

HIGHLIGHTS

- Increase in fighting results in highest number of civilian casualties in a month since August 2015
- Summer heat exacerbates humanitarian situation at crossing points
- IDP pensioners still struggling to get payments reinstated
- IOM presents results of National Monitoring system for IDPs
- Mobile clinics halted activities because of low funding



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People waiting in line to cross through the checkpoint in Zaitseve (from GCA to NGCA)

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Stark rise in civilian casualties

June has been characterised by intense fighting in the conflict area in eastern Ukraine, resulting in the highest number of civilian casualties in a month since August 2015. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) recorded 69 conflict-related civilian casualties in June (12 fatalities and 57 injuries). The majority of the casualties (four fatalities and 37 injuries) were caused by shelling from various artillery systems, including calibres prohibited by the Minsk Agreement. Moreover, 19 casualties (five killed and 14 injured) were caused by mines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices. Six civilians were injured by small arms including sniper fire across the 'contact line'. Two boys were killed by electrocution from a power line downed by shelling. Since the beginning of the conflict, 21,880 people were wounded and 9,470 killed, up to 2,000 of the fatalities were civilians¹.

The situation is prone to further deterioration since the parties strive to gain territory in the buffer zone and, in several locations, have been moving their positions closer to one another in the past two weeks. The stand-off in Stanytsia Luhanska and Zaitseve shrank to 300 and 500m from 1.5 and 2km respectively. Shelling frequently occurs at and in the vicinity of checkpoints, adding to the risks faced by thousands of people crossing the 'contact line' every day. Main hotspots of the armed conflict continue to be the western and northern suburbs of Donetsk, the area of the Donetsk airport, Staromykhailivka, Horlivka, Ozerianivka, Zaitseve, Yasynuvata, Spartak, Dokuchaievsk, Zaichenko, Kominternove, Sakhanka, Leninske (NGCA), Novotroitske, Avdiivka, Marinka, Stanytsia Luhanska, Trokhizbenka and Debaltseve (GCA).

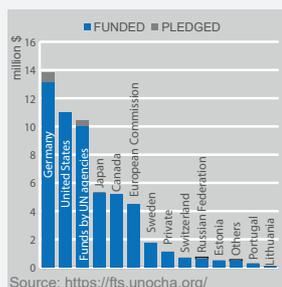
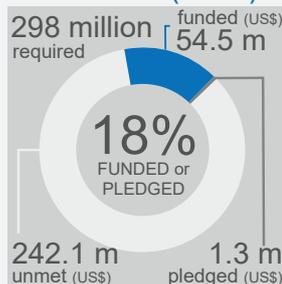
As the situation may further deteriorate with parties to the conflict moving their contingents closer to one another thereby increasing the risk of a confrontation, a well-developed and regularly updated contingency plan is an essential requirement for effective humanitarian response and safeguarding the lives and livelihoods of affected civilians. Partners are now revising the existing contingency plan.

FIGURES

People killed	9,470
People wounded	21,880
Externally displaced	1.1 m
People in need (2016)	3.1 m
People targeted (2016)	2.5 m

Source: UNHCR, WHO, OHCHR

FUNDING (2016)



Source: <https://fts.unocha.org/>

Waiting for hours in the heat to cross the line

Despite increased violence and the difficulties of movement, the number of people crossing the 'contact line' increased again in June. The Border Guard Service recorded 816,000 people crossings, almost 100,000 (or 12 per cent) more than in May. People travel across the 'contact line' in order to visit relatives, buy food and other goods, receive social payments and look after property. One reason for the recent increase in crossings is the ongoing struggle of pensioners residing in non-government controlled areas (NGCA) to get their pensions reinstated after they were suspended in February. Following the removal of a bureaucratic obstacle on 8 June, numerous pensioners rushed to Departments of Social Protection in Government-controlled areas (GCAs).

¹ These are conservative estimates, the actual number of casualties is believed to be higher.

Humanitarian partners to install sheds and provide water tanks at the five operating checkpoints, but this is insufficient to meet needs

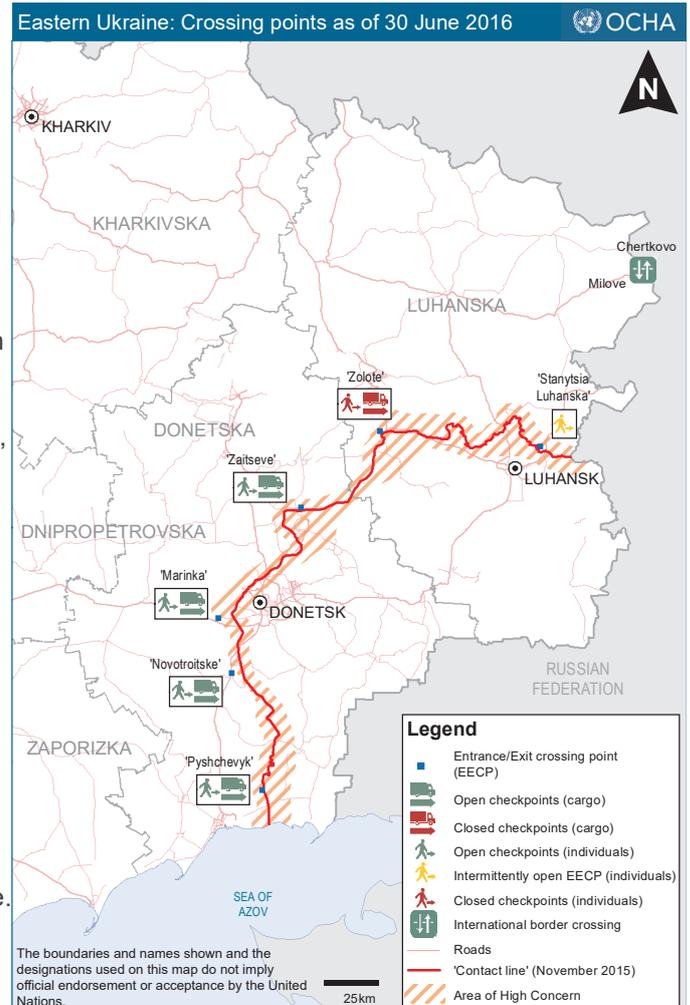
Ongoing insecurity and high temperatures have exacerbated the humanitarian situation at the five operating crossing points (Zaitseve, Marinka, Pyshevyk, Novotroitske and Stanytsia Luhanska). While waiting periods at the busiest checkpoints in Zaitseve and Marinka reached up to 36 hours in June, thousands of people were forced to wait in the searing heat with inadequate access to shelter from the sun, drinking water, sanitary facilities or basic health care. As a result, several people fainted and ambulances had to be called up to 10 times a day, twice as often as in May. Sheds, latrines, water tanks and health care are urgently needed at all five checkpoints, but particularly at the busiest ones. Basic facilities are also needed at the border crossing point with the Russian Federation in Milove, as Ukrainian citizens residing in non-government controlled areas (NGCAs) of Luhanska oblast continue to cross into GCA territory by crossing the border with the Russian Federation.

Humanitarian partners met to assess the urgent needs at checkpoints and improve coordination of the response. Partners already provided some water tanks and hygiene products at all crossing points. Sheds will be installed starting 10 July. Other partners are stepping up mine risk education activities. The Governor of Donetsk oblast ordered local authorities in Mariupol, Marinka, Zaitseve and Novotroitske to take over utility services of their respective checkpoints, including water supply, trash pickup and basic cleaning.

Nevertheless, commitments are insufficient to cater for all needs. The most urgent need remains medical support to the people waiting in line, and partners are advocating for the local authorities to ensure that medical personnel and ambulances are made available. Lack of funding to ensure continuation of operations is a key concern for many partners.

Insecurity is a challenge not only for those crossing the checkpoints but also for humanitarian partners, especially those operating in the buffer zone. Installation of latrines and other items in these areas is challenging also because there is no space available. Yet, given that people are forced to wait for longer periods in the buffer zone facilities are needed there as well. Partners understand that a careful analysis of risks, and ensuring that all parties to the conflict are aware of operations in the buffer zone are critical to minimize risk for staff and operations.

A new and deeply worrying development is the Government's decision to relocate the Entry-Exit checkpoint in Zaitseve to the former 0-checkpoint in Maiorsk, i.e. in approximately one kilometre distance from the NGCA checkpoint. A similar relocation has been announced for the checkpoint in Novotroitske. In light of narrow roads and the absence of natural barriers and shelter, close proximity of the checkpoints increases the life risks for people crossing. Moreover, the relocation necessitates the installation of new sanitary facilities. Yet, in Maiorsk there is not enough space for the installation or maintenance as trucks can barely manoeuvre on the narrow streets.



Water supply continues to be at risk

Rising temperatures highlight the continued need for reliable water supply in conflict-affected areas. However, increasing insecurity along the 'contact line' in Donetska oblast poses a real threat to service providers, as well as to critical infrastructure. Recently, exchange of fire occurred very close to important filter stations of the 'Voda Donbasa' system near Donetsk and Horlivka on several occasions. Company leadership and staff at the plants are operating under extremely challenging and dangerous circumstances. Relevant international legal frameworks oblige parties to the conflict to protect infrastructure necessary for the survival of the civilian population.

Currently, more than 4,000 people in Mariupol and 1,000 in the nearby settlements remain without piped water. In Luhanska oblast, water shortages have been reported in NGCA. Reasons seem to include issues with electricity supplies, as well as leakages. Effects are reported to be felt along the so-called Karbonit system (Pervomaisk, Stakhanov, Brianka, and south towards Antrasyt and Krasnyi Luch), as well as Luhansk city and surroundings. Supply restrictions are in place, and some locations are served by water trucking.

The economic crisis and people's increasing inability to pay water bills lead to high debts. As a result, the utility companies 'Luhansk Voda' and 'Voda Donbasa' face increasing difficulties to allocate funding for emergency repairs and even less for much needed long term maintenance of their facilities.

Suspension of payments still affects 350,000 IDPs

Half of the IDP pensioners affected by the suspension of payments in February still do not receive their pensions

Four months after the Ukrainian Government suspended social payments and pensions to some 450,000 to 600,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and IDP pensioners, the issue remains unresolved for some of the affected groups, and pensioners in particular. According to the Minister of Social Policy, some 350,000 IDPs and IDP pensioners affected by the suspension and verification procedure did not have their payments reinstated by 17 June. The Ministry claims it had suspended payments to 450,000 IDPs in February, owing to alleged fraud schemes.

Statistics published by local Departments of Social Protection (DoSP) and Pension Funds in the five affected eastern Ukrainian oblasts (Dnipropetrovska, Donetska, Kharkivska, Zaporizka and Luhanska) indicate a significantly higher number of initial suspensions. According to data compiled by the Protection cluster, out of more than 56,000 affected IDPs some 43,000 (or 77 per cent) were able to have their benefits reinstated. Yet, only 327,000 out of some 653,000 IDP pensioners (or 50 per cent) succeeded in reinstating their pensions, for many of them the only source of income². The humanitarian community has called upon the Government to delink pensions which are an acquired right of all citizen who meet certain eligibility criteria from the IDP status with limited results.

According to a survey conducted by the NGO 'Right to Protection', some IDPs had to present their passport at the local DoSP to get their status approved while others had to bring witnesses like neighbours or landlords to certify their place of residence or show certificates from school or kindergarten proving enrolment.

Contradictions in the legislation presented an additional concern to many IDPs over the past months. The obligation for IDPs certificates to be stamped was removed on 8 June (Resolution 509 amendment) after continuous advocacy from humanitarian partners and protests staged by IDPs in Kyiv and other places closer to the 'contact line'. Following the abolition of the stamp requirement, a large number of IDPs, mostly pensioners, flooded DoSPs in Luhanska and Donetska oblasts (GCA) in June to reinstate their social payments. This rush led to a drastic overload of local administrations and in some places in Donetska oblast (GCA), the number of elderly people waiting in the heat exceeded more than twice the daily capacity to receive people. Some pensioners came to DoSPs

² Protection cluster update on suspension of social payments to IDPs: https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/system/files/documents/files/update_on_suspension_of_social_benefits_and_pensions_for_idps_17_june_2016_en.pdf

The obligation for IDPs certificates to be stamped was removed on 8 June (Resolution 509 amendment) after continuous advocacy

as early as 3am to reserve a place in the queue. During the long waiting hours, people are often exposed to the heat or burning sun as the administration's premises lack seats in the shadow and do not offer drinking water.

New concerns rose from the adoption of a second change in the legislation (Resolution 637) on 8 June. According to the amendment, IDPs who receive social payments will be visited and checked by authorities' mobile groups. Again, procedures remain unclear, adding to fear and confusion among the affected people.



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Pensioners waiting at the Livoberezhnyi DoDP (Mariupol, Donetsk oblast)

Moreover, according to the amendment, IDPs, including pensioners, whose certificate was wrongfully cancelled (as opposed to being suspended only) can only have their payments reinstated after six months. This regulation presents an undue hardship for people and threatens their livelihood. Due to the suspension of payments some of the most vulnerable people affected are unable to pay for food, rent or transport.

On a more positive note, the Ministry of Social Policy informed on 30 June that a new unified information database of IDPs is expected to enter into operation by the end of July. The database, which the Ministry developed with the support of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is designed to ensure the interconnectivity between MoSP offices at raion, oblast and national levels.

According to the NMS, most IDP households rely on one or two sources of income

National Monitoring System of Ukraine's IDPs

In July, IOM will publish the results of the third round of its National Monitoring System (NMS) of the situation on 1.8 million registered IDPs in Ukraine. This will also include a report depicting the cumulative results of the first three rounds of monitoring (March-May) and the results of a phone survey administered to a sample of 3,600 IDPs in all regions of Ukraine. The NMS combines data obtained from multiple sources, including administrative data, key informant and face-to-face interviews with IDP and local households; and telephone interviews with IDPs registered with the Ministry of Social Policy.

The data crunched from these various sources give a more precise picture of IDP movements and vulnerabilities. Preliminary results of the NMS third round indicate that 58 per cent of IDPs are women; and that the majority of IDPs in Ukraine (32 per cent) are between 35 and 59 years old, followed by persons aged 18 to 34 (25 per cent). According to the NMS, most IDP households rely on one or two sources of income, most often social benefits, pensions and the IDP allowance.

The lack of employment remains the major concern for IDPs. However, a significant number of IDPs was able to find work at their new place of residence. According to the IOM phone survey data, 39 per cent of IDP women and 51 per cent of men have jobs. Moreover, the structure of IDP employment indicates that many apparently continue to work in similar sectors as before the displacement.

A positive and encouraging result of the NMS is that 81 per cent of IDPs who have been interviewed face-to-face are satisfied with the social environment in the location of displacement. Moreover, 70 per cent are satisfied with the social support they received and their access to healthcare, despite concerns linked to the suspension of social payments and the complications in the registration process. About one third of the IDPs from Luhanska and Donetsk oblasts are willing to return home.

HRP 2016: 18 per cent funded

As of 30 June, the Financial Tracking Service (FTS - <https://fts.unocha.org>) indicates that the HRP 2016 received US\$ 54,5 million, or 18 per cent of the US\$ 298 million required. Many donations are yet to be recorded, and donors and partners are invited to register donations.

A 14-truck convoy organised by the Logistic cluster arrived in Donetsk in June, carrying 190MT of construction materials. The Government of the Russian Federation delivered 400MT of assistance to Luhansk, including 46,5MT of building materials, according to the Russian Emergency Ministry (EMERCOM).

Mobile clinics halted activities because of low funding

While access to health care for patients with all kind of conditions, including infectious and chronic diseases, remains a major concern, the operation of WHO-sponsored mobile clinics which provided services close to the 'contact line' were forced to suspend operations due of lack of funding. For many people these mobile clinics are their only available health care. The mobile clinics in Ukraine have carried out more than 200,000 patient consultations since they were launched in early 2015.

WHO's appeal for US\$18.5 million remains unaddressed. US\$ 3 million are immediately needed to continue providing emergency health services and additional US\$ 5 million to scale up the response especially along the 'contact line' and inside NGCA.

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