

# Operational Update

September 2018

**Landmark decision on Pensions:** On 4 September, a decision of the Supreme Court in favor of an internally displaced person has the potential to positively affect the lives of thousands of conflict affected elderly.

**Shelter repairs in eastern Ukraine:** Since the beginning of the year, UNHCR has repaired 488 households of vulnerable populations in eastern Ukraine.

UNHCR partnered with the **Ukrainian Institute for Human Rights** to advocate for legislative initiatives aimed at protecting the human rights of IDPs and encourage their participation in governmental and public affairs.

## KEY INDICATORS

**16,180**

IDPs and other conflict-affected persons have received legal assistance from UNHCR partners in 2018.

**1,616**

Beneficiaries have been selected to receive individual protection assistance (IPA) through cash in 2018.

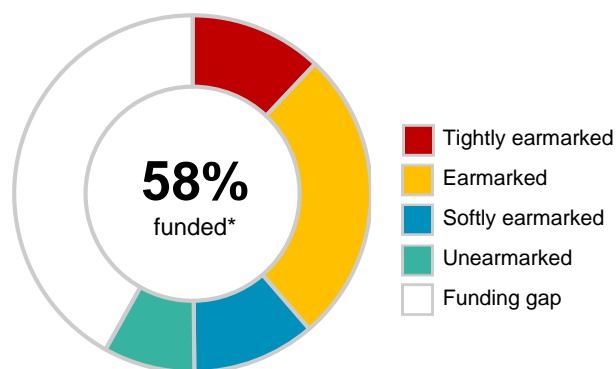
**650**

Households in eastern Ukraine have benefited from UNHCR shelter assistance in 2018.

## FUNDING (AS OF 10 OCTOBER)

**USD 31.1 million**

UNHCR's financial requirements 2018



\* Including indicative allocation of softly earmarked and unearmarked contributions.

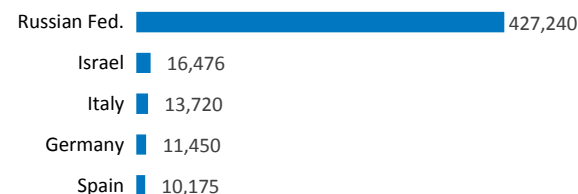


On 18 September 2018, a Psycho Social Rehabilitation Centre called "World of Happy Children" that had been renovated and refurbished with the support of UNHCR was inaugurated in the city of Sumy, north eastern Ukraine. The project was initiated by internally displaced people (IDPs) to support children with autism. An estimated 15 children benefit free of charge from the centre's facilities, which includes child psychologists, speech therapists, and pedagogues specialised in abnormal mental development.

## INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDP)\* AND CONFLICT-AFFECTED PERSONS\*\*

**1.8 million\*\*\***

### ASYLUM SEEKERS FROM UKRAINE\*\*\*\*



\* Residing more permanently in government-controlled areas (GCA).

\*\* Estimated number of conflict-affected persons living along the line of contact in GCAs and non-government controlled areas (NGCA).

\*\*\* Source: 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP).

\*\*\*\* Source (external displacement): Russian Federation (as of December 2016), Israel (as of July 2018): respective government authorities, UNHCR. EU Countries: EUROSTAT (as of August 2018).

External displacement data refers to the total number of asylum applications by Ukrainians (first time applications) in the top five receiving countries since the beginning of the Ukraine situation in January 2014.

## Operational Highlights

**Pensions:** On 4 September, a decision by the Supreme Court of Ukraine could positively impact hundreds of thousands of elderly, internally displaced people and residents of the non-government controlled areas (NGCA) in eastern Ukraine by ensuring that they will have readily-available access to their pensions. The ruling upheld a landmark judgement by a lower court that found in favour of an internally displaced person from Donetsk, whose pension had been suspended since April 2017. UNHCR is grateful to our NGO partner, **Right to Protection**, for providing legal representation to the concerned IDP. “This decision is a lifeline for thousands of elderly people who were unable to receive the pensions they rely on, and it’s plainly the right thing to do,” said Pascale Moreau, Director of UNHCR’s Europe Bureau. “While recognizing Ukraine’s ongoing reform efforts, we urge the Ukrainian authorities to rapidly implement the decision, and bring relief to the many people who rely on these payments for life’s basic essentials.”

### WANT TO READ MORE ON PENSIONS? CHECK OUT THESE LINKS:

UN Briefing Note: [Pensions for IDPs and persons living in the areas not controlled by the Government in the east of Ukraine](#)

ARTICLE: [Pensioners caught up in Ukraine conflict struggle to survive](#) - Shelling, landmines and long queues are among the hazards facing elderly residents as they try to collect their pensions.

VIDEO: [Ukrainian pensioners struggle to cross the conflict line](#) - Since the armed conflict divided eastern Ukraine back in 2014, almost 1.3 million pensioners have found themselves caught in the middle, living in territory now outside of government control but dependent on state institutions for their hard-earned retirement pensions.

Despite a ceasefire meant for the beginning of the school year, regular shelling continues causing household damages and civil casualties in the settlements near the ‘Contact Line’. In September, the OSCE’s Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) recorded around 19,000 ceasefire violations and since the beginning of 2018, 200 civilian casualties (37 deaths and 163 injuries), including 28 children. On 30 September, three children were killed and one injured by a mine near Horlivka. Therefore, the conflict continues affecting people living along the ‘Contact Line’. The settlements near the ‘Contact Line’ are prioritized by UNHCR, as many of them have either limited or no access to humanitarian organisations due to military troops being stationed there. On 16 September 2018, the village of Zolote-4 was shelled causing damages to 14 households in two multi-story buildings. UNHCR partner Proliska distributed shelter kits, which include Tarpaulin [a plastic sheet material] used for temporary replacement of broken window glass (see photos below).



In September, UNHCR visited the village of **Krymske**, which has suffered from fighting since 2014. Currently, only 47 per cent of the population (576 people), have remained. The village lacks clean water, coal and wood supply due to mined forests and fields. [UNHCR will distribute individual protection cash assistance and is currently repairing the local health post.](#)

Mine contamination of vast eastern Ukraine territories impedes assistance to vulnerable populations. In this respect, UNHCR welcomes submission of a draft law on demining to the Parliament of Ukraine, which has been compiled in accordance with certain international examples and comments from international organizations, including UNHCR. UNHCR through its legal partners is advocating for the

consideration of this draft law in relevant Parliament committees and for its further inclusion into the voting agenda.

## UNHCR Ukraine's Information Management Products' links

- Registration of Internal Displacement in Ukraine
- Checkpoint crossing along the 'Contact Line' on a monthly basis
- UNHCR Ukraine Shelter and Non-Food Items activities follow up in 2018
- UNHCR Ukraine NGO partners

### External relations



On 17 September 2018, a delegation of political directors of Foreign Affairs Ministries of the Benelux Union travelled to eastern Ukraine and participated together with UNHCR at the inauguration ceremony of the new Marinka EECP.



On 18 September 2018, four European Union Members of Parliaments from the Committee on Foreign Affairs led by the chair of the Security and Defence Subcommittee of the European Parliament, Ms. Anna Fotyga (ECR, PL) visited a UNHCR quick impact project in Talakivka (Mariupol area) and UNHCR interventions in EECP Maiorsk.



On 17 September 2018, four Estonian Parliamentarians visited UNHCR's support to Maiorsk checkpoint and met with shelter beneficiaries at Svitlodarsk. The delegation included the Chairman of Foreign Affairs Committee of Estonian Parliament, as well as the Ambassador of Estonia to Ukraine.



## REFUGEES AND STATELESS PERSONS

### Protection of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

- Following advocacy efforts of UNHCR NGO partner "Rokada", a new decree adopted on the 12 September by the Government of Ukraine states that there will now be **150 quotas** reserved each year for foreigners, stateless persons, refugees and persons who have been granted complementary protection to attend state-sponsored universities.
- In September, UNHCR together with NGO partner Rokada and NGO MBA Kids trained **24 refugee youth** on leadership skills.
- **Two refugees** took part in a UNFPA life skills training in Lviv.
- UNHCR facilitated the participation of **two Ukrainian judges** who are members of the International Association of Refugee Law Judges (IARLJ) at an annual conference organized in Catania, Italy on 12 – 14 September 2018.
- During September, UNHCR legal partners conducted **13 monitoring visits** to State Migration Service offices. As observed, the issue of long queues of potential applicants at SMS Kyiv had not been resolved. However, UNHCR and legal partner R2P managed to persuade SMS Kyiv to prioritize the applicants according to the list of vulnerable cases compiled by UNHCR partners Rokada and R2P.



**100**

Asylum seekers received legal assistance from UNHCR and its partners in September

**1,002**

Legal consultations provided to persons of concern in Kyiv, Odesa and Zakarpattya regions in September

**31**

Persons of concern were assisted with employment in September

**4**

Persons of concern were employed in September

### Livelihoods of Refugees and Asylum seekers

**100**

Refugees received counselling on self-reliance grants opportunities from UNHCR and its partners in September

**6**

self-reliance grants were approved by UNHCR partner Caritas in September

**20**

Refugees started business thanks to UNHCR self-reliance grants in September

### Assistance to Stateless Persons and Persons at Risk of Statelessness

- **Statelessness Determination Procedure (SDP):** On 21 September, The Parliament of Ukraine registered the draft law on the *Amendment of Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine Regarding Recognition as a Stateless Person*. This represents an important and positive step in developing procedures for determining the status of stateless persons and lobbying for the inclusion of these amendments in accordance with the 1954 Convention. In particular, thanks to UNHCR lobbying, the MPs included amendments to *the Law on Employment of Population* which stipulates that recognized stateless persons holding a temporary residence permit will not be obliged to have a working permit. This is a positive development, as otherwise stateless persons would have to wait for two years from the moment of recognition to be able to work without a working permit.
- On 24 September, the UNHCR NGO partner the Tenth of April together with the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), European Network on Statelessness (ENS) and Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion (ISI) issued a new report entitled "**Roma Belong – Statelessness, Discrimination and Marginalisation of Roma in Ukraine**". The report is the latest publication of the #RomaBelong project series, which explores the nexus between statelessness, discrimination and marginalisation of Roma in the Western Balkans and Ukraine. The report recommends the simplification of the procedures to confirm Ukrainian citizenship as well as to facilitate access to birth registration and documentation.
- UNHCR NGO legal partner R2P conducted **two trainings** for lawyers, attorneys and legal specialists of FLAC and State Penitentiary System on response to statelessness and prevention of it.

# 43

Stateless persons (or at risk of) were identified and provided legal aid in Kyiv, Odesa and Zakarpattya regions in September

# 17

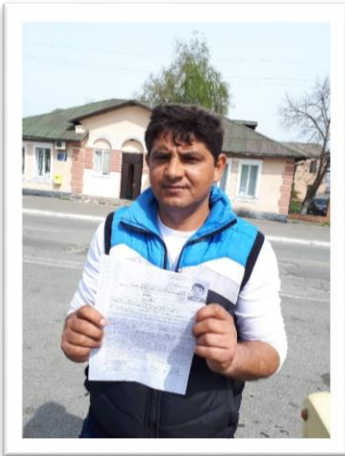
Persons received passports  
 Thanks to assistance provided by UNHCR partners in September

# 11

Persons received duplicates of birth certificates in September

# 6

**Persons**  
 Obtained their birth certificates for the first time in September



*Meet Yulii Baloh, who has been finally registered as a citizen of Ukraine thanks to the assistance of UNHCR NGO partner R2P. After his application had been pending registration for four months, R2P referred his case to the court. The court decision established the fact of legal residency and citizenship. Yulii has already applied for Ukrainian passport.*

## Protection and assistance to internally displaced and conflict-affected persons

### Protection

#### Protection Cluster

- The protection situation for conflict-affected and displaced people in Ukraine continues to be serious. The ongoing armed conflict, restrictions on freedom of movement, continued trade blockade between government-controlled and non-government controlled territory, and the suspension of social benefits and pensions to thousands of people has further stretched the resilience and heightened the vulnerability of the conflict-affected and displaced population, forcing many to resort to negative coping mechanisms. A recent assessment found that 71% of households applied negative coping strategies in NGCA and 78% of households in GCA – the highest level since April 2016. Risks to life, safety and security along the contact line due to ongoing conflict, loss of life, and injuries resulting from mines and explosive remnants of war continue to be key protection concerns. Globally, Ukraine ranks first for the number of anti-vehicle mine incidents and ranks second for the number of mine-related casualties. Other protection concerns include the risk of statelessness, with an estimated 57% of births in NGCA not registered in GCA. Only 477,000 IDPs continued to receive pensions as of July 2018, which is a 40% decrease from April 2017. Nearly 30,000 people reside in villages in GCA where there are restrictions on the freedom of movement. Psychosocial distress is widely reported among all age groups in both GCA and NGCA, while

assistance is limited and lack of MHPSS services remains one of the key protection gaps in areas along the contact line and in NGCA.

- In Kramatorsk, a meeting on checkpoint took place on 19 September and a Protection Working Group meeting on 20 September. The Protection Working Group was attended by 33 participants, including representatives of MinTOT, Department for Social Protection, local council of Novhorodske village and Yaroslava Mudroho National Law Academy.
- The Age and Disability Technical Working Group operating under the Protection Cluster presented the HelpAge International baseline report on conflict-affected older men and women in eastern Ukraine. The survey covered 4,595 older people and identified the following protection issues:

**96%**

are experiencing conflict-related psychosocial issues

**20.5%**

have experienced at least one type of violence and abuse; out of these, **76%** are women

**76.8%**

had to decrease their food intake since the beginning of the conflict

**53%**

are in need of assistive devices, while **47%** require basic hygiene items and diapers for adults

**56.9%**

have limited mobility and are in need of external assistance, while **7.2%** are immobile

### Protection Monitoring

- In September, UNHCR and its NGO partners conducted **586 monitoring visits** in seven regions, most of which were focused on conflict-affected populations of the settlements along the 'Contact Line'.
- In September, UNHCR NGO legal partner R2P conducted **66 monitoring visits to five entry/exit checkpoints (EECPs)**, where they surveyed and counselled **1,891 persons** crossing the 'Contact Line'. Over 50 percent of respondents were over the age of 60.

### Legal Assistance/Protection Counselling

- During the reporting period, UNHCR NGO legal partner R2P dealt with **680 court cases**; among these, **60** were finalized successfully. More than **60 percent** of the cases concerned access to pensions for conflict-affected persons living in NGCA and along the 'Contact Line'.
- On 26-28 September, UNHCR together with its partner the Tenth of April invited some **40 communities (IDP, Roma and refugee)** to Odessa to discuss the achievements of 2018 and plan for 2019. The representatives of Roma and refugee communities also took part in these sessions to enrich the discussions.
- UNHCR organized **two webinars** on affordable housing solutions with IDP communities around the country. These webinars with communities are meant to support communities in finding affordable housing on their own. They will provide the basics of housing legislation and programmes as well as give practical assignments guiding beneficiaries in advocating with their local authorities about obtaining funding for housing and including IDPs into the general housing solutions.
- During the reporting period, UNHCR NGO partner Proliska provided social accompaniment to **120 beneficiaries**.



Meet 16-year-old Daria, a resident of the village of Katerynivka (GCA Donetsk), who was injured by the shelling that took place in the beginning of August. Daria's documents, including ID, were burnt in the shelling. UNHCR NGO partner Proliska helped the teenager obtain proof of having a bank account in order to receive financial assistance from local administration. Moreover, Proliska has submitted an application for a national ID (a Ukrainian passport) for Daria.

# 1,655

Conflict-affected persons received legal assistance from UNHCR and its partners in September

# 1,689

Persons provided with complex consultations in September; 57% of those are elderly

# 6,225

Individual consultations provided in September

# 348

Persons benefited from 25 group consultations in September

# 75

Persons participated in four group counselling sessions organised by UNHCR partner R2P in September

## SGBV

- UNHCR recorded seven incidents of domestic violence, which have been assisted with information support as well as legal and psychosocial counselling.
- On 6 and 12 September, UNHCR facilitated **two awareness raising sessions** for high school students in two villages where military troops are stationed.
- SGBV awareness was among the topics raised at a number of capacity development workshops and community meetings that UNHCR conducted for **145 persons** in conflict-affected areas.

## Individual Protection Assistance (IPA)

# 717

IPA Cash Beneficiaries In September

UNHCR continues identifying and providing vulnerable conflict affected individuals with IPA in the form of cash in eastern Ukraine. Since the start of the programme in July 2018, **1,314 vulnerable individuals** have received cash transfers, which is 40 percent of the yearly plan. During the month of September, UNHCR transferred IPA in the form of cash to **717 beneficiaries**.

## Peaceful Coexistence Projects (PCPs)

# 56

Projects in 2018

Since the beginning of the year, 56 PCPs have been approved for implementation in eastern Ukraine. The majority of the projects are currently in progress. Examples include school repairs, community centers, a sports hall and playgrounds in Luhansk and Donetsk region, on both sides of the 'Contact Line.'



One of UNHCR's PCP is the repair of a dilapidated wooden bridge (see photo) that leads to a water well that provides for the village of Kodema. This village has experienced conflict since the summer of 2014 and continued to hear shelling until September this year. The well is the only source of drinkable water. However, crossing this bridge is unsafe, especially for the elderly. Around 70% of the population of the villages are elderly. The bridge will be repaired in collaboration with the village council and the villagers that will carry out the necessary repair works. This work will benefit over 430 persons among them children, elderly persons and internally displaced persons.

## Shelter and NFIs

### Shelter and NFIs Cluster

#### Cluster meetings

In the month of September, the Shelter and NFI Cluster led by UNHCR and co-chaired by the NGO People in Need (PiN), held two subnational meetings, one in Sloviansk (covering the northern Donbass area) and one in Sievierodonetsk (covering the Luhansk GCA area). The meeting in Sloviansk was attended by respectively eight and six international organisations. Local representatives of MinToT attended the Sievierodonetsk meeting.

A coordination meeting organised by the UNHCR Mariupol field office was held in Marinka, and focused on the southern Donbass areas.

#### House-damage tracking

The Cluster continues to track the new damages to residential premises. In September 2018, 31 houses were reported damaged as a consequence of military activities. This figure considers only inhabited houses. The source of the statistics is OSCE and INSO (International NGO Safety Organisation).

The count of new damages in the first nine months of the year has reached 655. The total number of damages registered in the first nine months of the year confirms the trend of the previous months, and represents only 1/6 of the estimated damages in the correspondent period of 2017 (655 vs 3,840).

### Shelter and NFI Achievements, Impact, and Identified Needs

- During the month of September, UNHCR repaired **35 houses** of vulnerable families assisting **84 conflict-affected persons** in eastern Ukraine. There are **13** repairs ongoing in Luhansk and **29** in Donetsk regions. For more details, please check our updated [dashboard](#).



Meet the Khandramay family living in Popasna, Luhansk. Popasna has been undergoing shelling since 2014 and now has more than 600 damaged or destroyed houses. Two direct hits destroyed the house of the Khandramays in a shelling incidents on a spring night in 2015. UNHCR and its partner NRC started to reconstruct this house in 2017. Mr. Khandramay demonstrated the ability and willingness to lead the construction process under the supervision of NRC engineers and UNHCR.





## 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](#). UNHCR works together with [15 NGO partners](#). UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster and Shelter/Non-food Item (NFI), Cluster, the latter being co-chaired together with [People in Need](#). UNHCR also leads the logistics working group that is mainly responsible for humanitarian convoys to east Ukraine.

## Financial Information

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

The indicative level of funding for the operation is **US\$ 18 million**. This figure is based on contribution earmarked to [Country Name], the indicative allocation of flexible funds, and adjustments.

### EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS TO UKRAINE | USD

United States of America 5.9million | European Union 2.1 million | Sweden 1.3 million | CERF 0.8 million | Japan 0.7 million | Canada 0.6 million | Russian Federation 0.2 million | Estonia 0.2 million | Private donors

### BROADLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Major donors of broadly earmarked contributions that can potentially be used for this operation due to their earmarking to a related situation, or to the region or sub-region.

United States of America 55 million | Private donors Australia 9.7 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 2 million

### UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Major donors of unearmarked contributions.

Sweden 98.2 million | Private donors Spain 58.7 million | United Kingdom 45.3 million | Norway 42.5 million | Netherlands 39.1 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 28.5 million | Denmark 25.5 million | Switzerland 15.28 million | Private donors Italy 15.1 million | Private donors Japan 14.6 million | France 14 million | Germany 13.7 million | Italy 11.2 million | Private donors Sweden 11.2 million

## CONTACTS

E-mail: [ukrki@unhcr.org](mailto:ukrki@unhcr.org), Tel: +38 044 288-9710

## LINKS

UNHCR Ukraine: [www.unhcr.org/ua](http://www.unhcr.org/ua) - Twitter: [www.twitter.com/UNHCRUkraine](https://www.twitter.com/UNHCRUkraine)

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