

This report is produced by OCHA Ukraine in collaboration with humanitarian partners.

BACKGROUND

Nationwide COVID-19 cases*

61,138	24,823	10,440	735
suspected	confirmed	recovered	deaths

Eastern Ukraine COVID-19 confirmed cases

166	49	553	419
Donetska oblast (GCA)	Luhanska oblast (GCA)	Donetska oblast (NGCA)	Luhanska oblast (NGCA)

*This figure doesn't include the number of confirmed cases in NGCA.
Data source: The Ministry of Health in Ukraine and NGCA health administrations.



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

Key updates:

- **Quarantine measures are slowly being phased out in accordance with the government's five-stage quarantine exit strategy.** Government-controlled areas (GCA) of Donetska oblast do not meet the criteria on testing coverage required to ease quarantine restrictions, yet have moved to the second stage of the exit strategy.
- **The economic repercussions of COVID-19-related measures have had a profound impact on the economic welfare of conflict-affected people and will have significant consequences on child poverty.**
- **The humanitarian community has called for urgent action to systematize vetting and approval of exceptions for civilians to cross the 'contact line,'** which are currently being implemented unevenly.
- **The re-opening of the 'contact line' from the GCA side was announced on 2 June to open after 10 June.** New measures to support the safe re-opening and operation of the entry/exit crossing points (EECPs) have reportedly not yet been put in place. Humanitarian organizations continue to actively advocate for the implementation of these measures with the Ministry for Reintegration to ensure the safety of people crossing the 'contact line' and staff working at EECPs.
- **The first UN-organized convoy through the 'Stanytsia Luhanska' EECP to the non-Government controlled areas (NGCA) of Luhanska oblast on 28 May hand-carried 9.3 tons of COVID-19-related humanitarian assistance.**

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Public health situation:

- **Donetska oblast (GCA) does not meet a nationwide requirement for the number of tests conducted daily necessary for proceeding to the next stage of the quarantine phase-out plan.** According to the Ministry of Health,¹ Donetska oblast (GCA) lags behind the nationwide testing requirement of 12 tests for every 100,000 residents conducted daily, with approximately nine tests per 100,000. In the meantime, as

the regional Commissions for Industrial and Environmental Safety and Emergencies have the final say on whether to permit moving to the next stage of the quarantine exit strategy, Donetska oblast decided to proceed to the second stage.

- **Health workers represent some 30 per cent of all confirmed COVID-19 cases in Donetska oblast (NGCA).** Since the first COVID-19 case was registered in Donetska oblast (NGCA) on 31 March through 2 June, 173 health workers have reportedly got infected,ⁱⁱ representing some 30 per cent of all confirmed cases. Although case-based reporting in Luhanska oblast (NGCA) is not available, there is reportedly an increase in the number of healthcare workers that have contracted COVID-19, with at least two mortalities. The percentage is lower in GCA of eastern Ukraine, with medical workers accounting for some 23 per cent of all infected, according to the Ministry of Health of Ukraine.ⁱⁱⁱ
- **Hospitals in NGCA lack personal protective equipment (PPE) to treat COVID-19 patients.** Health workers engaged in the COVID-19 response in Donetsk (NGCA) reportedly lack sufficient PPE, while ambulance workers and district practitioners are not provided with protection coveralls and disposable gowns.^{iv} In addition, the health system in NGCA sees a shortage of various COVID-19 medical supplies. In the meantime, scheduled surgeries have also been suspended.
- **Hygiene items are available in most locations in eastern Ukraine, while PPE is fully available in only one-third of settlements (GCA).** According to a Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) assessment,^v three-quarters of respondents reported that hygiene items were fully available in their location. Residents of at least two settlements in Donetska oblast (GCA) reported the absence of hygiene items for purchase. On average, compared to February 2020, prices for hygiene items increased by some 7 per cent. Slightly less than a third of respondents reported PPE was fully available at their location.

Socio-economic situation:

- **Poverty is expected to increase significantly in 2020 as a result of the expected economic downturn caused by COVID-19.** According to a macroeconomic forecast by the Cabinet Ministers of Ukraine,^{vi} 6.3 million people are expected to fall into poverty in 2020, with 1.4 million of them children. This conservative estimate anticipates absolute poverty increasing from 27 per cent to 44 per cent, with the impact on children even more profound – absolute poverty for children is expected to increase from 33 to 51 percent. This estimate is expected to be worse for the conflict-affected areas of eastern Ukraine.
- **Most households along the ‘contact line’ in eastern Ukraine have been affected by the COVID-19-related restrictions in economic terms.** From 80 to 90 per cent of families residing close to the ‘contact line’ were impacted by higher food and hygiene items prices,^{vii} while almost 40 per cent reported a decrease in monthly income compared to the pre-quarantine time. In addition, at least 65 per cent of households reduced the consumption of essential items, including health-related expenses. At least one-third of families depleted their savings in the last 30 days, while one-fourth delayed or skipped paying their rent and utility bills.^{viii}
- **The unemployment rate in Ukraine continues to climb.** As of 26 May, 506,000 people registered as officially unemployed – a two-fold increase compared to the same period during 2019 (12 March to 26 May).^{ix} The National Bank of Ukraine estimates the national unemployment rate rising to 11.5-12 per cent during the second quarter of 2020,^x while the unofficial unemployment rate could be 15 per cent. Eastern Ukraine is likely worse compared to the rest of the country, as the official pre-quarantine unemployment rate in Luhanska and Donetska oblasts (GCA) was already twice the national average – 15 per cent. In Donetska oblast, 15,000 newly unemployed people were registered as of 17 April, which is 42 per cent higher than the same period in 2019.
- **Almost one-third of businesses in eastern Ukraine (GCA) did not re-open after the easing of COVID-19-related restrictions on the national level in mid-May.** According to the UN Migration Agency (IOM), some 30 per cent of businesses that were closed during the quarantine were not able to re-open with the easing of restrictions, with 55 per cent naming the decrease in demand as one of the main reasons. On average, each enterprise had to dismiss one of the three people they employed before quarantine, and at least 55 per cent of respondents stated they needed financial assistance to keep their businesses afloat.^{xi}

- **The emotional trauma caused by movement restrictions, school closures and isolation intensifies the already high levels of stress among vulnerable children in eastern Ukraine.**^{xii} Isolation and lack of opportunity to continue education due to limited internet connectivity and/or limited access to necessary equipment increases the stress level and emotional trauma for some 430,000 children caught up in the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine. Despite restrictions, a spike in hostilities has resulted in at least six children being injured in the first week of May alone.
- **Following the re-opening of child day care centres on 25 May, there are concerns regarding the availability of funding in eastern Ukraine to fulfil the sanitary and hygiene requirements for premises, staff and children.** The level of preparation reportedly remains low, and the functioning of day care centres is expected to be limited. Multiple violations of the new health requirements are likely to be unavoidable as there is a lack of understanding of how the staff can ensure their safe implementation.
- **Women are disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 restriction measures, and the gap is feared to be higher in eastern Ukraine.** According to UN Women,^{xiii} the pandemic and related restrictive measures disproportionately affect women, exposing them to higher risk of income and savings losses, increased responsibility for unpaid care work, and increased risk of domestic violence.^{xiv}

Status of measures taken to contain the spread of COVID-19:

- **The Government continued easing COVID-19-related restrictions as part of its five-stage quarantine exit strategy.** The third phase of the exit strategy went into effect on 1 June. At the time, 20 of 24 oblasts met the established criteria, but Donetsk oblast was not among them. During the second stage, which started on 15 May, public transport within and between cities within oblast boundaries resumed operations; churches started holding services with no more than one visitor per 10 m²; hotels re-opened, yet their restaurants and in-door pools remained closed. From 25 May, the Government re-opened day care centres and subways in cities where the epidemiological situation allowed. From 1 June, the movement of inter-city passenger transport, as well as the work of fitness centres and selected educational facilities were permitted. On 10 June, cafes and restaurants are planned to re-open, while the resumption of regular international flights is expected from 15 June.^{xv}
- **Preparations for the opening of EECPs:** The re-opening of the 'contact line' from GCA side was announced on 2 June by the General Commander of the Military Forces of Ukraine to open after 10 June.^{xvi} Humanitarian partners have developed recommendations that have been shared with the Ministry for Reintegration on the safe re-opening and functioning of EECPs to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. It is not clear what measures have been put in place to ensure the safe operation of the EECPs, or whether the EECPs will open after 10 June.
- **In Luhanska oblast (NGCA), COVID-19-related restrictions were partially lifted:** On 13 May, markets and the wholesale trading of food-items were permitted to resume operations. Public transport (urban and suburban public transport, including taxis), kindergartens, shopping facilities selling non-food products, hairdressers and beauty salons resumed operations as well. Restrictions on the freedom of movement and strict isolation regime remain effective in only one city (Dovzhansk) in the oblast due to the unstable epidemiological situation.
- **In Donetsk oblast (NGCA), some restrictive measures were extended until further notice, while others were lifted.** Mass gatherings remain banned and restrictions on leaving the oblast remain in place. Self-isolation of persons of 65 years or older is still recommended, although it is not mandatory.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

COVID-related response:

- **Hygiene response:** As of mid-May, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and its partner Proliska have produced and distributed more than 31,400 protective items for local healthcare employees and persons with specific needs in Donetsk oblast (GCA). UNHCR has distributed 1,255 individual hygiene kits to the social workers of Departments of Social Protection (DoSP) in Donetsk oblast (GCA) and 480 kits to DoSP and social workers in Luhanska oblast (GCA). In addition, UNHCR and its partners Right to

Protection and Slavic Heart distributed sanitation and hygiene products to 43 collective centres hosting internally displaced persons in five regions of Ukraine, including Donetska and Luhanska oblasts.^{xvii}

- **Infection Prevention and Control (IPC):** WHO carried out webinars on key components of IPC, recommended strategies for COVID-19 prevention in health care facilities and PPE use in hospitals in NGCA of Luhanska and Donetska oblasts.
- **Provision of support with analysis on the spread of COVID-19:** UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) is working with the Government of Ukraine’s Public Health Centre (PHC) to improve its data collection methods to better analyze data on COVID-19. With financial support from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), UNICEF, REACH, and PHC are developing analytical dashboards and online maps that enable detailed statistical multifactor and geospatial data analysis of COVID-19 statistics on different levels, from the national level to the level of specific settlements. In addition, forecasting models are being implemented that will enable analysis of the capacity of healthcare facilities according to different scenarios.^{xviii}
- **Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS):** International Medical Corps has been facilitating online MHPSS training sessions for the staff of the primary healthcare centres along the ‘contact line.’ Moreover, the World Health Organization (WHO) has developed a training package on MHPSS to support healthcare staff working with COVID-19 patients as well as to educate them on how to take care of their well-being and mental health.
- **Delivery of COVID-19-related relief items to NGCA:** As humanitarian organizations are unable to deliver humanitarian aid to Luhanska oblast (NGCA) through Donetska oblast (NGCA), the UN organized a convoy to hand-carry 9.3 tons of PPE, hygiene supplies, and other COVID-19-related humanitarian assistance from WHO, Médicos del Mundo (MDM) and People in Need (PIN) through the ‘Stanytsia Luhanska’ EECF on 28 May for further distribution among social institutions.
- **Access to public transport:** As rural, isolated communities along the ‘contact line’ have been particularly affected by the COVID-19-related closure of public transportation services, in mid-April, ADRA resumed public transportation in ten localities in Donetska Oblast (GCA).^{xix}
- **Access to food:** Food assistance is being provided in 91 localities by the DoSPs and humanitarian actors, 72 of which do not have access to public transportation.^{xx}
- **Response to gender-based violence (GBV):** The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) has provided training for civil society organizations’ representatives on early identification and response to GBV. In addition, UNFPA has provided capacity building sessions for NGOs and state authorities’ representatives on psychosocial support in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak. UNFPA, together with the National Police and the Ministry of Interior Affairs, has developed information materials for GBV survivors on how to keep safe from abuse or violence during the pandemic.
- **Cash assistance:** Over 450 refugees and asylum-seeking families who have lost their livelihoods due to COVID-19 quarantine measures, have serious health ailments, or were at risk for homelessness, were supported with cash assistance in May.^{xxi}
- **Movement across the ‘contact line’ based on humanitarian grounds:** The UN Humanitarian Coordinator on behalf of the humanitarian community in Ukraine made a [statement](#) urging all relevant actors to systematize vetting and approval of exceptions for civilians to cross the ‘contact line’ as currently they are being implemented unevenly. Since the closure of the ‘contact line’ during the third week of March through the end of May, some 570 civilians have reportedly been able to cross based on humanitarian exemptions. At the moment, the list of exemptions negotiated by the humanitarian community includes the necessity to respect the principle of family unity, death, or severe disease of a close relative, as well as severe or chronic illnesses requiring urgent medical intervention. Humanitarian actors are currently working to expand the list of exemptions to facilitate civilian crossing across the ‘contact line’ on humanitarian grounds until EECFs are re-opened. OSCE Special Monitoring Mission is aware of at least 1,012 civilians who sought support to cross the ‘contact line’ since late March, while Ukraine’s Ombudsman also reported at least 200 civilians stranded in eastern Ukraine, wanting to cross the ‘contact line.’ Earlier, the Ministry for Reintegration invited humanitarian partners to support amending

the resolution #815 on the crossing of the 'contact line' and systematizing the existing humanitarian exemptions.

Impact on humanitarian operations:

- **Humanitarian operations continue with mitigation strategies to reduce exposure to and transmission of COVID-19.** Many humanitarian organizations have shifted services to mobile and digital platforms. Digital communications channels have become valuable resources to ensure vulnerable populations have access to vital information regarding the COVID-19 situation. In the meantime, as the country has started its phase-out from quarantine, some humanitarian organizations have activated their strategies on returning to the workplace allowing staff members to work from the office on a rotational basis.
- **Most humanitarian organizations are continuing the provision of life-saving assistance and protection to the most vulnerable while using existing resources to also respond to the COVID-19-related needs.** Humanitarian actors have adapted their operations to rely more on communication technologies to deliver remote counselling services. The reach of such 'virtual' assistance may be uneven depending on geographical areas and population groups. Some humanitarian organizations have adopted an 'individual service delivery' or 'door-to-door delivery' approach to minimize beneficiaries' exposure to COVID-19. While this approach helps ensure the continuation of critical support, it leads to increased operational and logistical costs.
- **Some humanitarian response activities have been halted due to the repurposing of existing resources for COVID-19 response.** For example, UNICEF had to suspend some projects related to rehabilitation of water infrastructure due to the shifted priority to the COVID-19 response.
- **Services provided at the entry/exit crossing points (EECPs) remain suspended.** Partners continue to monitor the situation and are on standby to provide the necessary support to prevent people from getting stuck at the EECPs.

FUNDING AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

\$205 M

Total revised HRP requirement for eastern Ukraine

\$47 M

Requirement for COVID-19 in eastern Ukraine

\$29 M

HRP funding received in 2020 (FTS)

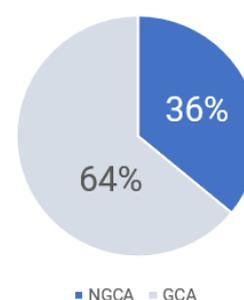
14%

HRP funding received in 2020 (FTS)

Cluster	Original and additional requirements (US\$ million)		Revised requirements (US\$ million)	Funding received (US\$ million)
Education	7.1	1.2	8.3	1.2
Food Security & Livelihoods	17.9	9.2	27.1	0.9
Health	21.8	16.6	38.9	3.5
Protection	50.8	4.9	55.7	1.4
Shelter/NFI	26.4		26.4	0.3
WASH	21.7	11.0	32.7	1.4
Multipurpose Cash Assistance	5.0	4.0	9.0	0.1
Common Services & Support	6.3		6.3	1.6
Cluster not specified			-	17.7
Total	158	47	205	29

■ Original requirements ■ Additional requirements

REQUIREMENT BY LOCATION



- The **2020 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP)** has been revised to incorporate the new **COVID-19 response activities and financial requirements** into the original document. The revised HRP requires \$205 million, including an additional \$47 million for COVID-19 response in eastern Ukraine in addition to the \$158 million initial requirement.
- The **Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)** has allocated some **\$925,000** for the COVID-19 response in eastern Ukraine, being implemented by WHO and UNICEF.
- The **Ukraine Humanitarian Fund (UHF)** has allocated **\$3.8 million** for COVID-19 response in both GCA and NGCA.

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

Restrictions have been established limiting access for people, humanitarian actors and the movement of humanitarian aid.

- **Movement of humanitarian aid from GCA to NGCA is restricted by provisions introduced in Donetsk oblast (NGCA)**, which only allow the movement of humanitarian convoys across the 'contact line' carrying medical, hygiene, food or COVID-related items. Humanitarian cargo is not permitted to transit through Donetsk oblast (NGCA) to Luhanska oblast (NGCA). In the meantime, UN agencies have received a 'green light' from the Government of Ukraine and Luhanska oblast (NGCA) for delivering of assistance through the pedestrian EECF 'Stanytsia Luhanska' in Luhanska oblast, with the first convoy organized on 28 May.
- **While the movement of humanitarian aid is permitted for all humanitarian convoys from the territory of the Russian Federation to both Donetsk and Luhanska oblasts (NGCA)**, no such convoys have been recorded during 2020.
- **Movement of humanitarian actors from GCA to NGCA is not currently possible.** While an order has been issued permitting staff members of the UN and ICRC to cross the 'contact line' to Donetsk oblast (NGCA), this order has not yet been approved in practice. Permissions for the movement of UN staff from GCA to Luhanska oblast (NGCA) have not been clarified yet. In the meantime, OCHA has organized two 'kiss' movements to transfer PPE and operational supplies through the 'contact line' without vehicles or staff transiting for further distribution among UN agencies operational in NGCA.

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ⁱ <https://moz.gov.ua/article/news/pokazniki-dlja-poslablennja-protiepidemichnih-zahodiv->

ⁱⁱ According to the Health Administration in Donetsk oblast (NGCA)

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://moz.gov.ua/article/news/operativna-informacija-pro-poshirenija-koronavirusnoi-infekcii-2019-ncov-1>

^{iv} According to the information provided by the health administrations in NGCA.

^v NRC's Rapid Market Assessment (April 2020)

^{vi} UNICEF Press Release "UNICEF is concerned about rapidly increasing child poverty because of COVID-19"

^{vii} Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment (May 2020) and NRC's Rapid Market Assessment (April 2020)

^{viii} Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment (May 2020)

^{ix} <https://www.epravda.com.ua/news/2020/05/26/660995/>

^x <https://hromadske.ua/posts/vid-pochatku-karantynu-v-ukrayini-zareyestruvalosya-200-tisyach-bezrobotnih-premyer>

^{xi} Express Impact Survey 'Micro-enterprises in GCAs of Donetsk and Luhansk regions during COVID-19 pandemic'

^{xii} <https://www.unicef.org/ukraine/en/press-releases/surge-violent-attacks-during-covid-19-lockdown-puts-childrens-lives-risk-eastern>

^{xiii} Rapid Gender Assessment conducted by UN Women on the Situation and Needs of Women in the Context of COVID-19 in Ukraine (April 2020)

^{xiv} <http://un.org.ua/en/information-centre/news/4909-covid-19-exacerbates-vulnerabilities-and-heightens-economic-social-and-health-risks-for-women-and-girls>

^{xv} <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/sogodni-v-ukrayini-startuye-drugij-z-pyati-etapiv-vihodu-iz-karantynu>

^{xvi} <https://president.gov.ua/news/ukrayina-gotuyetsya-do-vidkrittya-pershih-kpvv-na-liniyi-roz-61425>

^{xvii} *Ibid.*

^{xviii} UNICEF Press Release "Public Health Centre introduces new tools for COVID-19 data collection and analysis, with UNICEF support"

^{xix} UNHCR Ukraine: COVID-19 Protection Monitoring Report #4

^{xx} *Ibid.*

^{xxi} UNHCR COVID-19 Flash Update #8