



UN SCORE for Eastern Ukraine

USE Checkpoints component

The UN SCORE for Eastern Ukraine (USE) is a sophisticated analytical tool designed to improve the understanding of societal dynamics in the five eastern oblasts of Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia. USE helps to identify strategic entry points for policies and programs that contribute to strengthening social cohesion.

USE is based on the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (SCORE) Index methodology, originally developed in Cyprus by the Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development and UNDP. The SCORE Index has since been implemented across several countries in Europe and elsewhere to assist international and national stakeholders in the design of evidence-based solutions that can strengthen social cohesion and reconciliation efforts.

USE is jointly implemented by three UN entities – UNDP, UNICEF, and IOM. The first USE wave was conducted in 2017 and was funded by the UN, with a major contribution from the EU.

The USE process began with a series of consultations with authorities and civil society representatives in Kyiv and in each of the five oblasts in order to develop a conceptual model of what constitutes social cohesion in eastern Ukraine (Figure 1).

The first USE wave, which was completed in October 2017, captured the views of some 10,000 people residing in the five oblasts in the east of Ukraine. Specifically, it comprised a face-to-face general population survey of 5,300 respondents; a school survey of 3,300 pupils in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts; 72 in-depth interviews; and a face-to-face survey of 1,500 people residing in the non-government controlled areas who commute to the government-controlled areas across the five checkpoints in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. For more information on USE and the results of the first wave please visit use.scoreforpeace.org

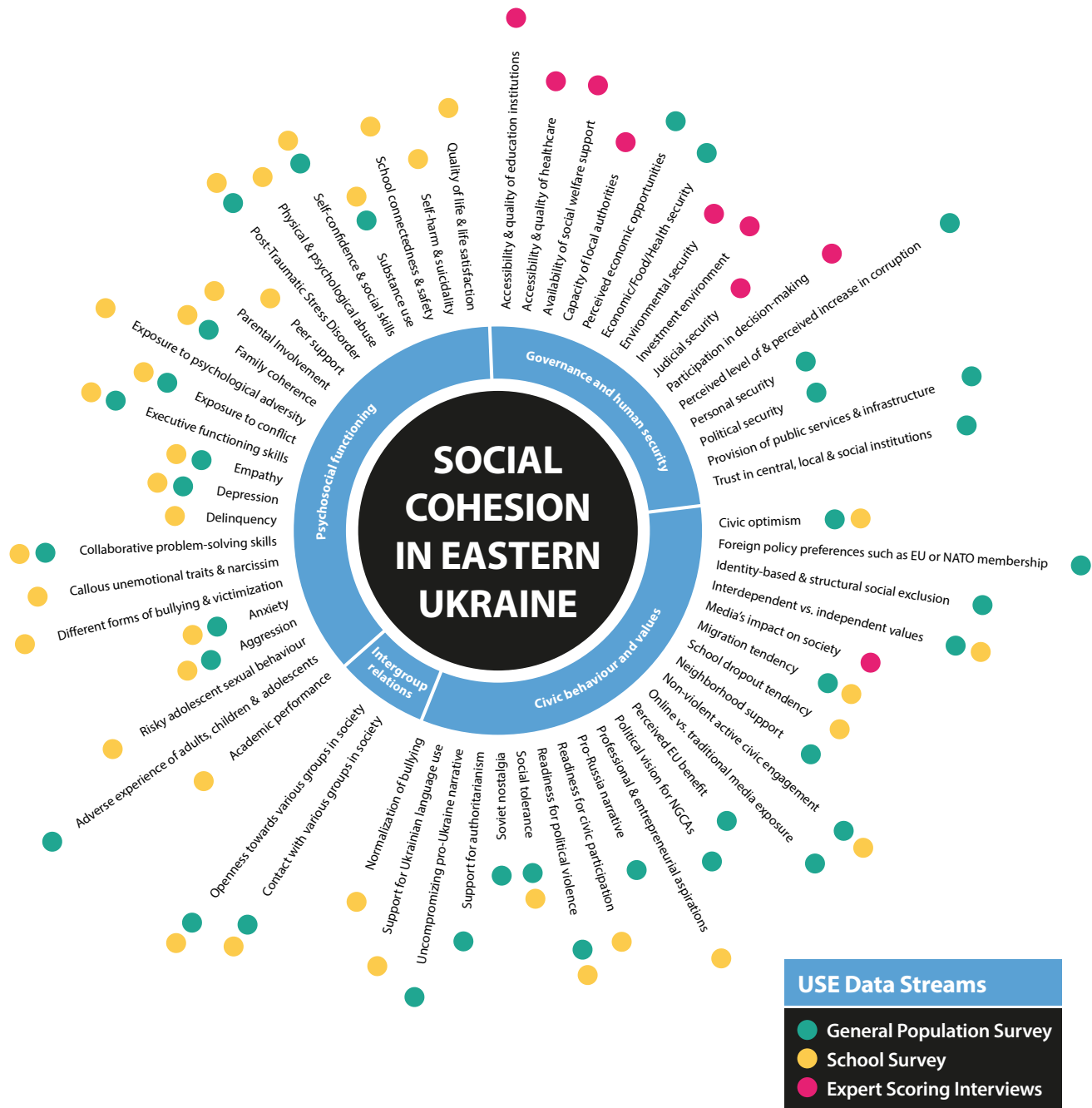


Figure 1. Conceptual model for social cohesion in eastern Ukraine.

Introduction

This brief outlines the key findings from the USE checkpoints component, which was conducted at the five checkpoints in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts (Figure 2). It reflects the views of people who reside in the non-government controlled areas (NGCAs) and commute across the line of contact to government controlled areas (GCAs) and back. Despite various obstacles, a high level of people-to-people connectivity currently remains. According to the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, more than 1.3 million crossings take place at the five checkpoints every month.¹ Commuters residing in the NGCAs represent an important segment of the overall NGCA population as, for various reasons, they maintain connections with GCAs and therefore have the potential to serve as a bridge for restoring and/or strengthening social cohesion between divided and/or conflict-affected communities.



Figure 2: The five checkpoints in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts.

¹ <https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrJoiOTU4ODVjYkNjM3ZC00N2E5LTlkNTQyZk3ZTYzNzliYjk4IiwidCI6IjdhNTE3MDMzLzE1ZGYtNDQ1MC04ZjMyLWE5ODJmZTBhYTEyNSIsImMiOj9>

Methodology

The USE checkpoints questionnaire is a condensed and tailored version of the USE general population survey questionnaire, and it should thus not be treated as comparable with the results of the other USE components. The 1,500 commuters interviewed (54 percent women and 46 percent men) were randomly selected and confidentially interviewed at the five checkpoints using gender and age quotas. The results are not representative of the total NGCA population, as they capture only the views of commuters who visit the GCAs through these checkpoints.

Summary of key findings

The key findings of the USE checkpoints analysis are:

- the overwhelming majority of commuters from NGCAs support a peaceful resolution to the conflict and remain positively disposed towards most 'other' groups of Ukrainian citizens (e.g. people from western Ukraine, people living in the GCAs, people who support close ties with Russia, etc.);
- satisfaction with provision of services is lower among commuters from Luhansk oblast than from Donetsk oblast, which is also reflected in the migration tendencies; and
- this specific segment of the population – people who reside in the NGCAs but commute to and from the GCAs – has the potential to act as a vehicle for bridging the conflict divide and restoring the social fabric and cohesion between various segments of Ukraine's population.

Main findings

Commuters from both the Donetsk and Luhansk NGCAs overwhelmingly reject the use of force for the resolution of the conflict, showing almost unanimous support for an exclusively peaceful resolution (Table 1), irrespective of different views as to what political arrangement such a resolution may entail.

Table 1: Scores for "Preference for military operation"

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Commuters from Donetsk oblast						Commuters from Luhansk oblast				
1.6						1.1				

* Preference for military operation as the preferred way of solving the conflict in the east of Ukraine – 0 indicates that there is no support for military operations, 10 indicates that most if not all people prefer a military solution to the conflict.

The most preferred political solution is the unconditional reintegration of the NGCAs, with commuters from Donetsk and Luhansk scoring this option at 5.7 and 6.6, respectively (Table 2). There is less support for independence or other forms of a political settlement that would result in the NGCAs being outside of Ukraine. However, a demographic analysis shows that commuters who support other forms of a political resolution (i.e., reintegration with a special autonomous status, independence, etc.) appear to have higher levels of economic security and/or a better socio-economic situation.

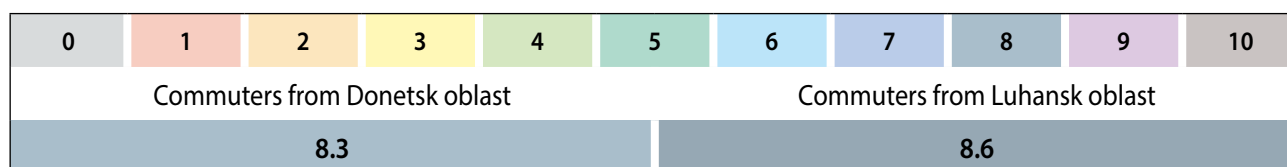
Table 2: Scores for "Political Vision: part of Ukraine without special status"

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Commuters from Donetsk oblast						Commuters from Luhansk oblast				
5.7						6.6				

* Preference for the NGCAs to remain part of Ukraine without special status – 0 indicates no support for this option, 10 indicates that all respondents prefer this option.

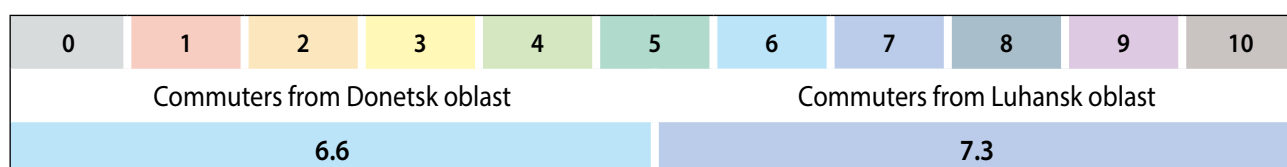
Equally important, there is a strong tendency among commuters to remain positively disposed toward various 'other' groups of Ukrainian citizens, irrespective of what political views those other groups may have, where they reside, or their social status (Tables 3 and 4). This indicates that the overwhelming majority of commuters are positively predisposed to programs or activities intended to strengthen social cohesion between different areas and/or communities of Ukraine, should such an opportunity be presented.

Table 3: Scores for "Positive feelings toward people living in GCAs of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts"



* Positive feelings towards people living in GCAs of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts – 0 indicates that people have cold and hostile feelings, 10 indicates that people have warm and affectionate feelings.

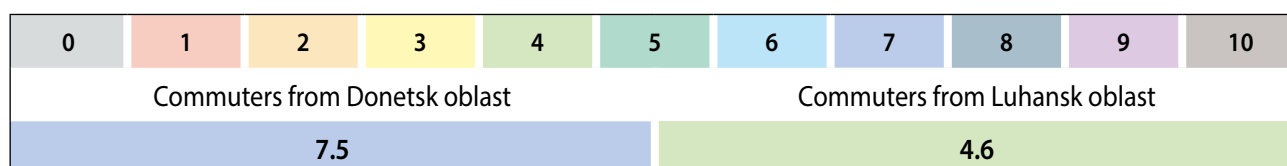
Table 4: Scores for "Positive feelings toward people from western Ukraine"



* Positive feelings towards people from western Ukraine – 0 indicates that people have cold and hostile feelings, 10 indicates that people have warm and affectionate feelings.

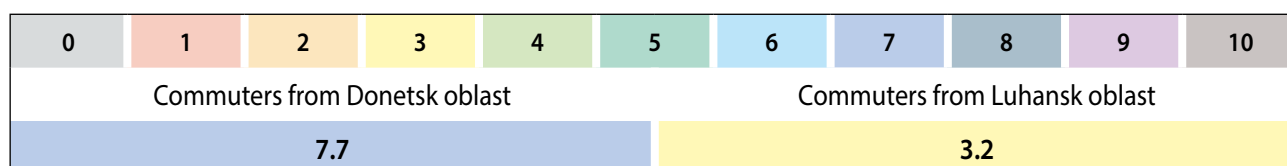
The most significant differences between commuters from Luhansk and Donetsk NGCAs are the levels of satisfaction with the provision of social services and communal services. Notably, commuters from Luhansk scored substantially lower in both areas (Tables 5 and 6) compared to those from Donetsk oblast.

Table 5: Scores for "Satisfaction with provision of social services in place of residence"



* Satisfaction with social services in the commuters' place of residence – 0 indicates complete dissatisfaction, 10 indicates full satisfaction.

Table 6: Scores for "Satisfaction with provision of communal services in place of residence"



* Satisfaction with communal services (e.g., water, heating and waste disposal) in the commuters' place of residence – 0 indicates complete dissatisfaction, 10 indicates full satisfaction.

Commuters from Luhansk NGCAs also scored marginally lower in terms of satisfaction with both their sense of economic security (Table 7) and personal security (Table 8). On the other hand, it can be observed that the commuters from both oblasts scored their economic security higher than their personal security.

Table 7: Scores for “Economic security in place of residence”

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Commuters from Donetsk oblast					Commuters from Luhansk oblast					
5.3					4.8					

* Perceptions of economic security (the extent to which commuters feel they have a stable source of income) – 0 indicates no sense of economic security, 10 indicates complete sense of economic security.

Table 8: Scores for “Personal security in place of residence”

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Commuters from Donetsk oblast					Commuters from Luhansk oblast					
4.7					4.3					

* Perceptions of personal security (the extent to which commuters feel safe in their communities) – 0 indicates no sense of security, 10 indicates a complete sense of security.

Finally, migration tendency scored higher among commuters from Luhansk oblast, perhaps not surprising in light of the consistently lower scores among commuters from Luhansk NGCAs on most socio-economic indicators. The analysis reveals that the two most significant factors influencing the migration tendency of commuters are:

- i) Political security: The lower the sense of political security, the more likely the person is to want to migrate out of her home community. Likewise, the higher the sense of political security, the more likely a person wants to stay; and
- ii) Age: The older a person is, the less likely she is to leave her home community. Accordingly, there is a significantly higher tendency for youth and working-age adults wanting to leave.

Table 9: Scores for “Migration tendency”

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Commuters from Donetsk oblast					Commuters from Luhansk oblast					
4.3					5.3					

* Migration tendency (the extent to which one is inclined to leave one’s region in search for more or better opportunities) – 0 indicates no one is considering leaving, 10 indicates that all wish to leave.

The significance of these two factors does not detract from the fact that there are other reasons that either prevent commuters from leaving their community or induce them to remain. Such reasons include both negative indicators (e.g., insufficient resources, absence of viable relocation alternatives or economic opportunities, etc.) as well as positive (e.g., commuters’ sense of belonging, acceptance and amenity in their home community).

The USE checkpoints component and various surveys have established that the three main reasons people commute from NGCAs to GCAs are to visit family and friends, to purchase goods, and to use banking and legal services. Intensive commuting has, however, been induced by various restrictive policies (e.g., restrictions on access to payments and benefits, restrictions on the movement of goods, etc.). The fact that commuting intensity maintains a regular consistency is testament to the continuing need to access GCAs for consumer goods, financial services, etc., but, importantly, it also indicates a continuing affinity that commuters from NGCAs feel towards people residing in GCAs. In this context, the commuters from NGCAs present a potentially significant resource for increasing social cohesion within and between various communities and ‘groups’ in eastern Ukraine, including those residing throughout the NGCAs. Such a resource can serve as a critical foundation for a sustainable and peaceful reintegration process once the necessary political conditions are established.