

THE PROTECTION CLUSTER INCLUDES SUB-CLUSTERS ON CHILD PROTECTION, GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AND MINE-ACTION



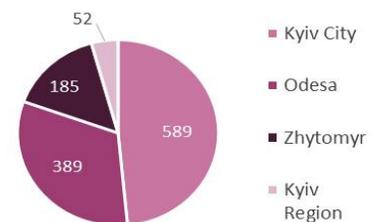
PROTECTION CONCERNS

- In July 2016, the number of **civilian casualties** in the conflict zone of eastern Ukraine recorded by OHCHR was the highest since August 2015, with **73 cases recorded**. The major cause of civilian casualties - 38 cases - was shelling from heavy artillery systems, which are prohibited by the Minsk Agreements. In addition, 26 civilian casualties were caused by mines, ERWs, booby traps and IEDs.
- Long queues were observed at all checkpoints**, with the longest at Zaitseve, Novotroitske and Mariinka checkpoints, as cars crossing the contact line are being examined more thoroughly. Queuing for hours in the heat, with inadequate sanitation and water facilities poses health risks, with people suffering from heat stroke and dehydration. One death was recorded at the Zaitseve checkpoint.
- As of July 1, 2016, all IDPs receiving social benefits and pensions are required to open a bank account at OschadBank, a state-owned bank, in order to receive their payments. **According to OschadBank, only 300,000 accounts have been opened by IDPs so far**. Protection Cluster partners estimate that at least 500,000 IDPs do not have the bank accounts needed to receive benefits either because they did not apply for them yet or because they are still in the process of being opened. Overall, the process of reinstating social payments and pensions for IDPs who had their payments suspended in early 2016 has been delayed in areas with large numbers of IDPs, as local authorities lack sufficient technical and staffing resources to undertake IDP verification. Due to the large number of people requiring reinstatement of benefits and pensions, social protection offices in government controlled Donetsk region are scheduling appointments for IDPs as far ahead as October 2016. This meaning that many IDPs are deprived of social benefits and pensions for extended periods of time.
- Over 1,200 IDPs residing in 16 collective centres in Kyiv city and Kyiv, Odessa and Zhytomyr regions, face imminent eviction, according to UNHCR protection monitoring.** Of these, 30% are older people and people with disabilities. The main reasons for eviction include large utility debts, which have accumulated since their arrival, as well as lease termination. Lack of affordable housing for IDPs with specific needs, including IDPs with disabilities, poses a challenge to identifying alternative solutions.
- There is lack of public awareness about prevention and response to GBV, and as a result survivors do not have timely access to information about existing services.**
- Protection Cluster partners have reported difficulties faced by those seeking the issuance of civil documentation in GCA, including birth and death certificates, for those born or who have died in NGCA.** Cases sometimes take several months to process, instead of one day, as stipulated by national legislation. Some courts in GCA request photo or video evidence of births or deaths in NGCA, in order to issue the relevant civil documentation.
- Civil documentation, IDP registration and housing, land and property rights continue to be key protection concerns** for IDPs benefitting from the Norwegian Refugee Council's information, counseling and legal assistance project, which helped 1,841 people in July.

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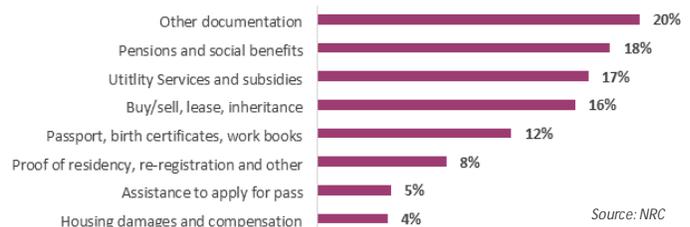
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IDPs at imminent risk of eviction from collective centers in Western and Central Ukraine



Source: UNHCR

Most frequently raised counselling issues



Source: NRC

HIGHLIGHTS

PROTECTION RESPONSE

- **The Protection Cluster developed a [Free Legal Aid Directory for internally displaced and conflict-affected people in Ukraine](#).** The Directory [maps](#) more than 140 organizations providing free legal assistance across all regions of Ukraine and lists the types of legal assistance offered and the format: hotlines, mobile teams and office consultations. The Directory is a practical tool that will help IDPs and the conflict affected population access free legal assistance, as well as facilitate referrals and information sharing.
- **The national hotline for GBV survivors**, operated by UNFPA implementing partner La Strada for the past five months, has received 15,814 calls. The most frequently requested assistance related to psychological support, information and legal advice concerning domestic violence and child abuse.
- To protect civilians crossing the contact line from queuing in direct sunlight, **UNHCR installed tents and sun shelters at Stanytsa Luganska and Zaitsevo checkpoints.**
- **The NGO Foundation.101 has created an online complaints application for people wishing to complain about officials at checkpoints in Donetsk and Lugansk regions.** The app "Skarga.101" can be downloaded at <https://skarga.foundation101.org/>. Complaints will be forwarded to relevant authorities and will inform the drafting of recommendations on improving movement through the contact line.
- **HelpAge identified 12 Community Safe Spaces for older people** in Severodonetsk, Lysychansk, Kreminna, Popasna, Stanychno-Luganskiy district and Novoaydarskiy district, as well as in several villages along the contact line. The Community Safe Spaces will be used by IDPs and host communities for psychosocial activities aimed at overcoming isolation, depression and loneliness. According to the HelpAge vulnerability database, 38% of 9,716 older people assessed in conflict-affected areas suffer from isolation and loneliness as a result of being separated from family and friends due to the conflict.
- **DRC continues to provide legal assistance to IDPs opening bank accounts with OshchadBank in five regions:** Donetsk, Khmelnytsk, Mykolayiv, Sumy and Zaporizhzhia. DRC also disseminated 12,000 information leaflets about its legal aid services to all 119 Oshchadbank branches in the North of Donetsk oblast.
- **The Odessa-based NGO Desyate Kvitnya is providing legal counselling to IDPs facing eviction from collective centres.** It is also organizing "go and see visits" to government proposed housing, so that IDPs can make an informed decision about possible relocation.

ADVOCACY

- **OHCHR published the report, "[Accountability for killings in Ukraine from January 2014 to May 2016](#)".** The report focuses on cases of alleged killings of civilians, and people otherwise protected under international humanitarian law, as well as deaths that occurred during Maidan and Odessa mass gatherings in 2014. Significant numbers of people, including civilians, were summarily executed or died in custody, with most such deaths occurring in 2014 and early 2015. Dozens of people have also died while in custody in the NGCAs of Ukraine. There has been widespread impunity, with no one taking responsibility for the killings, and few being held accountable.
- **The Protection Cluster issued [A Guidance Note on Peacebuilding and Reconciliation in Ukraine](#) for use by humanitarian actors in Ukraine.** Peacebuilding and reconciliation are integral to supporting a strong protection environment and facilitating durable solutions. The guidance note provides practical guidance on how peacebuilding and reconciliation can be operationalized in humanitarian response, including examples from other country contexts, as well as key recommendations.
- **Protection Cluster partners organized an advocacy event outside the Cabinet of Ministers on 20 July, 2016,** to mark 100 days of Cabinet of Ministers Resolution 365, which suspended social benefits and pensions to hundreds of thousands of IDPs. The campaign compiled 100 IDP personal stories, illustrating the impact of the Resolution on the lives of IDPs. This was presented to the Cabinet of Ministers as an alternative to their report about the 'achievements' of the 100 days.
- The Council of Europe Project "[Strengthening the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine](#)", in cooperation with the Dnipropetrovsk Regional State Administration, organized a **Regional Forum on the "Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons: National and Regional Responses"**, which was attended by more than 140 national and international participants. The Council of Europe presented its [report on "Enhancing the National Legal Framework in Ukraine for Protecting the Human Rights of IDPs"](#), which provides a comprehensive analysis of Ukrainian legislative framework on internal displacement.

TRAININGS/EVENTS

- **The Age and Disability Technical Working Group provided training** on inclusive programming to the shelter staff of the Norwegian Refugee Council and Luxembourg Red Cross. The training equips organizations with tools to mainstream physical accessibility within their shelter and NFI projects. The training included sessions on disaggregating sex, age and disability data; communication skills and physical accessibility for older people and people with disabilities within shelter and NFI programmes.
- **The United Nations held a workshop with the Government of Ukraine to validate the report and recommendations of the UN Joint Assessment on Mine Action**, which was conducted by UNDP, UNICEF and United Nations Mine Action Service earlier this year. The meeting was co-chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and attended by government mine action stakeholders. Mine Action Sub-cluster members agreed to establish three working groups: on data collection of victims of mine accidents; a non-technical survey and mine risk education.
- **UNFPA Ukraine hosted the inter-agency GBV Information Management System assessment mission.** It looked at the quality of services available to GBV survivors and the data management practices by organizations that either expressed the desire to jointly establish the IMS in Ukraine or might consider doing so in the future.