



PULSE OF PEACE IN DONBAS

monthly newsletter

- COVID-19: analysis and useful links
- News of CivilM+ and member organizations
- Political processes and situation in the conflict zone
- Legislative initiatives and analyses on the conflict
- Human dimension of the conflict
- Interviews and journalist

COVID-19: analysis and useful links

According to the [Ministry of Health](#) of Ukraine, as of September 24, 2,767 people were registered with COVID-19 in the part of the Donetsk region controlled by Ukraine, and 841 people were registered in the controlled part of the Luhansk region. As of September 24, the self-proclaimed "DPR" [announced](#) 3146 cases of coronavirus, and the "LPR" about 843 cases. As of September 30, the Donetsk and Luhansk regions are [classified](#) as "green" and "yellow" zones of epidemiological danger.

The situation with the checkpoints between the parts of Donbas controlled and temporarily not controlled by the government of Ukraine remains difficult. Thus, Denis Pushilin, the leader of the so-called "DPR", [said](#) that the checkpoints in the Donetsk region would remain closed. At the moment, crossing is possible only twice a week and only through the Elenovka checkpoint near Donetsk, which is connected by a road corridor with the Ukrainian checkpoint Novotroitskoye. The difficulties faced by the civilian population at the checkpoints in August are described in the ["Right to Defense"](#) report and in the new [report](#) from the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission.

As part of the university admissions campaign, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine [decided](#) to abolish self-isolation at the crossing of the checkpoint for applicants from

the occupied territories. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has published a [report](#) which analyzes statistics on coronavirus on both sides of the contact line, as well as children's right to education in connection with the pandemic.

Osnat Lubrani, UN resident coordinator in Ukraine, [called](#) on all parties of the conflict to assist people with special needs on their passage through the checkpoints. The statement was issued on the occasion of International Peace Day. UN reports that the number of people who crossed the contact line in August is 93% lower than in the same month in previous year.

News of CivilM + and member organizations

- September 5, 2020 – the “Opinion Festival” in Sievierodonetsk hosted a [discussion](#) “Mayors of the Russian spring: are local authorities responsible for the events of 2014?” and a [public talk](#) “When I grow up, I will also go to the war: how to break this vicious circle?”. Representatives of the Eastern Ukrainian Center for Public Initiatives, East-SOS and Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union were among the speakers (*text in Russian and Ukrainian*)
- September 22, 2020 – the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the Kharkiv Human Rights Group (KhPG) made a [submission](#) to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) under Article 15 of the Rome Statute on crimes committed against prisoners in prisons located in the parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions temporarily not controlled by the government of Ukraine (*text in Ukrainian*)

Political processes and situation in the conflict zone

Minsk process

- 2 September, 2020 - a regular meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) was held in the format of a video conference, at which a framework decision on mine action was agreed, as well as the coordinates of 19 priority demining sites and the next four areas for disengagement of forces and equipment. The head of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (OSCE SMM) Yashar Halit Cevik noted that the parties adhere to a full and comprehensive ceasefire regime (*text in [Ukrainian](#), [Russian](#) and [English](#)*)
- September 9, 2020 - an [extraordinary](#) meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group was held in the format of a video conference in order to prevent the breakdown of a complete and comprehensive ceasefire. The participants of the consultations agreed on a joint inspection in the area of the Shumy settlement with the participation of a representative of the OSCE coordinator. The office of the President of Ukraine [declared](#) that it is safe for Ukraine to carry out such an

inspection. However, this decision [was criticised](#). On September 10, the Office of the President of Ukraine [announced](#) the [cancellation](#) of the inspection due to new [requirements](#) from Russia and the so-called "L/DPR" (*text in Ukrainian, Russian and English*)

- President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky [said](#) that Ukraine would not succumb to Russia's blackmail in negotiations of the TCG, but is ready to seek a balance. He also expressed hope that a meeting of political advisors to the “Normandy Four” national leaders will be held in the near future, however, this hope has not yet been shared by the [Kremlin](#) (*text in Russian*)

Other events

- August 31, 2020 - court hearings on the crash of the Boeing MH17 have been [resumed](#) (*text in Russian*)
- September 11, 2020 - a meeting of political advisors to the “Normandy Four” national leaders was held. It included a discussion on the status of implementation of the Paris Summit, held in 2019, and preparations for the next Summit. Andrey Ermak, head of the Ukrainian president's office, [said](#) that the main outcome of the meeting is the agreement to extend the ceasefire regime in the Donbas (*text in Russian*)
- September 15, 2020 – a street [protest](#) took place in Kyiv regarding the requirement to adopt bill No. 2698 "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine regarding the Implementation of International Criminal and Humanitarian Law", organized by former prisoners and representatives of non-governmental organizations (*text in Russian*)
- September 22, 2020 - a meeting was held between the President of Ukraine and the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Its main focus was the peaceful settlement of the conflict in eastern Ukraine (*text in Ukrainian, Russian and English*)
- September 22, 2020 - UN urges parties of the conflict to fully respect the ceasefire, as stated in the 30th report of the UN Monitoring Mission on human rights. The report covers the period from February 16 to July 31, 2020 (*text in Ukrainian, Russian, English*)
- September 22, 2020 - in his speech at the UN on the occasion of its 75th anniversary, President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky [stated](#) that Russian aggression against Donbas means that the world did not learn the lessons of World War II (*text in Ukrainian*)
- September 24, 2020 - according to the OSCE SMM 1309 cases of violation of the ceasefire regime have been [recorded](#) since the moment of its announcement. UN previously [reported](#) that no civilians have been killed or injured since August 1, 2020 (*text in Russian*)

Legislative initiatives and analyses on the conflict

- According to the UN [OHCHR](#)'s response to the inquiry of Radio Liberty, for the period from April 14, 2014 to July 31, 2020 at least 13,100-13,300 people have been killed and are considered as war victims. Among them there are at least 3,367 civilians, including those 298 who were killed on board of the MH17 flight. The total number also includes approximately 4,150 people of Ukrainian military personnel and approximately 5,700 - of armed supporters of the so-called "L/DPR". UN also reports about 29,500-33,500 of wounded, including 7000-9000 civilians, 9700-10700 - Ukrainian military men and 12700-13700 - armed supporters of the so-called "L/DPR" (*text in Ukrainian*)
- September 2, 2020 - The Government of Ukraine adopted the Resolution No. 767, which changes the procedure for providing and determining the amount of monetary assistance to people affected by the conflict. The report is [analyzed](#) by the "Right to Protection" charitable foundation. The Ukrainian Ministry for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories has developed step by step [instructions](#) on how to receive this compensation (*text in Ukrainian*)
- September 13, 2020 - the head of the office of President of Ukraine Andrey Yermak spoke about the possible imminent [exchange](#) of detained persons according to the formula "100 for 100". This formula, as well as the access of the representatives of the Red Cross to persons held in the territory of the so-called "L/DPR" was agreed upon during the previous TCG meeting. Later, the Red Cross [reported](#) that access to prisoners had still not been granted (*text in Russian*)
- September 14, 2020 - the [decision](#) of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine "On the National Security Strategy of Ukraine" came into force. The restoration of peace, territorial integrity and state sovereignty in the temporarily occupied territories in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions was named a priority for the national security of Ukraine (*text in Ukrainian*)
- September 16, 2020 - Russia's Levada Center published the results of a [survey](#) "Friends and enemies of Russia" held in August 2020. Ukraine ranks second in list of enemies after the US (*text in Russian*)
- September 18, 2020 - Alexei Reznikov, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories made a keynote speech in the Verkhovna Rada, in which he mentioned the work of the Trilateral Contact Group and the process of reintegration of Donbas ([video](#) and [text](#) in *Ukrainian and Russian*)
- The United Nations Monitoring Mission launched a thematic [report](#) on human rights violations in the administration of justice in criminal cases related to the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine. According to the study, irregularities in such cases occur on both sides. In the territory controlled by the Ukrainian government, there are many violations of the rights to liberty and security of a person, and of the right to effective legal protection. In the territory controlled by the so-called "L/DPR", neither the "legislation" nor its practical application ensure the observance of the basic elements of the right to a fair trial and related human rights (*text in [Ukrainian](#) and English*)

- International Crisis Group published the [report](#) “Peace in Ukraine (III): the cost of the war in Donbas”, [analyzing](#) the economic consequences of the conflict (*text in English, Ukrainian and Russian*)
- According to the results of a [survey](#) conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology in cooperation with the ZMINA Center for Human Rights, 53% of respondents believe that cooperation with the authorities of the so-called “L/DPR” should be a subject of criminal responsibility only for those people whose direct responsibility in military and other serious crimes will be proven in court (*text in Ukrainian*)
- Charitable Foundation “East-SOS” published a [report](#) on the work of the “Hotline” on fixing violations by law enforcement agencies in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions in August 2020 (*text in Ukraine*)
- Charitable Foundation “Right to Defense” (“Pravo na zachist”) published a report “Monitoring of checkpoints in eastern Ukraine” for the first 6 months of 2020, based on a study conducted at five checkpoints between government-controlled and non-government-controlled territory of Ukraine (*text in Ukrainian and English*)
- Public holding "Group of Influence" ("Grupa vplyvu") published a [bulletin](#) "Electoral rights of IDPs and labor migrants" for July-August 2020 (*text in Ukrainian*)
- Charitable Foundation "East-SOS" published a review of human rights violations in the temporarily occupied parts of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions in August 2020 (*text in Ukrainian and Russian*)
- Media Detector published an [overview](#) of the spread of Russian propaganda into Ukrainian media space in August 2020 (*text in Ukrainian*)

Human dimension of the conflict

- The International Committee of the Red Cross in Ukraine presented the [project](#) “My children have never seen a peaceful sky”, dedicated to children born in the first year of the conflict in eastern Ukraine. This September many of them went to school for the first time (*text in Russian*)
- Ukrainian human rights organizations have developed a package of [proposals](#) to improve the conditions of the admissions campaign to Ukrainian universities for young people from the territories temporarily not controlled by the Ukrainian government. The problems of the current campaign were discussed at the [press conference](#) "Opening the campaign - 2020: is Ukrainian education more accessible to young people from the occupied territories" (*text in Ukrainian*)
- September 21, 2020 - a [marathon](#) took place in Kyiv in support of Ukrainian citizens detained in the Russian Federation, in Crimea and in the so-called "L/DPR" (*text in Ukrainian*)
- September 21, 2020 - an international peace initiative "Give peace a chance", formerly known as "Lights of Eirene", made an [appeal](#) to not forget about the

victims of the conflict in Ukraine. The appeal was a part of wider action planned to coincide with International Peace Day (*text in Russian*)

Interviews and journalism

- President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky gave an interview to the Austrian newspaper Wiener Zeitung: “It is necessary to end the war faster, and today it depends on the parties to the Normandy Four (*text in [German](#), [English](#) and [Ukrainian](#)*)
- What happens to people held in prisons in the temporarily uncontrolled territories in the [article](#) by “News of Donbas” (*text in Russian*)
- “Is economic development of Donbas possible without Luhansk and Donetsk?” - [opinion](#) from the chair of the board of the Institute for Economic Research and Political Consulting (*text in Russian*)
- Deputy Prosecutor General of Ukraine Gunduz Mamedov [said](#) in an interview with Radio Liberty that more than 100 mercenaries from more than 30 countries are fighting on the side of illegal armed groups in Donbas (*text in Ukrainian*)
- OSCE SMM publishes another set stories from the series “Women on the Contact Line” dedicated to the life and work of female civil society activists and OSCE SMM and observers (*text in [Ukrainian](#), [Russian](#), [English](#)*)
- A dystopian movie “[Atlantis](#)” about Donbas directed by Valery Vasyanovich was nominated for an Oscar from Ukraine (*text in Russian*)
- [Publication](#) by “Donbas News” about the life of internally displaced persons after moving (*text in Russian*)
- Portal "OstroV" talks with the innovators of the [Luhansk Contemporary Diaspora](#), a cultural initiative acting on both sides of the contact line (*text in Russian*)
- Civil society activist from Ukraine Tatiana Barantsova became a regional [winner](#) of the Fridtjof Nansen competition for refugees in Europe for her work in supporting people with disabilities and IDP children affected by the conflict in Donbas (*text in English*)

About CivilM +

The international CivilM + platform was established in 2017. It unites 19 organizations and three independent experts from Ukraine, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia and France. Within the CivilM + network, they contribute to the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Donbas. In particular, they inform their governments and communities about the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, implement projects in the spheres of peacebuilding, transitional justice, dialogue and human rights. Follow the platform news on CivilM + [Website](#) and [Facebook](#) page.

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The opinions expressed in journalistic materials may not coincide with the opinions of the authors of the newsletter.



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