



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The UN Migration Agency

IOM's ASSISTANCE TO CONFLICT-AFFECTED PEOPLE IN UKRAINE

BI-MONTHLY REPORT

Migration for the Benefit of All

NOVEMBER–DECEMBER 2018

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Humanitarian Country Team estimates that more than **5.2 million people** continue to be affected by the conflict in Eastern Ukraine.
- Of these, **3.5 million people** need humanitarian and protection assistance – a slightly higher number than at the beginning of 2018 due to widespread landmine contamination and prevalent mental and psychological impact. Thirty per cent of those people are elderly,
- making Ukraine's humanitarian crisis the "oldest" in the world. **Women** are disproportionately affected, particularly in the areas close to the contact line, where they head **six in ten families**.
- Over 2018, movement across the contact line increased by **20 per cent** compared to the previous year, with a monthly average of **1.1 million civilian crossings** to obtain services and maintain family links.
- The **total number of internally displaced persons (IDPs)** from Crimea and eastern Ukraine is **1,513,574** as of 10 December 2018, according to the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine.
- IOM has assisted over **281,000 vulnerable IDPs and conflict-affected people** in 24 regions of Ukraine since 2014.

HELPING UKRAINIAN DISPLACED PEOPLE PUT ROOTS DOWN IN NEW COMMUNITIES

Natalia is not from Mariupol, and wouldn't be living in this industrial city in southern Ukraine, were it not for the conflict that displaced her and her family from their home village of Shyrokyne in February 2015.

But she treats the city as if it were her own, organizing fellow-displaced people as well as locals, to clean up a messy public space next to a food kiosk she has opened with IOM help. "People stopped dumping here when they saw what we had done. My neighbours and clients support my initiatives and business development, and it helps me move further. I see that the positive emotions I give to the local community come back to me," she says. ▶



Natalia, a Ukrainian displaced woman, smiles to clients at her food kiosk established with a grant from IOM

Photo: IOM / Muse Mohammed 2018



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Even though Shyrokyne is only a short drive from Mariupol, the road to stability has been long and hard.

“We were hiding in our basement, when our house was destroyed by shelling. We had only two and a half minutes to escape while they were reloading. Thank God, our car was not damaged. We drove, and shells were falling behind us,” recalls Natalia.

After several months of further hardship, including an attempt to find a job abroad which ended with exploitation, Natalia managed to overcome depression and now runs two snack kiosks. She feels part of the local community, and plays her part to integrate and give back.

A new survey under IOM's EU-funded National Monitoring System shows that despite economic challenges, internally displaced people (IDPs) in Ukraine tend to stay in their current places of residence and build relationships with host communities, just like Natalia has done. The survey results have been jointly presented in Kyiv on 13 December by IOM, the Ministry of Temporary Occupied Territories and the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine.

Over several rounds of the survey, up to 80 per cent of displaced people have

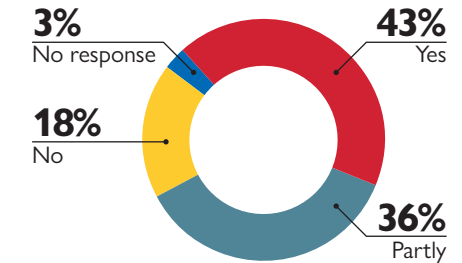
stated that they have fully or partially integrated into the local communities. Over a half (54 per cent) of the IDPs surveyed by IOM in the latest round stated that they trust local people in their current place of residence.

Close to two-thirds (62 per cent) of the IDPs interviewed by IOM reported that they have been staying in their current place of residence for over three years. More than one-third (38 per cent) stated that they would not return to their places of origin even if the conflict ends. In some regions, such as Kyiv, Chernihiv, Volyn and Chernivtsi, this figure is 60 per cent and higher. The share of displaced persons who stated their intention to return home after the end of the conflict decreased from 32 per cent in September 2017 to 24 per cent in September 2018.

“While UN Migration continues regularly updating and analysing comprehensive data from the National Monitoring System, we also provide direct assistance to displaced and conflict-affected people in Ukraine,” said IOM Ukraine's Chief of Mission, Dr. Thomas Lothar Weiss. “Since 2014, with the support of our donors, we were able to assist close to 300,000 people through our humanitarian, economic empowerment and social cohesion programmes, and we are committed to continuing our work as the needs of conflict-affected people in Ukraine remain high,” he added.

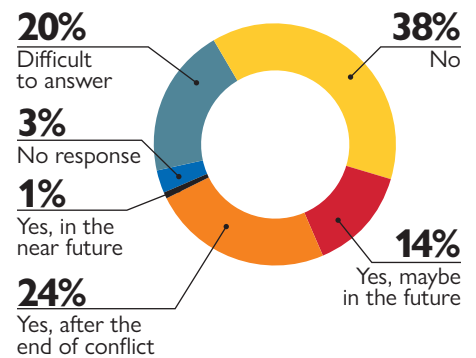
IOM has been conducting surveys on the situation of IDPs in Ukraine on a regular basis since March 2016. The research presents integrated data of face-to-face and telephone interviews with IDPs, returnees, key informants and people

IDPs' self-assessment of their integration in the local community



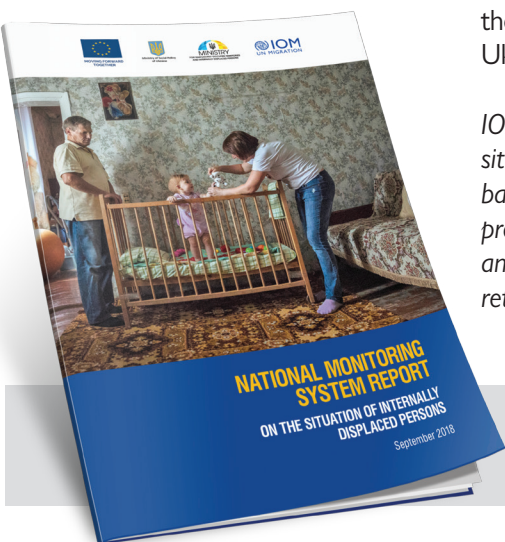
Source: Face-to-face interviews with IDPs, September 2018

IDPs' intentions on returning to live in the place of residence before displacement



Source: Interviews with IDPs (combined data), September 2018

crossing the contact line as well as focus groups discussions. In the latest, 11th round, conducted in September 2018, a total of 2,405 respondents were interviewed face-to-face, and 4,025 by telephone. In the latest report, data from telephone and face-to-face interviews collected in Round 9, Round 10 and Round 11 was accumulated to ensure a sufficient sample size to conduct analysis at the oblast level, as well as with particular groups of interest, such as IDPs from Crimea or returnee households with children.



Read the latest NMS report at

http://www.iom.org.ua/sites/default/files/nms_round_11_eng_press.pdf



THREE THOUSAND VULNERABLE PEOPLE IN THE DONBAS TO GET CASH ASSISTANCE

With the conflict in eastern Ukraine now in its fifth year, vulnerable families have exhausted all their resources, and can no longer afford to pay rent, or buy basic winterization items and other essential commodities.

IOM, with funding from the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), continues to operate in the region of need providing support to individuals affected by the conflict and exposed to daily obstacles.

Currently, IOM is providing cash assistance in equivalent of USD 200 to 3,250 vulnerable people living in the government-controlled areas close to the contact line, in order to help them cover their basic needs for the cold season. The beneficiaries are elderly people, people with disabilities, families with three and more children and single-headed households, identified by IOM staff and partners through the field visits, phone assessments, as well as in cooperation with local authorities and volunteers. The assistance empowers vulnerable individuals with the flexibility to choose which goods or services they would like to cover based on their own time-specific needs and household priorities.

IOM's previous experience shows that people prefer to spend the cash they receive on winter clothes, medicines, food and hygiene items, as well as for purchasing wood or coal for heating and paying their utility bills.



74 y.o. Valentyna (pictured) is one of IOM beneficiaries currently receiving cash assistance. She has been living here in Vilkhove, Luhansk Region, all of her life and

now a small pension is her one and only source of income. "I can pay for this winter's heating now. I'm so happy, it's such a weight off my mind," she said.



BUTTERFLIES HIT THE FEAR

Due to the protracted conflict and its consequences, the needs of residents of Donetsk and Luhansk regions in psychological counselling remain high. However, in Ukraine it is still unpopular to ask for assistance in a case like this. The project implemented by IOM, the UN Migration Agency, funded by the Government of Japan, aims at changing the current situation.

According to humanitarian organizations, over three-quarters of school directors and teachers interviewed near the contact line reported striking changes of the behavior of students due to the conflict. Parents are overstretched and are increasingly adopting negative practices such as alcohol abuse to cope with the crisis. Over a one-third of IDPs, questioned by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Seventy-four per cent (74%) of those who need psychological assistance do not receive it. PTSD particularly affects women. The conflict has also led to the destruction of families and social stratification, which deepens the feeling of anxiety and hopelessness among children, families and communities. Within a Japan-funded project aimed to support the development and social cohesion of communities affected by the conflict in the Donbas, IOM builds capacity of psychologists, social workers and teachers who provide free psychosocial assistance. From August to October 2018, 161 local specialists visited two-day trainings to expand their theoretical knowledge and gain new practical skills. The project participants received stationery



IOM-supported school psychologist Tetiana Ptitsya

for conducting group psychosocial sessions in the Donbas communities. Currently, IOM trainees conducted 122 sessions on topics such as child stress susceptibility and stress reduction, stress management practices, non-

violent communication methods, teamwork, self-regulation of behaviour in stress situations, etc., attended by 1,623 persons. “The culture of seeking psychological assistance in Ukraine has only recently ▶



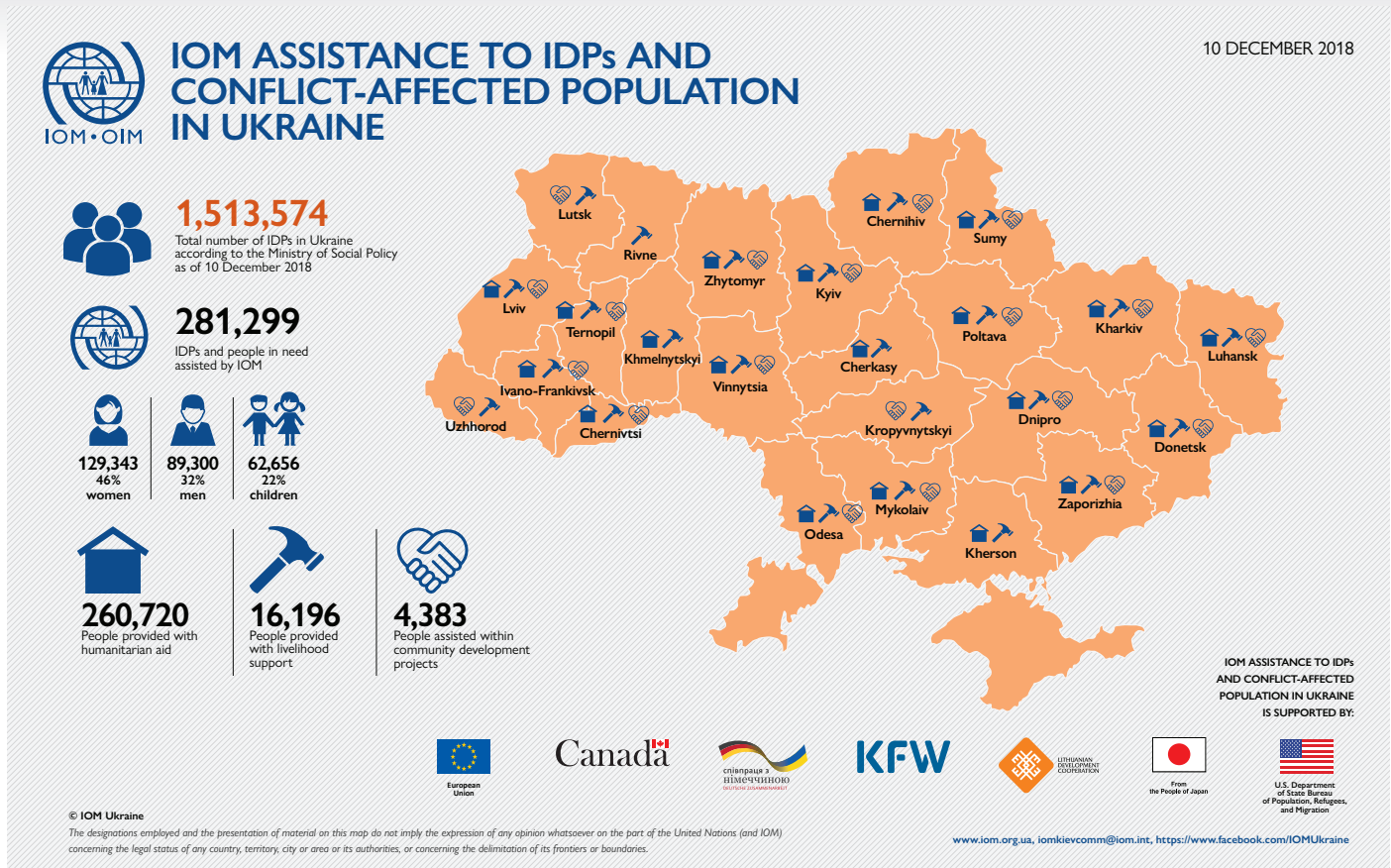
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begun to develop, people gradually get rid of certain stereotypes and their own fears, because. In our childhood nobody said that psychological problems were something that needed to be solved, not something that was to be ashamed of," says Tetyana Ptitsya, a practical psychologist at the Hirnyk Secondary School №18 in the Donetsk Region. When visiting Tetiana's office, you immediately realize that she loves her work. All the lockers are completely filled with toys, constructors, drawings and manuals, colourful hats are hanging on the walls. "All this makes my work easier, because the children usually say about what they feel not directly, but through pictures, tales, identifying themselves with objects or natural phenomena," Tetiana assures.

She has participated in IOM's project on psychosocial support for the communities of the Donbas, and with training, expert support, materials and equipment received, she continues to help children and adults. "Our mining town of Hirnyk is located only 12 kilometres from the contact line, and we live alongside the war every day," continues Tetiana. In February 2015, the school in which Tatiana works suffered significant destruction as a result of mortar shelling. She remembers that day very well: the children just finished their classes. The shock wave damaged windows and even the door flew out of school. "We were hiding under the tables, because there was nowhere to run," Tetiana recalls.

Of course, such events lead to stress disorders and anxiety. Tetiana honestly talks about her struggle with stress and shares how she was able to restore her emotional state: "I started drawing a lot. Our family lives in a private house, so I painted one of the outer walls. At first, these were only dark colours, because I figured out what I felt. I was able to return to the psychologist's work after a while, because it is very important to have an internal resource in order to provide psychological assistance to others. " Now the walls of Tetiana's house are painted with colourful butterflies, and the smiling and self-confident woman advises to take greater care of yourself and not to be afraid to visit a psychologist.





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:

Ms. Varvara Zhluktenko, IOM Ukraine's Communications Officer,
vzhluktenko@iom.int +38 044 568 50 15 +38 067 447 97 92

IOM'S ASSISTANCE TO CONFLICT-AFFECTED PEOPLE IN UKRAINE IS SUPPORTED BY:



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LITHUANIAN
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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.