



## Market Update 7 (October – November 2015)

# UKRAINE

## Macro-Economic overview

### Summary:

- Economic indicators reflect a growing Ukrainian economy although at very low rates.
- Harvest under favourable weather conditions indicate a robust agricultural sector performance although at lower rates compared to 2014.
- The labour market situation remains tense, despite signs of recovery.
- Market data indicate a commodity market disintegration in NGCA.
- Decreased availability of food items in NGCA in November compared to the summer period.
- The exasperating financial situation of the majority of general population in NGCA and IDPs in GCA of Donbas remains one of the major concerns.
- Further price increase are expected during the winter season.

GDP data for October and November [show continued improvement of the Ukrainian economy](#), although at very low rates (approximately 1% month-to-month)<sup>1</sup>. This positive trend has been identified starting from May 2015. However overall economic activity in other sectors remained weak when compared to last year. Official data seem to suggest that the implementation of the ceasefire has resulted in increased growth particularly in the mining and steel industry. On a regional basis, the industrial sector in Donetsk showed the greatest improvements in October 2015, with positive rates of growth [in industrial output of 8.7%](#) year-over-year (YoY)<sup>2</sup>.

In October, agricultural production increased by 0.5% YoY against 4.2% YoY reduction in September. This dynamic has been achieved through a continuation of the harvest under favourable weather conditions and an increased yield of sunflowers and fruits as well as better performance in the harvest process of sugar beet, potato and vegetable crops.

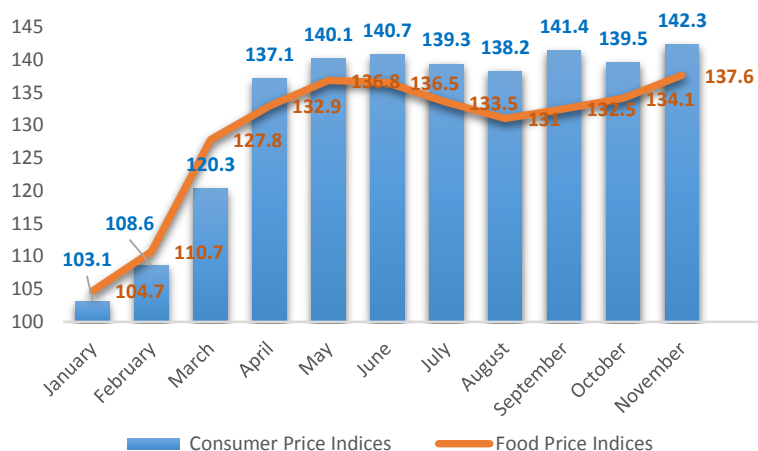
As of November 57.1 million tons of grain have been harvested with the average yield at 40.6 c/ha (in 2014 - 42.1 c/ha). The gross grain production in 2015 in Ukraine is expected within 59.2 million tons, which will satisfy domestic needs and food security is also good

potentially supply the external markets. In this marketing year<sup>3</sup>, [Ukraine has exported already 14.5 million tons of grain](#)<sup>4</sup>.

In the livestock, [situation has not changed](#) except of slight drop of production of eggs and meat, primarily because of low domestic demand and financial problems in enterprises of poultry industry.<sup>5</sup>

Consumer Price Index (CPI) reached 42.3% in November since the beginning of 2015. In November prices of raw food products continued to grow (by 4.3% m/m) mainly due to higher prices of vegetables, sugar, eggs and milk, in particular due to increased cost of production (**Graph 1**).

Graph 1: Consumer Price and Food Price Indices



<sup>1</sup> Ministry of economic development and trade of Ukraine, The composite index of production Report

<sup>2</sup> Donetsk Statistic Department, as of October 2015

<sup>3</sup> A marketing year is defined as the period from 1<sup>st</sup> July (current year) – 30<sup>th</sup> June (next year)

<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine, Official Notice

<sup>5</sup> Ministry of economic development and trade of Ukraine, Agriculture in November Report

Utilities prices and tariffs increased by 1.9% m/m due to the increase of heating tariffs. The food price index continues to grow after seasonal decreasing during summer. In November, food inflation reached 37.6% from the beginning of the year. The Government of Ukraine is expecting this figure to keep growing due mainly to usual winter food price increases.

The labour market situation remains tense, despite signs of recovery in economic activity. At the same time reducing [real wages continued to slow down](#) - to 18.6% y/y due to high inflation rates.<sup>6</sup>

## Food Supply and Availability in NGCA

WFP continues its market and food price monitoring in NGCA through its Third Party Monitoring, the Kiev International Institute of Sociology (KIIS). The majority of the interviewed key informants were small and medium manufacturers, wholesalers engaged in the food industry including meat and sausages, bread and cereals, sugar and sweets, dairy products as well as oils and fats.

According to the interviewed key informants, manufacture and sale of food products remains below the pre-crisis levels. Low purchasing power of the population remains the major factor of declining demand on the food market. Earlier products were delivered to cities on the other side of the contact line such as Volnovakha, Mariupol, Sloviansk, Kramatorsk etc. Currently trade with these territories is impossible. The situation is influenced additionally by the relations between the so-called authorities of DPR and LPR. Key informants referred to a kind of custom barrier that challenges the flow of commodities between these areas.

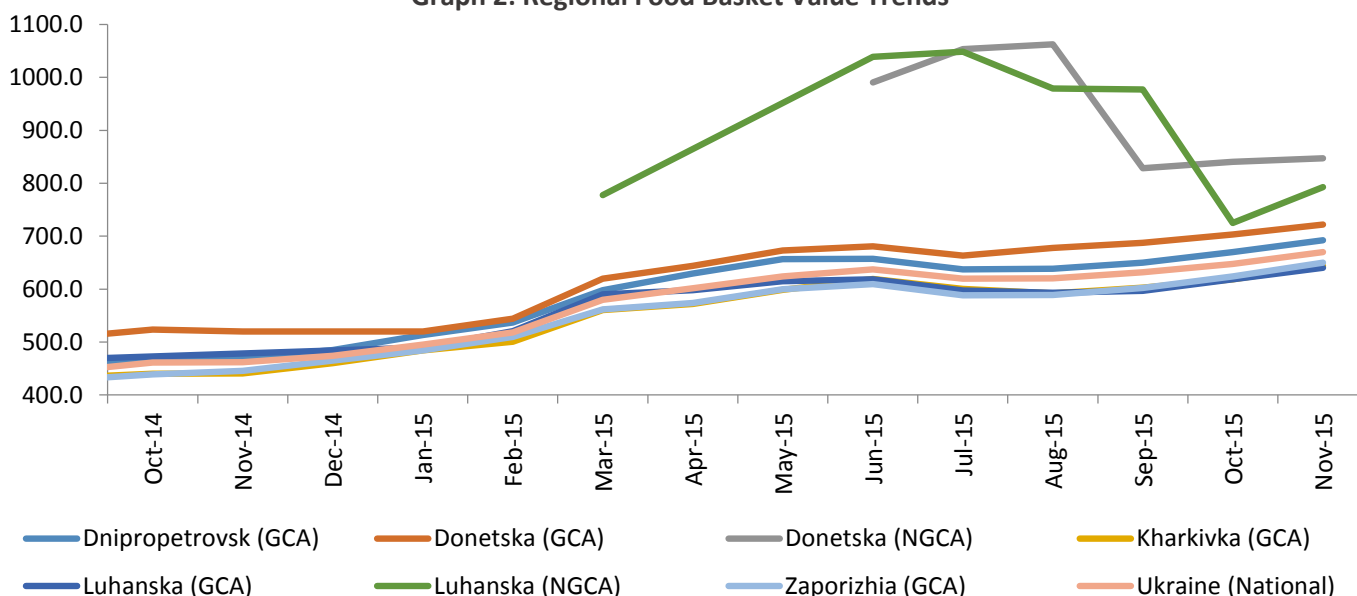
**Respondent A: Chief Technologist**  
**Oblast: Donetsk**  
**Market Location: Zugres**  
*If we consider the average, the summer sales increased sharply at the moment the blockade with Ukraine entered into force. The whole supply routes changed as a result. Deliveries from other countries and smuggling from Ukraine began. Sales returned to the previous levels. The purchasing power of the population declined and the cost of goods has increased. These factors also flattened sales growth in the absence of competition.*

The supply chain between GCA Ukraine and NGCA lacks clear procedures for delivery/crossing checkpoints, bringing more risks into supply operations.

The below **Graph 2** is a graphical representation of market trends in GCA and NGCA. Markets seem more integrated in the various oblasts of GCA.

Furthermore data seem also to indicate a commodity market disintegration within NGCA. Different market policies and purchasing power, alternative supply routes and varying exchange rates as well as custom barriers applied between DPR and LPR could be some of factors affecting the integration of markets within NGCA. WFP will continue to monitor and report on these factors in upcoming market updates.

**Graph 2: Regional Food Basket Value Trends**



<sup>6</sup> National Bank of Ukraine, Macroeconomic and Monetary review for October 2015

**Table 1** below indicates a decreased availability of food items in NGCA in November compared to the summer period when availability reached the highest level in 2015. Decreased availability could be seen in fresh produce such as vegetables but also in staples group such as buckwheat and potatoes as well as some of the meat products.

Commodity	Donetsk (NGCA) Nov-15	Change in Availability	Luhansk (NGCA) Nov-15	Change in Availability
Rice (Kg)	WA	▶	WA	▶
Wheat bread (Loaf)	WA	▶▶	WA	▶▶▶
Rye bread (Loaf)	WA	▶▶	WA	▶▶▶
Wheat flour (Kg)	WA	▶	WA	▶▶▶
Pasta (Kg)	WA	▶	WA	▶▶▶
Buckwheat grits (Kg)	NWA	▼	WA	▶▶▶
Potato (Kg)	NWA	▼	NWA	▼
Beef (Kg)	NWA	▶	NWA	▶▶▶
Pork (Kg)	NWA	▶▶	NWA	▶▶▶
Poultry (Kg)	NWA	▶▶▶	WA	▶▶▶
Boiled sausages (Kg)	WA	▶▶▶	WA	▶▶▶
Eggs (10 Pieces)	WA	▶▶▶	WA	▶▶▶
Butter (Kg)	WA	▶	WA	▶▶▶
Sunflower oil (Litre)	WA	▶▶	WA	▶▶▶
Pork fat (Kg)	NWA	▶▶	NWA	▶▶▶
Milk (Litre)	WA	▶▶▶	WA	▶▶▶
Sour cream (Litre)	WA	▶▶▶	NWA	▶▶▶
Curd (Kg)	WA	▶▶▶	NWA	▶▶▶
Cabbage (Kg)	NWA	▼	NWA	▼
Carrot (Kg)	NWA	▼	NWA	▼
Beetroot (Kg)	NWA	▼	NWA	▼
Onion (Kg)	NWA	▼	NWA	▼
Sugar (Kg)	WA	▶	WA	▶▶▶

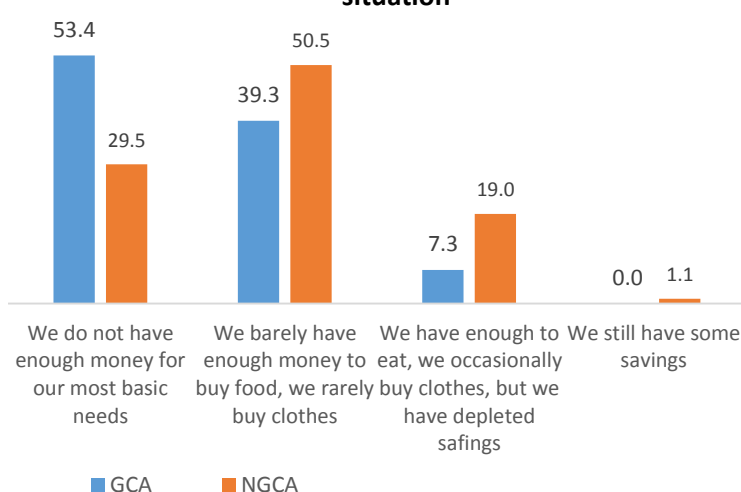
## Food Accessibility in East Ukraine

In general, financial situation of the majority of general population in NGCA and IDPs in GCA of Donbas remains difficult.

According to the recent WFP food security assessment, 29.5% of households in NGCA do not have enough money for basic needs, 50.5% have barely enough to buy food, and only 19% have enough to eat but have depleted savings (**Graph 3**). Over the past three months, 59% of households saw their income decrease, and 6% had no income.

Similar financial situation is prescribed for IDP households in GCA. 53.4% of households declared that they don't have enough money for basic needs, 39.3% have barely enough to buy food, and only 7.3% have enough to eat but had depleted their savings.

**Graph 3: HHs statement on the current financial situation**



At the same time, more than 65% of households are facing significant income decrease during last three months. The [average salary for vacancies offered](#) on DPR Labour Centre website<sup>7</sup> is around 4,400 RUB (around 1,600 UAH) compared to a [national average](#) of 4500 UAH<sup>8</sup>. Information gathered through focus group discussions in NGCA indicate long delays with almost all type of social benefits.

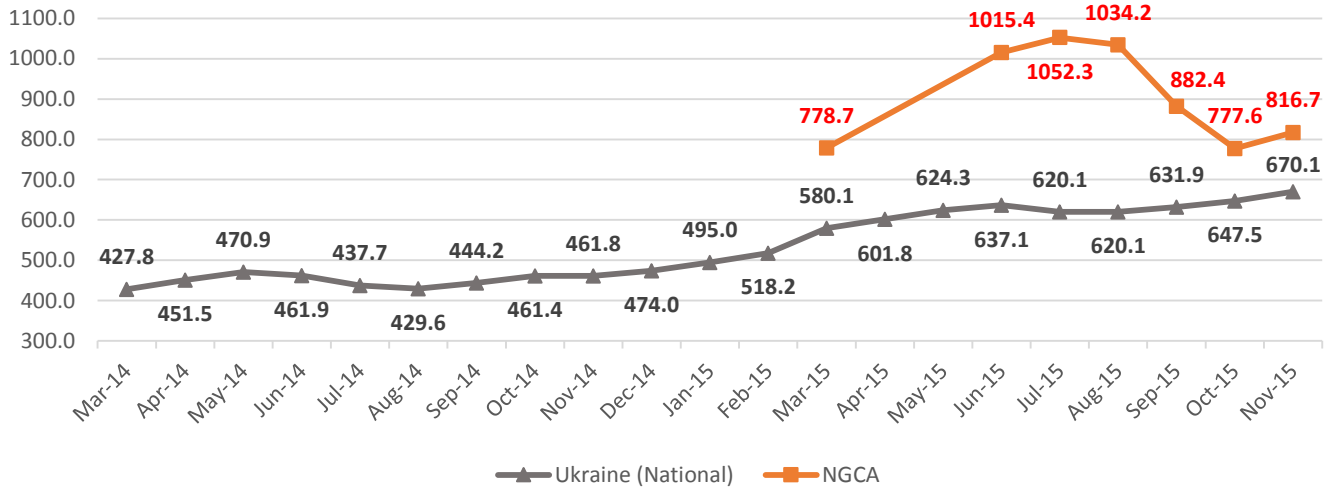
<sup>7</sup> DPR Labour Centre, as of 7.12.2015

<sup>8</sup> State Statistics Service of Ukraine, as of September 2015

## Food Basket Price Trend

Graph 4 below represents the price development of a full food basket for national and NGCA regions.

Graph 4: Food Basket Value in GCA and NGCA



The value of the full food basket at national level started to rise again in September after a seasonal decrease during the summer months. In October the value increase accelerated to 2.5% m/m and in November to 3.5% compared to a slight increment (2%) in September. As seen in graph 4 above, the value of the full food basket at national level has registered regular seasonal changes. Summer harvest season in local agriculture pushes prices down, especially for fresh produce. Therefore, further increments are to be expected in food prices for winter 2016.

During October and November, the value of food basket at national level reached its highest historical value. The food basket value grew primarily by seasonal increases in prices for vegetables, which rose by 30-80% since the beginning of autumn, eggs for about 40% and sugar 30%. Significant price increase was observed also within the staple group and particularly for some of the most preferred items such as potatoes (23%) and buckwheat (19%). Prices of bread, meat and dairy products remained stable in recent months.

The value of food basket in Donetsk GCA as of November 2015 reached 722.2 Hryvna or 7.8% higher compared to national level. In Luhansk GCA the value of food basket reached 640.4 hryvna, or 4.4% lower than the national and 12.8% lower than Donetsk GCA.

In October the value of food basket in NGCA continued its downward trend for a second month in a row. In November however prices started to increase again. The value of food basket in November increased with 5% compared to October. Food prices remain around 22% higher compared to national levels.

## Recommendations

- Some of the major risks to the future economic recovery could include threats of military confrontation aggravation, further reduced external demand for major Ukrainian goods and risks in money markets connected to IMF cooperation.
- Share of expenditure on food remains one of the highest in the world with around 52% for households in GCA and 80% in NGCA. This situation could be further aggravated due to additional financial pressure specific for the winter season such as heating, renting and other utilities.
- Food prices remain around 22% higher in NGCA compared to national levels. Further price increase are expected during the winter season. Considerations should be taken into account to review the value of cash/voucher transfers especially during the winter season.
- Adoption of cash and voucher modalities in NGCA needs careful considerations. Volatile exchange rates and availability of commodities in NGCA markets could represent additional for cash/voucher programs.

