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LIVES

# Ukraine Food Security Report: Summary

Since the start of the war in Ukraine on 24 February 2022, the humanitarian situation has continued to deteriorate. The war has pushed millions of people from their homes, creating the fastest-growing displacement crisis since the Second World War.

Critical humanitarian needs are apparent. Nearly 13.2 million people have been displaced internally or across borders since the beginning of the war. Over 6.2 million people – mostly women and children – fled Ukraine until 16 May, seeking refuge in Poland, Romania, Moldova, and other neighbouring countries. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) estimates another eight million people are Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) within Ukraine as of 16 May.

As the conflict continues, access to food and healthcare has been disrupted, and livelihoods, markets, and supply chains have been affected. These factors are putting pressure on families to meet their immediate food needs.

In March and April 2022, the World Food Programme (WFP) interviewed over 4,700 Ukrainians to understand more about their levels of food insecurity and how the war has impacted their lives. This report presents the results of this assessment, outlining the impacts of the war on Ukrainian families, incomes, and markets.

May 2022



## Key findings



At the national level, **one-third of households were found to be food insecure.**



**Oblasts in the eastern and southern parts of the country** were found to have the **highest estimated levels of food insecurity**, with one in every two households being food insecure.



Displaced households or family members who have been separated from each other were more likely to be food insecure, with around one in every two such households food insecure.



Households predominantly rely on cash purchases to access food; however, **over a third of all respondents reported having no income or depending on assistance** as their main source of income.



Across the country, nearly six out of ten respondents reported having experienced either a large income reduction or having no income at all as compared to before the war. As a result, **one in four people needed to borrow money to meet their essential needs.**



**Access to healthcare and medicine, safety and fuel, and transportation** were the most frequently mentioned needs that respondents could not meet.



**42 percent** of respondents reported that they had **felt worried about not having enough food to eat** in the week before the survey.



The war is also impacting markets, especially in the eastern and northern parts of the country, as **respondents reported product scarcity and market closures.** However, some evidence suggests that markets are also adapting to the changing situation.

Food insecurity is on the rise in Ukraine with about one in three households found to be food insecure nationally. Certain pockets of the population such as those who have been internally displaced (IDPs) or separated from their families were found to be more vulnerable. For instance, one in every two separated households is food insecure, compared to around one in every four non-separated households. Oblasts in the eastern and southern parts of the country are particularly affected, with Luhanska standing out as the worst-off oblast in terms of food insecurity and unmet basic needs.

Continuing conflict, disrupted supply chains and displacement tighten the pressure on households as many are forced to turn to a range of strategies to cope with rising food insecurity. Capturing such behaviours is important, especially in emergency settings, as it shows how households deal with sudden food shortfalls and meet their short-term food needs. With the majority relying on cash to access food, losing income sources or exhausting cash reserves can force more to rely on credit purchases and humanitarian assistance. About one in four respondents are already having to borrow money to meet their needs. At the same time, more

than a third are reducing their portion sizes to stretch out available food or to allow their children to eat.

Although markets have been adapting to the changing landscape of conflict, access challenges, supply disruptions and product shortages also put food security at risk with grains, bread and vegetables among many staples often reported to be scarce.

Beyond food, meeting other essential needs such as health/medicine, safety and transportation/fuel have been challenging, with similar pockets of the population or areas of the country particularly vulnerable. Displaced households for instance, were more likely to report the need for safety, health/medicine, transport and food. At the same time, almost half of the surveyed population in the eastern-most oblast of Luhanska reported safety as one of their top unmet needs.

The consequences of the war continue to ripple across the nation. Considering the highly fluid and rapidly developing context in Ukraine, the food security situation is likely to continue to evolve over time. Continuous monitoring will be carried out to capture such changes as the situation unfolds.



## World Food Programme

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