



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The UN Migration Agency

Migration for the Benefit of All

IOM's ASSISTANCE TO CONFLICT-AFFECTED PEOPLE IN UKRAINE

MONTHLY REPORT

JANUARY 2019

FREEZING IN THE DONBAS: IOM AND LITHUANIA PROVIDE HEATERS FOR PEOPLE IN NEED



Elderly resident of Verkhnotoretske, Donetsk Region, receives his electric heater from IOM

For the fifth consecutive winter, bitter cold and sub-zero temperatures pose health- and life-threatening challenges for the conflict-affected people in eastern Ukraine. In December 2018, the local authorities in Luhansk Region issued a public health warning, following an increased number of people with hypothermia symptoms seeking medical care.

The elderly, standing for 30 per cent of conflict-affected people in Ukraine, suffer most.

The humanitarian community strives to provide winterization assistance to the most vulnerable people in the Eastern Conflict Area. As part of the effort, IOM, funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, distributed electric heaters and cast-iron stoves to the residents of the small towns of Novotoshivske, Orikhove (Luhansk Region), Verkhnotoretske, Pivnichne and Druzhba (Donetsk Region). These settlements along the contact line ▶

HIGHLIGHTS

- IOM has assisted over **311,000 vulnerable internally displaced persons (IDPs) and conflict-affected people** in 24 regions of Ukraine since 2014.
- The **total number of IDPs** from Crimea and eastern Ukraine is **1,355,375** as of 21 January 2019, according to the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine.
- **Over 2 million people** in Ukraine's Eastern Conflict Area are in danger of getting injured or killed by mines and UXOs – ten times the size of Geneva's population.
- The Humanitarian Country Team appeals for **USD 162 million** funding to assist **2.3 million most vulnerable conflict-affected people** in Ukraine in 2019.



Learn more from the [Multi-Year Humanitarian Response Strategy for Ukraine](#).



Heaters distribution in Verkhnotoretske, Donetsk Region

in government-controlled areas suffer from shelling, lack of vital infrastructure, restrictions of movement and mine contamination.

Over 500 households, including single parents, families with three and more children, people with disabilities and elderly have received this essential assistance that will help them endure harsh Donbas winter. This is especially important considering extreme financial vulnerability of IOM's beneficiaries and high price of solid fuel – coal or wood, that is used in most households.

Before the conflict, Olha Stepanivna, a pensioner from the town of Pivnichne, used to live in her apartment with central heating, but because of intensive shelling had to move to her shabby village house, located in a safer area. She said that electric heater came in very handy for her, because she could not afford to buy one. "Now I will put it in the bedroom and will be able to regulate the temperature more efficiently, trying to reduce my expenses on coal and save a little bit of my scarce pension."



Olha Stepanivna at her village house in Pivnichne. It is cold here, but she says she feels safe from shelling





“WE KEEP OUR HANDS BUSY TO FEEL WE ARE ALIVE”

IOM-ASSISTED MOTHER OF FOUR STRUGGLES FOR BETTER FUTURE IN AVDIIVKA

Grayish winter landscapes of Avdiivka, an industrial town located just 6 km from the contact line, in the government-controlled area, are hardly optimistic: looking for Liliia's place, we pass half-empty streets and buildings damaged by shelling. However, when we enter her flat, painted in bright colours, decorated with handcraft flowers and filled with child laughter, we get to an island of happiness and joy.

A woman with hearing impairment and a mother of four, Liliia appears to be a cheerful person, although the story of her life sounds dramatic. In 2015, when the shelling began, she made a painful decision not to move from Avdiivka. “My mother, who passed just two weeks ago (in December 2018), had cancer and could hardly walk,” she says. “I could not leave her, and we spent all those terrible days here, together with my children.”

February 2015 was the scariest time. The shells were exploding all around. “We were hiding in the doorway, laid with pillows, our hands held together, and praying,” Liliia recalls. “Then a shell broke the window in my mother's bedroom. Shatters of glass and furniture fell on us, I tried to cover up my children – look, I have scars after that day.”

During the months they spent without electricity, heating and water supply, Liliia tried to do various kinds of crafts with her children. “In the candle light, we were drawing and painting, sewing and embroidering, making collages, artificial flowers and pieces of ▶



PHOTO: IOM/Volodymyr Shuvayev

Liliia mends clothes at rather reasonable prices: “My clients are happy to save money and I am happy to sew. Sewing comforts me.”



PHOTO: IOM/Volodymyr Shuvayev

Liliia posing with her younger daughters Mila and Marta. They celebrated Marta's seventh birthday under fire, with no cake and gifts. A neighbour presented Marta a puppy. Later they found a wounded and frightened cat in the street. It became Mila's present



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furniture. We tried to keep our hands busy to cope with our fears and feel we were still alive.”

Another disaster happened when the central heating was restored: the frozen water-pipes burst, and hot water flooded their flat. Liliia and her children completed all the refurbishment works by themselves. Many years ago, Liliia studied at vocational school to become an outwear tailor, though taking care of four children and her bedridden mother she has never had a chance to work. The social benefits she receives as a person with a disability and mother of four can hardly cover her family expenses. Recently Liliia participated in the IOM programme providing self-employment opportunities for conflict-affected people and received a professional sewing machine, an overlocker and a steam-generator.

PHOTO: IOM/Volodymyr Shuwayev



“I said: God, if you left us alive in shelling, we will survive anything else.”

“Clients came immediately after I posted the announcement in social network,” says Liliia. “Every day people ask me to mend, sew and alter clothes and now I am able to pay for my children’s school and dancing classes.” Liliia loves bright colours and exquisite styles. In her spare moments, she develops children’s party dress designs, while in the future she plans to produce

wedding and evening outfits for adults as well. She dreams to expand her business, hire two more tailors and open a salon where girls and women will be able to buy or rent party dresses and accessories. Liliia is full of enthusiasm to cope with all the difficulties. She believes some day wedding and evening dresses will be in high demand in her native town of Avdiivka.



IOM ASSISTANCE TO IDPs AND CONFLICT-AFFECTED POPULATION IN UKRAINE

23 JANUARY 2019



1,355,375

Total number of IDPs in Ukraine according to the Ministry of Social Policy as of 21 January 2019



311,773

IDPs and people in need assisted by IOM since 2014



145,558
47% women



99,591
32% men



66,624
21% children



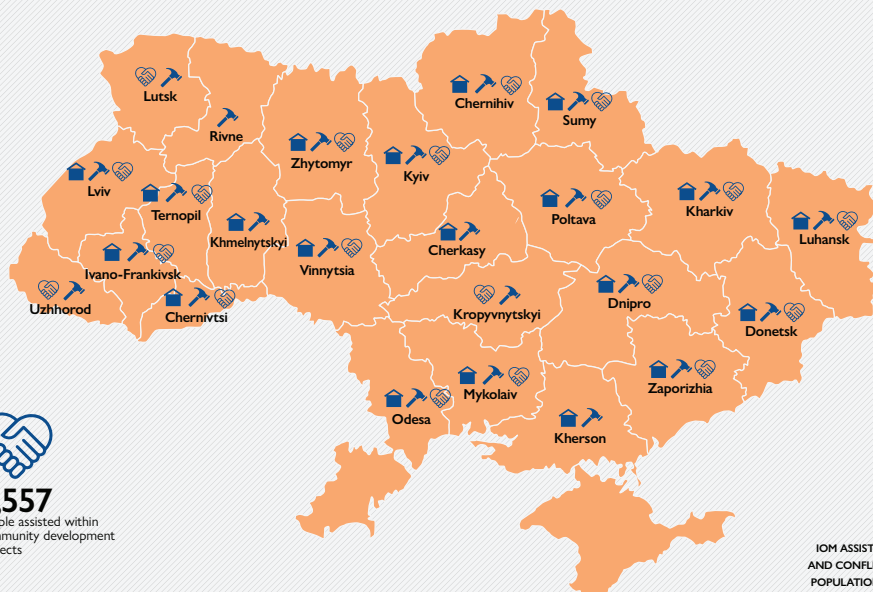
290,862
People provided with humanitarian aid



16,354
People provided with livelihood support



4,557
People assisted within community development projects



IOM ASSISTANCE TO IDPs AND CONFLICT-AFFECTED POPULATION IN UKRAINE IS SUPPORTED BY:





BACKGROUND ON THE CRISIS

In April 2014, armed groups in the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine (Donetsk and Luhansk) began to seize buildings and arms. As a result of ongoing fighting between armed groups and government forces, as well as the events which occurred in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (ARC) in March 2014, many people have been forced to flee their homes and have become increasingly vulnerable. Many are in need of shelter, food and non-food assistance, as their savings are often meager, social benefits take time to re-register, and livelihoods options may be restricted. Concurrently, while grassroots volunteer organizations, civil society and host communities have provided a robust response to the immediate needs of IDPs, the economic crisis in Ukraine has hampered opportunities for more durable solutions, in part through employment and community stabilization. Those staying in the Donbas, particularly in areas affected by fighting along the contact line, face imminent security threats. The provision of basic services has been disrupted, supplies are increasingly limited, and economic activity has been crippled. Daily ceasefire violations continue to be reported.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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From
the People of Japan



U.S. Department
of State Bureau
of Population,
Refugees, and Migration

In line with IOM's global strategy, the IOM Mission in Ukraine aims at advancing the understanding of the opportunities and challenges of migration in the Ukrainian context. Maximizing those opportunities and minimizing the challenges presented by migratory movements are the guiding principles of all activities and programmes the Mission engages in.

IOM Ukraine fights trafficking in human beings, assists the Government in addressing the needs of internally displaced persons and dealing with irregular migration, improving its migration management system, and creating migrant-inclusive health practices and policies. At the same time, IOM Ukraine engages in harnessing the development potential of migration, disseminating migration information and managing migration movements and integration of ethnic minorities, promoting the benefits of cultural diversity, and counteracting xenophobia and intolerance.

During the 22 years of its presence in Ukraine, IOM has assisted over 500,000 migrants (Ukrainians and other nationalities), IDPs, victims of trafficking and other vulnerable groups, directly or through its project partners.

Views and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the view of IOM or its member states.