# Ukraine

## ETC Situation Report #15
**Reporting period:** 16/09/2022 to 30/09/2022

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) was activated in Ukraine on 3 March 2022 following the escalation of armed conflict between Ukraine and the Russian Federation. ETC SitReps are distributed every two weeks.

## Highlights

- The ETC is prepositioning equipment for the establishment of a radio security communications network for humanitarians in Ukraine while continuing to engage with the Ukrainian State Centre of Radio Frequencies (UCRF) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the request for a VHF license.

- The ETC is providing secure internet connectivity and ICT helpdesk services to 266 registered users from 12 humanitarian organizations in Dnipro and Lviv.

- Since the launch of the ETC Chatbot, a total of 12,723 unique users in Ukraine have accessed information relating to humanitarian assistance.



The ETC plans for the location of the pilot Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) call centre. Photo: ETC/Amirullah Syarif

## Overview

The estimated toll of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine surpassed 14,844 civilian casualties, including 5,996 deaths as of 26 September, according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Between 1 – 25 September, approximately 897 civilian causalities were reported. The OHCHR has stated that actual numbers may be significantly higher. The most intense hostilities continue to take place in Donetska, Luhanska, and Kharkiv oblasts.

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) reports that 6.98 million people are internally displaced in Ukraine due to the conflict as of 19 September, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) puts the total number of Ukrainian refugees recorded across Europe at 7.5 million as of 27 September.

### Impact on telecommunications

Telecommunications infrastructure remains operational throughout most of Ukraine, however, there are reports of hacking and jamming of telecommunications channels in the

country and localized outages in areas of heavy fighting. Although 3G and 4G mobile network coverage continues to be operational along Ukraine's borders, there have been reports of localized saturation of the network in some areas experiencing an influx of refugees.

There have also been reports of reduced internet speeds as a result of a high volume of cyber-attacks on Internet Service Providers (ISPs). Additionally, phishing attacks targeting humanitarian workers have been reported.

# Activities

### Coordination

The ETC is present in four locations in Ukraine – Dnipro, Kyiv, Lviv, and Odesa. The ETC Coordinator, Information Management Officer (IMO), and a telecommunications specialist are based in Kyiv. The ETC Ukraine team also comprises four IT and telecommunications specialists, two based in Lviv, one in Dnipro, and another in Odesa.

### Security communications

The ETC continues to engage with the Ukrainian State Centre of Radio Frequencies (UCRF) regarding the request for a VHF license to establish a radio security communications network for humanitarians in Ukraine.

In the meantime, the ETC installed the indoor component of a VHF repeater in Odesa to prepare for the roll-out of a radio network once the VHF frequency license is granted.

The ETC is prepositioning telecommunications equipment for the set-up of UNDSS-managed Security Operations Centres (SOCs) in Ukraine. The latest proposal, which was submitted to the Security Management Team (SMT) for endorsement on 15 September, plans to establish a main SOC in Mukachevo, a backup SOC in Lviv, and three remote sites in Kyiv, Dnipro, and Odesa.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the provision of ETC funding to support staffing requirements for the UNDSS-managed SOCs has been drafted and is awaiting signature and approvals from WFP management and UNDP.

In September, the ETC delivered security communications training to 22 WFP staff members in Kyiv, bringing the total number of inter-agency staff trained by the ETC in Ukraine to 117.

### Data connectivity

As of 30 September, the ETC is providing secure internet connectivity services to 266 registered users from 12 humanitarian organizations in Dnipro and Lviv. The team is continuing to follow up with a local Internet Service Provider (ISP) to activate the link to expand the ETC secure network to the interagency humanitarian workspace in Lviv.

The ETC is finalising the testing of a Meeting Room Booking System (MRBS) for use in the three ETC connectivity sites.

ETC partner Cisco is providing weekly network cyber security reports through Cisco to monitor threats to the ETC data connectivity network in Ukraine.

The ETC is prepositioning VSAT satellite terminal equipment in Odesa in preparation for a potential deployment to provide data connectivity services in newly new accessible areas in south-eastern Ukraine.

### Services for Communities

The ETC conducted a needs assessment in Rivnenska and Ivano-Frankivska oblasts in western Ukraine from 18 to 21 September to identify the pilot location for the first ETC Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) call centre, and to secure buy-in from local partners and authorities.

Since the launch of the ETC Chatbot, vBeztpesi (вБезпеці in Ukrainian, which translates to "safe spaces"), a total of 12,723 unique users in Ukraine have accessed information relating to humanitarian assistance.

In September, users of the ETC Chatbot most frequently used the service to access information on humanitarian aid (70%), hotlines and referral methods (12%), other useful information (11%), and human rights (7%). When seeking information on humanitarian aid, users most frequently consulted categories related to general cash assistance and to WFP assistance, accessing information on how to register for assistance and the eligibility criteria.

The Global ETC is working with CLEAR Global on Chatbot content translation (Ukrainian – English / English – Ukrainian), reviewing existing content to maximize readability, and reviewing overall content to ensure logical flow.

# Dashboard

See the ETC Dashboard for an overview of service locations.

# Funding

The ETC in Ukraine is 97 percent funded out of the required US$3.72 million. So far, 38 percent of this funding has been committed or spent.

# Challenges

The risk of cyber attacks in Ukraine is considered high.

Security issues and access to some locations in eastern Ukraine is a major constraint in the ETC's ability to implement telecommunications solutions within Ukraine.

The process to acquire a VHF license in the country is lengthy.

# Meetings

The next Global ETC Partners Teleconference on the Ukraine response will take place on **27 October 2022 at 13:00 UTC**.

# Contacts

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Further information related to ETC operations can be found on the website:

**www.etcluster.org/emergency/ukraine-conflict**

For more information or to be added or deleted from the mailing list please contact:

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