

UKRAINE SITUATION

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

4 August – 7 September 2015

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Situational overview:** Following a period of flux in the conflict situation, fighting in eastern Ukraine has noticeably de-escalated following a ceasefire implemented on 1 September, though the situation remains tense.
- **Protection concerns:** Freedom of movement across the line of contact remains a primary concern. Access to civil documentation, such as passports and birth certificates is an ongoing problem for those in the non-government controlled area.
- **Legislation update:** On 25 August, the President of Ukraine signed a adopting the National Human Rights Strategy. The document outlines the state's imperatives in human rights protection and provides a roadmap through to 2020.
- **Assistance provided:** On 28 and 29 August, UNHCR trucks delivered 260 tonnes of humanitarian assistance for distribution to over 5,000 families living in the non-government controlled area. Since 3 August, UNHCR provided non-food items (NFIs) and emergency shelter assistance to more than 4,900 people in government controlled areas. In non-government controlled areas, UNHCR provided NFI and shelter assistance to some 2,100 people.



During the last weekend of August, UNHCR managed to deliver humanitarian aid to the non-government controlled area for the first time in several weeks. 13 UNHCR trucks carrying shelter materials and basic relief items travelled with support from WFP and partners to the city of Horlivka, one of the most damaged towns in Donetsk region. Since the start of the conflict in 2014, around 40 per cent of the population of Horlivka has left with only 150,000 out of 250,000 people remaining. According to local authorities, over 260 apartment buildings were damaged, as well as 17 hospitals and 82 schools and kindergartens. Over 1,200 private houses were destroyed by shelling and many homes have been left without roofs, windows or walls. Photo: UNHCR/V. Stetsenko

KEY FIGURES

1,460,000

registered Internally Displaced People (IDPs) including:

857,600

pensioners

346,800

working age

184,900

children

60,700

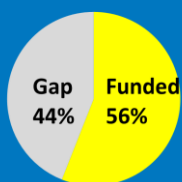
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Source: Ministry of Social Policy, Ukraine

FUNDING

USD 41.5 million

requested for the operation in 2015



PRIORITIES

- As part of the UN Humanitarian Response Plan, to lead protection, shelter and NFI clusters to help those forcibly displaced from their homes.
- Support Government in efforts to establish a central authority to deal with IDPs.
- Work with the Government to improve registration system, specifically procedures relating to pensioners and access to social assistance.
- Promote freedom of movement and humanitarian access.

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

Following a period of flux in the conflict situation, fighting in eastern Ukraine has noticeably de-escalated following an agreement brokered during talks of the Trilateral Contact Group's working group on security on 26 August, where it was agreed to implement a new ceasefire as of 1 September. The situation remains tense and the fragility of the ceasefire has already been tested by a few reports of sporadic small arms and mortar fire. Freedom of movement across the line of contact between the non-government and government controlled area remains restricted due to security measures and the continued government blockade against the non-government controlled area.

As of 7 September there were **1,460,000** internally displaced people (IDPs) registered by the Ministry of Social Policy, representing an increase of 58,900 since 3 August. This number is broadly in line with previous figures, indicating little change of conditions in the eastern conflict area and people seek to escape the difficulties there.

On 1 September, students throughout Ukraine returned to school and university. Those who are IDPs and those remaining in the non-government controlled area face particular challenges. De facto authorities in the non-government controlled area announced that beginning this academic year, the Ukrainian curriculum will be replaced by a system based on the Russian curriculum and will include a course on military training. The number of students enrolled in schools in the non-government controlled area is greatly reduced this year, with OSCE reporting between 50 and 90 per cent fewer students enrolling compared to before the conflict. Some schools close to the line of contact remain closed due to cut utility supplies while others face extensive repairs to damage caused by shelling.

IDP students in the government controlled area face a lack of available places in schools. Some will face additional problems following the implementation of Ministry of Education Decree no. 762 on the transfer of school students which entered into force on 21 August stipulating that while junior school students without academic records may transfer to the next year of the education system, 9th and 11th graders missing academic records will have to repeat the previous year. IDP students have also faced discrimination at school due to their status as displaced.

Humanitarian access to the non-government controlled area remains restricted. De facto authorities in the non-government controlled area have greatly constrained the operations of humanitarian agencies, including UNHCR. While some UNHCR humanitarian assistance was delivered to the non-government controlled area, much more is needed. The opening and closure of checkpoints is unpredictable. While some checkpoints are open to pedestrians and cars, no checkpoints on the line of contact are open for the transit of goods and all access points across the line of contact in Luhansk region remain closed, greatly limiting the delivery of much needed humanitarian aid to non-government controlled areas.

Long-term housing solutions for IDPs remain difficult to find, with the vast majority staying with volunteers and host families with others staying in collective centres and private accommodation. Many are in accommodation that is ill-suited to winter, making winterization a top priority for UNHCR programming.

External Displacement

UNHCR continues to monitor the refugee situation in neighbouring countries. According to government sources in receiving countries, the total number of people seeking asylum or other forms of legal stay in neighbouring countries now stands at 1,123,800, with the majority going to the Russian Federation (911,500) and Belarus (126,450).

The OSCE Observer Mission monitoring the Gukovo and Donetsk checkpoints on the Russia-Ukraine border inform that the situation remains calm. Total cross-border traffic again increased at both checkpoints during the reporting period. In the past week there was a net flow of 440 people entering Ukraine. This represents a return to the trend seen following the 12 February ceasefire of more people entering Ukraine following a lull of entries during the summer.

As of 7 September, since the beginning of the crisis, in the top five receiving countries in the European Union and in neighbouring countries there were 5,613 applications for international protection in Germany, 3,900 in Poland, 4,546 in Italy, 2,221 in Sweden, 2,211 in France, 200 in Moldova, 60 in Romania, 60 in Hungary and 30 in Slovakia according to government sources in receiving countries.

Data sources: Respective national asylum authorities

Achievements



Protection Cluster

- The Protection Cluster co-led by UNHCR and OHCHR conducted a thematic meeting on trafficking, jointly with IOM. Observed trends include the targeting of IDPs by fraudulent schemes, intensified recruitment and more people wanting to travel abroad; therefore the need for awareness raising for IDPs and affected populations on risks is high. Of concern to the Protection Cluster in particular is the very limited access to information and groups working on trafficking issues in the non-government controlled area. Many of the most vulnerable to trafficking live in the area and thus have increased security concerns amid reduced rule of law and are affected by the economic crisis and policies stopping access to social entitlements and bank accounts. Brochures and posters are available to all protection actors providing information on the risks of human trafficking, helpline numbers, self-identification criteria and assistance available to victims of trafficking.
- The Cluster also discussed the definition of what are commonly called ‘grey areas’ (areas in close proximity to the line of contact), the identification of protection risks of people living in these areas and key advocacy messages. While people living in ‘grey areas’ share protection risks with other groups, they face specific risks due to their location (shelling, mines and unexploded ordnance) and increased isolation (restricted freedom of movement, disruption of services, absence of local administration and limited access to humanitarian assistance). The Protection Cluster will continue to advocate for their inclusion in the assistance programme and will develop specific advocacy messages.
- Freedom of movement remains a primary concern. Several amendments were made including on issues where Cluster partners conducted advocacy. Amendments were made to the Temporary Order of 16 June to the online portal for pass applications to travel to cross the line of contact. The new procedures are more efficient, compared to the previous system of paper passes. However, there are still challenges: the website can at times become overwhelmed by a high number of applications; cancellation of public transportation across the contact line has led to long queues at checkpoints placing people at risk; and the proposed logistic centres to be established at checkpoints raise protection concerns as they may create a pull-factor towards areas that are subject to shelling.

Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- On 25 August, President Poroshenko signed Decree no. 501, adopting the National Human Rights Strategy. The document outlines the state’s imperatives in human rights protection and roadmaps major outputs towards them until 2020. Therein, the state acknowledges newly emerging challenges and persistent systemic human rights problems: the right to life, prohibition of torture and inhuman/degrading treatment, freedom of movement, right to a fair trial, rights of minorities and indigenous people, freedom of expression, access to information, right of assembly and association, right to participate in state/public affairs, prohibition of discrimination, right to work and social security, rights to education and healthcare, rights for private and family life and children’s rights. The strategy will be operationalized via an Action Plan which will be developed and adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers within three months. The Government plans to implement the strategy in collaboration with civic society, the Ombudsman’s Office, the Council of Europe, OSCE, United Nations and other international organizations.
- On 26 August, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted the 2015’s plan of activities for implementation of the National Programme for Implementation of the Convention on Rights of the Child until 2016. The action plan specifically refers to child protection risks associated with armed conflict and internal displacement, and envisages targeted assistance schemes for affected children: recreation, psychosocial assistance and humanitarian aid to children displaced and staying in conflict areas controlled by the government, although partly relying on external funding support. The plan specifically sets forth the Government agenda to address problems of unaccompanied IDP children, although gaps in IDP registration procedures disabling the under-age not accompanied by legal guardians to access registration and state financial support are not explicitly mentioned.

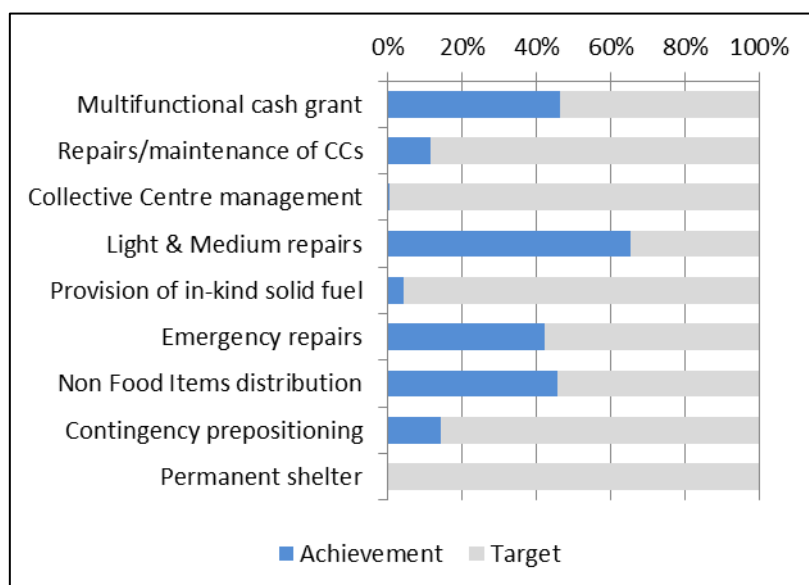
¹ [International Protection Considerations Related to the Developments in Ukraine – Update II](http://www.refworld.org/docid/54c639474.html)
www.refworld.org/docid/54c639474.html

- During the reporting period, UNHCR implementing partner Stantia Kharkiv provided 2,800 general consultations, 625 legal and 180 psychosocial consultations. More than 80 per cent of the consultations were provided to female beneficiaries. The issues raised related to access to humanitarian assistance, access to housing, employment, preparation for school, damaged housing in the eastern conflict area, medical assistance, civil documentation, subsidies, depression, anxiety. UNHCR implementing partner Crimea SOS provided consultations to 1,767 people, of which 525 were legal consultations and 1,242 social consultations. The most frequently raised problems included blocked bank accounts, crossing of the line of contact and the administrative border with Crimea, court decisions in the non-government controlled area, disposal of property in the non-government controlled area and employment issues.

Shelter and Non Food Items (NFIs)

Emergency Shelter and NFIs Cluster

- The Shelter and NFI Cluster led by UNHCR, has made significant progress with the implementation of light and medium repairs along the line of contact over the summer period. In the government controlled area, targeted needs for 2015 will be fulfilled, while serious structural repairs and full reconstruction of destroyed houses will remain outstanding. In the non-government controlled area, where assistance was restricted due to lack of access, light and medium repairs are still reported as priority needs and will remain a major concern into 2016.
- In preparation of Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for 2016, Clusters began the Humanitarian Need Overview process by identifying indicators. In parallel, the Government of Ukraine is in the process of reviewing IDP registration figures which are expected to be incorporated in the HRP process.



Humanitarian Response Plan implementation, Q2 2015



A spike in hostilities near Mariupol in mid-August caused a new wave of destruction in the village of Sartana. Following a needs assessment, UNHCR delivered reinforced plastic sheets and construction materials to 700 people in the affected area. Photo: UNHCR/A.Shcherbyna

Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- On 28 and 29 August, 13 UNHCR trucks carrying 260 tonnes of shelter materials (plastic sheeting, timber, plywood, roofing panels, cement) for emergency, light and medium repairs and non-food items (NFIs) arrived in the non-government controlled area. These trucks provided the first humanitarian aid across the line of contact since 16 July due to a combination of restrictions put in place by de facto authorities, the prevailing security situation and the government blockade. The delivery will provide assistance to over 15,000 people. Nonetheless, restrictions remain in place and it is not clear if or when further aid deliveries will be permitted.
- During the reporting period, UNHCR provided NFI and shelter assistance to over 7,000 people. In the government controlled area, UNHCR provided bedding sets (consisting of a blanket, bed linen and towels) and other NFIs to 2,600 people in the Mariupol area. UNHCR distributed emergency shelter materials in the village of Sartana,

southern Donetsk, which was recently subjected to shelling. UNHCR implementing partner ADRA carried out repairs to over 200 houses and three apartment blocks housing some 1,100 people in Slovyansk district, northern Donetsk and began repairs of an apartment block in nearby Seversk. Implementing partner People in Need (PiN) provided shelter materials to 330 households in the Slovyansk area. UNHCR implementing partner Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) distributed timber for light and medium repairs in Popasna and Novoaidar districts of Luhansk region.

- In the non-government controlled area, UNHCR and PiN delivered emergency shelter materials to 1,500 people in Horlivka, northern Donetsk despite severely restricted access to the area. PiN also distributed UNHCR NFIs to 618 people in Novoazovsk district, southern Donetsk.

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 five 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 Protection and Shelter and Non Food Item Clusters.

UNHCR implementing partners (IDP operation): [Adventist Development and Relief Agency](#) | [Crimea SOS](#) | [Danish Refugee Council](#) | [Norwegian Refugee Council](#) | [People in Need](#) | [Stantia Kharkiv](#)

Key Shelter and Non Food Items Cluster partners: [Adventist Development and Relief Agency](#) | [Caritas Ukraine](#) | [Chesna i Svyata Kraina](#) | [Crimea SOS](#) | [Danish Refugee Council](#) | [Donbas reconstruction and development agency](#) | [Dopomoga 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](#) | [The Right to Protection](#) | [Save the Children](#) | [The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights](#) | [UNICEF](#) | [UNDP](#) | [UNFPA](#) | [Vostok SOS](#)

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

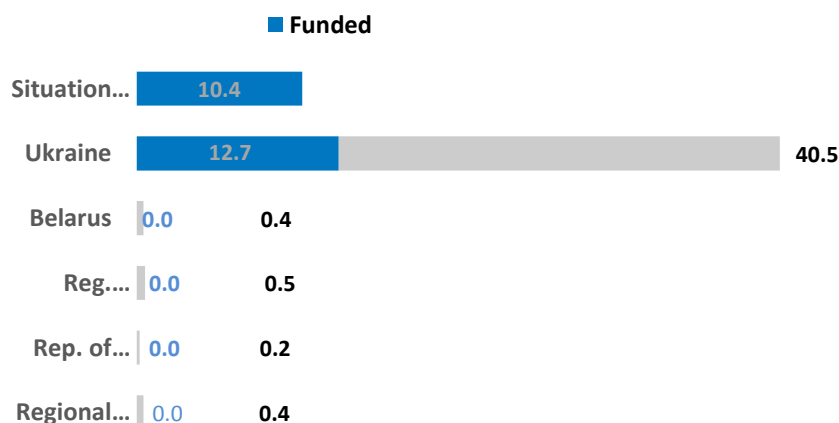
UNHCR is very grateful for the financial support provided by donors, particularly those who have already indicated a contribution to UNHCR's 2015 activities in Ukraine with un-earmarked and broadly earmarked funds. UNHCR's total financial requirement in 2015 for the Ukraine situation is **US\$ 41.5 million**, as presented in the [Supplementary Appeal](#). 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 Belarus and the Republic of Moldova as well as in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, countries covered by the Regional Office in Georgia. Contributions recorded so far represented **56 per cent** of the total financial requirements.

Donors who have contributed:

Funding (in million USD)

- Canada
- Denmark
- Estonia
- European Union
- Finland
- Georgia
- Germany
- Greece
- Italy
- Japan
- Norway
- Portugal
- Private Donors
- Republic of Korea
- Russian Federation
- Sweden
- United Kingdom
- United States of America

A total of **23.1 million** has been contributed



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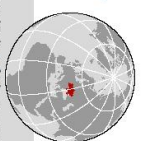
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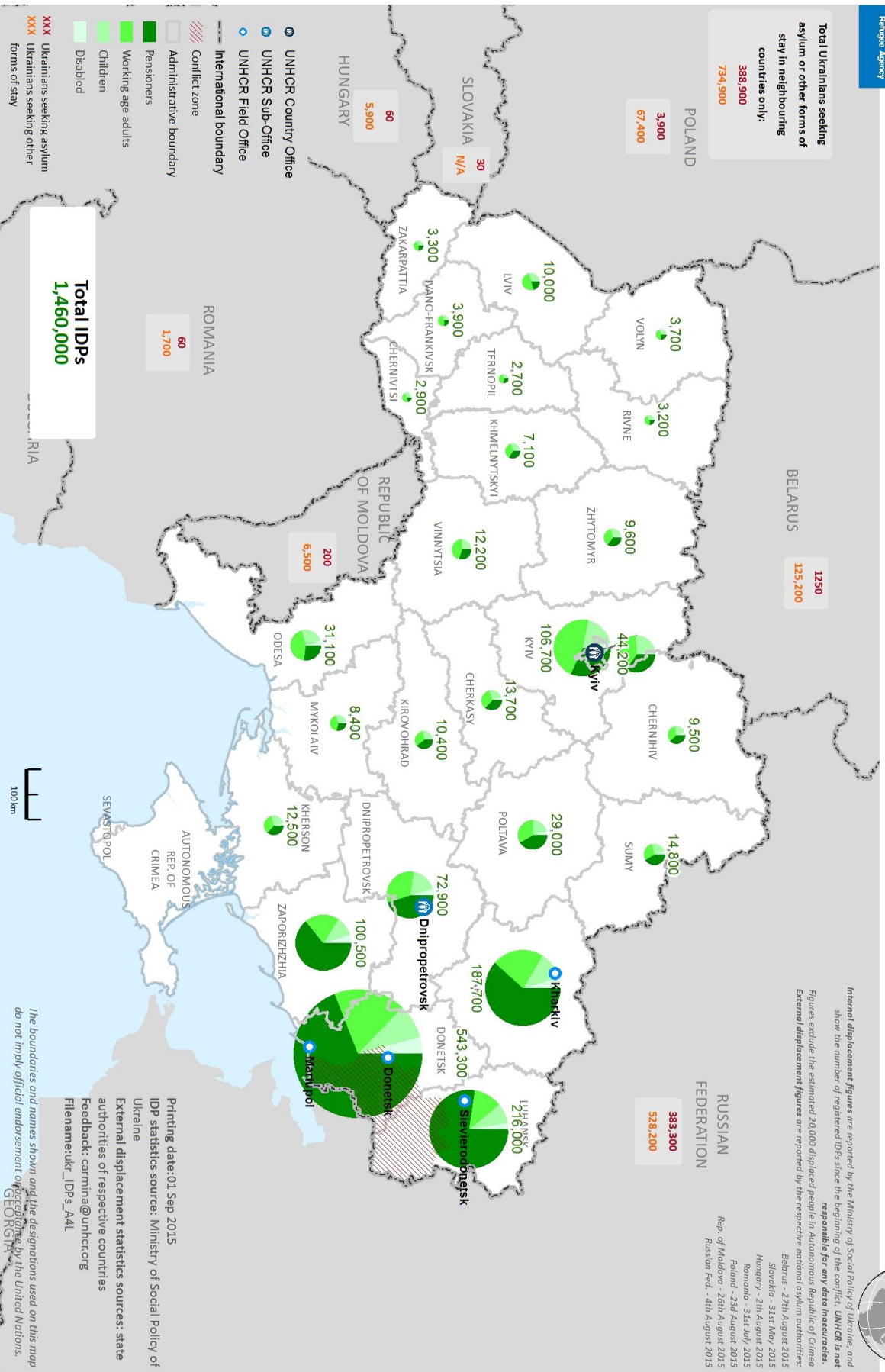
Ukraine: Internally Displaced People

- 28 August 2015

UNHCR - Kyiv



Total Ukrainians seeking asylum or other forms of stay in neighbouring countries only:
 388,900
 734,900



Total IDPs
1,460,000

XXX Ukrainians seeking asylum forms of stay
 XXX Ukrainians seeking other forms of stay

Internal displacement figures are reported by the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, and show the number of registered IDPs since the beginning of the conflict. UNHCR is not responsible for any data inaccuracies. Figures exclude the estimated 20,000 displaced people in Autonomous Republic of Crimea. External displacement figures are reported by the respective national asylum authorities: Belarus - 27th August 2015; Slovakia - 31st May 2015; Hungary - 23rd August 2015; Romania - 31st July 2015; Poland - 29th August 2015; Rep. of Moldova - 26th August 2015; Russian Fed. - 4th August 2015.

Printing date: 01 Sep 2015
 IDP statistics source: Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine
 External displacement statistics sources: state authorities of respective countries
 Feedback: carmina@unhcr.org
 Filename: ukr_IDPs_A4L

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