

KEY FIGURES

Internal displacement (as of 18 September)

275,489 Ukrainians are internally displaced

Applications for international protection in Russia (as of 19 September)

168,643 Ukrainians applied for refugee status or temporary asylum in the Russian Federation

Applications for international protection in selected countries

Poland: 1,565 applications (as of 17.09)
Germany: 699 applications (as of 31.08)
Sweden: 686 applications (as of 31.08)
Belarus: 449 applications (as of 15.09)

PARTNERS

Central and local authorities in Ukraine

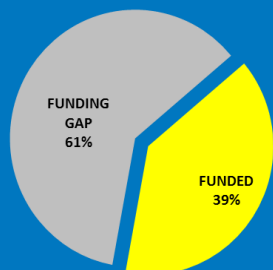
UN Agencies: ILO, OCHA, OHCHR, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, WHO

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

- OSCE Special Monitoring Mission
- Minsk Memorandum 19 September
- Minsk Protocol 05 September
- European Parliament ratifies EU-Ukraine Association Agreement

UKRAINE

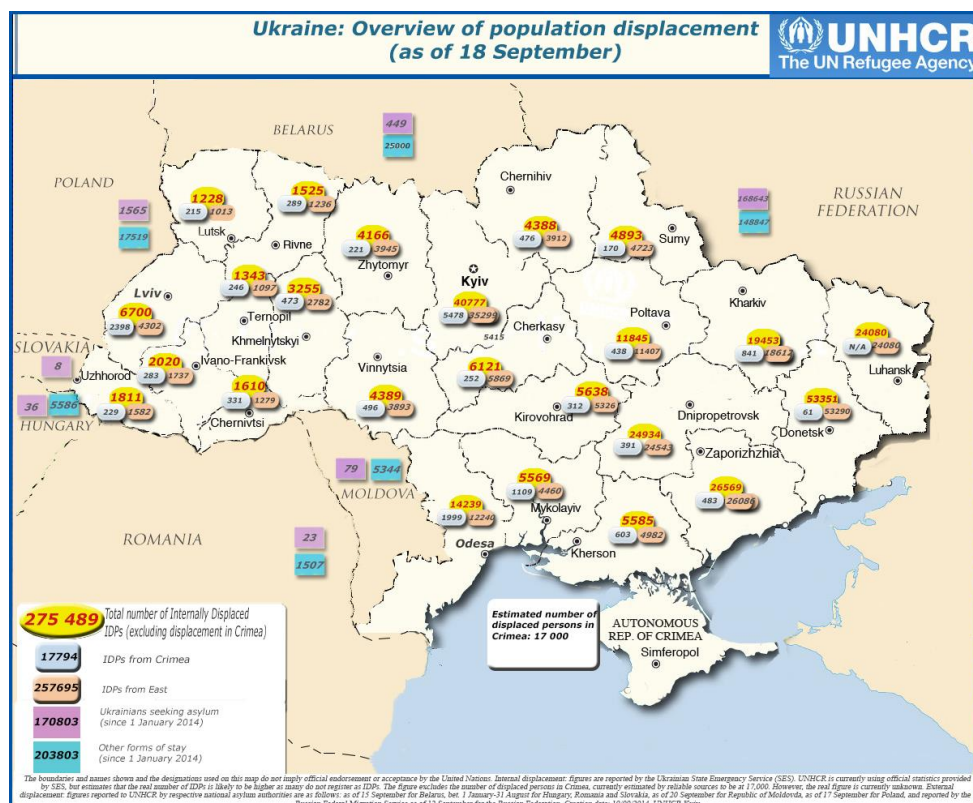
UNHCR EXTERNAL UPDATE ON THE SITUATION OF DISPLACED PERSONS

5 – 23 September 2014

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- As of 18 September, almost 275,500 Ukrainians have been displaced throughout Ukraine. Almost 94% of them come from the eastern regions of Ukraine.
- Within the reporting period, UNHCR distributed humanitarian aid worth more than 200,000 USD to the most vulnerable IDPs. Deliveries included assistance to rebuild destroyed homes.
- More than 250,000 USD was provided in form of cash assistance to about 1,500 vulnerable IDPs in Kyiv, Lviv and Vinnytsia region.
- A draft law on IDPs was submitted to the Parliament on 28 August. A vote on the law has been postponed until October.
- Government authorities report an increase in returns to government controlled areas in the Donbas region - 50,000 returns as of 22 September.
- The number of Ukrainians applying for asylum has reached 168,643 in the Russian Federation. In addition 1,565 Ukrainians applied for asylum in Poland, 699 in Germany, 686 in Sweden and 449 in Belarus.



* The map can be downloaded online [here](#).

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Operational Context

Internal Displacement

According to the Ukrainian State Emergency Service (SES), as of 18 September there were 275,489 IDPs¹. Almost 94% came from the East, while 17,794 came from Crimea. Since the beginning of September, UNHCR noticed an increase of over 15,700 in the number of IDPs, which is both due to the continued conflict in the Donbas region, as well as a rise in registration of already displaced persons². Most IDPs are in Donetsk region (53,351), Kyiv (40,777) and Zaporizhzhia (26,569). Many IDPs choose to remain in the eastern regions of Ukraine in order to be closer to their homes, as most wish to return as soon as the situation improves. Some refuse to travel to western regions due to alleged fear of discrimination from the local population.

The number of IDPs is expected to be higher, as many IDPs choose not to present themselves as IDPs at the SES³. Out of registered IDPs, almost 33% are children and 14% are elderly and persons with disabilities, stressing the need for medical care and access to education for these segments of the IDP population. Among the adult IDP population, two-thirds are reported to be women. Many male relatives remain in the conflict area to protect their properties.

Many IDPs have started returning to their homes in government controlled areas in Donetsk and Luhansk regions. According to the SES, as of 22 September, almost 50,000 people have returned to their homes. Most of them have returned to Slavyansk, Kramatorsk, Nikolayevka, Artiomovsk, and Krasny Liman.

Since the ceasefire agreement, increased population movements from the Russian Federation to Ukraine have also been observed⁴. Reportedly, people travel both ways with the intention to either return to Ukraine or move to Russia. Others cross the border to buy food and other basic supplies. Regional authorities speak of 400 Ukrainian nationals daily leaving the territory of Rostov region for Ukraine. UNHCR is not able to verify these reports.

External Displacement

In the **Russian Federation**, according to the data provided by the Federal Migration Service (FMS) as of 19 September, 168,643 Ukrainians have applied for international protection.⁵ Most of these applications have been submitted in the Central Federal District (61,089), Volga Federal District (29,630), and Southern Federal District (19,474). A further 148,847 have applied for other forms of legal stay⁶.

The number of asylum applications also increased in various other European countries. **Poland** continues to receive the highest number of asylum applications from Ukrainians, after the Russian Federation. As of 17 September, 1,565 Ukrainians have applied for asylum in Poland and a further 17,519 have applied for other forms of legal stay⁷. In **Sweden**, 686 Ukrainian nationals have applied for asylum in 2014 until the end of August, compared to just 98 in 2013. In **Germany** 699 have applied for asylum. In **Belarus**, as of 15 September, the authorities have reported that the number of asylum applications reached 449, while some 25,000 are reported to have applied for other forms of legal stay.

¹ The IDP figure has changed due to technical problems with reporting by the regional authorities. UNHCR is currently using official statistics from the SES

² Many families only registered with the authorities once it became clear that they would not be able to return home by the school start on 01.09.14

³ Available statistics also prove that many people remain unregistered as many do not see any benefit. For example, the SES reports that 33,282 elderly and persons with disabilities have registered as IDPs, while 72,169 persons have requested to have their benefits transferred to the place of displacement.

⁴ UNHCR received reports on population movement across the border from the border authorities, OSCE and media.

⁵ 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, which led to a slight amendment since the last reporting period (22 August – 4 September).

⁶ 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).

⁷ The figure includes applications for temporary and permanent residence permits and also EU long-term residence permits.



Legislation

IDP legislation

On 28 August a draft law on IDPs was registered at the Parliament and was expected to be submitted to voting on 16 September. On 15 September UNHCR issued a [press release](#) in Kyiv urging a swift adoption of the law. However, the vote on the law has been postponed until the next Parliamentary session on 14 October. This is a major setback in terms of initiating standardized registration procedures and facilitating IDPs' access to government services and humanitarian assistance.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister Groyzman has tasked the Ministry of Social Policy to take immediate steps towards the establishment of a centralized IDP registration system. In the absence of an IDP law, the Cabinet of Ministers has also amended by-laws in order to simplify the procedures for granting unemployment benefits⁸ to IDPs. On 2 September, Parliament adopted a new Tax Code in order to exempt charitable donations to IDPs from taxation⁹.

The movement of Ukrainian children to Crimea is being restricted, according to State Border Guard Service, as part of the implementation of the Law 'On guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of citizens and on the legal regime on the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine'. Before 8 September, Ukrainian children were allowed to enter Crimea using a birth certificate or child travel document. Now IDP children who do not have Ukrainian passport would have to apply for one in order to travel to Crimea.

Protection monitoring

UNHCR has received reports about discriminatory practices towards IDPs from the East, living in western regions¹⁰. Negative media articles have intensified this situation in some regions. There are concerns that this could impact assistance from civil society. Until now, assistance from voluntary groups and religious organization has been crucial in meeting the basic needs of IDPs. Incidents of discrimination may also affect IDPs decisions to remain in the East. In order to address this situation UNHCR together with its implementing partners started to work on information campaigns¹¹.

At the beginning of September, UNHCR organized a mission to Luhansk region¹² to assess the overall security situation and population needs¹³. As of 12 September, the number of accounted IDPs was 19,725, but the estimated figure might reach more than 50,000 IDPs. The majority being ethnic Russians from the area. Most of them are accommodated in private houses in Starobilsk, Novoboskov, Svetovo and Novoaidar. Local authorities are assisting IDPs, but the support is limited due to budgetary constraints.

⁸ Ministry of Social Policy has also circulated internal instructions regarding the use of electronic data, rather than physical files for the payment of social benefits. Many IDPs lack the necessary documentation and therefore payments could not be done until now.

⁹ Pending President's signature

¹⁰ According to IDP reports, there were cases of landlords reluctant to rent accommodation to IDPs, banks refusing loans, and employers rejecting qualified applicants from the East.

¹¹ As a first step, a roundtable with senior editors was organized in Kyiv on September 19 to discuss about how media coverage on IDPs can be improved

¹² The mission covered the following towns: Svatova, Kremennaya, Severodonetsk and Lisichansk.

¹³ This is the first time that UNHCR was able to collect information about the IDPs in Luhansk region; until now, security situation did not allow the collection of in-depth information on the situation of IDPs or distribution of humanitarian assistance.

Shelter and NFIs

Shelter

The SES reports that about 20% of IDPs are living in collective centres. In general, the financing of state-run collective centres remains constrained as resources have not been allocated to cover the costs of utilities. In some of the collective centres, electricity bills remained unpaid for several months.

According to the latest government's assessment, some 25,500 persons across Ukraine will need to be relocated before the winter season. UNHCR is concerned that the government has not allocated funds for accommodation of IDPs. The level of preparedness for the winter season is worrying. Nevertheless, rather than moving IDPs into winterized collective centres, which are often isolated from local communities, assisting IDPs to stay with host families could be a better approach, as the majority of IDPs are currently living with host families. Assistance could be given in the form of rental subsidies or discounts on utilities payments for persons hosting IDPs.

In the Russian Federation, the number of temporary accommodation centres (TACs) has increased by 17% since 22 August. According to the authorities, over 56,285 Ukrainians (including 17,928 children) are accommodated in 998 temporary accommodation centres. Those include tented camps and more permanent facilities.¹⁴ However, due to the upcoming winter season, tented camps are closing down, and displaced persons are being transferred to other regions. Over 60,135 Ukrainians have been relocated from the border areas to other Russian regions by the authorities, while 10,202 persons have moved on their own since 1 January 2014. Displaced people in the Rostov region are not opting for relocation as many hope to return soon to their homes in eastern Ukraine.

The Russian authorities have also decided to provide financial assistance to recognised refugees and beneficiaries of temporary asylum who live outside the TACs¹⁵. This financial assistance will be granted as of 15 September, for a period of maximum 30 days.

NFIs¹⁶

As of September 8, UNHCR has distributed direct humanitarian assistance worth more than 200,000 USD in Donetsk, Kharkiv and Kyiv region. In addition, 400 sets of food (including baby food) and NFI were delivered in Artiomovsk and 100 sets in Nikolaevka, especially to those who have completely lost their properties. UNHCR also delivered 500 wool blankets, 100 mattresses, 200 bed sheets and 100 pillows to collective centres in Pervomaisky district and in the city of Mariupol in the south of Donetsk region.

On 17 September UNHCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Kyiv Regional State Administration. UNHCR will allocate UAH 1.3 million (96.600 USD) to Kyiv region for targeted financial assistance to the most vulnerable IDPs. Some 800 beneficiaries (223 families) in Kyiv region identified by the local social department will receive cash assistance from UNHCR in amount UAH 3,500 (260 USD) to 7,000 (540 USD) each. Financial assistance has been also provided in Lviv and Vinnytsia region, negotiations are held to establish similar programmes in Kherson, Zakarpattia and Kharkov regions.

IDP needs keep growing dramatically as the cold season is approaching. Of great concern is the need for accommodation and/or reconstruction of their homes. Many IDPs have left their homes with few belongings and some have not received their benefits in over three months. At the same time, civil society's¹⁷ response is weakening.

¹⁴ This include educational and cultural institutions, rest homes, health camps and major sporting facilities.

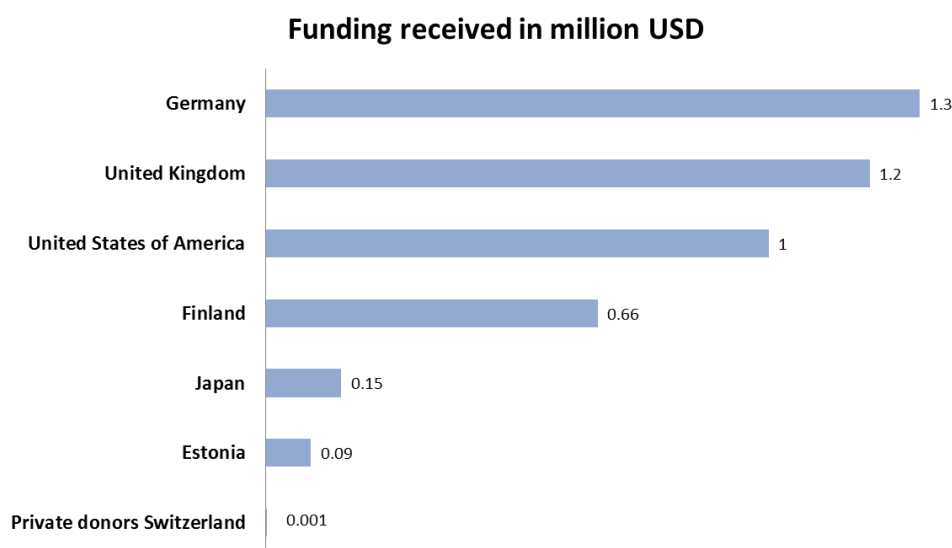
¹⁵ The recognised refugees and beneficiaries of temporary asylum will be granted 100 rubles/day/person (approx. USD 2.6)

¹⁶ Non-food items

¹⁷ It includes churches, community based initiatives/ groups of volunteers

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 Kiev on 14 August. On 10 September, IASC also organised a briefing on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine¹⁸, where UNHCR participated as one of four key speakers. **The overall needs for the IDPs situation are currently funded at 39 per cent.**



Contacts:

Nina Sorokopud, Associate Regional PI Officer, sorokopu@unhcr.org, Tel: +380 44 28 89 710 (extension 116)

Ana White, Communication/Advocacy Officer, whitea@unhcr.org, Tel: +41 22 33 15 983

Links:

UNHCR Kyiv: <http://unhcr.org.ua/en/> - Facebook: www.facebook.com/UNHCRKyiv -Recent web story: <http://www.unhcr.org/541c52839.html>