

## UKRAINE

### UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

September 2016

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- **Situational overview:** During the reporting period, the security situation in eastern Ukraine remains volatile and tense. There was a significant reduction in ceasefire violations 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.
- **Assistance provided:** In August, UNHCR provided non-food items (NFIs) and emergency shelter assistance to more than 3,800 people.



Photo: UNHCR Ukraine/M.Yurenev/Donetsk region/ July 2016.

According to the [UNHCR checkpoint survey](#) from July, 23.2 per cent of people crossing the line of contact were extremely vulnerable individuals. These include persons with disabilities, elderly above the age of 65, persons with an elevated medical condition, and women at risk. Long lines remain the largest concern of people crossing the line of contact. Compared to previous surveys, the number of those concerned about shelling and shooting has decreased, but the number of people concerned about long lines and a lack of facilities for waiting has nearly doubled.

UNHCR conducts the checkpoint survey on a rolling basis with implementing partner *Foundation.101* at all operational checkpoints to further understand protection risks and, in some cases, intentions to return.

Based on the results from the last round of the survey UNHCR installed weather shelters to protect people from rain and heat at all operational crossing points in eastern Ukraine.

#### KEY FIGURES

**73.6 per cent**

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

**61 per cent**

cross by private cars

**46.2 per cent**

are aged 40-65

**40 per cent**

travel to visit relatives they lived with before the conflict

**55.1 per cent**

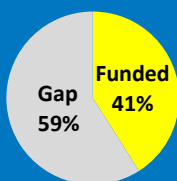
cross the line for stays lasting one week

Source: UNHCR crossing the line of contact survey (July 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 of contact and in the non-government controlled area.

## UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

### Operational Context

The security situation in eastern Ukraine remains volatile and unstable. The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission [reported](#) an increase in the number of violations of the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements in August. Fighting concentrated on the line of contact in Donetsk region in the areas of Horlivka and Pikuzy and Shchastia, as well as in the area of Shyrokyne, east of Mariupol. A new ceasefire was announced on 1 September to coincide with the new school year leading to a significant reduction of reported ceasefire violations. The presence of explosive remnants of war (ERW) and landmines continues to cause civilian fatalities in areas near the line of contact.

Freedom of movement of people across the line of contact remains restricted, with long queues observed at checkpoints. Those crossing the line of contact face risks to personal safety due to fighting in proximity to the checkpoints. The long queues mean that people spend many hours waiting to cross, sometimes waiting overnight as the checkpoints only operate during daylight hours. Limited shelter and sanitation facilities at checkpoints add to the difficulty of crossing the line of contact. The checkpoint at Mariinka was closed on 25-26 August due to shelling and shooting in the area. The checkpoint at Zolote-4 remains closed since 31 March; the only open crossing in Luhansk region is a pedestrian crossing at Stanitsya Luhanska. In order to alleviate some of the suffering of those waiting to cross the line of contact, UNHCR has installed weather shelters at checkpoints on the line of contact at Hnutove, Mariinka, Novotroitske and Stanytsia Luhanska, assisting some 10,000 people per day. UNHCR is in the process of constructing more shelters to meet demand.

The suspension of social assistance and pension payments for IDPs pending verification of residential addresses remains a key protection concern. 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.

Humanitarian access to the non-government controlled area of Donetsk remains limited for all UN agencies and other international organizations pending "registration" with *de facto* authorities. In the non-government controlled area of Donetsk region, UNHCR implements its activities through NGO partners, conducting protection monitoring and implementing community-based projects. In the non-government controlled area of Luhansk, UNHCR's "registration" with *de facto* authorities was renewed on 17 August after the previous "registration" expired on 23 April. UNHCR continues to implement its programmes and to conduct protection monitoring activities as well as damage assessments and the distribution of non-food items (NFI) and shelter materials to the affected population.

A shortage of livelihoods and employment opportunities and the general economic situation faced by Ukraine has particularly affected the displaced, forcing many to live in inadequate housing such as collective centres and other temporary accommodation. At present, there are 271 such collective centres housing over 10,000 people. Other IDPs stay with host families, volunteers and in private accommodation, though affordable private accommodation is often in poor condition. The lack of livelihoods and adequate housing greatly restrict the possibility to find lasting solutions.

### 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 slightly increased movement compared to the previous reporting period. The most recent weekly report showed that that daily average cross-border traffic decreased at both checkpoints, from 12,542 to 10,410 crossings per day, representing a significant decrease in movement compared to previous weeks. There was a daily average net flow of 210 people leaving Ukraine for the Russian Federation, reversing recent trends of more entries to Ukraine.

*Data source: Respective national asylum authorities*

## Achievements



### Protection Cluster

- The Protection Cluster led by UNHCR, prepared a [guidance note on peacebuilding and reconciliation in Ukraine \[PDF\]](#). The guidance note has been shared with the Ministry of Temporary Occupied Territories and IDPs. The Ministry emphasized that it would like peacebuilding and reconciliation to be mainstreamed into the work of humanitarian organizations and that reconciliation is part of the mandate of the Ministry.
- The Cluster has finalized the transition strategy and presented it to the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) at the HCT retreat. The transition strategy outlines a draft plan for the eventual handover of coordination responsibilities from the Protection Cluster to a national entity, most probably the newly created Ministry for Temporary Occupied Territories and IDPs. Key components of the transition strategy include working more closely with the newly created Ministry, which has started to attend Protection Cluster meetings and to engage in capacity building of the new Ministry and its staff. The transition strategy also outlines existing protection needs, benchmarks for handover, as well as an action plan to ensure responsible transitioning

### Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- The suspension of social assistance payments and pensions to IDPs remains a primary protection concern. Local Department of Social Policy (DoSP) offices lack the resources necessary to conduct the checks required by legislation relating to the suspension of payments. In accordance with the procedure on the assignment and renewal of social benefits for IDPs, approved by Council of Ministers resolution no. 365, local DoSP offices continue to inspect IDPs' actual place of residence. These inspections are carried out by working groups consisting of staff from the DoSP, the Pension Fund, the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), the Ministry of the Interior (MoI), the State Migration Service (SMS) and the State Fiscal Service (SFS). Working groups draft inspection reports, which are reviewed by the Commission on benefits renewal. The shortage of DoSP employees and transportation makes it difficult to check the residence of IDPs. Due to the slow pace of inspection visits, it was announced that the number of DoSP monitoring staff would be increased in some areas. Monitoring by UNHCR's partner *The Right to Protection* (R2P) indicates that local DoSP offices no longer request a State Migration Service stamp on IDP certificates. To renew old certificates, IDPs must now submit a written request to the DoSP. The newly issued certificates do not have a validity period. Local DoSP offices had previously interpreted legislation on IDP certificates in different ways, leading to confusion and causing additional obstacles for IDPs.
- During the reporting period, UNHCR partner *Stantsia Kharkiv* provided 1,091 general consultations, 412 legal consultations and 448 psychosocial consultations. Social counsellors provided support to 555 people and employment support to 55 people. UNHCR partner Slavic Heart provided information assistance to 454 people, 412 legal consultations, 191 psychosocial consultations, 53 social consultations and 128 employment consultations. *Proliska* provided 1,154 information consultations and assisted 171 people with individual case management. In August, *CrimeaSOS* provided 491 legal consultations, 157 secondary consultations and assisted in 30 court cases. In August, the *Norwegian Refugee Council* (NRC) provided 1,916 information consultations, 1,255 legal consultations and legal assistance to 39 persons. In July, *R2P* provided 777 consultations and other legal aid interventions to help people obtain welfare benefits and pensions, 242 to get IDP targeted welfare payments and 223 to clarify the IDP registration procedure. Overall, the majority 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, social assistance, renewal of permits to cross the line of contact, children, loss of contact with relatives, stress and anxiety.

<sup>1</sup> [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

- The Shelter Cluster led by UNHCR and co-chaired by *People in Need* (PiN), has initiated planning and preparation for winterization 2016-2017. The Cluster updated and published [Winterization Guidelines \[PDF\]](#). Partners in government-controlled areas of northern Donbas have favored cash and voucher approaches over NFIs to ensure joint humanitarian and recovery efforts.
- Following an increase in evictions or threats of evictions at seven collective centres, including centres in Kyiv, Zhytomyr, Odesa, Kharkiv and in the government-controlled area of Donetsk region, the *Joint IDP Profiling Service* (JIPS) was invited to Ukraine to assist the Cluster, UNHCR and its partners. The scoping mission, which occurred between 6-12 July, focused on developing an appropriate methodology to analyze the situation of IDPs to better facilitate the development of durable solutions and advocacy for IDPs found in urban contexts of displacement.
- For the period of 9 July – 12 August, Cluster partners have conducted 202 acute emergency repairs, 685 light repairs and 21 medium repairs. Heavy repairs and reconstruction is ongoing.

### Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- During the reporting period, over 3,800 people received UNHCR NFI and shelter materials. In the government-controlled area of northern Donetsk, UNHCR partner *ADRA* provided light and medium shelter assistance to 12 households while UNHCR partner *PiN* provided shelter assistance to 28 households in the area. In the government controlled area of Luhansk region, *NRC* is conducting light and medium shelter repairs to 813 homes and heavy repairs to a further 44 homes. In the non-government controlled area of Donetsk, *PiN* completed 204 emergency repairs, 148 light and medium repairs, and 9 heavy repairs to homes. UNHCR partners *Maximal* and *DDC* distributed 14,300 m<sup>2</sup> of tarpaulin to 573 households in Donetsk city and to areas near the line of contact. In the non-government controlled area of Luhansk, a construction company contracted by UNHCR completed repairs to 100 houses in the villages of Khryashchuvate, Heorhiivka, Novosvitlivka and Krasnyi Yar. UNHCR also distributed shelter materials to a further 33 homes in Heorhiivka.



Photos: UNHCR Ukraine/N. Sorokopud/Donetsk region/September 2016

UNHCR together with partner NGO *People in Need* (PIN) provides heavy repairs to damaged houses in the outskirts of the city of Donetsk.

On 18 August, 11 UNHCR trucks reached non-government controlled areas (NGCA) in Donetsk region bringing 150 tons of shelter materials and NFIs for partner NGO PiN. This delivery, facilitated by Logistic cluster led by World Food Programme, assisted more than 200 households with shelter repairs in conflict-affected towns, including Donetsk, Horlivka, Debaltseve, Dokuchayivsk and Makiivka. In addition, over 500 vulnerable families will receive basic relief items, including bedding, blankets, kitchen sets, jerry cans and buckets.

This is the fourth joint UNHCR/PiN convoy since the beginning of 2016. In total, 45 trucks have been delivered to Donetsk NGCA this year. As of August 2016, some 1.100 households have been already assisted with acute, light, medium, and heavy shelter repairs.



## 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 15 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](#) | [Danish Refugee Council](#) | [Desyataya Kvitnya](#) | [Dopomoha Dnipro](#) | [Donbass Development Centre](#) | [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 Dnipro](#) | [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: Funding (in million USD)

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

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

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



Photo: UNHCR Ukraine/Nikita Yurenev/Kyiv region/August 2016

### Recreation programmes for displaced persons with disabilities

Despite her disability, 15-year-old Vlada is known as a talented singer among peers. The young artist gladly performed small concerts for visitors and guests of the summer camp for displaced persons with disabilities and their families.

The camp, organized by UNHCR in August 2016 in the Kyiv region, hosted 26 displaced persons with disabilities from eastern Ukraine at a recreation facility equipped for people with special needs. The camp ran inclusive recreational programs, bringing together children and adults with disabilities with regular visitors

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#### Links:

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