

UKRAINE SITUATION

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

24 September – 20 October 2014

This update provides information on the situation of displaced persons and their protection needs. It is intended to be complementary to the [Situation reports](#) issued by OCHA.

KEY FIGURES

Internal displacement (as of 16 October)

417,246 Ukrainians are internally displaced

Applications for international protection in Russia (as of 14 October)

200,629 Ukrainians applied for refugee status or temporary asylum in the Russian Federation

Applications for international protection in other neighboring countries

Poland: 1,759 applications (as of 15.10)

Germany: 1,049 applications (as of 30.09)

Sweden: 951 applications (as of 08.10)

Belarus: 511 applications (as of 16.10)

PARTNERS

Central and local authorities in Ukraine

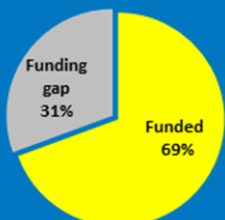
UN Agencies: ILO, OCHA, OHCHR, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, WHO

International organisations: CoE, IOM, OSCE

NGOs and community-based organizations from various regions in Ukraine

FUNDING

USD 11.3 million requested for the operation



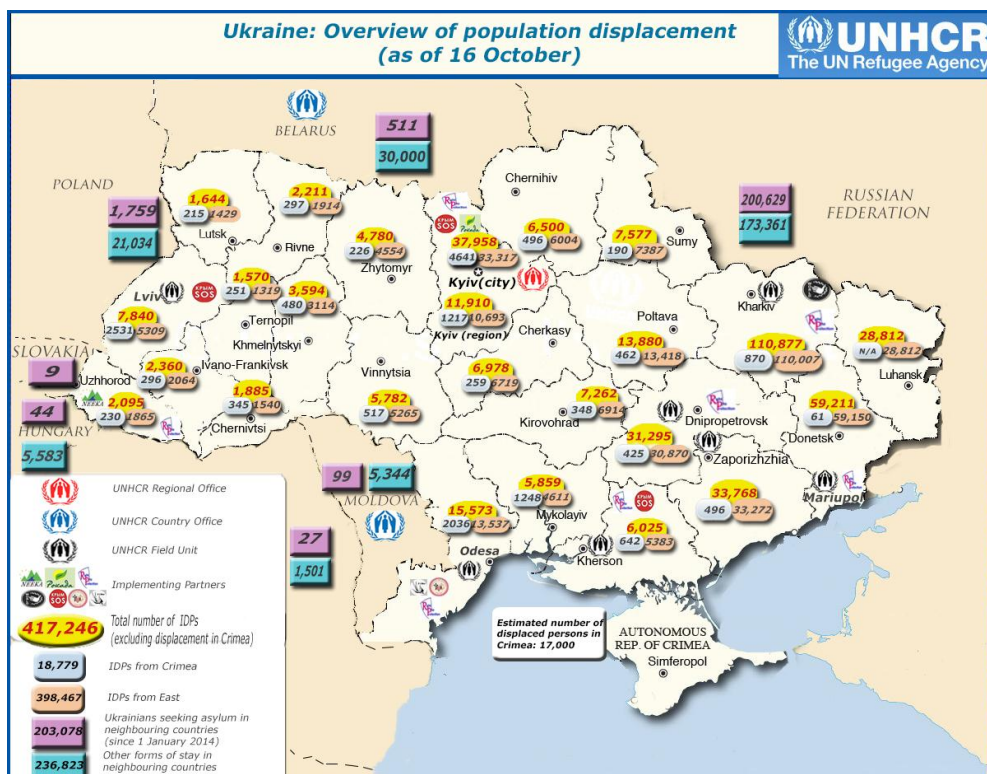
OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

[Sixth OHCHR Report on situation with Human Rights in Ukraine](#)

[Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons visit to assess situation of IDPs in Ukraine](#)

HIGHLIGHTS

- As of 16 October, 417,246 IDPs have been identified by Ukraine's State Emergency Service. 95% come from the eastern regions of Ukraine.
- Ukrainian Parliament adopted law on protection of internally displaced persons in addition to resolutions on IDP registration and provision of financial assistance, introduced by Cabinet of Ministers.
- With onset of winter season, UNHCR is focusing its efforts on providing assistance in key reception areas: Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia and Donetsk regions. As winterization component, 40 collective centres will be repaired and refurbished for accommodation of IDPs. Distribution of NFIs (10,000 winter clothing and 100,000 blankets) will further complete the preparation for winter. Cash assistance projects will be expended to six more regions to continue the pilot programs, which benefited some 1,600 most vulnerable IDPs.
- UNHCR airlifted 360 reinforced tarpaulin rolls for fast roofing repairs in the east of Ukraine. Another 1,400 plastic rolls and 2,000 plastic sheets will be delivered by sea and by road to meet the acute emergency shelter needs in the conflict area.
- UNHCR is to establish its presence in Luhansk region by deploying its international staff and partner NGO to assist IDPs in the government controlled areas.
- UNHCR deployed monitoring missions to Rostov, Belgorod and St.-Petersburg to assess situation with Ukrainian arrivals in the Russian Federation.



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Internal displacement: figures are reported by the Ukrainian State Emergency Service (SES). UNHCR is currently using official statistics provided by SES, but estimates that the real number of IDPs is likely to be higher as many do not register as IDPs. The figure excludes the number of displaced persons in Crimea, currently estimated by reliable sources to be at 17,000. The real figure remains unknown. External displacement: figures reported to UNHCR by respective national asylum authorities are as follows: as of 16 October for Belarus, as of 31 August for Slovakia, as of 31 September for Romania, as of 02 September for Hungary, as of 15 October for Republic of Moldova, as of 15 October for Poland, and reported by the Russian Federal Migration Service as of 14 October for the Russian Federation. Creation date: 16/10/2014, UNHCR Kyiv

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Operational Context

Internal Displacement

The number of registered IDPs increased sharply from 275,500 on 18 September to 417,246 on 16 October. Aside from data adjustment in Kharkiv region¹ the recent statistics by State Emergency Service (SES) confirms a steady growth in displacement during last three weeks with 2,000 – 3,000 new registrations reported per day. Majority of IDPs stay in the regions bordering the conflict-affected area: in the areas of Donetsk (59,000) and Luhansk oblasts (29,000) where Ukrainian government re-gained control, as well as in Kharkiv (111,000), Dnipropetrovsk (31,000) and Zaporizhzhia regions (34,000). As of 9 October, the registered IDP population includes 31% children; 19% of IDPs are included in the category “elderly or disabled”. Of adult IDPs, 66% are women.

Based on discussions with local observers and NGOs providing assistance to both registered and unregistered IDPs, UNHCR estimates that the number of unregistered IDPs could be at least two or three times higher than the reported number of IDPs, known to Government social services.

Returns

According to Minister of Social Policy Lyudmyla Denisova, some 86,000 IDPs have returned back to their homes as of October 7.² The number of returnees within the country is a very difficult figure to estimate, given IDPs were not officially registered in the first place. It is likely, that few report about their returns to the authorities, and the some returns are mixed with people moving back and forth.

As reported by various sources, Ukrainian nationals who had fled the conflict earlier this year to the Russian Federation have also begun returning home. According to the OSCE, the number of people crossing the Russian-Ukrainian border both ways through checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk has declined from 8,238 to 7,662 per day between 1 and 8 October³, and most people are crossing into Ukraine. About 2,000 have returned from Rostov Region to Ukraine as of 1 October. Border crossing statistics show that returns are picking up when the situation in Luhansk and Donetsk is calm, and come to a halt when incidents of violence occur. UNHCR has not received information from the Russian Federation authorities about the number of people who have returned to Ukraine.

External Displacement

In the **Russian Federation**, according to the data provided by the Federal Migration Service (FMS) as of 14 October, 200,629 Ukrainians have applied for international protection⁴ and a further 173,361 have applied for other forms of legal stay⁵. Most applications for international protection have been submitted in the Central Federal District (71,402), Volga Federal District (35,222), and Southern Federal District (22,484).

UNHCR undertook monitoring missions to the Rostov and Belgorod regions bordering Ukraine and to St. Petersburg hosting sizable numbers of Ukrainian nationals from 29 September to 9 October. In the areas visited Ukrainian nationals have access to employment and have an opportunity to make informed choices about the future settlement. Local schools and state universities have provided access to school children and students. Ukrainian students were provided with accommodation, scholarships and, where necessary, preparatory courses. UNHCR teams also visited private housing and to ensure that the local authorities are aware of their situation.

¹ The figures were adjusted by State Emergency Service from 20,000 to 87,000 in the end of September to fix the discrepancies in Kharkiv region, reported by local authorities.

² http://www.mlsp.gov.ua/labour/control/uk/publish/article?art_id=166840&cat_id=107177

³ <http://www.osce.org/om/125265>

⁴ The figure includes the number of applications for temporary asylum and refugee status. Recently, the Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation re-adjusted the figures.

⁵ Other forms of legal stay include: temporary/permanent residence permits, Russian citizenship or ‘Compatriots’ Repatriation Programme (integration and support plan for foreigner citizens with family links to the Russian Federation)

The number of asylum applications continues to grow in the European countries. As of 15 October, Poland has the highest number of asylum applications from Ukrainians, following the Russian Federation. 1,759 Ukrainians have applied for international protection in Poland and a further 21,034 have applied for other forms of legal stay⁶. In Germany 1,049 have applied for asylum as of September 30. In Sweden, 951 Ukrainian nationals have applied for asylum as of October 8. In Belarus, as of 16 October, the authorities have reported that the number of asylum applications reached 511, while some 30,000 are reportedly seeking other forms of legal stay.



Update on legislation

UNHCR welcomes the passage of the law “On the rights and freedoms of Internally Displaced Persons” on 20 October. The adoption of this law, including related draft legislation on taxation and humanitarian aid, is a crucial starting point to help internally displaced Ukrainians in need. The law defines the full set of rights of available people, simplifies administrative procedures, increases access to humanitarian support and sets out the framework to begin preparing for longer-term solutions. The law will also pave the way for a broader government policy on supporting IDPs and helping them to make new homes or to return voluntarily ([Press release](#)).

On 1 October, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted resolutions on registration of IDPs and financial assistance for temporary housing. The resolution on registration states that the Ministry of Social Policy will take the lead in organizing registration, maintaining a unified database of registered IDPs, and issuing them a standard certificate. The Ministry is working with UNHCR and other experts on developing the tools for registration and data collection, as well as the software, which is based on the Ministry’s existing system for processing social benefits. It is expected that the



88 households in Semenivka in neighborhood of Slovyansk received reinforced tarpaulin from UNHCR for fast roofing repairs

registration exercise will start shortly. According to the resolution on financial assistance, able-bodied adults registered as IDPs will receive a monthly subsidy of 442 UAH (34 USD) if they are actively seeking employment or have found employment in their place of displacement, while individuals who are not able to work (children, elderly, disabled) will receive 884 UAH (68 USD) for six months. This assistance will be exempt from personal income tax.

UNHCR welcomes the government’s effort to register IDPs, document their displacement and provide financial assistance to help them pay for rent. There

is a great deal of work ahead to make the registration system work smoothly, such as introducing online application forms and mobilizing volunteers to assist in the process. While the financial assistance program will provide important assistance to individuals, it is still important to adopt a resolution on paying the bills accumulated by collective centres over the last months. There was a Cabinet of Ministers resolution to pay these costs for IDPs from Crimea, but centres hosting IDPs from eastern Ukraine have not been paid.

On October 10, a government decree was enacted on facilitated issuance to the citizens of Ukraine granted temporary asylum in the Russian Federation, of documents about joining the state program of return of compatriots from abroad. The timeframe for verification of submitted information (marital status, education, vocational training) is now 10 working days, and certificate of participation in the state program is shortened to 15 working day. In the absence of documents about education, vocational training or employment period the migration authorities should conduct interviews with applicants to clarify their skills and qualifications.

Protection Monitoring and Response

UNHCR has introduced reporting tools to assist protection monitoring and response activities for our partners. The main developments have been the following:

⁶ The figure includes applications for temporary and permanent residence permits and also EU long-term residence permits.

- **Population movements** are monitored through contact with local authorities, collective centres, interviews of passengers at train stations and telephone interviews with returnees. With the onset of winter, the start of the school year, and potential progress related to a ceasefire, some IDPs from eastern Ukraine have started to think about next steps. Some have chosen to go home – either temporarily to gather up their belongings or to get a feel for the atmosphere. Many have left family members behind and want to re-join them; they want to look after their property; civil servants like teachers and doctors reported that they have been ordered to return to work or they will have their employment terminated. Since the Government has not established a predictable policy for assistance of IDPs, many people report feeling uncertain about the future, frustrated at the lack of help and feel pushed to return home.
- **IDPs from the East continue to report discrimination** in the rental market for housing. Employers are also reluctant to hire IDPs from the East. UNHCR and partners have held a round table with the national press, including several IDPs who spoke about their experiences, in order to raise awareness about this problem. Training for IDPs about their employment rights has also started.
- Together with its partner Crimea SOS, **UNHCR raised issues IDPs were facing in registering to vote in the upcoming parliamentary elections** on 26 October. In order to transfer their place of voting, IDPs from eastern Ukraine were supposed to provide documentary evidence to show why they needed to make the transfer. After detailed instructions appeared on the Crimea SOS website and in the press, the Central Electoral Commission simplified the procedures, so that persons with residence registration in Donetsk and Luhansk can register to vote temporarily at a different location without providing additional documentation. However, they can vote only for the party lists, not for the single-member districts.
- **The situation of people in institutional care is a major concern.** Disabled people, orphans, elderly and people in psychiatric hospitals have all been moved from conflict-affected areas. UNHCR has identified several institutions caring for these people and in need of non-food items support.

Shelter and NFIs

While Government is focusing on providing cash assistance for rent according several vulnerability criteria, UNHCR is partnering with authorities at the regional level to prepare enough accommodation centres for the winter. **UNHCR intends to refurbish 40 facilities with a total capacity of 1,200 people** in Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia region, Mariupol and accessible parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. On October 3, the first agreement was signed with Kharkiv City Council for winterization and repairs of seven accommodation facilities. UNHCR is finalizing agreements with local authorities in Zaporizhzhia, Dnipropetrovsk and Mariupol to start winterization of collective centres for accommodation of IDPs.

On 24 September, UNHCR airlifted 360 enforced plastic tarpaulin rolls to be used for some 1,000 damaged houses (3,500 people) in the eastern parts of Ukraine. The distribution of materials is ongoing in the northern part of Donetsk region (Slovyansk, Semenivka, Artemivsk and Seversk). Another 1,400 plastic rolls and 2,014 plastic sheets will be delivered by sea and by road in the third week of October.



On 24 September, UNHCR airlifted plastic rolls to support rapid repairs in the return areas for 1,000 households

According to the Ministry of the Emergencies (EMERCOM) of the Russian Federation, over 48,000 refugees from Ukraine, including over 15,000 children are staying at 931 temporary accommodation facilities in the country. The consolidated information about the number of temporary accommodation centres that was earlier placed at the Ministry's website is no longer released on a regular basis. As clarified by the EMERCOM, this means the "acute" phase of the operation is over and the function of managing temporary accommodation centres has been transferred to the regional level. The EMERCOM continues to transfer Ukrainian nationals by land or air from border areas to various regions across the country, where they can legalize their stay.

Non-Food Items (NFIs)

As of 15 October, UNHCR has dispatched more than 10,000 wool blankets, 2,000 bed linens, 4,200 towels, 1,800 clothing sets, 2,200 kitchen sets and 6,700 food packages in response to the urgent needs of IDPs in Kharkiv, Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk and Luhansk region. UNHCR also plans to distribute blankets and clothes in the major reception areas. Procurement is ongoing for 10,000 winter warm clothing and 100,000 blankets that will be distributed by Ukrainian Society of Red Cross and People in Need, as well as directly by UNHCR teams.



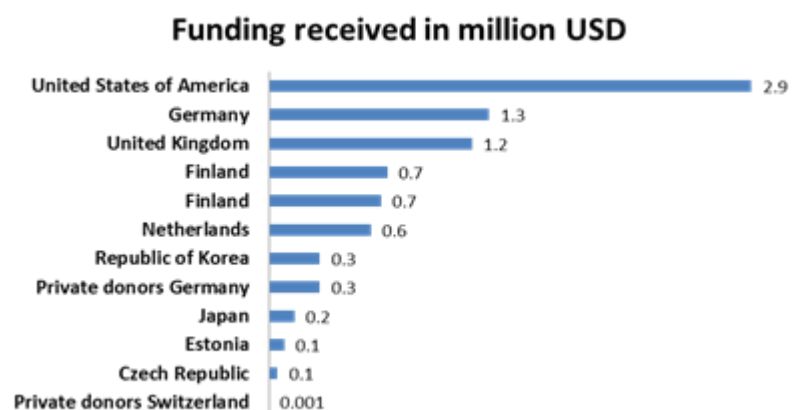
UNHCR organized the first delivery of humanitarian aid for 850 families in northern Luhansk region (Kremenna and Svatovo). On October 10, a Memorandum was signed with newly appointed Luhansk Governor Gennadiy Moskal to establish UNHCR presence

in the region and support local authorities with assistance to 25,000 IDPs in the areas, controlled by the Government. UNHCR together with local Government will conduct inventory of accommodation facilities, as well as develop cash assistance program and offer self-reliance grants to IDPs ([Press release](#)).

Local authorities are increasingly requesting assistance as reliance on charity organizations has now reached exceed their capacities. UNHCR has deployed international staff to Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv and Mariupol and established presence through local staff and implementing partners in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Dnipropetrovsk, Kherson, Mykolayiv, Zakarpattia, Odesa and Lviv regions. One time cash assistance projects for IDPs are being finalized with local Governors in six regions according to the vulnerability criteria, as piloted in Kyiv, Lviv and Vinnytsia regions, where USD 250,000 were provided to support 1,560 displaced people.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

UNHCR is grateful for the financial support provided by donors particularly those who have contributed to UNHCR activities with un-earmarked and broadly earmarked funds, as well as for those who have contributed to the situation of displaced people in Ukraine. UNHCR's total financial requirements for IDPs in eastern Ukraine include USD 11.3 million, as presented in the [Preliminary Response Plan](#) launched in Kyiv on 14 August. The overall needs for the IDPs situation are currently funded at 69 per cent.



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Links:

External Update: www.unhcr.org/ua/externalupdate IDP Profile as of Oct 17: www.unhcr.org/ua/idpprofile

Latest IDP Statistics: www.unhcr.org/ua/maps UNHCR Assistance to IDPs in Ukraine: www.unhcr.org/ua/humanitarianresponse

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