



Volunteers with Station Kharkiv, a multi-purpose community centre, and social workers from the municipality of Kharkiv provide information to IDPs at the Kharkiv train station about registration for assistance. Photo: © Jan Zychlinski, July 2015

BRIEFING PAPER

Displacement figures in Ukraine fail to reflect a complex reality

7 SEPTEMBER 2015

The registration of internally displaced people (IDPs) can serve some useful functions. They include determining their number, location, demographic characteristics and protection concerns, preventing fraudulent access to limited assistance and facilitating the provision of temporary documents in place of missing identity cards. That said, registration is not necessarily required for such purposes and, as the case of Ukraine shows, neither is it a perfect tool.

Limitations in terms of the definition of an IDP applied in Ukraine mean that many displaced people are ineligible for registration, and some others who are eligible face obstacles in completing the process. The result is that a significant number of IDPs are unable to access government assistance, and registered IDPs are the only ones counted or discussed for humanitarian purposes.

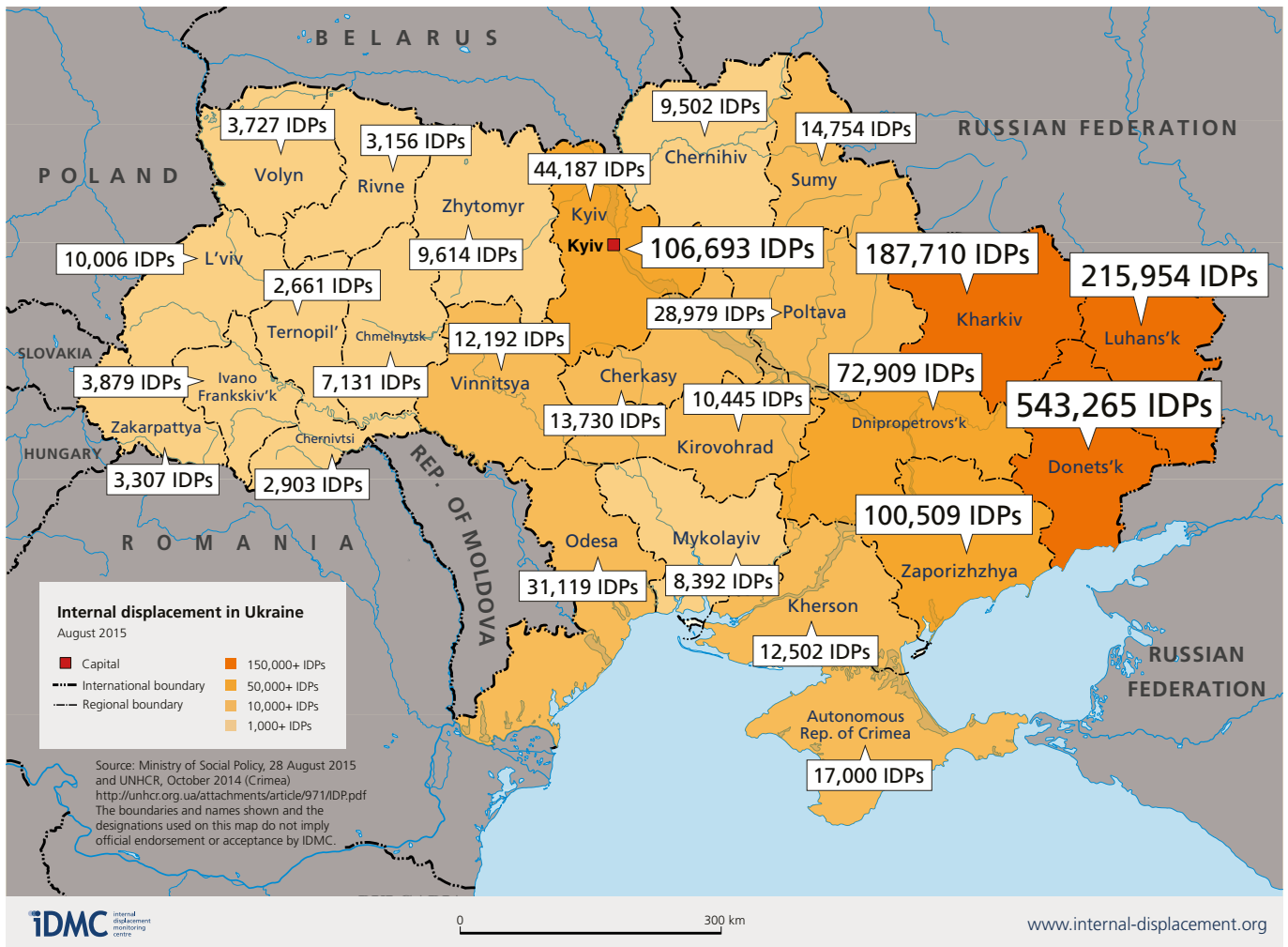
Envisaged amendments to the laws and procedures that govern registration will not bring the process entirely in line with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, and as such they will not fully address its shortcomings. Alternative methods of collecting data are required to improve the protection and assistance needs of all IDPs.

Background

2014 was a tumultuous year for Ukraine. The Euromaidan protests in Kiev led to the resignation of the country's president, Viktor Yanukovich, and the installation of a pro-European government ([RFERL](#), 22 February 2014). Clashes between pro and anti-Russia demonstrators flared soon afterwards, predominately in the south-east of the country. Days after Yanukovich fled to Moscow, Russian forces entered Crimea, seized administrative buildings and military bases and installed a pro-Russia leadership in the region ([RFERL](#), 4 March 2014, [Al Jazeera](#), 22 March 2014).

Following Moscow's declared annexation of Crimea, pro-Russia separatists seized control of areas in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of eastern Ukraine and declared independence ([PHAP](#), 21 July 2015). Armed conflict with Ukrainian forces erupted, in which Russia reportedly backed the separatists ([OHCHR](#), 15 May 2015, p.3). The conflict continues to escalate despite two ceasefire agreements ([RFERL](#), 17 August 2015; [EU](#), 11 August 2015).

Since March 2014, more than 2.2 million people have fled their homes within Ukraine and to neighbouring countries ([UNHCR](#), 14 August 2015; [Ministry of Social Policy](#), 28 August 2015). People first fled Crimea to other areas of Ukraine in response to insecurity, harassment and persecution, which mainly affected ethnic Crimean Tartars, a predominantly Mus-



lim minority (HRW, 2015; UNICEF, 21 March 2014; UNICEF, 5 April 2014; Civic Solidarity, 28 May 2015). Between 50,000 and 60,000 people were estimated to have fled from or within Crimea to other places in Ukraine by mid-2015 (Correspondence with Centre for Civic Education Almenda, 3 August 2015).

While Ukrainian authorities were grappling with the initial influx of IDPs from Crimea, a new displacement crisis took hold in the east, triggered by factors related to the separatists' seizure of territory. As of May 2014 there were around 1,500 IDPs from the east, but the number grew fast as the conflict intensified. By late August 2015 there were more than 1.4 million registered IDPs in Ukraine. The regions currently with most registered IDPs are Donetsk with 543,000, Luhansk with 216,000 and Kharkiv with 188,000 (Ministry of Social Policy, 28 August 2015).

The demographics of the displaced population are difficult to determine. The State Emergency Service (SES) initially disaggregated its data on IDPs by sex, age, disability and location, but the Ministry of Social Policy (MoSP) aggregates figures only under the categories of children, IDPs of working age, pensioners and IDPs with disabilities. This means there is no data on their sex and little on their age.

Given that people in Ukraine can retire from the age of 35, even the pensioner category is not indicative of age. Pensioners also include recipients of other state benefits in line with the country's law on mandatory state pension insurance (OCHA, 24 April 2015; GoU, 22 July 2005). The result is that around 60 per cent of IDPs are classified as pensioners (OCHA, 24 April 2015).

Nor does the data collected for registration purposes say anything about IDPs' needs and protection concerns. There is no way to gauge the extent of certain households' needs relative to others, and as a consequence no way of knowing if the right kind of assistance is being provided.

How does the registration of IDPs work?

It should be noted that the term "registration" means different things to different organisations. For the purpose of this briefing, it refers to the collection by the state or a mandated organisation of detailed personal data at the individual or household level in order to identify IDPs based on a legal administrative procedure.

At the beginning of the crisis, when IDPs were fewer in number, coordination councils registered IDPs in most regions. Procedures varied and there was no central database. Registered IDPs did not receive documentation confirming their displacement (UNHCR, 17 October 2014).

The government's approach gave a rough estimate of how many people were fleeing and in need of assistance. As the security situation in the east deteriorated, however, the number of IDPs increased. Some moved on after their first approach to the authorities, and data on secondary movements, possible voluntary returns and IDPs' needs and protection issues was not captured (CoE, 26 January 2015).

On 11 June 2014, the cabinet empowered SES to begin the official registration of IDPs (UNHCR, 11 June 2014). SES set up registration centres at main transit points and passed the

data it collected to the State Migration Service (SMS). Cabinet resolution 509, adopted on 1 October 2014, transferred responsibility for the registration system to MoSP ([GoU](#), 1 October 2014; [KHRPG](#), 1 January 2015). Article four of Ukraine's law on IDPs' rights and freedoms, which entered into force on 20 November 2014, details the registration procedure.

IDPs have to apply to be registered in person at the social protection department in their place of refuge in areas controlled by the government, with an identification document for each family member. It is not possible to register in areas not controlled by the government as Ukrainian law is not enforced. People must cross the contact line to register. Certificates are issued per family to every adult member. By the end of 2014, MoSP had put a digital registration system in place, and its database is the primary source of displacement figures ([EU, UN and WB](#), March 2015; [protection cluster](#), August 2015).

Registration as an IDP is directly linked to Ukraine's residence registration system, which is based on the Soviet *propiska* arrangement. People's address is recorded in an internal passport that determines their access to entitlements and services. For an IDP to receive their pension and other entitlements in their area of refuge, they must present their both internal passport and their certificate of registration as displaced. Those who move on have to re-register their address with the SMS to continue to receive benefits and assistance.

How comprehensive is the registration data?

Cabinet resolution 509 and the national law on IDPs include definitions that determine who is registered and so included in the displacement figures, and further cabinet orders deal with applicable geographical areas. There are, however, significant inconsistencies between them, and the issue has been repeatedly flagged as undermining IDPs' registration ([Vostok SOS](#), 1 July 2015; [protection cluster](#), August 2015).

Resolution 509, as amended on 15 April 2015 via cabinet resolution 264, states that people forced to leave their place of habitual residence in the "temporarily occupied territory" of Ukraine, "anti-terrorist operation area", villages at the contact line and settlements where Ukrainian authorities do not have control are eligible to register. Certificates can be issued to Ukrainian citizens, foreigners and stateless permanent residents.

The national law defines an IDP as a "citizen of Ukraine permanently residing on the territory of Ukraine, that was forced or voluntarily left one's place of residence as a result of or in order to avoid the negative impact of armed conflict, temporary occupation, situations of generalised violence, mass violations of human rights and natural or man-made disasters."

In practice, however, many regional and municipal authorities continue to apply cabinet resolution 509 and local bylaws instead, which has meant that some IDPs have been unable to register despite being eligible to do so under the national law ([protection cluster](#), August 2015).

Cabinet order 1085-p of 7 November 2014, however, determines localities that people must have fled from in order to be eligible for registration in addition to occupied and "anti-terrorist operation" areas ([GoU](#), 7 November 2014; [protection cluster](#), August 2015). These are areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions under the control of de facto authorities and areas near the contact line in government-controlled areas

of Donetsk. Cabinet order 428-p of 5 May 2015 updated the applicable areas of Donetsk, and an update for Luhansk had still not been issued as of August.

In terms of those excluded from displacement figures, resolution 509 states that children can only be registered by their parents or legal guardians. As such, those in the care of other relatives are not eligible, and there is no provision for state children's services to register unaccompanied minors. Those most affected are children at school in government-controlled areas, but whose parents remain in areas not under government control, and those not considered orphans or neglected.

Neither do the figures include people unable to cross the contact line between areas not under government control and those where it exerts its authority. A temporary order issued in January 2015 requires people fleeing from the former to the latter to have a permit to do so. Unregistered IDPs are not included in the figures, and neither are those whose registration certificates have been cancelled following SMS verification of their address.

Regulation 79 of 4 March 2015, which amends resolution 509, states that before an IDP's certificate can be stamped, an SMS representative must verify the temporary address they give when they registered ([OCHA](#), 13 March 2015). If they are not found at the address given, their certificate is deemed invalid.

Children born in areas not under government control whose documents are not recognised by the Ukrainian authorities may also be excluded, but the direct link between lack of birth registration and denial of IDP registration has not been established ([protection cluster](#), June 2015; [protection cluster](#), July 2015).

Table one below details these and other groups of IDPs excluded from registration and so from the displacement figures. Table two lists further obstacles to registration, and figure one gives a summary of the overall picture.

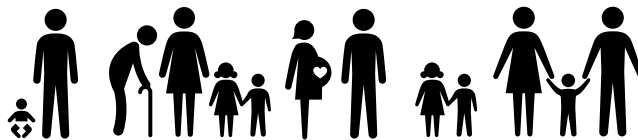
According to the definition in the Guiding Principles, all of the groups in table one and two should be considered IDPs. It states: "Internally displaced persons are persons or groups of people who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border".

The definition imposes no limitations in terms of geography, age or documentation, and particularly relevant in the case of Ukraine, it applies equally in government and non-government controlled areas.

In addition to the factors that render IDPs ineligible to register as such, those who are eligible face other obstacles in doing so, as outlined in table two.

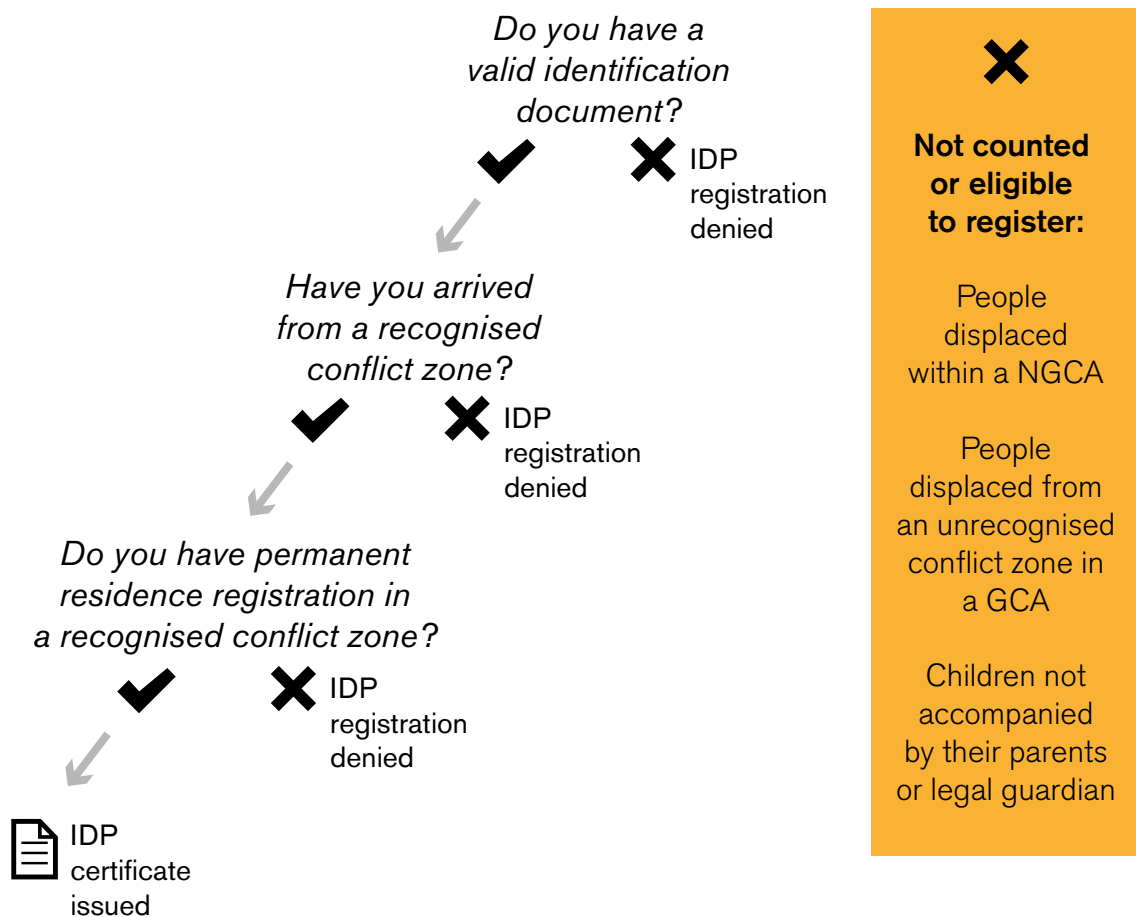
Formal obstacles to IDP registration in Ukraine

IDPs must acquire a permit to cross to a GCA.



Non-government-controlled area (NGCA)

Government-controlled area (GCA)



* If an IDP is absent when the SMS arrives on an unannounced visit to verify their address, their IDP certificate becomes invalid.

Other obstacles to IDP registration



Limited mobility



Fear of conscription



Fear for safety of relatives who did not flee



Fear of confiscation or damage to property left behind



Lack of information

Table one: Criteria that render IDPs ineligible for registration

Criteria	Explanation
Loss or lack of identification documents	Some IDPs never held an internal passport, and some lost or forgot theirs when they fled. Others contain inaccuracies or have been destroyed (protection cluster , August 2015; Correspondence with NRC, 29 July 2015). Some fled with only expired identification documents. There is no special procedure for those, such as many Roma IDPs, who do not hold identification documents.
Not registered as permanent residents in areas included in cabinet orders 1085-p or 428-p	Some IDPs lived in areas not under government control for years, but never officially registered their permanent address there. Others are only registered as temporary residents in such areas (Correspondence with NRC, 29 July 2015). Others replaced their internal passport after their displacement, but their new document did not show them as permanent residents in areas not under government control (DRC, 7 August 2015).
Flight from settlements in areas not controlled by the government that are not included in cabinet orders 1085-p or 428-p	As the conflict evolves, the list of settlements included in cabinet orders 1085-p or 428-p quickly becomes outdated. The current list, for example, does not include all of the towns and villages in Luhansk affected by the conflict or near the contact line (Correspondence with NRC, 12 August 2015). IDPs in Debaltseve were particularly affected when fighting escalated in February 2015, because the town was not listed (NYT , 14 February 2015; BBC , 13 February 2015). Debaltseve was later included when order 428-p was issued on 5 May, enabling IDPs to register.
Flight from government-controlled settlements that are not included in cabinet orders 1085-p or 428-p	People displaced from settlements in government-controlled areas are not eligible to register as IDPs, unless they are on the line of contact and listed in Order 1085-p or Order No. 428-p. Towns and villages under government control and near the contact line in Luhansk region are not included (Correspondence with NRC, 12 August 2015). This contradicts the national law on IDPs' rights and freedoms, under which people forced to flee their homes due to conflict, violence, occupation, human rights violations and disasters anywhere in Ukraine are deemed to be IDPs.
Unaccompanied minors and children who fled with relatives other than their parents or legal guardian	Neither unaccompanied minors nor children who fled with relatives other than their parents or legal guardian are eligible to register under resolution 509 (GoU , 1 October 2014). This has particularly affected students from schools and colleges who have relocated to government-controlled areas, but whose parents have remained in areas not under government control (Correspondence with NRC, 29 July 2015). Current legislation and regulations allow parents and guardians to designate another guardian in their place. However, it is not feasible for parents in areas not controlled by the government to designate a guardian. This requires notary validation and most notary offices are not operating in areas not controlled by the government.
Displaced within areas not under government control	People displaced within areas not under government control are unable to register as IDPs because Ukrainian legislation is not enforced.
SMS deems IDPs' address invalid	If IDPs are not at home when SMS makes an unannounced visit to verify their address, they are deregistered from the government database and their certificate is deemed invalid (R2P, UNHCR and DRC, undated, on file with IDMC; OCHA , 13 March 2015). Deregistration is not systematic throughout the country.

The story of two children separated from their mother

A year ago, when hostilities in the east had just broken out, 67-year-old Lidiia fled with her grandchildren from Alchevsk in Luhansk, an area not under government control. They took refuge in a government-controlled area. The children's mother Natasha, 33, could not leave Alchevsk because she was eight months pregnant. Once her child

was born she tried to move to the same government-controlled area, but she was prevented from crossing the checkpoint on the basis that her baby's birth certificate was not valid in Ukraine since it had a stamp of the Luhansk de facto authorities.

Lidiia meantime applied to register her grandchildren - a 13-year old girl and a 12-year old boy - as IDPs so that they would be eligible for social benefits. According to Ukrainian legisla-

tion, however, only parents and legal guardians can do so. Natasha is ready to give Lidiia power of attorney to legalise her children's situation, but the national notary is closed in areas not under government control.

Were the two children to be registered as IDPs, they would receive a monthly payment of 884 hryvnia (\$40) each. They have been attending school in the government-controlled village of Makievka in Kreminna district for a year.

Table two: Obstacles to registration as an IDP

Obstacle	Explanation
Permit required to cross the contact line	Obtaining a permit is an onerous procedure that takes up to ten days. An online application process was introduced on 7 July, but people must go to government checkpoints on the contact line to inquire about their permits. There is no alternative procedure for people without identification documents (protection cluster , August 2015; protection cluster , June 2015; OCHA , 30 January 2015; OCHA , 6 February 2015; OCHA , 6 March 2015; OSCE , 6 May 2015, Vostok SOS , July 2015). Neither is there any public transport across the contact line, which has cut the flow of IDPs from areas not under government control by nearly 50 per cent in some cases (OSCE , 6 May 2015). Some have therefore travelled via Russia to reach areas controlled by the government (protection cluster , June 2015).
Limited mobility	Elderly and other people with limited mobility may not be able to reach their local social protection offices to apply in person and ensure they continue to receive their social benefits (protection cluster , August 2015).
Limited understanding of the registration procedure	Forty-nine per cent of the calls made in June and July 2015 to the toll-free national helpline for IDPs were about registration (IOM and Donbass SOS, 2015, on file with IDMC). This represents more than double the number received from March to May (IOM , 2015).
Fear of conscription	Some IDPs choose not to register for fear they will be conscripted (protection cluster , August 2015; Correspondence with NRC, 29 July 2015).
Fear of implications for relatives and property left behind	Some IDPs fear that armed groups might learn of their registration, and that they could be deemed political opponents as a result. This in turn could lead to the property they left behind being damaged or confiscated, or to reprisals against relatives who chose not to flee (UNHCR , 17 October 2014).
Institutions not functioning in government-controlled areas located close to contact line	Some IDPs who fled to government-controlled areas have been unable to register because local departments of social protection are not functioning (Vostok SOS, 1 July 2015, on file with IDMC; protection cluster , July 2015).

The story of three IDPs denied their social payments

Victoria, a 35-year old entrepreneur originally from Luhansk, fled to Severodonetsk with her husband and her nine-year old son. The three of them had lived together in Luhansk, but their official permanent addresses were different – Victoria's was in Luhansk and her husband's in Severodonetsk. Victoria registered herself and her son as IDPs with no problem, but her husband was unable to do so because Severodonetsk is not listed in cabinet order 1085-p as a settlement affected by the conflict.

Victoria thought that having registered successfully, she would receive the social payments made to IDPs. She was told, however, that she was not entitled on the basis that she did not have to rent somewhere to live. Because she was living with her husband at his official permanent address, she was told that he should register her there too.

She is, however, unable to be registered in a government-controlled area, because under Ukrainian law she would have to cancel her registration in Luhansk first. This would mean travelling into an area not under government control, a risk she is unprepared to take. Even if she were to get a stamp cancelling her registration in Luhansk, it would not be recognised in government-controlled areas.

She is fed up with the red tape and has given up trying to persuade officials that she is entitled to the monthly allowance paid to registered IDPs.

Other factors lead to inaccuracies in Ukraine's displacement figures. In December 2014, the government suspended all pension and social payments in areas not under its control and central bank offices also closed ([Unian](#), 1 December 2014). For people to receive their benefits, they have to relocate to a government-controlled area and register as IDPs ([EU, UN and WB](#), March 2015). Some people go back to areas not under government control after they have registered, and then shuttle back and forth to receive their benefits ([OCHA](#), 24 April 2015).

The authorities openly acknowledge that this is taking place, and transit sites have sprung up for people leaving for short periods for administrative purposes. The overall results have been long queues at registration points, and an artificial surge in the number of IDPs in December, January and February, given that some have returned to their homes after registering ([OCHA](#), 13 February 2015).

Without the tracking of IDPs' movements in real time, registration data also becomes quickly outdated. IDPs move back to their places of origin, elsewhere in Ukraine or to other countries to claim refugee status, but these secondary movements are not captured. Nor are the deaths of IDPs reflected in the figures.

Can amendments to the IDP law enable all IDPs to register?

Draft law no. 2166, which is to go before parliament later this year, aims to address the shortcomings in the current law on IDPs' freedoms and rights, including on registration. If adopted, it will eliminate the requirement that IDPs register or

update their temporary address with SMS, expand the definition of an IDP to include foreigners and stateless people, and will extend the validity of the IDP certificate indefinitely (GoU, 2015; UNHCR, 21 May 2015; [protection cluster](#), August 2015).

The law also envisages an increase in the number of registration sites and a better appeal process for IDPs denied registration. In conjunction, a draft cabinet resolution would amend resolutions 505, on receipt of social benefits, and 509, making it possible for people other than parents to register children as IDPs and authorising child protection authorities to do so for unaccompanied minors.

The improvements should enable more IDPs to register, but they will not address all of the current system's flaws, and some will still be ineligible. They include IDPs displaced within areas not under government control; those fleeing an area not on the approved list of settlements; those taking refuge in areas without fully functioning authorities; those without accepted identification documents.

The registration system may also have broader impacts, though it should be intended to enable the government to understand the scale of the crisis and deliver services and assistance. Draft legislation on property compensation would make payment conditional on IDPs being registered. Also, the creation of an IDP category can obstruct integration of the displaced as years pass. In the case of Georgia, for example, it led to separate schooling of displaced children (NRC, 29 March 2010), the development of a stigma against IDPs (FMR, April 2013) and inefficient spending since assistance was tied to status rather than need (NRC, December 2013).

Looking ahead: How can unregistered IDPs be identified and assisted?

Government authorities bear primary responsibility for compiling information on IDPs with which to determine their protection and assistance needs. There is, however, no specification that data collection must be done via registration. As human beings in vulnerable situations, IDPs are entitled to the same guarantees under human rights and humanitarian law as all people falling under the state's jurisdiction, regardless of whether they are registered or not. They do not require a special legal status in order to exercise their rights. Efforts must be made to collect data on all IDPs and map their needs, whether they are registered or not, and in all areas, including those not under government control. The criteria that define an IDP for information collection purposes should reflect those set out in the Guiding Principles.

Unregistered IDPs can be identified via needs assessments, profiling exercises, UNHCR Somalia's population movement tracking and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM)'s displacement tracking matrix. Needs assessments provide a comprehensive overview of humanitarian needs and protection concerns across whole communities and various sectors. Their aim is to better target assistance. Profiling is a collaborative process of identifying IDPs, particularly their number and location, and requires the participation of the government and its humanitarian and development partners (IDMC/NRC and OCHA, 2008; JIPS, no date). UNHCR and IOM's tools are data management systems that collect, analyse, and disseminate information on population movements. The appropriate methodology for data collection and the degree of detail it involves will vary depending on the context and the purpose of the exercise. These data collection methods

could supplement IDP registration data and provide a more comprehensive picture of internal displacement.

Numerous needs assessments have included IDPs. An assessment by the European Union, United Nations and World Bank highlighted limited social services, difficulties with recovery of land and property, lack of possibilities to restore livelihoods and social networks, and problems with governance and rule of law as the main barriers to durable solutions (EU, UN and WB, March 2015). A multi-sector needs assessment carried out by national and international NGOs in eastern Ukraine found that IDPs' needs were greatest in areas not under government control, particularly in terms of protection, safety and dignity (Ukraine NGO Forum, 30 March 2015). UNHCR has also conducted participatory assessments in a number of government and non-government controlled areas ([protection cluster](#), July 2015). These assessments uncovered many concerns of IDPs, including obstacles to registration, restrictions on freedom of movement and inadequate assistance that does not meet their needs. However, it is not clear how these and other assessments have complemented each other or contributed to a coordinated response.

Conclusion

Ukraine's current displacement figures are not an accurate representation of the situation on the ground. Many IDPs are left out of the count, and some people who are not displaced are included. Because IDPs are not tracked, it is impossible to know how many have returned to their places of origin, how many remain displaced or what their movements have been since their registration (OCHA, 26 June 2015; IMC July 24 2015).

The centralised digital registration system is a welcome improvement, but it does not fully address these issues. Both the government and international organisations increasingly acknowledge that displacement figures aggregated based on the registration system can only be considered estimates and that many IDPs are excluded. The lack of reliable and comprehensive data has been cited as one of the main obstacles to the identification of beneficiaries and the efficient targeting of assistance (OCHA, 8 May 2015).

IDPs' rights do not derive from their inclusion on a register. They are entitlements of all citizens and habitual residents of Ukraine, and as such the government is obliged to protect and assist IDPs whether they are registered or not. Registration and other forms of data collection should not result in a real or perceived status that might put IDPs at risk, hamper access to benefits for certain groups in equal need, increase community tensions or create incentives for people who are not displaced to pretend to be IDPs.

The adoption of draft law no. 2166 will address some of these concerns and help to facilitate a smoother process, but it will not eliminate all of the challenges associated with registration that IDPs face. With the aim of ensuring that unregistered IDPs are also protected and assisted, NRC/IDMC recommends the following:

To the Ukrainian authorities:

- Create an appeal process that enables IDPs who fail to fulfil the requirements for registration to demonstrate how and why they are eligible
- Eliminate the requirement that people fleeing areas not under government control acquire a permit to cross the contact line

- Collect and publish data disaggregated by sex, age and needs to ensure that programming is properly designed and targeted to protect and assist IDPs based on need
- Implement a population tracking system to monitor IDPs' movements and protection and assistance needs, in order to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance whether they are registered or not
- Survey IDPs' intentions in terms of whether they prefer to return to their previous place of residence, integrate locally or settle elsewhere in the country – as an aid to planning interventions
- Improve local authorities' outreach to IDPs to ensure they are well informed about the registration procedure, including its purpose, criteria, benefits and confidentiality measures
- Decouple the registration process for IDPs from the social benefit system to ensure that welfare recipients continue to receive their entitlements without delay or interruption
- Organise training for local authorities and personnel involved in registering IDPs on the Guiding Principles and other laws, regulations, orders and criteria applicable to the process
- Reduce waiting times for registration by addressing the equipment and staffing needs of local social protection offices
- Ensure that legislation and regulations on property recovery provide that property documents, not registration as an IDP, are required to claim property

To the de facto authorities in areas not under government control:

- Monitor displacement and report the number of IDPs and their sex, age, location and needs in order to facilitate the provision of humanitarian relief
- Design and implement assistance programmes to meet IDPs' needs

To humanitarian, human rights and development organisations:

- Establish a common platform to compile and process information from all needs assessments as a first step towards more inclusive data gathering
- Develop and implement a coordinated strategy to identify unregistered IDPs and assess their immediate and long-term needs in both government and non-government controlled areas, and ensure their inclusion in protection and assistance programmes based on those needs
- Support the Ukrainian authorities in improving the government's data collection practices and designing programmes that ensure IDPs' assistance is appropriate and based on their needs rather than government registration

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The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) is the leading source of information and analysis on internal displacement. For the millions of people worldwide displaced within their own country, IDMC plays a unique role as a global monitor and evidence-based advocate to influence policy and action by governments, UN agencies, donors, international organisations and NGOs.

IDMC was established in 1998 at the request of the Interagency Standing Committee on humanitarian assistance. Since then, IDMC's unique global function has been recognised and reiterated in annual UN General Assembly resolutions. IDMC is part of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), an independent, non-governmental humanitarian organisation.

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