

**ISSUE No. 8.**

**JULY–AUGUST 2023**

# RESILIENCE AND COHESION OF UKRAINIAN SOCIETY DURING THE WAR

Periodic report based  
on monitoring materials from  
selected regions of Ukraine

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KYIV 2023

**RESILIENCE AND COHESION OF UKRAINIAN SOCIETY DURING THE WAR.** Periodic report based on monitoring materials from selected regions of Ukraine. **ISSUE No. 8. JULY – AUGUST 2023** / Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research. Kyiv. September 2023. 34 p.

This report was drafted by the team of the Ukrainian Independent Center for Political Research (UCIPR) as part of the activities of the National Platform for Resilience and Social Cohesion (National Platform). This civic initiative was launched in February 2018 (formerly known as the National Platform “Dialogue on Peace and Secure Reintegration”).

The National Platform’s activities are geared towards strengthening the national resilience of Ukraine. This could be done through establishing dialogue practices in society, providing the authorities with proposals for developing relevant policies, in particular, those on resilience and social cohesion, as well as ensuring public awareness of these processes. The initiative has been implemented with the financial support of the European Union as part of “Building Resilience in Conflict through Dialogue” project.

The report is based on data on events in 12 oblasts of Ukraine which are important for shaping a policy of national resilience. The project target oblasts were selected based on analysis of changes in cohesion of local populations due to the outbreak of military operations and include Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk, Chernivtsi, Lviv, and Zakarpattia oblasts. For data collection, we distinguish between the temporarily occupied areas, frontline and deoccupied areas, and rear areas.

UCIPR is grateful for the materials supplied by participants of the Regional Network of National Platform for Resilience and Social Cohesion, Dmytro Arabadzhiev, Nadiia Babarykina, Dementii Bielyi, Anatolii Boiko, Ihor Dotsiak, Mykhailo Zolotukhin, Oksana Ivasiv, Olena Lytvyn, Natalia Nechaieva-Yuriychuk, Olena Nizhelska, Andrii Romanenko, Dmytro Tuzhanskyi, Nazar Khamuliak.

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The product content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

The text of the report is available for download on the websites of the National Platform for Resilience and Social Cohesion <http://national-platform.org/> and UCIPR [www.ucipr.org.ua](http://www.ucipr.org.ua).

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# SUMMARY

## The situation at the front line

On 28 August 2023, the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine officially announced that the Armed Forces of Ukraine [liberated](#) the village of Robotyne, Zaporizhzhia oblast, occupied by the Russian army in March 2022. [According to](#) military experts, that was the first of several lines of trenches of the Russian occupiers. Robotyne lies about 20 kilometres from temporarily occupied Tokmak, a large logistics hub of the Russian army. Further from Tokmak lies the city of Melitopol, which still needs to be liberated. To resist the pressure of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the south, the Russians were forced to move there the most powerful units from other frontline spots. Ukrainian troops have carried out two operations in the south of Ukraine: in the west of Zaporizhzhia oblast and on the administrative border of Donetsk and Zaporizhzhia oblasts.

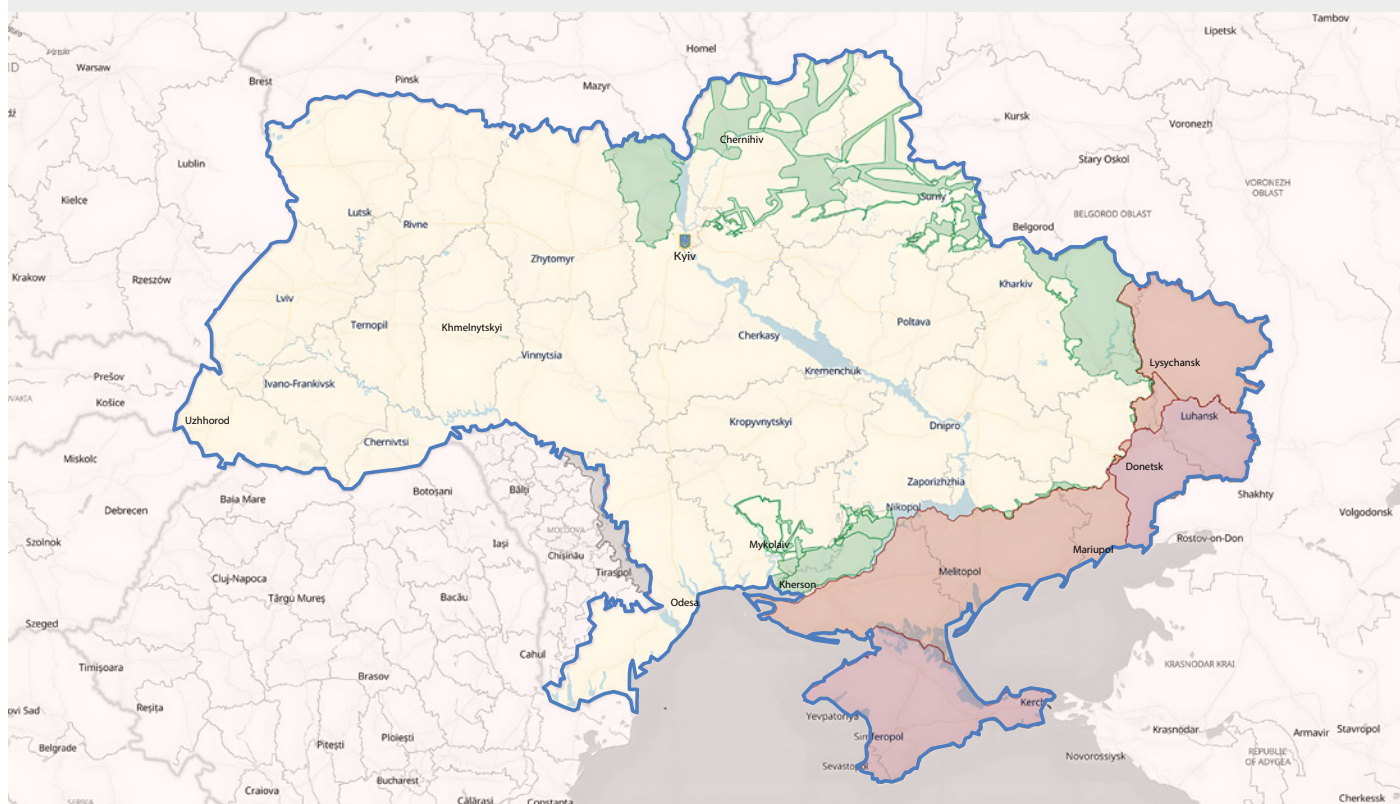
In July and August, Russian troops have attacked Kharkiv oblast towards Kupiansk with guided aerial bombs and other weapons. The spokesman for the Eastern Group of Ukraine's Armed Forces, Serhii Chervatyi, [said](#) that Russia had concentrated over 100,000 militaries in that area, outnumbering the group of forces of the former USSR which fought in Afghanistan in 1979–1989. Intense fighting has continued; some positions changed hands several times. The United Kingdom's intelligence services [predicted](#) that Russia would intensify its offensive towards Kupiansk and Lyman in September–October to create a buffer zone around Luhansk oblast.

The Russian occupiers have been conducting assaults towards Svatove almost round the clock. Moreover, they constantly fired on Nevske and Bilohorivka, Luhansk oblast, using artillery and mortars of various calibres and types.

Active military operations have also continued in the territory of Donetsk oblast, though without a significant change in the frontlines. The front line near the urban-type settlement of Velyka Novosilka remained the most dynamic. Developing the offensive, Ukrainian troops [have deoccupied the village of Urozhaine](#) in mid-August. At the same time, the frontlines around Bakhmut have been relatively frozen despite the fierce fighting in the winter and spring of 2023.

This map from 29 September 2023 shows how the area of military operations has changed since April 2022 (deoccupied territories are marked in green on the map, and occupied territories in red). Russian forces retreated from the right bank of the Dnipro River in Ukraine's south near Kherson and from the northeast – from Kyiv, Chernihiv, Sumy, and Kharkiv oblasts. The Russians have captured and continue to hold a large percentage of the territory in the east and southeast parts of the country, where heavy fighting is ongoing. Russia is relentlessly targeting entire Ukraine with various types of weapons, devastating infrastructure, destroying homes, and killing civilians.

## TEMPORARILY OCCUPIED TERRITORY OF UKRAINE Map as of September 29, 2023.



Source of information is <https://deepstatemap/live>.

The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights [has reported](#) 9,511 civilians as killed and 17,206 injured in Ukraine as a result of Russia's full-scale invasion based on data from 24 February 2022 to 27 August 2023.

According to [official data](#) of the juvenile prosecutors, 503 children have died and over 1,116 sustained injuries of varying severity as of the morning of 26 August 2023. The investigation continued to establish other violations of children's rights as a result of occupation in the areas where military operations were ongoing, in the temporarily occupied and deoccupied areas.

## Temporarily occupied areas

The Kremlin has continued preparations for "elections" in the temporarily occupied areas of Ukraine scheduled for September. Election campaigns were supposed to be launched simultaneously with Russia-wide elections which, according to the Kremlin, makes them part of internal political processes, while elections to the so-called people's councils should legitimate the Russia-installed authorities in domestic political life. Another goal of "elections" is to integrate the occupying administrations into the Russian legal and political context.

Furthermore, “elections” in the occupied areas are a proven reason to step up the issuance of Russian passports and Russification.

The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has addressed the parliaments and governments of foreign countries, international organisations regarding the intentions of the Russian Federation to hold sham elections in the temporarily occupied areas of Ukraine. Specifically, it called on the international community not to recognise the legitimacy of any “elections”, as well as to provide full assistance in the criminal prosecution of those involved in their organisation.

The trend of complete economic failure of the quasi-administrative entities set up by Russia in the temporarily occupied areas has intensified. Specifically, according to the latest changes in the so-called “budget of the DPR”, almost 90% of the needs of the occupied areas were financed by direct transfers from the state budget of Russia. At the same time, the breakaway authorities attempted to cover up the actual destruction of the economy of Donetsk oblast with talks about the investment boom which “has already practically begun in the oblast” and reports on the successful construction and restoration of certain destroyed facilities.

Experts of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) [have been granted access](#) to the roofs of two of the six power units of Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant (Zaporizhzhia NPP) a month after requesting it. According to IAEA, experts have observed no mines or explosives on the rooftops of Unit 3 and Unit 4 reactor buildings and turbine halls.

The Russia-installed administration of Zaporizhzhia NPP attempted to encourage Russian employees to work at the plant through providing them with housing seized from Ukrainians who had fled from Enerhodar where the plant is located. The general situation at the plant has remained tense due to potential threats to nuclear and radiation safety and the switch-off of the plant from the electric power network.

The occupiers have used tools of pressure and repression against the population of the temporarily occupied areas, including a policy of terror, intimidation and coercion. Residents appeared to be defenceless against the arbitrariness of the occupying regime. Among the vulnerable groups were children exposed to propaganda in schools. Children’s and youth organisations have been set up in schools to influence the opinion and views of children in accordance with Russian ideology.

The occupying authorities have continued to force Ukrainians to receive Russian passports; people faced serious consequences in case of refusal. Specifically, they could be deported, become the object of filtration checks, loose access to health care and social security services, and be deprived of the right to work.

As of August 2023, five dioceses of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) in the temporarily occupied areas have been re-registered with the Ministry of Justice of Russia: Donetsk and Horlivka dioceses in the occupied part of Donetsk oblast, Luhansk and Rovenki in Luhansk oblast, and Berdiansk diocese in the occupied part of Zaporizhzhia oblast.

## Frontline and deoccupied areas

The security situation has remained tense in the frontline communities and in the liberated areas. People have died every day as a result of shelling; infrastructure, housing, and communications facilities have been destroyed. The enemy has continued attacks on populated areas in Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv, and Mykolaiv oblasts using aircraft, drones, S-300 anti-aircraft missile systems, Grad multiple launch rocket systems, artillery, and the use of phosphorus munitions. According to our sources, the number of attacks by guided aerial bombs has increased in Kharkiv oblast in July and August. Russian troops used the tactic of double shelling of the same target with a time lag. As a result, employees of various services – doctors, rescuers, and police officers – have suffered in Kharkiv, Kherson, and Donetsk oblasts.

The threat of an offensive by Russian troops towards Kupiansk persisted which raised a high level of tension in Kharkiv oblast and prevented the restoration of communications and infrastructure facilities there.

Due to military operations, daily shelling, and occupation of a large part of Kherson oblast, it has faced serious challenges. Those factors influenced the conduct and manner of life of locals and prompted extensive migration of the able-bodied population. Local entrepreneurs and builders had limited capacities for carrying out even basic repair and restoration works. Therefore, companies from other oblasts have been



invited. This increases a decline in the economic, social, and public spheres of Kherson oblast and makes it face serious challenges of providing the vital needs of the population.

The destruction of Kakhovka dam has caused a large-scale humanitarian, environmental, and economic disaster. Overcoming its consequences remains the greatest challenge for the residents of Kherson oblast. With a joint effort of authorities and volunteers and with the support of both national and international partners, Kherson oblast and other affected areas are gradually solving these problems. In mid-August 2023, the government of Ukraine offered residents of Kherson and Mykolaiv oblasts a compensation mechanism for the lost harvest due to the collapse of Kakhovka HPP.

Locals of the deoccupied areas have regularly stepped on mines, often being injured or killed. Between the start of Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022 and July 2023, the United Nations has recorded 298 civilian deaths from explosive remnants of war, 22 of them children, and 632 civilian injuries.

Amid challenges posed by military operations and constant shelling, preparations for the new heating season in the target oblasts have been in the spotlight. Although planned repairs at energy facilities went according to schedule, the difficult situation in the border and frontline areas, in particular, in Kherson, Kharkiv and Zaporizhzhia, jeopardizes preparations for the heating season.

In some cities, an emphasis has been placed on the installation of protective structures and modular boiler houses to provide heating and save electricity. Eight cities in Donetsk oblast will be left without centralised heating due to broken gas pipelines, though authorities are looking for alternative heating sources.

Plich-o-plich (Side by Side) recovery project has been launched in the deoccupied part of Kherson oblast. As part of the project, 15 Ukrainian oblasts provide assistance for communities of 26 population centres to rebuild damaged housing and social facilities. Plich-o-plich involves cooperation at the level of communities and oblasts. The project is funded from the oblast and local budgets; funds from the state budget have not been raised yet. The recovery works continue in communities where there is no immediate threat of shelling and where enough people live.

## Relatively rear areas controlled by the Ukrainian government

On 17 July, Russia announced its withdrawal from the "grain deal" under which Ukraine exported grain from Odesa ports and intensified attacks on Odesa oblast. During that time, not only the port infrastructure facilities and granaries, but also the historical centre of Odesa were destroyed.

As a result of massive missile attacks on the city of Lviv and Lviv oblast on 6 July and 15 August 2023, civilians have been killed and many people injured, apart from significant damage to infrastructure and residential buildings. Everyone who cared, including residents, businesses, public organisations, and charitable institutions, helped authorities and relevant services in such a difficult situation.

In July and August, local authorities of the western and southern target oblasts have focused their efforts on ensuring the vital activities of the oblasts and maintaining the country's defence capability. This included preparations for the autumn-winter period, development of international cooperation and regional interaction, organisation and provision of aid to the Armed Forces of Ukraine, internally displaced persons, and Ukrainians affected by Russian invasion, as well as other important tasks.

Various international organisations and foundations that provide humanitarian aid, cultural and educational services to both community members and displaced persons have continued their activities.

Most schools in the rear areas planned to operate full time starting on 1 September. These are institutions where the shelter area is sufficient for full-time education. Other schools planned to use the mixed learning format or two-shift learning, depending on the number of school children and the area of shelters.

In schools of Romanian-speaking communities of Chernivtsi oblast, a scheduled increase in the number of Ukrainian language lessons has been postponed for one year. According to the Law of Ukraine "On Education", fifth-graders had to study 20% of subjects in the state language starting on 1 September 2023.



According to the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, over 840 Ukrainian businesses have relocated due to the war, of which more than 660 are already operating. The number of entrepreneurs has increased by 37,000 from January 2022 to July 2023.

Since 11 July 2023, the [government of Ukraine has changed](#) conditions of providing internally displaced persons with assistance. Since early August, the provision of assistance will be automatically extended for another six months for IDPs who have already received rental assistance, except for those who have been abroad for more than 30 consecutive calendar days without valid reasons or have returned to their previous place of residence in the occupied areas or areas included in the list of territories with no defined dates for the confirmed end or cessation of military hostilities. Furthermore, benefits will not be paid to internally displaced persons convicted of collaboration or serving a sentence in correctional facilities.

In various oblasts of the country, projects and programmes have been launched and implemented to support war veterans and their families to integrate them into civilian life better. Veterans were provided with psychosocial support and opportunities for professional development, physical rehabilitation, and active participation in public life. These programmes have an important impact on improving the quality of life of veterans.

The President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyi, prompted by a series of corruption scandals in the media, announced in August the dismissal of all chiefs of oblast territorial recruitment and social support centres which perform the function of military command authorities ensuring enforcement of legislation on military duty and military service, mobilisation training and mobilisation. He claimed that the system of mobilisation and conscription “should be run by people who know exactly what war is and why cynicism and bribery in wartime is treason”.

Attempted illegal border crossings, primarily by men eligible for military service, have been reported among mobilisation challenges. The perpetrators used fake documents or entered false information into Ukraine’s Shliakh system.

# I. TEMPORARILY OCCUPIED AREAS

## 1. Changes in the system of governance

### 1.1. Decisions of occupying authorities

In July–August 2023, the Russian Federation has taken further steps to integrate the four partially occupied oblasts of Ukraine (Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson) into Russia.

The occupiers have been actively adapting local legislation to Russian standards. Specifically, the system of local self-government was completely destroyed in Russia-occupied areas of Donetsk oblast: the posts of city mayors and their elections were abolished. Instead, the so-called municipal entities will elect local councils which, in turn, will elect the head of the “municipal entity” from three candidates upon a submission of the so-called Head of the Republic. It is important to note that residents of the breakaway Republic will not be able to elect the so-called Head of the Republic, because the local “parliament” will choose the Head from among the three candidates nominated by the Russian president. This process is aimed at integrating the occupied territories into the Russian system of vertical power where the President makes all decisions. The replacement of local collaborators holding senior administrative positions with natives from various regions of Russia has accelerated as well.

#### >> PREPARATIONS FOR THE SHAM ELECTIONS

Preparations for holding sham elections on 8–10 September 2023 have been underway in the temporarily occupied areas of the four Ukrainian oblasts. Apart from that, the occupiers have been preparing for the so-called early exit voting scheduled for 31 August in frontline population centres.

Civic Network OPORA [emphasised](#) that the Kremlin seeks to draw Ukrainian citizens into Russia’s political life and “legalise” the occupying authorities through sham elections in the temporarily occupied areas. Also, since the Kremlin cannot achieve the declared goals of the “Special Operation”, it needs to get the best outcome for the ruling party, United Russia, and demonstrate that the populations of the occupied areas support Vladimir Putin’s policies and the effectiveness of local elites.

It was the United Russia that carried out the largest “election campaign” in the occupied areas and registered the highest number of candidates. Putin’s party has registered 312 candidates for members of legislative occupying councils of the “new entities of the Russian Federation”. A Just Russia – Patriots – For Truth (SRZP) nominated 300 candidates, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) 276, the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) 255, and the New People 178. It is important to note that the opportunity to participate in elections of regional projects was not provided. The elections were scheduled to be held under the proportional system.

Ahead of the sham elections in Russia-occupied areas of Ukraine, Putin [had a meeting](#) with the so-called leader of the LPR, Leonid Pasichnyk, at which he called the situation on the contact line “stable”. After the meeting with Pasichnyk, he met with Yevgeny Balitsky, Gauleiter of the occupied part of Zaporizhzhia oblast, who reported to the President of the Russian Federation about the full preparedness of the oblast for the “elections”.

Activists of the Yellow Ribbon resistance movement called on locals to boycott the sham elections in the temporarily occupied areas of Luhansk oblast. They also considered a series of measures to disrupt the “voting” and recorded all the collaborators who participated in the preparation for the sham elections.

According to Pavel Timofeev, deputy of Zaporizhzhia Oblast Council from Melitopol, the so-called election commissions that had operated during the pseudo-referendum of 2022, unrecognised in the world,

participated in the preparations for the sham elections. “Dmytro Tabachnyk, who once was an ardent supporter of Viktor Yanukovich and did everything possible to crack down on Ukrainian students, is currently nominated by the United Russia party. Today, he is an adviser to the so-called Acting Governor of Zaporizhzhia oblast and will try to get an administrative position in the so-called legislative assembly of the temporarily occupied part of Zaporizhzhia oblast,” the deputy claimed.

The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine [has addressed](#) the parliaments and governments of foreign countries, international organisations regarding the intentions of the Russian Federation to hold sham elections in the temporarily occupied areas of Ukraine. Specifically, it called on the international community not to recognise the legitimacy of any “elections”, nor to provide full assistance in the criminal prosecution of those involved in their organisation. At the same time, the Rada has urged to recognise that the unlawful actions of the Russian Federation once again “confirm the impossibility to hold peace negotiations until the complete withdrawal of the occupying forces from the internationally recognised territory of Ukraine”.

### >> **FORCED PASSPORTING BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

According to the monitoring data on Luhansk oblast, the population living in the so-called LPR has continued to experience excessive pressure due to the requirement to receive Russian passports. Pursuant to legislation of the Russian Federation, from 1 July 2024, persons without Russian passports [will be re-cognised as a foreigner](#) and deported if they pose a threat to the occupiers.

The occupiers have attempted to step up the process of forced passporting among the elderly. Representatives of the occupying administration of Markivka raion personally [visited](#) pensioners’ households and held propaganda conversations, promising to help with food after they receive Russian documents. If this argument was not accepted, they resorted to threats, claiming that the elderly would not be admitted to hospitals without Russian passports.

According to the Russian occupiers, they have issued more than 542,000 passports of citizens of the Russian Federation in Luhansk oblast as of mid-August. Moreover, over 108,000 driver’s licenses have been exchanged for Russian ones.

In temporarily occupied Horlivka, Donetsk oblast, the invaders [have sent](#) an order to local facilities of all forms of ownership to provide the so-called State Security Ministry of the DPR with lists of employees who did not receive Russian passports. The deadline for executing the order has been set for 1 January 2024.

In Zaporizhzhia oblast, it has become impossible [to pay](#) for utilities, the Internet, and mobile phones without Russian citizenship. The occupying administration of the village of Blahovishchenka, Zaporizhzhia oblast, [attempted to encourage](#) locals to obtain Russian citizenship, offering pensioners a RUB50,000 reward (around EUR500).

### >> **PROPERTY, BUSINESSES**

The occupying administration of Donetsk oblast has announced plans for a real economic surge. Specifically, the possibility of launching the assembly of Belarusian [MAZ trucks in Donetsk](#), the prospects for the [production of trams at Azovstal](#) in Mariupol, with more than 12,000 workers employed by 2025, as well as the [prospect of creating a Silicon Valley](#) on the shores of the Azov Sea were made public. In the opinion of the occupying authorities, this will allow to [quadruple gross regional product of the breakaway Republic](#).

These promises are however worth nothing as it can be seen on the example of Mariupol airport. Right after the capture of the city, representatives of the occupying administration said that they were going to start its reconstruction in 2023 and that the airport would be operational by 2025. However, in 2023, Russia’s Deputy Prime Minister claimed that the airport would not be reconstructed, because the nearest Russian airport in Taganrog is 150 kilometres away. Design works at [Mariupol airport are scheduled to commence no earlier than 2026](#). Hence, the promises to rebuild the airport have not been fulfilled and will not be in the near future.

Assets of Ukrainian businesses were actively stolen in the occupied part of Donetsk, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts. Journalists of Novaya Gazeta Europe analysed data from state registers on 1,150 largest companies from occupied cities with a population of more than 100,000 people. 80% of the companies were entered in the Unified State Register of Legal Entities of Ukraine, which means they were established prior to Russia’s invasion and then brought into the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation. More than a thousand

companies in Melitopol, Berdiansk, Mariupol, Lysychansk, and Sievierodonetsk are now registered as Russian legal entities. Revenues of the largest of them, according to the Unified State Register of Legal Entities of Ukraine, reached UAH 450 million before the war. As a rule, new owners of Ukrainian businesses are Russians.

The merger of the so-called [Luhansk Railways](#) and Novorossiia Railways has been underway. The relevant statement was made by Nikolay Baboido who claimed to be Luhansk Railways Director. It has to be mentioned that in late May, the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Mikhail Mishustin, signed a decree on the creation of [Novorossiia Railways](#) headquartered in Russia-occupied Donetsk. The newly created company will merge railways in the temporarily occupied areas of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts of Ukraine. The occupiers hope to build, with the help of Novorossiia Railways, a “unified logistics system in the oblasts, upgrade the fleet of wagons and locomotives, and create a unified transportation management system”.

### >> ZAPORIZHZHIA NPP

On the night of 9–10 August, the temporarily occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant [lost off-site power](#) from its main 750 kV power transmission line, after which it had to be switched to the only available back-up off-site power supplies from a 330 kV line. According to Energoatom, the disconnection of this line threatens the NPP with power outage. Following this scenario, the main threat to nuclear and radiation safety is that the occupiers use the 4th power unit in hot shutdown mode in violation of operation conditions.

IAEA experts have been granted access to the roof of Unit 3 and Unit 4 reactor buildings of Zaporizhzhia NPP and they observed no mines or explosives there, IAEA Director General Grossi said.

The occupiers planned to [take away housing](#) from residents of Enerhodar to encourage Russians to work at Zaporizhzhia NPP, the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine reported. On Thursday, 6 July, the First Deputy Head of Putin’s Administration, Sergey Kiriyenko, arrived at the NPP. The official purpose of the visit was to get acquainted with the state of affairs at the plant and check general safety. The unofficial purpose was to demonstrate the absence of panic and try to resolve staffing problems.

Following the onset of the invasion, a large part of the NPP’s qualified personnel either fled the occupied areas or refused to sign contracts with Rosatom. The attempt to attract Russian employees has not yielded the expected result either. Sergey Kiriyenko and Yevgeny Balitsky, Gauleiter of Zaporizhzhia oblast, held a meeting on additional incentives to potential workers from Russia. To this end, they planned to provide Russians with housing seized from Ukrainians who left Enerhodar. They expected to move up to 4,500 Russians into seized housing.

### >> DEPORTATION / FORCED DISPLACEMENT

Maria Lvova-Belova, Russian Commissioner for Children’s Rights, who has been under the arrest warrant of the International Criminal Court in The Hague since March 2023, [said](#) that following the outbreak of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the occupiers had taken over 700,000 Ukrainian children to Russia’s territory. According to her, the Russians deported most children “together with their parents or other relatives”. She said that some 1,500 pupils of facilities for orphans and children deprived of parental care had been taken to the territory of Russia. In the words of the so-called Commissioner, 288 children from the non-government controlled areas of Donetsk oblast were placed in “foster families” in Russia. Children from the non-government controlled areas of Luhansk oblast returned to their boarding schools. Though later, the occupiers placed 92 children deprived, according to Russians, of parental care in “foster families” in Russia. Lvova-Belova also claimed that in November 2022, 52 children “with severe pathologies” from Oleshky boarding school, Kherson oblast, were taken to Crimea, “to a safe territory” as she put it.

The Russian invaders took about 80 high school students from the temporarily occupied areas of Luhansk oblast to the military academy in Kostroma. The abducted children were called for “military training” on the ground of the Military Academy of Radiation, Chemical and Biological Defence and Engineer Forces, receiving yet another dose of enemy propaganda, Luhansk OMA [emphasised](#).

In July, the occupiers [have taken some 280 children](#) from Antratsyt raion, Luhansk oblast, to the so-called Cossack Cadet Corps in the Republic of Kalmykia, the Russian Federation. According to their plans, a total of about 500 Ukrainian children had to be taken away until late summer. Hence, the occupiers not only

abducted children from the non-government controlled areas, but also brainwashed them with aggressive propaganda to turn the abducted children into future supporters.

## 1.2. Access to public information

In the temporarily occupied areas of Kherson oblast, the occupiers have recruited propagandists for a local branch of the Union of Journalists of the Russian Federation. [According to](#) the National Resistance Center of Ukraine, the creation of this pseudo-organisation aims to control propaganda in the oblast, especially among the so-called media outlets. The Head of Kherson branch is a Russian native, Alexander Malkevich, who oversees all “oblast media outlets” in all temporarily occupied areas. The organisation has about 40 “members”, most of whom were taken from Russia.

At the last meeting of propagandists, an employee of Tavria TV channel, created by the Russian occupiers on the basis of the captured oblast branch of Suspilne), Ksenia Degtyareva who came from Kazan received a certificate. According to the National Resistance Center, all the so-called local journalists are tasked to spread Russian propaganda and false information in the oblast under the guise that it comes from the locals.

## 2. Humanitarian situation

The humanitarian situation in the Ukrainian government non-controlled areas of Donetsk oblast depends on the proximity of a population centre to the frontline and the degree of destruction. Specifically, residents of Donetsk or Horlivka lead an almost normal life, whereas the situation in Mariupol is much more complicated: most residents live in destroyed houses, have no work, and lack food. The situation in recently captured Bakhmut and Soledar is extremely difficult. Notwithstanding the loud statements by the occupying administration, neither recovery nor stabilisation measures have been reported there at the time of writing of the report.

In Russia-occupied [Rubizhne](#), Luhansk oblast, reconstruction has not been launched for more than a year of occupation. To provide themselves with water, the locals drilled wells in their yards and neighbourhoods at their own expense because of the absence of centralised water supply in most areas. Local collaborators did not even promise to restore the system. The same stands true to the damaged houses which were also collapsing in more than a year because of bad weather. Problems with public transport have been reported. Due to a considerable length of the population centre, the locals can move around it only by taxi or wait for a vacant seat on the bus running between Kreminna and Sievierodonetsk.

### 2.1. Filtration measures of occupying authorities / treatment of prisoners of war

In Zaporizhzhia oblast, the Russian occupiers [have continued](#) to fight against the resistance of Ukrainian citizens, using a variety of methods. According to the Mayor of Melitopol, Ivan Fedorov, there were approximately five torture chambers in the city which the occupiers set up in the captured buildings of the police, the Military Commissariat, the Security Service of Ukraine, and some industrial businesses. According to some data, more than 500 people have been abducted in a year and a half.

Moscow court has considered the appeal and upheld the sentence to 13 years in prison for [Maksym Butkevych](#), Ukrainian human rights defender, taken prisoner last summer. The judges decided to count the actual detention time since 19 August 2022, that is, since the recognition by Russia’s Ministry of Defence the fact of Butkevych’s imprisonment. Butkevych attended the court session via video link from temporarily occupied Luhansk and said his last words: “I would only like to express my gratitude to all those people who care about my fate and all Ukrainian prisoners of war who are now in a difficult situation. People who are in the status of prisoners of war, or already convicted also constantly think not only about their relatives and

friends, but also about everyone who have remained free, who are in Ukraine, and everyone hopes that the prisoners of war will be released”.

In August, a breakaway court in the occupied part of Donetsk oblast [has sentenced](#) 20-year-old Vasyl Shytria, a soldier of the 23rd separate motorized infantry battalion of the 56th brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, to life imprisonment for the alleged murder of four “civilian residents” of Mariupol in April 2022.

On 28 August, representatives of the Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group (KHPG) [filed](#) a submission with the International Criminal Court, providing a legal evidence of the genocide in Mariupol, Donetsk oblast, committed by the Russians. According to Yevhen Zakharov, Director of the KHPG, a working group was created from among human rights defenders and Mariupol residents who had fled the city. He stated that a lot of information was collected about the events that had taken place in Mariupol. “It is really very scary. The way the Russians methodically shelled, destroyed house by house, one by one. The way snipers shot in rows when people stood in line for water. The way snipers shot at people who were cooking food on a bonfire. There were people who died because they stayed on the upper floors and it was impossible to reach them, they died of hunger and thirst. The way people, unable to withstand this horror, jumped out of the upper floors of their houses during shelling. They ended their lives by suicide because they could not bear it and somehow survive. There are a lot of specific stories,” Zakharov concluded.

## 2.2. Actions of occupying authorities regarding recruitment into armed formations

The occupation administration of Zaporizhzhia oblast was preparing for a new wave of forced mobilisation, the National Resistance Center [has reported](#). The occupiers are known to set up 44 “military registration desks” to register all draft-age citizens or reserve military personnel for military service at their place of residence.

In Starobilsk, Luhansk oblast, the occupying authorities [have obliged](#) all men at state-owned enterprises to undergo a medical examination and register for military service.

## 3. Work on identity

### 3.1. Changes in education standards

Due to the fact that the occupiers were preparing for fake elections, schools in the temporarily occupied areas of Zaporizhzhia oblast were supposed to open on 11 September, [according to](#) Melitopol Mayor Ivan Fedorov. In his words, ahead of 1 September, the occupiers conducted apartment-by-apartment visits and checked which of the children went to occupying schools and which did not. They threatened parents with deprivation of parental rights and forced them to send their children to occupying schools.

The Kremlin leadership set the task of [providing](#) all high school students of Russia-occupied areas of Luhansk oblast with new history textbooks until 1 September. Sections on Ukraine’s territories captured from 2014 to 2022 have already been included in the textbook. Moreover, sections of the 11th grade history textbook on the events from the 1970s to the 2000s have been radically rewritten. In a year and a half, the history of the second half of the century changed once again in Russia.

In the new academic year, the Life Safety subject [has been substituted](#) with the Defence of the Homeland in the curriculum of schools of the self-proclaimed LPR. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education of Russia was preparing a new curriculum for school-aged girls which provides for their training as sanitary instructors.

The invaders [have announced](#) the opening of cadet classes in the temporarily occupied areas of Zaporizhzhia oblast. Russia’s military formation, National Guard, together with collaborators from the so-called Ministry of Education and other officials of the occupying administration will oversee the process of militarisation of Ukrainian teenagers. In these cadet classes, children will be taught “patriotic upbringing”.



The Russian occupiers have [set up](#) the so-called young voter schools in the temporarily occupied areas of Kherson oblast the aim of preparing senior school children for the “election of the President of the Russian Federation”. The schools are tasked to train “observers” for the sham election. Training was supposed to start in September and last until March 2024. The newly created “public chamber” is responsible for the training.

In Russia-occupied Mariupol, Donetsk oblast, the occupying administration [has attempted](#) to resume the operation of two higher educational institutions, Mariupol State University (MSU) and Pryazovskyi State Technical University. Collaborators from among the teaching and administrative staff took an active part in these activities. Specifically, [Larysa Syvolap](#), who had been the Head of the Human Resources Department prior to the full-scale invasion, was appointed as MSU Rector, and Iryna Vyalkova, who had formerly been the Deputy Dean of this department, headed the Philology Department.

The [enrolment campaign](#) to the so-called Melitopol State University, Zaporizhzhia oblast, established during the occupation, failed. The Mayor of Melitopol, Ivan Fedorov, said that there were no applicants for some specialties, even for government-funded education. Members of the admission committee were forced to call all their acquaintances and ask them to submit documents, at least for statistics.

## 3.2. Freedom of religion

As of August 2023, five dioceses of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (hereinafter referred to as the UOC MP) in the temporarily occupied areas [have been re-registered](#) with the Ministry of Justice of Russia: in Donetsk and Horlivka (the so-called DPR), Luhansk and Rovenki (the so-called LPR), and Berdiansk, Zaporizhzhia oblast.



## II. FRONTLINE AND DEOCCUPIED AREAS

### 1. Changes in the system of governance

Since the onset of the full-scale invasion in February 2022, the political landscape and governance system in Donetsk oblast have drastically changed. The key reason was the suspension of activities of local self-government bodies and the transfer of their powers to military administrations, as well as restrictions placed on the implementation of democratic procedures due to the imposition of martial law (activity of political parties, ban on holding mass actions, etc.). The system of military administrations was established, incorporating oblast and raion military administrations as well as military administrations of cities and towns. Heads of military administrations took over all the powers of the respective city mayors or village heads. Furthermore, military and civil administrations, created prior to February 2022, have continued to operate in the Ukrainian government non-controlled areas.

Hence, in a wartime, local self-governments ceased to exist in the oblast, being substituted with the centralised vertical of military administrations. This system has its advantages, in particular, the capacity to rapidly respond to security and defence challenges, which can be difficult for collegial decision-making bodies. On the other hand, sole decision-making lacking publicity could entail corruption-related risks. Moreover, such system of governance excludes the participation of citizens in decision-making and restricts the possibility of effective control of policies pursued by the authorities.

The problems of local self-government were also updated in the monitoring on Kherson oblast. Notwithstanding the transfer of powers of local councils to military administrations, deputies of city councils still have mandates and the duty to maintain contact with voters. At the same time, they have no tools of influence to solve voters' problems. Deputies are subject to restrictions, including a ban on leaving Ukraine, due to their status. A good example is the case of [Oleksandra Arkusha](#), member of Kakhovka City Council. She could not be reunited with her family because of restrictions on leaving the country; she also had no opportunity to exercise her parliamentary powers, because Kakhovka is in Russia-occupied area where powers of the local council have been transferred to the military administration. This situation lasted for several months and required the intervention of many lawyers until the deputy was stripped of her powers in July. Also, officials of self-government bodies have continued to receive appropriate financial benefits, which causes irritation among voters and deputies.

#### 1.1. Decisions of authorities that affected cohesion

##### >> **PREPARATION FOR THE WINTER 2023–2024**

[According to](#) Ukraine's Minister of Energy, Herman Halushchenko, scheduled repairs at Ukrainian energy facilities were on schedule. However, he emphasised difficulties with preparations for the new heating season in the oblasts bordering Russia and in the frontline areas. "The most difficult situation is definitely in areas under ongoing shelling. This is Kherson. Ongoing shelling is reported. Russian forces target our brigades that go out there to do certain works. This is Kharkiv. These are frontline areas. The situation is more or less stable in Mykolaiv, but attacks are reported on a regular basis in Zaporizhzhia," Mr Halushchenko said on 12 August.

Preparations for the new heating season have been underway in Kharkiv oblast. Apart from checking the status of heating networks, an assessment of the needs of the local population was carried out,

primarily by international organisations, to ensure proper preparation for the winter and fair distribution of humanitarian aid.

As of 30 July, residential and social facilities in [Kharkiv](#) were 65% ready for heating. According to the Mayor, protective structures have already been installed at critical infrastructure facilities, notably at the thermal power plant, and control panels have been removed to the bomb shelter. To stabilise the situation in Kharkiv, modular boiler houses have been installed to help not only provide heating, but also save electricity consumption.

Eight cities in Donetsk oblast, notably Bakhmut, Siversk, Toretsk, Chasiv Yar, Vuhledar, Avdiivka, Sviatohirsk, and Lyman, [will be left](#) without centralised heating this winter due to a lack of gas, as gas pipelines have been damaged. In other cities of the oblast, heating will be provided by gas boilers or modular coal boilers. In cities without centralised heating, residents will use small Bullerjan stoves and other alternative sources of heating. The supply of firewood and pellets for citizens will also be ensured.

### >> **ENSURING THE STABLE OPERATION OF THE ELECTRIC POWER SYSTEM**

The [initiative](#) to install solar power plants at social security institutions of Kharkiv oblast is an additional step to ensure stable operation of the electric power system and meet the population's needs during emergency power outages. Specifically, solar batteries [have already been installed](#) at the city's clinical hospital. If green energy projects are successful, they will be expanded and fully implemented in the urban environment in the future.

### >> **INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION**

According to the monitoring data on Kherson oblast, given the collapse of the oblast economy due to the Kakhovka dam disaster and the complete mining of agricultural lands, the oblast cannot support itself. The oblast budget execution report shows that Kherson oblast can [cover](#) on its own only a little more than a quarter of budget needs. Therefore, assistance from the international community, the state budget and other oblasts of Ukraine is important to ensure the development of the oblast amid the current challenges.

A large-scale community reconstruction project, Plich-o-Plich, [has been announced](#) in Kherson oblast. The specifics of the initiative are that 15 rear oblasts of Ukraine will help rebuild facilities in 26 population centres of the right-bank communities of the oblast. Their reconstruction is carried out at the expense of the oblast and local budgets. The following oblasts are involved in the project: Vinnytsia, Volyn, Dnipropetrovsk, Zhytomyr, Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kirovohrad, Lviv, Odesa, Poltava, Rivne, Ternopil, Khmelnytskyi, Cherkasy, and Chernivtsi.

It has to be mentioned that similar "community-to-community" assistance was initiated late last year: hundreds of repair teams came to Kherson oblast, primarily on a volunteer basis, to help rebuild the destroyed facilities. The initiative now has features of a joint project to be implemented with the participation of foreign partners as part of We Build Ukraine initiative, [presented](#) at the international Ukraine Recovery Conference in London in 2023.

Recovery is underway in communities where there is no immediate threat of shelling and where enough people live. For the time being, the priority task is to repair residential buildings to provide returnees with safe housing.

For example, as part of Plich-o-Plich project, Ivano-Frankivsk oblast took patronage over the village of Davydiv Brid of Velyka Oleksandrivka territorial community, Beryslav raion, where two repair teams were rebuilding houses destroyed by the Russian occupiers. Chernivtsi oblast was supposed to help rebuild facilities in the village of Novomykolaivka.

### >> **RESPONSE TO THE KAKHOVKA DAM DISASTER**

In Kherson oblast, authorities, utility workers, rescuers, and volunteers in July have been struggling to respond the Kakhovka dam disaster: restore normal life, disinfect flooded premises, remove garbage after the water receded, adjust water supply, repair electric power grids and other destroyed communications, record damages, and organise assistance to victims.

Kherson and other affected oblasts received significant assistance from foreign partners who gave equipment needed to rapidly repair the damage inflicted by the disaster and ensure long-term recovery. The

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) [has handed over](#) \$2.3 million worth of equipment to the State Emergency Service of Ukraine, including 6 water tank trucks, more than 400 trailer sewage and floating motor pumps, and others.

The populations of Kherson and Mykolaiv oblasts could [receive compensation](#) for the harvest lost as a result of flooding caused by the destruction of Kakhovka HPP. The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine has adopted a [Resolution](#) on appropriate compensation in early August. Compensation worth UAH 3,318 (about EUR85) was provided for the lost vegetable harvest on an area of 0.01 hectare. Residents of Kherson oblast were to receive compensation for no more than 0.3 hectares (a maximum of UAH 99,540, or about EUR2,500), residents of Mykolaiv oblast – for no more than 0.2 hectares (a maximum of UAH 66,360, or about EUR1,650). as of mid-August, 79 farmers of Kherson oblast have already received appropriate compensation.

## >> DEMINING

In the deoccupied areas, locals regularly came across mines, often being injured or losing their lives. Between the start of Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022 and July 2023, the United Nations has recorded 298 civilian deaths from explosive remnants of war, 22 of them are children, and 632 civilian injuries.

According to [Washington Post](#) citing [GLOBSEC](#), a think tank based in Slovakia, Ukraine is now the [world's most mined country](#), it may take the approximately 500 demining teams and in current operation 757 years to complete. About 30% of Ukraine has been exposed to severe conflict and will require time-consuming, expensive, and dangerous clearance operations.

Experts [emphasise](#) that the world has seen no example of humanitarian demining in a country being in a state of active hostilities. Since demining in Ukraine is recognised as [the government's priority](#), the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine is actively working to increase the capacity of governmental agencies, involve non-governmental organisations and businesses in mine action.

A machine for preparing soil for mine clearance, developed by Kharkiv-based manufacturers, has already received the certificate of conformity. The machine has a simple design and relatively low cost of production, maintenance, and repair. It allows for the effective disposal of anti-personnel mines and detection of anti-tank mines. The first vehicle for preparing soil for demining [has been tested](#) in Balaklia community, Kharkiv oblast.

## >> EVACUATION

On 6 August, the Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine announced the reopening of [Kolotylivka–Pokrovka](#) crossing point on the border of Russia's Belgorod region and Ukraine's Sumy oblast, which was closed after the onset of the full-scale invasion of Russia. Officials specified that Ukrainian citizens returning from the temporarily occupied areas will pass through the crossing point.

Within the reporting period, the list of population centres, from which children with their parents or guardians should be evacuated on a mandatory basis, has been expanded. On 2 August, Ukraine's Reintegration Ministry [announced](#) the mandatory evacuation of children from nine more populated areas in Donetsk oblast around the city of Lyman which were under daily shelling. A total of 130 children were to be evacuated.

According to the OMA, on 22 August, 171 children remained in the frontline communities of Donetsk oblast. These were children who had parents. "We use a tougher mechanism, including forced evacuation with parents. The evacuation is ongoing, we hope to reach a zero mark within two weeks to have no children here," [said](#) the Head of Donetsk Oblast Military Administration, Pavlo Kyrylenko.

In late August, a forced evacuation of children [has been announced](#) in five frontline population centres of Vasylivka and Polohy raions, Zaporizhzhia oblast.

In Kharkiv oblast, a forced evacuation was announced on 17 July for Vovchansk, with some 200 children to be evacuated. A mandatory evacuation of community members of the Kupiansk raion was announced in August. [According to Kharkiv Oblast Military Administration](#), 1,433 people, including 343 children, have been evacuated from dangerous areas of Kupiansk raion as of late August.

In general, migration processes in Donetsk oblast have stabilised. It was rather about the gradual relocation of residents from the war zone and their gradual return to relatively safe areas of the oblast. Importantly, a significant number of residents of the oblast who had fled for the western and central oblasts of the

country decided to return to Donetsk oblast. This decision is due to the fact that their stay in other oblasts of Ukraine requires large financial cost and does not provide a full guarantee of safety and security, because the concept of rear area is very vague in the context of the current war with massive missile attacks on the entire territory of Ukraine.

According to social services of Donetsk oblast, more than 1.2 million people have left the oblast at the time of writing of the report. However, only 568,000 have been registered as internally displaced persons (hereinafter referred to as IDPs). Such discrepancy in figures can be explained by several factors. First, many women with children and elderly people who have left Ukraine are not registered as IDPs. Second, some IDPs may refuse to register for personal reasons, such as job availability, unwillingness to receive benefits from the government, or unwillingness to enlist for military service at their new place of residence.

More than 188,000 residents of Luhansk oblast [have relocated and registered](#) at their new actual place of residence in different oblasts of Ukraine. The largest group of this number was represented by people of working age – more than 100,000, or 53.2% of the total number of IDPs. Another 88,200 are distributed as follows: pensioners – 36,300 (19.3%), children – 38,900 (20.7%), people with disabilities – 7,700 (4.0%), others – 2.8%. The largest number of IDPs from Luhansk oblast live in Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk (44,200), Kyiv (16,000), Poltava (11,600), and Lviv (10,900) oblasts and in the city of Kyiv (26,000).

## >> HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

Technical water was supplied to Mykolaiv water supply system as of 23 August. The Mayor [said](#) that no drinking water will be delivered to households in the near future due to the problems with water supply in Kryvyi Rih following the collapse of Kakhovka dam. "A few weeks ago, I said that Mykolaiv residents will have drinking water soon. We had such hope then, but the situation has become more complicated. We changed the location of the water intake, and it is now connected to the reservoirs of Dnipropetrovsk oblast. And Kryvyi Rih has big problems with water in the aftermath of the destruction of Kakhovka HPP," Mykolaiv Mayor claimed. It should be noted that there has been no drinking water in Mykolaiv since 12 April 2022.

Within the reporting period, the humanitarian situation in the Ukrainian government-controlled areas of Donetsk oblast has been stable. Members of relatively safe communities had access to food, health care and social services. Moreover, humanitarian headquarters operated in most cities to ensure the distribution of humanitarian aid to all those in need. Humanitarian aid was delivered to the war zone by volunteers, authorities, and security agencies.

Residents of the deoccupied areas of Kharkiv oblast have continued to receive humanitarian aid, primarily food and hygiene kits for the most vulnerable groups. The amount of financial aid has significantly decreased.

## >> HUMANITARIAN HUBS / ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES CENTRES

34 coordination centres for IDPs from Luhansk oblast [have operated](#) in 18 oblasts of Ukraine, providing humanitarian aid to more than 120,000 people on a monthly basis. Following the deoccupation, the restoration of Ukrainian documents, property rights, and compensation for the damage inflicted by the aggressor will be the top priority. Therefore, the operation of ten administrative services centres (ASCs) has already been resumed and nine remote workplaces for ASC administrators have been created.

Consultations related to the registration of damaged housing and legal aid. Consultations and preventive examinations of people by family doctors and specialty physicians were also held in the hubs. Psychological support was provided on an ongoing basis. There were children's rooms in the most powerful IDP hubs and, in some places, entertainment, book exchange, and other services.

In Mykolaiv, all offices of ASCs, which provided more than 200 administrative services, [have resumed](#) operation in July. At the same time, the militaries could receive administrative services faster with the help of a single application window for the AFU personnel, "4.5.0", created after 24 February.

[According to](#) the Department of Labor and Social Protection of the Population of Mykolaiv City Council, the distribution of grocery kits in the city was gradually curtailed; there were no more deliveries from city or oblast warehouses. The Department however actively cooperated with the United Nations World Food Programme and public organisations.

**>> HEALTH CARE SERVICES**

According to the monitoring data on Kherson oblast, the state of access to quality health care services in the region has been found to be catastrophic. The situation was extremely difficult, as 75% of health care facilities were damaged, a significant number of health workers had to leave their jobs for safety reasons, and some doctors were killed or injured. Since the outbreak of the full-scale invasion, in the Kherson region, 34 [casualties](#) have been reported among health workers, including 23 injured and 11 killed.

One of the forms of work was the ongoing reshuffle of health workers from other oblasts. “There are currently 28 young specialists who work in health care facilities of Kherson oblast, 15 specialty physicians have come from Ukraine’s seven oblasts, notably Dnipropetrovsk, Sumy, Poltava, Zakarpattia, Vinnytsia, Odesa, and Khmelnytskyi,” said the Head of Kherson Oblast Military Administration, Oleksandr Prokudin. In July, a total of 50 health workers from other oblasts have worked in 14 hospitals of Kherson oblast.

Volunteer doctors have continued their work through international organisations. Specifically, these are doctors of Frida Ukraine, a Ukrainian-Israeli medical volunteer mission, doctors of NGO Casers, doctors and volunteers of Doctors Without Borders.

**>> RESTORATION OF HOUSING**

In Mykolaiv oblast, a little less than 30% of infrastructure facilities damaged during the full-scale war have been restored as of late July, including primarily housing and utility facilities, bridges, and roads. According to estimates of the OMA, Mykolaiv oblast has raised some EUR40 million from international donors.

Since the launch of [eRecovery](#) programme, the total amount of funds intended for the payment of benefits in Kharkiv oblast has amounted to more than UAH 98 million. Over UAH 9 million were transferred to the applicants’ accounts as of 1 August. [Benefits will be paid to](#) residents of all seven raions of Kharkiv oblast whose houses or apartments were damaged as a result of Russia’s aggression.

In early August, according to the website of Zaporizhzhia City Council, a new page, [Restoration of Housing, has been created](#) in the City section. “It contains information about the address of the damaged building, the customer of restoration services, the contractor, and the sources of funding for restoration,” the website reported.

**>> CENTRES FOR VETERAN DEVELOPMENT**

The Center for Veteran Development [has opened](#) in Kharkiv on the basis of V. N. Karazin National University where veterans can participate in educational programs or receive social and psychological assistance. The educational programmes offer the opportunity to get the second higher education or specialised competencies, including advanced training, certified courses, as well as participation in master’s and post-graduate programmes. Specifically, programmes meeting demand, Law English and Military English, have been approved. According to Kharkiv OMA, more than 930 veterans who resigned from military service due to injuries and other reasons and more than 1,900 family members of the killed defenders were registered in Kharkiv oblast. Kharkiv-based Center is the seventh institution of this kind in Ukraine. Similar institutions already operate in Kyiv, Lviv, and in Mykolaiv oblast.

**>> MONETARY COMPENSATION TO VETERANS OF THE ARMED FORCES OF UKRAINE OR THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS**

Over UAH 200 million are to be earmarked from the 2023 state budget to Kharkiv oblast for [monetary compensation](#) to veterans of the Armed Forces of Ukraine or their family members. “These funds will be spent for compensation to particular groups of persons who needed to improve their living conditions and have submitted documents. Among them are defenders, war veterans, and members of their families. The scheduled levels of funding are not sufficient to meet the needs of all veterans and their family members, as around 50% of them need compensation for housing,” said the Head of the Department for Veterans’ Affairs of Kharkiv OMA, Oleh Pul.

**>> SHELTERS**

The pace of construction of shelters has surged in July, as reported by authorities of Kherson oblast. The equipment of large bomb shelters continued. In one month alone, 70 shelters were established in Kherson

territorial community, almost double the number of shelters installed in June. On 19 July, 115 mobile ballistic shelters and another 30 military / civilian ones were [opened](#) in Kherson territorial community.

## 1.2. Access to public information and media

Print media, closed due to the war, have recently started to assert their presence in Donetsk oblast, with the support of journalistic organisations and international aid. For example, printed versions of [TehnoPolis](#) and [Visti](#) newspapers were made available in Kramatorsk and Sloviansk respectively. However, it was rather symbolic, because their circulation and content did not have much influence on the information space of Donetsk oblast.

Yet, the nature of media pieces in Donetsk oblast was rather peculiar. These were primarily official statements and materials in the form of press releases. At the same time, no analysis, or detailed description of local life, or journalistic investigations have been presented. The main reasons for this included a high level of self-censorship among journalists who believe they should not raise delicate issues or criticise the government during the war. This resulted in declining public interest in traditional media, as people started to prefer alternative sources of information, e. g., Telegram channels and rumours. In combination with poor media literacy, this situation poses additional threats of manipulation and information operations which can adversely affect the level of social stability and cohesion.

## 2. Work on identity

On 23 August, the founding meeting of the Public Coordination Council on strengthening the Ukrainian national and civic identity [was held](#) at Kherson City Council. Participants in the discussion paid close attention to further ways of cooperation of executive authorities with civil society institutions, and conditions for national and patriotic, military and patriotic, and civic education.

### 2.1. Changes in education standards

The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and the Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine plan to create a reserve of education workers in the deoccupied areas from 2024 onwards. 17 relocated higher educational institutions [are to be engaged](#) in relevant activities.

Active preparations for the beginning of the academic year have continued in Kharkiv oblast. Earlier this summer, the city authorities stepped up the preparation of shelters for schools and offered the opportunity for parents to choose a format of education suitable for their children. Parents were surveyed in schools. The large number of those surveyed supported online education only because of the remoteness or absence of shelters.

Along with that, active actions to equip premises for shelters have continued. To this end, the local authorities used the subway premises for creating sanitary zones and installing air recuperators. Children [are to study](#) there three or four times a week in shifts. School children will have free meals and will be taken to the subway by bus.

Most kindergartens in Kharkiv will operate remotely at the beginning of the year due to the high risk of danger to children.

Educational institutions of the Ukrainian government-controlled areas of Zaporizhzhia oblast and the city Zaporizhzhia will operate in a mixed format, the Head of Zaporizhzhia OMA, Yuri Malashko, [said](#). The permission to operate in this format will be granted to the founders of educational institutions following their examination by the special commission.

It was not possible to return to offline education in Kherson schools given the proximity of Russian troops and the daily attacks on the city, Roman Mrochko, the Head of Kherson City Military Administration, [reported](#).



## 2.2. Politics of memory: place names, museum work, holidays and their celebration

The public discussion on street renaming has continued in Kherson. Despite a prepared list of 137 names, Kherson City Military Administration delayed the decision on renaming for a few weeks because of the quite scandalous nature of the issue. The discussion was heated, with political accusations. Several influence groups were created. Some Kherson locals opposed changes in street names, arguing that any such discussion was inappropriate amid ongoing shelling. Others voiced proposals only in favour of patriotic names. The third group took a more moderate position in the discussion.

The renaming of 24 Soviet-era place names in Kharkiv oblast was [slow](#), especially compared to the pace of renaming at the national level. In the absence of continuous monitoring, it was hardly noticeable. Another shortcoming was the absence of a sustainable public campaign for promotion and popularisation, as the local population played an indirect role.

Voting for a new city name [has continued](#) in Pervomaisk, Mykolaiv oblast. Most people voted for the name of Olviopol. Everyone could vote for a new name on social media and on the official website of Pervomaisk City Council. The survey lasted until 26 September. At the time of writing of the report, the name of Olviopol gained 42% of votes on the Facebook page, followed by Bohopil and Pershotravensk – 22%.

## 3. Joint action

### 3.1. Cooperation at the community–authorities level. Trust in decisions of authorities. Response to the needs, business and civic initiatives

#### >> LOCAL INITIATIVES

Most deoccupied population centres of Luhansk oblast [are located](#) in Svatove raion. Hence, they have experience not only in relocating educational institutions and health care facilities, supporting Svatove locals forced to move to other oblasts, but also in carrying out stabilisation measures and working in combat conditions. The Comprehensive Programme for Social Protection and Support of Internally Displaced Persons of Svatove Raion of Luhansk Oblast for 2023–2024 has been approved. Similar programmes are implemented by Svatove, Bilokurakyne, Kolomyia, Lozno-Oleksandrivka, and Nyzhnia Duvanka village military administrations. Currently, the communities of Svatove raion support the activities of four humanitarian hubs for persons displaced from Luhansk oblast.



# III. RELATIVELY REAR AREAS CONTROLLED BY THE UKRAINIAN GOVERNMENT

## 1. Changes in the system of governance

### 1.1. Decisions of authorities that affected cohesion

In July–August 2023, authorities of Odesa, Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk, Zakarpattia, Lviv, and Chernivtsi oblasts have focused efforts on addressing the issue of livelihood of the oblasts and maintaining the country's defence capacity.

#### >> **PREPARATION FOR THE WINTER 2023–2024**

In Ivano-Frankivsk oblast, an operational headquarters has been established and an action plan to prepare for the upcoming heating season has been approved. These measures included the creation of necessary fuel reserves, checks of the hydraulics of the networks, replacement of sections of heating mains, and other necessary routine works. At the time of writing of the report, hospitals, utility facilities, and social facilities (in particular, orphanages and geriatric boarding houses) have been equipped with generators to ensure uninterrupted operation in emergency situations.

Active [preparations](#) for the autumn-winter period were underway in Ternopil oblast. 712 boiler houses of all forms of ownership, 2,308 residential buildings, and 675 social and cultural facilities have already been prepared. Repairs and maintenance of water supply, sewage, and heating networks were carried out; boilers were replaced at publicly owned boiler houses of the oblast. Moreover, a reserve of high-priority materials and equipment was created to quickly resume the operation of facilities if damaged.

As of 9 August, Lviv oblast was 60% [ready for the upcoming heating season](#). The availability and operational readiness of backup power sources was checked and verified in educational and cultural institutions, heat supply, water and sewage enterprises. The oblast had to be fully prepared for the new heating season until 1 October.

#### >> **INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

In July 2023, Poland [has launched Ukraine Reconstruction Service Office](#) to operate in eight western and central oblasts of Ukraine, notably Lviv, Volyn, Rivne, Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk, Zhytomyr, Khmelnytskyi, and Vinnytsia, Lviv OMA reported. The project aims to involve Polish companies in the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine, encourage Ukrainian businesses and self-government bodies in establishing contacts with Polish partners and investors. The pilot project provides for creating a dialogue platform between Polish and Ukrainian businesses and involving self-government bodies.

#### >> **INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION**

Chernivtsi oblast [helped recover](#) the village of Zarichne, Kherson oblast. 37 homes of locals have been rebuilt as part of Plich-o-Plich national project. More than a hundred buildings were damaged, because the village was on the contact line during the occupation. UAH 90 million are needed

for the recovery. There is not enough money in the oblast budget and the local authorities are looking for benefactors.

Chernivtsi Oblast Military Administration together with Chernivtsi Raion Council [have sent](#) from Bukovyna almost 20 tons of medicinal products, baby food, and consumables for the hospital in Kherson as part of humanitarian aid.

## 1.2. Access to public information

In July, the official website of Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast Council has started to operate, though with minimum content. Prior to that, all information was shared on the Council's official Facebook page. Sessions were broadcast on the oblast TV channel, Halychyna.

## 2. Work on identity

Chernivtsi City Council [has banned](#) the public use of Russian-language cultural products on the territory of Chernivtsi community. In addition, the public use of any cultural product originating from Belarus, Iran, and other countries that support Russia's aggression against Ukraine had to be banned by the city authorities. This decision was expected following the relevant decision by Kyiv City Council and did not evoke a particular reaction in the press.

### 2.1. Changes in education standards

Ivano-Frankivsk schools have been ready to operate as in pre-war times, starting on 1 September. Hence, [as stated](#) by Mayor Ruslan Martsinkiv, there will be no mixed form of education from the next academic year.

In the 2023/2024 academic year, 28 out of 45 schools of Chernivtsi community [are to operate](#) full time starting September 2023. These are institutions where the area of shelters is sufficient for full-time education. Other schools planned to use the mixed learning format or two-shift learning, depending on the number of school children and the area of shelters.

88% of the total number of schools in Odesa oblast are to operate full time from 1 September. 50% of kindergartens in the oblast do not have premises for arranging different types of shelters. As is known, 52 educational facilities have been damaged in Odesa oblast since the outbreak of the full-scale war. The highest number of damaged facilities, or 14, was reported within a week starting on 20 July 2023.

Taking into account the number of children relocated to Zakarpattia oblast due to the war, grades in Uzhhorod schools have 40–45 children which affects all aspects of the educational process, the Head of Zakarpattia OMA, Viktor Mykyta, [claimed](#).

### 2.2. Politics of memory: place names, museum work, holidays and their celebration

In the lobby of Chernivtsi international airport named after Leonid Kadeniuk, a metal plaque bearing a Russian inscription, part of an artistic metal installation depicting the flight of Nikita Kholop who, according to Russian legend, took off from the bell tower on homemade wooden wings in the Vladimir region in the 16th century, [has been dismantled](#). The author of this artistic metal installation is Shimon Okshtein, the most famous contemporary artist who was born in Chernivtsi and studied in Odesa. According to art critics, this installation needs to be preserved.

## 2.3. Freedom of religion

The situation of the freedom of religion was difficult in some areas. Tensions have been recorded in relationships between representatives of authorities and believers of the UOC. At the session on 22 August, deputies of Ternopil Oblast Council voted to ban a procession of believers of the UOC MP to the Holy Dormition Pochaiv Lavra, located on the oblast's territory, the Head of Ternopil OMA, Volodymyr Trush, [reported](#). He said that the procession was banned at a session of the Oblast Defence Council back on 11 August. However, the UOC MP believers [came](#) to Pochaiv Lavra. The procession lasted for eight days; the pilgrims covered more than 200 kilometres.

In an address to the believers on 9 August, Metropolitan Danylo (Mykhailo Kovalchuk) of Chernivtsi and Bukovyna of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as the OCU) [said](#): "Dear brothers and sisters, dear pilgrims, we bow down before you, because you overcome the impossible. Our authorities are either inventing a war or are afraid that Moscow will not condemn them and will not allow us to gather you in this sanctuary." A video with Danylo's address was quickly reposted on social networking sites. The OCU press service [explained](#) that Metropolitan Danylo meant the official ban on mass pilgrimages, imposed because of the war. The OCU assured that their position on the war unleashed by Russia is "clear, unequivocal and has been proven many times in documents and statements".

On the night of 22–23 July, Russia forces [carried out](#) a brazen attack on the city of Odesa and Odesa oblast. The enemy hit several cultural sites in the city centre of Odesa, home to the World Heritage property "The Historic Centre of Odesa". According to UNESCO, a number of significant cultural objects were damaged as a result of the attack, including the Transfiguration Cathedral. Italian PM Giorgia Meloni's office said that Italy is going to contribute to the effort to restore the Cathedral. The Italian government has involved two of Italy's most authoritative cultural institutions, the Milan Triennale and the MAXXI museum in Rome, in order to "gather the best economic, technical and cultural resources able to contribute to the restoration of the Transfiguration Cathedral".

Eleven priests of the UOC MP from Bukovyna, together with the clergymen from all over Ukraine, [have called on](#) Metropolitan Onufriy to immediately and definitely sever ties with the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) in response to Russia's missile attack on the Transfiguration Cathedral in Odessa. In the open letter, the priests call Russia's aggression against Ukraine "satanic" and condemn the support for the war shown by the ROC Head, Patriarch Kirill (Gundyayev).

## 2.4. National minorities

The increase in the number of lessons in Ukrainian [has been postponed](#) in the schools of Romanian-speaking communities of Chernivtsi oblast. According to the Law of Ukraine "[On Education](#)" of 2017, from 1 September 2023 onwards, fifth-graders should have studied three subjects or 20% of their total number in the state language. The transition was postponed for a year due to Russia's full-scale invasion.

[According to the results](#) of a survey conducted in Zakarpattia oblast in July 2023, the majority of local Hungarians (53.6%) believe that Hungary should provide weapons to Ukraine. Importantly, the opinion of the majority of Zakarpattia's Hungarians on military aid to Ukraine from Hungary does not coincide with the position of Viktor Orbán's government. Yet, its key argument against supplying weapons to Ukraine and banning transit of Western weapons across the Ukrainian-Hungarian border was the protection of Zakarpattia's Hungarians against Russian attacks. At the same time, 67.3% Hungarians in Zakarpattia gave a positive answer to question of whether Russia poses a threat to peace in Europe. In Hungary, this indicator is significantly lower, amounting to 48%.

## 3. Joint action

### 3.1. Cooperation at the community–authorities level. Trust in decisions of authorities. Response to the needs, business and civic initiatives

#### >> RELOCATION OF BUSINESSES

[According to](#) the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, more than 840 businesses relocated due to the war, of which more than 660 resumed operations. The number of businesses have increased by 37,000 between January 2022 and July 2023.

On 24 February 2022, Ukraine's producer of ketchup and canned vegetables, [Chumak](#), stopped production at the plant in Kakhovka, Kherson oblast. The company did not have time to relocate facilities from the occupied areas. The Russian occupiers looted raw materials from its warehouses. Chumak now produces its products at the facilities of competitors throughout Ukraine and abroad and plans to build a tomato processing plant in Odesa oblast. The new plant is expected to bring additional tax revenues to the oblast budget and create nearly 5,000 jobs. The choice of Odesa for the company's relocation was due to favourable climate conditions for growing tomatoes.

#### >> LOCAL INITIATIVES

In August, Lviv City Council has started to file applications for [business support grants](#). Vouchers worth up to UAH 300,000 will be provided to support veteran businesses and dual-purpose projects brining the victory closer. A business voucher for veterans and their families can be used for business modernisation and expansion, mobility and efficiency improvement, purchase of licensed software, as well as for training, consulting, and retraining. An investment voucher for dual-purpose projects can be used for the purchase of equipment and raw materials, renewal of the material and technical base, and other security, defence, and health care needs.

Ivano-Frankivsk OMA has launched the project, Caring for the Hero's Family. The project offers relatives of the fallen heroes from different oblasts of Ukraine the [opportunity](#) to rest for free in recreational facilities of the oblast and get acquainted with its history and nature. Since April, more than 170 children have been on vacation there, more than 100 accompanied by their mothers. On 21 July, 19 more relatives of the fallen soldiers were expected to come to the oblast.

### 3.2. Cooperation at the level of society. Initiatives. Trust between groups

#### >> AID FOR THE ARMY

The Committee of Voters of Ukraine [has analysed](#) expenses of Ukrainian cities for the aid for the Armed Forces of Ukraine since the start of the full-scale invasion. Data were provided by 24 city councils. For a year and a half, city councils have spent almost UAH 10 billion or 7% of the estimated total budget for military aid.

The cities of Mukachevo, Zakarpattia oblast, Khmelnytskyi, and Zhytomyr allocated the largest percentage of their budget expenses for Ukraine's defence – 26%, 21%, and 20% respectively. They were followed by Lviv – 10% and Chernivtsi – 9%. Among the analysed cities, Kyiv, Zaporizhzhia, Brovary, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Ternopil had the lowest military aid indicators – around 2%.

Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast Council [has channelled](#) UAH 20 million from the oblast budget to support the defenders. These funds were earmarked for the implementation of two programmes, the Programme for mobilisation training and defence work in the oblast for 2023–2027 and the oblast target programme for providing patronage assistance to military.

Each serviceman from Ivano-Frankivsk community [will be paid](#) UAH 20,000 from the city budget for the purchase of military gear, the Mayor Ruslan Martsinkiv said. In his words, some UAH 200 million will be allocated from the city budget for new payments to the militaries. The Mayor also added that the new programme will be operational from 24 July. To receive money, the militaries need to contact an administrative services centre or submit an application in electronic form.

[According to](#) Chernivtsi OMA, the oblast has allocated around UAH 400 million for territorial defence since the onset of the full-scale invasion. In addition, Chernivtsi OMA [has published](#) the amounts of aid to the militaries and their families in accordance with the status.

## >> REINTEGRATION OF VETERANS INTO CIVILIAN LIFE

The “Reintegration of veterans into civilian life” [project](#) has been launched in Lviv oblast. The project mission is to support and socialise ex-combatants who have returned home, their family members, and families of fallen soldiers. Volunteers, together with representatives of territorial communities, plan to regularly [provide the services](#) of career guidance; job search and opening of own business; legal advice; psychological counselling; trainings, cultural events, and meetings for communication.

In early July, a pilot project, [Veteran's Assistant](#), has been launched in Mykolaiv oblast. Veteran's assistants attended special free training courses at Petro Mohyla Black Sea National University. The duties of the assistant include individual professional support of veterans during their transition from military service to civilian life. The similar projects were launched in another three oblasts – Vinnytsia, Dnipropetrovsk, and Lviv.

The Youth and Sports Department of Lviv OMA has presented a project for physical and mental rehabilitation of war veterans and their family members called the [League of the Invincibles](#). The project targets military personnel and veterans currently rehabilitating in Lviv oblast, in particular those who use services of prosthetics and rehabilitation centres. The initiative provides for various activities, such as training, sports competitions, active rehabilitation, creation of the Card of the Invincible meant to serve as a pass for veterans to partner sports facilities, and creation of motivational video stories about veterans who have returned to active life after injuries.

## 4. Changes in the social structure

### 4.1. Challenges related to the situation of women and children, people with disabilities

A new programme to help children whose father or mother died in the war [has been developed and is being implemented](#) in Lviv. This is a one-time annual benefit worth UAH 50,000 for the child's education and rehabilitation. Children will receive benefits until the age of 18. There were 415 children in Lviv community entitled to the benefit as of 14 August.

In Bukovyna, four general secondary educational institutions and two preschool institutions have participated in the [All-Ukrainian project, United Ukraine](#). The project mission is to help children and parents / guardians from among IDPs and children with special educational needs reintegrate and adapt to life in local communities by means of physical training and sports based on the Sports for Development concept.

IDP reintegration hubs will be set up in Khotyn hub school of Khotyn City Council, Boiany Lyceum “Leader” of Boiany Village Council, Storozhynets Lyceum No. 1 of Storozhynets City Council, Olha Kobylanska Chernivtsi Lyceum No. 19 of Chernivtsi City Council, “Rainbow” preschool institution (nursery school) of Khotyn City Council, and “Hnizdechko” preschool institution of combined type No. 48 of Chernivtsi City Council.

This kind of services has continued to dynamically develop within the framework of grant support and various project activities. Furthermore, municipal institutions – social centres, departments, and others – operated in each territorial community.

On 21 August, a public centre, “Space, friendly to children, youth and families”, [was opened](#). This is a systemic project of security support for children and youth under the “Emergency response to meet the basic

needs and protection needs of conflict-affected and displaced children and their families in Ukraine” initiative, implemented by Save the Children International in Ukraine, funded by the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance and UKR HF – Ukraine Countrywide Response 2022 (IHF), and supported by Chernivtsi Oblast Council.

## 4.2. Needs of displaced persons. Response

On 11 July 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted the [Resolution No. 709](#) “Some Issues of Support for Internally Displaced Persons”. The Resolution [changed the approaches](#) to funding for IDPs. Payments for July will be provided to all recipients without changes, the new rules will apply from 1 August 2023. At the same time, the amounts of assistance remain unchanged: UAH 3,000 for people with disabilities and children under 18 and UAH 2,000 for others. [Assistance will not be provided](#) for individuals who: have been abroad for more than 30 consecutive calendar days without valid and documented reason, or more than 60 days cumulatively within a period of six months; returned to their previous place of residence; are serving a sentence in correctional facilities; or have been convicted of crimes against national security. Also, IDPs fully dependent on state support will not be eligible to assistance.

[From 1 September 2023](#), the assistance will be extended for persons whose financial situation requires such support, whereas persons whose financial situation allows them to make significant expenses without state support will not be entitled for the assistance. The assistance will be no longer provided for IDPs who have made large purchases since the adoption of the Resolution, in particular, purchased a new vehicle less than five years old, except for vehicles purchased by volunteers for the needs of Ukraine’s defence.

The assistance will also be no longer provided for IDPs who spent over UAH 100,000 buying a land plot, housing, real estate, or have a deposit on their bank account exceeding UAH 100,000 total, or purchased foreign currency or banking metals for a total amount exceeding UAH 100,000, or own housing in territories other than those where active hostilities are ongoing or have taken place or in temporarily occupied territories if such housing has an area of more than 13.65 square meters per family member.

As of now, 141,000 IDPs are officially registered in Zakarpattia oblast. [According to Zakarpattia Oblast Military Administration](#), the number of those displaced reaches 300,000 together with unregistered IDPs. Zakarpattia OMA separately distinguishes a group of 145,000 displaced persons who moved to the oblast for the summer, for a long tourist stay. The number of non-local residents totals 445,000 based on data of mobile operators. Hence, the permanent population of Zakarpattia oblast increased by a third.

The largest number of IDPs has been recorded in Uzhhorod, up to 35,000. The number of unregistered IDPs is the same, making a total of about 70,000. The official population amounts to 115,000–120,000. Also, many IDPs live in Mukachevo, Khust, and in the sanatorium of Poliana community. Besides, according to the OMA, the infrastructure of Uzhhorod (primarily water supply, garbage removal and disposal, urban infrastructure, traffic jams, parking lots, leisure places) is not designed for that number of IDPs and requires immediate response measures.

Since the outbreak of the full-scale invasion, the oblast has become home for more than 150,000 IDPs, Ivano-Frankivsk OMA [reported](#). [According to](#) the Ukrainian Parliament Human Rights Commissioner, Dmytro Lubinets, 86 monitoring visits were made to 90 shelters where IDPs lived. According to their results, Ivano-Frankivsk oblast has the best human rights indicators in Ukraine (93% of the Commissioner’s recommendations have been implemented).

More than 234,000 IDPs were registered in Lviv oblast as of August.

### >> HOUSING FOR IDPS

Within the reporting period, the construction of housing for displaced persons has continued. Chernivtsi authorities [planned](#) to build two apartment buildings for some 600 IDPs and were looking for contractors. The EU provided a grant worth EUR10.5 million.

At the same time, new houses constructed for IDPs in Bukovyna [have remained uninhabited](#): no one lived in Banyliv community where ten modular houses for IDPs were built last year. The reason is the absence of electricity. It has to be mentioned that the contractor had to be changed due to poor quality of construction.



Already opened shelters have continued to operate in the oblast. On 11 August, the Saint Olha shelter in Luzhany [celebrated](#) its first anniversary since the opening. Within that period, 130 IDPs lived in the shelter.

New premises for IDPs have been opened in Ivano-Frankivsk oblast. On 1 August, another shelter for 23 displaced Ukrainians was opened in Bodnariv, Kalush territorial community. Some IDPs were housed in the private sector. These are people who do not have money to buy or rent housing. The project was carried out with the support of MoveUkraine Ukrainian charity, the International Organization for Migration, Rokada Charitable Foundation, Etalon Civic Center, DESPRO NGO, and Hoidalka. In September, MoveUkraine planned to launch a new project on the construction of apartments for IDPs in Broshniv-Osada.

#### >> **EMPLOYMENT OF IDPS**

[According to](#) Chernivtsi oblast employment service, over 740 IDPs filed applications with the service in 2023. More than 200 IDPs were employed as salespeople, cashiers, managers, administrators, seamstresses, accountants, economists, drivers, workers, cooks, bakers, psychologists, locksmiths, doctors, carpenters, engineers, painters, etc.

Within the initial six months of 2023, 1,718 IDPs [have filed](#) applications with Lviv oblast employment service. Most of them (60.3%) have higher education and are aged between 35 and 44 (32.6%).

### 4.3. Needs of volunteers of Territorial Defence Forces. Response. Mobilisation

Following a scandal surrounding the former Chief of Odesa oblast territorial recruitment and social support centre (hereinafter referred to as TRSSC), Yevhen Borysov, suspected of illegal enrichment by UAH 188 million, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyi has emphasised the [need for inspections](#) of TRSSCs. On 11 August, he ordered the dismissal of all oblast military recruitment chiefs and their replacement with combat officers. On the same day, a meeting of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine was held based on the results of inspections of military recruitment offices. According to Zelenskyi, 112 criminal proceedings have been initiated, and 33 notices of suspicion have been served. The President of Ukraine said cases of abuse were recorded throughout the country, including Donetsk, Poltava, Vinnytsia, Odesa, Kyiv, and Lviv oblasts. On 17 August, the President enacted the resolution of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine to fire all oblast military recruitment chiefs.

Since the start of the full-scale Russian invasion, the State Bureau of Investigation [has investigated](#) 112 cases against TRSSC officials. According to the investigation results, 15 indictment acts were sent to court as of early August.

The State Bureau of Investigation has uncovered some 10 military recruitment officers in the past few weeks alone:

- in Zaporizhzhia, a military recruitment chief plotted an enrichment scheme for his cronies and helped criminal elements hide from the court,
- in Zakarpattia oblast, a military recruitment chief forced soldiers to build his mansion,
- in Odesa, a former military recruitment officer was caught for illegal enrichment,
- in Kramatorsk raion, a military chief from Donetsk oblast set up a scheme for issuing fictitious documents to cross the state border,
- in Bukovyna, scammers wanted to make money on issuing mobilisation deferment certificates.

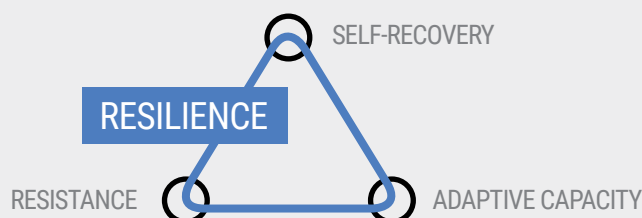
Attempted illegal border crossings [have been reported](#) among the mobilisation challenges. The number of violations [increased](#) in the summer. Border guards of Chernivtsi unit identified and apprehended 41 illegal border crossers on an August weekend alone. All of them were Ukrainian citizens from different oblasts of the country. Since the beginning of the year, border guards [have detained](#) almost 800 people who attempted to illegally cross the border in Chernivtsi oblast. These are primarily men eligible for military service. The perpetrators used fake documents or entered false information into Ukraine's Shliakh system.



# DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

## Conceptual framework of the approach of the National Platform for Resilience and Social Cohesion

**RESILIENCE** means a social practice at the national, oblast, and local levels that offers opportunities to overcome challenges and adapt to transformations.



We measure resilience in the following three dimensions:

- **adaptive capacity** of social systems and institutions to crises and sudden environmental changes,
- **self-recovery** that means mobilisation of citizens, institutions to jointly solve various humanitarian, social, and security tasks,
- **resistance** means stabilisation of models of cooperation between the government, business community, and civil society which contributes to increasing the level of cross-sectoral trust in the course of transformation.

**SOCIAL COHESION** means the state of relationships in society between social groups (horizontal cohesion) and between society and the authorities (vertical cohesion). It is measured by the levels of trust and norms of reciprocity (development of positive social capital); the strength of civil society; and conflict management institutions being in place (e.g., responsible democracy, independent judiciary, etc.).

**RESILIENCE AND SOCIAL COHESION ARE BASED** on common approaches, shared values, and versatile models of cooperation.

### >> FOCUS

- on actors, changes in the governance, assessment of vulnerability, adaptive capacity, and transformation as opposed to return to the previous state.

### >> DATA COLLECTION:

- temporarily occupied and frontline areas – Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, and Kharkiv oblasts, Ukrainian government-controlled areas where military operations are not taking place – Odesa, Mykolaiv, Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Zakarpattia, and Chernivtsi oblasts.

**DATA SOURCES:** publications in the media, decisions of authorities, draft decisions of authorities, data of surveys and public opinion polls, data of social networking sites, reports of non-governmental organisations, and any other publicised information. The data are collected by coordinators of the National Platform for Resilience and Social Cohesion in 12 oblasts, based on data sources, their own understanding of the state of affairs and involvement in local cohesion processes.

**>> PROBLEMS**

In the temporarily occupied areas:

- Dynamics of occupation. The advance of Russian troops, the situation in occupied population centres; opinion of the population of the oblast / community / political forces regarding Russia's occupation and military actions.
- Changes in the system of governance. Decisions and information of the occupying authorities; cases of collaborationism; seizure of property; expropriation of products by the occupying administrations.
- Humanitarian situation. Filtration measures of the occupying authorities; forced deportation and its routes; hostage taking; recruitment into armed formations; nature of evacuation; destruction; access to health care services.
- Work on identity. The operation of educational facilities; relocation of school children, students, and teachers; forced Russification; Russian state education standards; politics of memory: place names, museum work, holidays and their celebration; activities of religious organisations.
- Changes in the social structure. Challenges related to the situation of women, children, and people with disabilities.

In the Ukrainian government-controlled areas where military operations are not taking place:

- Dynamics of military operations. Shelling and attacks / weapons used against the civilian population; destruction.
- Changes in the system of governance. The organisation of activities of authorities and access of citizens to decision-making at the local level; access to public information; coordination of actions of volunteers and authorities, as well as actions between authorities at a variety of levels, authorities and the militaries, volunteers and the militaries, etc.
- Humanitarian situation. The accessibility of drinking water, food, communication, electricity; access to health care services; provision with humanitarian aid at the oblast level.
- Changes in the social environment. The attitudes in communities to changes in symbols, calendars (holidays, memorial days); renaming of streets and other public places; operation of educational facilities, relocation of school children, students, and teachers; civil society and business community, labour market.
- The situation of internally displaced persons. The availability of housing and employment; integration into the host community; networking.

**>> THE PUBLISHING FREQUENCY OF THE REPORT**

The initial monitoring report covers the first four months of the large-scale invasion (from February through June), starting 24 February 2022; and each of the follow-up reports has a two-month timeframe.



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# RESILIENCE AND COHESION OF UKRAINIAN SOCIETY DURING THE WAR

Periodic report based on monitoring materials from selected regions of Ukraine  
Issue No. 8. July – August 2023

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Electronic publication

Issued 30.09.2023

