

UKRAINE

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

11 June – 15 July 2016

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Situational overview:** During the reporting period, the security situation in eastern Ukraine remains 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 is an ongoing concern.
- **Legislation update:** The Council of Ministers adopted Resolution no. 365, controlling the transfer of social payments to IDPs at their place of residence.
- **Assistance provided:** Since 11 June, UNHCR provided non-food items (NFIs) and emergency shelter assistance to more than 700 people.



Petro, 77, has been working in the construction industry for more than 45 years. However, an elderly man could not repair his own home when it was shelled in summer 2014 because of health deterioration and lack of money. For more than two years, Petro and his wife had been living in a tiny room, the only space covered from the wind and rain by scattered roof sheets. Out of that, the elderly couple spent nearly 6 months hiding in the basements every night when his hometown of Khreshevate in the non-government controlled part of Luhansk was under fire. Following the damage assessment this May, UNHCR Luhansk has provided materials to Petro and rehabilitated his house with the assistance of the local construction company. On 7 July, the family moved back in. They are now looking optimistic into the future, waiting for their life to return to normal.

According to UNHCR estimates, more than 10, 000 houses are in need of repairs in the non-government controlled area of Luhansk region.

Photo: UNHCR Ukraine/Daria Volkova/Luhansk region/July 2016

KEY FIGURES

72.9 per cent

of people crossing the line of contact are concerned about insecurity

61 per cent

cross by private cars

43.3 per cent

are aged 40-65

74.3 per cent

travel to visit relatives

51.8 per cent

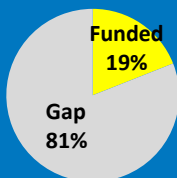
cross the line of contact every month

Source: [UNHCR crossing the line of contact survey \(May 2016\) \[pdf\]](#)

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 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 [reports](#) continued violations of the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements. Fighting continued on the line of contact in Donetsk region between Donetsk airport and Avdiivka and in the area Horlivka as well as east of Mariupol around Shyrokyne.

Freedom of movement of people across the line of contact remains highly restricted. Long queues of 200-400 cars are observed at checkpoints, with people queuing up to eight hours to cross the line. Challenges include the risk to personal safety of being on the line of contact, limited operating hours of checkpoints, technical problems with registration systems, the extortion of bribes, frequent changes to the rules and lack of shelter and sanitation facilities. The checkpoint at Zaitseve was closed on 12 June due to shelling. The checkpoint at Zolote-4 remains closed since 31 March. In order to alleviate some of the suffering of those waiting to cross the line of contact, UNHCR is in the process of installing weather shelters at checkpoints on the line of contact at Hnutove, Mariinka, Novotroitske and Stanytsia Luhanska, assisting some 10,000 people per day.

The suspension of social assistance and pension payments for IDPs pending verification of residential addresses remains a key protection concern. UNHCR's partners provide assistance to IDPs on how to reinstate the payments. The reregistration 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. While the "registration" of UN agencies remains on hold, UNHCR implements its activities in Donetsk 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 expired on 23 April and has not yet been renewed. This has not affected UNHCR's activities in the area to date; UNHCR continues to implement its programmes and to conduct some protection monitoring activities. Damage assessment and the distribution of non-food items (NFIs) and shelter materials to the affected population continues unhindered.

Displaced people continue to report the lack of livelihoods as a key concern. A shortage of employment opportunities and the general economic situation facing 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 1,400,668, with the majority going to the Russian Federation (1,092,212) and Belarus (139,194). In other neighbouring countries, 261 Ukrainians sought asylum in Moldova, 80 in Romania, 71 in Hungary and 26 in Slovakia. As of 15 July, 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, 5,332 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 inform that total average cross-border traffic increased at both checkpoints during the latest reporting period, from 11,147 to 11,701 crossings per day. There was a daily average net flow of 128 people leaving Ukraine for the Russian Federation. This continues the recent trend seen since the end of May, of more people leaving Ukraine.

Data source: Respective national asylum authorities

Achievements



Protection Cluster

- The Protection Cluster led by UNHCR, issued an update on the suspension of [IDP social benefits and pensions \[pdf\]](#) in order to reflect new regulations and share the latest figures on suspensions and reinstatements, disseminate protection monitoring information about the impact that the suspensions have had on IDPs. The update has featured in the Ukrainian and Russian media. Protection Cluster members have participated in a Working Group created by the Ministry of Social Policy to discuss amendments to the recent regulations.
- The Protection Cluster developed a [Free Legal Aid Directory \[pdf\]](#) for internally displaced and conflict-affected people in Ukraine. The Directory lists organizations providing free legal assistance across all regions of Ukraine and lists the format of the assistance (e.g. hotlines, mobile teams and office consultations), the types of legal assistance offered, as well as contact information. It is hoped that the Directory will facilitate referrals and information sharing. In addition to a Directory covering all Ukraine, separate directories have also been developed covering government controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, where the highest number of IDPs and affected populations are. The Directory is a practical tool that will help IDPs and affected populations access assistance.
- Protection Cluster Partners in Mariupol, Kramatorsk and Sievierodonetsk participated in training on how to integrate the IASC Guidelines on gender-based violence (GBV) Interventions into Humanitarian Action. The training helped partners to learn about prevention and mitigation of GBV across the humanitarian program cycle, as well as in development contexts. Ukraine is among 11 countries piloting the rollout of the Guidelines.
- The Cluster Coordinator conducted a mission to the non-government controlled area of Donetsk region. Key protection concerns in the area include freedom of movement, particularly for children and people with specific needs; the need to travel to the government controlled area to obtain civil documentation; insecurity for those living near the line of contact; and the presence of military in civilian areas. Employment opportunities are scarce, prices for goods are increasing and many people are struggling to meet their basic needs. Suspension of social benefits and pensions to IDPs remains a protection concern in the non-government controlled area; for many these were the only source of income. Lack of medicine was also cited as a serious protection issue. Programs implemented by Protection Cluster partners in Donetsk region include legal aid hotlines, psychosocial support, livelihoods, a women's community centre, as well as a safe house for SGBV survivors. In Lugansk region, protection is mainstreamed into humanitarian aid delivery and assistance focused on persons with specific needs. Based on the mission findings, the Protection Cluster will map the work being undertaken by protection actors in the area.

Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- On 8 June, the Council of Ministers adopted Resolution no. 365, "*On Procedure of Controlling Transfers of Social Payments to IDPs at their place of residence*" was adopted, coming into effect on 14 June. The resolution includes the establishment of "Commissions" for assigning or reinstating social payments (including pensions) composed on the basis of local administrations; it stipulates that social benefits may only be applied for at the place of IDP registration. Social protection authorities will initiate verification of personal residency data order to assign or reinstate social benefits; following residency verification, the social protection unit will draft a report on household conditions. Reasons for denial of social benefits include absence of the IDP from the place of residence indicated in the application for reinstatement of benefits. Where a person is absent from the place of residence, they will be obliged to go to the Department of Social Policy (DoSP) within three days, otherwise they will be sent a letter requesting them to go to a DoSP office within three days. Simultaneously, the State Border Guard Service (SBGS) will provide the DoSP with data on the beneficiary's movement to non-government controlled areas or abroad. Information received from government agencies can lead to cancellation of the IDP certificate according to Art. 12 of the Law on IDPs. Social benefits will cease if the absence of an IDP from the place of residence is confirmed by the report on household conditions or on recommendations from the Ministry of Finance following verification of social benefits. If the IDP

¹ [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>

certificate is cancelled, IDPs will not be able to receive their benefits sooner than in six months after suspension, in compliance with the required procedures.

- During the reporting period, UNHCR partner the Right to Protection (R2P) provided legal assistance to 172 people. In June, UNHCR partner CrimeaSOS provided legal consultations to 789 people and took part in 26 court cases. Stantsia Kharkiv provided 820 general consultations, 276 legal consultations and 311 psychosocial consultations. UNHCR partner Slavic Heart provided 1,163 general consultations, 1,051 legal consultations and 228 psychosocial consultations. NRC provided 1,236 information consultations, 467 general consultations and 16 legal consultations. The majority of consultations were provided to women. Main concerns raised were the reinstatement of social assistance, inheritance, business, civil documentation, humanitarian assistance, medical assistance, housing, employment, children and depression. In the non-government controlled area of Donetsk, UNHCR partner Maximal provided 201 legal consultations, 647 psychosocial consultations. Main issues related to social assistance, housing, land and property, crossing the line of contact and requests for humanitarian assistance. In the non-government controlled area of Luhansk, the UNHCR Protection Unit provided 23 general consultations. Main concerns included humanitarian, social and medical assistance, legal assistance and access to rights. NGO partner, Donbas Development Centre (DDC) provided 31 legal consultations and first aid training to 475 people.

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), in cooperation with Donetsk and Luhansk administrations and partners, launched a damage database collecting information to improve coordination of repairs. Cluster partners including ADRA, Arche Nova, DRC, ICRC, Luxembourg Red Cross, Mercy Corps, PiN and UNHCR contributed to the database currently consisting of 19,083 homes, comprising 10,612 in the government controlled area of Donetsk and 8,471 in the government controlled area of Luhansk. Through the Sub-national Cluster's referral system and the inputs by regional and local authorities, database cleaning allows identification of gaps. The database will be continually updated to include details of newly damaged homes.
- On the 31 May, the Cluster's Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) met to orientate the strategic direction of the Cluster until the end 2016. There was robust discussion on capacity building for Donetsk and Luhansk regional authorities, development of the Cluster's transition plan and durable solutions for conflict affected and displaced populations. In addition to focusing on light, medium and heavy repairs and pilot reconstruction projects, the SAG discussed assistance to the crisis affected and displaced population to increase affordability of housing and to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are met through current housing options.
- The Cluster is developing an interactive online map to improve its ability to monitor and respond to emergency referrals covering shelter and winterization needs.
- Following monitoring of 271 collective centres, the Shelter Cluster has published an [overview \[pdf\]](#) of the current situation of collective centres in Ukraine. 6,518 persons live in these centres in government controlled areas. 52 of the monitored centres have closed since the start of the crisis (32 closed during 2015-16) mainly due to financial difficulties and seasonal use of such centres. Monitoring revealed that 700 people face the risk of eviction. The factsheet also provides a review of legal provisions, case studies and recommendations for partners attempting to provide durable solutions for people living in collective centres.
- More information on Cluster activities can be found in the June 2016 [factsheet \[pdf\]](#).

Achievements, Impact and Identified Needs

- During the reporting period, UNHCR NFI and shelter materials were provided to over 700 people. UNHCR's Kharkiv Field Office distributed NFIs to 432 people in northern Donetsk and provided shelter materials to partners ADRA and PiN. UNHCR's partner ADRA provided light and medium shelter assistance to 74 households in northern Donetsk. UNHCR's Mariupol Field Office provided 248 NFIs to the NGO Proliska for distribution to people living near the line of contact. In non-government controlled areas, UNHCR partners Maximal and DDC distributed 21,800 m2 of tarpaulin in Donetsk city and to areas near the line of contact. In Luhansk, UNHCR distributed shelter materials to 123 households in Khryashchuvate, Novosvitlivka, Krasnyi Yar, Zelena Rosha and Heorhiivka villages. UNHCR contracted a construction company in Luhansk to assist people unable to do their own repairs. So far, 20 households have been selected for repair assistance.



In first week of July, UNHCR partner NGO Proliska has distributed buckets and jerry cans filled with water to residents of the conflict affected villages in the northern part of Donetsk region. Due to shelling and ongoing hostilities, water supply was damaged in many communities, located in the close proximity to contact line. Photo: Proliska/Eugeniy Kaplin/Donetsk region/July 2016

300 children from Donetsk and Luhansk schools joined the English-language summer camp in Kyiv region



3

300 children from 8 schools in Luhansk and Donetsk region came to Kyiv region in July to participate in the all-Ukrainian language program Go Camp that promotes foreign languages in Ukraine. UNHCR together with Ministry of Temporary Occupied Territories and IDPs has arranged the travel of the groups to the summer camp, managed by international volunteers under the Community Based Initiatives.

On the last day of the weekly program, the students enjoyed a special English lesson which was joined by UNHCR representatives, Deputy Minister Georgi Tuka and Ukrainian Eurovision finalist PurPur band.

Over 600,000 children were affected by the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Many of them require psychological assistance to cope with trauma and distress. Photo: UNHCR Ukraine/O.Pustovit/Kyiv region/July 2016



Working in partnership

On 20 July, UNHCR and the City of Mariupol will co-host the Cities of Solidarity Forum. The event recognizes the strong commitment and the spirit of solidarity which the City and people of Mariupol have extended to internally displaced people over the past two years. The forum will bring together the internally displaced population, the host community, local authorities, central government, diplomatic representations, international organizations, civil society, the media, faith-based institutions, business associations and academia. During the keynote moment of the event, a Framework for Cooperation will be signed between UNHCR and the Mariupol Municipal authorities, in support of shared protection objectives. More information on the Cities of Solidarity Initiative can be found on our [website](#).

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

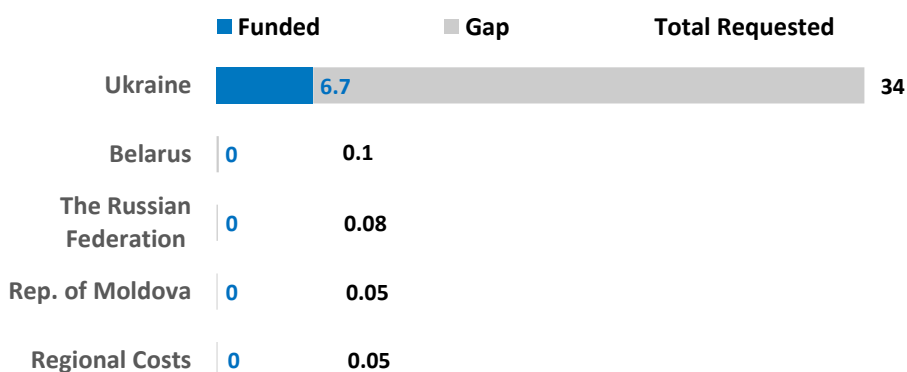
UNHCR is very grateful for the financial support provided by donors, particularly those with un-earmarked and broadly earmarked funds. UNHCR’s total financial requirement in 2016 for the Ukraine situation is **US\$ 34.8 million**. This covers UNHCR’s financial needs for providing protection and assistance 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 **19 per cent** of the total financial requirements.

Donors who have contributed:

- Canada
- Estonia
- European Union
- Germany
- Japan
- Private Donors
- Russian Federation
- Sweden

Funding (in million USD)

A total of **6.7 million** has been contributed



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