairs with UNHCR-provided materials for 156 households near the line of contact. In the government-controlled area of Luhansk, NRC completed repairs to 10 homes, while repairs to 45 homes are ongoing with materials provided by UNHCR. In the non-government controlled area of Donetsk, UNHCR partners DDC and Maximal distributed emergency shelter materials in areas near the line of contact. PiN completed emergency, light, medium and heavy repairs to 384 homes. In the non-government controlled area of Luhansk region, UNHCR provided shelter materials to 79 homes in Heorhiivka, 30 homes in Velyka Verhunka and 31 homes in Novosvetlovka.

Anzhela's mother goes to get water from a neighbour. Their home in Novosvetlovka, in the non-government controlled area of Luhansk region, was severely damaged during hostilities in 2014 in eastern Ukraine. Damage to utility infrastructure in conflict-affected areas is an ongoing problem as fighting continues. At the end of September, water supplies from government-controlled areas to non-government controlled areas were reportedly cut due to the non-payment of bills further exacerbating an already difficult situation affecting some 600,000 people. *Photo: UNHCR/Luhansk region/Petr Shelomovskiy/September 2016*



Mural to symbolize cooperation between IDPs and host community

The UNHCR Sub-office in Dnipro supported the creation of a mural symbolizing support and cooperation between internally displaced people and the local community. The picture shows a displaced girl sitting on an abandoned house. Below the mural, there is a quote by German writer Christian Morgenstern: “Home is not where you live, but where they understand you”. The mural, which measures 15 meters in height, was painted by the local artist collective Zdes Roy. The official opening of the mural took place on 21 September, the International Day of Peace. As of September 2016, Dnipro region hosted some 75,578 IDPs according to the statistics provided by the Ministry of Social Policy. *Photo: UNHCR Ukraine/Dnipro/Oleksandra Gaskevych/September 2016*



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 16 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 leads the Protection Cluster and co-chairs the Shelter and Non-food Item Cluster together with People in Need.

UNHCR implementing partners (IDP operation): [Adventist Development and Relief Agency](#) | [CrimeaSOS](#) | [Danish Refugee Council](#) | [Desyataya Kvitnya](#) | [Dopomoha Dnipra](#) | [Donbass Development Centre](#) | [Foundation.101](#) | [HelpAge International](#) | [Most](#) | [Maximal](#) | [Norwegian Refugee Council](#) | [People in Need](#) | [Proliska](#) | [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](#) | [Dopomoha Dnipra](#) | [HIA Hungary](#) | [IOM](#) | [Mercy Corps](#) | [Ministry of Regional Development, Building and Housing](#) | [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](#) | [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 Ukraine is **US\$ 42.3 million**. This covers UNHCR’s financial needs including special operations 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 **41 per cent** of the total financial requirements.

Donors who have contributed:

- Canada
- Estonia
- European Union
- Germany
- IOM
- Japan
- Private Donors
- Russian Federation
- Sweden
- United States of America

Funding (in million USD)

A total of **17.1 million** has been contributed

	Funded	Gap	Total Requested
Ukraine	17.1	25.2	42
Belarus	0	0.1	0.1
The Russian Federation	0	0.08	0.08
Rep. of Moldova	0	0.05	0.05
Regional Costs	0	0.05	0.05

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