

## UKRAINE

### UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

2-22 April 2016

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- **Situational overview:** During the reporting period, the security situation in eastern Ukraine has deteriorated. The situation throughout eastern Ukraine is volatile and tense.
- **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 address is verified remains a key concern.
- **Legislation update:** The Government adopted a resolution with 74 recommendations to the President of Ukraine, Parliament and its committees, the Cabinet of Ministers, ministries and departments, the National Bank and local self-governing bodies on improving legislative support and practical assistance to IDPs.
- **Assistance provided:** Since 2 April, UNHCR provided non-food items (NFIs) and emergency shelter assistance to more than 3,000 people.



On April 12, a UNHCR project to improve conditions at the local Oncology Center has been implemented in Mariupol. Mariupol Oncology Center is the only functional institution of its kind in the government controlled area of Donetsk region. According to hospital statistics, 18,790 patients were treated in 2015, out of which 2,878 were IDPs. These figures do not include conflict affected people living in the near the line of contact and communities neighbouring Mariupol, which are also served by the hospital. UNHCR's assistance included the refurbishment of medical wards (providing building materials for repair) and the purchase of additional equipment for patients. *Photo: UNHCR Ukraine/A.Shcherbyna*

#### KEY FIGURES

**74.8 per cent**

of people crossing the line of contact are concerned about insecurity

**58 per cent**

cross by private cars

**57.2 per cent**

are aged 40-65

**54 per cent**

travel to visit relatives

**46 per cent**

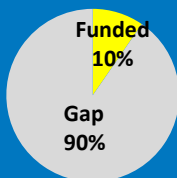
cross the line of contact every month

*Source: UNHCR crossing the line of contact survey*

#### 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

During the reporting period, the security situation in eastern Ukraine has deteriorated. The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission [reports](#) a high number of ceasefire violations. Fighting remains concentrated on the line of contact in Donetsk region between Avdiivka and Yasynuvata, Donetsk airport, Horlivka and in the area of Svitlodarsk. Conditions also deteriorated in Luhansk region leading to the closure of the only crossing point on the line of contact in the region at Stanytsia Luhanska, greatly restricting freedom of movement in the area.

Long queues and consequently long waiting times were observed at most checkpoints on the line of contact. Queues of more than 300 vehicles have been observed during the reporting period. Checkpoints lack the capacity to manage the number of people wishing to cross and increased traffic is expected as weather conditions improve. The number of people crossing the contact line increased during March, possibly due to the suspension of social payments and pensions. The State Border Guard Service indicated that the number of people crossing the line of contact reached 575,606 people in March compared to 429,061 in February.

The suspension of social assistance and pension payments pending verification of places of residence, initiated by the Ministry of Social Policy in February, remains a key issue for IDPs as most of them depend on the payments as their only means of subsistence. The suspension particularly affects the most vulnerable, such as the elderly and disabled, who may face difficulties reaching offices of the Department of Social Protection to confirm their residence. Meanwhile, the procedure for the verification of addresses remains unclear.

Access to social assistance by IDPs has been further complicated due to amendments to the Law on Rights and Freedoms of IDPs which came into effect on 13 January, the State Migration Service (SMS) is no longer required to stamp IDPs certificates. This has caused additional obstacles to IDPs receiving their entitlements due to varying interpretation and implementation of the amendments by each government authority. The Ministry of Social Protection Services continues to require stamps on IDP certificates in some regions, while the SMS does not stamp certificates. Following a decision of the Cabinet of Ministers on 22 February, SMS is required to resume stamping IDP certificates. Practice continues to vary leading to confusion among authorities and IDPs.

Humanitarian access to non-government controlled Donetsk remains limited for UN agencies while the issue of “registration” is still pending. UNHCR continues to conduct activities through partners, including monitoring, implementation of small-scale community based projects and Quick Impact Projects (QIP). Access to the area near the line of contact in non-government controlled Luhansk remains particularly difficult.

On 14 April, a new Government was announced which included the creation of the Ministry for Temporary Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons of Ukraine. UNHCR welcomes this development and hopes that it will improve coordination with relevant state authorities and other stakeholders, communication of strategies, programs and progress to the general public.

### 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 1,363,833, with the majority going to the Russian Federation (1,092,212) and Belarus (130,021).

The OSCE Observer Mission monitoring the Gukovo and Donetsk checkpoints on the Russia-Ukraine border inform that total average cross-border traffic increased at both checkpoints during the latest reporting period, from 10,210 to 10,451 crossings per day. There was a daily average net flow of 135 people entering Ukraine from the Russian Federation. This continues the trend of recent weeks of increased total crossings and increased entries to Ukraine.

As of 22 April, since the beginning of the crisis, in the top five receiving countries in the European Union and in neighbouring countries there were 6,540 applications for international protection in Germany, 6,522 in Italy, 4,880 in Poland, 2,687 in France, 2,532 in Sweden, 261 in Moldova, 76 in Romania, 67 in Hungary and 26 in Slovakia according to government sources in receiving countries.

## Achievements



Protection<sup>1</sup>

### Protection Cluster

- The Protection Cluster led by UNHCR, advocated to stop the arbitrary suspension of social payments and benefits to IDPs, which has begun in five eastern regions and will be undertaken throughout Ukraine, as well as to de-link social payments and pensions from IDP registration. This included a presentation at the General Humanitarian Coordination meeting and a briefing to the Humanitarian Coordinator on the impact of the suspension on the most vulnerable IDPs. The procedure of verification and renewal is applied inconsistently in different regions, the process is unclear and time consuming, impacting disproportionately on those with limited mobility, including the elderly, the disabled and single-headed households. As a result of the suspension, many IDPs face a serious risk of destitution, being evicted for not being able to pay rent and unable to afford basic necessities such as food and medicine.
- The Cluster delivered a training on protection mainstreaming for humanitarian organizations working in northern Donetsk. Participants represented local and international NGOs as well as UN agencies and local authorities.
- The Cluster undertook protection monitoring visits in Slovyansk and Kramatorsk, speaking with IDPs facing eviction from collective centers. The Protection and Shelter and NFI Clusters met with the mayor of Slovyansk as well as local authorities to find a durable housing solution for the IDPs facing eviction.
- Protection coordination meetings took place in Slovyansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kharkiv. Issues related to lack of proper and harmonized implementation of recent legislation, as well as the impact of the suspension of social benefits on displaced populations were discussed. Protection partners emphasized the need to continue advocacy efforts at the central level in order to address the negative impact of legislative changes on IDPs.

### Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- On 31 March, Parliament adopted Resolution no. 4273 “On recommendations of the Parliament hearings: ‘observance of rights of IDPs and nationals residing in the temporarily occupied territory, non-government controlled areas and the ‘Anti-terrorist Operation’ area’”. The resolution contains 74 recommendations to the President of Ukraine, Parliament and its committees, the Cabinet of Ministers, ministries and departments, the National Bank and local self-governing bodies on improving legislative support and practical assistance to IDPs. The resolution recommends that the President consider holding a meeting of the Security and Defense Council on IDPs and nationals residing in the temporarily occupied territory and the non-government controlled area (NGCA) with the participation of NGOs (representing IDPs). It also recommends that Parliament urgently consider the list of 27 registered draft laws on IDPs and residents of the NGCA, including draft Law no. 4257, “On amendments to the Law of Ukraine ‘On Compulsory State Pension Insurance’ on the right to a pension for citizens residing in non-government controlled areas. The resolution recommends that Parliamentary Committees consider a list of 51 registered draft laws pending clearance and that the Council of Ministers submit proposals to Parliament amending the law on the 2016 state budget to ensure financing of several initiatives supporting IDPs. These include a comprehensive state programme for support, social adaptation and reintegration of internally displaced people in other regions of Ukraine until 2017; an action plan operationalizing the National Human Rights Strategy priority areas until 2020; the creation of a central executive agency for IDPs; and the development of procedures for the restoration of destroyed and damaged houses located in government controlled areas of the “ATO”.
- During the reporting period, UNHCR partner Stantsia Kharkiv provided 1,146 general consultations, 233 legal consultations and 154 psychosocial consultations. UNHCR partner Slavic Heart provided 1,358 general consultations, 943 legal consultations and 490 psychosocial consultations. Around 75 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 documentation, medical assistance, IDP rights, legislation, crossing the line of contact and the Crimean administrative border, housing, land and property, employment and children. Stantsia Kharkiv also

<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>



provided assistance to several de facto stateless people, including a man with no identification except a Soviet passport and a Roma lady released from prison on the non-government controlled area of Luhansk with no documents. In March, UNHCR partner CrimeaSOS provided consultations to 856 people. Main concerns were civil documentation, renewal of IDP registration, property, business registration and crossing the Crimean administrative border. During the same period, partner NGO Desyataya Kvitnya provided consultations to 308 people. In the non-government controlled area, UNHCR partner NGO Maximal provided legal consultations to 70 people mostly relating to application for social assistance.

## Shelter and Non-food Items (NFIs)

### Emergency Shelter and NFIs Cluster

- On 2-15 April, the Shelter Cluster led by UNHCR and co-chaired by People in Need (PiN), finalized the [Guidelines on Structural Repairs and Reconstruction \[pdf\]](#) in order to provide recommendations to the humanitarian community. In partnership with Donetsk and Luhansk administrations in the government controlled areas, the Cluster team collected over 11,000 individual addresses of damaged or destroyed houses and began to systematically track the implementation of repairs by partners. With the input of ADRA, Luxembourg Red Cross, Mercy Corps, NRC and UNHCR, over 15,000 addresses are now registered. The initiative will be extended to other partners. The Cluster team will provide feedback for municipalities in order to involve them in implementation and inform them of existing gaps.
- On 13 April, the Cluster discussed the issue of collective centers. With the arrival of spring, the moratorium on eviction was lifted and the decommissioning of collective centers begun, accelerating the need to find durable solutions for IDPs who are unable to return to their place of origin.

### Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- During the reporting period, the UNHCR NFI and shelter materials were provided to some 3,000 people. The UNHCR Field Office in Kharkiv provided some 4,000 NFIs to 2,085 people in the government controlled area of northern Donetsk. Mariupol Field Office provided 70 sleeping bags to a school in Mariinka to be used in the school bomb shelter in case of shelling. 73 sleeping bags were provided by UNHCR to the NGO Federation of Greek Communities in Ukraine for distribution to schools in Chermalyk, Granitne and Starohnativka to equip their bomb shelters.
- In non-government controlled Luhansk, UNHCR distributed jackets and bedding sets to 751 most vulnerable inhabitants of six villages in coordination with local authorities. Winter assistance is being finalized in Donetsk following delays in implementation due to restrictions imposed by the de facto authorities. So far, NFIs have been provided to 4,674 households out of a targeted 5,000 households (93 per cent implementation).

In April, a new center providing support to families, the elderly and women was opened in Svyatohirsk. UNHCR provided UAH 4 million (USD 157,800) to partner charity foundation Slavic Heart to support IDPs and host communities in northern Donetsk. Through the agreement with UNHCR, the centre provides skills and vocational training, grants for community initiatives, targeted support to vulnerable people, as well as legal and psychosocial consultations. Mobile teams linked to the centre provide similar services throughout the region. (Photo: Slovyanske Sertse)



## Books collected for IDPs at the International 'Book Arsenal' Festival

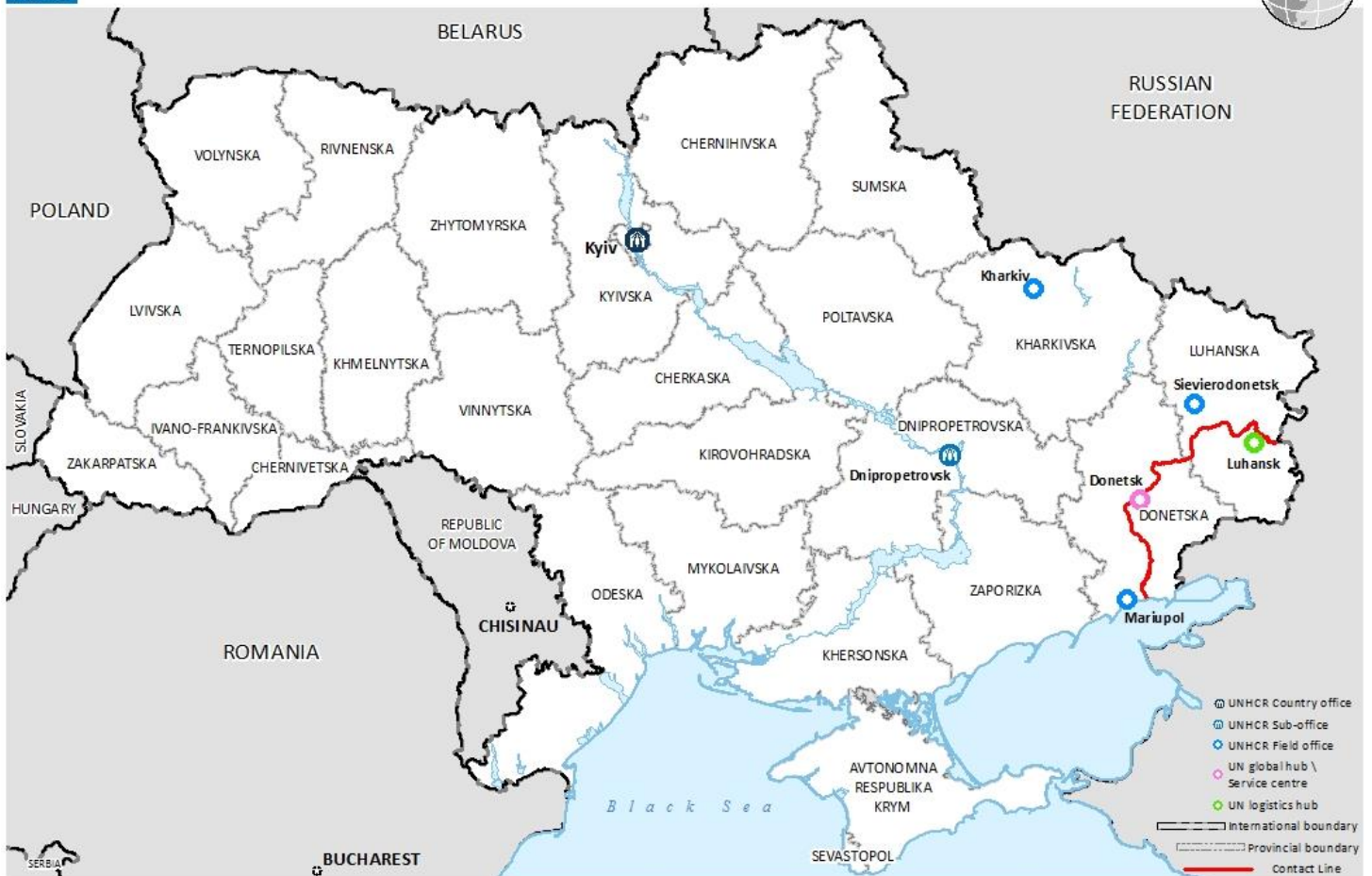
UNHCR together with the International 'Book Arsenal' Festival organized the Second Charity Book Drive for displaced people and communities in eastern Ukraine. The book drive took place in the framework of the largest book industry fair in Ukraine on 20-24 April 2016 as part of the Mystetskiy Arsenal Charity Project. This year visitors to the book festival and Kyiv residents were invited to not only donate a book but also send a symbolic "Card to the East" with warm words of support to those in need of assistance.

Photo: UNHCR Ukraine/A.Davydenko



### Ukraine: UNHCR presence

UNHCR - Kyiv



Date: 18 Jan 2016

Source: UNHCR

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

UNHCR\_presence\_01.2016\_v1a

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## Working in partnership

On 19 April, UNHCR in conjunction with the NGO Forum facilitated a briefing and discussion with Community-based Organizations (CBOs) from eastern Ukraine, which were involved in drafting recommendations of the CBO Forum which took place in December 2015 in Kharkiv. Counterparts from the Government of Ukraine, embassies, humanitarian and development partners present discussed the recommendations as well as the role, needs, and future of civil society in Ukraine. The recommendations document is available in [English \[pdf\]](#) and [Ukrainian \[pdf\]](#).

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](#) | [Desyataya 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 Dnipro](#) | [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	

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