

## Humanitarian situation in Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Luhansk oblasts

### KEY FINDINGS

- **Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Luhansk oblasts have recorded around 50% of all reported conflict events in Ukraine** since the beginning of the war on 24 February 2022. Together with high access constraints, the situation has led to **severe information gaps** around the needs and living conditions of people remaining in these oblasts.
- **Access dynamics vary within the three oblasts** and depend on the degree of active conflict, divided control over the territories, damages to roads and critical infrastructure, and landmine contamination. **The encircled city of Mariupol**, non-government-controlled areas (NGCAs), and contested areas that came under Russian control after 24 February **likely experience the highest degree of access constraints and severity of needs.**
- **The humanitarian situation in areas of heavy conflict and shelling is dire**, with civilians forced to find shelter and endure frequent electricity, heating, telecommunication, and water cuts resulting from damages to critical infrastructure. Active hostilities drastically reduce the mobility of people and goods, threaten civilian lives, restrict aid delivery, and **prevent humanitarians from accessing people in need of life-saving aid.**
- Russian forces began a new offensive operation in eastern Ukraine on 18 April. **Fighting will likely further intensify in Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Luhansk oblasts in the coming weeks.** There are also concerns over international humanitarian law violations as related reports emerge from areas previously affected by intense fighting in the country.

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#### About this report

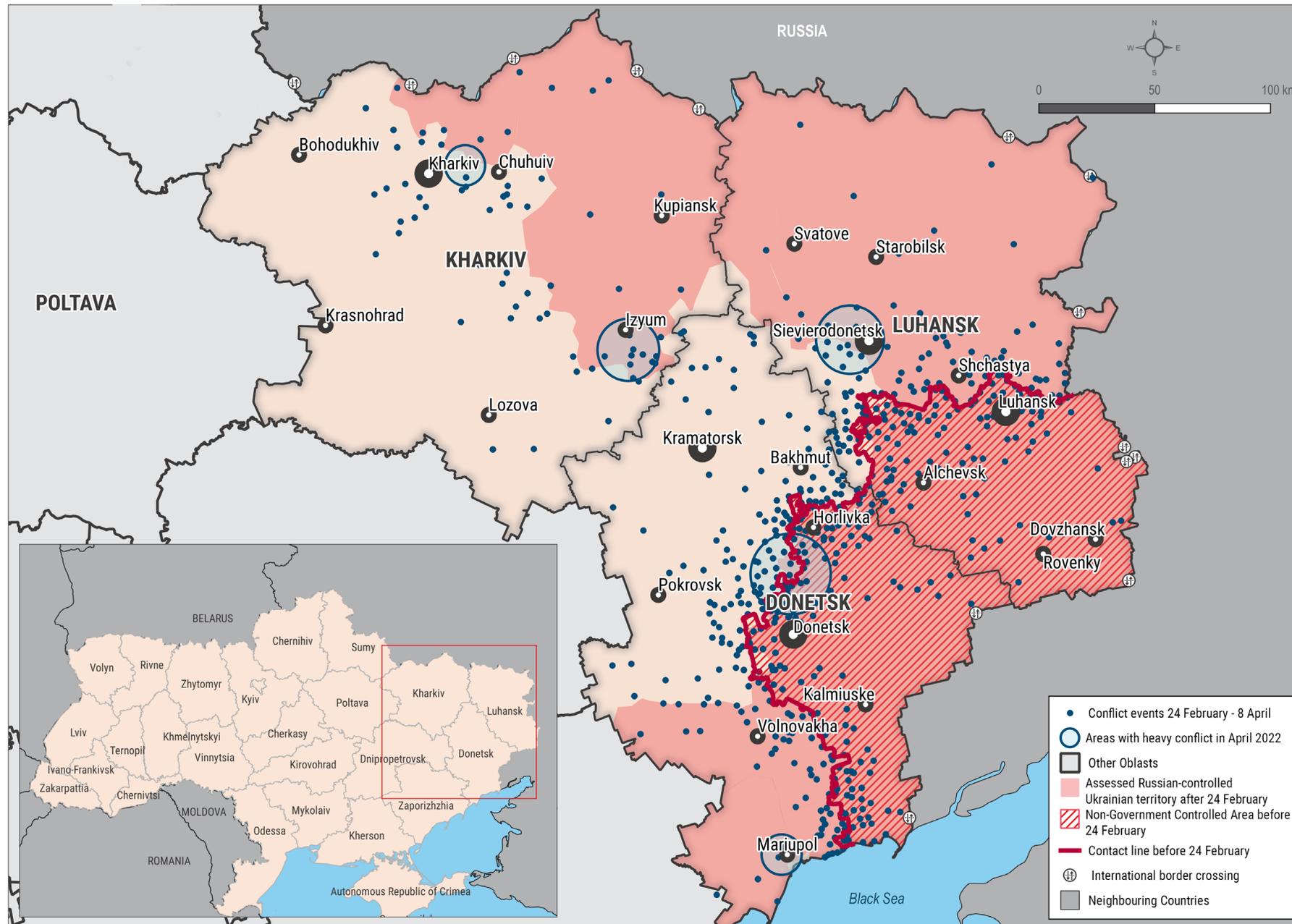
**Aim:** this report provides an overview of the humanitarian situation in Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Luhansk oblasts and highlights critical needs and information gaps.

**Method:** ACAPS reviewed secondary data from public and non-public sources. Between 1–15 April, the team conducted 13 key informant interviews with Ukrainian civil society members.

ACAPS is conducting an open source data collection on access and damages according to the ACAPS methodology. Raw data will be available by the end of April 2022.

**Limitations:** there is extremely limited information on the humanitarian situation in Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Luhansk because of heavy fighting hampering the mobility of civilians, media, and humanitarian organisations. There is also an imbalance in the available information among the three oblasts, with very limited information about Luhansk.

### MAP 1: CONFLICT IN GOVERNMENT- AND NON-GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED AREAS IN DONETSK, KHARKIV, AND LUHANSK OBLASTS



Source: ACAPS using data from OCHA 31/01/2022; OCHA 14/04/2022; ACLED accessed 18/04/2022; OCHA 9/04/2022; ISW accessed 18/04/2022.

## OVERVIEW

### Conflict

Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Luhansk oblasts have recorded around 50% of all reported conflict events in Ukraine since the beginning of war on 24 February 2022 (ACLED accessed 15/04/2022). Russian forces began a new offensive operation in eastern Ukraine on 18 April. Fighting will likely further intensify in eastern Ukraine as Russian forces have withdrawn from Kyiv and northern Ukraine and been redeployed to the eastern and southern fronts. Russia is assumed to be hoping to consolidate control in the east through territorial gains and aiming to connect with other forces in Donbas region (Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts) (ISW 18/04/2022; IWS 01/04/2022 and 04/04/2022; The Guardian 04/04/2022; BBC 14/04/2022). The most intense fighting as of mid-April has been in the cities of Kharkiv and Izyum in Kharkiv oblast, in Rubizne and Popasna, in Luhansk oblast, and in Mariupol and Marinka cities in Donetsk oblast. The fighting has caused significant damage to infrastructure and further increased the level of humanitarian needs for civilians in the affected locations (ISW 18/04/2022; Kyiv Post 28/03/2022; OCHA 08/04/2022 and 06/04/2022; Kharkiv Regional State Administration 05/04/2022).

### Access

Mariupol, which has been encircled since 1 March, and other contested areas with active conflict in Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Luhansk oblasts are some of the most inaccessible territories in Ukraine (WFP 15/04/2022; KII 05/04/2022 a; KII 04/04/2022; CF SSS 15/04/2022; The Guardian 01/04/2022). Shelling and bombing drastically reduce the movement of people and goods, threaten civilian lives, restrict aid delivery, and prevent humanitarians from accessing people in need of life-saving aid. Access dynamics vary within the three oblasts and depend on the degree of active conflict, divided control over the territories, damages to roads and critical infrastructure, and landmine contamination. Access constraints have been creating significant information gaps about humanitarian needs and response in NGCAs and territories under Russian control since 24 February. The access situation in NGCAs was already restricted prior to the recent escalation (ACAPS 09/12/2021).

### Impact on civilians

Nearly 45% of all confirmed casualties in Ukraine since 24 February were in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, predominantly resulting from shelling, heavy artillery, and missile and air strikes (OCHA 15/04/2022 and 04/04/2022; OHCHR 12/04/2022). Civilians in these areas have been among the most heavily affected by the war. The number of civilians remaining in the three oblasts and their needs are not clear given access and data collection constraints. An estimated 1.4 million people are in need of safe water in the east of Ukraine (UNICEF

15/04/2022). The number of people in need of cross-sectoral assistance is likely higher in Kharkiv city, which remains conflict-affected but largely accessible. The severity of needs is likely higher among those in encircled areas such as Mariupol, which has been heavily affected and inaccessible for weeks (MSF 15/04/2022; CF SSS 15/04/2022).

The humanitarian situation in areas of heavy conflict and shelling is dire. Civilians are forced to find shelter and endure frequent electricity, heating, telecommunication, and water cuts resulting from damages to critical infrastructure (Kyiv Post 24/03/2022; OCHA 08/04/2022; REACH 06/04/2022; Ministry of Education accessed 12/04/2022). There are concerns over international humanitarian law violations, such as extrajudicial killings of civilians, unlawful violence, widespread intimidation against unarmed civilians, conflict-related sexual violence, and the indiscriminate use of cluster munition in residential areas, as related reports have emerged from areas previously affected by intense fighting in the country (The Washington Post 13/04/2022; HRW 03/04/2022 and 04/03/2022; Amnesty International 07/04/2022; Protection Cluster 01/04/2022).

### Displacement

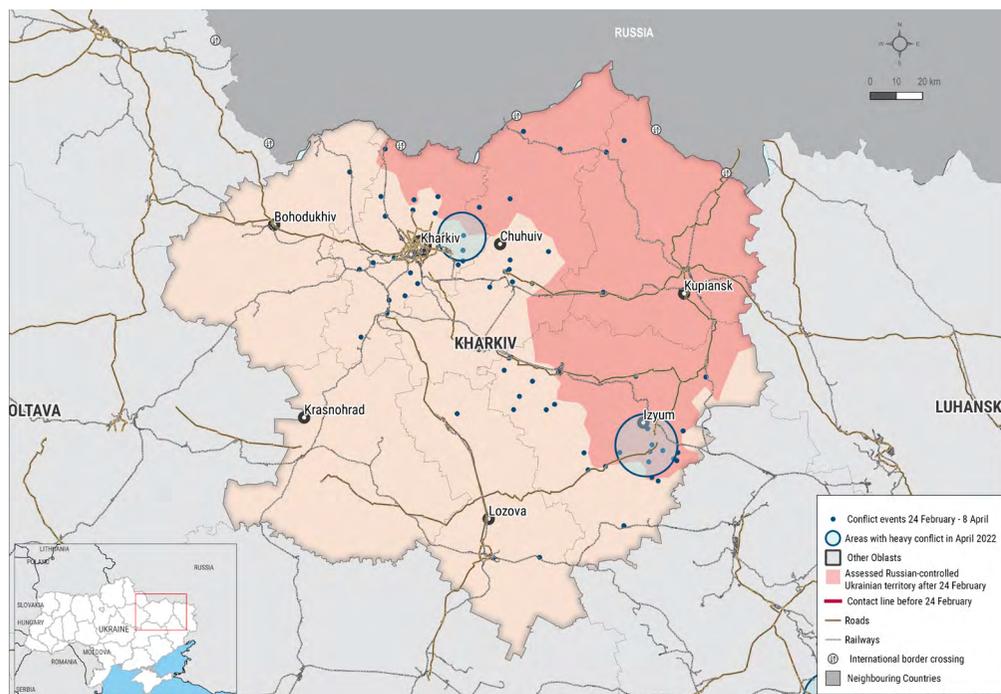
An estimated 33% of IDPs in Ukraine (over 2.3 million people) originate from Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Luhansk, and Zaporizhia oblasts, while over 850,000 IDPs remain displaced in those oblasts. 13% of IDPs and more than 20% of the non-displaced population in the eastern oblasts report feeling completely unsafe (IOM 01/04/2022). Authorities have urged residents in Luhansk and Donetsk to evacuate before the expected large-scale Russian offensive makes movement too dangerous. This offensive will likely drive further displacement from the region (BBC 06/04/2022; IOM 01/04/2022; OCHA 06/04/2022).

### Pre-crisis context

Conflict has already been affecting Donbas region since 2014 and has resulted in the separation of the territory into government-controlled areas (GCAs) and NGCAs (House of Commons Library 01/04/2022; ACAPS 17/02/2022; OCHA 11/02/2022). Before 24 February, 1.6 million people in NGCAs were in need of humanitarian assistance (55% of the population in need of humanitarian assistance in the country), and more than half of the 1.4 million IDPs in Ukraine were in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts (OSCE 12/02/2022; OCHA 30/11/2021; IOM accessed 15/04/2022). The situation has deteriorated since February with increased needs and hindered access.

## KHARKIV OBLAST

### Conflict in government- and non-government-controlled areas in Kharkiv oblast



**Source:** ACAPS using data from OCHA 31/01/2022; OCHA 14/04/2022; ACLED accessed 18/04/2022; OCHA 9/04/2022; ISW accessed 18/04/2022. See full map on page 13.

## Overview

### Population

The number of people remaining in Kharkiv and the current displacement dynamics within the oblast are unclear. Its total population prior to 24 February was 2.63 million (State Statistics Service of Ukraine 2021).

High numbers of people in need will likely remain in Kharkiv city, the administrative centre of the oblast. This city was the second-largest in Ukraine prior to the conflict, with a population of 1.4 million, around half of which have been displaced (MSF 15/04/2022; CF SSS 15/04/2022; State Statistics Service of Ukraine 2021).

Despite calls for evacuation, an estimated 30,000 people remain in Lozova city (Kharkiv Regional State Administration 11/04/2022). As at 3 April, 15,000–20,000 people remained in Izyum and surrounding villages of Kamyanka, Sukha Kamyanka, and Topalske (Ukrayinska Pravda 03/04/2022).

The vast majority (2.1 million people) of the pre-war population in the oblast lived in urban areas (State Statistics Service of Ukraine 2021).

### Conflict

Conflict has intensified in the oblast since the beginning of April, particularly in Kharkiv city and surrounding areas to the north and east (KII 09/04/2022 a; OCHA 08/04/2022 and 06/04/2022; Kharkiv Regional State Administration 05/04/2022; Reuters 13/04/2022). After Kharkiv rayon, Izyum rayon has experienced the highest number of conflict events (ACLED accessed 15/04/2022). Rayons to the south of Kharkiv city towards Izyum and the border with Donetsk, including Chuhuiv and Barvinkove, also endure constant shelling, airstrikes, and missile attacks (OCHA 06/04/2022).

There have been reports of the use of cluster munitions and antipersonnel mines, including in Kharkiv city and rural areas near Derhachi (Reuters 11/04/2022; HRW 29/03/2022; FP 16/03/2022). In these areas, humanitarian aid delivery is challenging, conflict threatens civilians' lives, and the movement of people is restricted.

### Kharkiv city

Kharkiv city, located 25km from the Russian border, has been continuously shelled since the onset of war. The shelling has destroyed and damaged more than 2,000 buildings, including hospitals, schools, and more than 1,640 residential buildings (Al Jazeera 21/03/2022; The Washington Post 21/03/2022; UNOSAT 29/03/2022; Nexta Twitter 12/04/2022).

**Villages north of Kharkiv city**, including Borschova, Cherkasski Tyshky, Lipty, northern Saltivka, Russki Tyshky, and Tsirkuny, are assumed to have a high level of needs. People there are not able to leave, and communities cannot be accessed with food, medical assistance, and other aid (KII 05/04/2022 a; KII 04/04/2022). In Derhachi, the second most affected city in Kharkiv rayon, shelling continues to threaten civilian lives (OCHA 06/04/2022; ACLED accessed 15/04/2022).

### Izyum city

Ukrainian local authorities believe that between 10,000 – 15,000 people remain trapped in the city out of 46,000 people living there prior to 24 February (The Guardian 18/04/2022). Initial assessments show a high need for assistance in Izyum and surrounding areas (REACH 06/04/2022). Izyum, in the southeastern Kharkiv oblast, has experienced some of the heaviest fighting in the oblast, desstroying around 80% of its residential buildings (The Guardian

18/04/2022). Russian forces have largely controlled the city since the beginning of April (ISW 01/04/2022; The Guardian 04/04/2022). In Izyum city and its surrounding areas, fighting continued as at 11 April (OCHA 11/04/2022).

Civilians in Izyum city have endured daily bombing for weeks and face a constant feeling of insecurity. They also experience a lack of electricity, heating, and water (The Guardian 04/04/2022). Active fighting is preventing aid delivery and the evacuation of people (OCHA 01/04/2022). As at 4 April, conflict had destroyed 80% of residential buildings, according to the deputy mayor, and many areas within the city and surrounding areas were totally cut off (OCHA 04/04/2022).

## Needs and access to services

Needs within the oblast are likely more significant in rayons with intense active conflict or those reported to be under Russian control (KII 04/04/2022). Civilians are under constant threat of shelling in much of the oblast, preventing some from seeking aid (KII 09/04/2022 a).

### Shelter

In northern areas of the oblast and in Kharkiv city, people continue to live in subways, basements, and other temporary shelters that are inadequate for long-term living (KII 05/04/2022 a). They are in need of food, water, blankets, and warm clothes (KII 05/04/2022 a; KII 05/04/2022 b).

Many residents lack electricity and gas (Shelter Cluster 31/03/2022). As temperatures fluctuate between 5–10° C, residents have been requesting wood-burning stoves to heat their shelters (CF SSS 15/04/2022).

There is a reported high need for construction tools and materials both for permanent reconstruction and temporary fixes, such as securing broken windows. There are active repairs to damaged infrastructure; in Kharkiv city, 20–30 damages are addressed per day (KII 05/04/2022 a; CF SSS 15/04/2022).

There is a need for specialised devices for rescuing people from the rubble of buildings that have collapsed because of shelling (KII 05/04/2022 a).

### Food

Shelling, particularly in northern and eastern areas of Kharkiv city, is reducing access to markets (KII 09/04/2022 a). IDPs and people sheltering from conflict in public spaces have very limited access to food and hot meals; they continue to request ready-to-eat food (CF SSS 15/04/2022).

There has been a slight improvement in food supply to Kharkiv city since the end of March, although the availability of items remains unpredictable. Queues for certain items, such as bread, are also long, exposing people to conflict (KII 09/04/2022 a; KII 04/04/2022). While acute needs for baby food have been addressed in Kharkiv city, stocks remain too low to withstand future supply disruptions.

Kharkiv oblast is agriculturally developed. Since the beginning of the conflict, residents of rural areas have had better access to food than residents of Kharkiv city, but in rural areas experiencing active conflict, household food stocks are diminishing as heavy fighting precludes regular external supply (KII 04/04/2022).

### Healthcare

Access to medicine is a challenge across the oblast but particularly in Kharkiv city, where only about 30% of pharmacies were operational in early April (KII 04/04/2022). There is a need for medicine for people with chronic diseases, especially diabetes (KII 09/04/2022 a; KII 05/04/2022 b). As at 2017, there were more than 89,000 people in the oblast with diabetes mellitus (Kharkiv Regional Health Centre 14/11/2019). The Kharkiv Regional Administration has set up a hotline to address insulin needs. In areas without telecommunication services, people may not be able to access this service, although paper prescriptions are still available (Kharkiv Regional State Administration 09/04/2022 and 07/04/2022). There is a need for medical devices, such as ultrasounds, as a result of damages and destruction to healthcare facilities (KII 05/04/2022 a).

Doctors in Kharkiv city have had their salaries withheld. Half of them have also left the city, resulting in a shortage of doctors and further limiting people's access to medical services (KII 04/04/2022).

### Water and sanitation

A lack of water has worsened personal hygiene issues, as water access is intermittent across the oblast. In areas without electricity, the central water system is unable to function, meaning people must rely on alternative water sources.

### Hygiene items

There is a need for basic hygiene products across the oblast, including soap and women's hygiene products (KII 05/04/2022 a).

### Education

As at 1 April, 305 of 715 general education institutions had suspended educational activities,

and another 122 educational institutions were in areas under the control of Russian forces (Kharkiv Regional State Administration 01/04/2022). It is unclear what educational activities are taking place in those 122 institutions. Damages and destruction to educational facilities may have a long-lasting impact on the provision of education. Conflict has damaged at least 60 schools, 30 kindergartens, and seven higher education facilities across the oblast. It has destroyed at least 50 educational buildings in Kharkiv city alone (Save the Children 04/04/2022; Kharkiv Regional State Administration 21/03/2022).

### Access to cash and pensions

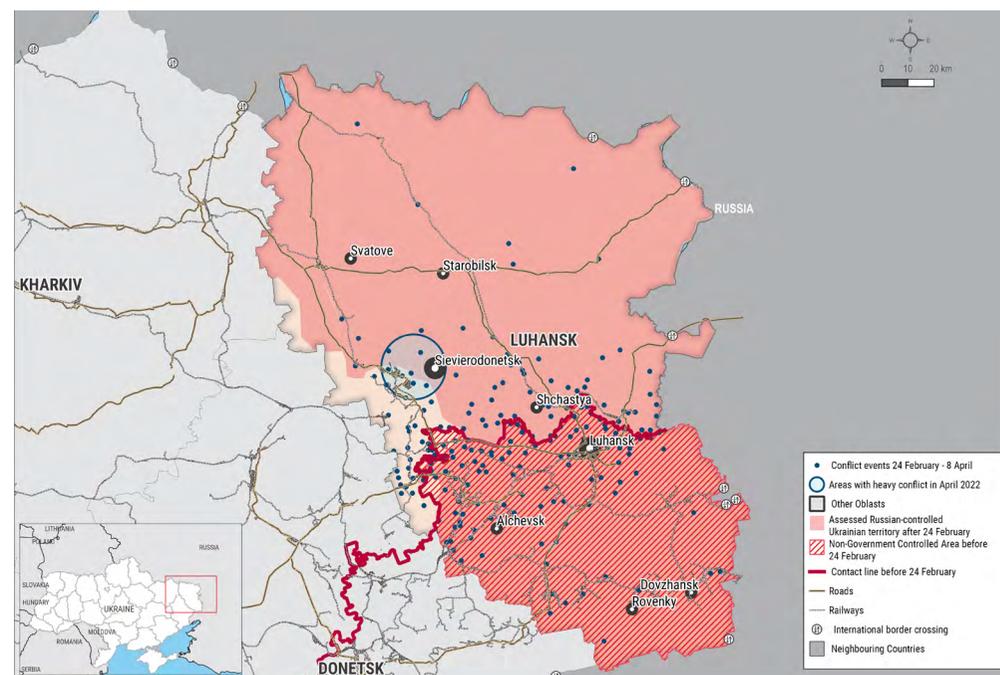
Bank branches and terminals are not operational in the majority of Kharkiv city, making it impossible to withdraw cash (KII 04/04/2022). Some automated teller machines (ATMs) in the western part of the city are functional but irregularly (KII 09/04/2022 b). Cash withdrawals from supermarkets are possible but limited to UAH 500–1000 (approximately USD 17-34) per day (KII 04/04/2022). The restrictions affect older people who rely on ATMs to access state pensions. Alternatively, pensions can be delivered by mail, but mail carriers are often unwilling to travel to rayons with heavy active conflict (KII 05/04/2022 b).

### Roma population

Approximately 7,000 Roma people lived in Kharkiv region prior to the escalation of conflict. This number amounted to around 15% of the Roma population in Ukraine. Roma communities already faced discrimination and challenges prior to the conflict, including challenges in accessing employment, education, and healthcare and a lack of necessary documentation to prove their identity or place of residence (OSCE 17/11/2021). Roma people are likely more vulnerable to the impact of the conflict, have higher needs, and face significant challenges in accessing aid given the lack of documentation (CF SSS 15/04/2022).

## LUHANSK OBLAST

### Conflict in government- and non-government-controlled areas in Luhansk oblast



**Source:** ACAPS using data from OCHA 31/01/2022; OCHA 14/04/2022; ACLED accessed 18/04/2022; OCHA 9/04/2022; ISW accessed 18/04/2022. See full map on page 14.

### Overview

### Population

As at 9 April, around 30% of the population was still in Luhansk oblast (Reuters 09/04/2022). The total pre-conflict population of the oblast was 2.12 million (State Statistics Service of Ukraine 2021). The Luhansk governor has urged people to leave while they still can, anticipating a potential increase in hostilities (Reuters 09/04/2022).

## Conflict

Luhansk oblast is one of the areas of the country most affected by the hostilities. As at mid-April, around 90% of territories in Luhansk oblast were under the control of Russian forces and their proxies, reaching the outskirts of Sieverodonetsk (BBC 07/04/2022; IWS 15/04/2022). The fighting since then has been concentrated in the cities of Popasna and Rubizhne with Russian forces trying to control the remaining territory (IWS 15/04/2022). Access to the territories newly controlled by Russian forces is not possible, and active hostilities have severely restricted movement between the two areas of control (CF SSS 15/04/2022).

Prior to 24 February, the oblast was split into GCAs and NGCAs along the contact line. The NGCAs covered around half of the oblast's total area, including some of its most populated cities such as Alchevsk, Krasnodon, and Luhansk city (the regional capital) (Al Jazeera 22/02/2022). Since 2014, the town of Sievierodonetsk has been the headquarters of the regional authorities (The Guardian 09/04/2022).

**Hirske, Kadiivka, Kremine, Lysychansk, Popasna, Rubizhne, and Sievierodonetsk cities** remain among the areas most heavily affected by conflict. These cities likely have the highest humanitarian needs resulting from the disruption to electricity and damages to water and gas infrastructure, with active fighting hampering repair and relief efforts (ACLEDA accessed 15/04/2022; OCHA 11/04/2022).

**Most severe humanitarian needs reported are in the areas that have been under Russian control since March 2022**, such as Shchastya, where access to food and aid remains very limited. Only a small number of volunteers were still operating in the area in mid-April.

**In GCAs (as in Sievierodonetsk and surrounding areas)**, food shortages are less pronounced, but protection risks are higher for civilians because of intense active fighting and shelling (CF SSS 15/04/2022).

## Needs and access to services

The humanitarian situation in Luhansk oblast remains extremely dire as a result of active conflict. Hindered access and a lack of telecommunications make it harder to report on the needs of the people in the territory. Active conflict and attacks on civilians waiting at distribution points hamper access to humanitarian aid (ND 06/04/2022).

## Food

Food is one of the main needs of the remaining population in the oblast. In Sievierodonetsk (and other cities and towns experiencing shelling), the risk of shelling has led many people to live in basements and temporary shelters with little access to food items (France 24 12/04/2022). In March, the population in Shchastya could only rely on their own food provisions. Conflict and the risk of shelling have reduced the number of community volunteers able to provide assistance (CF SSS 15/04/2022). There is also a need for food preparation items, such as small gas tanks and portable gas ovens (CF SSS 15/04/2022).

## Water and sanitation

Water supply is cut off in Popasna, Rubizhne, and Sievierodonetsk and partially cut off in Hirska and Lysychansk (OCHA 06/04/2022). Water pumps are not operational in territories without electricity, and there is a need for water filters (CF SSS 15/04/2022).

## Hygiene items

There is a need for basic hygiene products across the oblast (CF SSS 15/04/2022).

## Shelter and NFIs

There is a need for sleeping bags, small gas tanks, and rechargeable lamps, as gas and electricity supplies are damaged across the oblast (CF SSS 15/04/2022). There is also a reported high need for construction tools and materials, as conflict has destroyed most buildings.

## Health

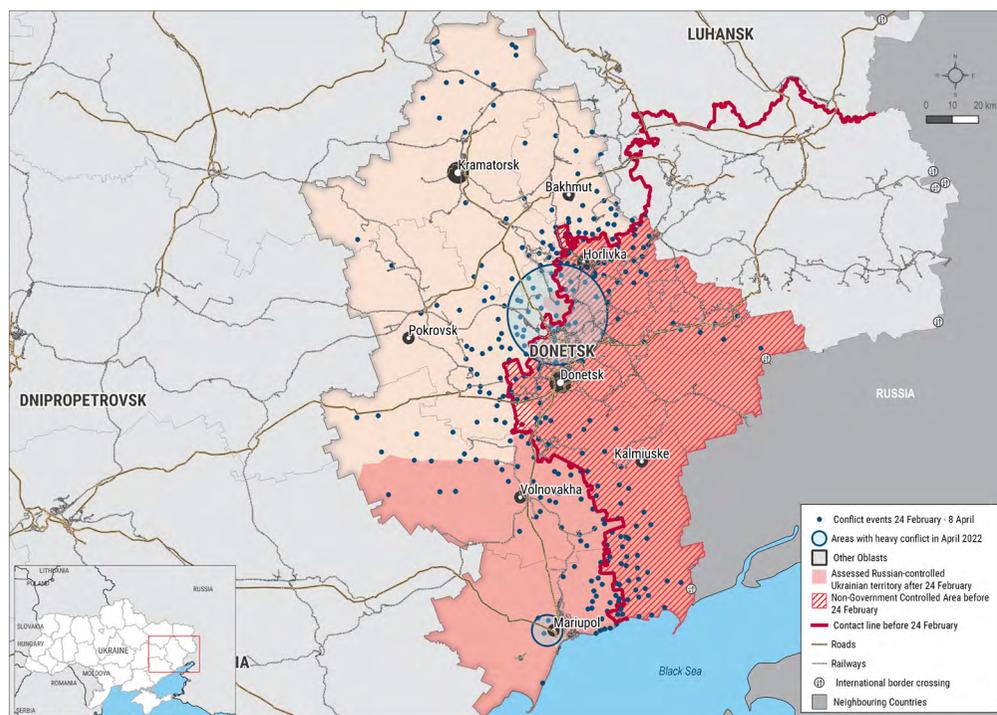
Access to medicine is a priority, and a shortage of insulin is expected. There is also a need for medical equipment, especially emergency kits for wound treatments (CF SSS 15/04/2022).

## Access to electricity and gas

Conflict has destroyed and severely damaged gas, electricity, and water supplies across the oblast (CF SSS 15/04/2022). As at 14 April, over 109,000 people in 38 settlements remained without gas, and over 103,000 in 32 settlements remained without electricity (Luhansk Regional State Administration 14/04/2022 a).

## DONETSK OBLAST

### Conflict in government- and non-government-controlled areas in Donetsk oblast



Source: ACAPS using data from OCHA 31/01/2022; OCHA 14/04/2022; ACLED accessed 18/04/2022; OCHA 9/04/2022; ISW accessed 18/04/2022. See full map on page 15.

## Overview

### Population

Around 700,000 people remain in the Ukrainian-controlled areas of Donetsk (UNHCR 13/04/2022; France 24 04/04/2022). An estimated 120,000 people remain in Mariupol (PBS 15/04/2022). The total population of the oblast was 4.1 million prior to 24 February, and over half of this number was estimated to live in NGCAs (State Statistics Service of Ukraine 2021; Donetsk People's Republic 2018).

There is a high number of IDPs within the oblast, but information on the actual locations of displacement and the number of people remaining in NGCAs is not available. People from places with heavy fighting are moving to safer villages and towns nearby, affecting the ability of receiving municipalities to cope with the increased number of IDPs (CF SSS 15/04/2022). Authorities have called on the population of Donetsk oblast to evacuate in anticipation of an expected increase in fighting (France 24 04/04/2022).

### Conflict

Fighting is the most intense along the pre-24 February contact line and in the encircled city of Mariupol, where urban warfare and shelling have led to catastrophic humanitarian conditions (OCHA 04/04/2022; ACLED accessed 16/04/2022). Across the oblast, conflict and shelling have damaged health facilities, residential buildings, schools, and heating, water, gas, electricity, and railway infrastructure, as well as bridges (OCHA 21/03/2022; USAID 25/03/2022).

Before 24 February, the oblast was split into GCAs and NGCAs along the contact line. The NGCAs represented approximately one-third of the oblast's total area (Al Jazeera 22/02/2022; UNICEF 05/2018). The de jure capital, Donetsk city, is part of the NGCAs, meaning Kramatorsk acts as the de facto administrative centre (France 24 09/04/2022).

**Mariupol** has been encircled since 1 March. Active fighting continued in the city as at 17 April (Critical Threats 18/04/2022). As Russian forces slowly advanced in the city, it experienced heavy bombardment, including the 16 March attack on a theatre sheltering at least 500 civilians that, according to local officials, killed 300 people (Reuters 25/03/2022).

Shelling has left the city without any water, electricity, or cell phone services (HRW 07/03/2022). On 29 March, Mariupol's mayor called for the total evacuation of the city's remaining civilians (Reuters 29/03/2022). Active fighting affected 90% of homes in the city, including 60% damaged by shelling and 40% destroyed. The conflict has also destroyed 90% of hospitals and schools. According to Ukrainian officials, the death toll stands at over 10,000 people, a number that remains unverified because of access constraints (AP News 12/04/2022).

**The conflict has particularly affected settlements close to active fighting**, including Avdiivka, Donetsk, Horlivka, Kramatorsk, Marinka, and Vuhledar (OCHA 04/11/2022). Shelling destroyed Volnovakha city early into the invasion (Reuters 12/03/2022; The Guardian 06/03/2022).

## Needs and access to services

A lack of access and communication makes it impossible to have a clear picture of the true extent of needs in Mariupol, but the city likely faces extreme needs across all sectors.

People face challenges in accessing aid in areas experiencing shelling and conflict. Any time spent outdoors increases their risk of death or injury, so some people are unwilling to attempt to reach distribution points. On 6 April, four people died when artillery fire hit an aid distribution point in Vuhledar (OCHA 04/08/2022; Reuters 06/04/2022).

Older people face additional challenges in reaching aid points because of a lack of access to information about aid, most of which is transmitted via social media, or mobility limitations (KII 08/04/2022 a).

Aside from Mariupol, needs are highest in areas that have been occupied by Russian and NGCA forces since March 2022, as there seem to have been no systematic efforts made to address humanitarian needs (CF SSS 15/04/2022).

### Food

Food is a pressing need among affected populations in Donetsk oblast, particularly ready-to-eat food with a long shelf life (KII 08/04/2022 a). Sloviansk is experiencing increasing food needs as it has become a hub for civilians fleeing other parts of Donetsk oblast. There is also a need for food assistance for the more vulnerable population groups (such as older people and people with impaired mobility) who are unable or unwilling to evacuate the city; current food assistance is insufficient because of supply chain disruptions (KII 05/04/2022 c). Other towns receiving IDPs, such as Manhush, Melekine, and Mykhailivka, are increasingly unable to cope with the arrival of IDPs presenting acute food needs (OCHA 21/03/2022; CF SSS 15/04/2022).

### Water

The supply at the Horlivka reservoir is at risk of running dry, potentially leaving over 340,000 people without water (OCHA 25/03/2022; UNICEF 15/04/2022). Water access in NGCAs is a concern, with water only available for two to three hours a day in Donetsk city (OCHA 23/03/2022). Water supply in Avdiivka (a GCA) has been disrupted since 21 February, with local authorities distributing non-drinking water (KII 08/04/2022 a). There are reported needs for water pumps and filters (CF SSS 15/05/2022).

### Healthcare

Medicines for chronic conditions, such as blood pressure medication, are a high priority (KII 05/04/2022 d; KII 08/04/2022 b).

### Shelter and NFIs

NFI needs include equipment for people in shelters, such as batteries, power banks, small gas tanks, and portable gas ovens. Those without access to heating are in need of blankets (KII 08/04/2022 c; KII 05/04/2022 c; CF SSS 15/04/2022).

190 settlements in the oblast were without electricity as at 12 April. Avdiivka, Bakhmut, Marinka, and Toretsk are the most affected regions (Donetsk Regional State Administration 14/04/2022).

### Hygiene items

There are reported needs for adult diapers across the oblast (KII 08/04/2022 a; KII 08/04/2022 b; KII 05/04/2022 d).

### Access to cash

Shops and markets that remain open require cash payments, making access to cash a concern, as ATMs contain little to no cash. The risk of shelling makes queuing outdoors dangerous as well. The economic impact of the conflict has also led many people to lose their income (KII 05/04/2022 c). ATMs and banks in Avdiivka have not been operational for two weeks as a result of disrupted internet connectivity and active fighting. Residents have to travel to the neighbouring town of Pokrovsk to access cash (OCHA 13/04/2022).

### Access to fuel

In areas where there is a disruption in the electric grid, people are in need of fuel to run generators (KII 08/04/2022 c). With spiking fuel prices, much of the money raised by charities goes to buying fuel for evacuations (Left Bank Analytics 04/04/2022).

## ACCESS DYNAMICS AND CONSTRAINTS

In Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Luhansk oblasts, active shelling and bombing drastically reduce the movement of people and goods, threaten civilian lives, restrict aid delivery, and prevent humanitarians from accessing people in need of life-saving aid. There is a critical need for evacuation and safe movement from such areas, but there are significant restrictions and obstructions to the movement of people resulting from active fighting and the substantial destruction of critical infrastructure, such as roads and bridges.

Access dynamics vary within the three oblasts and depend on the degree of active conflict, divided control over the territories, damages to road and critical infrastructure, and landmine contamination. Mariupol, NGCAs, and contested areas that came under Russian control after 24 February are likely to present the highest degree of access constraints.

### Access of people in need of humanitarian aid

**Physical obstructions to accessing services** are the most prevalent constraint reported by people in Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Luhansk oblasts. Hostilities, such as the firing of artillery on aid distribution points and queues of civilians awaiting aid, severely hamper civilian movement. There have been reports of such incidents in Vuhledar (Donetsk oblast) and Sievierodonetsk (Luhansk oblast). There were also reports of the shelling of markets and shopping centres in northern and eastern parts of Kharkiv city (Reuters 06/04/2022; KII 09/04/2022 a; OCHA 08/04/2022; Novosti 06/04/2022; Protection Cluster 27/03/2022; CNN 25/03/2022).

**There are reports of attacks on civilians trying to flee areas of heavy conflict**, including civilian vehicles being fired upon in Luhansk and Kharkiv and a missile strike at a train station in Kramatorsk in Donetsk, which led to more than 130 civilian casualties (Reuters 08/04/2022; OCHA 08/04/2022; OHCHR 28/03/2022). These events indicate heightened risks to civilian lives, ultimately restricting the movement of people towards aid and safer areas of the country. People with disabilities and older people have faced additional barriers in reaching bomb shelters.

### Access of humanitarian organisations to the affected population

**Movement restrictions within areas of conflict**, particularly those encircled or partly encircled by the Russian forces, pose a significant barrier to accessing affected populations. Several attempts at organising convoys to reach Mariupol have failed, as they were not allowed to enter the city (The Kyiv Independent 14/03/2022; BBC 21/03/2022; OCHA 08/04/2022). The ICRC attempted to evacuate civilians and deliver aid on 1–2 April, but the convoy was stopped near Manhush, 20km from Mariupol (ICRC Ukraine Twitter 01/04/2022; Reuters 05/04/2022; OCHA 08/04/2022).

**There have been instances of interference with the implementation of humanitarian activities**, including claims of seizing relief workers and humanitarian aid from a convoy attempting to reach Mariupol. There have also been reports of the closure of or attacks on pre-agreed humanitarian corridors (Global News 23/03/2022; ICRC 01/04/2022; The Guardian 01/04/2022; The Independent 01/04/2022; Business Insider 01/04/2022).

**Violence against humanitarian personnel** is a continuous risk, particularly towards volunteers and local organisations who may be the only ones able to reach remote villages. There have been casualties in Kharkiv city and in other areas of the oblast, Novodruzhesk city (in Luhansk oblast), and Mariupol city (in Donetsk oblast), which raise concerns over the safety and security of humanitarian personnel (Save the Children 12/04/2022).

### Security and physical constraints

**Insecurity** is a significant challenge to humanitarian access and aid delivery. In areas of heavy fighting, it is exceptionally difficult for local organisations to deliver aid (KII 04/04/2022). The insecure environment sometimes halts assistance. As at 4 April, insecurity halted water trucking services in some parts of Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Luhansk (OCHA 04/04/2022; UNICEF 02/04/2022).

On 11 April, one of the humanitarian aid centres established by volunteers in Sievierodonetsk came under heavy fire. The centre was feeding as many as 3,000 people daily and providing food and hygiene products to bedridden patients (OCHA 13/04/2022).

**Some attacks target roads**, making it dangerous for volunteers and humanitarian responders to reach insecure areas (KII 05/04/2022 b). Damaged roads and bridges hamper the delivery of assistance throughout Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Luhansk oblasts and limit the size of trucks and delivery of big cargos on certain routes.

**The presence of unexploded ordnance and mines** poses direct risks to humanitarian workers. Even before the current conflict, Ukraine was the most mined country in the world, with 7,000km<sup>2</sup> of GCAs and 14,000km<sup>2</sup> of NGCAs affected (Protection Cluster 27/03/2022).

**Logistical constraints**, including the lack of fuel, are a major barrier. In Kharkiv oblast, local authorities have central control over the rationing of fuel, even from fuel stations. There is a need for special permissions to acquire fuel, and volunteers typically get the allocations (KII 09/04/2022 a). The disruption of the banking system in many cities in NGCAs and Kharkiv oblast also prevents the transfer of funds to humanitarian organisations in those areas (UNICEF 02/04/2022; KII 09/04/2022 a).

## MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE

### Evacuations and corridors

Following the shift in conflict dynamics at the beginning of April, increased population movements have been reported out of Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Luhansk oblasts, largely towards the direction of Dnipro city. People attempting to leave those areas were mostly women and children, elderly people, people with disabilities, and people from poorer socioeconomic background, who were not able or reluctant to move before. Those people are likely to face movement challenges and require transit support and medical attention. Needs for hygiene and mobility equipment adapted for people with disabilities were reported (REACH 17/04/2022; CF SSS 15/04/2022). Based on the vulnerability of the newly displaced people, those who remain in conflict-affected areas are likely facing extreme conditions, mobility restrictions, and acute cross-sectoral needs.

There are active evacuation efforts. The precise number of people that have been evacuated or are currently being evacuated is difficult to estimate, but between 13–16 April, more than 4,400 people were reported to be evacuated from areas affected by hostilities (OCHA 18/04/2022; OCHA 15/03/2022). Evacuations have been encouraged from areas in Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Luhansk oblasts where conflict is expected to escalate in the coming weeks (OCHA 04/04/2022; Kharkiv Regional State Administration 06/04/2022).

Russian officials have stated that more than 820,000 people have crossed the border to Russia from Ukraine since 24 February (OCHA 15/04/2022). There are also reports of the forced relocation of civilians to Russia or NGCAs, but these are difficult to verify (OCHA 28/03/2022). The actual figure for voluntary and forced displacements from Mariupol and Donetsk GCAs towards NGCAs and Russia remains unclear (BBC 27/03/2022).

Evacuations in areas of heavy conflict are predominately happening via centralised buses or private vehicles. Evacuations from Mariupol (in Donetsk oblast) have become only possible through private vehicles. Following the attack on the train station in Kramatorsk on 8 April, civilians in other areas of Donetsk have been told to use trains departing from Sloviansk (AP 09/04/2022; Reuters 10/04/2022; CNN 07/04/2022; Donetsk Regional State Administration 08/04/2022; KII 05/04/2022 c). People in Kharkiv city are also moving via railway, which is facilitated by the state authorities (KII 04/04/2022; KII 05/04/2022 b).

In Luhansk oblast, evacuations are regular and take place via rail, bus, and private vehicles, but the lack of humanitarian corridors increases protection risks for civilians (Luhansk Regional State Administration 14/04/2022 b and 14/04/2022 c; CF SSS 15/04/2022). Rail evacuations are organised from towns with functioning railway lines, and road evacuations occur along humanitarian corridors. The Ukrainian regional administration coordinates the evacuation

efforts from Sievierodonetsk but not the surrounding areas, where community members or volunteers carry out evacuations (CF SSS 15/04/2022).

The Ukrainian Ministry of Reintegration communicates daily to confirm which corridors across the conflict-affected oblasts are open and whether buses are available or private vehicles need to be used (Iryna Vereshchuk accessed 12/04/2022; OCHA 08/04/2022; KII 09/04/2022 a). Planned evacuations through pre-established corridors have been cancelled several times when safety could not be guaranteed (OCHA 17/03/2022; Reuters 29/03/2022).

### Barriers to evacuation

The main reasons hampering the movement of people include active shelling, checkpoints, and the absence of reliable humanitarian corridors (Protection Cluster 27/03/2022). The lack of reliable information about safe routes is also a challenge, particularly for older people with limited access to social media (where most updates are shared) (KII 06/04/2022).

The financial cost of evacuations can be high because of increased fuel prices, increased rent in safe areas, and loss of income (KII 05/04/2022 d). The fact that those without access to electricity and telecommunications will not receive information on free evacuation options until aid workers or authorities personally visit them compounds these difficulties (Luhansk Regional State Administration 14/04/2022 c). People with limited mobility have a harder time evacuating because of the lack of targeted evacuations for people with special needs (KII 08/04/2022 a; CF SSS 15/04/2022).

People closer to the border with Russia are fearful of leaving because of the increased risk of conflict, shelling, mines, and shooting (KII 04/04/2022). People in occupied villages, including northern Saltvika, are unable to leave (KII 05/04/2022 a).

## RESPONSE CAPACITY

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State authorities, humanitarian organisations, and volunteers actively provide humanitarian response activities in all oblasts. There are several types of humanitarian aid provided by various responders:

- **The Ukrainian regional administration** is in charge of bringing most of the aid into the oblast, including central government supplies. The aid is delivered to aid provision centres within the cities but is unable to reach people in need that are sheltered or are in rural areas (Luhansk Regional State Administration 14/04/2022 d; CF SSS 15/04/2022).
- **NGOs** bring aid directly to the municipalities (hromadas), including rural areas (KII 06/04/2022; CF SSS 15/04/2022).
- **Volunteers** are often not linked to any organisations and work individually with private cars or buses. Their capacity covers smaller quantities but can sometimes reach areas where other responders are not present. They distribute food and medical supplies, but it is hard to confirm to which extent aid has reached people in need, as finding drivers in areas with intense fighting is becoming a challenge (CF SSS 15/04/2022). They also provide information on evacuations and humanitarian corridors to those who receive aid and to IDPs arriving to new destinations.
- **UN agencies, the Ukrainian Red Cross, and international NGOs** assist the population still in the oblasts with food and in-kind assistance (Luhansk Regional State Administration 14/04/2022 d). UN agencies work through partners to implement aid distributions (CF SSS 15/04/2022).

**In Kharkiv oblast**, there has been a daily delivery of between five to ten tons of humanitarian assistance, including medicine and medical devices, in the first weeks of April. The majority of humanitarian aid is delivered through cars and trucks, with some supplies reaching Kharkiv city by train (Office of the President of Ukraine accessed 11/04/2022; Kharkiv Regional State Administration 09/04/2022). A medical logistics hub accepts medical aid supplied by members of parliament, the Ministry of Health, donor organisations, and volunteer organisations, which they distribute to healthcare facilities across the oblast, including hospitals in Kharkiv (Kharkiv Regional State Administration 09/04/2022). Aid arrives at 23 points across Kharkiv city (Kharkiv Regional State Administration 13/04/2022). Teams of volunteers continue to provide humanitarian assistance throughout Kharkiv city and the rayons that are not occupied (KII 04/04/2022; Kharkiv City Council 07/04/2022).

**Access to Luhansk oblast** remains more difficult, and relief deliveries are less frequent. Authorities at the municipal level are providing humanitarian assistance by delivering fuel, generators, and candles from local reserves (KII 06/04/2022). On 5 April, UN agencies delivered relief to the acting administrative centre, Sievierodonetsk. Local organisations subsequently distributed this relief (CF SSS 15/04/2022).

**In Donetsk oblast**, wagons distribute bulk aid to the oblast administration, who then distributes it to the affected population. Community volunteers make smaller deliveries (PIN 25/03/2022; KII 08/04/2022C). People who themselves are sheltering in the affected areas sometimes provide assistance that can be given from a distance, such as psychological support (PIN 18/03/2022; OCHA 25/03/2022). UN agencies deliver aid in the NGCAs of Donetsk oblast through local implementing partners (OCHA 11/04/2022).

Russian officials have stated that Russia has delivered 10,807 tons of aid to NGCAs in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, as well as to Kherson and Zaporizhia oblasts (OCHA 11/04/2022). At the same time, NGCA authorities have reported distributing aid, including food packs, hygiene kits, and health assistance, to areas of Mariupol under their control (DPR Ministry of Emergency Situations 12/04/2022 and 14/04/2022). It is not possible to verify these reports.

## KEY INFORMATION GAPS

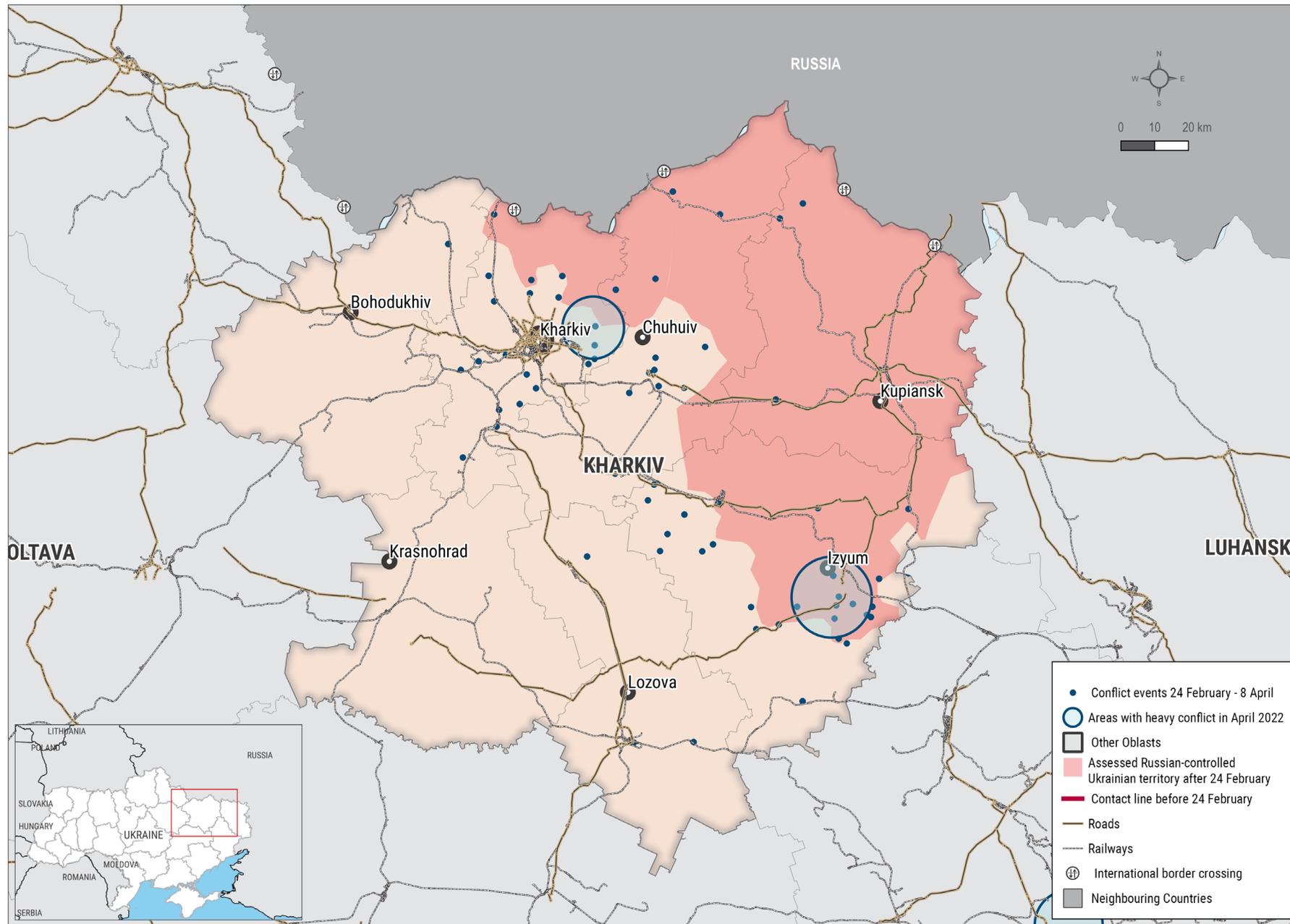
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Access constraints and communication disruptions have led to information gaps on the scale and scope of needs across the three oblasts.

Main information gaps include:

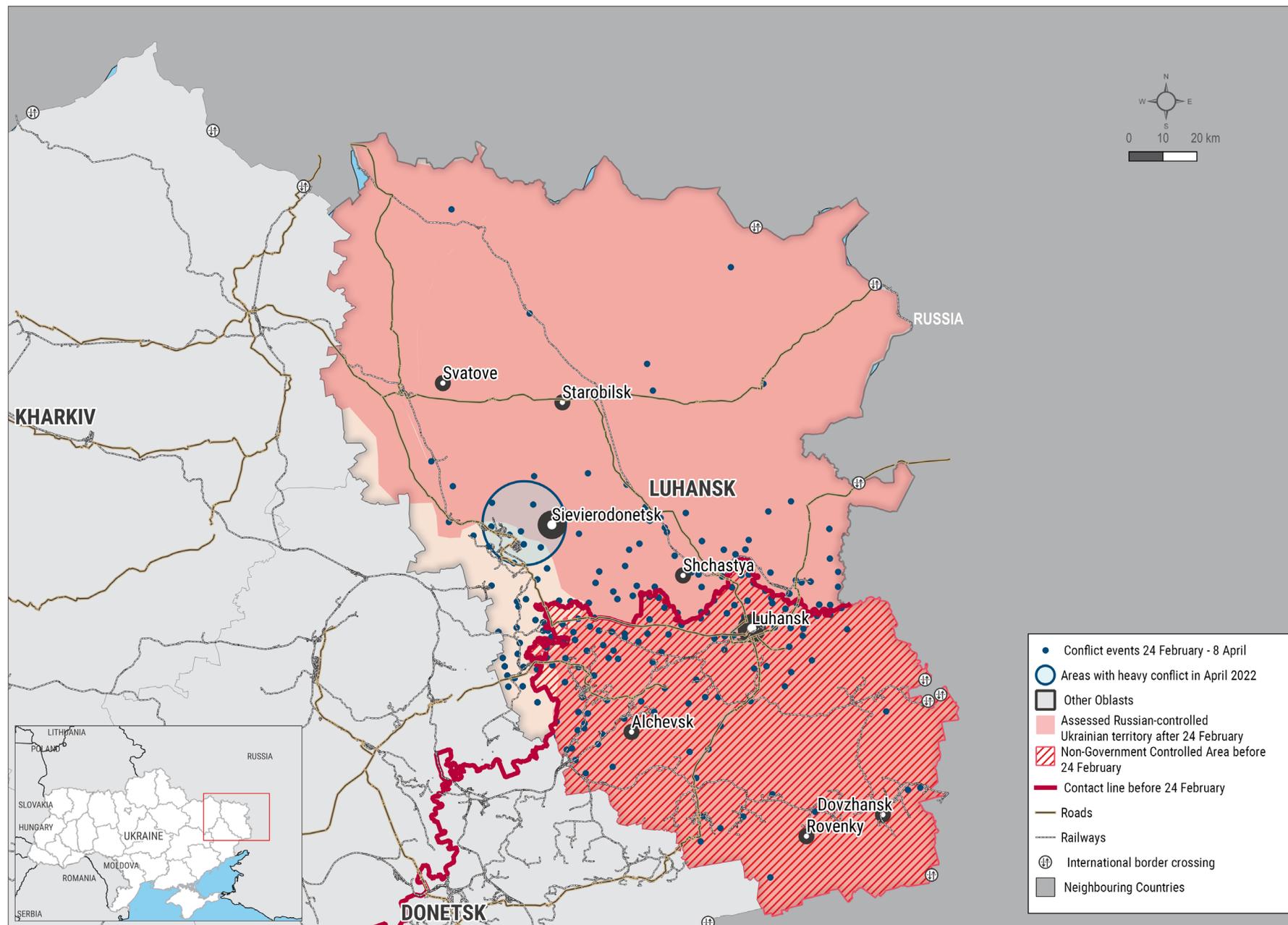
- the scale and scope of humanitarian needs, especially in Luhansk oblast and Mariupol
- the number of people displaced within the oblasts, their locations, and priority needs
- information on the local response
- the actual figure of voluntary and forced displacements from Mariupol and Donetsk GCAs towards NGCAs and Russia
- detailed information on aid distribution in NGCAs
- details on the needs and response in areas that have come under the control of Russian and NGCA forces since 24 February.

## MAP 2: CONFLICT IN GOVERNMENT- AND NON-GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED AREAS IN KHARKIV OBLAST



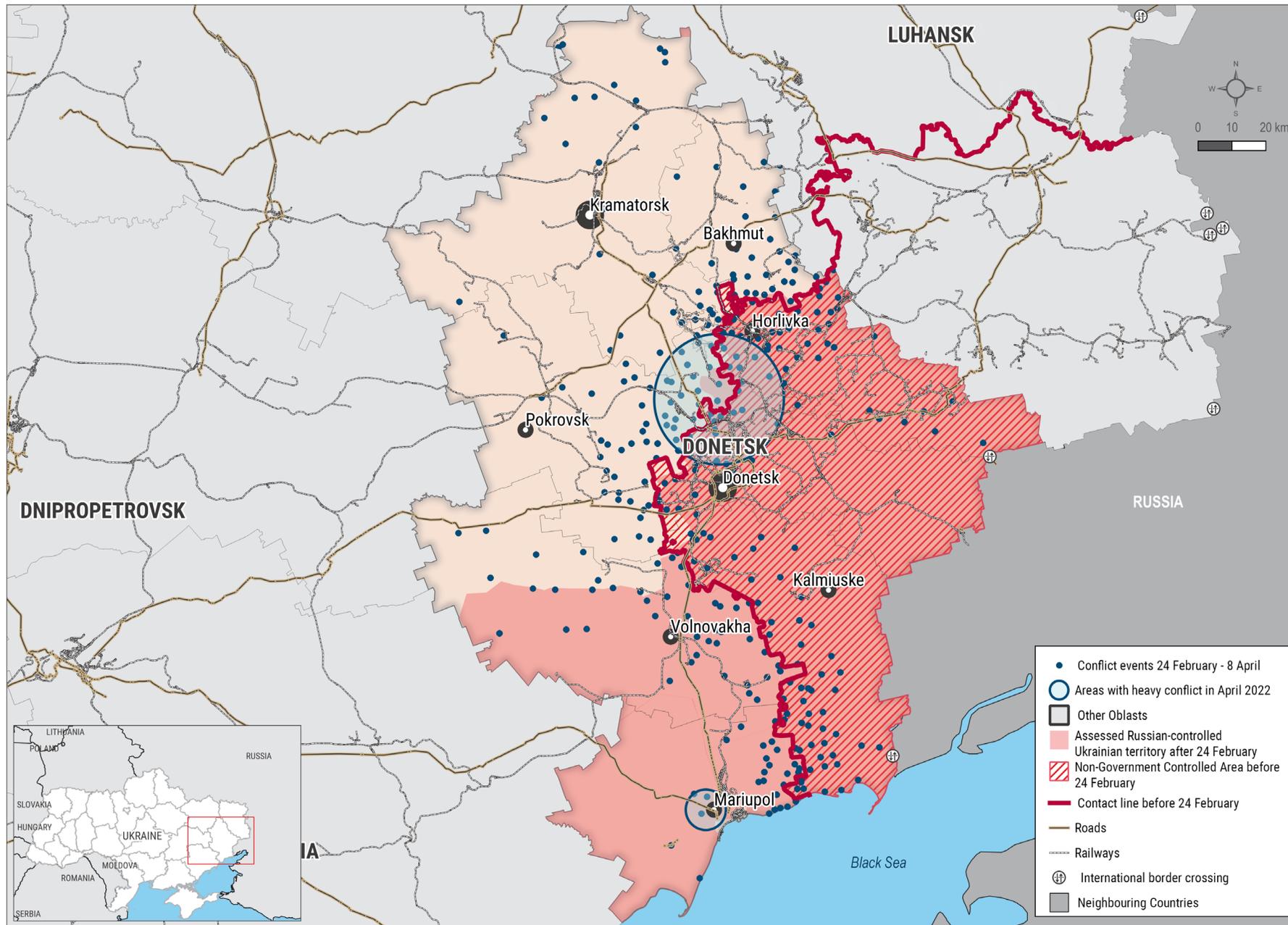
Source: ACAPS using data from OCHA 31/01/2022; OCHA 14/04/2022; ACLED accessed 18/04/2022; OCHA 9/04/2022; ISW accessed 18/04/2022.

### MAP 3: CONFLICT IN GOVERNMENT- AND NON-GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED AREAS IN LUHANSK OBLAST



Source: ACAPS using data from OCHA 31/01/2022; OCHA 14/04/2022; ACLED accessed 18/04/2022; OCHA 9/04/2022; ISW accessed 18/04/2022.

### MAP 4: CONFLICT IN GOVERNMENT- AND NON-GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED AREAS IN DONETSK OBLAST



Source: ACAPS using data from OCHA 31/01/2022; OCHA 14/04/2022; ACLED accessed 18/04/2022; OCHA 9/04/2022; ISW accessed 18/04/2022.