

Intensified attacks on key energy infrastructure continue in April

Key Messages

- In April, much of eastern Ukraine experienced **intensified aerial and ground attacks** targeting key infrastructure, particularly in the Donetsk and Kharkiv regions. Over **two dozen energy facilities** have been destroyed or damaged since March, disrupting access to energy and water and exacerbating widespread electricity supply problems throughout much of the country. All of Kharkiv's thermal power plants remain offline as of late April, necessitating power imports from western Ukraine. However, attacks have also targeted the electricity substations responsible for distributing these electrical supplies. Residents have **reportedly** adapted to the more frequent power outages of recent months by charging their devices and storing water when power is available, and relying on power banks and water reserves during outages. In the first three weeks of April, Russian airstrikes also killed **at least 65 civilians**, more than double the 2023 monthly average. Meanwhile, according to data from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (**ACLED**), there were a total of 3,301 conflict events in April 2024, similar to observed levels in March 2024 and about 20 percent less than in April 2023.
- Significant ongoing humanitarian assistance continues to support access to food and income for many households most impacted by the ongoing conflict. Assistance has mainly been distributed in the regions along the frontline: Kharkiv, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Dnipropetrovsk, and Kherson. In April, the **World Food Programme (WFP)** reported reaching 1.7 million people with various forms of in-kind and cash assistance, and this total is expected to increase once pending payments for its school meal programs are accounted for. Since the beginning of 2024, WFP has consistently reached around 2.4 million people monthly. Though challenges in access and humanitarian operations persist in conflict-affected areas, WFP has adopted mitigation measures. For instance, WFP distributed double 30-day rations of in-kind food assistance in areas at risk of access constraints, including Vovchansk and Velykyi Burluk in Kharkiv and Kurakhivska and Novogrodivska in Donetsk, and plans to distribute double 30-day rations in Maryinska and Ocheretinska in Donetsk in May. In addition to humanitarian assistance, many households can access various government social protection benefits, including low-interest loans and insurance.
- **Spring cereal planting** is currently ongoing across Ukraine. Given the high amount of rainfall the Ukraine typically receives, forecast average rainfall from June to September is expected to be sufficient for crop growth, even with above-average temperatures. Overall, July/August harvest prospects for winter wheat are promising given good soil moisture conditions and forecast rainfall, despite some localized rainfall deficits accumulating during April and May in the east. At this time, there is no substantive evidence that the Russian attacks on Ukrainian energy infrastructure have meaningfully impacted this season's agricultural activities.
- Grain and oilseed exports are continuing at pre-invasion levels, with over **7.2 million metric tons** exported in April, mostly via Black Sea ports. It should be noted that grain stocks from previous marketing years are expected to be partially supporting current exports; the February 2022 invasion severely disrupted Ukraine's ability to market the large 2021/22 crop, which caused stock levels to build up. With improved trade flows facilitated by the establishment of the **grain corridor** in July 2023, stocks have steadily declined. While the USDA forecasts a decrease in **grain** exports for the 2024/25 marketing year compared to the last several years, an increase in **oilseed** exports is also expected. This trend aligns with findings from a recent **survey** from the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food, which found that many farmers are switching some of their land from grain to oilseed production as grain production is less profitable.

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* FEWS NET's classifications are IPC-compatible. IPC-compatible analysis follows key IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus of national food security partners. As of IPC 3.0, the IPC no longer assesses the impact of food assistance on classification and thus no longer maps the (!). However, FEWS NET continues to produce food security maps inclusive of the (!) as well as maps compatible with IPC 3.0/3.1, which include the mapping of food security assistance bags. FEWS NET and the IPC use different methods to estimate the total Population in Need of humanitarian food assistance and assess the risk of Famine. Learn more at www.fews.net/about.

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