# Joint market monitoring initiative (JMMI)

February, 2023 Ukraine

#### **KEY MESSAGES**

- **Essential items**, that is food and hygiene items, remained widely available for customer Kls. In January 89% of customer Kls reported availability of warm clothes whereas 93% did in February, meanwhile for medication this rate increased from 88% to 94%. Limited availability of the above mentioned goods was more prevalent **in the South**, especially in the Kherson oblast.
- Median price of the full JMMI basket continued to rise nationwide and across most macro regions. Both the highest increase (13%) and the most expensive set of JMMI basket products (1180 UAH) were in the East. At oblast level the highest baskets were found in Volynska (1353), Kyiviska (1274), and Zaporizka (1231).
- **Affordability** remains a key issue, as 34% of costumer KIs reported the **increase in prices** as their main financial barrier to accessing goods, and 27% of retailers anticipated that it would be a challenge in the next months.
- There was a **notable increase** in the share of retailer KIs who reported **difficulties** keeping their store operational and well-stocked in February (47%) compared to January (34%). The main difficulties were price increases among suppliers and storage of goods during power outages. **60% of retailers** in the **South** also mentioned difficulties related to physical danger in the area.

#### **CONTEXT & RATIONALE**

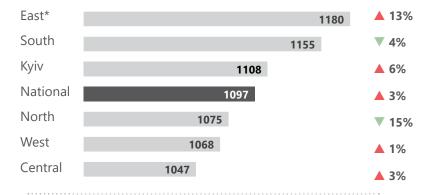
Since 24 February 2022, the full-scale war across Ukraine has prompted mass displacement and humanitarian crisis. Given the prominence of multi-purpose cash as a modality for assistance, market monitoring is a kev initiative to ensure humanitarian intervention is effective, sustainable and does not harm local markets. Due to the widening of areas beyond the control of the Government of Ukraine, humanitarian market data from conflict-affected areas is limited and incomplete. The Joint Market Monitoring Initiative seeks to fill this information gap by providing useful and timely data on price trends and market functionality indicators.

## 1097 UAH

Cost of JMMI basket

27.55 USD ( 4%) 25.86 EUR ( 3%)

#### Median values of the full JMMI baskets in February 2023



#### JMMI in February 2023:

**11** participating partners

1387 interviews conducted

663 retailers surveyed

724 customers surveyed (40% men and 60% women)

23 oblasts monitored

144 hromadas monitored

\*East includes Kharkivska, Luhanska, and Donetska oblasts

#### **ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW**

- Track prices and availability of basic commodities in Ukraine markets on a monthly basis.
- Assess the impact of the current humanitarian crisis on market systems in Ukraine.
- Contribute to a broader understanding of the market environment in Ukraine for the benefit of humanitarian actors across all sectors.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

Marketplaces across Ukraine are assessed on a monthly basis. In each location, field teams record prices and other market indicators through retailer and customer key informants (KIs) interviews that characterize monthly changes in the local markets.



#### **AVAILABILITY OF GOODS**

In February 98% of customer KIs reported full availability of **food items**, whereas for 2% of customers KIs food items were still in limited availability (Figure 1). The highest proportion of of such respondents was in the newly accessible areas of Khersonska oblast (13%) and in Sumska oblast (10%), regions experiencing ongoing ground shelling.

As in the previous month, in February 99% of customers KIs reported full

availability of **hygiene items** (Figure 2). However, limited availability of hygiene items remains an issue in the South, with 20% of customers KIs in Khersonska oblast reported limited availability in their local stores and marketplaces.

With the ending of the cold season, the availability of **warm clothes** for customers KIs has improved (Figure 4). While in January 89% of customer KIs reported full availability of clothes, in February this proportion increased to 93%. Limited availability of clothing

for customer KIs was only observed in Vinnitska, Sumska, Khersonska and Khmelnitska oblasts.

In January 88% of customer KIs reported availability of over-the-counter **medications** whereas 94% did in February (Figure 3), limited access to medicines remained an issue for customer KIs in the South: every third respondent surveyed in Khersonska oblast indicated limited access to medications, and 8% of respondents in Odeska oblast reported limited or no availability of medication.

Figure 1: % of customer KIs reporting availability of food items, national

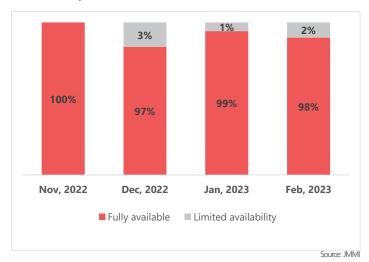


Figure 3: % of customer KIs reporting availability of medication, national

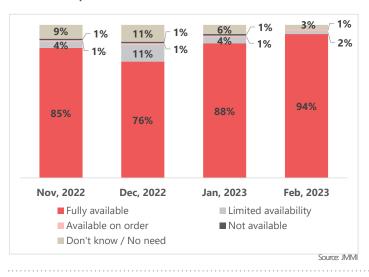


Figure 2: % of customer KIs reporting availability of hygiene items, national

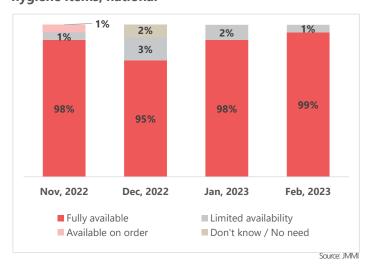
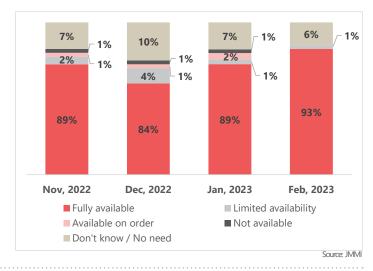


Figure 4 % of customer KIs reporting availability of warm clothes, national



## AVAILABILITY OF ENERGY RESOURCES AND MARKET PRICES

#### **Availability**

**Vehicle fuel** became more widely available to customer KIs in February.

Indeed, while only 57% of customer KIs in December 2022 and 69% in January had full access to vehicle fuel countrywide, in February 2023 the percentage amounted to 78% (Figure 5).

However, 2% in the South and 1% in the West of customer KIs reported

limited access to vehicle fuel. In addition, for 4% of customer KIs in the Centre vehicle fuel was not available.

Also, there was an increase in the number of customer KIs reporting full availability of **fuel for heating** residential buildings (Figure 6): from 77% in January to 83% in February.



Figure 5: % of customer KIs reporting availability of vehicle fuel, national

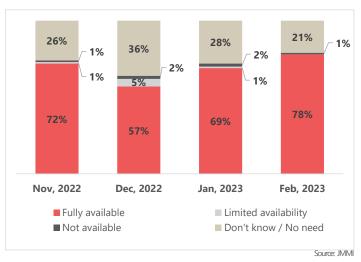
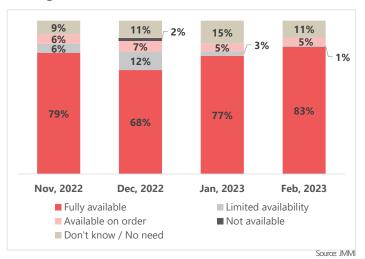


Figure 6 % of customer KIs reporting availability of heating fuel, national



However, limited availability (between 1% and 3%) was reported by customer KIs in the North, South, West and in Kyiv. Seventeen percent of customer KIs in the South and 9% in the North indicated that they could buy heating fuel only via order.

#### Market prices

Fuel price growth declined sharply due to ample supply and weaker demand for fuels, caused by an improved situation in the energy sector and relatively warm weather, as well as by a decline in global oil prices in annual terms<sup>1</sup>.

In February, the average consumer prices for all types of **fuel for vehicles** were lower compared to January. The price of liquefied petroleum gas for automobiles fell the most (by 11%), the price of diesel fuel and petrol A-95 decreased by 5%, and the price of petrol A-92 decreased by 4% (Figure

8)<sup>2</sup>.

However, vehicle fuel prices were still higher than in February 2022. For instance, the price of diesel was 54% higher than in February 2022, petrol A-92 was 41% higher, petrol A-95 was 40% higher, and LPG was 31% higher.

According to the JMMI customer KIs survey, the estimated price of petrol and diesel fuel purchased through unofficial sources was slightly lower than the estimated price of those purchased through official sources. Thus, respondents could buy diesel through official sources for 53 UAH per liter, through unofficial sources for 50 UAH per liter, and concerning petrol - for 50 UAH and 49 UAH respectively.

The price growth in administered prices continued to be restrained by the moratorium on increases in utility tariffs for households<sup>3</sup>.

As a consequence, the prices of electricity and natural gas used by customers to heat their houses have remained unchanged since the beginning of the full-scale war. Natural gas in all regions of Ukraine was available to the residents at a price of 8 UAH per cubic metre, and the price of electricity varied across the country from 1.44 UAH to 1.68 UAH per kWh depending on the amount of electricity consumed.

In February, customer KIs in the Centre, East and South used coal for heating at a price of 12 thousand UAH per ton.

The price of firewood continued to decrease gradually. In February customer KIs could buy firewood for 1,300 UAH per cubic meter on average, which is 13% lower than in January (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Estimated firewood price, national, UAH per cubic meter

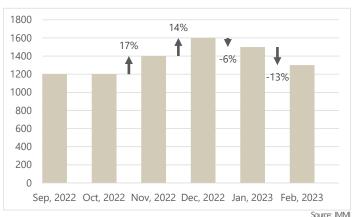
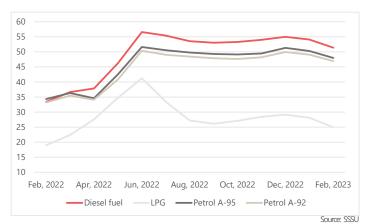


Figure 8: Average consumer price for vehicle fuel, national, UAH per liter





#### THE BASKET

#### Median value of the full JMMI basket

#### The JMMI Basket is a subset of the 335-item consumer set of representative goods (and services)

maintained by the State Statistics Service of Ukraine (SSSU), focusing on core food and hygiene items that an average household must purchase on a regular basis. The JMMI Basket was defined in consultation with the Ukraine Cash Working Group. Trends in the price of the basket are indicative of consumer price inflation.

In February 2023, the cost of the JMMI basket increased by 3%. The biggest rise in value occurred in the East (+13%), and the largest reduction occurred in the North (-15%).

JMMI items were more costly in the Eastern (1180 UAH) and Southern (1155 UAH) regions, whereas the lowest prices (1047 UAH) were observed in the Central part of the country.

#### **Prices**

In February, the cost of the **food basket** increased in all regions except the Southern and the Northern. The most expensive food baskets were registered in the South (616 UAH) and in Kyiv (608 UAH), and the cheapest ones in the North (579 UAH) and in the East (583 UAH).

As expected, as spring approaches vegetables increased in price. In February, onions, carrots and cabbages became more expensive (by 28%, 11% and 5%, respectively). Moreover, complementary cereal for babies rose in price across all regions (from 1% in the North to 5% in Kyiv). For customer KIs in the East, some other food products such as buckwheat, milk, oil, potatoes, rice, water and wheat flour, were also available at a higher price than in the previous month.

The cost of the **non-food (hygiene)** basket rose sharply in the East and in Kyiv (by 23% and 13%, respectively). This was mainly due to a 32% increase in the price of diapers in the East, and a 17% increase in Kyiv.

#### **JMMI BASKET**

rooa	
Bread	500 g
Buckwheat	1 kg
Cabbage	1 kg
Carrots	1 kg
Chicken (legs)	1 kg
Complementary	
cereal for babies	200 g
Drinking water	1 bottle (1.5 L)
Eggs (chicken)	10 pcs
Milk (2.5%)	900 ml
Oil (sunflower)	900 ml
Onion	1 kg
Potato	1 kg
Rice (round)	1 kg
Wheat flour (white)	1 kg

Non-food items (NFIs)	
Body soap Diapers	1 bar (75 g)
(infant size 3) Hygiene/sanitary	1 pack (40-60 pcs)
pads Laundry soap Toothpaste	1 pack (10 pcs) 1 bar (200 g) 1 tube (75 ml)
Washing powder (machine)	1 box (400 g)

Map 1: Median values of food and non-food items in February 2023, by oblast

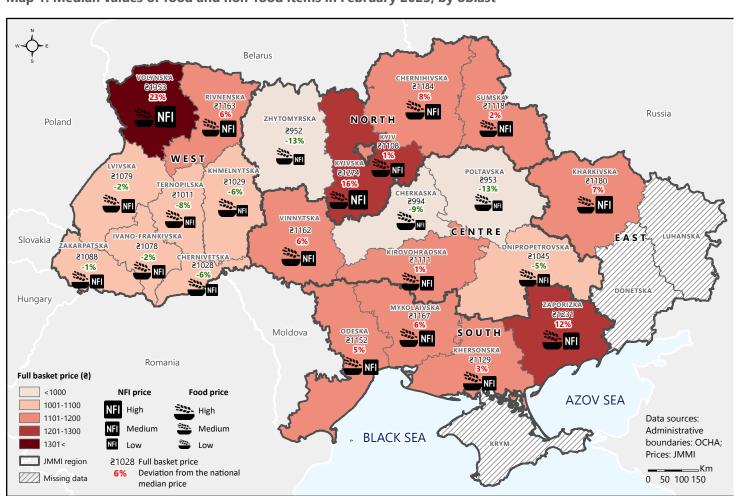


Table 1: Median prices of food items in February 2023 by region, UAH

		West		Centre		South		North		Kyiv		East		National	
Item	Unit	Median price	1 month change												
Bread	500 g	18	-10%	18	5%	19	-1%	16	-19%	19	-21%	14	-7%	18	-8%
Buckwheat	1 kg	65	-2%	61	-8%	70	-7%	65	-7%	67	-3%	67	2%	66	-3%
Cabbage	1 kg	14	17%	15	3%	16	0%	14	8%	14	8%	18	20%	14	5%
Carrots	1 kg	30	20%	31	14%	30	7%	30	10%	30	15%	36	34%	30	11%
Chicken (legs, fresh)	1 kg	95	0%	102	<b>7</b> %	84	-12%	85	-15%	100	-6%	74	-5%	90	-5%
Complementary cereal	200 g	82	2%	76	4%	74	3%	71	1%	76	5%	68	-6%	75	4%
Eggs (chicken)	10 pcs	62	-5%	59	-9%	67	-2%	60	-6%	63	4%	60	-2%	61	-5%
Milk (2.5%, fresh)	900 mL	31	-2%	32	0%	36	3%	32	-3%	31	-2%	30	2%	31	-1%
Oil (sunflower, refined)	900 mL	59	-2%	63	3%	67	0%	63	-4%	63	-1%	65	5%	63	1%
Onions	1 kg	44	29%	45	32%	44	26%	43	23%	44	38%	47	35%	44	28%
Potatoes	1 kg	8	-11%	10	-7%	12	0%	9	5%	9	-5%	11	13%	10	0%
Rice (round)	1 kg	62	1%	58	-5%	61	-2%	60	-2%	60	-3%	59	4%	60	-2%
Water	1.5 L	14	-1%	13	-2%	16	7%	13	-20%	14	4%	17	10%	14	-4%
Wheat flour (white)	1 kg	19	-3%	18	0%	20	0%	19	0%	18	-4%	19	6%	19	0%
Total		602	2%	600	2%	616	-1%	579	-4%	608	1%	583	4%	595	0%

Source: JMMI

Table 2: Median prices of non-food (hygiene) items in February 2023 by region, UAH

		West		Centre		South		North		Kyiv		East		National	
Item	Unit	Median price	1 month change												
Body soap	1 bar (75 g)	14	0%	11	4%	15	7%	12	-19%	13	1%	14	16%	13	0%
Diapers (infant, 5-9 kg)	1 pack (40-60 pcs)	313	0%	303	7%	377	-11%	351	-30%	351	17%	433	32%	351	9%
Hygiene/sanitary pads	1 pack (10 pcs)	37	-2%	36	2%	40	4%	34	-11%	37	11%	41	3%	37	-3%
Laundry soap	1 bar (200 g)	20	11%	19	0%	22	0%	23	5%	21	-4%	20	4%	20	-1%
Toothpaste	1 tube (75 ml)	36	1%	34	-2%	37	-3%	32	-34%	33	-11%	36	-8%	35	-7%
Washing powder	1 box (400 g)	46	1%	44	-3%	48	2%	44	-1%	46	16%	52	16%	46	3%
Total		465	0%	447	5%	539	-8%	496	-26%	500	13%	596	23%	503	6%

Source: JMMI

Map 2: Median values of food items in February 2023, by oblast





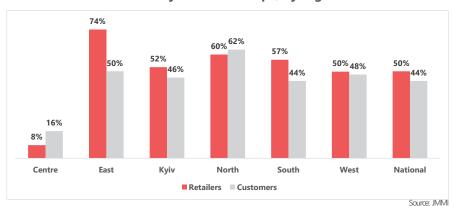
#### **ACCESS TO STORES**

In February 2023, 44% of customer KIs indicated that the full-scale war was affecting their ability to **physically access** stores or marketplaces. In January, the figure was 26%. The highest percentages were observed in the North and in the East, where 62% and 50% of customers KIs, respectively, reported difficulties in accessing shops. On the other hand, 74% of retailers KIs in the East indicated the same (Figure 9).

The main reported reasons across the country were air alerts (17% of customer KIs surveyed) and prolonged power outages (11%). Air attacks mostly restricted northern and western buyers, as indicated by 32% of customer KIs residing in those areas. The lack of electricity in stores affected access to them to a greater extent in the northern regions (28% of customer KIs).

Additionally, customers KIs in the East indicated that movement restrictions related to martial law, and the lack of transportation affected their ability to

Figure 9: % of customer and retailer KIs reporting that the full-scale war has affected the ability to access shops, by region



access stores and marketplaces (24% and 19%, respectively). Moreover, 20% of customer KIs in the South were impacted by fighting or shelling.

**Financial factors** also negatively affected customer Kls' access to stores or marketplaces across Ukraine (61%). The main ones were the increase in prices (34%) and not being able to afford items (12%). Considerably higher percentages was observed in the East (95%), where the vast majority of customer Kls reported financial issues

Fifty-five percent of customers KIs in the East, 43% in the North, 41% in the Centre and 40% in the West reported the increase of prices as their main financial constraint. Moreover, 22% of customer KIs in the East and 20% in the North indicated that they cannot afford items.

As such, the issue of affordability remains crucial, especially in the East and North, where it represents a huge barrier in accessing markets.

#### MARKET FUNCTIONALITY

While in January the percentage of retailer KIs who reported **difficulties** keeping a store operational and well-stocked was 34%, in February the figure increased to 47% (Figure 10). The greatest challenges in this regard were storing goods during power outages (this was reported by 15% of surveyed) and prices set by suppliers (14%).

Retailer KIs from the East and South faced difficulties more frequently than other Ukrainian regions (88% and 62%, respectively). In addition to the difficulties mentioned above, they were affected by dangerous conditions in their area (12% in the East and 16% in the South) and movement restrictions (13% in the East and 8% in the South).

Mostly because of the very high intensity of missile and artillery attacks

all retailer KIs in the East expected new difficulties related to the war in the future (Figure 11), while the national average was 62% (in January - 61%). Among the most anticipated difficulties were rising prices (27%), reducing purchasing power of customers (23%) and reducing mobility of customers (6%). The latter had particular relevance for the East, where it was reported by 22% of the retailer KIs.

Figure 10: % of retailer KIs reporting difficulties in keeping their store operational and well-stocked, by region

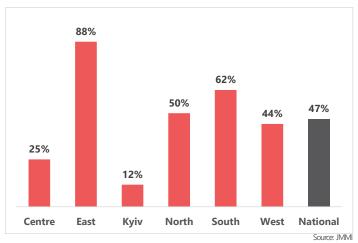
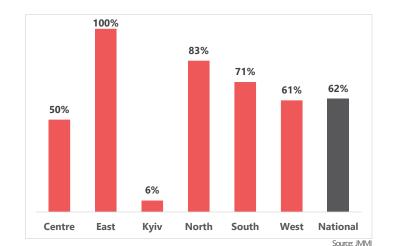
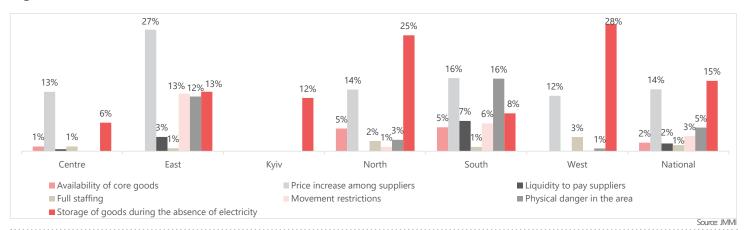


Figure 11: % of retailer KIs reporting anticipating new challenges due to the war, by region



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Figure 12: % of retailer KIs reporting on new challenges faced since the start of the crisis, by type of challenge and region



#### **SUPPLY**

In February, a major increase in the vulnerability of retailer KIs in the South in terms of **food supply** emerged. While in January the share of retailer KIs who reported purchasing food

from only one supplier in this region was 45%, in February the figure increased to 62% being the highest in the country (Figure 13). At the same time, the national average was 35%.

The proportion of retailer KIs whose businesses mostly relied on a **single** 

### supplier of core hygiene items was slightly higher (44% in February country wide). The greatest challenge

country wide). The greatest challenges in this regard were observed in the southern and northern regions, where the figure was 68% and 56%, respectively.

Figure 13: % of retailer KIs reporting in February 2023 that they mostly rely on a single supplier for food items, country-wide

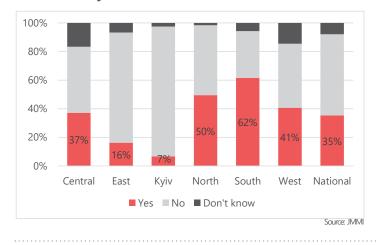
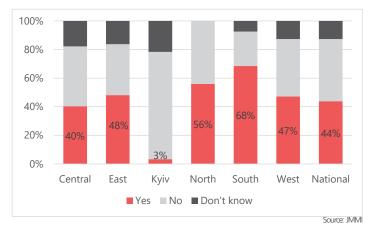


Figure 14: % of retailer KIs reporting in February 2023 that they mostly rely on a single supplier for hygiene items, country-wide



#### **FINANCIAL SERVICES**

According to the JMMI customer KIs survey air attacks and power outages continued to limit the opening hours of banks across the whole country. In February 2023, 14% of customer KIs reported that bank branches could not provide their usual services during air alerts. For 4% of customers KIs, banks were unavailable during power outages, with the highest proportion in the North (23%). Banks still remained inaccessible to a significant fraction of customers in the South (17%), all of them located in Mykolaivska and Khersonska oblasts. Nationwide, bank branches and mobile banking offices

were offering full-service for just 8% of customer KIs, with the largest share in the South (26%).

According to 12% of customer KIs the number of functional **ATMs** was highly limited. This was a problem especially in the East (50%) and in the North (14%). Nationwide, 6% of customer KIs reported the absence of ATMs in their hromadas, percentage which amounted to 18% in the South. As in the previous month, the availability of ATMs was limited by power outages (reported by 7% of the surveyed countrywide). In addition, in the South, 18% of customer KIs reported ATMs not working due to technical problems

or other issues.

Nationwide, 65% of customer KIs reported that **Ukrposhta** offices worked daily and provided all of their usual financial services regularly. At the same time, 13% of customer KIs noted that Ukrposhta offices were unavailable during air alerts. For 4% of customer KIs, only mobile post offices were accessible in their communities.

The main payment modalities accepted by retailer KIs in February were cash (37%), credit cards (27%), debit cards (20%), and mobile apps (16%).



#### **MACROECONOMICS**

#### Inflation

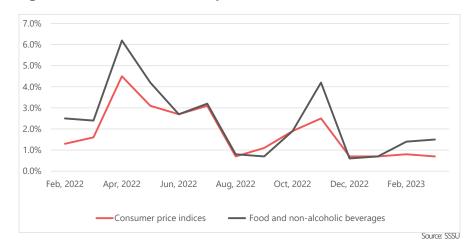
The price outlook in the consumer market was characterized by strong **inflation**: in February 2023, prices were 24.9% higher than in February 2022<sup>3</sup>. Prices for transport, food and non-alcoholic beverages and household appliances increased the most over the year (by 33.6%, 31.8%, and 30.4%, respectively), as shown in Figure 16.

The rise in prices in the transportation sector was driven by a considerable rise in fuel and lubricant prices (by 42%), which in turn led to an increase in prices for passenger transport by road (by 28.8%).

Among food items, eggs, fruit, edible oil and fish increased the most (by 80.3%, 74.9%, 52.6% and 44.1%, respectively), as shown in Figure 18.

The adjustment of the official hryvnia exchange rate in July 2022 resulted in

Figure 15: Inflation rates, % to previous month



an increase in prices in product groups with a high share of imports, such as household appliances.

Concerning health care, the annual price increase was 20.2%. Pharmaceutical product, medical products, appliances and equipment increased in price by 21.3% and outpatient services by 18.9%.

In the field of education, pre-primary and primary education costs have risen the most (by 22.2%).

Figure 17: Mid-market exchange rate for the US Dollar (USD)

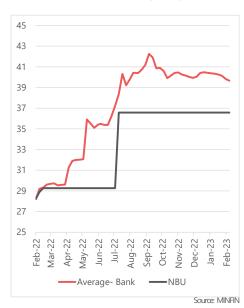


Figure 19: Changes in gross value of exports and imports of Ukraine, by million USD

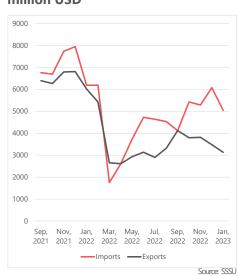


Figure 16: Consumer price changes for selected groups of food and services, February 2023 to February 2022, %

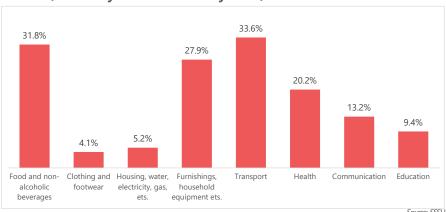
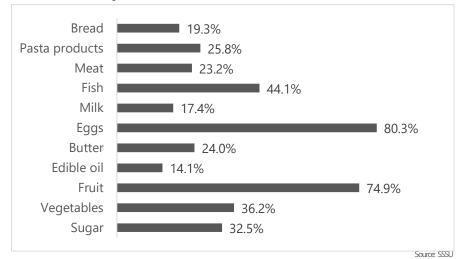


Figure 18: Consumer price changes for selected food items, February 2023 to February 2022, %



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#### **Economic activity**

In February, improved energy sector performance, a more favorable external environment, the activation of the "grain corridor" and better consumer and business sentiments helped revive activities in both the manufacturing and service sectors.

However, to a large extent, the revival was caused by seasonal factors.

In January, the deficit in trade in goods narrowed due to market saturation with machinery products, primarily with emergency power supply goods. However, the current account turned to a deficit amid lower disbursements of grants. International financing was

key for the capital inflows, helping to raise international reserves to USD 29.9 billion as of the end of January.

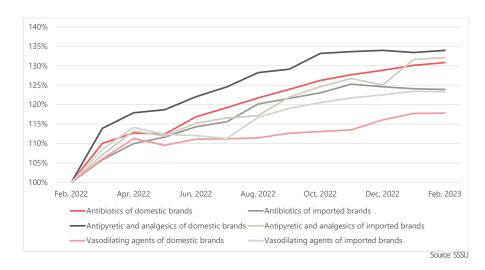
An increase in cash and non-cash FX supply helped to improve the FX market situation and to decrease the NBU's interventions<sup>1</sup>.

#### **MEDICINE**

In February, there were no considerable fluctuations in the prices of medicines.

Compared to February 2022, the prices of antipyretics and analgesics of domestic brands were higher by 34%, for antipyretics and analgesics of imported brands - by 32%, for antibiotics of domestic brands - by 31%, for antibiotics of imported brands - by 24%, for vasodilating agents of imported brands - by 23%, and for vasodilating agents of domestic brands - by 18% (Figure 20)<sup>2</sup>.

Figure 20: Cumulative price increase of selected medicines, national average, as % from February 2022



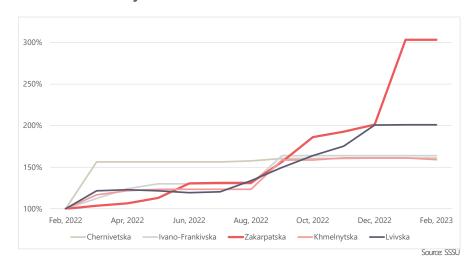
#### **RENT**

Rental prices for one-bedroom apartments in Ukraine continued to rise.

In February 2023, the average rent for a one-room apartment was 37% higher than in February 2022. The largest increase in renting prices as compared with February 2022 was recorded in Zakarpatska (three times more than a year ago), Lvivska (twice as much), Ivano-Frankivska (by 64%), Chernivetska (by 61%) and Khmelnytska (by 59%) oblasts (Figure 21).

The highest rental price was in Zakarpatska oblast (13123 UAH), whereas the lowest - in Sumska (2687 UAH), Zaporizka (2783 UAH) and Khersonska (2905 UAH) oblasts<sup>2</sup>.

Figure 21: Top oblasts by increase of rent for a one-room apartment, as % from February 2022





#### METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

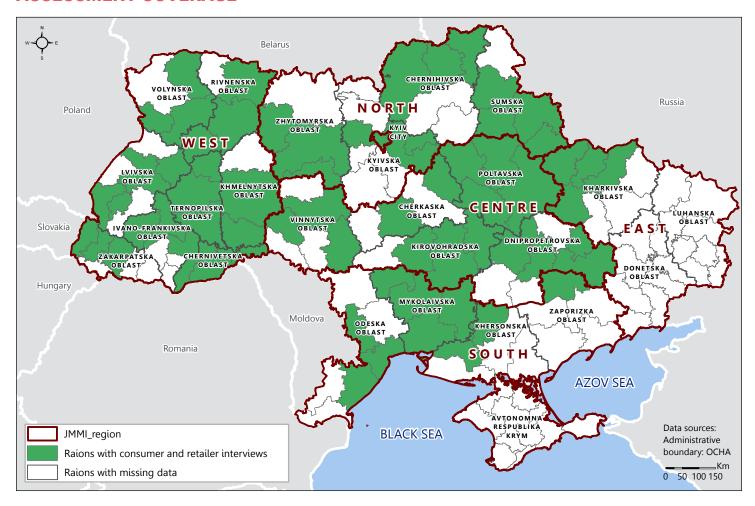
Data collection is a joint, partner-led exercise carried out once per month by participating CWG members across the country. The methodology for collecting primary data focuses on quantitative, structured interviews with purposively sampled interviewees. Two harmonized questionnaires are used: one targeting retail market traders who act as key informants (KIs) for their respective markets, and another targeting customers in monitored stores and marketplaces for individual interviews.

Field teams must aim to collect a minimum of three prices per item per assessed hromada, interviewing retailer KIs until this threshold is met, and must also submit a minimum of five customer KI interviews per assessed hromada. Only the price of the least expensive commonly purchased brand or variety is recorded for each item. All data is collected by field staff trained on the common JMMI methodology and tools; it is then submitted to a common CWG KoBo server and is cleaned and analyzed by REACH on behalf of the CWG.

Secondary data, in particular data from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, are also integrated into the JMMI and used for triangulation where possible.

The prices reported in this factsheet are 'location medians', designed to minimize the effects of outliers and unequal numbers of prices submitted from diverse locations. First, the median prices of each assessed item is calculated within each assessed hromada; then, for each item, REACH calculates the median of this list of hromada-level medians across larger geographical areas (raions, oblasts, regions, and the whole of Ukraine).

#### ASSESSMENT COVERAGE





## CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

As the JMMI relies on purposive sampling methodologies, the results must be regarded as indicative and not representative. Furthermore, results are indicative only of market conditions during the time frame in which they were collected.

The JMMI methodology records the price of the least expensive commonly purchased brand or variety available in the store for each item. As brand availability may vary from area to area, price comparisons across areas may sometimes be based on slightly varying products.

In some cases, partners were unable to collect the minimum number of retailer

KI or customer KI interviews required by the JMMI methodology. Where necessary, imputation from raion-level or oblastlevel medians was used to compensate for missing prices and enable the cost of the JMMI basket to be calculated.

While the JMMI's remote monitoring methodology produces reliable data on prices and availability, further data on market functionality cannot be collected using this methodology.

As the JMMI continues to expand into new hromadas, some changes in the overall median prices may be driven by shifts in coverage rather than by true price coverage rather than by true price.

#### **DONORS**





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### **ENDNOTES**

- <sup>1</sup> National Bank of Ukraine 'Monthly Macroeconomic and Monetary Review, March 2023', 6 March 2023, available **here**
- <sup>2</sup> State Statistics Service of Ukraine 'Average consumer prices for goods (services) in Ukraine in 2023", 15 March 2023, available **here**
- <sup>3</sup> State Statistics Service of Ukraine "Consumer price indices for goods and services in 2023", 13 February 2023, available here

#### **ABOUT REACH**

REACH Initiative facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidencebased decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, **ACTED** and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT).

