



This report is a consolidation of United Nations informational products, drafted by the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Ukraine.

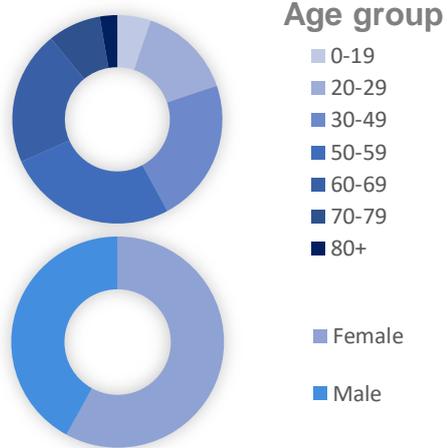
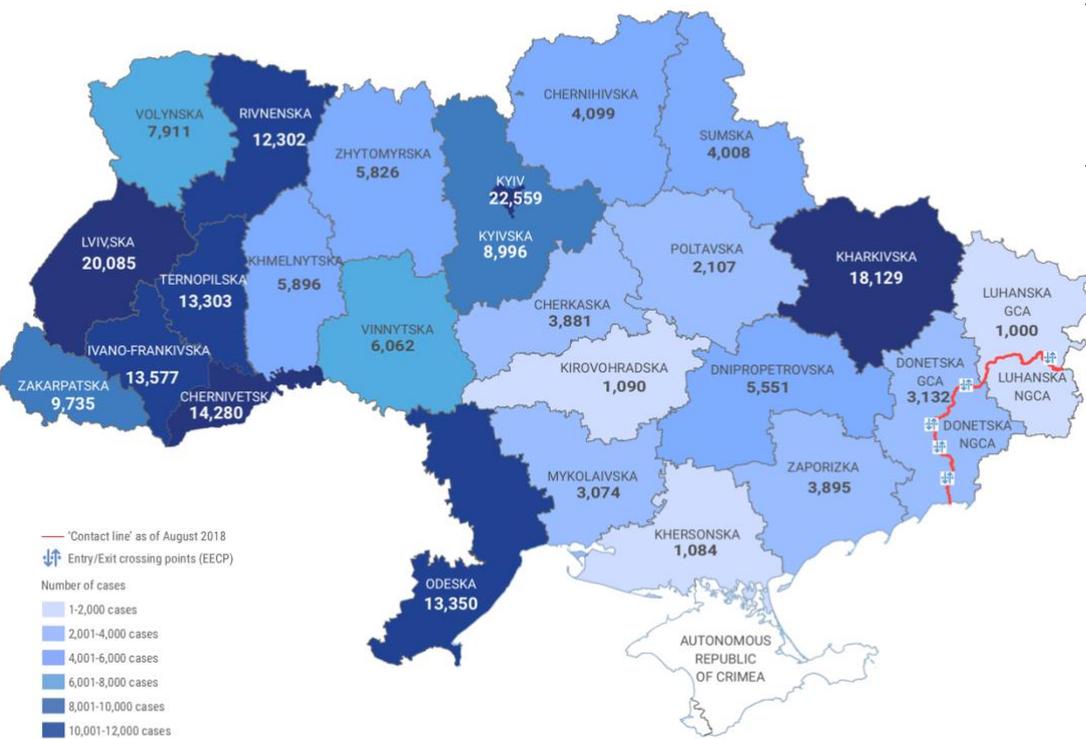
HIGHLIGHTS



Eastern Ukraine COVID-19 confirmed cases



\*This figure does not include the number of confirmed cases in the non-Government-controlled areas (NGCA).  
Data source: Ministry of Health, Ukraine and entities in control of certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine.



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

- The number of new confirmed COVID-19 cases continues to grow, along with the number of registered deaths. Total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 is also increasing. Currently, 23 regions do not meet the criteria that would allow easing off the quarantine measures.
- The UN system in Ukraine conducted a thorough and deep socio-economic impact assessment of the Covid-19 implications on Ukraine. During the presentation of the findings to the Prime Minister of Ukraine and a number of line ministries, the parties exchanged on strategic plans and alignment of Governmental and UN programmes. The UN agencies stand ready to further support the Government in its robust Covid-19 response mainstreaming the findings and recommendations as much as possible in the sectoral response plans of the authorities.

**2.6 M**  
Tested for COVID-19

**21 M\***  
Affected people

**1.5 M**  
Internally displaced people

\*Proposed by the Health Cluster as a plaining figure at this time. It is based on the early enforcement of preventive and mitigation measures implemented by the Government of Ukraine, which have been put in the place earlier than in other European countries. In Ukraine, it is estimated that up to 50% of the population could be impacted.

## SITUATION OVERVIEW

### The impact of the crisis on the socio-economic situation

- While undergoing a slow recovery process, Ukrainian economy continues to face difficulty amid the COVID-19 crisis. According to the National Statistical Service, the level of unemployment in Ukraine increased from 8.6 per cent to 9.9 per cent in the second quarter of 2020.
- The Government of Ukraine had registered the draft law introducing amendments to Law on the State Budget. According to the draft, housing issue remains the most acute. The majority of housing solutions for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) budgeted in previous years, such as affordable housing, “housing for IDP” project, and accommodation of formerly deported people are not foreseen in the draft budget. The only option remained is housing for displaced ATO/JFO participants. On a positive side, the Ministry for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories has increased the funding for subventions to conflict-affected territories. This may allow a larger number of settlements to receive this subvention to support IDPs and conflict-affected population residing on their territories. The funding for compensation for destroyed housing has been also increased by 5.7 times.
- Persons belonging to groups that are marginalized and in situations of vulnerability continue to be at increased risk of being left behind during the COVID-19 crisis, as the pandemic often exacerbates existing inequalities and vulnerabilities, notably for Roma, persons with disabilities living in the community, those living in homelessness, and older persons and persons with disabilities living in long-term care facilities.
- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has noted that the Government does not publish data on COVID-19 cases disaggregated by disability, hindering the design of an effective disability-inclusive COVID-19 response. Persons with disabilities in institutions are particularly vulnerable, as shown by the number of infections in long-term care facilities and psychiatric facilities.
- There is a concern that local authorities and law enforcement agencies arbitrarily apply COVID-19 restrictions to ban minority groups’ peaceful assemblies, while other assemblies occur without obstacle. The organizers of Pride in Odesa and Kharkiv were notified that all public gatherings in Ukraine were banned, while the current regime in both zones has allowed for the planned gatherings.
- As of 28 September, 134 COVID-19 cases had been detected in penitentiary facilities (affecting 102 penitentiary staff, 20 medical personnel, 5 prisoners, and 7 detainees), an increase by 45 cases since 26 August. One prisoner and one detainee have died. OHCHR is concerned that the actual number of COVID-19 cases in penitentiary facilities may be underreported due to low rates of testing. By 28 September 2020, only 1,118 COVID tests had been carried out, while the total number of detainees exceeds 50,000. Weak control over compliance with sanitary and preventive measures by penitentiary employees remains of concern.
- Schools across the country have reopened, however internally United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) is estimating that less than 2% of school-aged children are affected by their school closure due to the high level of confirmed COVID-19 cases in their municipalities. After three weeks since the opening of the schools, there are reports of shortages of Covid-related supplies in the schools in the area. Of particular concern is the lack of cleaning items and masks for teachers. One of the reasons for this situation is the prioritization criteria set by the local governments – hospitals and medical facilities are prioritized in getting covid-related supplies, while other social institutions may be provided with small quantities.
- After the Government ruling on 14 September concerning the right to vote, individuals who are in mandatorily self-isolation during the local elections scheduled for 25 October will have an opportunity to vote at home.

## The humanitarian, socio-economic and human rights situation in the eastern conflict area

- The overall humanitarian situation in eastern Ukraine remains similar to previous weeks, characterized by an improved security situation that was marked by the de-escalation of the armed tension since July 27 when the additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire came into force, agreed upon by the Trilateral Contact Group. In August, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)-led Cluster recorded no new damages to civilian houses on both sides of the ‘contact line’ for the first time since 2017 when the Cluster started systematically tracking such damages and established a database.
- The ongoing restrictions on crossings at entry-exit checkpoints (EECPs) across the contact line in eastern Ukraine remains a concern, which hinders the civilian population’s access to human rights and basic services, such as the right to family life, essential medical care, education and social protection, notably pensions.
- On 25 September, the entities in control of certain areas of Luhansk region of Ukraine made amendments to the resolution changing the modalities for entering and leaving Luhansk non-government-controlled areas (NGCA). Citing the “unfavourable epidemiological situation in Ukraine” [government-controlled areas (GCA)], the entities restricted rules for crossing allowing for only those with residence registration in Luhansk NGCA to enter and leave Luhansk NGCA once per month. As currently reported, many people in Luhansk NGCA are not aware of the requirement to prove their place of residence in NGCA to enter from GCA. It is expected that these issues will impact the crossings at the Stanytsia Luhanska entry/exit crossing point (EECP) which remains the only functioning EECP in Luhansk oblast.
- Half a year after the introduction of COVID-19-related quarantine measures, most EECPs remain closed. Currently, only two out of five EECPs are functioning with certain restrictions. During the period from 14 to 17 September, 39,327 persons crossed the ‘contact line’ through the Stanytsia Luhanska EECP in Luhanska oblast. This number represents a 42 per cent increase compared to the previous two-week period (1-14 September). However, the number of crossings remains significantly lower than in the pre-COVID-19 period when approximately 300,000 persons crossed the “contact line” at this EECP every month. The Novotroitske/Olenivka EECP operated twice per week based on lists regularly pre-approved by the entities in control of certain areas of Donetsk region of Ukraine.
- In total, four so-called “humanitarian corridors” were organized allowing 333 persons to cross to GCA and 916 to NGCA. Of those who entered GCA, 29 persons were transferred to the observation point in Donetska oblast where they will stay 14 days in isolation. As of 28 August, no people unable to cross to NGCA were staying overnight in the tents of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SES). Seven individuals facing difficulties with crossing were accommodated in a state-run social institution in the town of Druzhkivka in Donetska oblast.
- Oshchadbank extended further the validity of its banking cards until 1 November. At the moment, there are at least 300,000 NGCA pensioners and 163,000 vulnerable persons registered as IDPs in GCA who have had limited opportunities to cross the ‘contact line’ to collect their pensions in GCA since mid-March due to COVID-19-related movement restrictions. After six months without access to the only source of income for many of them, pensioners are forced to find alternative ways to survive, including by depleting their savings, borrowing or by accessing their pensions through costly and legally challenging routes.
- With a 93 per cent drop in the number of people crossing the ‘contact line’, those most impacted by the closure are the elderly, who are unable to withdraw their pensions in areas under Government control. It is estimated that more than one million people have been impacted by the closure.

For more information on the situation in the eastern conflict area, see the [OCHA Situation Report](#).

## THE UNITED NATIONS IN UKRAINE – COVID-19-RELATED RESPONSE AND COORDINATION

In Ukraine, the overall coordination for nationwide COVID-19 response is led by the United Nations Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator and the World Health Organization (WHO). The United Nations Country Team oversees the United Nations nationwide response, and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) has overall responsibility for the humanitarian response to COVID-19 in eastern Ukraine.

### Medical procurement and related support

- To strengthen the capacity of social workers in monitoring the situation of families with children in difficult life circumstances and families where children from boarding schools were returned, UNICEF distributed Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits to social workers and child protection professionals in 5 oblasts with the highest number of children from boarding schools who returned to their biological families and communities. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has procured and delivered respirators for 4 hospitals of Donetsk Oblast. UNICEF jointly with implementing partner Neeka continued distribution of hygiene supplies to Roma population in Zakarpattya.
- UNICEF with logistical support of the local partner “Friends Hands” delivered Institutional Hygiene Kits, waste bins of different volume and liquid soap to the healthcare institutions in Donetsk oblast GCA as part of COVID-19 response. Overall, 724 medical personnel and patients benefitted from this support. The distribution of e-vouchers for hygiene supplies to educational institutions to prepare schools for safe opening has also started. Overall, 116 schools and 68 kindergartens in Donetsk and Luhansk GCA received e-vouchers that can be redeemed in the nearby partner shops. It is supposed that e-vouchers will cover needs in hygiene items for the educational institutions for the period of three months and will ensure adherence to the sanitary norms in the COVID-19 times.
- UNHCR jointly with its NGO partner Proliska handed over non-food items (NFIs) to a hospital in the town of Petropavlivka in Luhanska oblast (GCA) and distributed PPEs to primary health care facilities located along the ‘contact line’ in Donetska oblast (GCA). Since July, UNHCR jointly with its NGO partners distributed PPE items to 43 primary healthcare institutions and 155 medical workers along the ‘contact line’. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in March, UNHCR initiated 47 Peaceful Coexistence Projects (PCPs) and Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) aimed at providing medical assistance, PPE, hygiene items and NFIs to increase capacities of medical facilities in conflict-affected areas.
- UNHCR distributed cash assistance to 82 refugee and asylum-seeking families whose livelihoods have been seriously impacted by COVID-19 restrictions. This assistance intends to support households in preparation for a new academic year. It is planned that financial assistance will be used to procure digital tools and other school-related items in order to ensure that children have access to education through the distance learning modality in “red zones” regions where in-persons classes are currently on halt.

### Technical support

- On 10 September, UNHCR delivered a humanitarian convoy carrying construction materials for its shelter programme in Luhansk NGCA. In total, 10 trucks transferred over 90 tons of assistance that will be used to implement houses repairs in the following weeks. With the arrival of the convoy, UNHCR has been able to resume its shelter activities. Since the COVID-19 related movement restrictions came into force in March, it was the first time that UNHCR was able to deliver convoy to Luhansk NGCA through Donetsk NGCA. During this period, all previous convoys to Luhansk NGCA were delivered through the pedestrian-only EECF in Stanytsia Luhanska when the humanitarian aid had to be transferred manually through the bridge between the two sides of the checkpoint.

- World Health Organization (WHO) IPC team conducted respirator fit testing in 46 health care facilities, as well as technical support visit to infectious disease hospital department and IPC Webinars on best practices of IPC program implementation in primary care.
- On 20 August, UNHCR jointly with its NGO partner, the Donbas Development Centre (DDC), delivered desks, chairs and materials to a vocational school in the town of Novoazovsk in Donetsk NGCA. The rehabilitation works will be implemented by a local community to ensure that classrooms are ready to host children when they return to school in September.
- UNDP has provided secure digital communications equipment to the State Emergency Service (SES) of Ukraine in the Donetsk Oblast.

### Communication and awareness-raising activities

- New informational content and materials have been produced to raise awareness about COVID-19 and basic preventive behaviours. This included a brochure for social workers on how to use PPE and talk to families about COVID-19. UNICEF supported an online marathon on International Breastfeeding Week and promoted a series of materials on the importance of breastfeeding and safe practices during the pandemic. UNICEF continues to work on raising awareness on hygiene practices among Roma's children living in Zakarpatiya region and being one of the most vulnerable minor community in Ukraine.
- The national solidarity campaign – designed to fight stigma and discrimination in the context of COVID-19 – continued unfolding on social media through a social media activation. Ukraine joined the UNICEF digital activation on the COVID-19 Champions for Children with stories of Ukrainian social workers from conflict torn Eastern Ukraine.
- The roll-out of the first telephone volunteering system in Ukraine continued throughout the country in response to the growing loneliness and isolation caused by the pandemic. As part of the project, young people have been mobilized to provide telephone support and useful information on COVID-19 prevention to people who feel lonely, including older adults, children and adults with disabilities, etc.
- To promote the inclusion of human rights into journalism curriculum and to raise awareness among future journalists about the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable groups and on how the pandemic has changed people's perception of human rights, UNDP conducted the Human Rights Media Festival for journalism students. Students and professors of journalism from 21 Universities joined this initiative and participated in a 10 days event.

### Crisis Management Support

- The first wave of training on “Mental Health and Psychosocial support during COVID-19 Preparedness, Response and Recovery” finalised. 140 healthcare facilities (secondary and primary) from 13 regions were engaged in the training. During the final meetings the managers discussed changes introduced in their facilities after the training and the need for greater focus on mental wellbeing of medical workers and their patients. The second wave is planned to cover remaining 12 regions of Ukraine until end of December 2020.
- UNICEF in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Policy and implementing partners conducted series of online webinars for social workers and child protection specialists on protection of children during COVID-19 pandemic, prevention of initialization of children, as well as on reintegration of children from institutional care back to their families and communities. On-line courses for education professionals and parents on PSS and positive parenting for prevention of all forms of violence were developed in cooperation with implementing partner and Kyiv Mohyla Academy.

## EXTERNAL PUBLICATIONS/DEVELOPMENTS

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In Conflict-Torn Eastern Ukraine, Football Offers a Path to Hope (in [English](#) and [Ukrainian](#))

EECPs MID-YEAR SURVEY REPORT ([English](#) and [Ukrainian](#))

Ukrainian human rights activist is named European regional Nansen Refugee Award winner ([English](#) and [Ukrainian](#))

On 22 September, OHCHR launched its 30<sup>th</sup> report on the human rights situation in Ukraine

[UNHCR Ukraine's Key Advocacy Messages: Internal Displacement in Ukraine](#)

The first person infected with COVID-19 was treated here: the Observation Department in the Luhansk oblast received help – <https://dnews.dn.ua/news/753822>

Peace in Ukraine (III): The Costs of War in Donbas –

<https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/eastern-europe/ukraine/261-peace-ukraine-iii-costs-war-donbas>

BBC Ukraine interview with Matilda Bogner, Head of OHCHR in Ukraine –

<https://youtu.be/fhdEE6v1Wd4?t=303>

Article of a journalist about homeless people and COVID-19 in Ukraine, extensively quoting OHCHR in Ukraine –

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/ru/kak-pandemiya-izmenila-zhizn-bezdomnykh-v-ukraine/>

During the quarantine, almost a quarter of migrants from Donbass were forced to take leave at their own expense –

<https://prm.ua/pid-chas-karantynu-mayzhe-chvert-pereselentsiv-z-donbasu-zmusheni-buli-brati-vidpustki-zavlasniy-rahunok/>

35 per cent of IDPs relying on social support reported challenges in accessing payments –

<https://www.unian.ua/society/koronavirus-opituvannya-pokazalo-skilki-pereselenciv-pidverdili-problemi-z-otrimannyam-socdopomogi-novini-ukrajini-11155760.html>

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\*A list of used sources is available upon request.