

Operational Update

May 2019

In May, UNHCR's NGO partner R2P surveyed 2,293 persons crossing the five entry-exit checkpoints (EECP) along the 'contact line'. Samples of the findings include: 72% crossed on a bimonthly basis; 6% traveling with minors; 21% of those displaced have returned; 77% crossed in order to avoid payment suspension. For more information on this, please visit UNHCR and R2P's [interactive dashboard here](#).

On 26 May, UNHCR promoted its "2 billion kilometers to safety" campaign during Kyiv's *Chestnut Run*, one of the largest traditional sporting events in Ukraine held since 1993. UNHCR invited participants to symbolically support displaced persons by dedicating the kilometers they run to UNHCR's campaign. Over 100 persons signed up to participate. For more information, [see our Press Release on this event here](#).

Ukrainian language courses for refugees and asylum seekers were launched in Odesa. The courses are provided by the Odesa National Polytechnic University. So far, 36 persons enrolled. The university had been supported by UNHCR in 2018 with computer equipment. The students can attend the courses free of charge.

KEY INDICATORS

10,139

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other conflict-affected persons have received **legal assistance** from UNHCR partners in 2019.

425

IDPs and other conflict-affected persons have been selected to **receive cash for protection** through the individual protection assistance programme (IPA) in 2019.

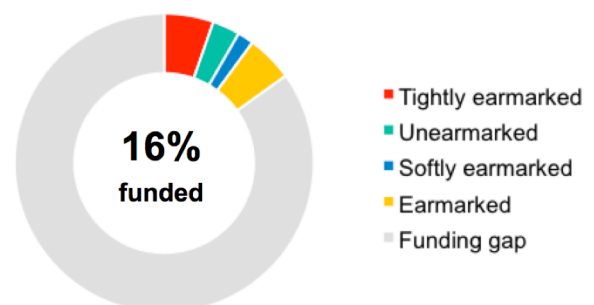
247

Households in eastern Ukraine have benefited from UNHCR **shelter assistance** in 2019.

FUNDING (AS OF 7 MAY)

USD 28.3 million

UNHCR's financial requirements 2019

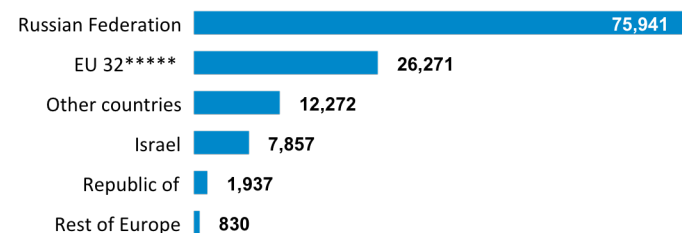


INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS)* AND OTHER CONFLICT-AFFECTED PERSONS**

1.5 million***

REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS FROM UKRAINE

125,108****



*Residing more permanently in government-controlled areas (GCA).
 **Vulnerable, conflict-affected persons living along the 'contact line' in GCA and non-government controlled areas (NGCA).
 ***Sources: 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), UNHCR
 ****Source: UNHCR PopStats, December 2018
 *****28 EU countries and Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland



UNHCR was present at Kyiv's traditional "Chestnut Run" event. During the event, UNHCR volunteers explained to runners how they could dedicate the kilometers they would run to the refugee cause as part of the "2 billion kilometers to safety" campaign. Photo: UNHCR Ukraine

Operational Highlights



In May 2019, the [OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine \(SMM\)](#) recorded approximately **29,300 cease-fire violations**, representing a 6 per cent increase compared to the previous month. As a result of the continuous increase of shelling, the Shelter Cluster reported that **84 civilian homes** were either damaged or destroyed on both sides of the 'contact line' in eastern Ukraine during May. This represents an increase of 42% as compared to the previous month. As a response, UNHCR and its NGO partners - [Proliska](#), [Right to Protection \(R2P\)](#), [Slavic Heart](#), the [Norwegian Refugee Council \(NRC\)](#), [MOST](#) and the [Donbas Development Center \(DDC\)](#) – are responding with protection and humanitarian support. Furthermore, UNHCR and its NGO partners MOST and DDC

have been providing acute emergency shelter kits in areas that were previously inaccessible to humanitarians because of security and access restrictions. This includes 15 settlements near the 'contact line' in Donetsk Oblast where 165 acute emergency shelter kits have been distributed to conflict-affected persons whose shelters had been damaged or destroyed. *Photo: UNHCR assists families with acute emergency shelter kits living in areas where it is still not possible to implement shelter repairs because of on-going security situation.*

As part of its regular protection monitoring missions, UNHCR visited a number of isolated settlements located along the 'contact line'. Highlights of the month included Novotoshkivke, where UNHCR and its NGO partner Proliska provided humanitarian assistance; Zolote-4, where UNHCR visited homes of civilians that had been shelled only hours before (*Photo right*) and supported the family with a NFI kit and individual protection cash assistance; Bohdanivka, a settlement that is cut from basic services in which only nine elderly persons still remain in six damaged houses. At the moment, Proliska has been assisting the remaining population with transportation to the nearby settlement for urgent medical assistance and basic supplies.



Between 22 and 26 May, UNHCR joined the 9th International Book Arsenal Festival in Kyiv. In line with this year's theme of the festival: *The Neighbourhood: An Open Question*, UNHCR partnered with the Embassies of Canada, Denmark, Estonia, the Netherlands and Switzerland and organized a "Refugee Books Zone" where writers, readers, publishers and the public at large could learn about refugee authors and their books and gain a deeper understanding of forced displacement around the world. The "Refugee Book Zone" hosted unique events with refugee authors from different countries; some of them already translated into Ukrainian language. On 24 May 2019, a "Human library" was organized with writers from Canada (Kim Thúy and Larry

Tremblay), Denmark (Kristian Husted), Estonia (Imbi Paju), and the Netherlands (Kader Abdolah), all whom have written books that depict the experience of refugees. After an introduction by each author, the public at large was invited to interact with the authors and learn about their experiences. For more information, please read the [Press Release on UNHCR Ukraine's website](#).

Key Advocacy Messages for May

- Despite advocacy efforts, the Ukrainian Parliament has not considered Draft Law 6240, which would pave the way for IDPs to vote for majority candidates in the upcoming parliamentary elections. Therefore, IDPs will only be able to vote for political parties. In order to do so, IDPs are required to vote in their current place of residence. If they want to register elsewhere, such as in their place of current residency, they need to register themselves in the local registries of voters. However, the past Presidential elections demonstrated that many IDPs were not aware of this procedure. According to the Central Electoral Commission (CEC), some 76,000 IDPs changed their voting address for the Presidential elections. Therefore, awareness raising and public information campaigns for IDPs on the registration procedure could ensure a higher turnout of IDPs wishing to exercise their right to vote on election day.


MULTI-SECTOR RESPONSE TO REFUGEES AND STATELESS PERSONS
Protection of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

- UNHCR and R2P provided support for the State Migration Service (SMS) with the draft revision of the Refugee Law of Ukraine. Working meetings will continue on a weekly basis in June and July. A draft law will be submitted to Parliament in early autumn.
- During the reporting period, UNHCR continued monitoring the new refugee department of the Kyiv Regional Migration Service (TsMU). Starting on 1 May, UNHCR and NGO partners have been providing on-site training to new TsMU staff that have started receiving new asylum-seekers that had temporarily registered with UNHCR as a contingency measure while they waited for the TsMU to accept their application. As agreed between UNHCR and TsMU, vulnerable applicants will be prioritized. There are currently challenges in providing free interpretation services for the asylum-seekers, which the TsMU promised to resolve by the end of July. Another obstacle for asylum-seekers is a fine for those who took longer to apply for asylum. UNHCR is actively working to resolve these issues.
- During the reporting period, R2P continued its legal assistance on extradition cases (12 individuals, 2 of them in detention – in Kyiv and Chernihiv). In some cases, R2P has partnered with the FLAC.

2,141

Legal consultations provided to refugees and asylum seekers in Kyiv, Odesa and Zakarpattia oblasts in May

925

Social consultations provided to refugees and asylum seekers in Kyiv, Odesa and Zakarpattia oblasts in May

74

Refugees and asylum seekers received psychosocial assistance in May

91

Home visits undertaken to unaccompanied minors in May

Livelihood Interventions for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

15

refugees were counselled on opportunities to receive self-reliance grants from UNHCR and its partners in May

73

refugees have started their own businesses with UNHCR self-reliance grants since launch of the program in 2018



Nicola moved to Ukraine from Cote D'Ivoire some 10 years ago and settled in Odesa. Thanks to support from his Uncle, he was able to start his studies at the Odesa Academy of Food Production. Throughout his studies, Nicola quickly learned Ukrainian and Russian and was an active member in his student community. However, the situation in his home country changed quickly with the war: he was unable to return home and his family was no longer able to support him. Therefore, Nicola requested asylum in Ukraine. Thanks to a business grant provided by UNHCR, Nicola finished his confectioner course, successfully graduated and now has found his dream job - to make people's life a bit sweeter.*

Assistance to Stateless Persons and Persons at Risk of Statelessness

- On 21 and 22 May, UNHCR Representative and Associate Legal Officer visited Lviv and Zakarpattia oblasts in western Ukraine. In Lviv, UNHCR and its partner NEEKA met with the 1st Deputy Head of SBGS of Western Regional Command and the Officer for Administrative Work with Foreigners. The Command oversees 1,200 kilometers of Ukrainian border with Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Slovakia and Romania.

104

Stateless persons (or at risk of) were identified and provided with legal aid in Kyiv, Odesa and Zakarpattia oblast in May

18

Persons received passports in March thanks to UNHCR and partners' support in May

31

Persons received duplicates of birth certificates in March thanks to UNHCR and partners' support

3

Persons obtained their birth certificates for the first time in March thanks to UNHCR and partners' support



PROTECTION FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED AND OTHER CONFLICT-AFFECTED PERSONS

Protection Cluster

- On 30 May, a Protection Cluster meeting was held in Kyiv, where participants discussed the PSEA survey and follow up steps. Partners were updated on the progress in improving conditions and access to basic services at the crossing checkpoints and discussed military use of civilian property. Participants also exchanged information on taxation of agricultural lands which cannot be cultivated due to mine contamination and risks imposed on the access to health care in contact line villages under ongoing medical reform.
- The Protection Cluster Coordinator participated in the Global Protection Cluster conference in Bangkok where she spoke at a donor briefing on HDN, and participated in a panel on conflict sensitivity and humanitarian access.



UNHCR Protection Activities

- Free Legal Aid Centers (FLAC):** In May, UNHCR and its partner R2P provided two seminars to FLAC representatives from North Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, with **12** representatives participating in the Sloviansk seminar, and **15** in the Severodonetsk seminar.
- Prevention of evictions from collective centers:** On 22 May 2019, UNHCR and R2P visited the IDP Collective Centre "Sanatorium Teteriv" located in Koroshtyshev town, Zhytomir oblast where water and electricity supply has been cut because of accumulated debts. With a population of 137 IDPs (55 children), UNHCR, noted, among others the presence of elderly persons and persons with disabilities. UNHCR will continue to meet with local authorities in order to find a solution for the challenges affecting the residence of this collective center.



Legal Assistance and Protection Counselling

2,279

Internally displaced and other conflict-affected persons (71% female, 29% male) received legal assistance from UNHCR and its partners in May

4,275

Persons benefited from individual protection counselling in May

69

Group consultations on protection-related issues were provided to 796 persons (74% female, 26% male) in areas along the 'contact line' in May

- In May, UNHCR's partners R2P provided protection consultation to 2,593 beneficiaries (1,880 women, 713 men) with complex consultations on different protection issues. The largest age group was 60+ (1,351 – 52%). 46% of beneficiaries are residing on the other side of the 'contact line', 41% reside near the 'contact line' and 29% are IDPs. Of those, 18 persons were referred to R2P's statelessness project. R2P monitoring teams provided 6,923 consultations on various protection related issues, the most frequently asked questions continue to be about reference information for institutions (addresses, working hours, etc). UNHCR's partner MOST provided protection counselling and information support in person and by phone to 273 persons.

Social Accompaniment

In the month of May, UNHCR partners provided social accompaniment to **362 individuals** who needed support in obtaining personal documentation, accessing state services, or receiving authorization to cross check points, among other things. In some cases, individuals were supported with transportation to access public buildings and register for social services.



Meet Dima who is a paralympic athlete. In 2018, at an international competition in Poland he achieved 6th place. Dima believes in the power of sport and wants to be an example for people with disabilities. However, despite being a champion in the past, today Dima's health needs support: his rehabilitation was in Donetsk in 2012. However, since the conflict started, he has been unable to earn a living and invest in additional rehabilitation sessions. Because of the war he was unable to visit his former clinic where professionals already knew how to treat him and his particular situation. However, thanks to the support of Proliska, Dima was able to undergo an additional rehabilitation session.*



Psychosocial assistance

198

82% Female | 18% Male
Persons received consultations in May

During the reporting period, UNHCR partners provided **198 vulnerable persons with psychological consultations** to help conflict-affected people deal with symptoms of psychological trauma, domestic violence, grief, depression, anxiety, and psychological tension.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

- During the reporting period, UNHCR partner Slavic Heart identified eight SGBV survivors who were assisted with psychosocial support. Additionally, UNHCR visited 14 SGBV survivors.
- UNHCR's partner, Slavic Heart, is monitoring a restraining order received through court with the support of Bakhmut's Free Legal Aid Centre to protect an SGBV survivor.
- Slavic Heart conducted two workshops for a total of 115 local authorities in the cities of Avdiivka and Kostiantynivka on streamlining multi-sectoral response to SGBV. Five awareness-raising sessions were conducted for communities of Svitlodarsk, Stanytsia Luhanska and Zalizne.
- UNHCR conducted an analysis of the available multi-sectoral response services for SGBV survivors in six villages located near the 'contact line': Bakhmut, Krasnohorivka, Zalizne, Luhanske and Svitlodarsk.
- On 30 May UNHCR and its NGO partner the *Tenth of April* held an information session for 13 internally displaced women and women from the local community in Oleksandriia.
- On 26 May, UNHCR and its partner Slavic Heart held a capacity building session to the Mariinsky Raion Police on gender sensitivity, SGBV prevention and response as envisaged by Ukrainian Law. The training included over 20 local police officers covering the area of Mariinsky Raion located near the 'contact line'.



Individual Protection Assistance (IPA)

181

IPA cash beneficiaries selected in May

UNHCR continues identifying and providing vulnerable conflict-affected individuals in eastern Ukraine with **cash for protection**. In 2019, UNHCR plans to distribute cash for protection to **2,500 vulnerable persons** living near the 'contact line'. In locations where IPA cash is not possible, UNHCR's NGO partners assisted 30 beneficiaries in May under its IPA In-Kind Programme (25 through NGO Most and 5 through NGO DDC respectively).



Peaceful Coexistence Projects (PCPs)

13

Projects approved in May

UNHCR supports small to medium-scale infrastructure repairs proposed by communities or local authorities in eastern Ukraine. PCPs primarily support the creation of an atmosphere of peaceful co-existence between the displaced population and host communities and contribute to the prevention of tension between displaced people and the host population. Since the beginning of 2019, UNHCR has initiated the implementation of 43 **Peaceful Coexistence Projects (PCPs)** in eastern Ukraine.



On 27 May, UNHCR partner Proliska supported the House of Culture by providing a new boiler equipment, pipes, radiators and heating systems. The local authorities together with the district administration implemented the internal repair. The installation of a new heating system will allow for events and literary evenings to be organized for children throughout the year. The House of Culture also has a library.



Community Support Initiatives (CSIs)

10

Initiatives approved in May

UNHCR in Ukraine empowers communities of internally displaced and other conflict-affected persons throughout the territory. CSIs include a range of activities designed to mobilize and empower communities. They build on their education, skills, and capacities in order to strengthen their ability to organize emergency responses and self-advocate with local and national authorities as well as find durable solutions for their own protection.



UNHCR and its partner Proliska launched an open air summer cinema near the 'contact line' village of Valuyskoe near Staniska Luhanska. The initiative was launched by a group of young people who felt the need to promote outdoor activities for both IDPs and local children. Therefore, the community decided to have an open air cinema that would be used as a sports club during winter. Therefore, thanks to the support of Proliska, the team purchased bean bags, children's chairs, chairs, a projector and screen to project movies, sound-amplifier equipment (speakers), a laptop and a cotton candy machine.



SHELTER/NON-FOOD ITEMS

Shelter and NFI Achievements, Impact, and Identified Needs

- In May, UNHCR completed repairs to **43 homes** of vulnerable families in eastern Ukraine.
- In May, UNHCR partners distributed **NFIs and bed linen** sets among **551** beneficiaries in Donetsk Oblast.
- In May, **2 NFI kits** were distributed in Luhansk Oblast.
- In May, UNHCR partners distributed **216 jerry cans** in Donetsk Oblast.
- During the reporting period, UNHCR visited six houses in Marinka and Krasnohorivka where the State Emergency Services (SES) are repairing several houses of elderly persons with tools provided earlier in the year by UNHCR for them to increase their brigades of workers. Thanks to this support of the Donetsk oblast administration, the SES increased its brigades from one team (of five persons) to 40 persons, engaging their staff from Lviv and Odessa departments. They started working on 1 May 2019 and intend to continue doing repairs for the next two months.



Meet Sveta, 65, whose left Kazakhstan to Ukraine where she lived in the small and peaceful town of Stanytsia Luhanska, located in the eastern part of the country. However, her life was shaken upside down in 2014. In that year, while Sveta was with her two grandchildren who live with her, the conflict reached Stanytsia Luhanska and the town suffered fierce bombing during summer. Afraid of the shelling, the family did not leave their home. This is when on 18 August 2014, there was extremely heavy shelling. Sveta's house was caught in the crossfire and shockwaves blew out all the windows and the roof of her house. The family tried to cope on their own and were even refused support from other sources. Thanks to UNHCR partner, the Norwegian Refugee Council, Sveta had her home repaired.*

Shelter Cluster

- On 30 May, a subnational Shelter/NFI Cluster meeting took place in Volnovakha, Donetsk Oblast. The meeting discussed new damages, revision of residual shelter needs, winterization and activity updates from State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU) and partners. Different from Luhansk oblast Subnational meeting, taking place in early June, there will be an on-going discussion with SESU regarding their repair works of damaged houses. SESU is paying closer attention to Donetsk due to higher numbers of new damages in the oblast, which have been observed by the Shelter/NFI Cluster. Meeting in Volnovakha was prepared in close partnership with the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs (MinTOT), who invited heads of several village councils.

Working in Partnership

The humanitarian response to displacement in Ukraine is a coordinated effort by the government, international organizations, national and international NGOs. In providing support to persons of concern, UNHCR works closely with the Government of Ukraine. In the case of IDPs, UNHCR has signed a Letter of Understanding with the [Ministry for Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons](#). In the case of refugees and stateless persons, UNHCR cooperates closely with the [State Migration Services of Ukraine](#). UNHCR works together with [13 NGO partners](#). UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster and Shelter/Non-food Items (NFI) Cluster. UNHCR together with OCHA also co-leads the logistics working group that is mainly responsible for humanitarian convoys to eastern Ukraine.

Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for critical financial support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programs with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

The indicative level of funding for the operation is **US \$4,669,183 million**. This figure is based on contributions earmarked to Ukraine, the indicative allocation of flexible funds and adjustments.

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the Major donors of unearmarked contributions.

Sweden 90.4 million | **Norway** 44.5 million | **Netherlands** 37.5 million | **United Kingdom** 31.7 million | **Germany** 26.7 million | **Private donors Spain** 26.3 million | **Denmark** 24.4 million | **Switzerland** 15.1 million | **Private donors Republic of Korea** 13.8 million

SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of softly earmarked contributions that can potentially be used for this operation due to their earmarking to a related situation or theme, or to the region or sub-region.

United States of America 4.8 million | **Private donors Australia** 2.5 million

EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS TO UKRAINE | USD

CERF 0.93 million | **Japan** 0.84 million | **Canada** 0.57 million | **Sweden** 0.55 million | **Russian Federation** 0.25 million | **Estonia** 0.23 million | **Lithuania** 0.03 million | **Private donors** 0.03 million

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Please note that this report attempts to highlight the main activities implemented by UNHCR and its NGO partners within the selected reporting period. Please note that it is by no means exhaustive. For additional details about our work, do not hesitate to check www.unhcr.org/ua or, contact us directly at ukrkom@unhcr.org.

**Please note that the names of persons who appear in this report have been changed for their protection.*