

UKRAINE SITUATION

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

1 – 21 May 2015

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Situational overview:** The overall security situation is critical. Fighting has steadily intensified during the reporting period, though with no change to the line of contact. Continued diplomatic efforts are underway towards a political solution to the conflict.
- **Protection concerns:** Freedom of movement across the line of contact remains a key concern. Recent issues reported by IDPs include a lack of information on the renewal of government financial assistance and the address verification process.
- **Legislation update:** Draft law no. 2166 on the Introduction of Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine to strengthen the guarantees of the rights and freedoms of IDPs was adopted for first reading by Parliament.
- **Assistance provided:** Since 30 April, UNHCR provided non food items (NFIs) to 6,300 people in non-government controlled areas. UNHCR delivered a further 300 NFI sets to people in government controlled areas. Implementing partner People in Need distributed UNHCR shelter material to 22 households.



“I want my daughter to have a home.” Carrying baby Viktoria, Yulia, 25 and her husband fled their home in Zolote, Luhansk region, last August to escape nearby fighting. Following the recent ceasefire, the family decided to return home to their village. They found buildings destroyed, schools deserted and the coal mine in which Viktoria’s dad had worked, closed. UNHCR has provided non food items to Yulia’s family and others who have returned to the village. Photo: UNHCR Ukraine/Mario Pavlovic

KEY FIGURES

1,283,700

registered Internally Displaced People (IDPs) comprising:

770,400

pensioners

298,100

working age

161,200

children

54,000

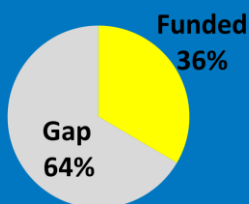
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Source: Ministry of Social Policy, Ukraine

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

Against the backdrop of the 9 May Victory Day holiday the situation on the ground has remained critical, characterized by a worsening conflict situation and a steady increase in the number of ceasefire violations. Fighting has intensified along the line of contact, with the heaviest fighting taking place to the north and west of Donetsk city, north and west of Luhansk city and north and east of Mariupol. In spite of the progressive intensification of fighting, the line of contact has not moved since the seizure of Debaltseve by Anti-Government Elements in mid-February. Areas being fought over have already been fought over for some time and therefore new displacement has been limited. Nonetheless, the overall security situation remains extremely tense with reduced reports of people returning to the conflict area.

Diplomatic efforts have continued, with a meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group, consisting of senior representatives of Ukraine, the Russian Federation and the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office taking place in Minsk on 6 May. This was the first such meeting to take place since the 12 February ceasefire.

As of 13 May there were 1,283,700 IDPs registered by the Ministry of Social Policy, representing an increase of 28,000 since 27 April. The comparatively low number of new registrations was mainly due to the Labour Day and Victory Day holiday period rather than any improvement of conditions in the conflict area.

Following the high number of movements in and out of non-government controlled areas reported over the Easter holidays, the number of reported movements has reduced, particularly returns. While IDPs in government controlled areas complain of the lack of employment opportunities, the prospects in non-government controlled areas are no better. The situation is made worse by the increase in costs, particularly food which has increased in cost by 3-4 times since November 2014. Basic staple items cost approximately twice as much as in government controlled areas. Those that do return do so mostly to look after family who cannot leave and to maintain property. IDPs have developed various means of coping with the situation such as sending individual family members back to the conflict area to oversee property. There have also been reports of families remaining in non-government controlled areas sending the breadwinner abroad to find work and send money back.

IDPs are currently accommodated in three types of accommodation: collective centres, with host families or volunteers and privately rented accommodation. The vast majority live with host families or with volunteers. It remains unclear how much longer these IDPs will be able to remain in such temporary accommodation amid increasing reports of IDP fatigue in receiving communities. Due to the unexpected longevity of the conflict situation, it seems most likely that secondary displacement will occur as IDPs seek more sustainable solutions.

The Governor of Luhansk passed a decree restricting traffic across the line of contact to certain classes of vehicles which was implemented on 1 May. UNHCR observed long queues of trucks including food shipments at checkpoints on the line of contact. This, in addition to already restrictive measures on crossing the line of contact, has greatly restricted freedom of movement and may have an impact on humanitarian access. UNHCR is following the situation closely.

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 845,800, with the majority going to the Russian Federation (699,400) and Belarus (81,070).

The OSCE Observer Mission monitoring the Gukovo and Donetsk checkpoints on the Russia-Ukraine border inform that the situation continues to remain calm. Following a period of increased movement, total cross-border traffic decreased at both checkpoints before again picking up. The trend of more people returning to Ukraine, which has been observed since the signing of the 12 February ceasefire, has continued.

As of 15 May, since the beginning of the crisis there were 3,648 applications for international protection in Germany, 3,350 in Poland, 2,956 in Italy, 1,851 in Sweden, 1,763 in France, 200 in Moldova, 50 in Romania, 50 in Hungary and 20 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 is currently working on inter-agency contingency planning led by OCHA. Several meetings have been held in Kyiv and in the field to discuss preparedness and response activities that can be carried out by protection partners, their capacity to step up and financial requirements. Protection partners have analyzed the potential protection risks for several population groups (IDPs, host communities along the line of contact and civilians trapped in the conflict area) highlighting the need to have a differentiated approach in government controlled areas and non-government controlled areas, as humanitarian access will most likely be more limited in the latter. The level of preparation of Ukrainian authorities and de facto authorities remains unclear.
- Protection Cluster coordinators from UNHCR and OHCHR conducted a mission to Kharkiv and Dnipropetrovsk from 5 to 8 May. The purpose was to present the work of the Cluster at the local level, explaining how work being done in the field contributes to the Cluster and to learn from partners how the Cluster can best support them. Protection partners highlighted the need for high-level advocacy on policy issues, specifically obstacles to freedom of movement and registration; also for closer coordination and gap analysis to better respond to protection needs when they arise. On the subject of contingency planning volunteer organizations which have been actively involved in the evacuation of civilians from the conflict area emphasized the need for more guidance and more support, particularly in the areas of funding and transportation.

Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- Following extensive advocacy by UNHCR, implementing partner the Right to Protection and civil society, draft law no. 2166 on the Introduction of Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine to strengthen the guarantees of the rights and freedoms of IDPs was adopted for first reading by Parliament on 19 May. The draft law includes the following amendments: the IDP definition now includes stateless individuals and foreigners with permanent residence; documentary evidence required for IDP registration now includes documents attesting previous residency in the place of origin. It will take 15 working days to process applications from IDPs without passports and residency permits; registration of current residential addresses with the State Migration Service is no longer required; there are improvements regarding registration of IDPs with unemployment agencies; the draft law provides for unilateral termination of previous employment contracts. The IDP certificate now has unlimited validity; return shall be voluntary; IDPs have a right to family unity and to obtain information on missing relatives.
- Following the entry into force of Council of Ministers Resolution no. 212 on 23 April, extending financial support to IDPs under Resolution no. 505, a number of concerns have been reported by UNHCR Field Offices. Most Field Offices reported a lack of information on the process as the primary concern among IDPs. The Resolution appears to be implemented inconsistently by the Department of Social Protection at the regional level with some offices stamping the existing certificate while other offices claim that the renewal is automatic as the certificate does not have an expiration date. Long queues have been reported at several Department of Social Protection offices as IDPs seek to renew their registration.
- Lack of information and inconsistencies regarding the practical implementation of Resolution no. 79 on the verification of IDP addresses has been a common complaint among IDPs. While it was reported that in Dnipropetrovsk region that verification of addresses is being actively enforced, elsewhere verification has not taken place despite the 18 May deadline for implementation of the Resolution. In some locations, State Migration Service staff carry out checks by visiting IDP addresses, elsewhere IDPs must go to the nearest State Migration Service office to register their address. Many State Migration Service offices are understaffed and unable to carry out checks on IDP residency. Elsewhere, there are long queues at the State Migration Service office as IDPs must go to the office to confirm their place of residence. Staff are under resourced and uncertain of the procedure for lack of instructions.
- On 7 May, Council of Ministers Order no. 428-r on settlements within the conflict area came into force, amending Order 1085-r of 7 November 2014. Instead of a list of settlements where the Ukrainian state either temporarily does

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

not have control (i.e. non-government controlled areas) or has only partial control (i.e. the line of contact), the following lists have been created: a) A list of settlements in territory where the state temporarily does not implement its power including 108 settlements, in addition to the settlements of Amvrosiivka, Starobesheve and Shakhtarsk districts in Donetsk region; and Anratsyt, Krasnodon, Lutuhyne, Perevalsk, Slovyanoserbbsk, Sverdlovsk districts in Luhansk region. b) A list of settlements located on the line of contact comprising of 62 settlements.

- On 13 May, a UNHCR Participatory Assessment community event took place in Sievierodonetsk, where Participatory Assessment workshop findings were presented and discussed. The event was attended by over 50 people, including the Deputy Governor of Luhansk region, partner organizations, and 30 IDPs. The same day, a similar event took place in Donetsk city. Participatory Assessment with IDPs is aimed at gathering accurate information on specific protection risks faced by IDPs, underlying causes and hearing their proposed solutions. The results will influence the protection and solutions strategy for eastern Ukraine.
- Preliminary Participatory Assessment reports from Sievierodonetsk, Dnipropetrovsk and Kharkiv have been shared with key partners and the preliminary Participatory Assessment report for Donetsk is currently being finalized. UNHCR Kyiv began the Participatory Assessment process in Kyiv region with a planning workshop on 14-15 May attended by 45 participants from local authorities and humanitarian organizations who identified key themes and protection issues. The Participatory Assessment process for Mariupol will begin on 1 June.
- UNHCR implementing partner, Crimea SOS continue to provide protection information, legal assistance and counseling to IDPs in Kyiv, central and western regions. Main issues addressed by the IDPs during the consultations are related to the issues of extension of IDP certificates, movement across the checkpoints in the conflict area and the administrative border with Crimea.

Shelter and Non Food Items (NFIs)

Emergency Shelter and NFIs Cluster

- The Shelter and NFI Cluster led by UNHCR has released a [factsheet](#) focusing on major needs and assistance delivered.
- The Shelter and NFI Cluster is currently carrying out a contingency planning exercise as part of an inter-agency response plan led by OCHA out of which a Cluster operational plan will be developed. Complementary to this, the Cluster maintains a list of partner's warehouses, stock and contact details as a preparedness measure.
- Shelter Cluster partner REACH is beginning a door to door survey targeting 2,800 respondents in Donetsk, Luhansk, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv and Zaporizhzhia regions. This survey will consolidate the information with a baseline used for shelter, NFI and also cash assistance. It will be the largest such door to door one time survey so far undertaken in the context of the Ukraine situation.



“It was a nightmare. They landed here and there,” Larisa from Slovyansk shows her backyard. One of the shells hit her house directly, leaving a hole in the wall roughly the height of a person. “It happened last summer right on the Christian Orthodox Holy Trinity holiday. We are still living with our friends. But as soon as we have the roof repaired, we will return home”. UNHCR operational partner People in Need distributed shelter materials to 22 households in Slovyansk, Kramatorsk and Zakitne in Donetsk region. Photo: People in Need/Roman Lunin

Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- During the reporting period, UNHCR has provided NFI and shelter assistance to over 6,600 beneficiaries. In government controlled areas, UNHCR distributed emergency kits (a blanket, sleeping bag, bed linen, towel sets, hygiene kits, food, jerry can and a bucket) to 300 people in Zolote village, on the Luhansk sector of the line of contact. UNHCR also provided shelter materials to Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) for emergency repairs in the same village. Implementing partner People in Need (PiN) distributed UNHCR shelter material to 22 households in Slovyansk, Kramatorsk and Zakitne in Donetsk region.
- In non-government controlled areas, Luhansk Red Cross distributed 4,000 blankets, 1,750 jackets and emergency shelter material (plastic sheeting and tarpaulins) provided by UNHCR to 4,000 beneficiaries in Luhansk city and the nearby villages of Krasnodon, Novosvitlivka, Khryashchivate, Lutuhyne, Alchevsk. Two trucks carrying 26.8 tonnes of UNHCR NFIs (kitchen sets, blankets, plastic sheeting and buckets) for distribution in northern Donetsk arrived in Donetsk city on 7 May with subsequent distributions to 2,300 beneficiaries.

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.

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 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](#) | [ICRC](#) | [IOM](#) | [Norwegian Refugee Council](#) | [OCHA](#) | [OHCHR \(HRMMU\)](#) | [OSCE](#) | [State Migration Service of Ukraine](#) | [The Right to Protection](#) | [The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights](#) | [Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union](#) | [UNICEF](#) | [UNDP](#) | [UNFPA](#) | [Vostok SOS](#)

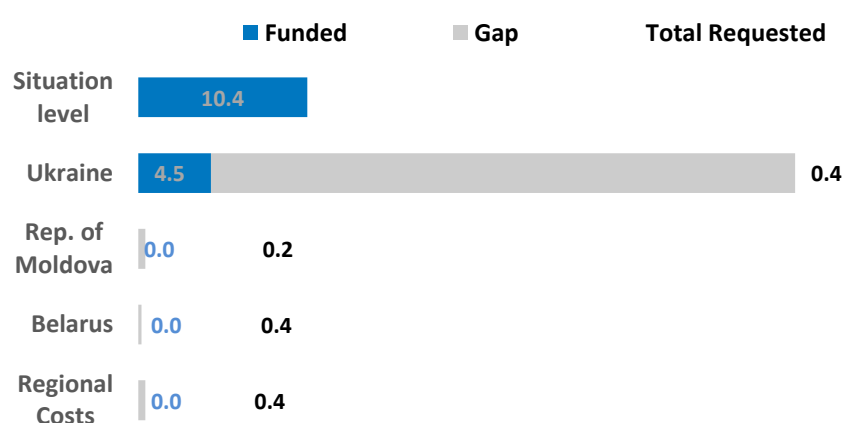
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

UNHCR is very grateful for the financial support provided by donors, particularly those who have already indicated a contribution to UNHCR's 2015 activities 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. Contributions recorded so far represented **36 per cent** of the total financial requirements.

Donors who have contributed: Funding (in million USD)

- Canada
- Denmark
- Estonia
- European Union
- Finland
- Germany
- Greece
- Italy
- Private Donors
- United States of America

A total of **14.9 million** has been contributed



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Links:

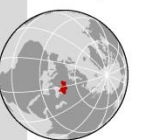
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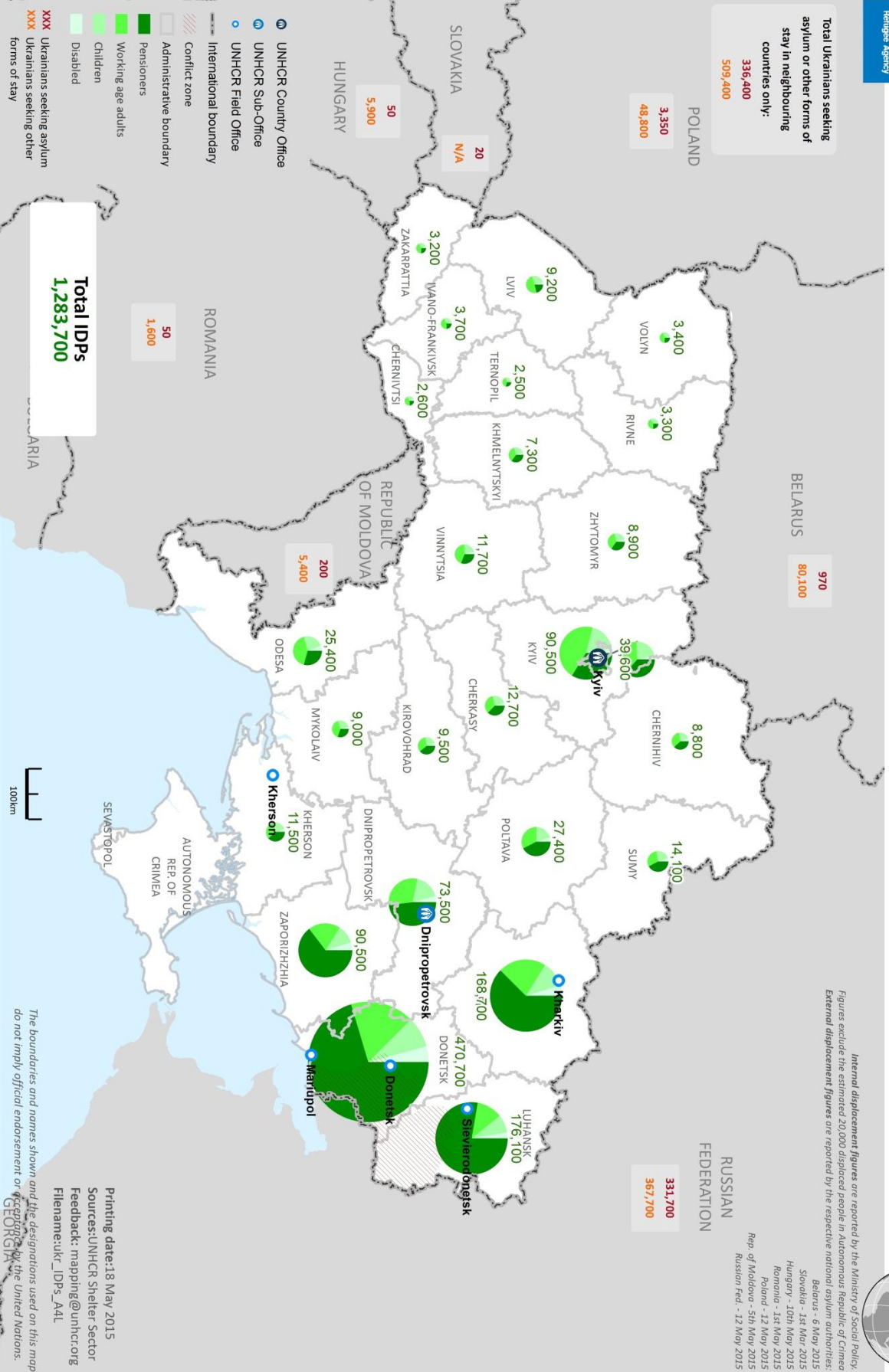
Ukraine: Internally Displaced People

- 13 May 2015

UNHCR - Kyiv



Total Ukrainians seeking asylum or other forms of stay in neighbouring countries only:
 336,400
 509,400



Internal displacement figures are reported by the Ministry of Social Policy. 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 - 6 May 2015; Slovakia - 18 Mar 2015; Hungary - 10th May 2015; Romania - 1st May 2015; Poland - 12 May 2015; Rep. of Moldova - 5th May 2015; Russian Fed. - 12 May 2015.

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

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