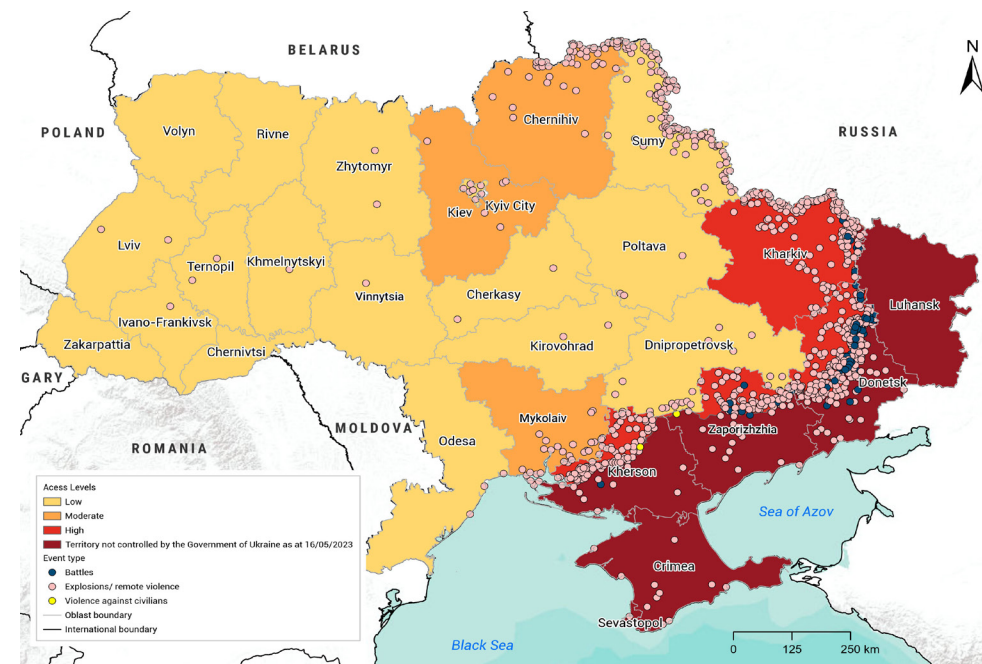# UKRAINE
Quarterly humanitarian access update

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- **Attacks on humanitarian responders** and their premises have increased, including in Odesa and Mykolaiv oblasts, away from the front lines.

- **Shifting front lines** in areas of high conflict create a dynamic access situation, which can disrupt access small localities. Since the start of 2023, access to 60,000 people in 40 towns and villages in eastern Ukraine has been disrupted (OCHA 26/05/2023).

- **Requirements for Russian passports** continue to restrict access to basic services in areas under Russian control. De facto authorities use threats, deny access to services, and promise benefits to pressure the population into acquiring Russian passports.

- **Shelling, air strikes, and the presence of mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO)** remain the main drivers of access constraints, especially in oblasts along the front line. Safety and security concerns limit the movement of civilians and humanitarian responders. Damage to civilian infrastructure affects service delivery.

- **The destruction of the Kakhovka dam and power plant** on 6 June 2023 caused flooding in Kherson and Mykolaiv oblasts. Humanitarian responders do not have access to the affected population in Russian-controlled areas, and floods have disrupted services, including piped water, in the affected areas.

- **The Ukrainian counteroffensive started in June 2023**. A more dynamic access situation is expected in areas of heightened conflict activity, although the overall access situation remains unchanged, as Ukrainian forces have not yet retaken any major population centres (NYT 23/06/2023; ISW 22/06/2023).

Humanitarian access severity in Ukraine as at 31 May 2023

Source: ACAPS using data from ISW 31/05/2023; ACLED accessed 31/05/2023

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ABOUT THIS REPORT

Aim

This report aims to compare access challenges across different oblasts in Ukraine to inform humanitarian responders and support their decision-making. It is part of our quarterly analysis of access constraints; our previous report was published on 16 March 2023.

Methodology

This analysis is based on changes in the access severity model between 1 March and 31 May 2023, which ACAPS developed using data collected from publicly available secondary sources.

Some of the analysis for Kherson oblast goes beyond 31 May to cover the access impacts of the destruction of Kakhovka dam.

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

This report coincides with the public release of ACAPS' Access Severity Model API that provides all of our oblast-level access severity scores since March 2022.

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

Limitations

Access scores in this report are based on the new API methodology and are not comparable with severity scores from previous reports. The analysis relies primarily on publicly available data, which is unlikely to be comprehensive because of the dynamic conflict situation.

ACCESS TRENDS AND FIGURES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Key figures

Oblasts with the highest number of recorded access events between March–May 2023:

- Kherson (207 events, 27% of total events)
- Donetsk (189 events, 24%)
- Kharkiv (110 events, 14%).

Most recurrent access events between March–May 2023:

- In oblasts along the front-line: violence affecting civilians (208 events, 33% of total events in these oblasts), targeting of civilian infrastructure and public services (121 events, 19%), landmine and UXO casualties (101 events, 11%).
- In the rest of the country: violence affecting civilians (40 events, 27% of events inthese oblasts), targeting of civilian infrastructure and public services (31 events, 21%), landmine and UXO contamination (21 events, 14% of events).

Attacks on humanitarian responders and volunteers: ACAPS recorded seven publicly reported incidents that injured humanitarian responders, including volunteers, in Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Kherson oblasts between March–May 2023. Altogether, these incidents injured ten responders and volunteers and killed one volunteer (The Kyiv Independent 03/03/2023; Forbes 01/03/2023; Ukrainska Pravda 14/04/2023 a, 16/03/2023, and 27/03/2023 a; TVN24 18/03/2023; OCHA 03/03/2023).

In several instances, Russian strikes destroyed or damaged humanitarian facilities away from the front lines. On 7 May, an attack damaged a mobile hospital of the Ukrainian Red Cross in Mykolaiv, forcing the organisation to operate from another location. On 8 May, a missile attack hit a 1,000m2 warehouse of the Ukrainian Red Cross in Odesa. This attack injured two people and killed one. The resulting fire destroyed all humanitarian aid stored on the premises. This led to the temporary suspension of humanitarian aid provision in the oblast (ICRC Ukraine Facebook 08/05/2023). On 13 May, missiles destroyed a warehouse holding food assistance in Ternopil (Christian Aid accessed 16/05/2023).

ACCESS TRENDS AT THE OBLAST LEVEL

The following table 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:

OBLAST	ACCESS OF PEOPLE IN NEED TO AID AND SERVICES	ACCESS OF HUMANITARIANS TO PEOPLE IN NEED	SECURITY AND PHYSICAL CONSTRAINTS	ACCESS SCORE
Donetsk	4.4	5.0	3.4	**4.3**
Kharkiv	4.4	4.3	2.8	**3.8**
Kherson	4.5	5.0	2.9	**4.1**
Luhansk	4.5	3.9	2.5	**3.6**
Zaporizhzhia	5.0	4.0	2.8	**4.0**

This table lists the humanitarian access severity scores for oblasts with the highest access constraints without accounting for the authority in control of the territory (all scores range from 0–5); please refer to the methodology for a scoring description:

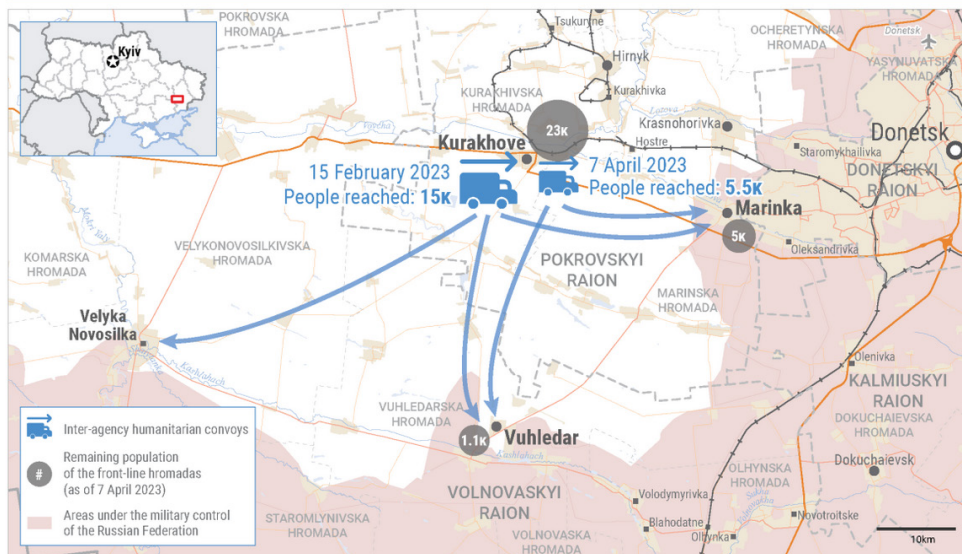| OBLAST	ACCESS OF PEOPLE IN NEED TO AID AND SERVICES	ACCESS OF HUMANITARIANS TO PEOPLE IN NEED	SECURITY AND PHYSICAL CONSTRAINTS	ACCESS SCORE
Donetsk	2.9	5.0	3.4	**3.8**
Kharkiv	2.9	3.6	2.8	**3.1**
Kherson	3.0	4.3	2.9	**3.4**
Luhansk	3.0	3.2	2.5	**2.9**
Zaporizhzhia	3.5	3.4	2.8	**3.2**

Donetsk oblast

- Access severity score: 4.3/5.0
- Access score trend since February 2023: no significant change
- Raions with the highest number of recorded access events: Bakhmut, Kramatorsk, Pokrovsk
- Most recurrent access events: violence targeting civilians.

Between March–May 2023, ground conflict in Ukraine was centred in Donetsk oblast (77% of reported armed clashes in the country), with most incidents occurring in Avdiivka, Bakhmut, Lyman, Marinka, Ocheretyne, and Soledar hromadas (ACLED accessed 31/05/2023). Ground conflict and shelling affected civilians, causing casualties, damaging and destroying homes, and restricting movements. Despite the heavy fighting, there were minimal changes to the front line between March–May 2023 (ISW 01/03/2023 and 31/05/2023).

The intensity of the conflict has disrupted access in several cities:

- The situation is particularly critical in **Avdiivka,** where 2,000 people remained as at 24 March (OCHA 24/03/2023). On 27 March, Ukrainian authorities closed off access to the city for volunteers and journalists because of increasing insecurity (Ukrainska Pravda 27/03/2023 b). During the same period, Ukrainian authorities cut off mobile phone service in the city to minimise potential communication of information to Russian forces (Ukrainska Pravda 26/03/2023). The violence is preventing debris-clearing vehicles from entering the city, making it extremely difficult to pull people out from under the rubble of destroyed buildings (Ukrainska Pravda 01/05/2023).

- 5,000 civilians remain in **Marinka** hromada, where constant shelling disrupts the provision of water, gas, and electricity. 1,100 civilians remain in **Vuhledar** hromada, where a lack of phone and internet connectivity makes it more difficult for humanitarians and civilians to coordinate. For both of these frontline hromadas, the nearest town that humanitarian convoys can reach is **Kurakhove**, around 10–20km away, where mobile units have provided aid and assistance to the affected population of all three towns (OCHA 03/05/2023).

- Chasiv Yar is the closest town to the Bakhmut front line that international humanitarian responders can reach (ICRC 22/03/2023).

Humanitarian situation in Marinka, Vuhledar and Kurakhove (Donetska Oblast)

Source: OCHA (accessed 27/06/2023)

On 18 March, an attack hit a bus of Polish volunteers carrying humanitarian aid on the Kostiantynivka-Chasiv Yar route, killing one volunteer and injuring another (Ukrainska Pravda 27/03/2023 a). A rocket attack on Kostiantynivka on 16 March also killed one volunteer (Ukrainska Pravda 16/03/2023).

On 5 May, five people came under fire as the Ukrainian police and the State Emergency Service evacuated them from Bakhmut, killing an older woman (Ukrainska Pravda 05/05/2023 a). Shelling also hit schools, hospitals, administrative buildings, and other civilian infrastructure (ACAPS accessed 31/05/2023).

In areas of Donetsk under Russian control, a lack of drinking water is regularly reported (Ukrinform 22/03/2023). In Mariupol, residents lack access to healthcare. They report a shortage in medicines, doctors, and medical equipment (Mariupol City Council Telegram 07/04/2023).

Kharkiv oblast

- Access severity score 3.8/5.0
- Access score trend: no significant change
- Raions with the highest number of recorded access events: Chuhuiv, Izium, Kupiansk
- Most recurrent access events: landmine and UXO victims, violence targeting civilians

Areas of Kharkiv closer to the front lines and the Russian border continue to be heavily shelled, particularly Dvorichna, Lyptsi, Petropavlivka, and Vovchansk hromadas (ACLED accessed 31/05/2023). The shelling causes civilian casualties, damages civilian infrastructure (including schools and hospitals), and causes electricity disruptions, particularly for frontline communities.

ACAPS recorded 49 casualties (injuries and fatalities) resulting from landmines and UXO in Kharkiv oblast between March–May 2023, the second highest among all oblasts, with most occurring in Izium raion. The actual number of casualties is likely higher (LB 02/03/2023; Oleg Sinegubov Telegram 04/03/2023, 07/03/2023, 13/03/2023, 25/03/2023, 01/04/2023, 05/04/2023, 06/04/2023, 12/04/2023, 15/04/2023, 19/04/2023, and 11/05/2023; Korrespondent 11/03/2023, 14/03/2023, 17/03/2023, 22/03/2023 a, 24/03/2023, 26/03/2023, 28/03/2023, and 29/03/2023; Ukrainska Pravda 23/03/2023, 28/03/2023, 06/04/2023, 07/04/2023, 08/04/2023 a, 09/04/2023, 21/05/2023, and 26/05/2023; Kharkiv Regional Prosecutor's Office Telegram 27/04/2023; State Emergency Service of Ukraine Facebook 06/05/2023).

Attacks injured two volunteers assisting with evacuations in April, one in Dvorichna and another in Kucherivka, both in Kupiansk raion (Ukrainska Pravda 14/04/2023).

Kherson oblast

- Access severity score 4.1/5.0
- Access score trend: slight deterioration
- Raions with the highest number of recorded access events: Beryslav, Kherson
- Most recurrent access events: violence targeting civilians, landmine and UXO victims, presence of areas under Russian control, targeting of hospitals and other civilian facilities

Russian forces continue to heavily shell the right bank of Kherson oblast, particularly Beryslav, Bilozerka, Kherson, Novooleksandrivka, and Tiahynka hromadas (ACLED accessed 31/05/2023). Civilians are likely to limit their movements to minimise physical security risks.

Areas where people congregate, such as markets and humanitarian distribution centres, sometimes become shelling targets. On 18 April 2023, shelling of the central market in Kherson city killed one person and injured nine (Ukrainska Pravda 18/04/2023). There were also reports of attacks on humanitarian aid distributions on 2 March in Kozatske village and on 10 March in Kherson city (Kherson RMA Telegram 02/03/2023 and 10/03/2023).

Ukrainian authorities have banned families with children from entering certain settlements in Beryslav and Kherson raions, mostly those along the bank of Dnipro River, to halt a recent trend of people returning to areas with heavy shelling (Ukrainska Pravda 04/04/2023).

Between March–May in Kherson oblast, at least ten shelling incidents hit medical facilities, and nine hit educational facilities, likely causing damage and temporarily disrupting health and education services (ACAPS accessed 31/05/2023).

Russian fire injured six humanitarian responders and volunteers operating along the right bank of Dnipro River in March. On 2 March, shelling of Kozatske village injured two volunteers from a local NGO, along with nine other people (OCHA 03/03/2023; Kherson Regional Prosecutor's Office Facebook 02/03/2023). In Zmiivka village, shelling injured one volunteer on 1 March and three others on 3 March (Forbes 01/03/2023; The Kyiv Independent 03/03/2023).

ACAPS recorded 56 casualties (injuries and fatalities) resulting from landmines and UXO in Kherson oblast between March–May 2023, the highest among all oblasts, with most occurring in Kherson and Beryslav raions. The actual number of casualties is likely higher (Korrespondent 02/03/2023, 03/03/2023, 06/03/2023, 13/03/2023, 15/03/2023, 20/03/2023, 22/03/2023 b, 30/03/2023, 07/04/2023, and 02/05/2023; Ukrainska Pravda 10/03/2023, 13/03/2023, 15/04/2023, 22/04/2023, 27/04/2023, 11/05/2023, 14/05/2023, and 15/05/2023; Kherson RMA Telegram 17/03/2023, 26/03/2023, 03/04/2023, 14/05/2023, 17/05/2023, and 20/05/2023; Olexandr Prokudin Telegram 20/03/2023 and 31/03/2023; Ukrinform 12/04/2023; Beryslav Raion Administration Telegram 18/04/2023, 20/04/2023, and 23/04/2023).

During the reporting period, reports indicated that Russian forces were preparing for civilian evacuation from certain parts of Kherson under their control, namely Skadovsk and Melitopol, towards Crimea. While there were no reports of large population movements in Russian-controlled parts of Kherson, there were reports that staff employed by the de facto authorities were leaving Skadovsk, potentially leaving the local population without access to certain services (Ukrainska Pravda 08/05/2023 a). At the same time, while preparing for evacuations in Melitopol and Skadovsk, Russian forces surveyed the local population, gathering data on residents' permits and whether or not they held Russian passports (Ukrainska Pravda 08/04/2023 b). This survey may have exposed parts of the population to further harassment based on their documentation.

Russian forces continue to enact policies to push the population in territories under their control towards acquiring Russian passports. In Kherson oblast, these policies include threats of deportation and expropriation, the forced re-registration of vehicles under Russian regulations with Russian passports, the denial of medical services, and the promise of financing resettlement in other areas of Russia (Ukrainska Pravda 03/05/2023 and 14/04/2023 b; Resistance Center 08/04/2023 and 07/04/2023; Ukrinform 19/04/2023).

Access events following the destruction of the Kakhovka dam and power plant

On 6 June, an explosion destroyed the Kakhovka power plant and breached the nearby dam, causing flooding downstream along Dnipro River. The flooding mostly affected Kherson but also reached Mykolaiv oblast (BBC 08/06/2023). The flood peaked at 8.5m on 8 June and had receded by 22 June, although 200 houses remain inundated in areas of Kherson under the control of the Government of Ukraine. The flood has displaced 4,000 people from Kherson and Mykolaiv oblasts (OCHA accessed 22/06/2023; REACH 16/06/2023). In the medium term, an increased risk of floodwater transporting hazardous materials and causing environmental contamination, disease outbreaks, and water supply disruptions is expected (REACH 16/06/2023). There is no access to Russian-controlled areas (OCHA accessed 22/06/2023).

Reduced access to piped water the flooding of Kherson oblast and the decreasing water levels in the Kakhovka reservoir have left tens of thousands of people without access to piped water. This service disruption extends beyond Kherson oblast to neighbouring oblasts throughout southern Ukraine (OCHA accessed 27/06/2023). The nearly 750,000 people who relied on the Kakhovka reservoir will need a new 150km pipeline to provide them water (OCHA accessed 22/06/2023). The lack of clean water and inadequate access to sanitation increase the risk of disease outbreaks (REACH 16/06/2023).

Shelling from Russian forces hit civilians and volunteers evacuating civilians and people providing assistance (Ukrainska Pravda 10/06/2023 and 14/06/2023 a). Attacks also targeted a boat evacuating people from the Russian-controlled left bank, killing three people and injuring 23 (Censor 11/06/2023).

Lack of access to areas under Russian control: the UN has not received security guarantees from Russian forces that would enable response operations. Ukrainian volunteers have not been granted access (UN 13/06/2023; Espreso 12/06/2023). Even volunteers in Russian-controlled territories were not allowed to access some of the most affected areas, though some managed to locate alternative routes and help rescue some people (IStories 07/06/2023).

Reports indicate multiple impediments to the free movement of the flood-affected population and humanitarian responders in Kherson oblast. These include the Russian military demanding money from volunteers to evacuate civilians (Espreso 09/06/2023; Ukrainska Pravda 14/06/2023 b). The Russian military have also prevented people in Velyka Kardashynka and Hola Prystan towns from returning to their homes and, in Oleshky town, have only allowed those with Russian passports to leave (Resistance Center 11/06/2023 and 13/06/2023).

On the first day following the dam's destruction, the de facto authorities in Russian-controlled areas of Kherson downplayed the potential impact of the floods, potentially slowing down initial response and evacuation efforts. Russian authorities only called for large-scale evacuation efforts on the second day of the flood. Despite these calls, many residents remained stranded on rooftops without access to assistance (IStories 07/06/2023).

The risk posed by mines and UXO has increased significantly, as the floods have dislodged mines planted along the banks of Dnipro River and carried them ashore. Movement may cause them to explode unexpectedly. All flooded areas and new shorelines are at risk (Ukrinform 08/06/2023).

Maps highlighting the number of access events in Kherson at the raion level can be found in the annex of this report.

Luhansk oblast

- Access severity score 3.6/5.0
- Access score trend: slight improvement
- Raions with the highest number of recorded access events: Alchevsk, Luhansk, Shchastia, Starobilsk
- Most recurrent access events: presence of areas under Russian control

Russian forces control most of the oblast, meaning there is little publicly available information on humanitarian access constraints in the oblast. The lack of information has resulted in relatively low access severity scores in pillars 2 and 3, although constraints are likely to be high, as the high scores in pillar 1 reflect.

Conflict intensity has remained stable between March–May 2023 after increasing between December 2022 and February 2023. Most armed clashes occur in Krasnorichenske, Kreminna, and Lysychansk hromadas (ACLED accessed 31/05/2023).

Russian authorities impose policies that cause the majority of access constraints. Most restrictions are centred around requiring residents to hold a Russian passport to access basic services in these territories. In Svatove, those who do not hold a Russian passport face a 30% wage reduction; in Starobilsk, there are reported evictions of people who refuse to acquire Russian passports (Ukrainska Pravda 12/05/2023 and 06/05/2023). The free movement of civilians to and from Luhanska, Rubizhne, Stanytsia and Starobilsk cities was only possible for those who held Russian passports (Ukrainska Pravda 04/03/2023).

Russian forces taking over medical institutions prevents the local population from accessing medical services. There have also been reports of medication shortages, as they are diverted for the use of Russian forces (Ukrainska Pravda 30/04/2023). Russian forces are stationed at a school in Lubianka settlement; children continue to attend classes on the same premises, exposing them to serious physical security risks (Ukrainska Pravda 28/04/2023). There are reports of the takeover of schools and a medical centre in Holubivka (Interfax 24/04/2023).

Zaporizhzhia oblast

- Access severity score 4.0/5.0
- Access score trend: slight improvement
- Raions with the highest number of recorded access events: Melitopol, Polohy, Vasylivka
- Most recurrent access events: presence of areas under Russian control, targeting of hospitals, disruptions to utility services, violence targeting civilians

Shelling continues to be one of the main drivers of access constraints in Ukrainian-controlled areas of Zaporizhzhia oblast, disrupting and damaging public infrastructure and causing safety and security constraints for civilians and humanitarians. The most affected hromadas are Huliaipole, Malynivka, Orikhiv, and Vasylivka (ACLED accessed 31/05/2023).

De facto authorities in areas of Zaporizhzhia under Russian control have called for frontline communities to evacuate, with shops in evacuated areas running out of food and medicine (Reuters 08/05/2023; NYT 08/05/2023). Destinations for evacuations include Russia and, in Russian-controlled Zaporizhzhia, Berdiansk and Prymorsk (Ukrainska Pravda 05/04/2023, 05/05/2023 b, and 08/05/2023 b). Authorities have threatened parents who do not evacuate their children in Tokmak with the invalidation of their child's school year (Ukrainska Pravda 08/05/2023 b).

Russian forces have restricted civilian movement and access to services: in Chumatske, Dorozhnianka, Kostiantynivka, and Reshetylivka settlements, Russian forces forbid the entry of civilians without local registration documents (Ukrainska Pravda 02/05/2023). Forces have denied medical services to people without Russian passports (Resistance Center 14/03/2023). At checkpoints in Tokmak, Russian forces have threatened to prevent people without Russian passports from accessing the city (Ukrainska Pravda 01/04/2023).

Russian forces have continued using civilian facilities to treat injured combatants in territories under their control, disrupting the provision of services to the local population. In Vysoke village, Russian forces have turned a school into a military hospital; in Novovasylivka, they have taken over a civilian hospital (Ukrainska Pravda 20/03/2023 and 29/03/2023).

RETROSPECTIVE: CONFLICT DYNAMICS AND IMPACTS ON ACCESS SCORES IN 2022

The new ACAPS API has been allowing users to retrieve access severity, pillar, and indicator scores at the oblast level since March 2022. The following section uses that functionality to provide an overview of successive conflict dynamics on ACAPS humanitarian access scoring.

In the context of a Ukrainian counteroffensive in the short and medium term, it is useful to understand how previous changes in territorial control affected access severity scores.

The following key takeaways have emerged by looking at Chernihiv, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Kyiv, Mykolaiv, and Sumy oblasts:

• Civilian access to basic services remains constrained even when humanitarian access is practically unimpeded. This situation is a result of the longer-term consequences of damage and destruction to civilian infrastructure.

• Mine and UXO contamination is a long-term problem that will continue to drive safety and security constraints for the population and responders.

• When Ukrainian forces retake areas and they become newly accessible, these areas may become targets for Russian shelling, especially if they remain near the front line. This change will drive an increase in safety-related constraints.

• When retaken areas are further away from the front line, access constraints decrease over time with the absence of Russian shelling.

Start of the full-scale invasion and push towards Kyiv

This stage lasted from 24 February to 30 April 2022.

Russia initially conducted air strikes across Ukraine, targeting its capital, Kyiv. Russian troops entering Ukrainian territory through Belarus in the north came next with the goal of taking control of Kyiv city in a matter of days and overthrowing the Ukrainian Government (NBC News 24/02/2022; The Guardian 25/02/2022).

Russian troops simultaneously advanced to Hostomel, a city with a major airport and international cargo facility, and assaulted Vasylkiv, located 40km from Kyiv (Ukrinform 02/04/2023; ISW 24/02/2022).

At the same time, Russian troops made gains on the highway between Zhytomyr and Kyiv, threatening Fastiv, a city 70km away from Kyiv (GFIS 25/03/2022; ISW 03/03/2022). Russian
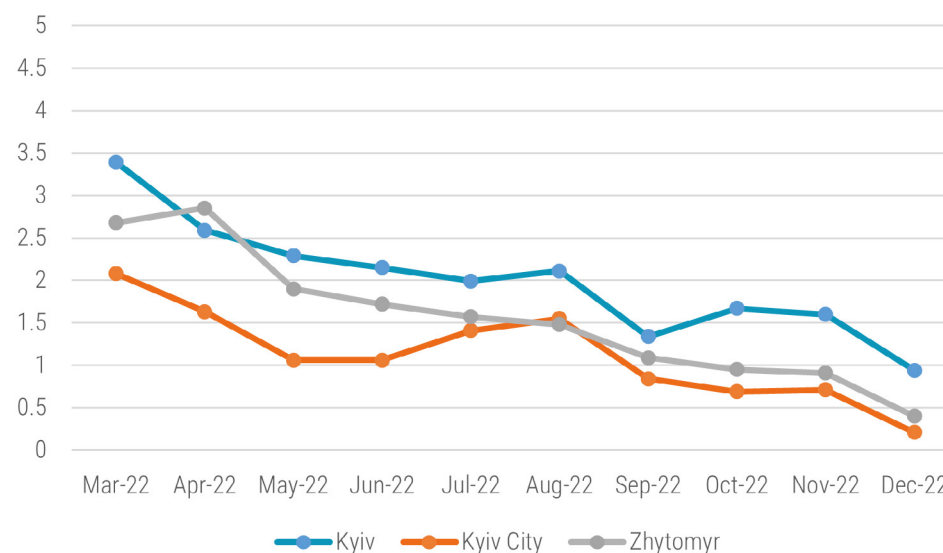
forces continued to approach Kyiv from the northwest. By 5 March, they had captured Bucha, Hostomel, and Vorzel; by the middle of March, their tanks had reached areas within a few kilometres of Kyiv (BBC 24/02/2023; ISW 15/03/2022).

Ukrainian forces resisted and caused heavy losses for Russian forces, who had to withdraw from Kyiv and Zhytomyr oblasts in April 2022. The Russian retreat left evidence of war crimes behind, including unlawful killings of civilians in Bucha on the outskirts of Kyiv (FT accessed 29/06/2023; OHCHR 22/04/2022).

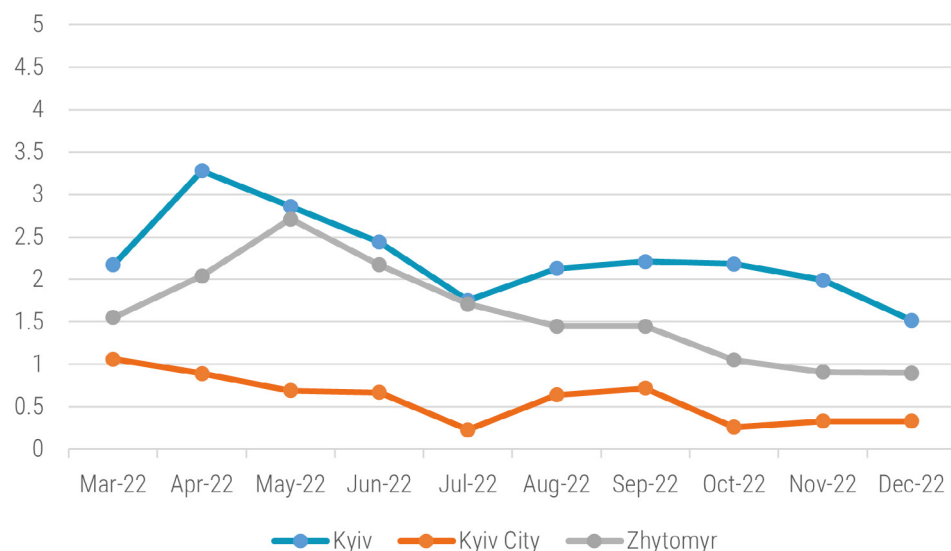**Impact on access severity scores**

Access severity scores in Kyiv and Zhytomyr oblasts and Kyiv city decreased after the withdrawal of Russian troops in April 2022, but the presence of mines and UXO and damage to roads and transport infrastructure continued to restrict access and cause safety and security constraints in the aftermath of active fighting.

Access severity scores in Kyiv, Kyiv City and Zhytomyr

Source: ACAPS access severity model (accessed 20/06/2023)

Physical, environmental, and security constraints' severity scores in Kyiv, Kyiv City and Zhytomyr

Source: ACAPS access severity model (accessed 20/06/2023)

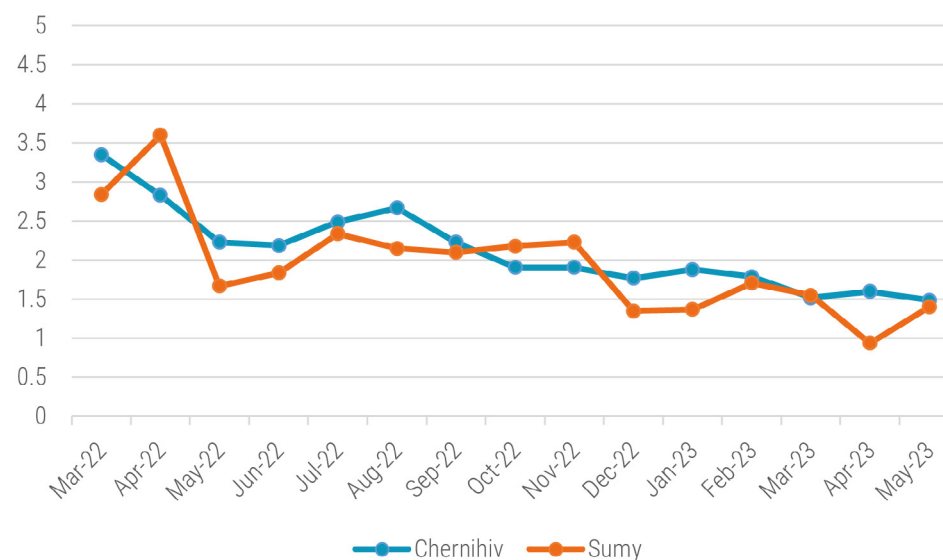### Sumy and Chernihiv became newly accessible in April 2022

Russian forces were present in Sumy and Chernihiv oblasts from 24 February to 4 April 2022. During the initial phase of the invasion, the Russian military approached Sumy city, where heavy urban fighting against Ukrainian forces ensued (The Guardian 02/01/2023). The fighting lasted several days, and Russia attempted to encircle and bypass Sumy without notable success. During the invasion, Russia conducted shelling and air bombardments that, along with attacks by Russian soldiers, killed over 100 civilians in Sumy region (Ukrainska Pravda 13/04/2022; UN 07/12/2022). Following their failure to capture the city, Russian troops withdrew from the villages and towns it held in the oblast at the beginning of April 2022.

The same scenario unfolded in Chernihiv oblast (TVP World 07/04/2023). Initially, Russian troops surrounded Chernihiv city and used rocket launchers to attack civilian infrastructure. Russian forces killed at least 98 civilians and injured at least another 123 in eight attacks on the city in early March 2022 (HRW 10/06/2022). Russian forces withdrew from the area on 31 March as part of their retreat from Kyiv oblast (TWP 06/04/2022).

Impact on access severity scores

Since the withdrawal of Russian forces at the start of April, access severity scores in Sumy and Chernihiv oblast have decreased slightly.
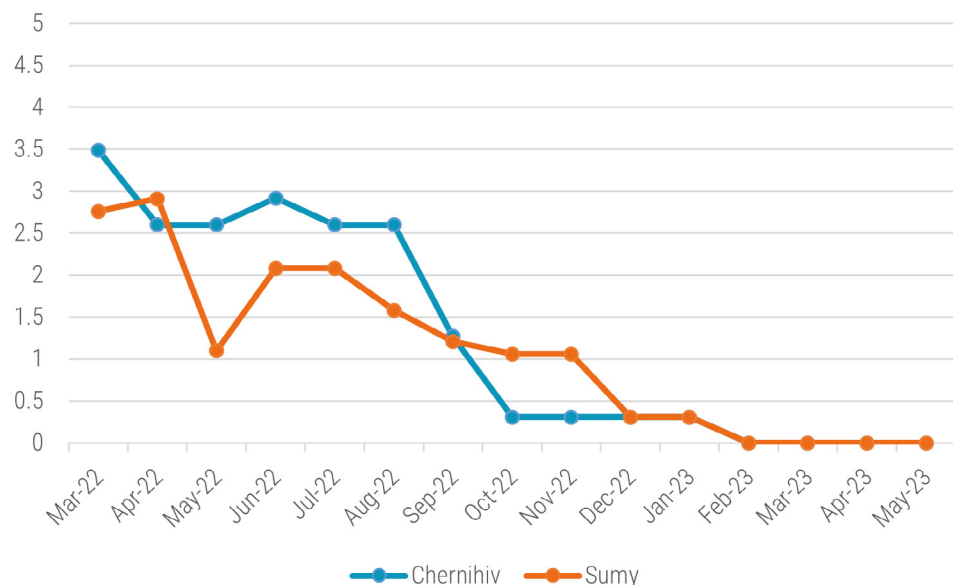
Access severity scores in Sumy and Chernihiv oblasts

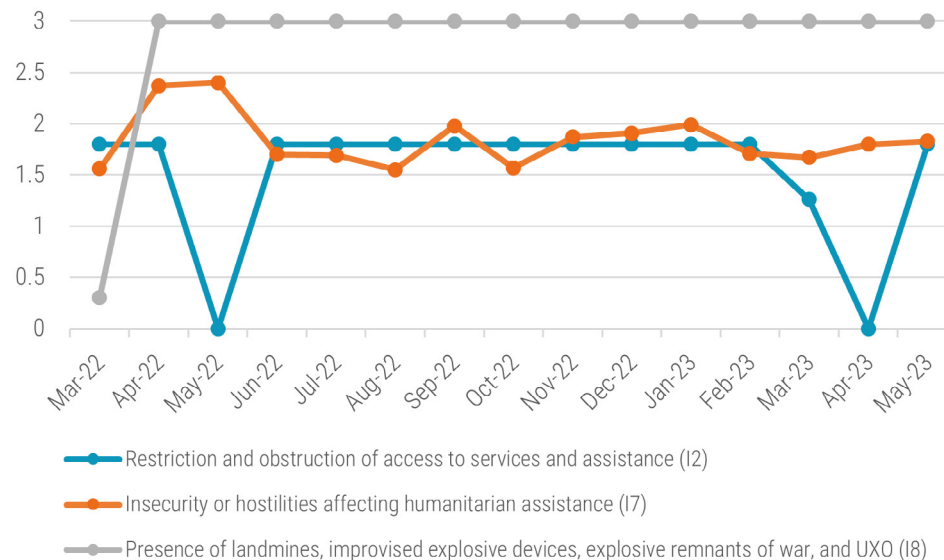Source: ACAPS access severity model (accessed 20/06/2023)

While constraints on humanitarians' ability to operate in Sumy and Chernihiv oblasts have decreased over time, continued shelling from across the Russian border continues to disrupt civilians' access to services and damage civilian infrastructure in Sumy. The presence of mines and UXO drives safety and security concerns for civilians and humanitarians.

Constraints to access of humanitarian organisations to people in need in Chernihiv and Sumy oblasts

Source: ACAPS access severity model (accessed 20/06/2023)

Main access constraints in Sumy oblast (indicators scored 0-3)

- Restriction and obstruction of access to services and assistance (I2)
- Insecurity or hostilities affecting humanitarian assistance (I7)
- Presence of landmines, improvised explosive devices, explosive remnants of war, and UXO (I8)

Source: ACAPS access severity model (accessed 20/06/2023)

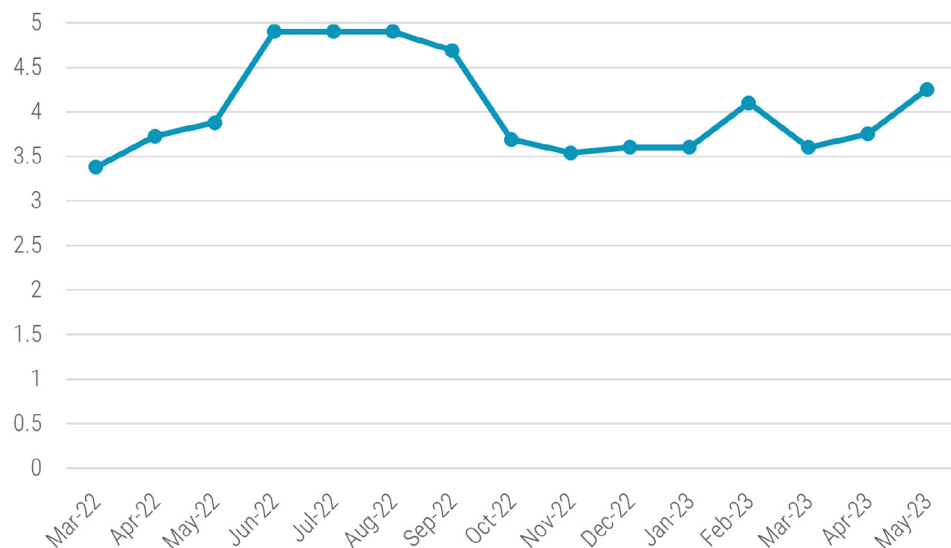### Most of Kharkiv became accessible again in September

In the first months of the invasion, Russia took over large parts of Kharkiv oblast, including key logistical centres like Kupiansk and Izium (ISW 22/04/2022).

In early September 2022, the Ukrainian army began a new offensive to regain control of territories under Russian control. Ukraine regained 500 settlements and 12,000km2 of territory in Kharkiv region (BBC 10/09/2022). Russian forces still maintain control over a small portion of the oblast's northeastern border with Luhansk oblast (ISW 25/05/2023).

Impact on access severity scores

Access constraints for humanitarians have decreased in Kharkiv oblast following Ukrainian forces recapturing most of its territory in September. The overall access severity score remains high because there are still some Russian-controlled areas in the oblast. In government-controlled areas of Kharkiv, the main access constraints result from Russian shelling (which causes damage and disruption), active conflict, and mines and UXO.

Constraints to access of humanitarian organisations to people in need in Kharkiv oblast

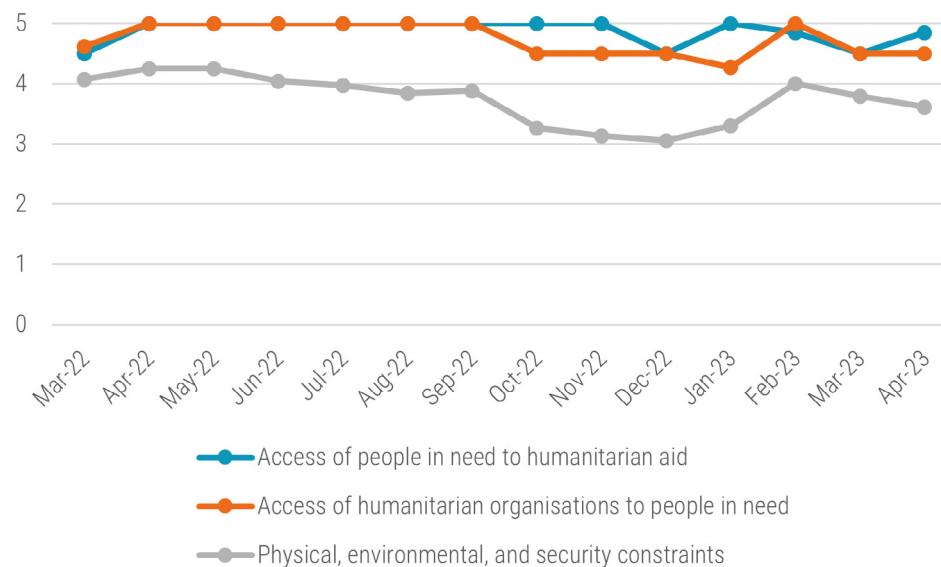Source: ACAPS access severity model (accessed 20/06/2023)

Sustained conflict intensity in Donetsk oblast

Donetsk oblast is the current focus of Russian military offensives and the most active sector of the front line. The shift in the conflict's focus from northern Ukraine followed Russia's failure to capture Kyiv during the first phase of the war in March 2022 (Kyiv Post 14/09/2022). Russian military efforts are focused on the cities of Avdiivka, Bakhmut, and Marinka of Donetsk oblast (Kyiv Post 14/09/2022; ISW 24/05/2023).

Impact on access severity scores

Access severity scores have remained high in Donetsk oblast since the start of the full-scale invasion. The intensity of the conflict and consistent reporting of humanitarian response constraints near the front lines of Ukrainian-controlled areas fuel these high scores.

Access severity score in Donetsk oblast

Source: ACAPS access severity model (accessed 20/06/2023)
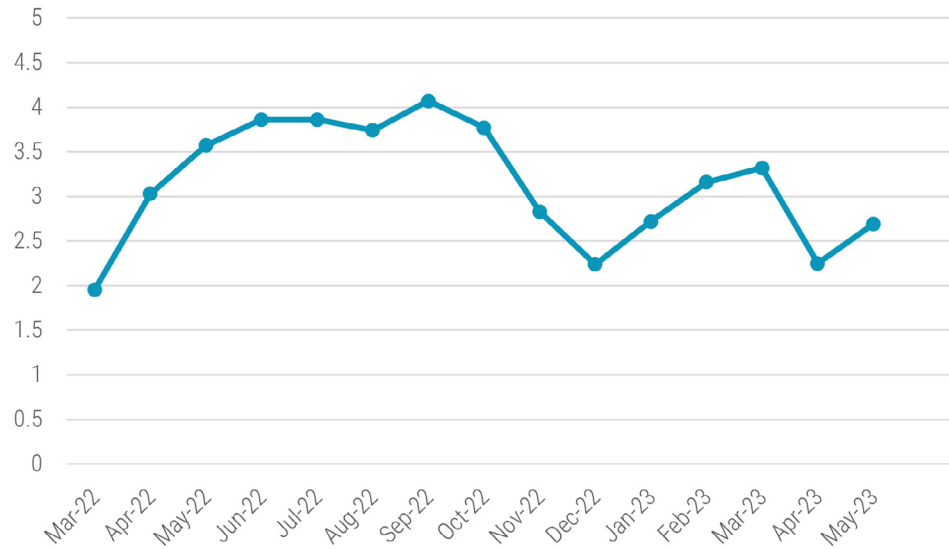
The south of Mykolaiv oblast and north of Kherson oblast became accessible again in November

Russian forces managed to capture Kherson city, the oblast capital, in March 2022, along with territories near Mykolaiv city in southern Mykolaiv oblast (FT accessed 29/06/2023). In November, they withdrew to the left bank of Dnipro River as Ukrainian rocket strikes made it challenging for Russia to maintain troops on the right bank of Kherson (Time 04/01/2023; ISW 09/11/2022).
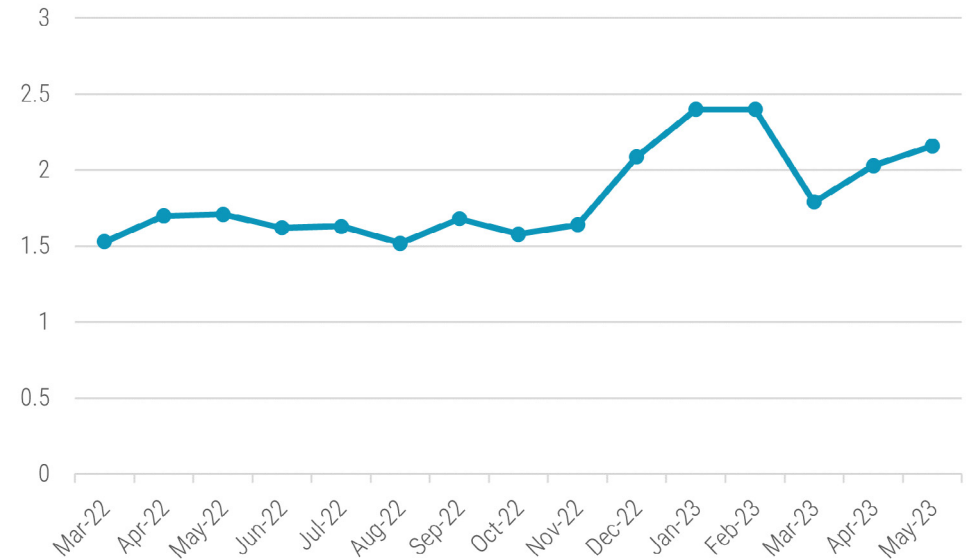
Impact on access severity scores

The withdrawal of Russian troops reduced access constraints in Mykolaiv oblast after November 2022. The overall safety and security situation has improved in the oblast as the rate of Russian shelling has decreased over time. Mines and UXO continue to pose a significant challenge, especially along former front lines.

Access severity score in Mykolaiv oblast

Physical, environmental, and security constraints in Mykolaiv oblast (indicators scored 0-3)

Legend:
- Insecurity or hostilities affecting humanitarian assistance (I7)
- Presence of landmines, improvised explosive devices, explosive remnants of war, and UXO (I8)
- Physical constraints in the environment (I9)

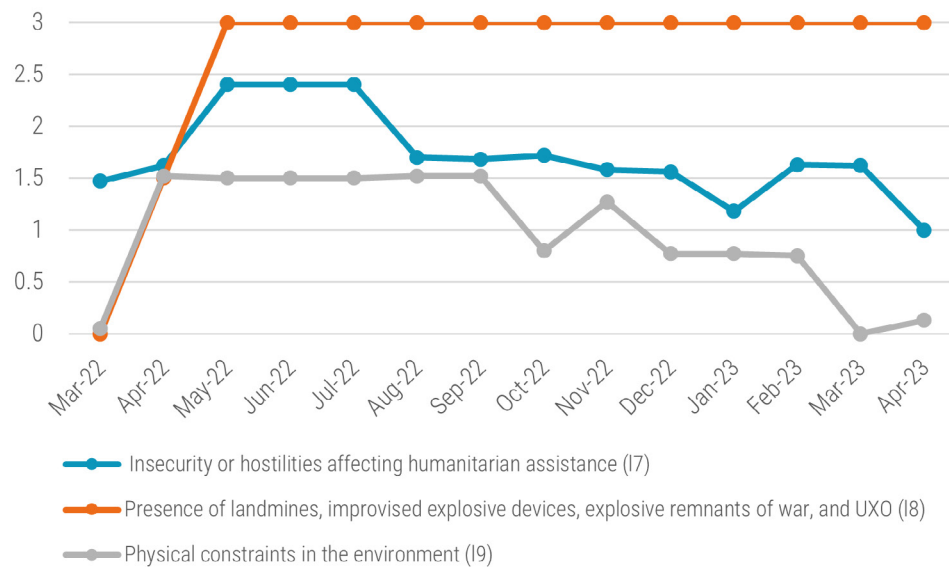Source: ACAPS access severity model (accessed 20/06/2023)

In Kherson oblast, insecurity increased after the right bank of Dnipro became newly accessible in November 2022, due to an increase in heavy shelling by Russian forces.

Insecurity in Kherson oblast (indicator scored 0-3)

Source: ACAPS access severity model (accessed 20/06/2023)

METHODOLOGY

New for this report

This report is ACAPS' first Ukraine subnational access severity analysis using the scores from our new subnational access severity model. The main change in the new methodology is that scores only consider long-term access events for six months, not indefinitely. Short-term events are still considered for 45 days. As a result, scores in this report are not comparable with scores from previous ACAPS oblast-level access reports on Ukraine, and some scores may be lower than expected. This methodological change particularly affects indicators I5 and I9. While access events relevant to those indicators were regularly reported in 2022, the continued closure of access to Russian-controlled territories makes it impossible for certain events to occur (for example, aid cannot be diverted at crossing points if humanitarians do not attempt to use them). Responders also stop reporting some events over time as the situation does not significantly change.

Current 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 predefined 75 event types and grouped them into 35 subindicators, nine indicators (I), and three pillars. The indicators received a score between 0–3, and the pillars received 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 oblast-level scoring in Ukraine, 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

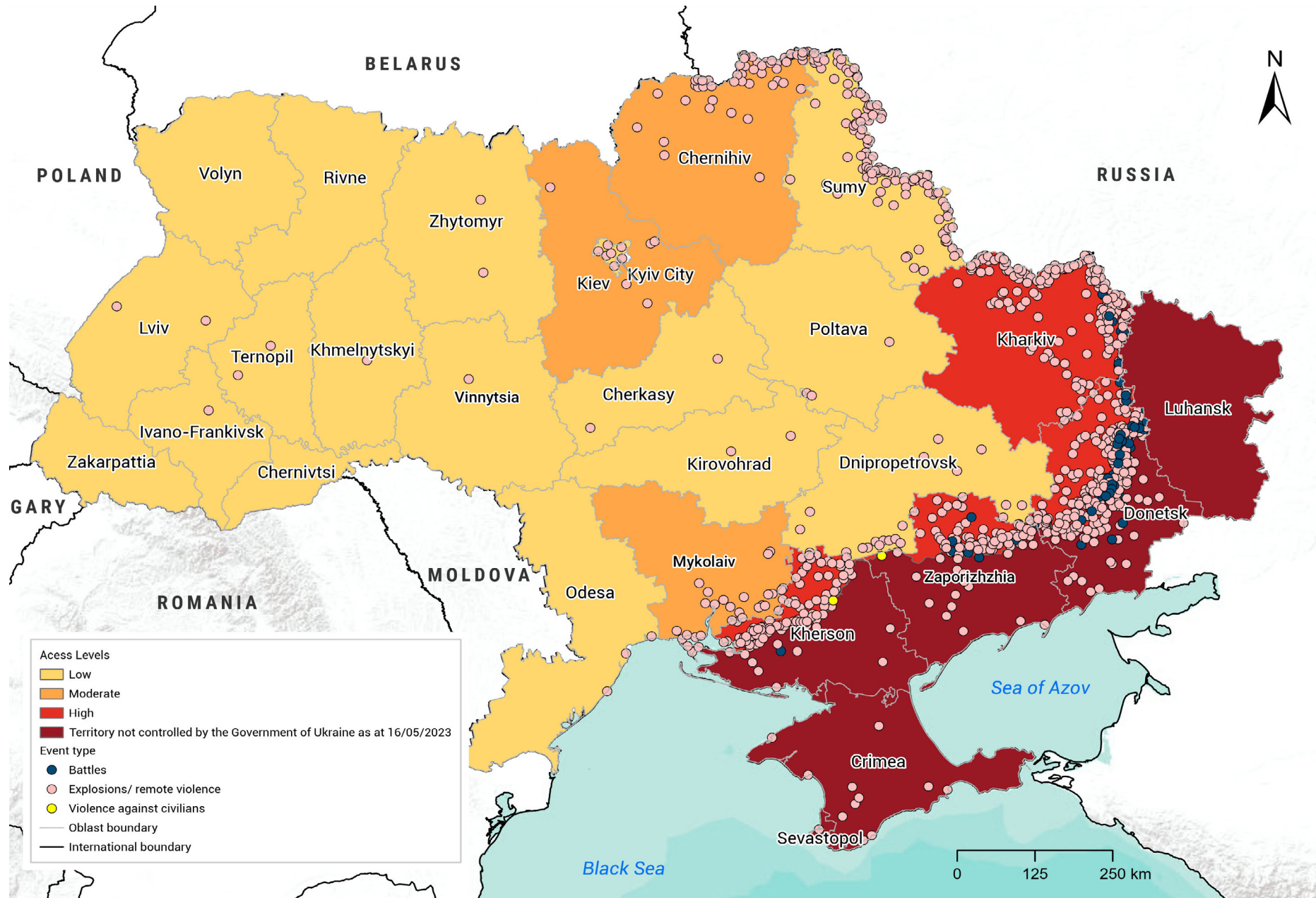4–5 extreme access constraints

Limitations

The analysis relies on publicly available data, which is unlikely to be comprehensive in a dynamic conflict situation like Ukraine. 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 on the humanitarian response and the access constraints that non-government-controlled areas are facing is lacking.

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.

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS SEVERITY IN UKRAINE

Acess Levels
- Low
- Moderate
- High
- Territory not controlled by the Government of Ukraine as at 16/05/2023

Event type
- Battles
- Explosions/ remote violence
- Violence against civilians
- Oblast boundary
- International boundary

Source: ACAPS using data from ISW (31/05/2023); ACLED (accessed 31/05/2023)
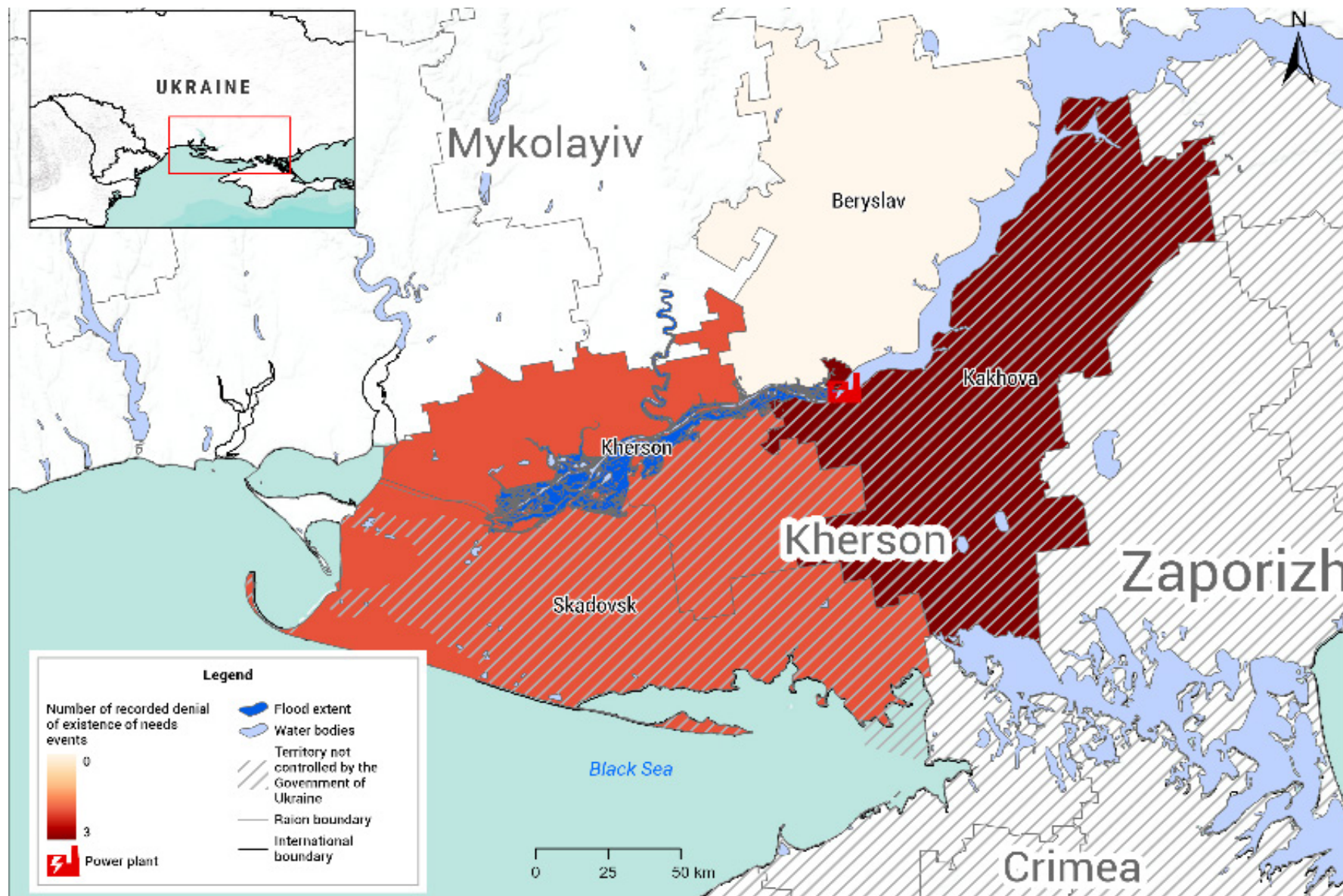
ACCESS SEVERITY TABLE AS AT 31 MAY 2023 (INDICATOR (I) SCORES OUT OF 3, PILLAR (P) AND OVERALL SCORES OUT OF 5))

OBLAST	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	I8	I9	P1	P2	P3	ACCESS
Cherkasy	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.8	**0.8**
Chernihiv	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.6	3.0	0.8	1.5	0.0	3.0	**1.5**
Chernivtsi	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.7	**0.7**
Dnipropetrovsk	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.4	2.4	2.7	0.0	1.5	0.4	2.8	1.6
Donetsk	3.0	2.2	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	0.2	4.4	5.0	3.4	**4.3**
Donetsk*	1.2	2.2	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	0.2	2.9	5.0	3.4	**3.8**
Ivano-Frankivsk	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.7	**0.7**
Kharkiv	3.0	2.2	3.0	3.0	3.0	1.2	2.0	3.0	0.1	4.4	4.3	2.8	**3.8**
Kharkiv*	1.2	2.2	2.1	2.3	3.0	1.2	2.0	3.0	0.1	2.9	3.6	2.8	**3.1**
Kherson	3.0	2.4	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.2	3.0	0.1	4.5	5.0	2.9	**4.1**
Kherson*	1.2	2.4	2.1	2.3	3.0	3.0	2.2	3.0	0.1	3.0	4.3	2.9	**3.4**
Khmelnytskyi	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.9	0.8
Kirovohrad	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.7	0.7
Kyiv	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.1	3.0	0.0	1.5	0.2	1.7	1.1
Kyiv City	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	1.5	0.0	1.5	0.0	1.1	0.9
Luhansk	3.0	2.4	3.0	3.0	3.0	0.4	1.5	3.0	0.0	4.5	3.9	2.5	**3.6**
Luhansk*	1.2	2.4	2.3	4.5	3.0	0.4	1.5	3.0	0.0	3.0	3.2	2.5	**2.9**
Lviv	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	1.5	0.2	0.8	0.8
Mykolaiv	1.2	1.8	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.4	1.7	3.0	0.3	2.5	0.4	2.7	1.9
Odesa	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	1.5	0.1	1.5	0.0	1.3	0.9
Poltava	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.8	0.8
Rivne	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.7	0.7
Sumy	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8	3.0	0.0	1.5	0.0	2.7	1.4
Ternopil	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.1	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.4	0.7	0.9
Vinnytsia	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.7	0.7
Volyn	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.7	0.7
Zakarpattia	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.7	0.7
Zaporizhzhia	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	0.7	1.6	3.0	0.5	5.0	4.0	2.8	**4.0**
Zaporizhzhia*	1.2	3.0	2.1	2.3	3.0	0.7	1.6	3.0	0.5	3.5	3.4	2.8	**3.2**
Zhytomyr	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	1.5	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.9	0.8

* Scores not considering the authorities in control of the territory

ANNEX: RECORDED ACCESS EVENTS IN KHERSON OBLAST BETWEEN 6–16 JUNE 2023

Denial of existence of humanitarian needs or entitlements to assistance (I1)

Source: ACAPS (accessed 16/06/2023)

Restriction and obstruction of access to services and assistance (I2)
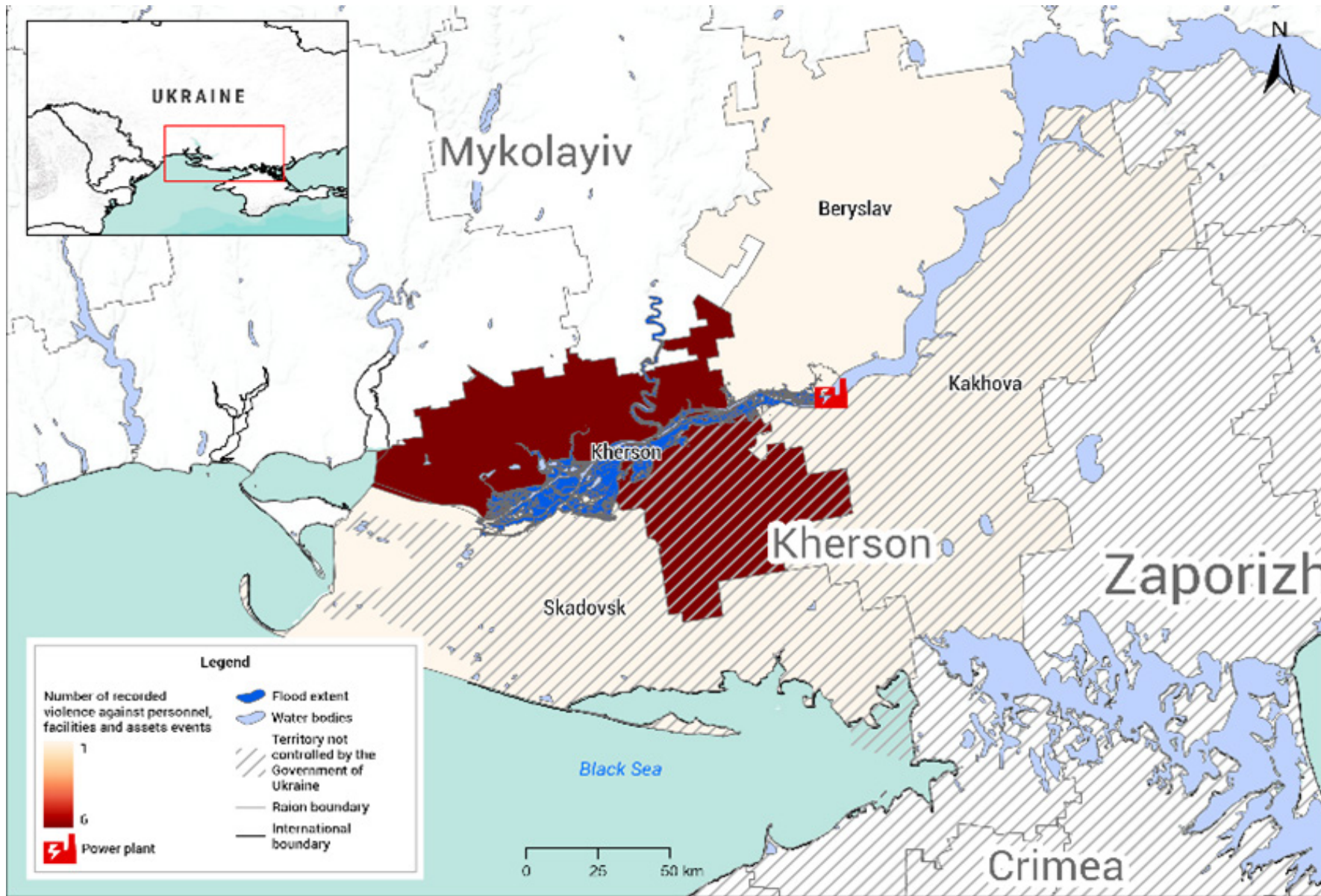

Source: ACAPS (accessed 16/06/2023)

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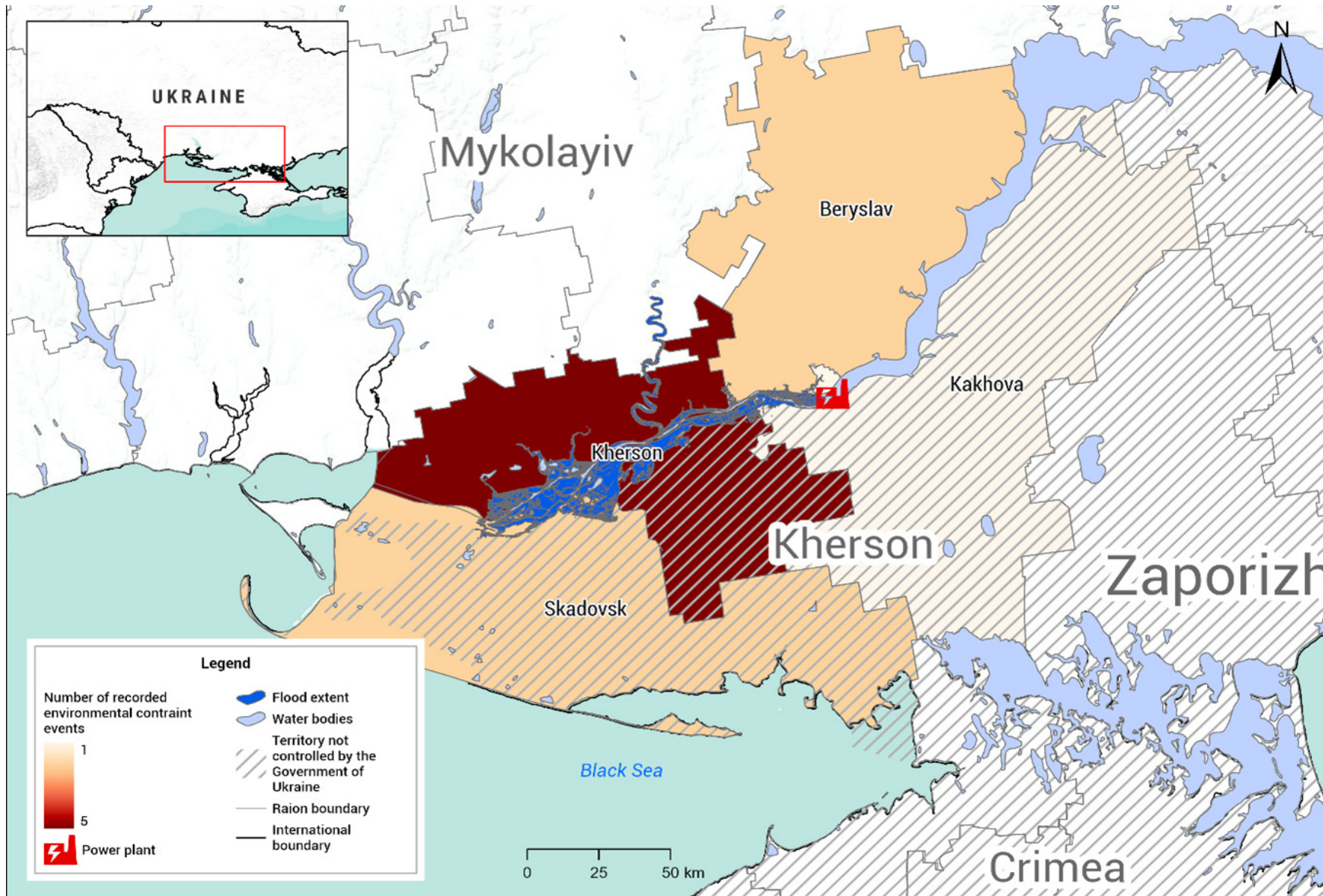

Source: ACAPS (accessed 16/06/2023)

Violence against humanitarian personnel, facilities, and assets (I6)

Source: ACAPS (accessed 16/06/2023)

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

Source: ACAPS (accessed 16/06/2023)