

## Attacks on infrastructure continue as Russia launches new offensive in Kharkiv

### Key Messages

- On May 10, Russia launched a **new cross-border offensive** in Kharkiv. Attacks and shelling of settlements near the Russian border prompted a **mandatory evacuation** of approximately 20,000 people to Kharkiv City, most of whom are older and have health and mobility challenges. Additional **strikes on Kharkiv City** have also occurred, resulting in damage to homes and public infrastructure and the deaths of at least **35 civilians**. The security situation has also deteriorated in frontline areas of **Donetsk** under the new offensive. Concurrently, Russian forces have continued to launch attacks on key energy and communication **infrastructure**, including thermal power plants, substations, and transmitters in several regions.
- Ukraine has lost about half of its power-generating capacity because of the attacks on its energy infrastructure and has had to import power from bordering countries to make up most of the gap until repairs can be made. The power sector has incurred an estimated one billion US dollars in damage, and to fund the necessary repairs, Ukraine announced this month that the **cost of consumer electricity will increase** by more than 60 percent. The government estimates this will cost the average consumer around seven additional dollars per month, placing additional pressure on the limited resources of poor households. In addition to electricity price increases, **nationwide rolling blackouts** have been re-introduced and are expected to continue in the short term. In the coming months, with the arrival of improved air defense weaponry, precision strikes on key distribution infrastructure, such as power substations, are expected to dwindle.
- Humanitarian organizations continue to provide high levels of support to populations most affected by the ongoing conflict. In May, **WFP** reportedly distributed food and cash to nearly 1.7 million people in need, mostly in frontline areas. WFP also distributed double 30-day rations of in-kind assistance to 40,000 people in Kharkiv and Donetsk to prepare for increased humanitarian access challenges linked to the new offensive. To support the **evacuees from northern Kharkiv**, WFP has distributed rations to over 10,000 beneficiaries via the transit center in Kharkiv City. Alongside humanitarian assistance, households can access various government social protection programs. These include **low-interest loans** and the **complementary social benefit program**, a collaboration between the government and WFP supporting high-risk groups such as older adults and individuals with disabilities.
- As planting activities **near completion**, the spring cereal growing **season** is now underway as of late May. Average to above-average soil moisture across most of the country has been **favorable for crop production** and has buffered the short-term impacts of below-average precipitation since mid-April. Cropping conditions for spring barley, corn, and soybeans remain satisfactory in most areas. Though average to below-average rainfall is expected throughout the rest of the growing season through September, harvest prospects remain favorable, except in the southeast where significant rainfall deficits have led to below-average soil moisture and relatively poorer crop conditions; conditions are not expected to improve given forecasts of nationwide above-average temperatures through January 2025.

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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](http://www.fews.net/about).

**About Key Message Update**

This Key Message Update provides a high-level analysis of current acute food insecurity conditions and any changes to FEWS NET's latest projection of acute food insecurity outcomes in the specified geography. Learn more [here](#).