



24 September 2014 - Kharkiv, Ukraine. Dozens of exhausted travellers lie sleeping on benches in a corner of the lobby of a Stalin-era train station. They are internally displaced people (IDP) from the conflict in eastern Ukraine, forced from their homes by the violent conflicts in the region. It is said they are three thousand, but UNHCR officials believe the real number is two to three times higher. Many simply find shelter with relatives or friends and don't alert anyone.

With a shaky ceasefire in place since last Saturday, some IDPs are now returning home – or what is left of it. The continuous fighting has indeed left a trail of destruction in the Luhansk and Donetsk region. On top of this, more than 3,000 people have died in battle since April.

But even with a peace agreement on the table, the IDPs seem to be Ukraine's forgotten people. [According to](#) UNHCR's representative in Ukraine Oldrich Andrysek, the hundreds of thousands of IDPs from east Ukraine – not to mention the 17,000 Crimean IDPs – are given neither priority nor money by a government that's preoccupied with trying to reclaim lost territory. "The government of Ukraine will do what the international community allows it to do," he says.

"I don't know what the future will bring. So far I've only been registered as an IDP. But I haven't received any help from the government. We don't know where to live anymore," a worried woman told UNHCR. "We can't go home because the trains don't go there and, if we go, there's no gas, the windows are broken. So we won't have any heat. What will we do this winter? It's horrible. We don't know."

The question thus remains if their situation will improve any time soon. [According to](#) Al Jazeera's Robin Forestier-Walker many rebel-held towns rely on gas that flows from Ukrainian government-controlled areas. "That is why [separatists] resent the current ceasefire," he said. "They want control of the entire Donetsk region." According to locals, however, it's relatively safe now. "It's been quiet for a week-and-a-half. Well, of course, there's been shooting. But it's quiet."

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