



# Ukraine Food Security Report

12 May 2022



World Food Programme

SAVING  
LIVES  
CHANGING  
LIVES

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## HIGHLIGHTS

The World Food Programme (WFP) has established a remote food security monitoring system in Ukraine to inform its response. Between 10 March and 12 April 2022, a total of 4,741 respondents were interviewed through a phone survey. This report presents the results of this survey, offering a snapshot in time of household food security. 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.



Nationally, **one third** of households were found to be food insecure, based on inadequate current food consumption and eroding ability to maintain adequate consumption levels in the future:



**One in five** of the surveyed households had inadequate food consumption at the time of the survey.



When combining this with households' use of coping strategies such as borrowing money or leaving valuable assets behind when displacing, as well as the reliance on erratic income sources or total income loss, food insecurity estimates rise to approximately **one in three**.



Oblasts in the eastern and southern parts of the country recorded the highest levels of food insecurity, with **one in every two households being food insecure**.



Households that are **displaced or those separated from each other** were found to be the most impacted, 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 the main source of income.



**One in four households had to borrow money** to cover their essential needs



**One in three** were forced to abandon valuable assets during their displacement journey.

This comes on a backdrop of disrupted supply chains and increasing food prices. Taken together, it suggests the current food insecurity largely arises from a lack of access and purchasing power.

Households apply various strategies to cope with a lack of food or money:



Two in every three households reported **relying on less preferred and less expensive food**



More than one-third **reduced portion sizes** to stretch out available food

**29%**

Reported that **adults restricted their consumption** to allow children to eat.



The three most frequently mentioned needs that respondents identified are:



**19%**  
Health and medicine



**19%**  
Safety



**17%**  
Transportation/Fuel



Markets are impacted by the war, and predominantly in the east.



In the northern and eastern oblasts, up to a third of people reported that shops in their **local markets were partially or fully closed** at the time of the survey.



More than half of respondents in Kyiv city and the north, east, and south oblasts reported that **some products were scarce**, mentioning food stuffs such as grains, bread, dairy, and meat.

However, evidence from WFP's work along the food supply chain suggests that after an initial shock, market actors are indeed adapting to the changed circumstances where and to the extent possible, highlighting the need for continued monitoring of market dynamics.

## BACKGROUND

Since the onset of the war on 24 February 2022, the humanitarian situation in Ukraine 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.

Eastern and southern oblasts in Ukraine continue to see active fighting. As of 2 May, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported<sup>1</sup> a total of 6,546 civilian casualties, including 3,193 killed and 3,353 injured, though actual figures are believed to be much higher.<sup>2</sup> **Critical humanitarian needs are apparent.** The destruction of civilian infrastructure is affecting essential services such as electricity, heating, and clean water and disrupting access to food and healthcare. Livelihoods are affected by disrupted markets and supply chains.<sup>3</sup> **Nearly 13.2 million have been displaced internally or across borders since the beginning of the war.** Over 5.5 million people, mostly women and children fled Ukraine until 2 May, seeking refuge in Poland, Romania, Moldova, and other neighbouring countries.<sup>4</sup> IOM estimates another 7.7 million people to be internally displaced persons (IDPs) within Ukraine as of 17 April.<sup>5</sup>

WFP has established a remote monitoring system to assess and monitor the food security situation in the country. This included rapid web surveys to guide the immediate response, followed by an initial round of remote emergency food security assessment conducted between 10 March and 12 April through phone calls using Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) technology. This phone assessment covered a representative sample of 4,741 respondents across all oblasts except Krym and Sevastopolska. This report is based on its findings. Data from other sources, including the rapid web surveys and external sources, was used to validate findings and is referenced throughout. Following the end of the first round of CATI survey data collection, continuous food security monitoring using the same technology has commenced.



<sup>1</sup> "Ukraine: Civilian Casualties as of 24:00 02 May 2022 - Ukraine," ReliefWeb, accessed May 4, 2022, <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-civilian-casualties-2400-2-may-2022-enruuk>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> WFP, "Ukraine and Neighbouring Countries - WFP External Situation Report #14 - 24 April 2022," 14, accessed April 25, 2022, <https://api.godocs.wfp.org/api/documents/feadf22233be4a75a52e8628706f1978/download/>.

<sup>4</sup> "Situation Ukraine Refugee Situation," UNHCR Data, accessed April 25, 2022, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>.

<sup>5</sup> IOM, "Ukraine - Internal Displacement Report: General Population Survey Round 3," 3, accessed April 22, 2022, [https://displacement.iom.int/sites/default/files/public/reports/IOM\\_Ukraine%20Displacement%20Report\\_R3\\_ENG%20%282%29.pdf](https://displacement.iom.int/sites/default/files/public/reports/IOM_Ukraine%20Displacement%20Report_R3_ENG%20%282%29.pdf).

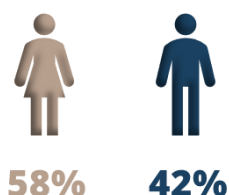
## PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS AND HOUSEHOLD DEMOGRAPHICS

Half of all survey respondents were women, and nearly half of the households surveyed reported that women are the main decision-makers in their households.

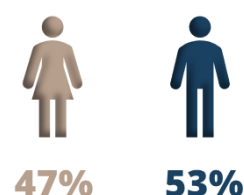
The average size of a surveyed household is 3.5 members. This is higher than the average size of 2.6 members reported by the State Statistics Service of Ukraine in 2020.<sup>6</sup> This could be caused by the fact that 19 percent of the surveyed population are hosting internally displaced relatives and friends. When grouping the reported number of household members, results showed that the majority fell in the small and medium-sized household categories.

More than one in three of the surveyed households reported being displaced from their original place of residence at the time of the survey, as a result of the war. A quarter of respondents reported being separated from other members of their households, a figure that jumps to around 50 percent for displaced households. Oblasts recording the highest proportions of separated households were found to be Zhytomyrska, Kyivska, Kharkivska as well as Kyiv city (around 30 percent each).

### SEX OF RESPONDENTS

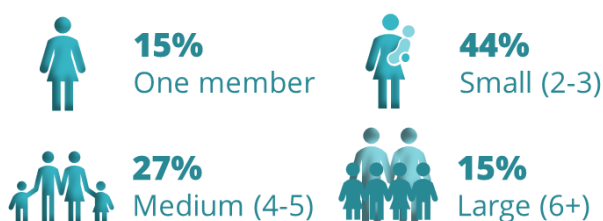


### SEX OF HOUSEHOLD DECISION MAKER

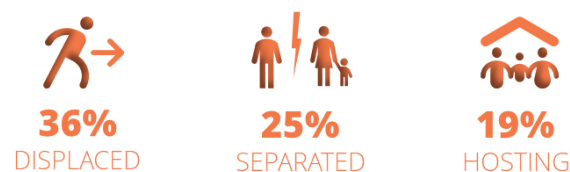


### HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Average size: 3.5 members



### RESIDENCY STATUS



## FOOD SECURITY



**At the national level, one-third of households were found to be food insecure.** This estimate is based on the remote Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security (rCARI). The rCARI classification assesses the adequacy of households' current food consumption, as well as their capacity to maintain food consumption as measured through the use of coping strategies, type of income sources, and changes in income. At the national level, one in five of the interviewed households had inadequate current food consumption at the time of the survey. When combining this with households' use of coping strategies such as borrowing money or leaving valuable assets behind when displacing, as well as relying on erratic income sources or total income loss, food insecurity estimates rise to approximately one in three, nationwide.

It is important to note that out of the 33 percent estimated to be food insecure according to the rCARI scale, only 5 percent were found to be severely food insecure, meaning facing extreme food consumption gaps or extreme loss of livelihood assets. The remaining 28 percent are moderately food insecure, i.e., experience some food consumption gaps and inability to meet food needs without applying crisis coping strategies.<sup>7</sup>

As the following section will show, findings indicate that households majorly rely on cash purchases to access food, but also that 34 percent of respondents reported no longer having an income source or depending on assistance, and that one in four needed to borrow money to meet their essential needs. This comes on a backdrop of disrupted supply chains and increasing prices. Taken together, it suggests the current food insecurity largely arises from a lack of access and purchasing power.

These findings represent the result of the first round of monitoring and offer a snapshot of the food security situation as surveyed between mid-March to mid-April. Considering the highly fluid context in Ukraine, **continuous monitoring will be carried out to understand how household food security will evolve as the situation unfolds.**

<sup>6</sup> State Statistics Service of Ukraine, "Statistical Yearbook of Ukraine 2020" [http://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat\\_u/2021/zb/11/Yearbook\\_2020\\_e.pdf](http://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_u/2021/zb/11/Yearbook_2020_e.pdf) (pg.78)

<sup>7</sup> The rCARI scale of food insecurity classifies population into four categories (food secure, marginally food secure, moderately food insecure and severely food insecure). According to rCARI food insecure is measured by combining moderately and severely food insecure population. This classification is different from IPC where population is classified into five phases using a different scale.



Map 1: Percentage of food insecure population (moderately + severely) by Oblast

Food security estimates differ between oblasts and between population groups. **Oblasts in the eastern and southern parts of the country were found to have the highest estimate levels of food insecurity**, with one in every two households being food insecure (see map 1). Luhanska stands out as the worst-off oblast in food security terms. This is also an oblast with significant access challenges, which could play a large part in the food security situation.<sup>8</sup>

Comparisons between IDPs and residents further demonstrate a higher level of food insecurity among IDPs (54%), compared to residents (23%). IDPs in the east and south are the most food insecure. In the east, 62 percent of IDPs are food insecure (14 percent severe and 48 percent moderate), while this figure is 59 percent for IDPs in the south (8 percent severe and 51 percent moderate). Furthermore, results showed that separated households have a higher level of food insecurity than those not separated from each other. **On average, one in every two separated households is food insecure compared to around one in every four non-separated households.**



The below chart shows food security by both displacement and separation status. Households that are both displaced and separated display the highest levels of food insecurity (56 percent).

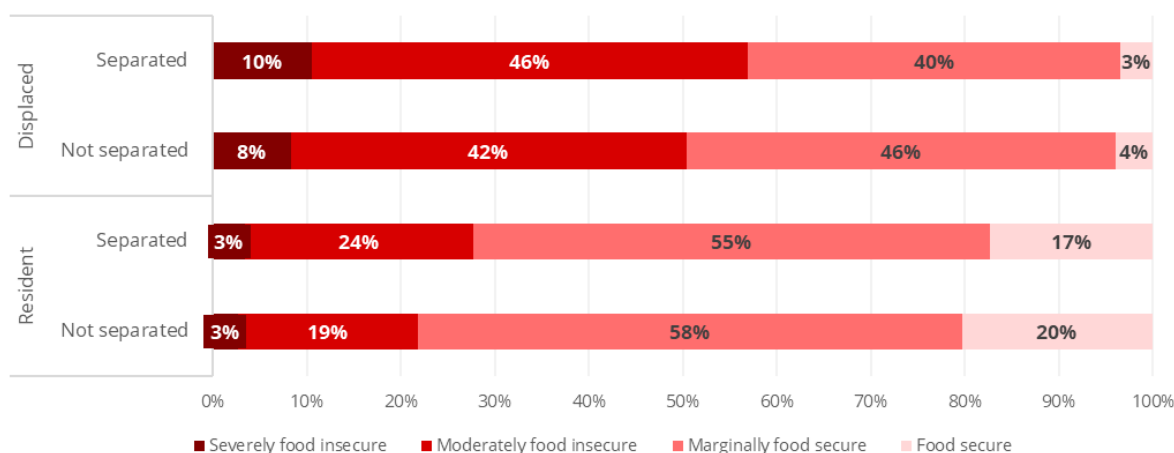


Chart 2: rCARI by household separation status

<sup>8</sup> "Humanitarian situation in Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Luhansk oblasts", [https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/20220419\\_acaps\\_thematic\\_report\\_ukraine\\_humanitarian\\_situation\\_in\\_kharkiv\\_luhansk\\_and\\_donetsk\\_0.pdf](https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/20220419_acaps_thematic_report_ukraine_humanitarian_situation_in_kharkiv_luhansk_and_donetsk_0.pdf)

Comparisons by household size show that large households tend to be more food insecure, with nearly half (44 percent) falling under the moderately or severely food insecure classifications, while households of smaller sizes have similar food insecurity levels.

No significant differences were found in the food security situation of households that have either female or male decision-makers (about a third for both).

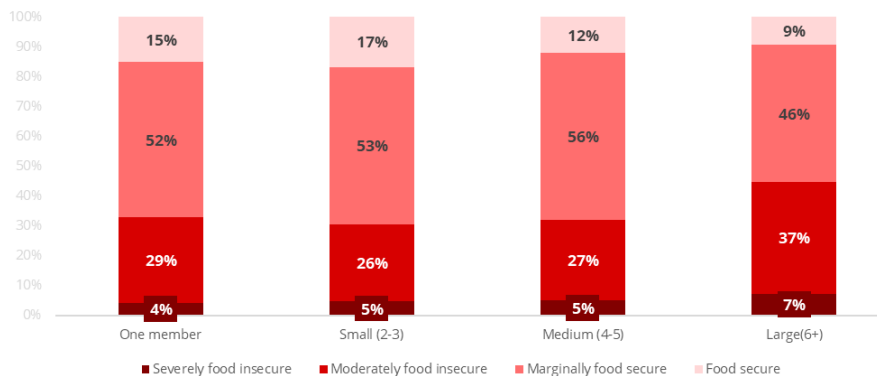


Chart 3: rCARI by household size across Ukraine

## FOOD CONSUMPTION

Overall, 21 percent of households were found to have inadequate food consumption, defined as a poor or borderline household food consumption score (see annex 1). Analyzing results by oblast, **Luhanska had the highest share of households with inadequate food consumption (47 percent)**. Meanwhile, Khersonska and Donetsk oblasts had around one-third of households with poor or borderline food consumption.



Map 4: Food consumption score (borderline and poor) by Oblast

Web survey results have echoed the above findings from the phone survey, with nearly 40 percent of IDPs residing in the eastern and southern areas consuming one meal or less the day prior, followed by 35 percent of IDPs in Kyiv.

When comparing the inadequate food consumption by residence and displacement statuses of households, no major differences were observed. Households with a female decision-maker were more likely to have a poor or borderline consumption (23 percent), compared to 19 percent of households with a male decision-maker.

Households mostly bought their food with cash (69 percent), followed by consuming their own

production (17 percent), and credit purchases (6 percent). However, this could change over time as people may exhaust the cash

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