



Social Cohesion in Ukraine

Part I: Defining and measuring social
cohesion using the SCORE

Acknowledgements

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The views, conclusions and recommendations presented in this document do not necessarily reflect the position of USAID, UNDP or their partners.

About SCORE

The Social COhesion and REconciliation Index (SCORE) is an analytical tool providing a solid evidence base for developing policies and programs that strengthen national unity, social cohesion, and resilience as well as for monitoring progress of their implementation.

SCORE Ukraine is implemented on an annual basis and designed to improve the understanding of societal dynamics in Ukraine. It is a joint initiative funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Union (EU) and implemented by the Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development (Seed).

This conceptual and analytical paper is based on the SCORE Ukraine data set collected between January – April 2021, which consists of a nationally representative sample of 12,482 face-to-face interviews across the country, excluding Crimea and non-government controlled areas (NGCAs) in eastern Ukraine. The sample is representative of the adult population of Ukraine, and the sampling strategy was based on population estimates of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine as of January 1, 2019.

The SCORE index is a tool designed to measure social cohesion and reconciliation in post-conflict societies around the world and has been applied in more than 15 post-conflict countries across the globe. For more information on SCORE, the full list of SCORE Ukraine indicators and their glossary definitions visit our online data platform [here](#).

About Partners

Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development works with international development organizations, governments, and civil society leaders to design and implement evidence-based, people-centred strategies for the development of peaceful, inclusive, and sustainable societies. Working in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia, SeeD provides policy advice for social transformation that is based on citizen engagement strategies and empirical understanding of the behaviour of individuals, groups and communities. The SeeD approach focuses on understanding the root causes of social problems by developing and empirically testing a science-based theory of change.

USAID (United States Agency for International Development) is the world's premier international development agency directly involved in numerous development projects. USAID has partnered with Ukraine since 1992, providing more than \$3 billion in assistance. USAID's current strategic priorities include strengthening democracy and good governance, promoting economic development and energy security, improving healthcare systems, and mitigating the effects of the conflict in the East.

USAID's Democratic Governance East (DG East) is a five-year activity to improve trust and confidence between citizens and government in eastern Ukraine, building opportunities for the region to lead Ukraine's democratic transformation. DG East aims to strengthen the connection and trust between citizens and their government in eastern Ukraine by promoting good governance and inclusive civic identity, increasing interaction between citizens and civil society, and increasing collaboration between government and citizens and citizen participation in community development and local decision-making.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supports strategic capacity development initiatives to promote inclusive growth and sustainable human development. Through partnerships with national, regional, and local governments, civil society, and the private sector, UNDP strives to support Ukraine in its efforts to eliminate poverty, develop people's capacity, achieve equitable results, sustain the environment, and advance democratic governance. UNDP, through its flagship UN Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme (UN RPP), is also helping to restore critically important social and economic infrastructure and effective work of local governments in eastern Ukraine, create jobs and spur entrepreneurship among IDPs and host communities, and promote peace and reconciliation.

1. Defining Social Cohesion in Ukraine

In recent years Ukraine has gone through political upheavals, social conflicts and warfare that have threatened social cohesion, tearing apart interpersonal bonds, the social fabric, and the country itself. Understanding social cohesion in Ukraine is needed to bridge the widening chasms between groups with divergent future visions for the country (1; 2). Social cohesion must be part of a realistic long-term strategy designed to facilitate the reintegration of the areas not currently under the control of the Ukrainian government (3). It is also crucial for strategies seeking to address the inclusion of marginalised groups such as IDPs (4; 5), the disabled, or the poor, the reintegration of ATO/JFO veterans (6), and the facilitation of decentralisation reform process (7). It has also become of increasing interest to international agencies (8; 9; 10; 11; 12), and Ukrainian policymaking in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts¹ In a complex and fragmented context like Ukraine, progress on virtually any socio-political issue cannot be achieved without considering social cohesion.

Social cohesion and its components have also been proposed as sources of systemic resilience against conflict and other shocks, potentially safeguarding communal and individual wellbeing in the face of stressors and crises (13). Despite its centrality and potential, peacebuilding programmes around the globe have struggled to induce sizable increases in social cohesion (12; 14). Given the difficulty to enhance social cohesion, and its importance for resilience in societies, it is all the more crucial to first define and then understand how to efficiently increase social cohesion.

This paper proposes a framework for understanding social cohesion, a definition for it, and a measurement framework using indicators in the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (SCORE) Index², which is appropriate for Ukraine³. It then reveals results of the levels of Social Cohesion across Ukraine. It is the first volume of a pair of papers: this report will outline the conceptual framework, while the second volume will delve deeper into root causes and disrupting factors of cohesion, analyse the link between social cohesion and other societal, economic, and political phenomena, and discover entry points to build social cohesion in Ukraine.

Social cohesion – an elusive beast

Researchers and practitioners – both in Ukraine and beyond – have proposed several definitions of social cohesion. These definitions tend to include the absence of conflict between social or political groups (15; 16), strong social bonds (15; 17; 18; 19), eagerness to work together (20; 21; 22), trust between individuals (18; 23; 24), a common identity and shared values (12; 16; 19; 21), trust in institutions (12; 18; 24; 25; 26), and aspirations of inequality reduction and achieving well-being for all (12; 17; 27; 28; 29). Yet others have highlighted social cohesion's inherent ambiguity and indefinability, proposing instead that it should be left without a rigid definition, adaptable to the needs of each society, and dependent on the political and social cleavages of a given context (25; 30).

¹ The Ukrainian Ministry of Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories has included several SCORE indicators in the "Strategy of Economic Development of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts for the period up to 2030".

² For more info on the SCORE index globally, and its methodology, see: scoreforpeace.org

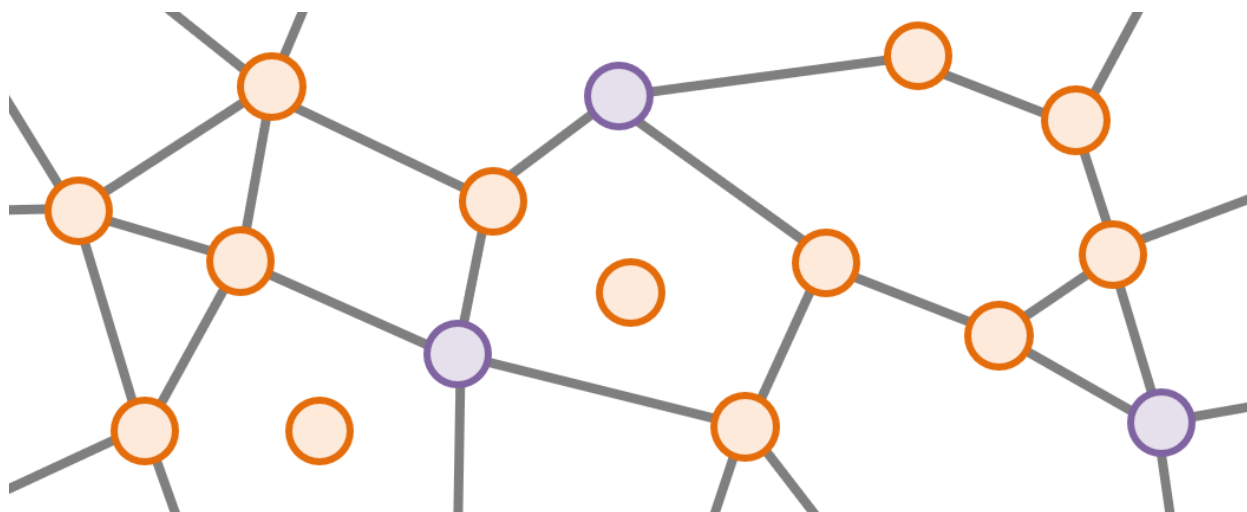
³ For more info on the SCORE index in Ukraine, see: app.scoreforpeace.org/en/ukraine/

In the various conflict and post-conflict contexts where SCORE has been implemented, SeeD has followed a middle path between ambiguity and prescription: drawing from the literature while also including social and inter-group phenomena which are relevant and important for each society (31; 32; 33). To accurately tap into these contextual phenomena, holding consultations with local stakeholders is paramount, as they ensure the participatory definition of each society's social cohesion metrics⁴. The SCORE thus varies from country to country, depending on the main social cohesion issues, conflicts, and reconciliation challenges specific to each context.

Social cohesion defined as harmonious relations in a networked system

SeeD considers social cohesion to be a network phenomenon (34; 35) characterized by the interconnectivity of actors in a society, and by the characteristics and qualities of these relationships. Social cohesion thus refers to the state of harmonious, mutually beneficial relations, and reciprocity between actors. Actors in such a social network can be citizens or institutions (including state authorities and non-state organisations). If citizen-citizen relationships function harmoniously in a society, then that society has a high level of *horizontal social cohesion*. If citizen-institution relationships function harmoniously in a society, then that society has a high level of *vertical social cohesion*.

Figure 1: A conceptual model of a society as a network of nodes and edges, with two kinds of actors: citizens (in orange) and institutions (in purple) that are arranged in a web of relationships (grey lines). Note some actors are better connected than others. Not visualised are the various qualities that relationships between two actors might have: adversarial, cooperative, domineering, violent, supportive, and so on. Social cohesion depends on the density and qualities of such citizen-citizen and citizen-institution relationships, as well as the norms that citizens and institutions about such relationships.



Distinguishing the vertical and horizontal dimensions of social cohesion in Ukraine (12; 21) is needed given that relations between citizens and with institutions function differently. Indeed, one might expect the levels of vertical and horizontal social cohesion to be very different in societies with dysfunctional institutions. Moreover, the drivers of vertical and horizontal are also expected to differ.

⁴ For example, Migration Tendency was included in Moldova's SCORE, as a key social cohesion issue there is brain drain. In Afghanistan, social cohesion was broken down into more specific phenomena which were perceived to be more pressing issues, such as intercommunal conflicts, gender equality and the prevalence of violence.

But precisely which characteristics of those relationships between actors should be considered to define high social cohesion in Ukraine? There have been multiple attempts to pin down the concept in Ukraine over the years. Both conceptualization of social cohesion and measuring it can be an elusive challenge for academics and practitioners alike. Since 2015, SeeD has been trying to inform these efforts by providing methodological, analytical, and empirical contributions. There is a growing need to define the concept and its measurement in a trackable and scalable way (from the national to the city level). Based on SeeD’s learning in Ukraine (and beyond), and relying on consultations with Ukrainian stakeholders, while drawing upon a variety of definitions and frameworks (12; 18; 21; 24; 36; 37; 38) and remaining sensitive to the specificities of social dynamics in Ukraine, we propose that Horizontal and Vertical Social Cohesion consist of the following components, each measured by the following SCORE indicators.

<i>Vertical Social Cohesion</i>	
<i>Theoretical Component</i>	<i>SCORE indicator⁵</i>
Authorities representing citizens’ concerns, caring equally about all parts of Ukraine, are open to hearing different points of view and are attentive to needs of ordinary people.	Ukrainian Authorities Care
Authorities are accountable, act with public interest at heart and bear responsibility for their actions.	Accountability of Authorities
Citizens feel comfortable expressing their political views (collectively and individually) without fear.	Political Security
Citizens feeling that ordinary people can change things in their community and that their vote matters and can make a difference.	Sense of Agency
<i>Horizontal Social Cohesion</i>	
<i>Theoretical Component</i>	<i>SCORE indicator⁵</i>
Citizens believing that everyone living in Ukraine, irrespective of ethnic or cultural background, can be considered Ukrainian and an integral part of society.	Pluralistic Ukrainian Identity
Feeling attachment to and belonging in Ukraine.	Sense of Belonging to the Country
Tolerance towards marginalised groups (e.g., Muslims, Jews, Roma), openness to interact personally, and acceptance in the community.	Social Tolerance
Accepting as close friends and colleagues, and not feeling threatened by, citizens from different regions or with different political ideologies and visions.	Social Proximity and Lack of Social Threat
Citizens perceiving that community members care for each other and cooperate to solve common problems.	Community Cooperation

⁵ The indicators contributing to the meta-indicators of both vertical and horizontal social cohesion are equally weighted. The exception is Social Proximity and lack of Social Threat, which will be half weighted as they tap into the same phenomenon of harmony between groups

Unlike other measurement frameworks, we avoid including trust in institutions as an indicator measuring vertical social cohesion. In participatory consultations, it was pointed out by Ukrainian stakeholders that this would be tainted by political views of respondents about particular institution-holders rather than an objective appraisal of the institution. Instead, indicators which tap into other aspects of the relationship between citizens and authorities are used.

Furthermore, this framework of social cohesion is *formative*, in the sense that we do not propose an underlying latent phenomenon of social cohesion, which, when it exists, manifests itself as the appearance of the components mentioned above (19). Rather, we arrive at this selection of indicators a priori, following theoretical decisions based on consultations and contextual knowledge. We thus do not expect that the components of either vertical or horizontal social cohesion are necessarily correlated with each other. Instead, we consider that they are potentially independent of each other, with different groups of citizens or regions of the country having a different combination of strengths and weaknesses⁶. Accordingly, SCORE analysis on how to increase social cohesion may well focus on particular component indicators which are shown in section 2 to be low.

Some social cohesion frameworks include an array of indicators which are peripheral to a concrete definition of social cohesion, such as service provision (23), satisfaction with living standards (26) and long-term unemployment (39). Although such indicators should definitely be measured in any study investigating social cohesion, our framework separates the indicators measuring social cohesion from those which may be prerequisites or outcomes of social cohesion (19; 24). For our purposes, a succinct and circumscribed set of indicators is desired – this will allow the social cohesion metric to remain meaningful and relevant for quantitative analysis, and also more trackable across time. Then, the wider web of relations between social cohesion and other indicators can be investigated, testing different hypothesis around enabling and disruptive factors.

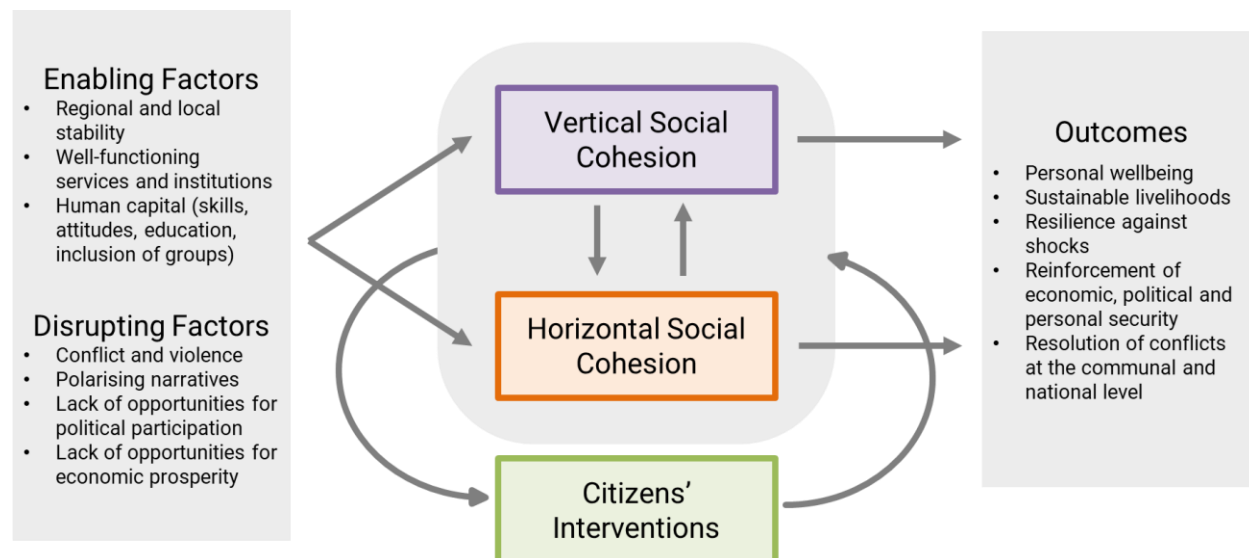
Social cohesion in the web of societal dynamics

Researchers have debated at length if social cohesion is a cause or an effect of other social factors (40; 41; 42). Our framework sees social cohesion as being affected by various enabling and disrupting factors, while also generating certain long-term outcomes as shown in figure 2. Factors influencing social cohesion may include the functioning of institutions, or economic conditions (24; 41). Social cohesion could be undermined by conflict (43), chronic lack of opportunities, or divisive narratives and ideology.

High social cohesion is expected to have positive outcomes both for individuals, like personal mental wellbeing (44), and society at large, like economic growth (41). In countries experiencing conflict, social cohesion could be an important prerequisite for conflict resolution, reconciliation between groups, long-term harmony, and prevention of future violence.

⁶ Comparing social cohesion scores is thus more useful at the component level rather than at the level of the overall metric, since areas with similar overall scores may have radically different profiles of component scores.

Figure 2: Schematic of social cohesion as a phenomenon affected by various enabling or disruptive factors, and in turn affecting certain outcomes. Social cohesion also affects and is affected by the civic behaviour of the citizenry. Each arrow represents a relationship where one factor affects another, which can be investigated by the SCORE. Citizens' interventions police, prune and maintain social norms, press causes, punish institutional or individual wrong-doing, and push for incremental social change and policies. Not part of Social Cohesion per se, instead it is a force which may either reinforce or undermine it.



These relationships may be different for vertical and horizontal social cohesion. They may have different enabling factors or outcomes. Furthermore, there may be an interplay between Vertical and Horizontal Social cohesion: in some societies one may be reinforcing the other, in others they may be independent of each other. In contexts where state institutions are dysfunctional or weak, there may be a conflict between vertical and horizontal social cohesion, where allegiances to governmental institutions collide with allegiances to local informal networks.

Given that the SCORE has measured many of these enabling and disrupting factors, as well as several potential outcomes, upcoming SCORE analyses in volume II will investigate what the prerequisites of both Vertical and Horizontal Social Cohesion are, and which outcomes are most likely to follow on from successful increase of social cohesion. Each grey arrow in figure 2 can be seen as a research question worth investigating using SCORE data.

Against the rose-tinted civic participation lens

Many of the frameworks measuring social cohesion include participation and citizenship behaviour in definitions of social cohesion, as a sure marker of interconnectedness and solidarity. Other research separate these from social cohesion, in an attempt to understand the link between citizenship behaviour and social cohesion (45; 46). The frameworks that include participation tend not to consider countries in conflict or undergoing acute social tensions. In contexts with intense socio-political turbulence, inter-group enmity, or active warfare, active citizenship and

participation is not an unambiguously benign phenomenon. In fact, SCORE has found that it is linked to potential radicalization (47) and violent civic behaviour⁷ (31; 48).

Thus, we place participation in civic and political processes outside social cohesion, and instead conceptualise citizens' interventions as emerging from social cohesion, and which in turn, can affect social cohesion – hence the cycling grey arrows in Figure 2. Different forms of citizens' interventions can exist (protests, petitions, social media campaigns), each of which can be reconciliatory or adversarial, non-violent or violent, planned or spontaneous, constructive or destructive, and so on. Furthermore, we do not naïvely take citizens' interventions to always emerge when social cohesion is high, or indeed to always have a positive impact on social cohesion. Some civic interventions arise because of social tensions, and some interventions can seek to exclude or marginalise minority groups, and lead to a breakdown of social cohesion. This more generalized lens for citizenship must be used in societies where social cohesion is fragile, national policies are hotly contested, and conflict intertwines with civic movements. Indeed, only such a lens could account for the complexities of the Ukrainian citizens' intervention *par excellence*: Euromaidan and everything in its wake.

To understand the full complexity of civic behaviour, such phenomena should be measured by an array of indicators, and not aggregated into an overall meta-construct. We propose SCORE indicators **civic engagement, active citizenship, passive citizenship, violent citizenship and readiness for political violence**. Separating the civic dimension from social cohesion allows us to investigate the feedback loop⁸ between the two. This leads to important discoveries such as that aspects of social cohesion have been shown to be resilience factors against radicalisation, dampening the effect of radicalising dynamics (47).

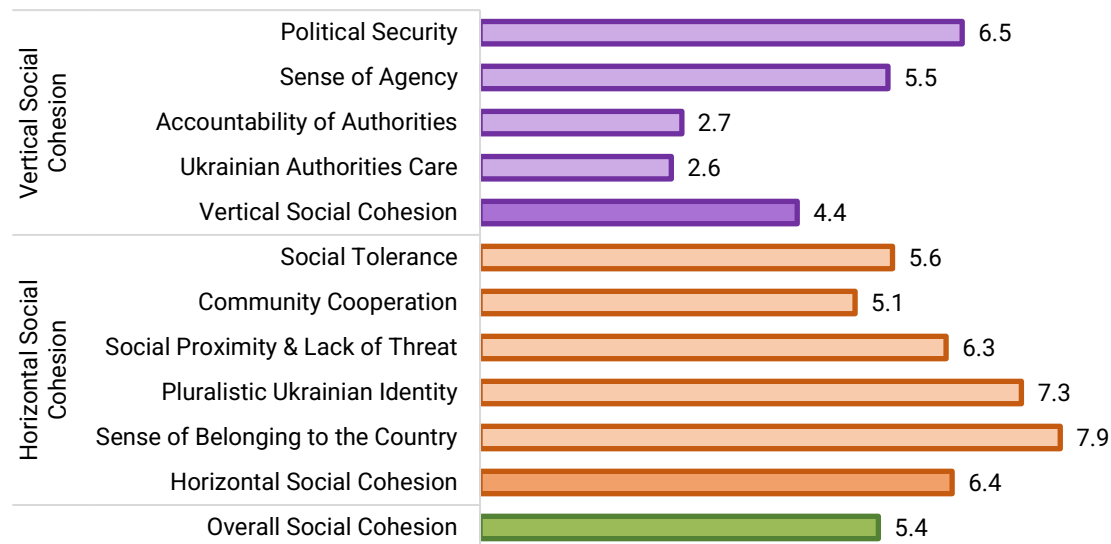
⁷ This result also appears in Ukraine. Active Citizenship is correlated with Violent Citizenship ($r=.39, p<.01$), while Civic Engagement is weakly correlated with Violent Citizenship ($r=.16, p<.01$), even after controlling for age. The rose-tinted lens might predict these correlations to be negative, or non-significant at the very least.

⁸ Citizens' civic behaviour is in a tight feedback loop with social cohesion, but it is not the only phenomenon intertwined with social cohesion. The SCORE could also identify feedback loops of social cohesion with, for example, the media landscape: it is thought that worse social cohesion leads to more polarising narratives spread on media, and polarising narratives in turn undermining social cohesion, leading to a vicious cycle.

2. Measuring Social Cohesion in Ukraine

Using SCORE Ukraine data from 2021, we find the Social Cohesion score to be 5.5 out of 10, with Vertical Social Cohesion at 4.3 out of 10 and Horizontal Cohesion at 6.4 out of 10.^{9,10} Figure 3 shows the national scores of vertical and horizontal social cohesion as well as, their individual components. While national levels of political security and sense of agency are moderate, levels of accountability and citizen-care of Ukrainian authorities are very low. Taken together, these result in low levels of vertical social cohesion for the country (4.3). In contrast, national levels of sense of belonging and endorsement of an inclusive, pluralistic identity are high, while components which tap on the acceptance of, harmony, and cooperation among different groups (e.g., Social Tolerance, Community Cooperation, Social Proximity and Lack of Threat) are at moderate levels. As a result, horizontal social cohesion for the whole country is at moderate levels (6.4).

Figure 3: National Scores of Overall, Vertical and Horizontal Social Cohesion, including their individual components, calculated using SCORE 2021 survey data from a sample of more than twelve thousand citizens across Ukraine.



Further, Figure 4 reveals that there is substantial geographical variation in the levels of both dimensions of social cohesion. Horizontal social cohesion is consistently higher than vertical social cohesion in all oblasts. This suggests that citizen-institution relationships are dysfunctional and warrant attention. Figure 4 also reveals oblasts which enjoy higher or lower levels of vertical and horizontal dimensions of social cohesion. Indeed, for most areas vertical and horizontal social cohesion tend to go hand in hand. Nonetheless, there are exceptions, as is the case of the Contact Line area of Luhansk, where while horizontal social cohesion is high (7.6), but vertical social cohesion is very low (3.3). Further analysis in the follow up social cohesion

⁹ The overall social cohesion corresponds to the average of horizontal and vertical social cohesion scores.

¹⁰ All indicators measured by the SCORE, including horizontal and vertical social cohesion, are given a value from 0 to 10, where 0 corresponds to an absence of social cohesion in an area or in society and 10 corresponds to a strong presence.

report will investigate more deeply areas which have a unique constellation of high and low scores on the components of social cohesion.

Moreover, it is important to also highlight cases where two oblasts have the same scores on both dimensions of social cohesion. These are Donetsk and Kirovohrad; and Kyiv (Oblast) and Dnipropetrovsk. Although, at face value these pairs of oblasts appear to be identical, a more granular examination of their scores on the components of each social cohesion dimension is needed to understand the ways they differ.

Figure 5 shows the oblasts which have the three highest or lowest scores on each component of vertical and horizontal social cohesion. While some oblasts, like Ternopil and Rivne, tend to have high scores on both vertical and horizontal social cohesion, other oblasts, such as Chernihiv, Zakarpattia, Kirovohrad, and Luhansk, have unique constellations of successes and challenges on either or both dimensions of social cohesion. Peacebuilding organisations and stakeholders may therefore use this map to tailor their strategies to the needs and challenges of each oblast, while also being aware that the different strengths available to be leveraged in each of these. Alternatively, this map can be used to focus attention of which challenges are most important for each oblast. Of course, care should be taken when comparing areas with a vastly different context: the contact line area is a rural area with no large cities, while Kyiv city has a population of nearly three million.

Figure 4: Plot of the scores in vertical and horizontal cohesion of each oblast, including disaggregations for the areas within 20km of the contact line in Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts. Some oblasts cluster rather close to the national average (in red), while others are peculiar outliers, with unique social dynamics, such as the Contact Line area of Luhansk oblast (high horizontal social cohesion but very low vertical social cohesion).

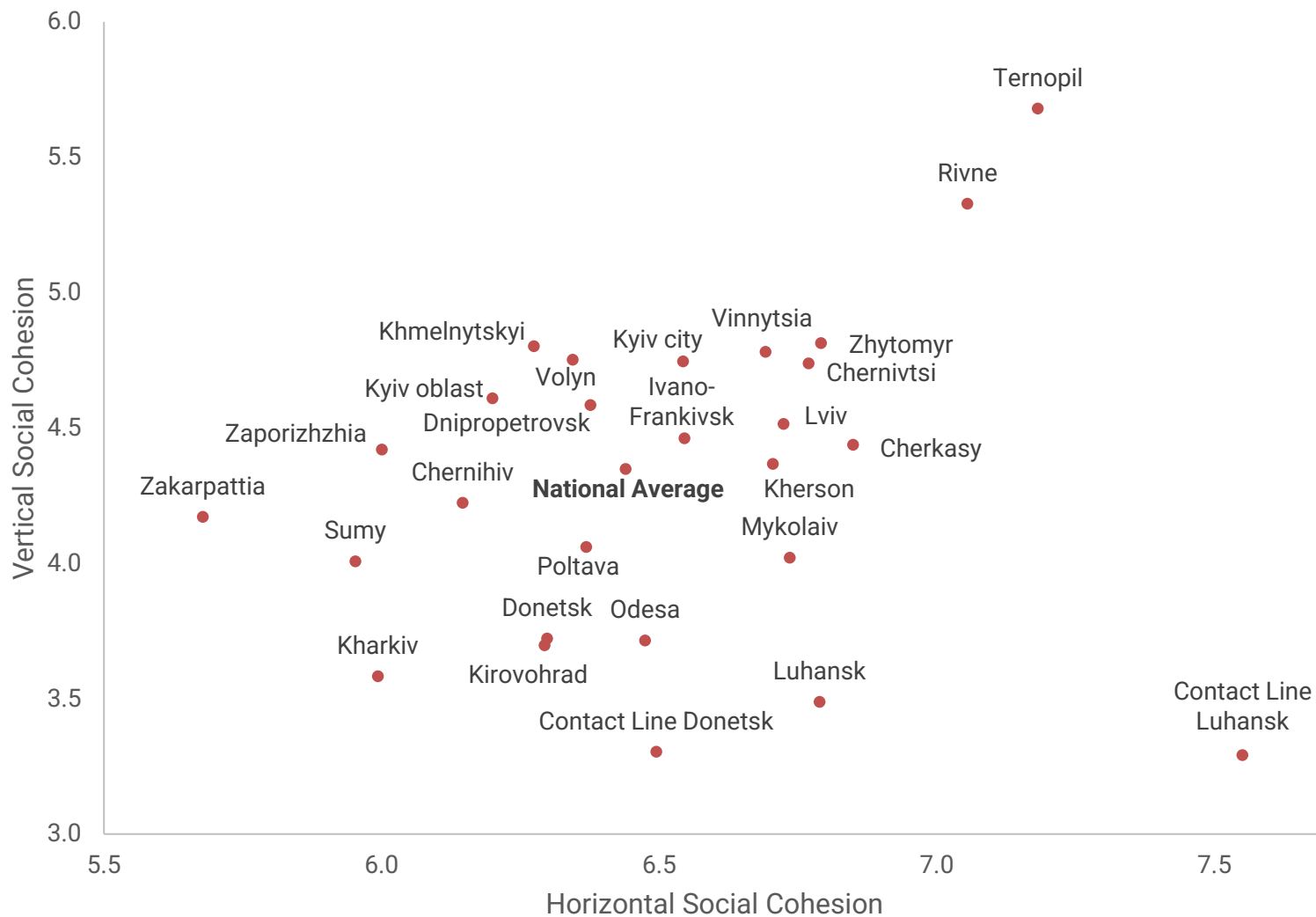
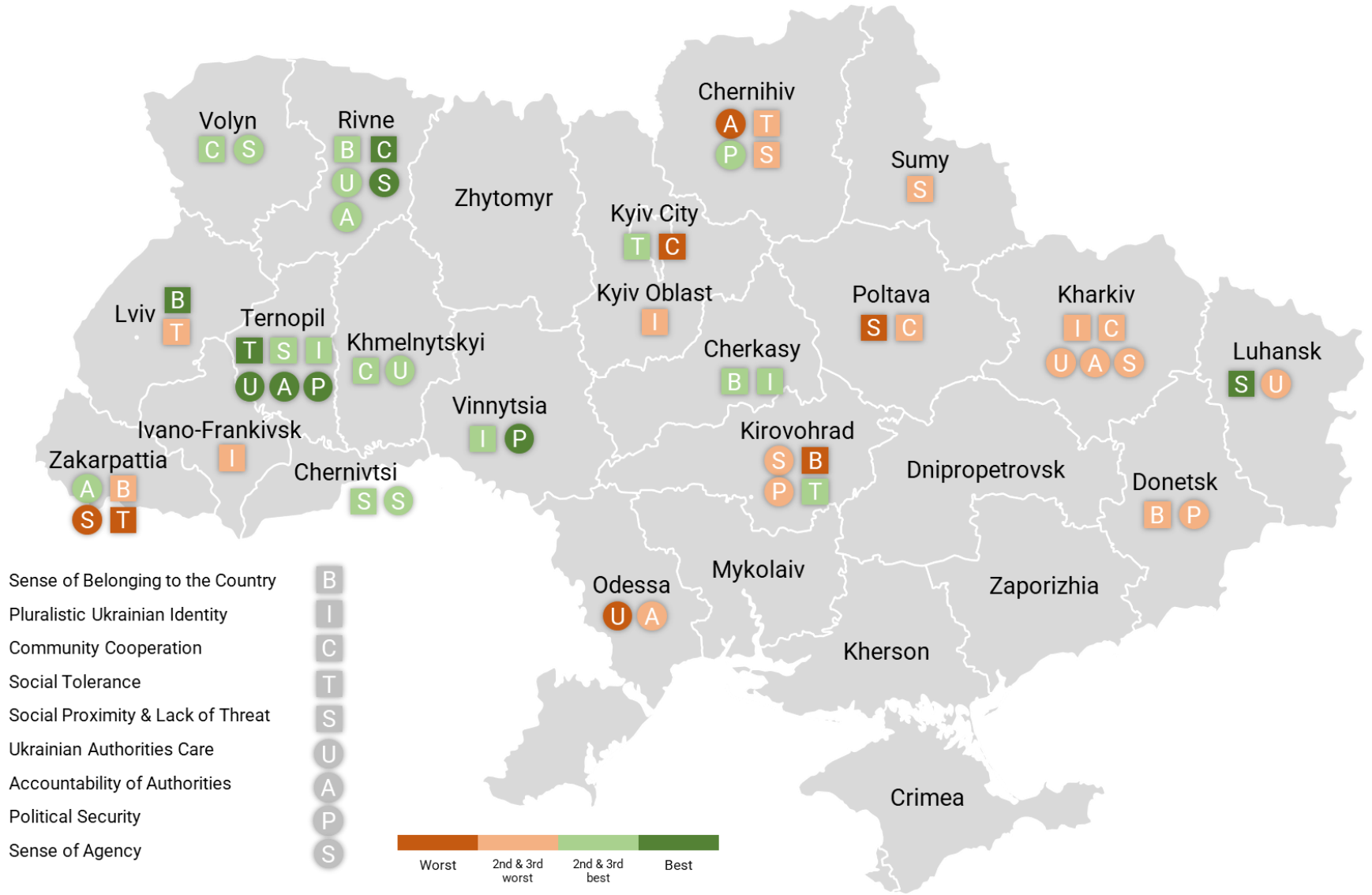
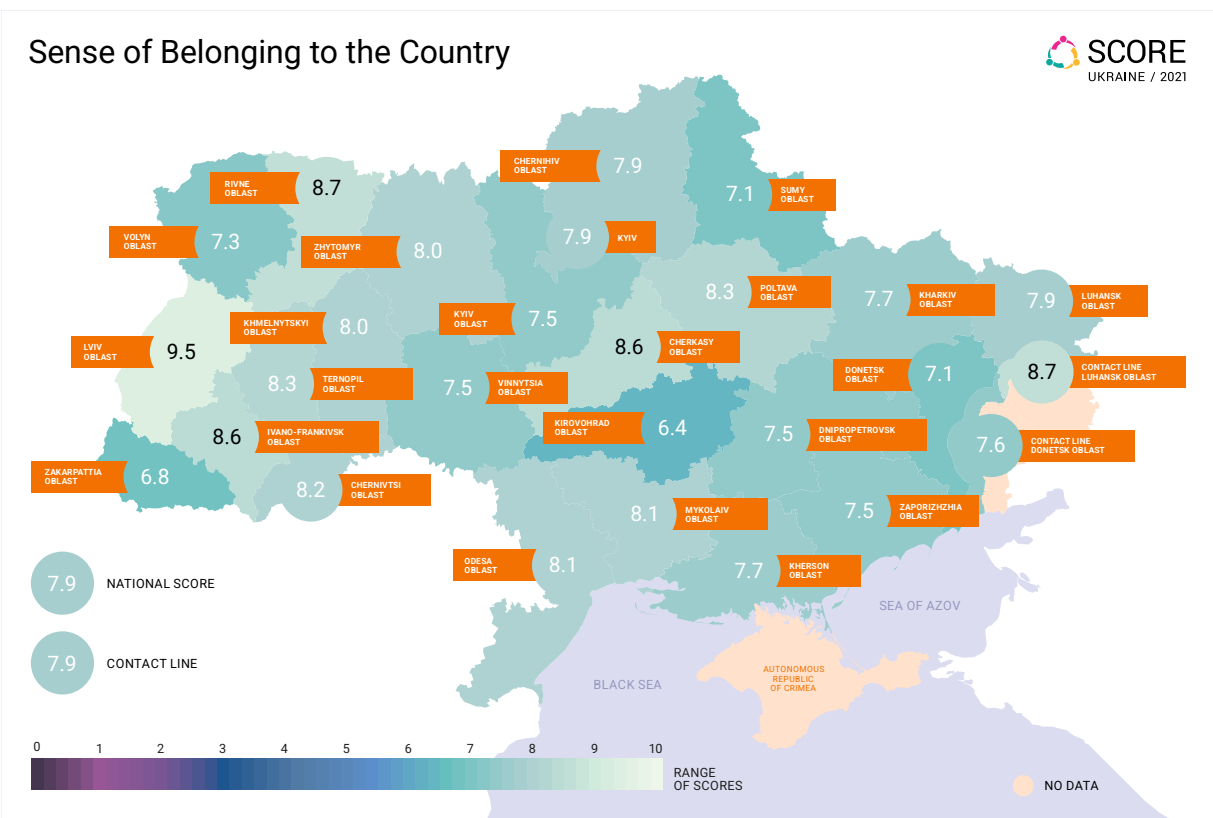
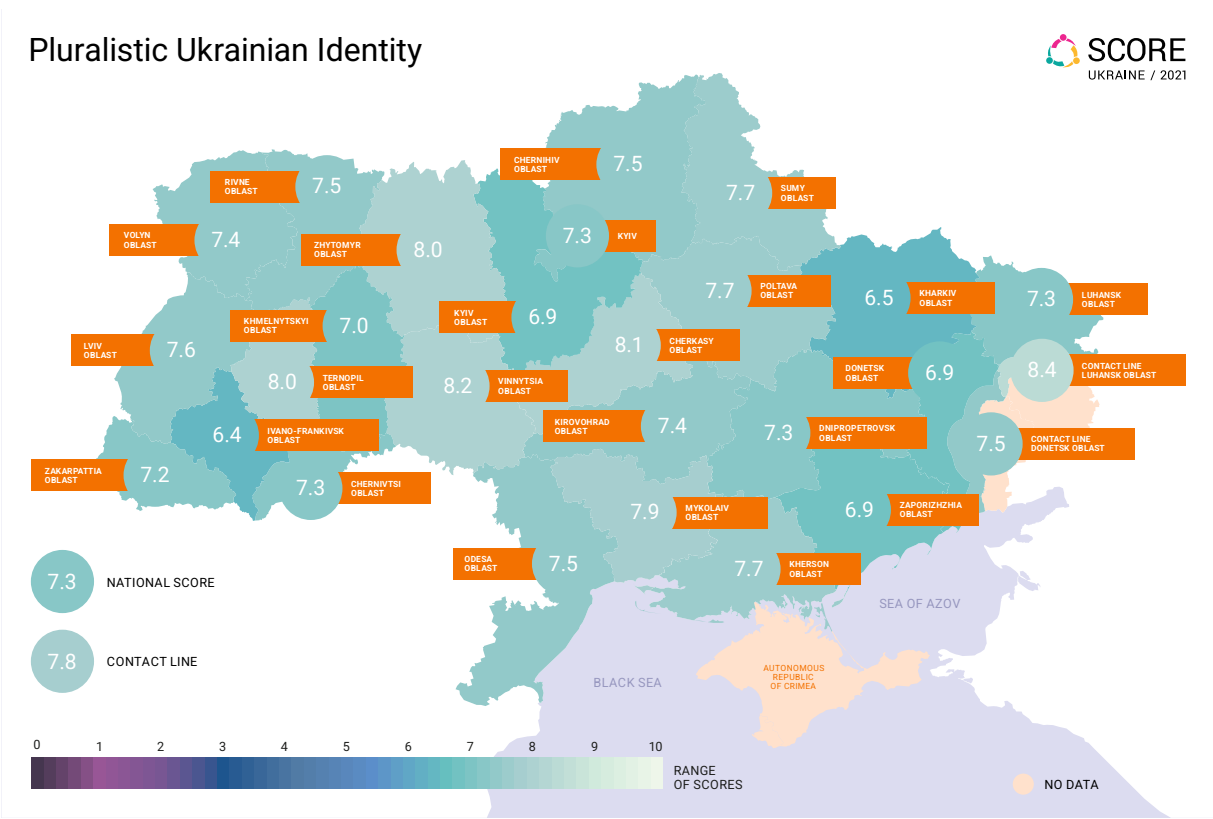


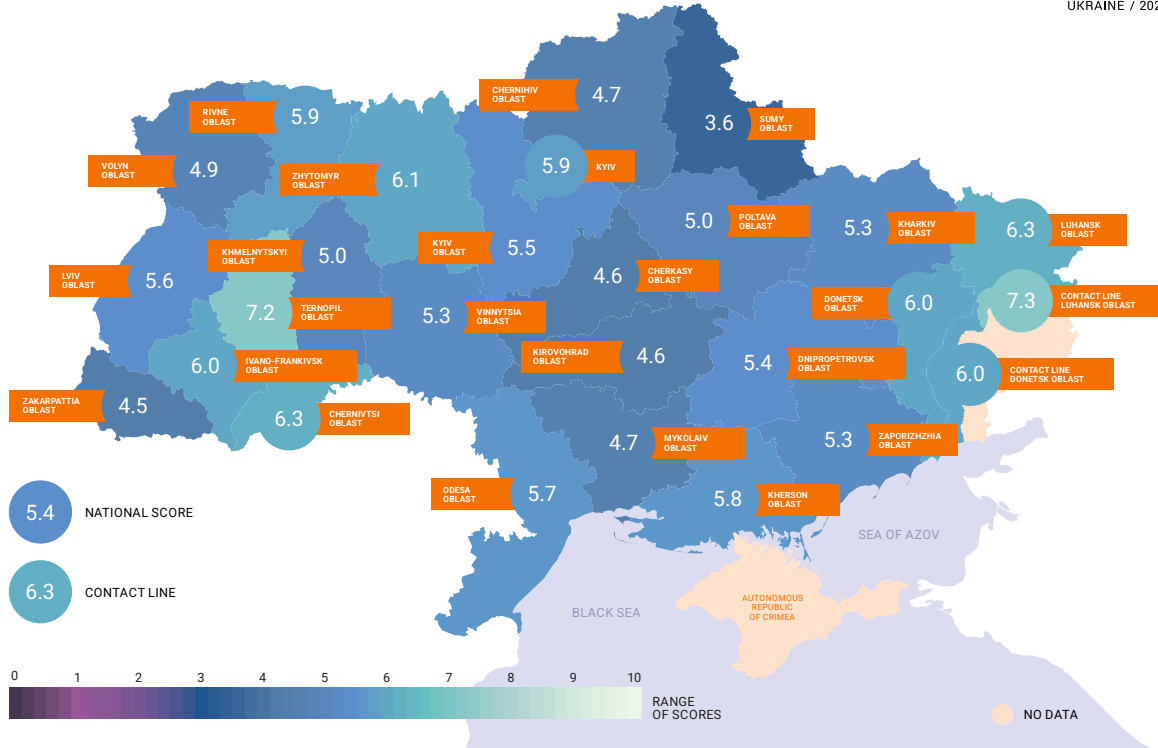
Figure 5: Oblasts which have the three highest or lowest scores of each component of vertical and horizontal social cohesion. Symbols denote that that oblast achieved the highest (green) or lowest (orange) score in each component of vertical and horizontal social cohesion. Lighter green and orange correspond to being among the top or bottom three oblasts. Some oblasts have a combination of green and orange symbols, implying that they are doing well in some parts of social cohesion, but poorly in others.



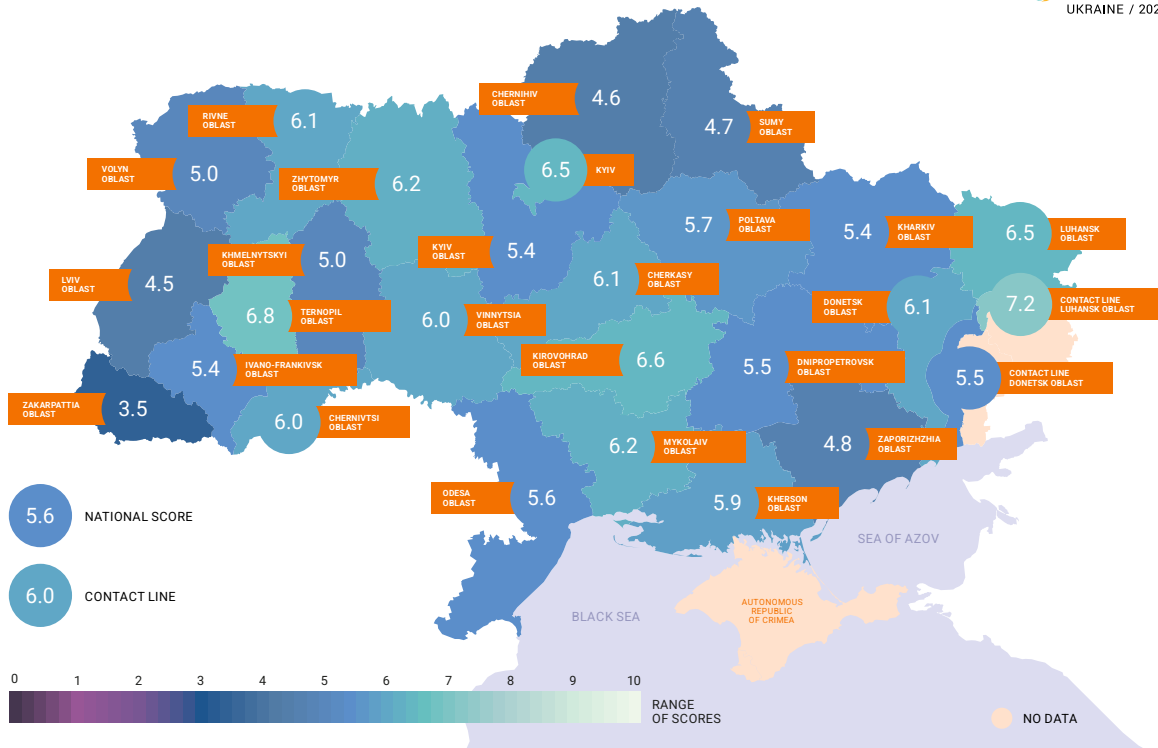
Components of Horizontal Social Cohesion



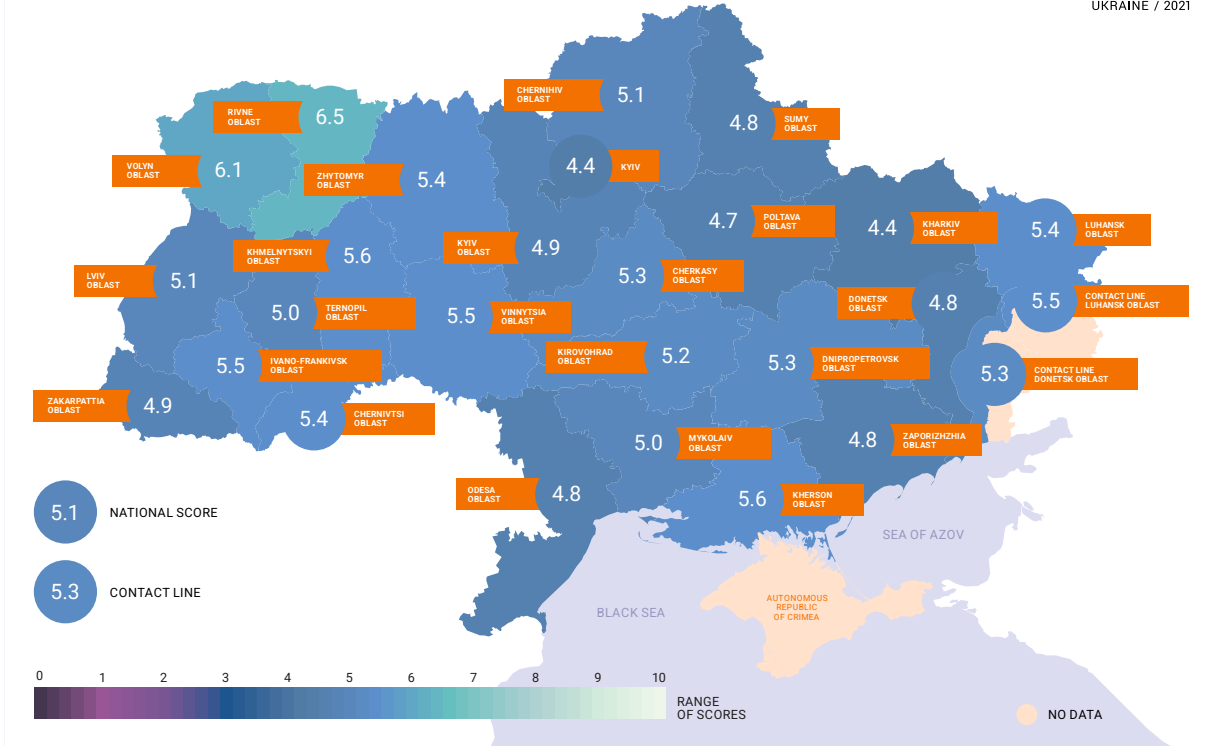
Social Proximity



Social Tolerance



Community Cooperation



Pluralistic Ukrainian Identity tends to be higher in the Contact Line area of Luhansk oblast (8.4) compared not only to the national score (7.3) but also to the oblasts in eastern Ukraine (Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk & Luhansk which have an average score of 6.9). The SCORE reveals Pluralistic Ukrainian Identity to be positively correlated with Distress Tolerance¹¹, Empathy, and Growth Mindset. Moreover, Pluralistic Identity is associated with higher support for reintegrating the NGCAs into Ukraine, and lower support for them becoming part of Russia or independent countries.

Sense of Belonging to the Country is high across Ukraine, with the exception of Kirovohrad oblast which is relatively lower. Nonetheless, it appears to vary with age, with older people reporting higher levels than younger people. Further, like Pluralistic Identity, Sense of Belonging is negatively correlated with Future Visions which place the NGCA out of Ukraine's control/influence (e.g., grant them independence, special status, or allow them to operate under Russian influence). Both Sense of Belonging to the Country and Pluralistic Ukrainian Identity enjoy high scores, and both are important for narrowing the chasms between groups with divergent future visions.

Social Threat¹² is relatively low across the country. Nonetheless, citizens of Poltava oblast report relatively high social threat relative to the national score. Social threat is higher in people residing in urban (vs. rural areas). It is also higher in people who identify as Russian or European compared

¹¹ For the definition and score of Distress Tolerance and all other indicators mentioned in this report see : app.scoreforpeace.org/en/ukraine/

¹² For the Social Proximity and Lack of Threat component of (horizontal) social cohesion the average score between Social Proximity (Figure10) and the **reverse score of Social Threat** (Figure 9) are used.

to those who do not endorse neither of these identities. Further, Social Threat is associated with feelings of Marginalisation. It is also negatively associated with Social Tolerance, particularly towards immigrants, Muslims, and Jews.

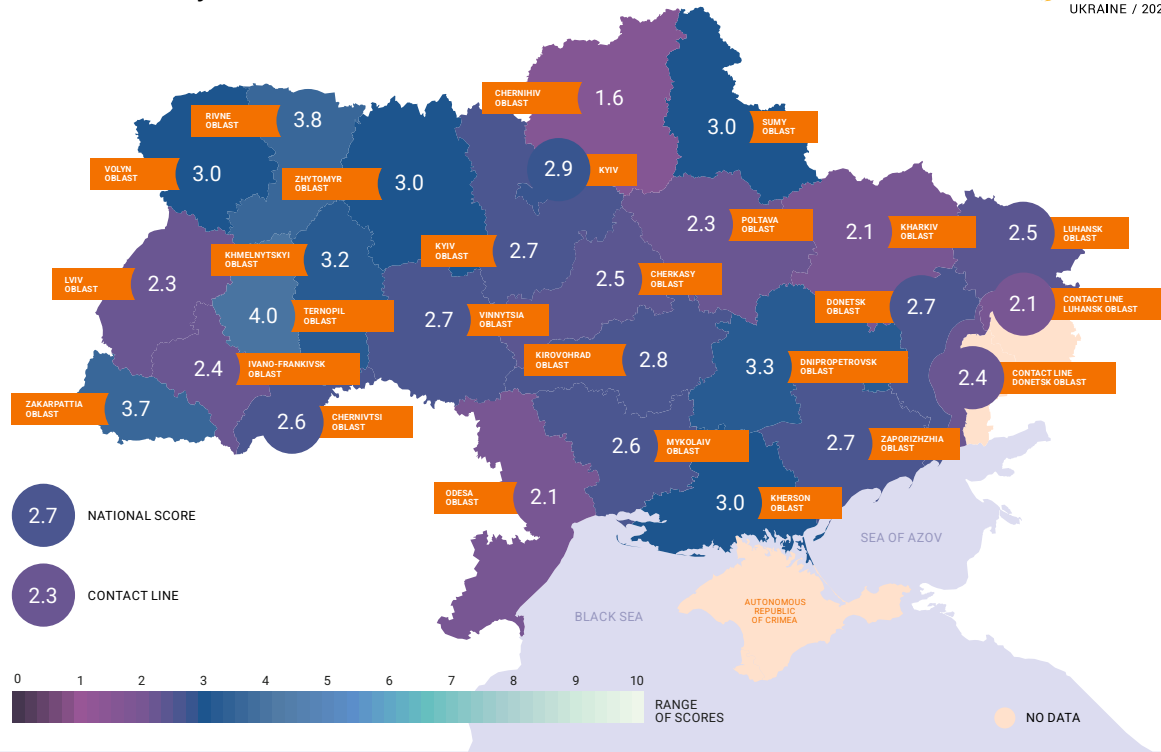
Social Proximity tends to vary across oblasts, with relatively higher levels reported in Ternopil oblast the Contact Line of Luhansk oblast. There are low levels in Sumy oblast and some areas of the central part of Ukraine. Social Proximity is positively associated with Readiness for Dialogue with different socio-political groups which are directly or indirectly involved with the conflict. Moreover, positive life skills such as Growth Mindset, Critical Thinking, Empathy and Distress Tolerance are positively associated with Social Proximity. This suggests that proximity may facilitate adaptation to a culturally diverse context. Indeed, there is a negative association between Social Proximity with Ukrainian Nationalism which reinforces this suggestion. Future research will thus examine factors that bolster Social Proximity and minimize perceived social threat.

Social Tolerance varies greatly from oblast to oblast, with scores ranging from 3.5 (Zakarpattia) to 7.2 (Luhansk Contact Line area). Younger people (18-35 years of age) tend to be more tolerant of marginalised groups compared to older people. Further, Social Tolerance is positively associated with Readiness for Dialogue, Civic Duty, and Belief in Human Rights. Social Tolerance is negatively associated with Ukrainian Nationalism and endorsement of Gender Stereotypes. These associations highlight its pivotal role not only in ensuring the harmonious co-existence between different groups but also in facilitating reconciliation between groups with different future visions for the country. Future analysis will aim to understand the variation in Social Tolerance between neighbouring oblasts, and to identify how to build tolerance towards particularly rejected and marginalised groups (like Roma, LGBTQI+, Drug users, etc.).

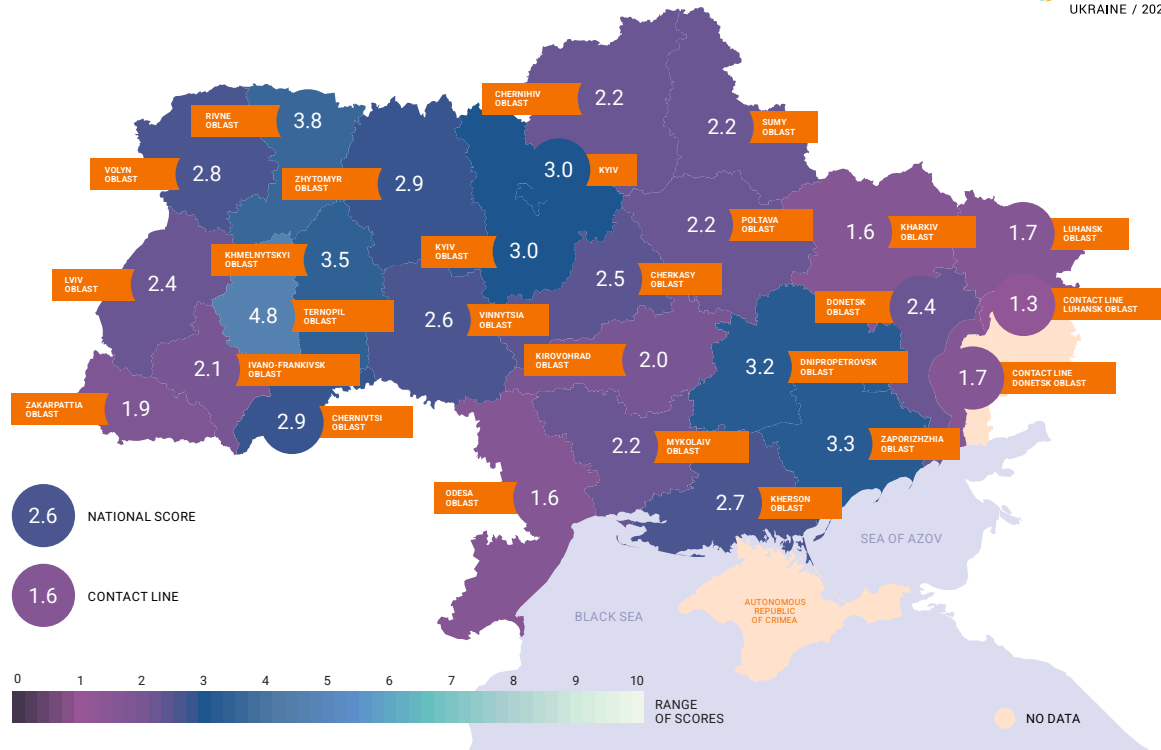
Community Cooperation is the lowest-scoring component of horizontal cohesion. Nonetheless, while scores for most oblasts range between 4.4 and 5.6, Rivne and Volyn oblasts have relatively higher scores 6.5 and 6.1 respectively. Community Cooperation is positively correlated with Trust in Local Authorities and negatively correlated with Perceived Corruption of Local Authorities. Further, higher levels of Community Cooperation are reported among older citizens (60+) compared to younger citizens. Given its low score compared to other components of horizontal social cohesion, follow-up analyses will investigate how to boost Community Cooperation, and its link with well-functioning institutions and services.

Components of Vertical Social Cohesion

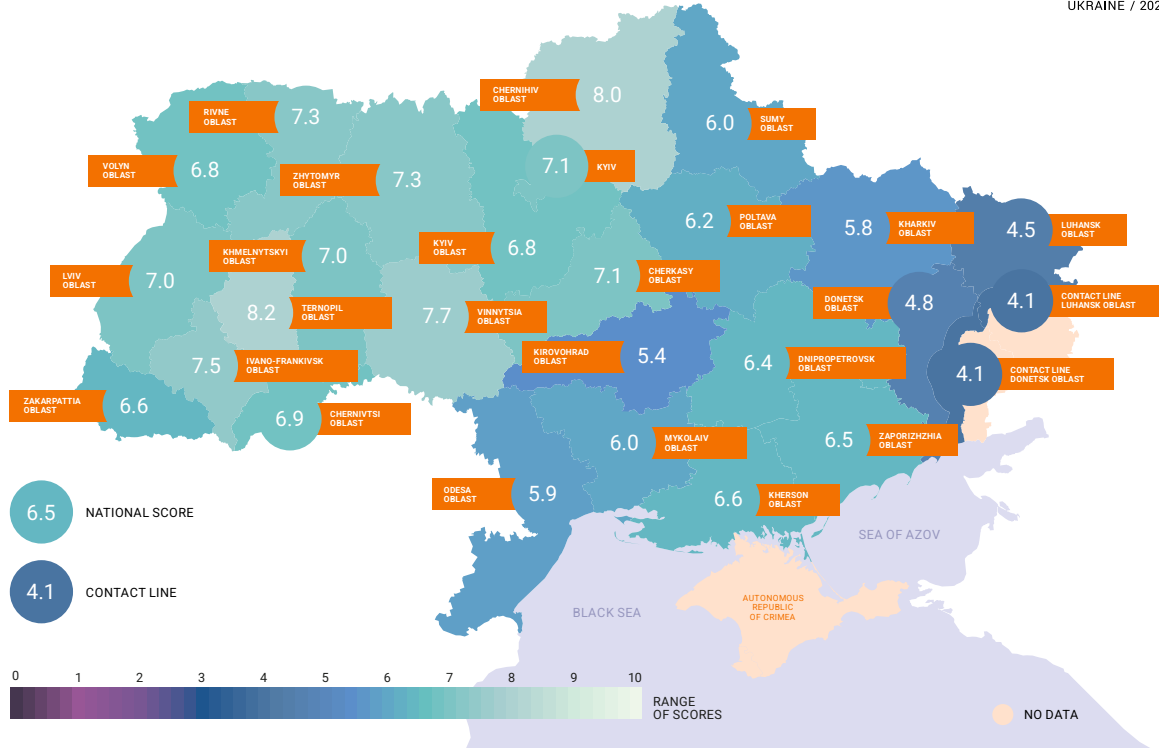
Accountability of Authorities



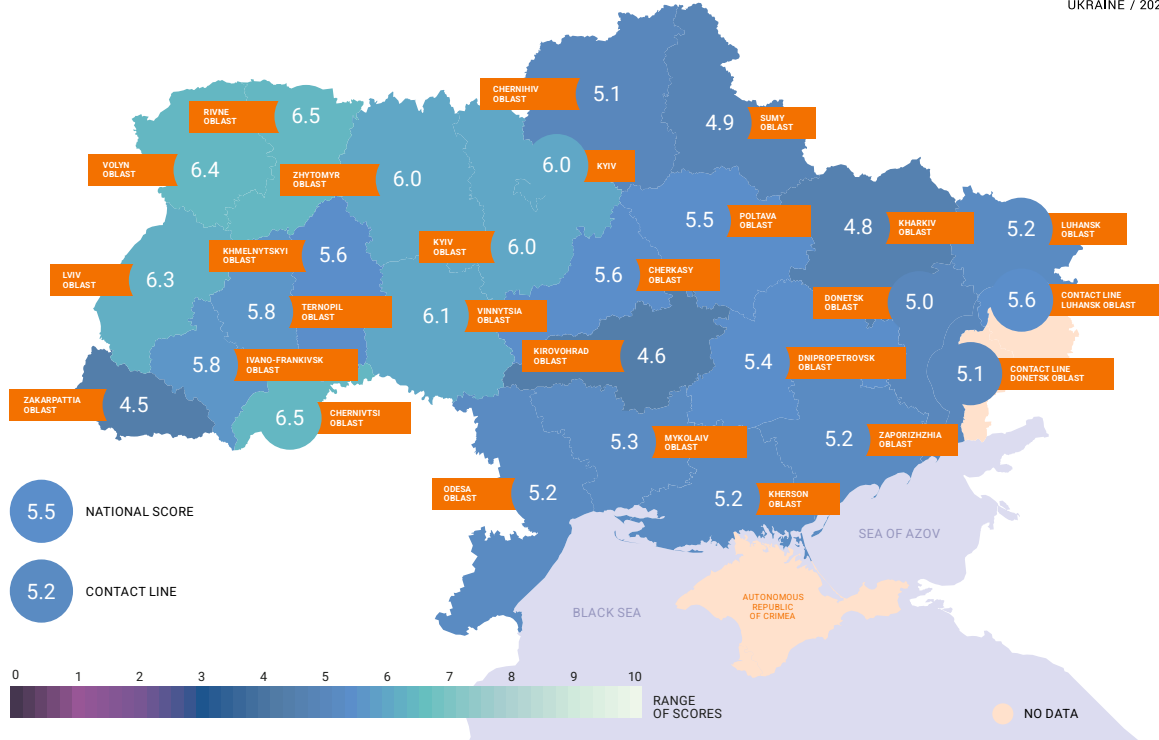
Ukrainian Authorities Care



Political Security



Sense of Agency



Ukrainian Authorities Care scores are very low throughout Ukraine. Ternopil oblast, however, enjoys relatively higher scores compared to the rest of the country. The lowest scores are found in Luhansk, and the Contact Line areas of Luhansk and Donetsk Oblasts. Ukrainians and Citizens of Ukraine feel that Ukrainian Authorities care more than those who do not identify with these groups. Similarly, younger people (18 – 35 years of age) report that Ukrainian Authorities care more than older people. This component is positively correlated with Human Security, and Trust in Central and Local Institutions. The low perceptions of authorities care in the contact lines and proximal areas may be explained by the fact most communities in those areas are temporarily governed by Civil-Military administrations with limited knowledge on how to effectively govern.

Accountability of Authorities is very low across the country, with citizens of Chernihiv oblast reporting the lowest level (1.6). The highest levels of accountability are reported in Ternopil (4.0). A similar pattern of associations to the one reported for Ukrainian Authorities Care is also evident for Accountability of Authorities with positive associations with Trust in Central and Local Institutions, Human Security (incl. Health, Economic, and Personal). Future research will investigate enabling and disrupting factors of these important components of vertical social cohesion, as most oblasts score low.

Notable variation in the levels of Political Security exist between oblasts in the eastern part of Ukraine including the contact line and oblasts in the west of the country. Specifically, while citizens of Vinnytsia and Ternopil oblasts report the highest levels of political security, citizens in Donetsk and Luhansk including the Contact Line areas report the lowest. Political Security is positively associated with other components of Human Security including Personal, Health and Economic. Political security is also positively correlated with Income, Civic Optimism, Belief in Human rights, and Trust in Local Institutions and negatively correlated with Fear of Economic Instability.

Sense of Agency varies across oblasts with somewhat higher scores in western Ukraine compared to the rest of the country. Specifically, the highest levels of Sense of Agency are reported in Chernivtsi and Rivne, while the lowest are found in Kirovohrad and Kharkiv. Sense of Agency is positively associated with Civic Engagement, Active Citizenship Orientation, and Readiness for Dialogue. Given its pivotal role in eliciting constructive engagement in democratic processes, follow-up research will investigate this link between Sense of Agency and citizenship.

3. Conclusions and Next Steps

This report has presented a wide-ranging but concise framework to understand, define, measure and analyse social cohesion in Ukraine. The following conclusions emerge from this work.

- 1) **Social cohesion is achieved when relations between citizens, groups and institutions are harmonious and reciprocal.** This can be measured using the nine components and two dimensions (vertical and horizontal) presented above.
- 2) Social cohesion should be conceptualised as being **in a web of inter-related factors**, which will be investigated in the second volume of this report. The follow-up report will investigate how to increase social cohesion and what expected impact this will have.
- 3) Across Ukraine, **vertical cohesion (4.3) is lower than horizontal cohesion (6.4).**
- 4) To increase vertical social cohesion, citizens' assessment that **authorities do not care and are not accountable** must be addressed. Volume II will analyse what entry points would be most effective.
- 5) To increase horizontal social cohesion, **prioritise building community cooperation and social tolerance**, as they are the lowest scores. However, pluralistic identity and feelings of belonging to the country are high. These cohesive sentiments could be leveraged for impact in other dimensions.
- 6) **Different oblasts have very different social cohesion profiles** and different needs and challenges. Each oblast is doing well or badly in a different combination of social cohesion components. Ternopil and Rivne oblasts enjoy high levels on both vertical and horizontal cohesion, Kharkiv, Kirovohrad, and Luhansk oblasts have very low scores on most of vertical cohesion components. Strategies aiming to build social cohesion should therefore respond to local needs and leverage local strengths.
- 7) **Volume II of this report will uncover what drivers and enabling factors are most relevant for building components of social cohesion** that were found to be scoring low. It will also probe the link between vertical, horizontal social cohesion, and citizenship behaviour. Answering these questions using SCORE analysis will reveal the way forward for peacebuilders and policymakers to build resilient social cohesion in Ukraine.

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