



them an opportunity to cover their needs such as rent payment, warm clothes, medicines and other vital items," says ECHO Head of Office in Ukraine, Mamar Merzouk.

In order to scale up its assistance in the East of Ukraine, IOM will also open a sub-office in Kharkiv. "We aim at strengthening our field presence for assessing the needs of IDPs and providing immediate humanitarian assistance, as well as developing long-term solutions for the social and economic integration of displaced populations and host communities in Ukraine," states IOM Ukraine's Chief of Mission Manfred Profazi.

Assisting IDPs through income-generating activities and supporting those communities which host large numbers of IDPs will be in focus of another EU-funded programme IOM just launched. Community and IDP representatives in 34 post-conflict and displacement locations will be encouraged to jointly decide on small social or public infrastructure projects, like the renovation of a school or a kindergarten, or improvement of a first-aid station. In doing so, the project aims at boosting social cohesion and understanding among communities and IDPs. Another 1,000 displaced persons will benefit from a self-employment scheme or participate in professional training courses, making them self-sufficient and contributing to the well-being of their families and host communities.

Additional warm clothes, winter shoes, blankets, heaters, bed linen and other household items will be provided to another 1,400 IDP families under a new German-funded contribution to IOM's humanitarian assistance programme. The German contribution will also cover improvement of living conditions in collective centres. According to the estimates, collective centres house about 10% of the total IDP population in Ukraine. These centres often lack proper heating, sanitary and other types of facilities which the project seeks to improve.

Since the beginning of the crisis, over 9,500 IDPs have been assisted by IOM and received warm clothes, shoes, blankets, household and hygiene items, as well as medicine, psychological and other forms of assistance with funding provided by the U.S., the UN, Norway and Switzerland.



Warm blankets distributed to IDPs in Kmelnytskyi Region



Aid distribution in Odesa: vulnerable IDPs getting bed linen and blankets



Over 3,500 displaced children have been assisted by IOM since the beginning of the crisis

## LIFE STORY

# IOM HELPS IDPS TO START NEW LIFE IN KHARKIV REGION



Anton with four of his seven children at a shelter for IDPs in Kharkiv, where the family is currently staying

The number of IDPs in Ukraine is constantly growing. The largest number of them – about 110,000 – is currently staying in Kharkiv city and the region. This is no surprise as Kharkiv Oblast neighbours the Luhansk and Donetsk regions, where the ongoing conflict has generated massive displacement since late spring.

110,000 may seem to be not a large number for the region of over 2.7 million people, but behind every cold figure there is a unique story of struggle, hope and faith.

“Yesterday my wife gave birth to our 7th baby on the bed linen provided by IOM”, smiling, recalled a proud father at one of the IDPs centres near Kharkiv supported by IOM. Anton\* welcomed IOM staff to a big room divided into three sections with hanging covers, where he stays with his family. The newborn became the 70th member of the community taking shelter in the centre.

Anton’s family of nine came from Antratsit city, Luhansk Region, at the beginning of August. He and all his children are smiling a lot, though their life hasn’t been easy over the last couple of months. They have received blankets, pillows, and bed linen from IOM, as well as other essentials from other organizations delivering humanitarian aid in the region, become part of the new community, and their older children have started to attend local kindergarten and school. Anton, a former miner, talks about



Evhenia had to move from her home town Torez, Donetsk Region, to Kharkiv

staying permanently in Kharkiv, which is not an overly common occurrence since many IDPs in the east plan to return home as soon as is feasibly possible. But, of course, it is a challenge for him to find a job not only because of his profession, which is of no demand in Kharkiv Region, but also because his employment record book and other documents have been left at the head office of his former employer back in Antratsit.

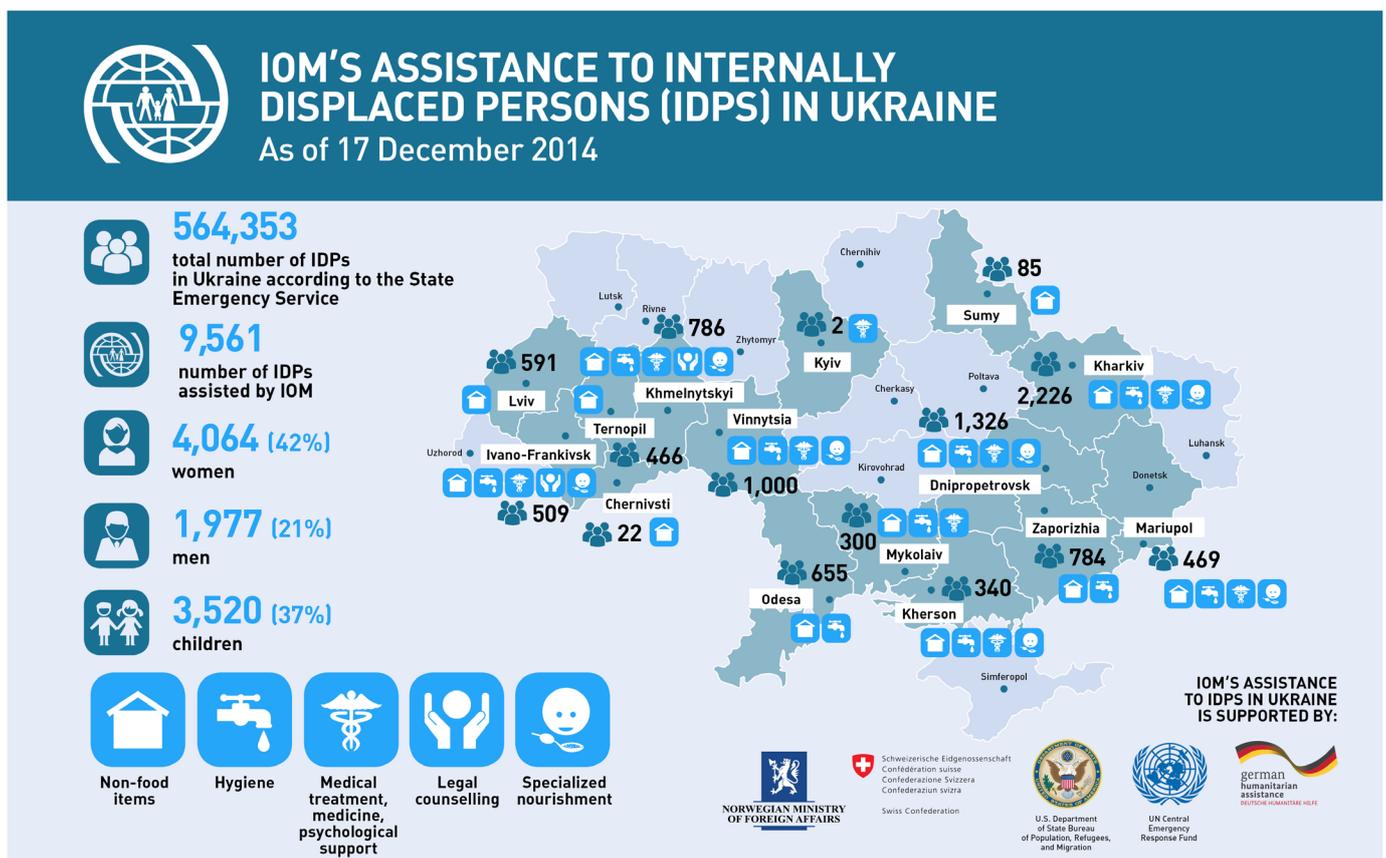
The lack of employment opportunities is the main concern for another family as well. Evhenia\*, a mother of three, gave birth to a baby girl in July. The birth was premature as the family had been going through a lot of hardships and had to move around a lot. She left right from the hospital in Torez, Donetsk Region, where she was undergoing examination for a C-section. "The doctor encouraged me to flee the city and I found out that the hospital was later destroyed by bombs", relates Evhenia.

She feels safe now and is very grateful to IOM not only for warm clothes, household items, and school supplies for her two older children, but for the ongoing support from the IOM-funded NGO for special nutrition for the newborn and necessary medicine. The NGO staff put her in touch with the officials of a village 65 kilometers from Kharkiv. The village granted this family an abandoned house. The house needs major renovation, but the family manages to get along and stay warm. Evhenia does not plan to return to Torez, and she hopes that her husband will find a job and that they will continue living in Kharkiv Region.

By mid-December, IOM has provided assistance to over 2,000 IDPs in Kharkiv Region. Over the last couple of months, with the winter rapidly approaching, support has been chiefly provided in the form of warm clothes, heaters, blankets and bed linen with some targeted aid to large families with toddlers to purchase medicine and child nutrition. Concurrently, IDPs remain vulnerable and in need of both immediate and livelihoods support in Kharkiv Region.

\* The names have been changed

## IOM'S RESPONSE MAP



### BACKGROUND ON THE CRISIS

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

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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### IOM'S ASSISTANCE TO IDPS IN UKRAINE IS SUPPORTED BY:



European Union



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation



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



UN Central Emergency Response Fund



german humanitarian assistance  
DEUTSCHE HUMANITÄRE HILFE

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

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

*During the 18 years of its presence in Ukraine, IOM has assisted over 300,000 migrants (Ukrainians and other nationalities), potential migrants, victims of trafficking and other vulnerable groups, directly or through its project partners.*