



# European Union

## Joint Humanitarian - Development Framework for Ukraine



### Political context

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Ukraine, its political, economic and social stability and development are crucial for the European Union. Ukraine and the EU have developed since Ukraine's independence a solid partnership, based on protection and promotion of common fundamental values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, including its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (AA/DCFTA), is one of the most ambitious Association Agreements since it aims at deepening the political association and economic integration of Ukraine with the EU across the board.

Since 2014, Ukraine has undertaken intense and unprecedented reforms across a number of sectors of the economy and society, guided by the AA/DCFTA. At the same time, the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and the destabilisation in the east of the country resulting in the current conflict cause significant human suffering while constituting a weight on Ukraine's economy and a challenge to Ukraine's reform process. Despite continued diplomatic efforts in the Minsk and Normandy formats, the conflict continues leaving behind a trail of destruction and human suffering. The European Union stands by Ukraine and its people, and is committed to support Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence.



## Rationale of the Joint Humanitarian Development Framework

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Since the outbreak of conflict in eastern Ukraine, the EU has devoted considerable resources to helping meet primary humanitarian needs, promoting stabilisation and contributing to a foundation for future recovery and development.

The EU is committed to an integrated and comprehensive approach to the challenges faced in the east of Ukraine. It attaches great importance to the links between humanitarian assistance, early recovery, and more medium and long-term reform leading to better social cohesion and economic development. The humanitarian-development nexus fosters increased coordination between the different EU actors, leading to joint approaches, coordinated advocacy and collaborative implementation, monitoring and progress tracking, prevention, and “building back better”. In the context of eastern Ukraine the aim is to achieve a smooth transition and full integration – where possible – between emergency humanitarian assistance towards early and longer term recovery and peacebuilding efforts in the region. Humanitarian aid will continue to be provided to the most vulnerable people affected by the conflict, notably in non-government controlled areas (NGCA) and along both sides of the contact line. Assistance in the government controlled areas (GCA) will aim to ensure that the relevant government authorities and local bodies, as well as civil society in the eastern regions have the capacity to meet the needs of all citizens, notably in view of the conflict, and are well-positioned to participate fully in reform processes taking place throughout Ukraine.

The underlying rationale for EU intervention in the east has three dimensions. First, in the short term, the EU is focused on ensuring the functionality and inclusiveness of state institutions, protecting basic services and living standards, and ensuring respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and human rights. This is an important prerequisite for creating an environment for citizens in the region, where they feel that they have a good quality of life and where youth feels that it has a future. Second, through the Association Agreement with the EU, Ukraine is engaged in an unprecedented reform process to adhere to European standards in democracy, transparent governance, social matters and sustainable economic development. The EU's broad range of assistance in the east is to help ensuring that the GCA of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts participate and fully share in the benefits from these nationwide reforms. Third, the EU seeks to promote social cohesion and the maintaining of people to people contacts within and between GCA and NGCA. This is expected to positively impact reconciliation and public perceptions that are fundamental to the reintegration of conflict affected areas temporarily not under government control and the ultimate territorial integrity of Ukraine.

The approach is set out in the present Joint Humanitarian Development Framework (JHDF) 2017-2020 for Ukraine, as agreed following the joint Director-level ECHO<sup>1</sup>, EEAS<sup>2</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup> Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations. ECHO ensures rapid and effective delivery of EU relief assistance through its two main instruments: humanitarian aid and civil protection.

NEAR<sup>3</sup>-SGUA<sup>4</sup> mission to government-controlled conflict-affected areas of Ukraine in March 2017. The JHDF builds on the work of the Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment<sup>5</sup> and draws on a variety of other reports and analyses. It promotes synergies between EU services (NEAR-SGUA, EEAS, FPI<sup>6</sup> and ECHO) to deliver a more resilient response to the impact the conflict in eastern Ukraine has had on the population.

Consultations took place in Kyiv in autumn 2017 to define the content of the JHDF and initiate its drafting. Opportunities for closer cooperation were identified and a number of joint missions were agreed between concerned EU services to provide in-depth analysis and inform future programme design. This includes the critical issue of access to water, concerns around damage to the environment and groundwater supplies in the region.

The JHDF is a living document, developed in view of notably the annual ECHO Humanitarian Implementation Plan for Ukraine, the multiannual bilateral cooperation strategy for Ukraine (European Neighbourhood Instrument Single Support Framework 2018-2020), the EU Gender Action Plan 2016-2020 (GAP II) and the EU support programme for the east of Ukraine (part of the Special Measure II 2017). It will be regularly updated based also on consultations with government and partners, while taking into account the EU-Ukraine, regional and national development plans and policy. As such, it contributes to a more comprehensive policy dialogue with the government and major donors, and helps to develop a common vision towards promoting peace, recovery, stability, and socioeconomic development in the east of Ukraine. It should help avoid duplication and leverage collective efforts for greater development impact.



## Conflict impact

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The conflict has had a significant and detrimental impact on human welfare and on social and economic conditions in eastern Ukraine.

First, it has divided the Donbas area along a 500 km-long 'line of contact'. One-third, mostly the urban and industrial part of the Donbas is controlled by Russian supported separatists. The remaining two-thirds, mostly rural hinterland, remain under Ukrainian government control. Out of 6.6 million people living in the Donbas, 4.4 million have been affected directly by the conflict, of which 3.4 million are in need of humanitarian assistance.

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<sup>2</sup> European External Action Service. The EEAS is the European Union's diplomatic service. It helps the EU's foreign affairs chief carry out the Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy.

<sup>3</sup> Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations. The mission of the DG NEAR is to take forward the EU's neighbourhood and enlargement policies, as well as coordinating relations with EEA-EFTA countries insofar as Commission policies are concerned.

<sup>4</sup> Support Group for Ukraine. SGUA's role is to support Ukraine in the implementation of the Association Agreement with the EU (including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area), and of the Association Agenda which stems from it.

<sup>5</sup> The Eastern Ukraine Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment was carried out jointly by the European Union, the United Nations, and the World Bank Group, and with the leadership and participation of the Government of Ukraine (GoU) in 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Service for Foreign Policy Instruments. Working alongside the EEAS, FPI is managing the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace which enables the EU to respond to crises in an effective and timely manner.

According to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, by 15 August 2017, a total of 10,225 people had been killed, including 2,505 civilians, and 24,541 injured; the UN estimates injuries to be under-reported. A total of 1,5 million people are displaced internally (IDPs) – the majority of them being women and children – and an estimated 1,1 million have fled abroad. A complete halt of ceasefire violations has not yet been achieved. Heavy weapons remain within the conflict zone and their usage is reported on a daily basis resulting in destruction of critical civilian infrastructure and frequent civilian and military casualties. Damage to residential buildings continues to present a major challenge and is hindering the population return process even in areas outside ongoing conflict actions.

A renewed flare-up of the conflict can occur quickly and unpredictably due to the continued close proximity of the warring sides and absence of heavy weapons withdrawal. The situation at the crossing points is precarious for the approximately 800,000 people who traverse the line of contact every month. They face long waiting hours in an environment exposed to fighting, mine risk, lack of health and sanitation facilities, risk of sexual violence and harassment as well as hot temperatures during summer and equally freezing temperatures in winter.

Prior to the conflict, the Donbas region had already faced significant long-term challenges related to poverty, demography, and its economic structure.

Many of the country's key heavy industries that are located in the Donbas (in 2012, the eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk accounted for nearly 16 per cent of national GDP) have experienced long-standing decline. The conflict and related trade disputes have further paralysed **economic activity** in Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland, aggravating the overall decline of the socio-economic situation. The conflict also continues to disrupt agricultural value chains and traditional markets, creating food insecurity. Unemployment, limited access to finance, high cost of doing business in general and skills mismatch stifle socio-economic development and diversification. The situation has been compounded by the significant loss of services, shelter, and livelihoods associated with the conflict. Vulnerability is particularly acute for the forcibly displaced and the 800,000 people living along both sides of the contact line.

The conflict has also significantly deteriorated levels of **social cohesion, trust, and cooperation** throughout the country, which were already affected by divergent and politically charged narratives about history, language and patriotism. As a region, the Donbas is more sceptical of Ukraine's transformation and people are also the most unaware and sceptical of the reform process.

**Infrastructure** has been heavily affected. Transport routes have been severed in some cases leading to the need to travel over poorly maintained secondary and tertiary roads, increasing isolation and raising business costs. The conflict cuts through highly integrated water and electricity supply networks, leaving an utmost complex interdependency and exposing large numbers of the population to high risks of being cut off from vital supplies.

People living in areas along the contact line and in NGCA lack access to **health services**. Many facilities have been destroyed or damaged while medical and diagnostic equipment is often outdated or not available. The absence of ambulance services and of an efficient referral system is an additional challenge.

Many **IDPs** continue to face bureaucratic impediments and discrimination due to various legislative acts adopted since the beginning of the conflict. The suspension of social assistance and pension payments to 500.000 – 600.000 IDPs in February 2016, pending verification of place of residence, continues to pose major problems for many IDPs.

Opening a perspective for policy advancements, after three years of the displacement crisis, the long awaited Government strategy on IDPs was finally released in December 2017. Its implementation will now be key.

Despite some improvements, **restrictions of movement** across the contact line continue to cause problems, especially for persons who lack the required Ukrainian documents. People living in NGCA have no access to pensions or social payments despite social protection being a constitutional right and pensions being an acquired right of citizens.

While the Donbas is concerned by similar problems with regard to **women's rights** as the rest of Ukraine (violence, including domestic violence; lack of representation and participation in decision-making; economic and labour market related discrimination), the conflict has a disproportionate effect on women and girls, also for putting them at higher risk of sexual and gender based violence, human trafficking, and negative coping strategies like transactional sex.

Still, with continuing access to government resources and international assistance the government-controlled sides of both oblasts are gradually stabilizing, allowing for governance structures to consolidate providing a basis for socio-economic recovery, including for the population displaced from non-government controlled areas. Furthermore, the government has established a Ministry for Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons in April 2016, which has been welcomed by the international community. The Ministry addresses all issues related to the conflict region including internal displacement, conflict management and humanitarian assistance. In early 2017, Ukraine adopted an Action Plan for NGCA. It contains some promising practical steps towards the strengthening of economic, social, informational, and cultural ties with the people cut off by the hostilities. The economic aspects of the Action Plan, one of the major pillars, have however been substantially curtailed by the March 2017 decision of the National Security and Defence Council to "temporarily suspend cargo transfers to and from NGCA" in response to the de-facto expropriation of Ukrainian companies located in NGCA by the Russian backed separatists.



## EU priority sectors

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To date, EU support in the east has mainly been provided through two distinct, but complementary delivery channels. The first channel has been through **DG ECHO** and has addressed short term **humanitarian needs** of the most vulnerable conflict-affected population, especially in proximity to the contact line and in NGCA. Priority sectors of intervention are food assistance, water and healthcare (including psycho-social activities), essential household items, livelihood, protection (including humanitarian demining action and promotion and respect of IHL), education in emergencies, repairs of critical infrastructure and housing and winterization activities.

The second delivery channel has been the EU's crisis response mechanism - the **Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)**. The **stabilisation and early recovery** support provided by the IcSP laid the ground for medium and long term assistance. The IcSP has been supporting actions to improve human security and observance of human rights, humanitarian de-mining, income generation, community empowerment and social cohesion activities, as well as actions strengthening local governance systems through decentralisation.

Additional funding was also made available at short notice under ongoing bilateral programmes funded under the **European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI)**. Activities primarily supported investments in residential accommodation for the displaced population and public infrastructure. The **European Investment Bank** launched its **Early Recovery Programme** which aims to finance investments for social infrastructure to re-enforce resilience and public services in over 1,000 locations in eastern Ukraine.

Combined, these programmes have been contributing to wider efforts to:

- alleviate human suffering and safeguard the integrity, rights, and dignity of conflict-affected populations, including through psychosocial support;
- ensure continuity of access to basic life-essential services;
- maintain economic life and minimum living standards;
- strengthen local government capacity and build citizen-state trust;
- support humanitarian mine action, including mine risk education, marking and demining;
- repair and maintain residential buildings and critical social infrastructure affected by the conflict;
- support actions to improve security and monitor rights for all conflict affected people, including support to the registration of Internally Displaced Persons;
- increase societal resilience<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Resilience is understood to mean the ability of an individual, a household, a community, a country or a region to prepare for, to withstand, to adapt, and to quickly recover from stresses and shocks without compromising long-term

While the existing EU instruments will continue to focus on areas where they bring specific added value, an increased role of the European Neighbourhood Instrument into assistance for the conflict affected regions will necessarily bring about a re-alignment.

Going forward, the following sectors offer the greatest potential for comprehensive joint EU action: *Human security including housing and rehabilitation of critical infrastructure, economic development and support to livelihoods including the development of an integrated social protection model, and health.*

All interventions in the region will be limited to GCA with the exception of humanitarian assistance which is also provided in NGCA.

#### **Human security including housing and rehabilitation of critical infrastructure:**

The EU will continue to support activities which strengthen local government capacity to fulfil its functions through a range of interventions including on housing policy and capacities to tackle the rehabilitation of critical infrastructure, with an important role foreseen for International and European Financial Institutions (IFIs). Coupled with improvements in local governance, notably via enabling full roll-out of decentralisation, the objective is to strengthen the good functioning of local government structures and to bring them closer to the people they serve. Thus, the positive presence of the Ukrainian state and its care for Ukrainian citizens, as well as EU response to the crisis in the region should become effective and visible. Activities will furthermore focus on improvement of capacity to provide social services, enhanced and collaborative community security, support for social cohesion and community empowerment to build citizen-state trust. At the same time, the EU will continue to ensure the broader security environment in the region through its support for the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission and the OHCHR Human Rights Monitoring Mission. Special attention will be paid to the provision of basic services at crossing points which should facilitate the free movement of people and goods between GCA and NGCA.

At the national level, the EU will work with relevant government services along the same priority axes, to support the development of a national policy for conflict management and protection of civilians, a housing and compensation policy for conflict affected people – including IDPs – as well as better central-local coordination efforts. At all levels, EU support will mainstream gender with regard to both governance support (e.g. gender-responsive budgeting and policy making, strengthening of women's political and administrative participation) and assistance aimed at social cohesion (e.g. strengthening women's voices in civic groups, protection against violence) as well as protection needs for particularly vulnerable groups like the elderly, single-headed households, minorities. As an essential first step at the local level, it will be important for the government to accurately

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development prospects. Council conclusions on EU approach to resilience, 3241st Foreign Affairs Council meeting, Brussels, 28 May 2013.

record damage to civilian property with a view to the establishment of compensation claims in the first instance, while not underestimating the contribution the effective implementation of such policies can make towards reconciliation over the longer term. An accurate and timely reporting of damage to residential property is a critical first step to ensuring the eventual compensation of households whose primary asset has been damaged or destroyed. Joint action will therefore be focused on supporting the government and local authorities to develop an efficient compensation and housing policy learning from the experience of other countries which have created similar mechanisms. Through its humanitarian partners, DG ECHO will continue to address the most critical shelter needs for the most vulnerable citizens, and to ensure adequate winterisation particularly along the line of contact and in NGCA. In terms of confidence-building, reconciliation support and social cohesion, EU services will work jointly to identify entry points for such processes, bringing their specific mandates to bear on the issue. Fruitful areas for collaboration include raising central and local authorities' capacities for the maintenance of water networks and other essential utilities, including with the help of IFIs, and economic development. Further, the EU fully recognises the important role demining plays in promoting human security and its importance for any early recovery activity.

#### **Economic development and support to livelihoods**

A comprehensive programme of support which seeks to address bottlenecks on both the supply and demand sides is required to bring about conditions for economic regeneration of the region. The EU will seek to stimulate the development and expansion of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), with particular attention to women's entrepreneurship and economic participation and empowerment, through enabling access to finance and strengthening business advisory and support networks. Activities will also aim to offset the impact of internal displacement on the socioeconomic situation. At the same time, the EU will target interventions in the education sector which work to better align labour market supply with business skill demands in the vocational education and training (VET) sector. In the higher education sector, the EU will provide assistance to displaced universities and colleges, seeking to support the implementation of education policies which aim at regional consolidation, enable enhanced higher education opportunities in GCA for students from NGCA, and bring improvements to educational standards.

Closer to the contact line, actions will be tailored to support income-generating activities, small-scale and individual business opportunities, depending on what the situation permits. The objective will be to support short term job creation programmes, including in order to address issues of food insecurity. Assistance – in cash and in kind – aimed at covering basic needs (including humanitarian food assistance) will continue to be provided by DG ECHO along the contact line and in NGCA.

## Health

Health systems are a fundamental component of the basic services required by citizens. The EU, through both DG ECHO and the IcSP, has provided support to primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare services in the east of Ukraine, small repair and renovation of critical healthcare infrastructure and development of psychosocial support services.

Over the next three years, the EU will endeavour to develop a common programmatic response in the health sector, in close cooperation with the Ukrainian authorities. This will take into account the need to incentivise medical students and young graduates to move to and work in facilities in the east.

The longer term objective is to help the government to implement the health chapter of the Association Agreement which will strengthen the overall health system and contribute to the improvement and the quality of prevention and care nationwide and, connected to this, ensure that the healthcare reform initiated at central government level fully encompasses eastern conflict-affected GCA. This will entail increased attention to strengthening the capacity of both government structures and healthcare providers, including mobile health teams, to provide quality healthcare services within the framework of the national healthcare reform. This support for systemic and institutional reform will go hand-in-hand with continued DG ECHO support to selected healthcare providers charged with providing targeted care to the most vulnerable populations along the line of contact and in NGCA. Particular attention will also be paid to the health status of youth who is crucially important to the future development of the region as well as to effective outreach to particularly vulnerable groups, ensuring their health service coverage (e.g. elderly, remote communities, IDPs). Psychosocial support systems linking schools and state care providers will be a priority. Integrated health services and psychosocial support will also be targeted towards any conflict-affected population, with particular attention to survivors of sexual and gender based violence, including domestic violence.



## **Implementation**

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The JHDF informs the annual plans of action for Ukraine as prepared by DG ECHO, DG NEAR and the FPI as also other EU initiatives for assistance in response to the impact of the conflict in east Ukraine, in line with the ENI Single Support Framework 2018-2020. The approach will be subject to annual review taking into consideration the evolution of the conflict, the nation-wide reform processes and the impact and experiences from implementation of assistance projects. It is critical that the JHDF remains closely aligned with the government priorities and the work of other donor partners. Special attention will be given to ensure full coordination and where possible integration with actions supported by EU Member States.

A number of joint missions have been scheduled to provide in-depth analysis and inform future programme design. This includes the critical issue of access to water, concerns around

damage to the environment and groundwater supplies in the region and support to the health system reform.

DG ECHO's Integrated Analysis Framework for 2017-18 identified high vulnerability of the population affected by the crisis and high humanitarian needs in Ukraine. The situation remains volatile and the humanitarian crisis is not expected to be over in the near future. Moreover, the humanitarian consequences of the conflict in eastern Ukraine have largely disappeared from international radars. DG ECHO has included Ukraine in its list of "forgotten crises"<sup>8</sup>.

While several ECHO-supported activities from the 2017 funding cycle will continue in 2018, ECHO's Humanitarian Implementation Plan 2018 for Ukraine and the Eastern Neighbourhood aims at continuing support focused on addressing the most critical humanitarian needs in key sectors, with a specific focus on humanitarian food assistance, health and shelter/non-food items for the most vulnerable conflict-affected people living in NGCA and in the areas along both sides of the contact line. DG ECHO will strongly support humanitarian advocacy activities which will raise the profile of the Ukraine humanitarian crisis, promote humanitarian access, safeguarding of IHL, and seeking complementarities between humanitarian and development programming.

A new multi-annual EUR 50 million programme supporting transition and development action in GCA of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts funded under the European Neighbourhood Instrument was signed in December 2017. Building on interventions funded under the other instruments, the action aims to:

- enhance local capacity for gender-responsive decentralisation and administrative reforms to improve governance, local development and the delivery of services;
- stimulate employment and economic growth by providing assistance to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) development through demand-driven business development services and professional skills training;
- enhance social cohesion and reconciliation through promotion of civic initiatives;
- support sector reforms and structural adjustments in health, education and critical public infrastructure to mitigate direct impacts of the conflict.

Support for the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission is foreseen to be shifted from the IcSP to the ENI.

Under the IcSP a new programme addressing youth resilience and civic engagement was adopted in November 2017, along with a programme which will support the relevant Ukrainian authorities in enhancing their efforts to mitigate and address civilian harm arising from the conflict. In the medium term, support for the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission will continue. New interventions may focus on peacebuilding and reconciliation in eastern Ukraine.

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<sup>8</sup> "Forgotten Crisis Assessment Sep 2017", European Commission, DG ECHO, 2017: [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/annex\\_4\\_fca\\_sep2017.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/annex_4_fca_sep2017.pdf) (accessed on 16 January 2018).