



International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
The UN Migration Agency

# IOM's ASSISTANCE TO CONFLICT-AFFECTED PEOPLE IN UKRAINE

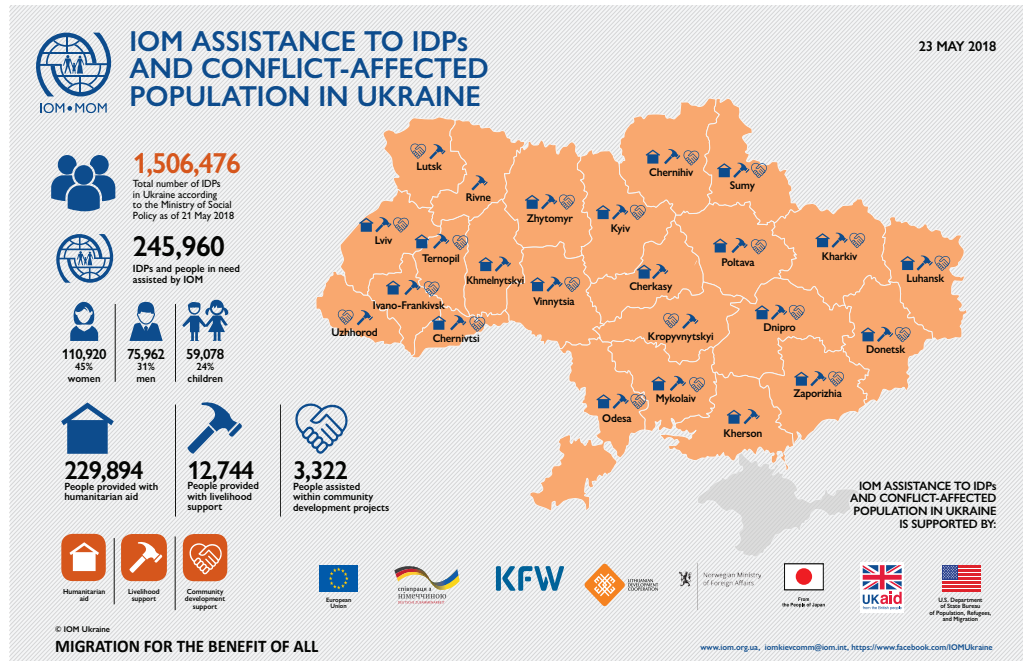
MONTHLY REPORT

Migration for the Benefit of All

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## HIGHLIGHTS

- The overall security situation in eastern Ukraine has deteriorated since the beginning of May, causing more and more destruction and victims among both military and civilians. Operation of the Donetsk Filter Station was suspended, putting at risk the water supply for **345,000** people.
- As of 23 May, the 2018 Ukraine Humanitarian Response Plan was funded only at **12%**.
- The total number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Crimea and eastern Ukraine is **1,506,476** as of 21 May 2018, according to the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine.
- IOM assisted over **245,000** vulnerable IDPs and conflict-affected people in 24 regions of Ukraine.



## IOM AND JAPAN RENOVATE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE IN UKRAINE'S CONFLICT-AFFECTED EAST



**Ambassador Shigeki Sumi and Dr. Thomas Lothar Weiss at the official opening of the renovated library in Toretsk**

Over 40,000 residents of Ukraine's conflict-affected Donbas region will benefit from nine community centres – libraries and cultural centres – renovated by IOM, the UN Migration Agency, with funding from the Government of Japan. According to the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, approximately 800,000 out of the country's 1.5 mln officially registered internally displaced persons reside in the Government-controlled area of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. "The significant increase in the number of residents brings additional burden to social infrastructure and may lead to tensions among community members," explained Dr. Thomas Lothar Weiss, IOM Ukraine's Chief of Mission. In order to ▶



contribute to the integration of IDPs and promote communication and dialogue between groups within host communities, IOM, with funding from the Government of Japan, has been supporting local-driven initiatives in 29 Donbas communities and renovating public spaces where displaced persons and locals, including people with disabilities, can interact.

One of the locations IOM works in is Toretsk, a mining community in Donetsk Region, with over 70,000 inhabitants, about ten per cent of whom are IDPs. The town is less than ten kilometres from the contact line and the non-government controlled area. In 2014, during the first months of the conflict, Toretsk suffered heavy shelling. The IDPs, mainly from nearby Horlivka, began arriving after July 2014, when the Ukrainian Government regained control over the town. The local library has been serving as an information centre with free Internet and as a place where IDPs seek guidance and support. Now, after the refurbishment done by IOM, the old library transformed completely, having turned into an accessible open space for social cohesion activities organized by the local initiative group. Fifteen initiative group members, locals and IDPs, have already organized over 50 master classes, concerts, and open air festivals over the last six months.

“Our ground floor lobby, the hall, the conference room, the sanitary unit, the second floor hall and the reading room have been renovated,” Tetiana Scherbakova, director of the library, said proudly. “Winters with heavy frosts used to be a difficult time for us, and now the shabby old windows and entrance doors have been replaced. IOM has installed a 300 litre water tank to ensure there is water in the library even during frequent water supply cuts. Also, now we have an outside ramp allowing access for persons with disabilities.”



**Ambassador Shigeki Sumi and Dr. Thomas Lothar Weiss visiting renovated library in Popasna**

The renovated library in Toretsk, as well as the one in Popasna, Luhansk Region, have been opened early May by the Ambassador of Japan in Ukraine, Shigeki Sumi, and IOM Ukraine's Chief of Mission, Dr. Thomas Lothar Weiss.

The sakura planting ceremony in the main square of the Bakhmut city was the highlight of the Ambassador's visit to Ukraine's east. “In solidarity with Ukraine, Japan has been providing humanitarian and economic support to the Donbas communities since the beginning of the conflict. I hope that every spring, when sakura trees will be blooming, the residents of Bakhmut will enjoy the

beautiful flowering and remember the people of Japan,” Ambassador Sumi said. “IOM has been working in the Donbas, because we care,” said Thomas Weiss. “UN Migration Agency has been able to support communities in eastern Ukraine due to generous donor funding, such as the support received from Japan, and active involvement of all the community members. Despite the proximity to the conflict zone, with their resilience and brilliant ideas, people in Ukraine's East are multiplying the benefits from the support they receive in order to turn their home towns and cities into a better place for living.”



# FOUR YEARS INTO THE CONFLICT, DAILY BUDGET OF DISPLACED UKRAINIANS STAYS LESS THAN THREE DOLLARS

With the conflict in eastern Ukraine entering its fifth year, new data, collected by IOM, the UN Migration Agency, through an EU-funded survey, shows that over a half (54%) of internally displaced persons have funds enough only for food or have to limit expenses even for food. This is a ten per cent increase from the end of 2017 when the previous round of the survey was conducted. The United Nations and its humanitarian partners estimate that the number of food-insecure people in Ukraine has doubled over the last year, to 400,000 people in the government-controlled area, and to 800,000 in the non-government controlled territories.

"The conflict in eastern Ukraine and its impact on Ukraine's economy over the past years has eroded people's coping capacity, exacerbating their vulnerabilities," said IOM Ukraine's Chief of Mission, Dr. Thomas Lothar Weiss.

According to the latest IOM survey, the National Monitoring System, current average monthly income per IDP household member is UAH 2,239 (USD 85), a little less than UAH 2,446 recorded in December 2017. It stays lower than the actual subsistence level calculated by the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine



**A displaced woman living 5 km from the contact line separating the two sides in the conflict in eastern Ukraine**

in March at UAH 3,215 (USD 122). One-fourth the IDP households, surveyed by IOM, have monthly income up to UAH 3,000 (USD 114), while almost half of IDP families live on UAH 3,000 – UAH 7,000 (USD 114 – USD 266) per month.

The survey revealed that healthcare currently appears to be unaffordable for many IDPs due to the cost of medicine and services. The share of IDPs satisfied with accessibility of health care services drastically declined from 85 per cent in December 2017 to 62 per cent in March 2018.

At the same time, situation with IDPs' employment has remained relatively stable since June 2017, with 48 per cent of displaced persons having a job. Twelve per cent of IDPs are currently actively seeking employment. Among them, the overwhelming majority (78%) are women, and up to 40 per cent complain about the lack of vacancies.

"Having assisted over 240,000 conflict-affected people in Ukraine, IOM is committed to working with the Government and civil society of Ukraine, donors, Humanitarian Country Team and other international partners in order to build resilience of most vulnerable populations affected by the conflict in the East," said Thomas Weiss.

"The conflict in Eastern Ukraine continues to trigger new humanitarian needs, damage local infrastructure and negatively affect incomes of many families. Unfortunately, displacement and lack of opportunities forces many internally displaced to return to insecure areas and risk their lives," Ambassador Hugues Mingarelli, Head of EU Delegation to Ukraine, noted. "The EU, as the largest donor, will continue doing everything in its power to improve the conditions of IDPs and increase their access to employment and basic services," Ambassador Mingarelli added. He explained that thousands of IDPs have already benefited from EU's assistance for accommodation; many more are receiving much needed trainings and small grants for starting their own business. Apart from grants and humanitarian aid, European Investment Bank is providing Ukraine loans for reconstruction projects in the five eastern regions.

**IOM Ukraine has been conducting regular surveys on the situation of IDPs since March 2016. In the latest round, conducted in March 2018, 2,420 IDPs were interviewed face-to-face, and 3,611 were interviewed by phone.**



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### NADIYA'S HOPE FOR A BETTER FUTURE

In the western Ukrainian city of Ivano-Frankivsk and the region, it is hard to find a person who has not heard about Nadiya\* Stefurak, a Paralympic sportswoman, world medalist in biathlon, who presented Ukraine at the 2010 Winter Paralympics in Vancouver. She is well-known for her sports glory and charity work with children with disabilities. IOM, the UN Migration Agency, is honoured to have Nadiya among its beneficiaries, supported with grants for self-employment.

Nadiya was enrolled into the IOM's programme designed both for people displaced from Crimea and Donbas and vulnerable members of communities which host them across Ukraine. She successfully defended her business plan and received a knitting machine. It now takes a prominent place at Nadiya's modest house in the village of Zaberezhia, where Ukraine's Paralympics star lives with her elderly father. The machine allows producing custom-made clothing and earning some additional income to Nadiya's pension of UAH 1,500 (USD 57) only. "Now everyone wants to have something unique," Nadiya demonstrates some of her products, explaining how she came up with different patterns.

"When I got injured in 1998, I did not have a wheelchair for two years. Then I started to learn hand knitting and take some orders. It was such a hard work that my eyes hurt," Nadiya recalls.

Then was the life-changing meeting with the local representatives of Malteser International, Order of Malta Worldwide Relief, who helped Nadiya to start her rehabilitation and sports career. As a well-known Paralympic athlete, Nadiya was invited to deliver motivational speeches at schools, and finally, after 2010 Paralympics, she decided to retire from sports and dedicate herself to working with children with disabilities. She runs a charity "[Svitla Nadiya](#)" (Bright Hope), which takes care of



**Nadiya was supported by IOM with funding from the British Embassy in Ukraine**

120 children from Bohorodchany district, including 30 who are bedridden. Excursions, master classes, hygiene items – Nadiya is extremely busy fundraising for the charity. There is also a rehabilitation room and a massage therapist is visiting at home those who cannot come to the centre due to their health condition. "I explain to the parents that their children need to work, and work, and work. The sport I was doing requires enormous work," says Nadiya. "A problem is that parents of children with disabilities often feel sorry for them. My situation was different, my mother died and I understood that I should take care of myself."

This resilient woman has been taking care of herself for many years. Recently she bought additional equipment for her knitting machine to be able to produce more knitting patterns, and saves money to buy additional punch cards to expand her small business step-by-step.

However Nadiya's main wish is to find two or three more knitting machines to be able to organize master classes for children with disabilities who have an interest in gaining practical skills. "The children come of age and should find some work, but nobody wants to hire them. I just don't see any other option for them but to pass some informal

vocational training and get self-employed," says the strong woman, her eyes are shining with determination. "Knitting would be also an option for their mothers to have some income and diversity in their lives, as when there is a child with a disability in a family, the mother usually fully dedicates herself to looking after the child and is not able to find a job."

**Soon after the annexation of Crimea and the outbreak of the conflict in the east of Ukraine in 2014, IOM, the UN Migration Agency, started providing grants for vocational training, self-employment and micro-entrepreneurship to internally displaced persons. Later the programme was expanded to include vulnerable host community members as well, in order to avoid possible tensions between local population and the newcomers. As of May 2018, almost 7,000 small grants have been awarded on a competitive basis to empower conflict-affected people and vulnerable host community members, create income-generating opportunities or improve chances for employment, and help them to become more self-reliant and economically independent.**

\* The Slavic name translates as 'Hope'



## 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. Most leave with few belongings and 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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## IOM'S ASSISTANCE TO CONFLICT-AFFECTED PEOPLE IN UKRAINE IS SUPPORTED BY:



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U.S. Department  
of State Bureau  
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***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 21 years of its presence in Ukraine, IOM has assisted over 500,000 migrants (Ukrainians and other nationalities), IDPs, potential migrants, 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.*