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## Data on Ukraine in the Context of War

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### Abstract

High-quality data is essential for policymaking, particularly during wartime, when errors are far costlier. Despite challenges like outdated census data and limited resources, Ukraine maintains a robust data collection system, notably through the State Statistics Service of Ukraine (Ukrstat). However, due to national security concerns, there are data publication delays and restrictions. Various other sources, including government agencies, NGOs, and research organizations, offer additional valuable datasets, and new open data initiatives increase data accessibility. Thus, despite wartime disruptions, ample data resources remain available for researchers.

### Introduction

Perhaps there is no need to explain how important quality data are for policy-making—particularly, for the forecast and evaluation of specific policy solutions. This is most important during war, when the fiscal space is much narrower and therefore the price of mistakes is much higher than during peacetime. Ukraine has a very well-developed data collection system based on UN standards. Furthermore, the Ukrainian parliament recently adopted a [new law on official statistics](#) that harmonizes Ukraine’s legislation with EU legislation in this sphere. However, implementation of this law requires time and financing (the latter obviously lacking given Ukraine’s current prioritization of defense).

Despite some lacunes (e.g., the latest census was implemented in 2001, and later censuses were delayed—first because [Ukrainian government did not prioritize it](#), then because of COVID and the war), generally the statistics on Ukraine are quite accurate and well developed, although some of the data, such as population data or detailed data on state budget implementation, are not set to be published until martial law is lifted. To sidestep this issue, in addition to the statistics published by Ukrstat, one can find many relevant datasets collected by government agencies and non-government organizations. In this article we will discuss each data source in turn.

### Ukrstat as Main Source for Official Data

The primary source of official data on Ukraine is the Ukrainian Statistical Agency (Ukrstat). Currently the data is migrating to the new website. However, as of May 2024, the majority of data is still hosted on the [old website](#), so for the time being it is still recommended to start there when searching for data on Ukraine. This website may look outdated, but in reality it offers a high-quality database, with the majority of datasets offered in both Ukrainian and English. The Ukrainian version of the website contains more information, although

the main sections that a researcher needs—“Statistical information” and “Publications”—are identical in both versions. However, in some cases it might still prove useful for non-Ukrainian speaking researchers to work with translation tools such as Google Translate or DeepL to translate the more extensive Ukrainian version. For example, microdata files are available only in Ukrainian version of the “Statistical Information” section, and “Express Information” section is available only in Ukrainian. In the “Statistical Information” section, researchers can find all major economic indicators for the country, and sections of the website to which new information has been recently added are clearly marked with the yellow “new” sign.

Some information is published with a delay: for example, the data on external trade is typically published with an approximately two-month delay, and quarterly GDP data can be expected at the end of the next quarter (though the most precise GDP data is published with a delay of over 12 months—for instance, Ukraine’s 2022 GDP data was given its final update on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024). One can consult the [calendar of updates of statistical information](#) for exact dates when information will be updated.

Naturally, Russian occupation of Crimea and Donbas in 2014 and the full-scale war have undermined the ability of Ukrstat to collect data. After 2014, Ukrstat stopped collecting data in the occupied territories, although it still provided some estimates—for example, population data include the occupied areas of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts, but do not include Crimea. Each statistical table contains notes that show which territories are included in the calculations. Some major indicators, such as GDP, were recalculated without the now-occupied territories for the few years before 2014 to provide more opportunities for comparison.

Since the start of the full-scale invasion, some data has gone unpublished (despite being collected as usual) due to national security reasons. For instance, popula-

tion data has not been updated, although a few months ago Ukrstat allowed respondents to fill out the Household Budget Survey and Labor Force Survey online. The reason for this is not only that it is hard to reach some population groups, such as internally displaced persons or refugees, but also that new population data would allow the estimation of Ukraine's war losses, which are not disclosed. The depersonalized microdata of these surveys for the years 2018–2021 can be found in the “Microdata” section of the website. The estimates, for example, of unemployment rely on the websites of job-search services and on surveys which are representative of the population structure as of early 2022 (see also Volodymyr Paniotto's article in this issue).

More granular information can be found in the “Publications” section of the Ukrstat website. Publications usually appear with a one-year delay, but contain significantly more data than the site's “Statistical Information” section. In the “Publications” section, one can find information grouped by different criteria, as well as some historical data (although some of the older publications are provided only in PDF format). Some regular publications previously put out by Ukrstat are no longer published there, as the data is now collected by other agencies. For example, the data on healthcare after 2017 have been collected and published by the [Public Health Centre](#), the data on books and periodical editions after 2017 published by the [Book Chamber of Ukraine](#), and the data on Foreign Direct Investment collected by the [National Bank of Ukraine \(NBU\)](#). These changes were made to reduce the workload on respondents and on Ukrstat itself, and because these specialized institutions are better at collecting the data within their particular areas. For example, the NBU compiles Ukraine's balance of payments, and thus it was natural to hand off collection of data on investment and foreign trade to it, since it owns relevant methodology and expertise.

### Economic Data

The best source for macroeconomic, financial sector, and banking sector data is the website of the National Bank of Ukraine. Its English-language version is as complete as the Ukrainian version, although the information in English may appear with a small delay. The major macroeconomic data can be found in the quarterly [Inflation Reports](#), and the data on financial markets and the banking sector can be found in [Financial Stability Reports](#) which are published twice a year. Both of these reports provide downloadable Excel files with the data for tables and figures. Some data can be found only in these reports, for example, the aggregated data on the real estate market or labour market in Ukraine collected from market participants. In addition, the NBU conducts a number of [surveys](#) of banks, enterprises and

experts, the results of which, along with some general data on [implementation](#) of the State Budget of Ukraine, are also available on its website.

Previously, the detailed data on implementation of the state budget were published by the [Treasury of Ukraine](#). However, since 2022 it no longer publishes this data for national security reasons. Some data on public finance can be found on the [Ministry of Finance's](#) website, including the data on [2014–2019](#) budget implementation. One can find there statistics on the public budget and public debt (although the Ukrainian version of the website contains more information than the English version). The most recent information can be found at the “[Press Center/News](#)” section of the website. There, one can see up-to-date information on budget implementation and on financial support Ukraine has received from its international partners.

The KSE Center of Public Finance and Governance offers the most important public finance data in one place: the “[Budget Barometer](#),” a monthly publication on implementation of state and local budgets, public debt developments, etc. The [Open Budget](#) portal, by contrast, provides more detailed statistics on implementation of budgets of different public entities, but only in Ukrainian. Finally, the most refined data on public spending can be found on the <https://spending.gov.ua/new/> portal: there, one can look at transactions of a particular government agency or public institution (such as a school or hospital). The most detailed information on public procurement can be found in the [analytical module](#) of the Prozorro system (access to some data requires registration).

### Open Data and Data on Specific Information

Since 2014, Ukraine has made huge progress in opening and publication of data: in 2023 it was in the [31<sup>st</sup>](#) place in the Open Data Index, above many EU countries. Ukraine has an open data portal. However, it is available only in Ukrainian, and although it contains over 30,000 datasets, it is poorly structured—to use it, one needs to know exactly what one is looking for.

On the bright side, some of this data can be downloaded automatically using API. Some companies, for example [Opendatabot](#), collect the data from this and other government portals and re-publish it in a more user-friendly form. Generally, public-private partnerships have been very productive in producing data collection platforms and analysis tools. One example is the above-mentioned Prozorro. Another example that is currently under development is the [DREAM](#) platform, which will collect data on Ukraine's recovery projects and will be useful for all stakeholders: those who want to find financing, potential investors, and watchdogs

(the platform will include tools for analysis of project implementation).

Some very specific information on certain regions or industries can be found on the websites of the relevant regions/cities, ministries or government agencies (the list of their websites is provided on the website of the Cabinet of Ministers). For example, the tax administration provides data on registered entrepreneurs, tax inspections, collection of certain taxes, etc., the customs service provides information on movement across borders, the National Agency for Corruption Prevention maintains the registry of e-declarations of officials (and other newly created anti-corruption agencies that investigate or punish corruption also provide quite detailed statistics), and the Ministry of Social Policy runs the dashboard for data on IDPs.

Additionally, there exists a large quantity of data provided by Ukrainian research organizations that has proven helpful for social science research on Ukraine. For example, the Institute for Economic Research publishes a significant amount of macroeconomic data, implements their own monthly survey of enterprises, closely follows Ukraine's EU integration, and produces a number of publications on different policy issues. The KSE Research Institute collects data on the land market and on sanctions levied on Russia, and also provides the most accurate data for war damages inflicted by Russia. The Centre for Economic Strategy collects up-to-date data on Ukraine's economy as well. The most comprehensive database of Ukraine's reforms is provided by VoxUkraine.

#### *About the Author*

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In addition to the official statistics, one can look for less "traditional" sources, such as surveys, self-reporting, publications in social networks or satellite image data. A number of international organizations and foreign governments also collect statistics relevant for Ukraine: for example, the UN collects official data on Ukrainian refugees (but there are also a number of surveys of refugees by Ukrainian organizations aimed at gaining a more comprehensive picture).

#### **Conclusion**

The full-scale war against Ukraine has undermined the capacity of government agencies to collect statistics relevant to their work, and some data are no longer published for security reasons. However, there is still a large amount of data available for researchers. When working with research on Ukraine, one has to keep in mind two things: first, that communication with Ukrainian researchers may greatly simplify the search for relevant data since Ukrainian researchers are familiar with it and may recommend where to start or may already have a relevant dataset, and second, that one should think twice before publishing research results that may potentially harm Ukraine. Even the use of language may be quite a sensitive issue—for example, writing "conflict in Ukraine" instead of "Russia's war on Ukraine" supports Russian propaganda. Again, consulting with Ukrainian colleagues before engaging in research/publishing on the country (for example, asking them to review a publication or discussing a research idea with them) would be a good path to follow.