

This factsheet provides an overview of data from Round 8 of the Conditions of Return Assessment (CoRA), which was conducted in April – May 2024 in 858 locations across 284 hromadas and 23 oblasts. For access to the full report and operational dataset, please contact DTMUkraine@iom.int.¹

CONTEXT

As of 11 April 2024, IOM estimates that around 3,548,000 people remained internally displaced in Ukraine while UNHCR indicates that further 6,554,800 people were displaced abroad.^{2,3} IOM estimates that, as of 11 April 2024, approximately 4,734,000 people have returned spontaneously to their place of habitual residence in Ukraine following a period of displacement of at least two weeks (internal displacement or cross-border). Of these, 24 per cent have returned from abroad.⁴

To inform targeted interventions aimed at alleviating the vulnerability that stems from poor structural and social conditions in areas of return, the Conditions of Return Assessment (CoRA) provides granular data on where returns are occurring, the ways in which those who have returned are most vulnerable and why.

Figure 1: Coverage of the Conditions of Return Assessment Round 8

23 Oblasts 91 Raions 284 Hromadas 858 Locations

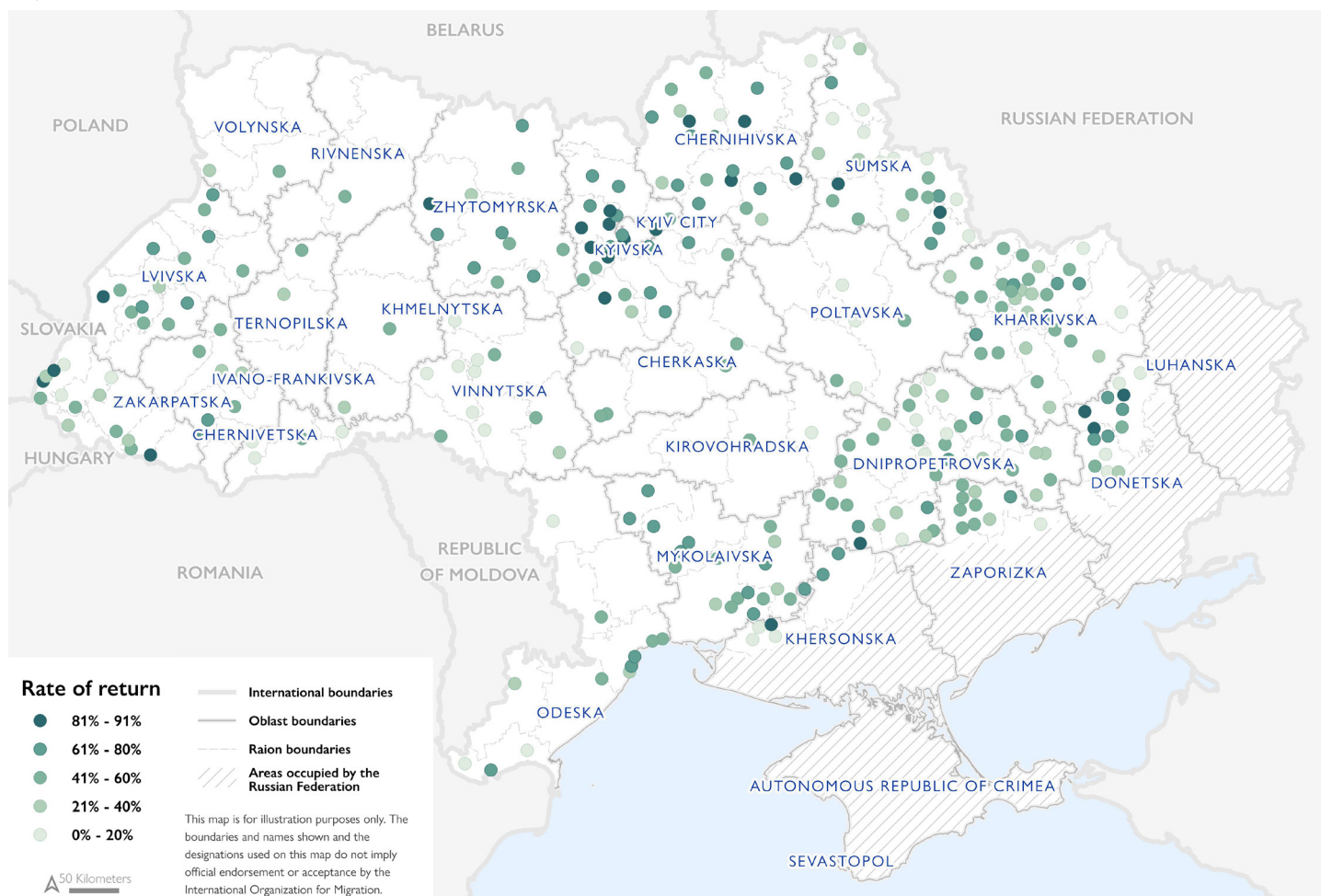
Hromada- and settlement-level data is available upon request at DTMUkraine@iom.int.

RETURNS TO SEVERE CONDITIONS

A substantial portion of areas of return (105 hromadas, or 37% of assessed hromadas) witnessed the return of 40-60 per cent of people displaced from these hromadas since February 2022. Additionally, in 63 and 18 hromadas, respectively, 60-80 per cent and 80-100 per cent of formerly displaced people had returned. Significantly, the highest recorded rates of return were observed in Kyivska Oblast, whereby 67 per cent of locations had witnessed a minimum of 60 per cent return rate. High return rates were also observed in Kharkivska, Dnipropetrovska, Khersonska, Chernihivska, Lvivska, and Mykolaivska Oblasts.

A significant share of locations to which formerly displaced persons returned presented a score of 'Medium Severity', for all drivers of return (see pages 5-9). Despite the deteriorating security and lack of employment prospects in their areas of origin, many individuals are choosing to return to their homes, likely driven by sentimental ties and exhaustion from prolonged displacement. The invasion of February 2022 forced them to flee and live in precarious conditions for over two years. Their situation has worsened as they have lost financial security and faced the consequences of the changes to the IDP living allowance resolution.

Map 1: Rate of return in hromadas assessed in Round 8 of the Conditions of Returns Assessment



¹ The data included in the full report and operational dataset are classified as 'restricted' under the [OCHA Ukraine Information Sharing Protocol](#).

² International Organization for Migration (IOM), [Internal Displacement Report, Round 16 \(April 2024\)](#).

³ [UNHCR](#).

⁴ International Organization for Migration (IOM), [Returns Report, Round 16 \(April 2024\)](#).

KEY FINDINGS – DRIVERS OF SEVERITY



LIVELIHOODS

- A notable share of returnees faced challenging employment conditions upon return. Key Informants (KIs) in 56 per cent of locations (481 locations) reported that few, or no residents seeking work could find suitable job opportunities. An estimated 25 per cent of returnees resided in those locations (692,000 individuals).
- In 5 per cent of assessed locations **with high severity livelihood conditions (39 locations)** a maximum of 40 per cent of the displaced population had returned. These locations typically had few or no agricultural activities that had resumed, few unemployed residents who could find work, and only a few shops were open.
- Two fifths of all assessed locations (40%, 341 locations) were rated medium severity for livelihoods, primarily due to the slow recovery of the job market and closure of businesses, leading to limited employment opportunities.
- The **ability to afford basic food and non-food items** remains a pressing concern in return locations. Key informants in nearly a fifth of assessed locations (19%) reported that most or all residents in these locations had reduced the quality and/or quantity of basic items and food (159 locations).



RESIDENTIAL DESTRUCTION

- Residential destruction was classified as high severity in 5 per cent of locations (45 locations) across nine oblasts, over half of which were located in Kharkivska (27%, 12 locations) and Khersonska Oblasts (24%, 11 locations).
- Over half of these locations (56%, 25 locations) had also experienced missile strikes, shelling or other long-range attacks in the month preceding data collection, an increase of 10 percentage points in the share of locations subject to residential damage owing to increased hostilities since the previous assessment.
- KIs reported that the majority of assessed locations (95%, 813 locations) had experienced up to 40 per cent of residences destroyed by the war, where three quarters of returnees resided (75%, 2,659,000 individuals). While 5 per cent of locations (45 locations) suffered over 40 per cent of residential structures damaged or destroyed by the war.
- Compared to Round 7, residential damage worsened in 1 per cent of assessed locations** (6 locations), of which two thirds were located in Sumska and Dnipropetrovska Oblasts (33% each). KIs attributed this to the May 2024 escalation of hostilities in Eastern and Northern Ukraine.
- In 3 per cent of assessed locations in which residential homes were damaged (27 locations), **damaged houses were not being rebuilt or repaired**. Forty-one per cent of these locations were located in Kharkivska Oblast.



UTILITIES AND SERVICES

- According to KIs, 21 per cent of locations (182 locations), hosting 59 per cent of the returnees, reported damage to schools. Road infrastructure was also damaged in 14 per cent of the assessed locations (122 locations), impacting 38 per cent of the returnees. Damage to health clinics was reported by KIs in less than a fifth of locations (13%, 108 locations), where 43 per cent of the returnees resided.
- Disruptions to electricity (14% of locations assessed, 120 locations) and water (12%, 99 locations) supplies affected more than one in ten returnees, each (298,000 and 311,000 individuals, respectively) in the month preceding the assessment. Since the previous round, the share of assessed locations in which KIs reported electricity disruptions decreased by 3 percentage points, suggesting improvements in the reconstruction of electrical supply networks.



PUBLIC LIFE

- KIs indicated concerns about community tensions in 23 per cent of assessed locations (199 locations), affecting 40 per cent of returnees (1,089,000 individuals). These concerns most often derived from the allocation of humanitarian aid.
- KIs in 7 per cent of locations assessed in both rounds (57 locations), reported that residents only leave their homes when required to, resulting in quiet, sparsely populated streets. A third of these locations were located in Sumska Oblast (19 locations, 33%). Once again, the disruption to daily life can be attributed to the increased hostilities in the oblast, resulting in continued mandatory evacuations.



SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Up to 24 per cent of assessed locations had been subject to missile strikes (203 locations), shelling and long-range attacks in the month preceding the assessment. In over two thirds of locations with high severity of safety and security conditions (49 out of 71), up to 40 per cent of the displaced population had returned. Large variations in return rates were recorded in locations where KIs reported high severity conditions for safety and security, suggesting that the security situation is not necessarily a primary factor when considering return.
- KIs reported that residents were aware of the presence of **mines and/or unexploded ordnance (UXOs) in 15 per cent** of the assessed locations (128 locations), consistent with the previous round, these were primarily located in Kharkivska, Sumska, and Donetsk Oblasts. Demining efforts were active in 72 per cent of assessed locations where the presence of mines or UXOs was reported (92 locations).

METHODOLOGY

To provide granular and actionable data on the conditions and sustainability of returns in Ukraine, the Conditions of Return Assessment (CoRA) employs a multisectoral location-level assessment (MSLA) methodology conducted with local authority key informants (KIs) at the settlement or city-raion level.⁵ Each round of the assessment is 45 days in duration, reported quarterly. Round 8 covered the period from 15 April to 31 May 2024.

Between rounds, CoRA has continuously expanded in coverage, building upon a systematic evidence base updated on a 45-day basis on where returns have occurred, and are yet to occur across the country. As displacement has become protracted in Ukraine, the increased coverage and movement from a bi-monthly assessment to quarterly better aligns with humanitarian and recovery partner needs, centring longer-term solutions to displacement.

To capture the diversity of conditions that can be present within a hromada, a purposive sample of locations was selected based on criteria such as the size of the displaced and non-displaced population, and the presence of key infrastructure. In the case of cities, a KI is identified for each city-raion. Once a hromada is assessed, it is included for re-assessment in every subsequent round, to understand how return mobility and conditions change over time.






Population figures at the settlement level are cross-checked and triangulated with figures collected through IOM's Mobility and Needs Assessment (MaNA) to ensure harmonization and accuracy of population numbers across IOM assessments⁶. Data is collected at the location level and subsequently aggregated by hromada. All population figures at hromada level, as well as rates of return, presented in CoRA are sourced from Round 9 of MaNA (June 2024). The reason for this substitution is the more extensive representativeness of MaNA population figures, which cover the entire hromadas and not only the subset of locations that is assessed for CoRA. Population figures at the national level are derived from Round 16 of IOM's General Population Survey (April 2024). Hromada-level pre-war population figures are sourced from the Ukrainian State Statistics Service (SSSU).

The criteria used to assess conditions of return are informed by the International Recommendations on IDP Statistics (IRIS) indicator framework and by the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions, and adapted to create a list of critical or minimum conditions required for return to be a durable solution to displacement. The indicators selected are divided into five thematic areas, or "drivers" of severity (Table 1).

SCORING SEVERITY

Each sectoral indicator is assigned a "severity score", that is, the relative reported absence of critical physical and social living conditions that are conducive to sustainable reintegration. For example, the assessment asks: "Which of the following best describes normal public life in the location now?"

Table 1: List of selected indicators on structural and social conditions

DRIVERS	INDICATORS
Livelihoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recovery of agriculture (where relevant) Recovery of large enterprises and industry (where relevant) Recovery of the public sector Recovery of small businesses, shops and markets Availability of employment Reduction in the quality or quantity of basic items and food used in household
Utilities and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to regular government services Access to criminal, legal and justice institutions Access to education Access to healthcare services Disruptions to electricity supply Disruptions to household water supply
Residential destruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential damage or destruction Rehabilitation and repair of residential damage or destruction
Safety and security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presence of unexploded ordnance (UXO) or mines Active demining initiatives (where relevant) Concerns regarding of military and military activities Occurrence of missile strikes, shelling or other long-range attacks
Public life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intra-communal tensions related to displacement or social assistance Quality of daily public life

- Streets are busy with residents carrying out daily activities and it feels calm (**low severity**)
- Streets are busy with residents carrying out daily activities, but it feels tense (**medium severity**)
- Residents leave their homes only when they have to and streets are sparsely populated (**high severity**)

For each assessed location, the severity score for each indicator is aggregated as a simple average to provide a severity score for each driver. For each hromada, the severity scores for all assessed locations are aggregated, and weighted by the pre-war population of each location.

⁵ With the exception of Dnipropetrovska Oblast, where interviews were conducted with KIs who were not part of local government, so as to provide insights into a key area of return despite challenges in gaining access to regional authorities

⁶ KIs are asked to provide an estimate of the share of people who had been displaced from a location and have since returned in the form of a range (e.g., 40-60%). The maximum number of returnees is then estimated by multiplying the high end of the return rate range provided by the estimated number of individuals displaced from the same location.

IOM UKRAINE

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