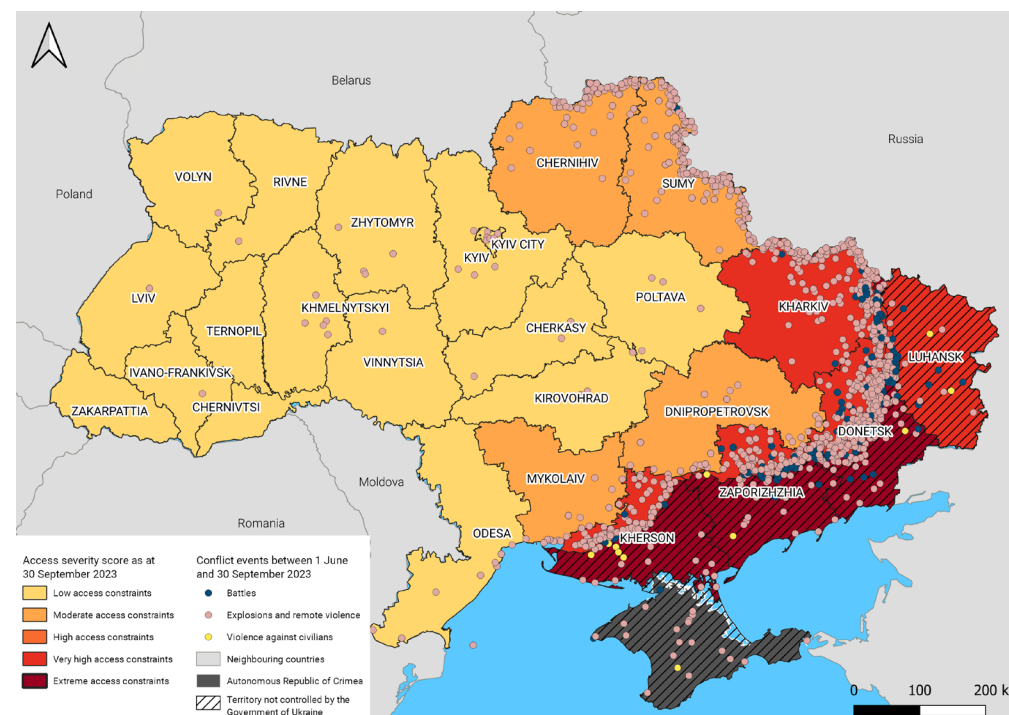# UKRAINE
Quarterly humanitarian access update

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

- Attacks on humanitarian facilities, responders, and distribution points increased during June–September 2023. Most incidents occurred on Dnipro River's right bank in Kherson oblast, but the attacks affected all other frontline oblasts, and locations away from the frontlines such as Chernihiv and Lviv cities.

- Intensified conflict in Ukraine's south has increased access constraints, including checkpoints, permit requirements, and a very fluid access situation that changes day to day. Direct communication with oblast and hromada authorities allows humanitarians to receive the most up-to-date information on access to specific localities.

- The Ukrainian Government has called for the mandatory evacuation of minors in Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts, as well as for children in institutions within 50km of the Russian border and 100km of territories under Russian control.

- Odesa oblast, especially its port and grain infrastructure, has come under increased attack since Russia refused to renew the Black Sea Grain Deal in July 2023.

- Ukrainian civilians are using Russia and Belarus border crossings in Chernihiv and Sumy oblasts to leave the territories under Russian control and re-enter Ukraine. This has been the case since the start of the conflict, but the closure and reopening of the crossings in late July to early August 2023 drew attention to this method.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Humanitarian access severity in Ukraine as at 30 September 2023

Source: ACAPS using data from ISW (accessed 23/10/2023) and ACLED (accessed 06/10/2023)
Note: see larger map on page 12

About this report

Aim: this report aims to compare access challenges across different Ukraine oblasts to inform humanitarian responders and support their decision-making. It is part of the ACAPS quarterly analysis of access constraints, with the last report published on 13 July 2023.

Methodology: this analysis is based on changes in the access severity model between 1 June and 30 September 2023, which ACAPS developed using data collected from secondary sources. Discussions with key access actors along with interviews with local and international responders further validated the initial findings.

A short description of the methodology is available in the last section of this report.

The complete methodology, access events dataset, and access severity model API are available on the ACAPS Ukraine Hub website.

Limitations: he analysis relies primarily on publicly available data, which is unlikely to be comprehensive because of the dynamic conflict situation.

ACCESS TRENDS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Significant increase in violence against humanitarian responders, facilities, and distribution points

Between June–September 2023, over 25 incidents of attacks against humanitarian facilities, responders, and distribution points were reported, a significant increase from the previous reporting period. These attacks injured at least 14 humanitarian responders, including volunteers, and killed three. During the March–May reporting period, the attacks resulted in ten injuries and one death (ACAPS 13/07/2023).

- **Chernihiv oblast:** the 19 August strike at the Chernihiv city centre killed seven people, including one humanitarian responder, and injured over 148 (Ukrainska Pravda 19/08/2023; Zmina 20/08/2023).

- **Donetsk oblast:** on 9 September, two volunteers died, and two others received injuries when shelling hit the car they were riding in Chasiv Yar (Ukrinform 10/09/2023). On 23 July, attacks heavily damaged the Palace of Culture in Chasiv Yar, destroying relief items and medical supplies and impeding humanitarian health service deliveries. The palace was serving as the city's humanitarian aid headquarters and a location for medical care (OCHA 23/07/2023; Ukrainska Pravda 23/07/2023).

- **Kharkiv oblast:** on 19 September, a Russian missile strike in Kupiansk killed two volunteers while they were returning from assisting civilian evacuation (Suspline 22/09/2023). On 12 July, a local NGO delivering construction materials came under fire in Odnorobivka, although no injuries were reported among responders (UN 13/07/2023). On 17 June, Russian shelling hit a car in Huriv Kozachok, killing its four passengers (including two volunteers) (Ukrainska Pravda 17/06/2023).

- **Kherson oblast:** this oblast still has the most incidents affecting humanitarians. At least 18 attacks on humanitarian responders and humanitarian distribution points were publicly reported between June–August. The attacks injured at least 14 local and international volunteers. Affected localities include Beryslav, Bilozerka, Kherson city, Novooleksandrivka, Sadove, and Zmiivka (Censor 09/06/2023 and 11/06/2023; Ukrainska Pravda 09/06/2023, 14/06/2023, 31/07/2023, 10/08/2023, 11/07/2023, 06/07/2023, and 14/09/2023; Kherson ODA Telegram 29/06/2023 and 22/06/2023; Ukrinform 20/07/2023, 03/08/2023, 11/08/2023, and 16/08/2023; Zmina 07/07/2023; Olexandr Prokudin Telegram 10/06/2023; ADRA 11/08/2023).

- **Luhansk oblast:** a volunteer was injured in Makiivka after his car came under fire from Russian forces (Ukrainska Pravda 05/07/2023).

- **Lviv oblast:** on 19 September, a Russian air strike hit the Caritas-Spes warehouse in Lviv, destroying over 300 tonnes of humanitarian aid (OCHA 19/09/2023).

- **Zaporizhzhia oblast:** on 25 August, shelling affected an interorganisational convoy heading to Stepnohirsk, damaging two of their trucks (OCHA 15/09/2023). On 9 July, a Russian-guided bomb hit Orikhiv city during humanitarian aid distribution, killing four people (Ukrainska Pravda 10/07/2023).

Permit requirements for humanitarians and fluid access situation

With the intensification of the conflict along the frontline, certain areas now require permits for humanitarian travel (OCHA 15/09/2023). Responders face a changing access situation with localities choosing to restrict access during period of increased shelling or airstrikes by Russian forces. Direct communication with oblast and hromada authorities gives humanitarian responders the latest information on accessible localities and indications on how the security situation may evolve (KII 27/10/2023).

Evacuations

Authorities called anew for the mandatory evacuation of children under 18 in several conflict and shelling hotspots. Minors were evacuated with their parents or legal guardians, in line with Ukrainian legislation.

- **Donetsk oblast:** at the start of June, Ukrainian authorities announced mandatory evacuations for 239 children in Ivanopillia, Kostiantynivka, Mykolaivka, Niu-York, Podilske, Severny, and Zalizne villages (Ukrainska Pravda 01/06/2023). On 5 August, the Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories announced a mandatory evacuation of minors from Malynivka, Nykonorivka, Orikhuvatka, Rai-Oleksandrivka, Torske, Tykhonivka, Vasiutynske, Yampil, and Zarichne because of conflict intensification. 89 of the 130 children expected to be evacuated remained in those areas as at the end of August (MRTOT Facebook 05/08/2023; The Kyiv Independent 28/08/2023).

- **Kharkiv oblast:** on 17 July, oblast authorities called for the mandatory evacuation of 194 minors from ten settlements of Vovchansk hromada (MRTOT 18/07/2023). 184 minors were evacuated by 29 July (Oleg Sinegubov Telegram 29/07/2023).

- **Kherson oblast:** on 13 September, the authorities called for the mandatory evacuation of minors and their families in 31 settlements of Berislav, Bilozerka, Darivka, Kherson, Mykolaiv, Novooleksandrivka, Novoraisk, and Tiahinka hromadas, which frequently came under Russian shelling (Ukrainska Pravda 14/09/2023). As at 5 October, over 300 children had been evacuated (Ukrainska Pravda 05/10/2023).

- **Sumy oblast:** on 10 July, oblast authorities called for the mandatory evacuation of residents within 5 kilometres of the Russian border. 500 children had been evacuated as at 22 September (Suspilne 22/09/2023).

- **Zaporizhzhia oblast:** on 28 August, authorities called for the evacuation of 54 children and 67 family members from one settlement in Vasylivka raion and four settlements in Polohy raion (Ukrinform 29/09/2023).

As at June 2023, regional authorities had been instructed to relocate **children in institutions** (children's homes, special educational institutions, shelters, and boarding houses) located within 50km of the Russian border and 100km of territories under Russian control (GoU 01/06/2023).

While no major population centre has been retaken in the Ukrainian counteroffensive, a small number of people live in some of the small heavily conflict-affected localities that have been retaken. For example, on 12 June, 11 people were evacuated from Blahodatne, Storozhove and Neskuchne settlements in Donetsk oblast, where approximately 75% of the settlements were destroyed (Ukrainska Pravda 12/06/2023). In Pyatikhatki (Zaporizhzhia oblast), up to 20 people remained upon the retaking of the village by Ukrainian forces (RFE/RL 20/06/2023).

Restrictions on civilian access to basic services in Russian-controlled territories

In territories under their control, Russian authorities continue to use basic service access to pressure the population into getting Russian passports by restricting access to Russian passport holders only. Between June–September 2023, examples of this pressure included withholding high school diplomas, preventing new school year registration, threats of deportation and private property confiscation, and access denial to healthcare and essential medication (National Resistance Center 13/08/2023, 31/07/2023, 14/07/2023, and 10/09/2023; Ukrainska Pravda 29/08/2023 and 06/09/2023; Censor 23/08/2023).

Between June–August 2023, reports indicated that Russian armed forces continued taking over and repurposing essential civilian facilities for military use in territories under their control, primarily in Luhansk oblast but also in Zaporizhzhia oblast. As a result, civilians have been deprived of access to certain services, especially healthcare:

- **Luhansk oblast:** in Mistky, a field hospital has been set up on a local school's premises (Ukrainska Pravda 13/06/2023). All Lysychansk hospitals have been converted to military use, with residents having to rely on pharmacies selling medicine at unaffordable prices (The Kyiv Independent 03/07/2023). The children's health centres in Makarov and Lyman have been turned into military hospitals (Ukrainska Pravda 04/07/2023). In Sievernyi, a school is being used for military purposes, cutting off access for community residents (Ukrainska Pravda 12/08/2023). Throughout the oblast, maternity hospitals are being used to treat wounded soldiers (National Resistance Center 07/07/2023).

- **Zaporizhzhia oblast:** a Melitopol sanatorium has been turned into a military base (Ukrainska Pravda 01/06/2023). The Rozivka Central District Hospital has been taken over to provide specialised medical care to wounded Russian forces (National Resistance Center 15/06/2023). A Tokmak kindergarten has been turned into a military hospital (Ukrinform 11/07/2023).

Impact of the conflict on civilian access to basic services

Throughout Ukraine, one in five people have problems with accessing basic medicine, largely because of unaffordability. In Russian-controlled frontline areas and territories, this figure increases to one-third of the population (Ukrinform 26/07/2023). 59% of settlements within 100km of the front line assessed by REACH in June–July reported medicine access as one of their main concerns (REACH 04/09/2023).

Anecdotal evidence suggests that some older people, people with chronic illnesses, and people with disabilities travel from Russian-controlled territories to Russia to receive medical treatment. These people make up the majority of recent arrivals to Russia from those territories, along with people displaced by the destruction of the Kakhovka dam, although precise figures are not available (The New Yorker 14/08/2023).

The school year started on 1 September, but only one-third of children in Ukraine have access to full in-person learning. Another third is learning via a mix of online and in-person classes, and the last third is learning fully online (Unicef 29/08/2023). As at 11 August, only 68% of educational institutions had shelters to protect children in case of shelling and air strikes, with Dnipro, Kharkiv, Kherson, Mykolaiv, and Odesa oblasts having the greatest need for shelters (GoU 11/08/2023). A State Service of Education Quality of Ukraine study found that the percentage of children not in preschool has increased from 16% in 2022 to 22% in 2023, mostly because of a lack of shelter in preschool facilities (SQE 13/07/2023). Between June–September 2023, ACAPS recorded 103 incidents of violence involving schools and education facilities; most were in Kherson oblast (34), followed by Donetsk (20), Kharkiv (11), Dnipropetrovsk (10), Zaporizhzhia (9), Sumy (8), Odesa (4), Luhansk (2), Kyiv (2), Kyiv city (1), Mykolaiv (1), and Lviv (1) (ACAPS accessed 06/10/2023).

Increased attacks on civilian infrastructure following Russia's refusal to renew the Black Sea Grain Deal in July 2023

Since the Black Sea Grain Deal expired, Russia has conducted multiple strikes on Odesa's and Izmail's seaport and agricultural facilities, as well as other civilian facilities. July recorded the highest statistics of air strikes, shelling incidents, and civilian infrastructure damage, particularly in Odesa and Izmail cities (ACLED accessed 06/10/2023; ACAPS accessed 06/10/2023). New reported damage decreased in August–September but remained significantly higher than in the months preceding July (ACAPS accessed 06/10/2023).

Post-Kakhovka dam destruction restoration efforts

By the end of June, people had started returning to the most flood-affected Ukrainian-controlled areas (OCHA 27/06/2023). Repairs have since been underway. For example, in Dnipropetrovsk oblast, the Nikopol water supply was restored by 90% as at the end of July, and a new water supply infrastructure was being constructed for Marhanets as at 22 July (Gorod 31/07/2023; Dnipropetrovsk ODA Telegram 22/07/2023). However, in Kherson city, constant shelling is hampering the repairs to the electric grid damaged during the floods. 6,500 households remained without electricity as at mid-September (Epravda 16/09/2023). The floods have further delayed Mykolaiv city's drinking water supply restoration. The city's tap water has not been potable since May 2022 (Ukrinform 23/08/2023).

The situation is likely to be more dire in Russian-controlled territories. For example, Hola Prystan was still flooded at the start of August, and only 1,000 of the 14,500 total population remained (Most 05/08/2023).

ACCESS TRENDS AT THE OBLAST LEVEL

Table 1 lists the humanitarian access severity scores for oblasts with the highest access constraints (all scores range from 0−5); please refer to the methodology for a scoring description.

Humanitarian access severity scores for oblasts with the highest access constraints

OBLAST	ACCESS OF PEOPLE IN NEED TO HUMANITARIAN AID	ACCESS OF HUMANITARIAN ORGANISATIONS TO PEOPLE IN NEED	PHYSICAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND SECURITY CONSTRAINTS	ACCESS SCORE
Donetsk	5.0	4.3	3.4	4.3
Kharkiv	4.9	4.8	2.8	4.1
Kherson	5.0	5.0	3.2	4.4
Luhansk	5.0	3.9	1.8	3.6
Zaporizhzhia	5.0	4.3	2.2	3.9

Table 2 lists the humanitarian access severity scores for oblasts with the highest access constraints without accounting for the territory's controlling authority (all scores range from 0−5); please refer to the methodology for a scoring description.
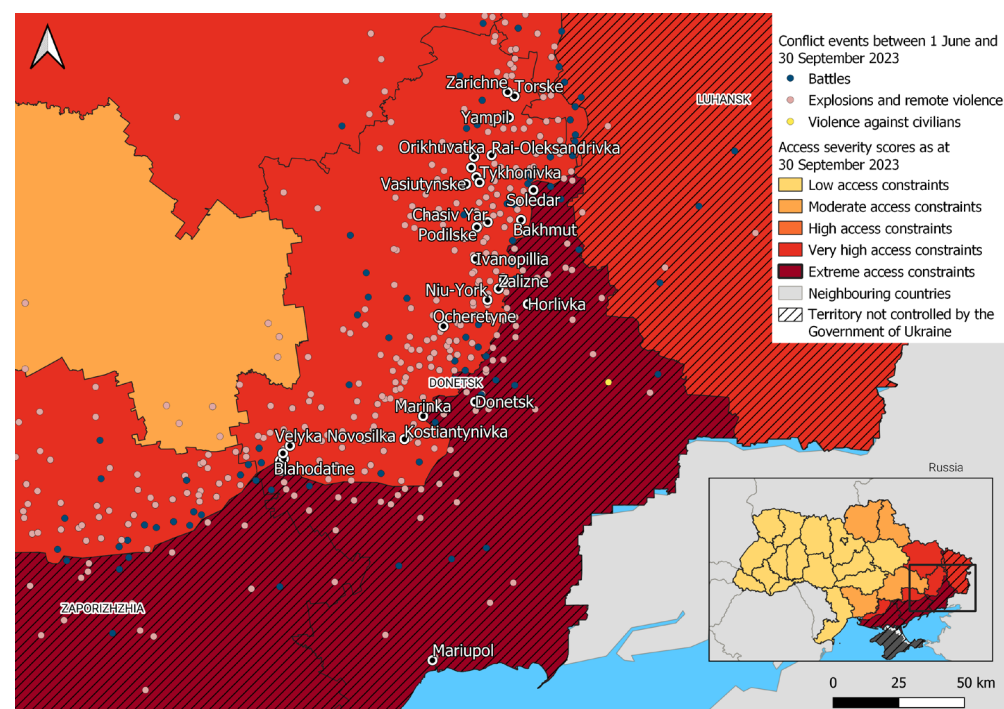
Humanitarian access severity scores for oblasts with the highest access constraints without accounting for the territory's controlling authority

OBLAST	ACCESS OF PEOPLE IN NEED TO HUMANITARIAN AID	ACCESS OF HUMANITARIAN ORGANISATIONS TO PEOPLE IN NEED	PHYSICAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND SECURITY CONSTRAINTS	ACCESS SCORE
Donetsk	3.5	4.4	3.4	3.8
Kharkiv	2.4	4.5	2.8	3.2
Kherson	3.5	5.0	3.2	3.9
Luhansk	3.5	3.9	1.8	3.1
Zaporizhzhia	3.5	4.3	2.2	3.4

Donetsk oblast

- Access severity score: 4.3/5.0

- Access score trend since June 2023: no significant change

- Raions with the highest number of access events: Bakhmut, Kramatorsk, and Pokrovsk

- Most recurrent events: violence targeting civilians and civilian facilities

Humanitarian access severity in Donetsk oblast as at 30 September 2023

Source: ACAPS using data from ISW (accessed 23/10/2023) and ACLED (accessed 06/10/2023)

Donetsk continues to be the oblast with the highest conflict intensity. Nearly 60% of all reported armed clashes in June-September occurred in the oblast. Avdiivka, Bakhmut, Liman, Marinka, Ocheretyne, Soledar, and Velyka Novosilka are the most affected hromadas. Velyka Novosilka also saw the highest increase in reported battles (from 4 in March−May to 214 in June−September) (ACLED accessed 06/10/2023).

Donetsk also continues to be the oblast most affected by shelling and air strikes. The oblast accounted for nearly 40% of all reported shelling and air strike incidents in Ukraine during June–September. Donetsk, Kostiantynivka, Marinka, Ocheretyne, Soledar, Toretsk, Velyka Novosilka, and Vuhledar were the most affected hromadas (ACLED accessed 06/10/2023).

Shelling and air strikes continue interrupting utility provisions in Ukrainian-controlled areas, as utility workers cannot always access damaged infrastructure and the repair pace cannot keep up with new damage (KII 11/10/2023 a). By the end of September, 110 settlements in Donetsk remained without a power supply. Temperatures are expected to drop before the upcoming winter season (Donetsk ODA 28/09/2023). Solid heating fuel purchases (coal and firewood) may be a large burden for certain households, and people who go to the forests to gather their own firewood expose themselves to significant risks from mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO).
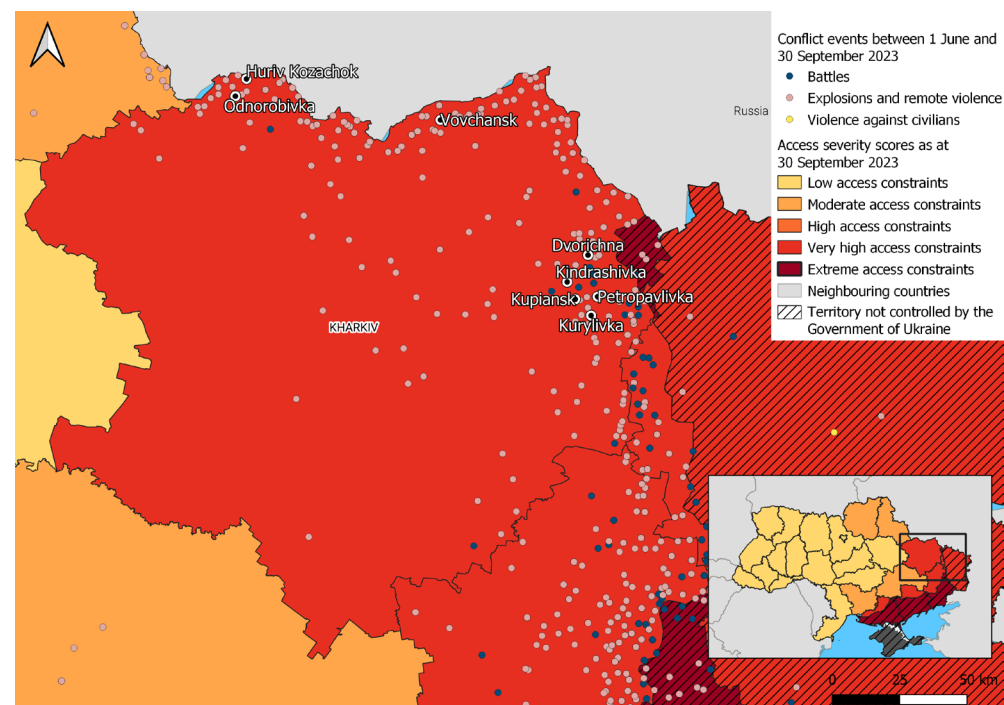
In Ukrainian-controlled areas, people with limited physical mobility face additional constraints in accessing medical care, including vaccinations. Staff shortages have led to Donetsk hospitals switching to shifts and remote-working models, with specialists travelling to medical institutions from other regions for a couple of days or conducting consultations via telemedicine (Ukrinform 20/07/2023).

Reports continue regarding issues with drinking water provision to the population in Russian-controlled territories (National Resistance Center 02/06/2023). Issues with sewage infrastructure are also reported. For example, in Mariupol's Prymorskyi district, sewage goes directly into a stream that then flows into the sea (Ukrinform 19/07/2023).

Kharkiv oblast

- Access severity score: 4.1/5.0
- Access score trend since June 2023: slight deterioration
- Raions with the highest number of access events: Chuhuiv, Izium, and Kupiansk
- Most recurrent events: violence targeting civilians and civilian facilities

Humanitarian access severity in Kharkiv oblast as at 30 September 2023

Source: ACAPS using data from ISW (accessed 23/10/2023 and ACLED (accessed 06/10/2023)

Russian forces continue heavy shelling and air strikes in Kharkiv oblast, the second most affected oblast in June–September 2023. Dvorichna and Petropavlivka (Kupiansk raion) and Vovchansk (Chuhuiv raion) were the most targeted hromadas, although Derhachi (Kharkiv raion) and Zolochiv (Bohodukhiv raion) were also frequently shelled (ACLED accessed 06/10/2023).

37 settlements of Kupiansk raion have been under mandatory evacuation orders since 10 August because of conflict intensification and shelling. The affected areas are Dvorichna and Petropalivka hromadas and parts of Kindrashivka, Kurylivka, and Kupiansk hromadas, where 11,000 people live. By the end of August, 1,500 people had left, including 340 children. Around half went by their own means, and half were transported by volunteers (The Kyiv Independent 10/08/2023; OCHA accessed 01/09/2023).

ACAPS recorded 49 casualties (injuries and fatalities) resulting from landmines and UXO in Kharkiv oblast between June–September 2023. This is the highest number among all oblasts, although lower than during the March–May 2023 period, when most occurred in Izium raion. The actual number of casualties is likely higher (Ukrainska Pravda 30/06/2023, 02/06/2023, and 07/07/2023; Oleg Sinegubov Telegram 06/06/2023, 02/06/2023, 12/06/2023, 15/06/2023, 20/06/2023, 24/06/2023, 25/06/2023, 30/06/2023, 02/07/2023, 03/06/2023, 05/07/2023, 17/07/2023, 21/07/2023, 23/07/2023, 14/08/2023, 21/08/2023, and 22/08/2023; Radio Svoboda 18/06/2023; Espreso 11/06/2023; Ukrinform 03/07/2023, 12/07/2023, 16/07/2023, 10/09/2023, and 11/09/2023; ACAPS 13/07/2023; Kharkiv Oblast Administration 07/09/2023, 08/09/2023, 09/09/2023, 10/09/2023, 14/09/2023, 21/09/2023, 25/09/2023, 29/09/2023, and 01/10/2023; Censor 07/09/2023).
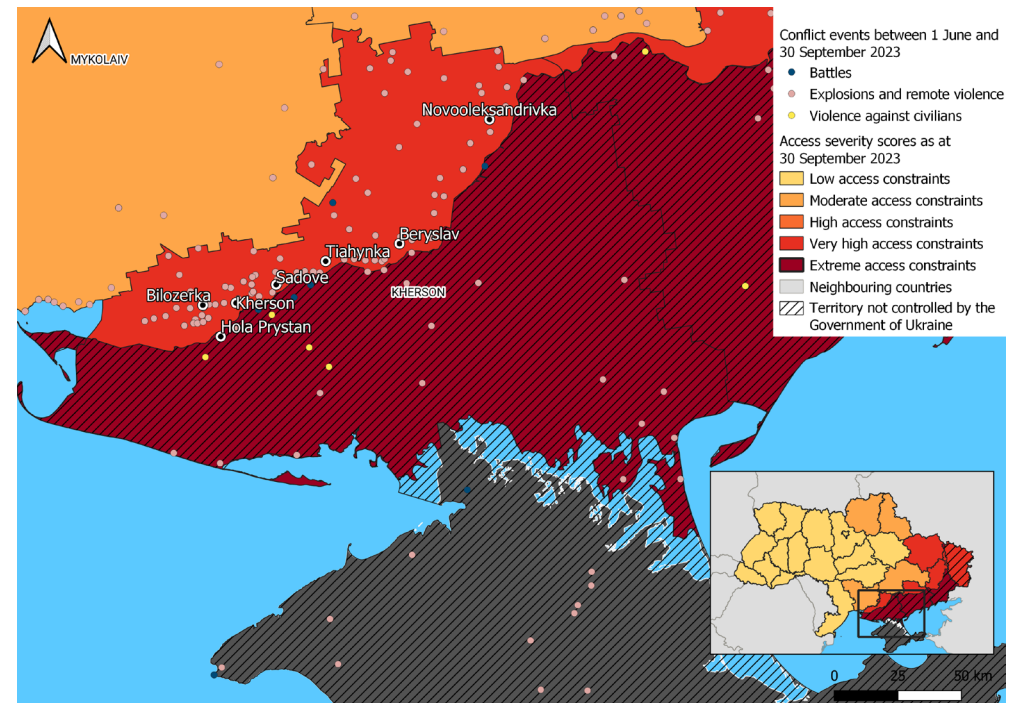
Kherson oblast

- Access severity score: 4.4/5.0

- Access score trend since June 2023: slight improvement

- Raions with the highest number of access events: Beryslav and Kherson

- Most recurrent events: violence targeting civilians and civilian facilities

Localities along Dnipro River's right bank continue to come under heavy shelling, particularly in Kherson city but also in Beryslav, Bilozerka, and Tiahynka hromadas (ACLED accessed 06/10/2023). Basic utility provision has deteriorated because of the continued shelling (KII 07/10/2023 a). Dnipro River's right bank is also where the majority of attacks on humanitarian responders, volunteers, and aid distribution points occurred in June–September 2023 (ACAPS Access Events Dataset accessed 06/10/2023).

ACAPS recorded 24 casualties (injuries and fatalities) resulting from landmines and UXO in Kherson oblast between June–September 2023. This is the second highest among all oblasts and a significant decrease from March–May 2023. Most incidents occurred in Berislav raion. The actual number of casualties is likely higher (Ukrainska Pravda 03/06/2023, 15/07/2023, 16/07/2023, 29/08/2023, 14/09/2023, and 17/09/2023; Kherson Oblast Military Administration Telegram 02/7/2023, 17/06/2023, 23/06/2023, and 28/06/2023; Ukrinform 30/08/2023, 09/07/2023, 05/08/2023, 08/09/2023, 28/09/2023, and 29/09/2023).

Electricity cannot be restored to localities along Dnipro River, namely Kozatske, Olihivka, Sadovoy, and Tyaginka, because of constant shelling and the infrastructure damage caused by Russian troops during their retreat in November 2022 (Ukrinform 11/09/2023). Access to electricity and heating is crucial before the cold winter months.

Humanitarian access severity in Kherson oblast as at 30 September 2023
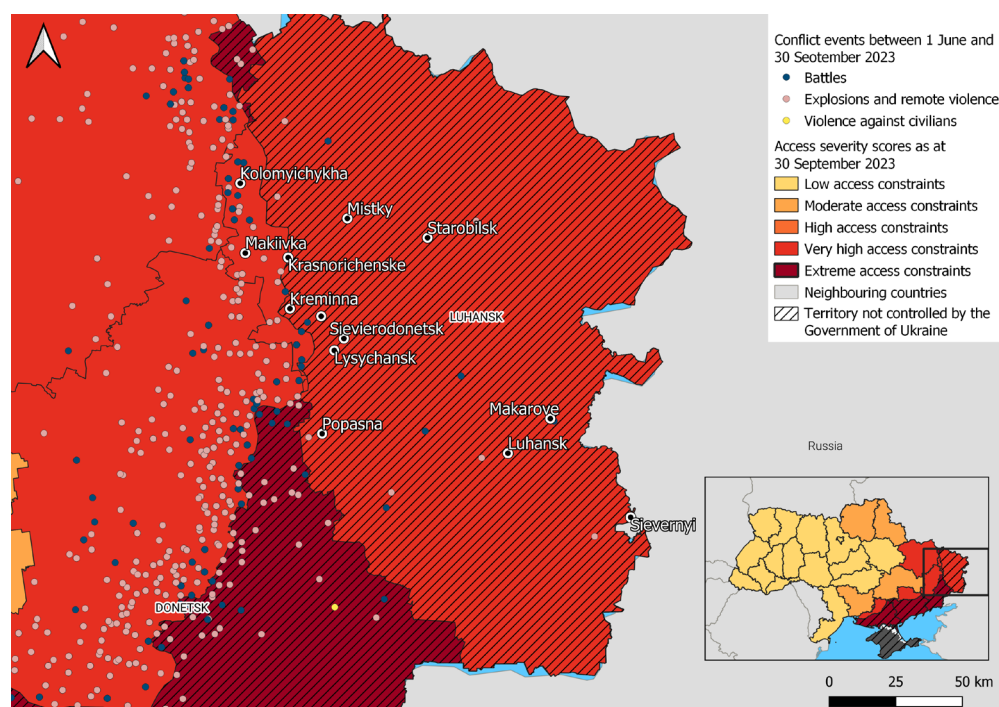

Source: ACAPS using data from (accessed ISW 23/10/2023) and ACLED (accessed 06/10/2023)

Luhansk oblast

- Access severity score: 3.6/5.0
- Access score trend since June 2023: no significant change
- Raion with the highest number of access events: Sievierodonetsk
- Most recurrent events: presence of areas under Russian control

Humanitarian access severity in Luhansk oblast as at 30 September 2023

Source: ACAPS using data from ISW (accessed 23/10/2023) and ACLED (accessed 06/10/2023)

Luhansk's access severity score continues to be the lowest among frontline oblasts. The low numbers of reported civilian infrastructure damage and landmine and UXO victims contributed to a lower score for the third pillar of the access severity model. At the same time, civilians and humanitarians continue to face high constraints in the oblast, primarily driven by the restrictions and policies of the Russian authorities in control of most of the oblast and the insufficient provision of basic services.

Conflict intensity increased slightly in June–August compared to March–May 2023. Kolomyichykha is the most affected hromada and has seen a sharp increase in conflict incidents from the March–May period. Krasnorichenske, Kreminna, and Lysychansk hromadas are also particularly affected (ACLED accessed 06/10/2023).

Reported shelling and air strike incidents in Luhansk decreased by 25% in June–August compared to March–May and remained lower in September. Shelling still continues to be a major concern, with 412 incidents reported in the oblast in June-September, especially in Krasnorichenske, Kreminna, and Kolomyichykha hromadas (ACLED accessed 06/10/2023).

Certain parts of Russian-controlled Luhansk continue to have little to no provision of basic services and utilities. Small villages have been without electricity or telecommunications for over a year (Luhansk OMA Telegram 23/07/2023). In Sievierodonetsk, drinking water and electricity supply is limited, and the city is likely to lack centralised heating during the winter (Censor 10/07/2023; Ukrinform 16/09/2023). In Rubizhne, the lack of water supply for over a year has led residents to drill water wells, and options for public transportation are limited (Luhansk OMA Telegram 27/07/2023 a and 27/07/2023 b). Poor public transport options are also reported in Starobilsk raion, with limited access to a majority of settlements (Luhansk OMA Telegram 25/07/2023 b and 25/07/2023 c). In the territories taken by Russian armed forces after the start of the full-scale invasion, water is available only for a few hours per week (Luhansk OMA Telegram 21/07/2023).

Civilians in parts of Russian-controlled Luhansk suffer from decreased healthcare access because of a lack of staff and ambulance transport. In Russian-controlled settlements near Lysychansk, Popasna, Rubizhne, and Sievierodonetsk along the front line, medical care access is especially limited (Ukrinform 25/07/2023). In Lysychansk and Sievierodonetsk, Ukrainian oblast authorities also claim that in late July there has been an increase in the number of people dying while waiting for an ambulance to arrive and that a lack of mobile phone coverage makes it difficult for people to call emergency services (Luhansk OMA Telegram 25/07/2023 a and 25/07/2023 b). In Starobilsk, a shortage of medicine and medical personnel has been reported, with older people losing access to medical treatment after civilian medical personnel were moved to military hospitals. Other medical staff have also moved to other parts of Ukraine or gone to work in Luhansk city, where a limited range of medical specialists remain available (Ukrainska Pravda 30/07/2023).

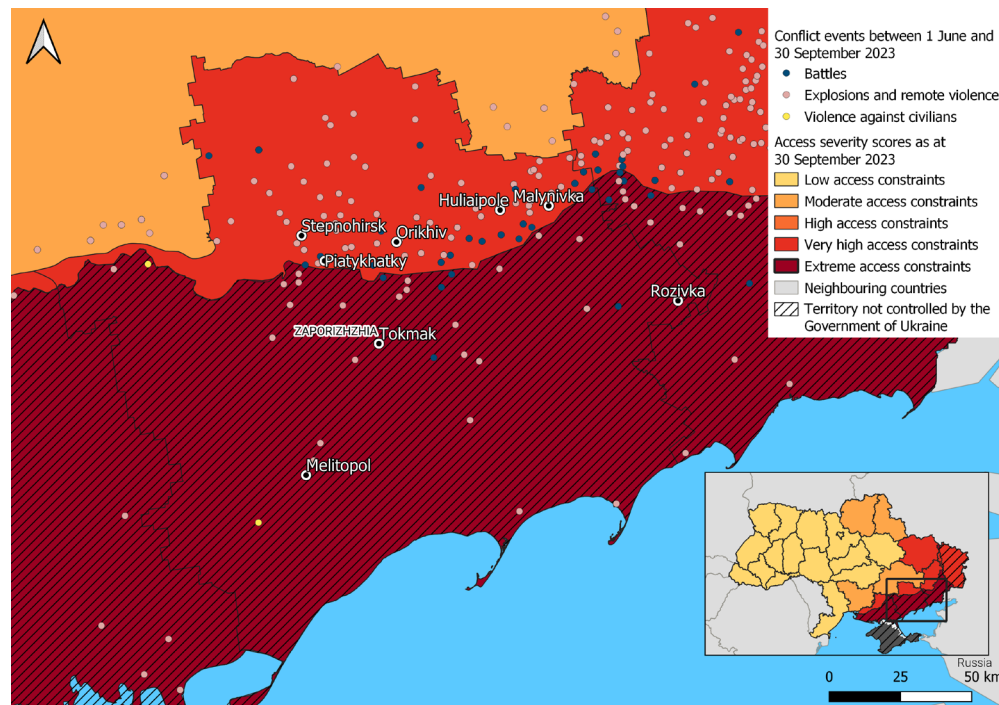In the Russian-controlled territories of Luhansk, Russian armed forces restrict civilian movement as they search for people assisting Ukrainian armed forces. Entry into Kreminna, Rubizhne, and Sievierodonetsk is only possible for those with a local residence permit or authorisation, and document checks are conducted when entering Luhansk city (Ukrinform 24/07/2023; Artem Lysohor Telegram 05/08/2023).

Zaporizhzhia oblast

- Access severity score: 3.9/5.0
- Access score trend since June 2023: no significant change
- Raion with the highest number of access events: Polohiv
- Most recurrent events: violence targeting civilians

Humanitarian access severity in Zaporizhzhia oblast as at 30 September 2023

Source: ACAPS using data from ISW (accessed 23/10/2023) and ACLED (accessed 06/10/2023)

The Ukrainian armed forces' counteroffensive has been focused on Zaporizhzhia, with several towns retaken. As a result, conflict intensity has dramatically increased in Zaporizhzhia since early June. There have been nearly ten times more armed clashes in the oblast between June–August (438) compared to March–May (46), and a further 107 clashes in September. The most affected hromadas are Huliaipole, Malynivka, Orikhiv, Stepnohirsk, and Tokmak (ACLED accessed 06/10/2023).

Zaporizhzhia continues to face heavy shelling and air strikes, particularly in Huliapole, Malynivka, Orikhiv, and Stepnohirsk hromadas (ACLED accessed 06/10/2023). On 10 August, a Russian missile strike hit a hotel in Zaporizhzhia city frequently used by humanitarian staff, killing one person and injuring at least 16 (Reuters 11/08/2023; Zaporizhzia OMA Telegram 11/08/2023).

BORDER CROSSINGS FROM RUSSIA AND BELARUS

With crossings at Zaporizhzhia's Vasylivka checkpoint no longer being reported, the shortest route for people wishing to go from territories under Russian control to those under Ukrainian control is via Russia and then back through one of the border crossings with Ukraine. On 26 February 2023, an order by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine allowed certain border crossings with Russia and Belarus to remain operational for such returns (State Border Guard Service of Ukraine 02/02/2023).

The media and Ukrainian authorities reported on the closure of the Kolotilovka-Pokrovka crossing (Sumy oblast) towards the end of July and its subsequent reopening on 5 August, bringing attention to the existence of such a crossing (UNHCR 04/08/2023; MRTOT 06/08/2023).

Currently, Ukrainian authorities have confirmed that the Kolotilovka-Pokrovka crossing is operational for Ukrainians coming from territories under Russian control crossing back through Russia. Kolotilovka-Pokrovka only allows crossing into Ukraine on foot (Realgazeta 08/08/2023). By mid-August, there were 200 crossings per day (Ukrainska Pravda 18/08/2023). Humanitarian assistance is provided on the Ukrainian side of the border, with sleeping facilities, medical assistance, hot food, and hygiene items (KII 05/10/2023 a). From there, people can be transported to Sumy and other Ukrainian cities, including a modular town in Vyshgorod (Kyiv oblast) (MRTOT 06/08/2023).

The border crossing with Belarus at Novi Yarylovychy is also being used to re-enter Ukraine. Shelter, hot food, and medical assistance are available near the checkpoint, but long-term-stay shelters or transportation options for those without vehicles are not available (KII 09/10/2023 a).

Media investigations suggest that private transportation options are available from various Russian-controlled cities, including Donetsk, Luhansk, and Mariupol. Carriers also organise transportation from the Ukrainian checkpoints towards multiple Ukrainian cities. Prices for such trips start at around UAH 10,000 (Svoi City 11/05/2023; Kochegarka 17/08/2023). There are also volunteer groups that provide the trip for free (Svoi City 11/05/2023).

Entering Ukraine at such checkpoints is only possible for Ukrainian citizens and requires at least a birth certificate (MRTOT 30/06/2023). Anecdotal evidence suggests that Ukrainian

border guards have denied entry to certain people, including those who did not have their Russian passport with them despite being issued one, those who were on certain blacklists, those who had a Russian passport that was not issued in a Russian-controlled territory of Ukraine, or those who had unverifiable Ukrainian documents (Free Crimea Telegram 14/08/2023).

METHODOLOGY

The data behind this report was extracted from publicly available and unpublished sources circulated within the response. The narrative presented was based on data analysis and secondary data review. The access severity scores were calculated using the oblast-level data collection of events related to access constraints. The collected access events are available in the humanitarian access events dashboard and dataset. ACAPS has predefined 75 event types and grouped them into 35 subindicators, nine indicators (I1−9), and three pillars (P1−3). The indicators receive a score between 0−3, and the pillars receive a score between 0−5. The final access severity score is an average of the three pillar scores.

Pillar 1: access of people in need to humanitarian aid

I1. Denial of existence of humanitarian needs or entitlements to assistance

I2. Restriction and obstruction of access to services and assistance

Pillar 2: access of humanitarian organisations to people in need

I3. Impediments to enter the country (bureaucratic and administrative)

I4. Restriction of movement within the country (impediments to freedom of movement and/or administrative restrictions)

I5. Interference into implementation of humanitarian activities

I6. Violence against humanitarian personnel, facilities, and assets

Pillar 3: physical, environmental, and security constraints

I7. Insecurity or hostilities affecting humanitarian assistance

I8. Presence of landmines, improvised explosive devices, explosive remnants of war, and UXO

I9. Physical constraints in the environment (obstacles related to terrain, climate, lack of infrastructure, etc.)

More information on ACAPS' humanitarian events monitoring and access scoring system is available in the methodology note. For Ukraine's oblast-level scoring, the calculations are done on a continuous numerical scale instead of thresholds, allowing for decimals and a more nuanced result. The resulting scores are classified into the following groups:

0–1 low access constraints

1–2 moderate access constraints

2–3 high access constraints

3–4 very high access constraints

4–5 extreme access constraints

Limitations

The analysis relies on publicly available data, which is unlikely to be comprehensive in a dynamic conflict situation such as Ukraine's. Reported data may come with a delay, so some published data is no longer applicable at the time of analysis. This analysis collected data through a review process to ensure that selected subindicators for a given oblast are still relevant. The evolving situation and the amount of data collected mean that some inaccuracies will likely remain.

Detailed information is lacking on the humanitarian response and the access constraints faced by non-government-controlled areas.
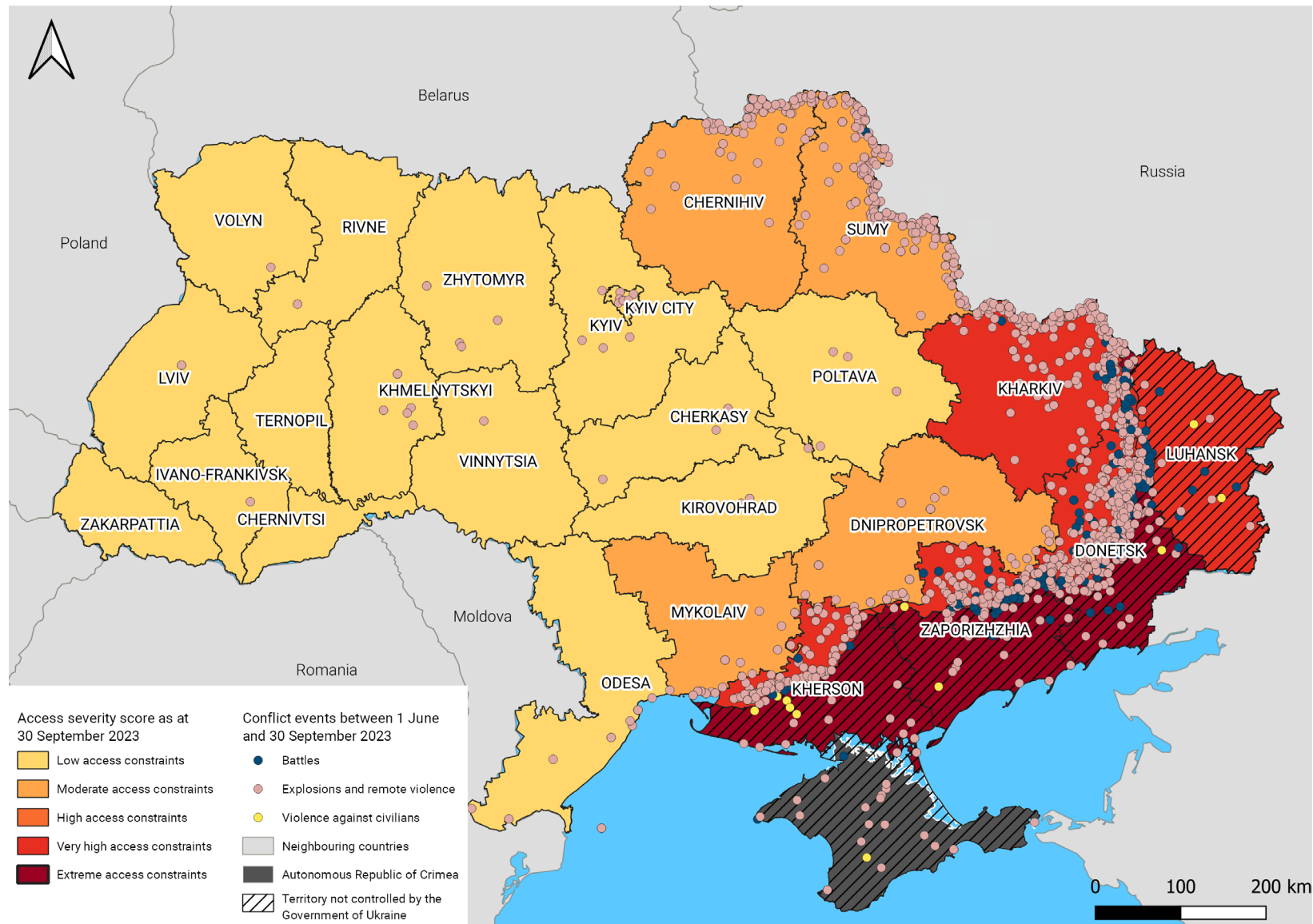
There are no access scores for Crimea and Sevastopol, as there is insufficient information to produce a reliable score. Russia has controlled these areas since 2014, and entering from Ukraine has been impossible since then.

ACCESS SEVERITY TABLE AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

OBLAST	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	I8	I9	P1	P2	P3	ACCESS
Cherkasy	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.5	0.9	0.0	0.1	1.4	0.0	1.5	0.6	0.8	1.0
Chernihiv	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.7	1.6	3.0	0.0	1.5	0.7	2.6	1.6
Chernivtsi	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.4	0.7	0.9
Dnipropetrovsk	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.7	2.4	2.3	0.0	1.5	0.7	2.6	1.6
Donetsk	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	1.4	2.4	3.0	0.8	5.0	4.3	3.4	4.3
Donetsk*	1.2	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	1.4	2.4	3.0	0.8	3.5	4.3	3.4	3.8
Ivano-Frankivsk	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.4	0.7	0.9
Kharkiv	3.0	2.8	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.5	2.0	3.0	0.1	4.9	4.8	2.8	4.1
Kharkiv*	0.0	3.0	3.0	2.3	3.0	2.5	2.0	3.0	0.1	2.4	4.5	2.8	3.2
Kherson	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.8	3.0	0.1	5.0	5.0	3.2	4.4
Kherson*	1.2	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.8	3.0	0.1	3.5	5.0	3.2	3.9
Khmelnytskyi	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.3	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.4	0.8	0.9
Kirovohrad	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.1	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.4	0.7	0.9
Kyiv	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.2	3.0	0.0	1.5	0.4	1.8	1.2
Kyiv City	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.4	1.5	0.0	1.5	0.4	1.0	1.0
Luhansk	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	0.4	1.5	1.2	0.5	5.0	3.9	1.8	3.6
Luhansk*	1.2	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	0.4	1.5	1.2	0.5	3.5	3.9	1.8	3.1
Lviv	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.4	0.1	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.5	0.7	0.9
Mykolaiv	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.5	0.9	0.7	0.8	3.0	0.0	1.5	0.9	2.2	1.5
Odesa	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.6	1.5	0.0	1.5	0.4	1.2	1.0
Poltava	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.1	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.4	0.7	0.9
Rivne	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.1	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.4	0.7	0.9
Sumy	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	1.9	3.0	0.1	1.5	0.4	2.8	1.6
Ternopil	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.4	0.0	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.5	0.7	0.9
Vinnytsia	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.4	0.7	0.9
Volyn	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.4	0.7	0.9
Zakarpattia	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.7	0.4
Zaporizhzhia	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	1.4	1.6	2.5	0.0	5.0	4.3	2.2	3.9
Zaporizhzhia*	1.2	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	1.4	1.6	2.5	0.0	3.5	4.3	2.2	3.4
Zhytomyr	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.0	1.5	0.4	1.4	1.1

*Scores not considering the territory's controlling authority

UKRAINE'S HUMANITARIAN ACCESS SEVERITY AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

Access severity score as at 30 September 2023

- Low access constraints
- Moderate access constraints
- High access constraints
- Very high access constraints
- Extreme access constraints

Conflict events between 1 June and 30 September 2023

- Battles
- Explosions and remote violence
- Violence against civilians
- Neighbouring countries
- Autonomous Republic of Crimea
- Territory not controlled by the Government of Ukraine

Source: ACAPS using data from ISW (accessed 23/10/2023) and ACLED (accessed 06/10/2023)

Note: indicator scores are out of 3; pillar and overall scores (ACCESS) are out of 5.