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Introduction

This report summarizes the findings of DRC protection monitoring conducted in Ukraine in the oblasts of Lviv and Chernivtsi in the West, Chernihiv in the North, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kharkiv in the East and Mykolaiv in the South between January and March 2023.

This report seeks to identify trends in protection risks and rights' violations, challenges and barriers in access to services (particularly for the most vulnerable) across monitored oblasts during the reporting period, in order to inform the ongoing and planned humanitarian response, and support evidence-based advocacy on behalf of persons of concern. Findings from protection monitoring are visualized in an interactive dashboard which enables DRC and all relevant stakeholders to easily access this data.

To view the Protection Monitoring dashboard summarizing the main findings for the reporting period, [click here](#)

Key findings include:

- Limited availability of medical facilities and services in rural and conflict-affected areas, challenges with accessing specialized healthcare services and medication.
- Increased Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) issues linked with prolonged displacement, family separation and continued exposure to conflict and armed violence.
- Access barriers for persons with reduced mobility, including accommodation and other basic services.
- Limited or disrupted public transportation services in conflict-affected areas, including rural areas, impacting access to basic services for the most vulnerable.
- Continued challenges with the registration processes for social benefits, including difficulties with documentation requirements, costs of procedures and distance to registration centres, delays in disbursements, limited awareness and understanding of the processes.
- Increasing reliance on humanitarian assistance and social protection programmes, particularly among vulnerable populations, coupled with limited livelihood opportunities including in conflict-affected areas and IDP-hosting areas.
- Insufficient outreach and awareness-raising efforts to inform communities about available services, including groups with specific needs.



Context update

One year into the Russian Federation's military offensive, the war continues to have devastating consequences for civilians. Since 24 February 2022, the number of people in need of humanitarian aid and protection in Ukraine increased from approximately 3 million people to nearly 18 million¹. Throughout the year, intense hostilities caused widespread destruction, killings and displacement. Massive destruction of civilian infrastructure across the country decimated essential services, including energy, water supply, and heating. Mine and other explosive ordnance threats increased, in a country already considered one of the world's most mine-contaminated regions before 24 February 2022.

The war has entered a new phase, with a renewed Russian Federation's military offensive marked by intensified fighting in several areas in eastern Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts. Russian forces continue to conduct ground attacks near the city of Bakhmut in Donetsk Oblast as well as along the outskirts of Donetsk City, while heavy fighting has also been reported in the cities of Svatove and Kreminna in Luhansk Oblast. As of 10th March 2023, more than 5,3 million IDPs were registered across Ukraine, while 8 million Ukrainian refugees were recorded in Europe². Since the beginning of 2023, some 2.2 million border crossings have been noted from Ukraine to neighbouring countries, whereas some 1.7 million border crossings have been noted back to Ukraine, based on government's data. Indiscriminate artillery shelling and missile attacks from the Russian forces continue in various regions of Ukraine, including in eastern and southern oblasts, resulting in civilian casualties and damage to civilian objects such as residential buildings, schools and hospitals. As of 26 March, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has recorded 22,424 civilian casualties in the country, including 8,401 killed and 14,023 injured³.

Methodology

Protection monitoring data has been gathered through mixed methods including in-person Household (HH) surveys, Key Informant (KI) interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), direct observation, and Rapid Protection Assessments (RPAs). The report also reflects on the findings of the Protection Cluster community-level protection monitoring which DRC participates in, and which is conducted through structured key informant interviews.

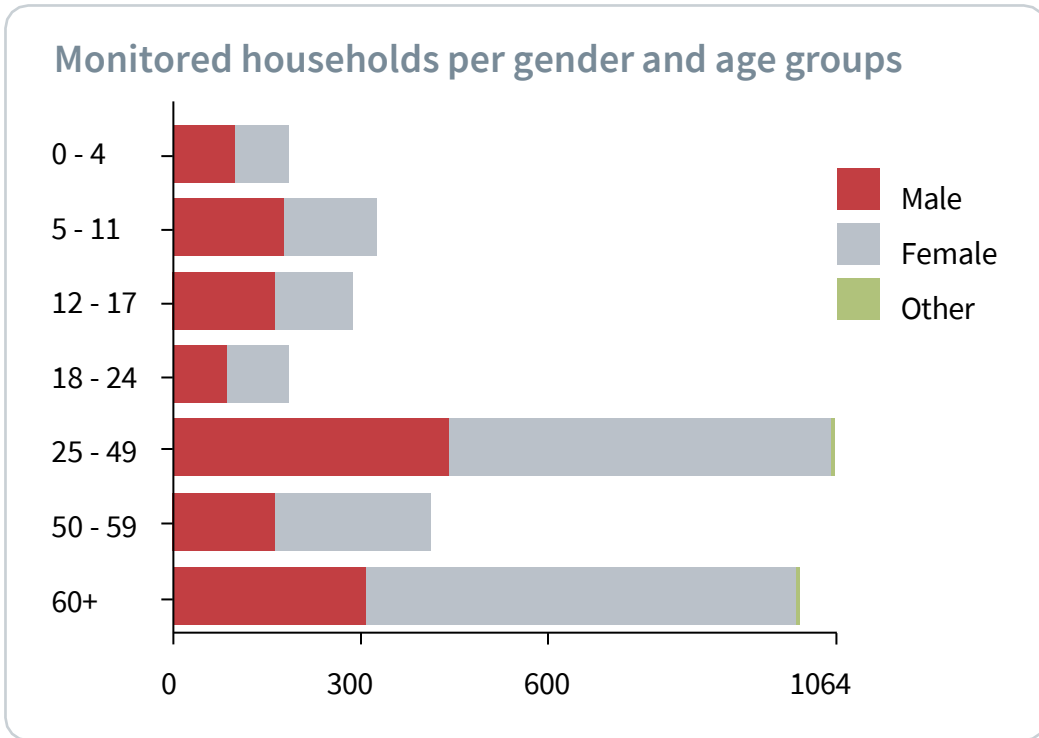
DRC protection monitoring activities target a variety of groups including Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), returnees, host community members, and non-displaced people directly exposed to and affected by the war.

Between 1st of January and 31st of March 2023, DRC protection teams monitored 1408 households corresponding to 3,566 individuals. The majority of the monitored HHs were IDPs (73.8% - 1039), out of which 64% were displaced between February and May 2022. 22.2% (312) were conflict-affected persons who remained in conflict-affected areas, 3.6% (50) were returnees, and 0.5% (7) were representatives of the host communities.

¹ Ukraine: Situation report, OCHA, 10 February 2023, available [here](#)

² Ukraine situation flash update #42, UNHCR, 10 March 2023, available [here](#)

³ Ukraine: civilian casualty update, OHCHR, 27 March 2023, available [here](#)



Respondents per displacement group

IDP	1.035	72.5%
Non-displaced person	342	24.0%
IDP Returnee	50	3.5%

Graph 1 & 2: Report Demographics





Population Movement

Displacement

Forced displacement. The majority of the overall surveyed IDP households reported having left their area of origin between February and May 2022. For IDPs originating from Dnipropetrovsk, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia and Kharkiv Oblasts, a second peak of displacement was reported between the months of July and October 2022. Overall, 63% of respondents reported having experienced shelling and missile attacks or fear of such, 2% physical attacks and 0.4% GBV incidents, during their displacement journey.

7% of IDP respondents reported having been affected by multiple displacements. Multiple displacements ratio was higher in Lviv (9%), Chernivtsi (10%) and Dnipropetrovsk (11%) Oblasts. This can be explained by the fact that affected individuals and households will primarily seek refuge within the vicinity of their area of origin but will be compelled to flee further away as conflict intensifies and the front line evolves.

Multiple displacements per current oblast		
Dnipropetrovsk Oblast	35	11.6%
Lviv Oblast	32	9.3%
Chernivtsi Oblast	13	9.8%
Chernihiv Oblast	5	5.8%
Kharkiv Oblast	4	4.8%
Zaporizhzhia Oblast	3	2.6%

Graph 3: Multiple displacements per current oblast

Kharkiv Oblast remains the region with the country’s largest hosted registered IDP population. As of February, 467,154 IDPs were registered, and Kharkiv, Bohodukhiv, and Chuhuiv hromadas were hosting most of the IDPs⁴. Of the 13% of IDP respondents of DRC protection monitoring reporting that they are not willing to return, 74% are planning to integrate into the local community. While Kharkiv Oblast remains close to the frontline, FGD participants from the non-displaced conflict-affected community reported feeling bound to their houses because they rely on existing support networks and farming fields and do not want to leave due to fear of looting during their absence.

⁴ “Registered IDP area baseline assessment, Ukraine – Round 2021”, IOM, February 2023, available [here](#)





As of March 2023, there were 70,957 IDPs in Chernihiv Oblast according to oblast authorities, located across all five raions⁵. This includes IDPs displaced within the oblast and an estimated number of 28,000⁶ IDPs originating from other areas across Ukraine, including but not limited to Donetsk, Kherson and Kharkiv Oblasts. Displacements continue in the border regions on a daily basis and sometimes with a flow back to the border towns depending on the security situation.

More than 393,000 IDPs have settled in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast since the start of the full-scale invasion according to local authorities⁷. Majority of IDPs surveyed in Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts are originating from Luhansk, Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts, with Donetsk being the main area of origin (52%). Vast majority of them left their area of origin between March and June 2022 apart from new arrivals coming from Bakhmut, Soledar, Nikopol and Kherson. 80% of IDP respondents indicated their willingness to return. Of the 11% of IDPs not willing to return, 23% reported intention to relocate elsewhere within or outside Ukraine to be reunited with family members or because they found employment opportunities. 40% are willing to integrate in their displacement community as they prefer to stay close from home.

Supported evacuations. IDPs in Lviv and Chernivtsi Oblasts are originally from northern, southern and mainly eastern oblasts of Ukraine. Most of the IDPs surveyed (64%) travelled to Lviv and Chernivtsi Oblasts via supported evacuations, while one third of them (34%) travelled using their own means through private vehicles and public transportation. While the heads of oblast administration keep daily track of the number of individuals officially evacuated (i.e., through supported evacuation trains), there are no available figures of individuals evacuating by their own means.

Evacuation trains reach Lviv on a weekly basis. According to the latest observation rounds conducted at the train station of Lviv, from 30 to 60 individuals are transported through each of these evacuation trains. Several factors will influence the number of people evacuating: while increased shelling will force more people to flee, national/cultural celebrations such as the New Year will lead to lesser numbers. A large portion of those arriving in Lviv through evacuation trains are families with a high number of children, low-income people, persons with disabilities, elderly people, as well as members of the Roma community. Upon arrival, evacuees can receive a one-time evacuee cash assistance at UkrPochta (Ukrainian post office), only if they have registered for the evacuation compensation prior to travelling. However, many of the evacuees have not registered for this compensation prior to travelling. This can be mainly explained by a lack of information about the evacuation compensation modalities as well as the fact that some of those arriving through the evacuation trains are not evacuating for the first time, and hence not anymore eligible for the one-off evacuation compensation.

During FGDs conducted with newly arrived IDPs in Lviv, participants reported that most of them were displaced due to active hostilities/threat of shelling and damaged/destroyed houses in their area of origin. They indicated that research regarding available collective centres was usually done prior to evacuating through social networks.

⁵ Kyiv Protection Cluster Hub Coordination Meeting in the Chernihiv region, meeting of 23 March 2023

⁶ According to the oblast military administration, as of February 2023 as referenced [here](#)

⁷ "Critical Areas Situation Report", Left Bank Analytics, March 2023



Two participants indicated that they had initially moved to a collective centre located in the central area of Ukraine where they were told that they could not stay more than two weeks, therefore deciding to move to the western region of Ukraine. Of the total number of participants, only 20% reported being informed of the evacuation compensation.

Family separation. Overall, across monitored oblasts, 40% (565) of respondents reported being separated from household members due to the conflict. Among those 565 respondents, 90% are IDPs. High rates of family separation were reported by respondents currently residing in Lviv (58%), Chernivtsi (52%), Dnipropetrovsk (45%) and Zaporizhzhia (43%) Oblasts. Main family separation reasons include family members remaining behind in the area of origin (68%), displaced to another location in Ukraine (19%), displaced to another country outside of Ukraine (14%), while 3 respondents indicated not knowing the whereabouts of their missing family members. For IDPs displaced in Lviv, Chernivtsi, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts, the main family separation lies in family members remaining in the area of origin. On the other hand, for IDPs displaced in Chernihiv and Kharkiv Oblasts, the main family separation reason is the displacement of their family members to other locations in Ukraine or other countries outside of Ukraine.



Graph 4: Main reasons for family separations

Return

Overall, across monitored oblasts, 72% of IDP respondents reported willingness to return to their area of origin, out of which 15% do not have a clear timeframe yet. 13% reported no intention to return, with 48% of them planning to integrate into the local community of displacement, 9% planning to relocate to another area in Ukraine and 7% planning to relocate to a country outside of Ukraine. The main challenges faced by IDPs when attempting to locally integrated in their hosting community are lack of employment and sources of income (25%), lack of adequate and stable housing in the area of displacement (10%) and lack of community support (10%)⁸.

⁸ “Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine”, UNHCR, February 2023, available [here](#)





Intentions to return per oblast or origin

Donetsk Oblast	309	85.6%
Kharkiv Oblast	115	87.1%
Zaporizhzhia Oblast	111	89.5%
Luhansk Oblast	68	75.6%
Kherson Oblast	67	89.3%
Dnipropetrovsk Oblast	28	82.4%
Chernihiv Oblast	25	86.2%
Mykolaiv Oblast	13	86.7%
Kyiv Oblast	6	66.7%
Odesa Oblast	3	60.0%
Sumy Oblast	2	66.7%
Zhytomyr Oblast	1	50.0%

Graph 5: Intentions to return per oblast or origin

Monitored households in Kharkiv Oblast reported that the main deciding factor for interviewees to return is the improvement of the security context. During FGDs organised, participants stated that some would prefer to return to repair their houses if it was safe enough to return. According to participants, it will be less likely for youth to return due to the destruction and damage of properties coupled with insufficient income-generating opportunities in the area of origin. FGD participants stated that those who have returned to rural areas used private or public transportation.

Chernihiv Oblast is an oblast of high returns with the oblast reaching an estimated 95% of its population pre-24th February 2022⁹. Among IDPs in Chernihiv Oblast, 28% plan to return within 3 months, 48% hope to return one day and 9% expressed no hope to return¹⁰. While return intentions and hopes are similar in Mykolaiv Oblast, eastern areas including Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts have lower return plans within 3 months. Further to this, 41% of those reporting planning to return through DRC protection monitoring pointed out improvement of the security situation as the main deciding factor to return.

⁹ “Critical Areas Situation Report”, Left Bank Analytics, March 2023

¹⁰ “Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine”, UNHCR, February 2023



Repaired shelter (24%), increased service availability (11%), repaired infrastructure (11%) were also reported among the main deciding factors. These figures vary according to the area of origin of the respondents. For instance, repaired shelter is the main deciding factor to return for respondents originating from Chernihiv Oblast, while improvement in security situation is by far the main factor reported by IDPs originating from eastern and southern regions of Ukraine.

Main deciding factors to return		
Security situation improvement	922	80.5%
Infrastructure is repaired	87	7.6%
Increased service availability	72	6.3%
Health facilities accessible	29	2.5%
Shelter is repaired	16	1.4%
Education facilities accessible	12	1.0%
Other	7	0.6%

Graph 6: Main deciding factors to return

Main protection risks and needs

Life, safety and security

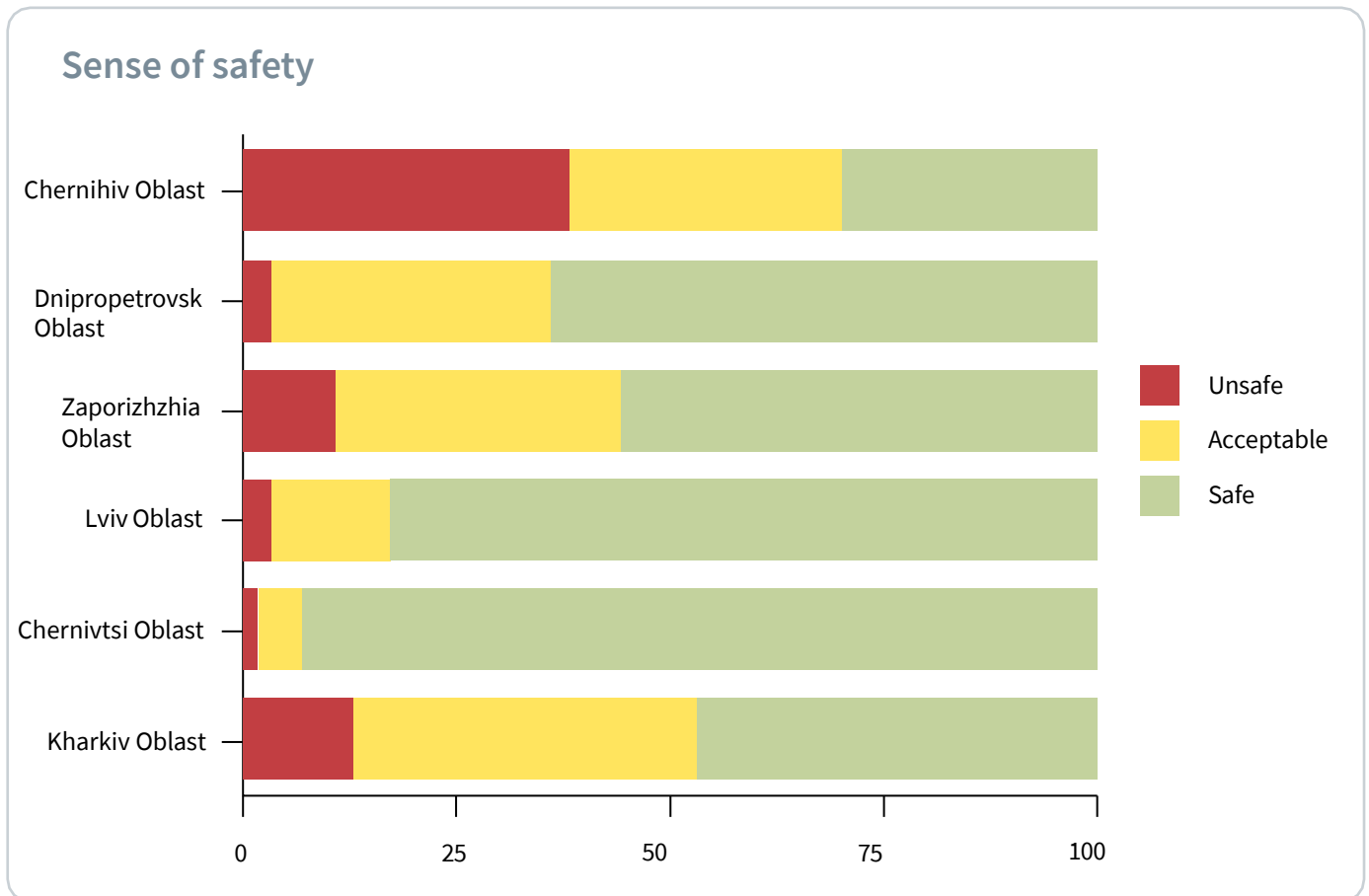
The 2022 REACH MSNA, whose findings were released in March 2023, indicates that nationally about 16% of assessed households have severe or extreme protection needs, East and South having the highest needs, including Kharkiv Oblast (with 54% of respondents with severe or extreme protection needs) as well as Mykolaiv and Bahstanka raions (with 65%).

Sense of safety. According to the MSNA report, in the East, South and North, the proportion of households identifying armed violence/shelling as a risk is higher than the country’s average. In line with this, 13% (22) of respondents surveyed in Kharkiv Oblast reported feeling unsafe. FGD participants in Kharkiv Oblast added that it was dangerous to leave children alone or unsupervised, even for a short period and that children experience high stress and fear the sound of explosions or air alerts. They also noted that conflict-affected communities are afraid of travelling far from smaller settlements as they feel unsafe being far from home.





While the overall average of respondents reporting feeling unsafe or very unsafe is 13% (176) across the different monitored locations, Chernihiv Oblast has by far the highest portion of respondents feeling unsafe (38% or 119). Importantly it was reported as 39% for female respondents and 32% for male respondents. Shelling, threats of shelling, and the presence of armed actors are reportedly the main factors influencing the sense of safety. In Chernihiv Oblast, shelling is especially prevalent in the areas bordering Belarus and the Russian Federation.



Graph 7: Sense of safety by surveyed oblast

Since Mykolaiv Oblast came under the control of the government of Ukraine on 11 November 2022, there is no longer any active ground conflict. As a result, access constraints because of conflict concerns have greatly diminished. Although it continues to drive safety and security concerns, shelling has significantly decreased in Mykolaiv Oblast. The number of shelling incidents per day has decreased from an average of 4.7 in October to around one in January and February 2023. Power outages were reported as a source of safety concern, especially by older persons fearing robbery incidents.

In Lviv and Chernivtsi Oblasts, 86% of the respondents reported feeling safe or very safe, while 15% reported having an acceptable level of safety or feeling unsafe mainly due to threat of shelling, ongoing armed conflict and presence of armed actors.



While emerging social tensions mainly linked with language differences and tensions over access to humanitarian assistance and employment opportunities have been observed, particularly in the West, household-level respondents of Lviv Oblast reported for 83% of them that the relationship with host communities was good or very good, while 17% reported acceptable or bad relationship, compared to 12% across the different locations monitored by DRC teams. According to a REACH assessment report released in February 2023, not less than 73% of non-displaced households in Lviv Oblast reported not having received assistance, as opposed to only 1% of IDPs residing in collective centres and 7% of IDPs residing outside of collective centres¹¹.

Landmines contamination. During observation rounds in Kharkiv Oblast, DRC noted that farm fields, on which farmers were relying before the escalation, are now contaminated with explosive ordnance fuelling dependency on humanitarian assistance or government allowance due to a lack of income generating activities in rural areas.

Many areas across Chernihiv Oblast remain with explosive ordnance contamination as well. Specifically, during this reporting period, there was an incident in Skorinets village where a tractor ran over a mine on the roadside of a paved road wounding the driver. Since February 2022, it was reported that there were 13 incidents including 10 civilian fatalities and eight injured in Chernihiv Oblast. Despite significant presence of mine action actors and State Emergency Service of Ukraine, REACH MSNA showed that 92% of the households reporting concerns about landmines/UXO indicated having no training or briefing on explosive ordnance risks in Chernihiv raion¹².

Newly accessible areas in the eastern part of Mykolaiv Oblast are particularly contaminated with landmines and UXOs. Four incidents involving mines and UXOs were reported between November 2022 and February 2023.

Liberty and freedom of movement

Fear of conscription. In Kharkiv Oblast, 90% of the household survey's respondents reported not being restricted on their movements. Yet during FGDs, participants stated that men are worried about travelling because of fear of conscription, while some of them avoid public places. Participants also noted that the women in the family feel anxious about their partners being conscripted.

In Chernihiv, Lviv and Dnipropetrovsk Oblasts, similar concerns were reported, while the issuing of conscription notices is increasingly being reported despite the exemptions to the conscription introduced by Decree n°76 released on 27th January 2023¹³. In Chernihiv Oblast, the percentage of respondents reporting movement restrictions was higher for male respondents (11%) and for IDPs (8%). In Dnipro, participants to FGDs indicated that following rounds of military checks in a collective shelter, some IDP adult men have been enlisted.

¹¹ Area-based assessment Lviv Oblast – Ukraine, REACH, February 2023

¹² 2022 MSNA, Ukraine, REACH. Key findings report available [here](#)

¹³ Legal Alert 89, DRC, January 2023, available [here](#)



Generally, men of conscription age are facing discriminatory practices. It was observed at Lviv train station that single adult male evacuees with no physical impairment cannot access free accommodation in collective sites, contrary to other gender and age groups. In addition, it was reported that adult men of conscription age who are not enlisted with the military office cannot register for employment opportunities and face denial of their rights to register for civil events such as marriage. According to IOM data, more than 60% of current human trafficking victims are men with 94% of trafficking in the form of labor exploitation¹⁴.

Lack of public transportation. Barriers to freedom of movement include a lack of available public transport, including in rural/remote conflict-affected communities. In Lviv Oblast, where many collective centres are located on the outskirts of Lviv city or in rural areas, people with reduced mobility and low income face increased challenges in accessing services due to distance and lack of transportation. They end up relying on volunteers' networks and rarely on humanitarian organised transportation. Many transportation routes, including roads, bridges and railway lines, have been disrupted or damaged since the escalation of the conflict, particularly in areas close to the contact line. In addition, in many rural areas, public transportation has been completely halted, leaving residents without access to essential services, including medical care. This has led to as significant increase in social isolation and economic hardship, particularly for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, people with disabilities, and low-income families.

Lack of disability-inclusive collective centres. Most of the collective centres visited by DRC protection monitoring teams are not adequately equipped to accommodate persons with reduced mobility (lacking operational lifts, ramps and accessible WASH facilities), and arrangements are usually not made for them to be accommodated on the ground-floor. This leads to substantial limitations of movements, challenging access to services and isolation for persons with reduced mobility accommodated in collective centres, with some reporting that they never leave their room or floor. In a collective centre located in Kharkiv Oblast, it was observed that individuals with reduced mobility were accommodated on floor seven while no lift was functional. Interviewees reported that persons with physical impairment need to rely on the support of others when using WASH facilities or make use of pots. The lack of adequate equipment also creates additional safety risks for persons with reduced mobility who cannot access underground bomb shelters in the absence of an elevator. Arrangements for persons with reduced mobility are made by site managers, without overall guidance and oversight from national authorities. In Dnipro, one collective centre's management reportedly re-accommodated a person with a wheelchair to the ground floor. In Lviv, the geriatric centre of Pidbuzh, located in the outskirts of Lviv city, is currently accommodating both patients with mental health condition and IDPs in different wards. Key informants interviewed reported that most of the IDPs accommodated in this CC are single older persons who are not willing to leave since the building is equipped with elevators, floors are not overcrowded, and showers are equipped for persons with physical impairment.

¹⁴ These statistics were shared during a coordination meeting in Lviv in March 2023.



Civil status and documentation

Civil documentation. Lack of documentation remains a significant issue across monitored oblasts. Individuals who lack documentation face barriers to accessing their social assistance benefits and humanitarian assistance. Overall, 11% of household respondents reported experiencing barriers to obtaining civil documentation, with 50% reporting older persons without pensioner certificates and 24% reporting children without birth certificates. This lack of documentation is particularly affecting IDPs, whose documents have been destroyed or lost during the conflict or displacement, and are facing barriers such as delays in restoration, lack of legal aid, cost of and distance to the registration services, as well as lack of information on where to access registration services.

Main barriers to access civil documentation		
Delay in restoration	49	31.0%
Legal aid needed	41	25.9%
Cost of obtaining the documents	21	13.3%
Distance, not accessible	21	13.3%
Lack of information on where to access	14	8.9%
Archives are destroyed	12	7.6%

Graph 8: Main barriers to access civil documentation

IDPs originating from NGCAs face additional challenges due to lack documentation recognized by the Ukrainian authorities (such as birth and education certificates). In accordance with the «Law of Ukraine On Ensuring the Rights and Freedoms of Citizens and the Legal Regime in the Temporarily Occupied Territory of Ukraine», any act (decision, document) issued by the authorities and/or persons in Non-Government controlled areas (NGCA) is invalid and does not create legal consequences, except for documents confirming the fact of birth, death, registration and dissolution of the marriage of a person in NGCA, which are attached to the application for state registration of the relevant civil status act. However, no changes have been made to the legislation governing the procedure for registering civil status acts. Therefore, IDPs must apply to the court to establish the facts of birth, death or marriage.

In Chernihiv Oblast, the ratio of respondents experiencing barriers to obtaining civil documentation is higher (17%), with 33% of them requiring legal aid support and 37% reporting the cost of obtaining documentation and distance to access registration services as main barriers. As reported by a key informant in Ichnia hromada when asked about issues in accessing the legal system, “the main problem is the cost of services and the lack of transport to the relevant government agencies.” Access to legal support is mainly affecting groups including minority nationalities such as Romani people, IDPs, the elderly and people who have been military personnel.





The lack of specialized services in Ichnia hromada, for example, including notaries and lawyers, further affects the ability to access legal processes according to the key informant interviewed. Free secondary legal aid can support court related access, however there are gaps in supporting the restoration of documents especially related to the certificate of income. Public, local and international organizations are working to address this gap through the provision of direct services and training to social services as mentioned by the key informant respondent.

Disability registration. Lack of access to registration of disability status and therefore allowances from the State and access to assistive devices continue to exacerbate vulnerabilities. The barriers to access registration include cost of transportation for multiple appointments; time it takes to complete the process; and lack of information about the service providers and the procedure. It is also a costly procedure including the requirement (not necessarily a legislative requirement but part of the procedure of the relevant hospital) to travel to and stay in a hospital for at least two weeks where PoCs have to pay for their stay, medicines, food and procedures, as per a key informant of Chernihiv Oblast who is a caregiver of persons with disabilities. If someone can obtain the status of disability, the following processes of accessing assistive devices are very limited. “The programme... only exists on paper but in fact there is nothing, the queues waiting for such devices can last for years”. A representative of an Organisation for Persons with disabilities (OPD) mentioned that “it would be necessary to digitalize medical committees as now the recovery process is not available and if a person loses their certificate, they need to go through the medical commission process again.” This key informant added that the model of disability in Ukraine is a medical one at the raion level despite the social model having normatively been established. In Ukraine, 7% of the population have a registered disability, worldwide the average percentage is 15% of the population. It was suggested by the key informant that the difference is due to the different approaches between the medical versus the social model of disability.

Overall, across monitored oblasts, among respondents who reported household members with disability status in Ukraine, 41% of those reporting barriers for receiving disability allowance through household-level protection monitoring mentioned problems with registration followed by costly process (19%) and lack of information (17%).

Housing, Land and Property

Compensation for destroyed and damaged property. On the 23rd of February 2023, the Law of Ukraine on Compensation for Destroyed and Damaged Property was adopted, establishing a mechanism for providing compensation for damaged and destroyed properties. This law will come into force two months after its publication after the Cabinet of Ministers adopt relevant by-laws¹⁵. To ensure effective implementation of the Law, a Register of Damaged and Destroyed Property is established for collecting and processing information.

For oblasts that suffered significant damage to private homes, including northern, southern and eastern oblasts, this is an important mechanism to be able to access rights related to destruction during armed conflict. Overall, across monitored oblasts, 51% of respondents reported damaged property due to the conflict.

¹⁵ UNHCR Thematic Legislative Update, Ukraine, March 2023; Legal Alert 91, DRC, March 2023, available [here](#)



The ratio is particularly high for respondents originating from Chernihiv Oblast (84% of respondents reporting property damage), from Luhansk Oblast (67%), from Donetsk Oblast (62%), and from Kharkiv Oblast (54%). According to Chernihiv Oblast authority data from March 2023, 817 apartment buildings have been restored out of 1,071 that were damaged, and 2,047 homes have been restored out of 8,790 that were damaged¹⁶. In Mykolaiv Oblast, as of 6th January 2023, official data states that the ongoing conflict has damaged or destroyed over 14,700 civilian objects in the oblast, including over 9,500 residential buildings, 92 medical institutions and 397 educational institutions¹⁷. There are initial concerns about how people who have already restored their properties will be able to access the new compensation mechanism. The need for information and support in accessing it is expected to be substantial.

Property damaged

Kirovohrad Oblast	1	100.0%
Zhytomyr Oblast	2	100.0%
Chernihiv Oblast	31	83.8%
Luhansk Oblast	74	67.9%
Donetsk Oblast	256	61.5%
Kharkiv Oblast	84	53.5%
Zaporizhzhia Oblast	58	41.7%
Dnipropetrovsk Oblast	15	33.3%
Sumy Oblast	1	33.3%
Kherson Oblast	28	32.9%
Mykolaiv Oblast	6	30.0%

Graph 9: Property damaged due to conflict per oblast of habitual residence

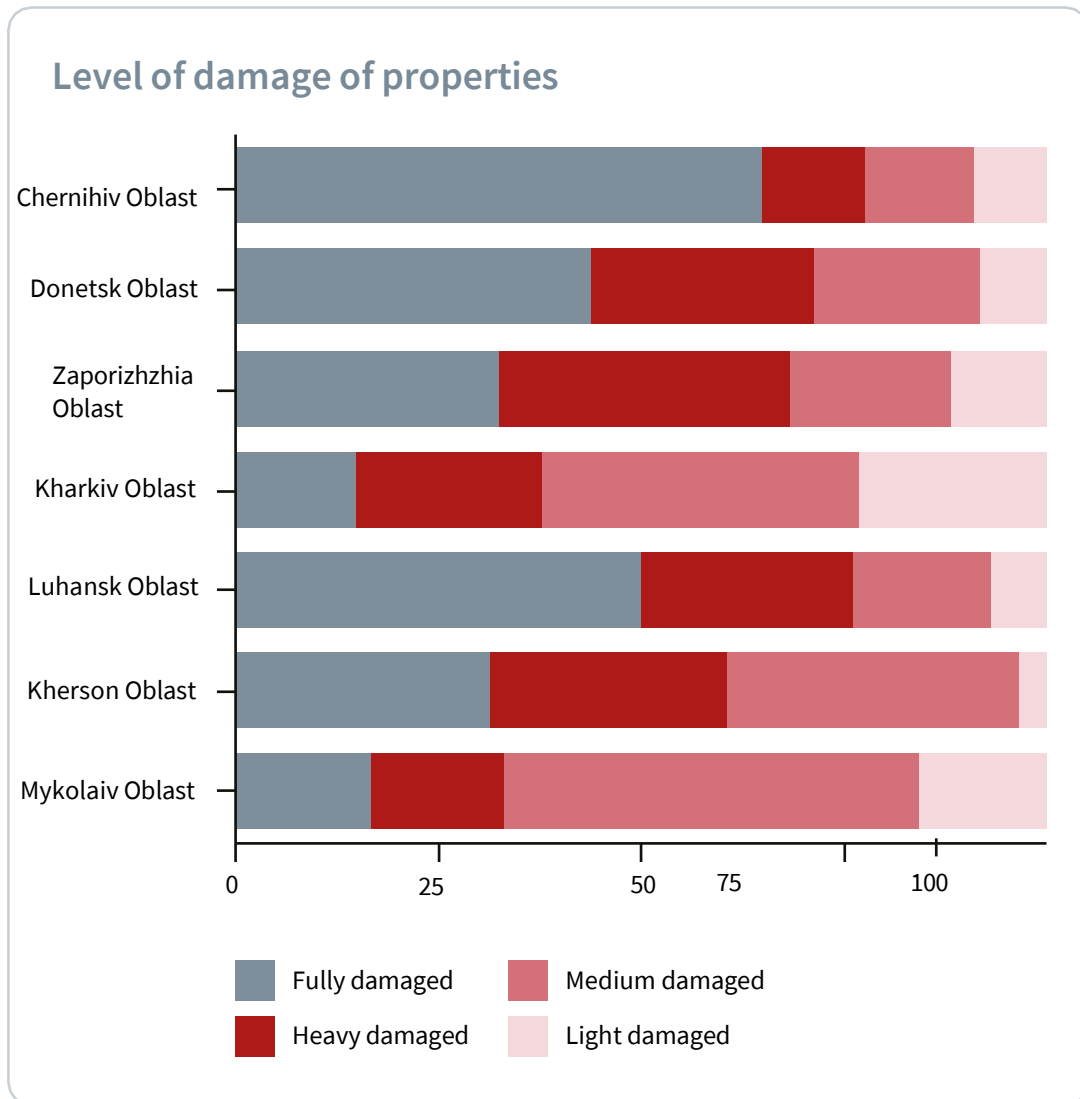
Among respondents reporting damaged properties, 32% (228) respondents reported their property to be fully damaged, 25% (179) reported heavy damage, 27% (190) reported medium damage and 16% (115) reported light damage. The ratio of fully damaged properties is particularly high for respondents originating from Chernihiv Oblast (65% reporting full damage), Luhansk Oblast (50%), Donetsk Oblast (44%), Zaporizhzhia Oblast (33%) and Kherson Oblast (32%).

¹⁶ Information shared by Oblast authorities with DRC shelter team.

¹⁷ Announced by the press service of the Mykolaiv Regional State Administration on Facebook, available [here](#)



There are reports of light repairs that cannot be covered by shelter actors including the restoration of doors which were damaged in February 2022. This is a gap in shelter programming that needs to be addressed especially due to the potential exposure to protection threats that may result if not.



Graph 10: Level of damage of properties per oblast of habitual residence

Lack of HLP documentation. Overall, 21% of the respondents surveyed reported lacking HLP documents, including ownership documentation for their property and formal lease agreements. In Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, the main legal information topic requested is HLP, which seems to be the biggest concern of affected communities.

Although security of tenure is not a prevalent reported issue in Chernihiv Oblast, some of the current housing arrangements for the population in the oblast are worth analysis. The majority of respondents (82%) owned an apartment or house which may be due to the fact that DRC teams were mainly conducting surveys in rural villages as opposed to the city centre. 7% of respondents reported living with a host family or relatives and 4.5% renting accommodation.



Out of those who are renting accommodation, only 1% confirmed they have a formal lease agreement. Among IDPs renting accommodation, 56% reported having a verbal agreement.

Lack of HLP documentation impacts access to rights such as access to security of tenure, the ability to prove ownership when returning to an area of origin, the ability to receive support for rehabilitation and to access compensation mechanisms. As per a key informant of a local NGO interviewed in Chernihiv Oblast, “there are various issues of registration of documents of ownership of property which has become more relevant with the law on compensation”. Many people have not reissued their inheritance, especially in villages. Some people are facing overdue terms for inheritance and cannot receive payments and compensation, because they do not know how to do it and the procedure is costly. “The cost of a house may be less than the cost of registration,” as per the key informant.

Basic economic and social rights

Adequate standard of living

A significant proportion of IDPs are hosted in collective centres in Lviv Oblast. The Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) cluster and its partners have mapped 243 active CCs throughout the region, hosting an evaluated 22,946 IDPs. It indicates that close to 10% of registered IDP individuals are accommodated in CCs in Lviv Oblast. While there are indications that needs among the population in CCs are higher than for the displaced population outside CCs and host communities, there is limited data available to allow for representative comparisons between these demographics¹⁸.

Discrepancies in management of collective centres are prevalent across the different areas of Ukraine. While part of the collective centres is free of charge, others request payment of utilities or rent from residents. In addition, residents of collective centres across the monitored oblasts reported issues related to lack of privacy, lack of hot water, lack of appliances such as washing machines, lack of central heating, lack of disaggregated and usable WASH facilities, lack of child-friendly and learning spaces. It was observed by DRC protection teams visiting collective centres in western Ukraine that some rooms/apartments were covered in mould due to lack of heating. Despite poor conditions, IDPs living in private accommodation in the West reportedly try to resettle in CCs while IDPs currently residing in CCs refuse to take part in cash for rent programmes for fear of losing their room in CCs. This is mainly linked with the belief that IDPs accommodated in CCs are prioritized for assistance, and with the fact that cash for rent programmes are covering 3 to 6 months’ rent. In parallel, IDPs residing in collective centres have reported fears of eviction, not knowing until when they would be accommodated. DRC protection monitoring team visited three temporary centres in Lviv where IDPs were told that they could stay no longer than two weeks to one month. According to REACH assessment report from February 2023¹⁹, nearly a fifth of IDP households (both in and outside CCs) struggle securing long-term accommodation solutions in Lviv Oblast, especially within Lviv city. Oblast administration funded the creation of additional 30 collective centres through restoration of abandoned institutions, creating 3500 additional places.

¹⁸, ¹⁹ “Area-based assessment Lviv Oblast – Ukraine”, REACH, February 2023 available [here](#)



In a collective site in Kharkiv city, DRC observed that persons from an ethnic minority group (Roma community) were accommodated in a separate space, a sports hall with limited services and equipment, and signs of othering and exclusion among other residents and staff.

Access to education

Overall across monitored oblasts, the ratio of respondents reporting their household children attending education is high (90%), although online education is the main mode (reported by 67% of respondents having schooling children), including in remote rural areas, areas close to the contact line and areas with schools lacking bomb shelters. Some schools also implement mixed modalities, for example, every second day students study online while the other half of the time is offline. Students are sent home during air sirens or when there are issues with access to the bomb shelters due to technical faults.

Power outages, lack of access to devices (such as computers and tablets), lack of/weak internet connectivity and lack of dedicated learning space for children, including in CCs, were reported as main barriers for online education, with children reportedly missing classes. In addition, participants of FGDs in Lviv and Kharkiv Oblasts shared concerns related to the negative impact of online schooling on children's socialisation and development, as well as on continued class attendance.

In Chernihiv Oblast, rehabilitation of schools is ongoing with 26 preschool institutions restored out of 53 that were damaged, 39 secondary education institutions restored out of 72 that were damaged, one university restored out of three that were damaged and 1 vocational training institution restored out of five that were damaged. In Lviv Oblast, in order to support families who are unable to purchase devices, three digital educational centres equipped with high-tech devices and open to all children (both from host and IDP communities) have opened.

Access to healthcare

Access to health services. Overall across monitored oblasts, only 49% of respondents indicated primary health care facilities accessible in their area, despite the harsh winter season coupled with power outages and lack of heating. The rate is even lower for IDPs residing in Zaporizhzhia (38%) and Dnipropetrovsk (39%) Oblasts, where long queues to access services were reported. In Kharkiv Oblast, primary healthcare services are mainly delivered nearby collective sites, but respondents have reported high medication costs. This, conjoined with delay in the payment of State allowances, highlights the gap of affected communities unable to acquire medicine, including those needing drugs to treat mental health issues. Specialized services are reported accessible by only 28% of respondents across monitored oblasts. In Chernihiv Oblast, the rate drops down to 17%. While the capacities and budget of State health services are overstretched, health humanitarian actors usually provide institutional support and basic services such as physicians' consultations and medication, but rarely cover special medical needs.

Main barriers to access healthcare are reportedly distance (35%), lack of available services (25%) and cost of medicines/consultation fees (15%). It is worth mentioning that in rural areas of Chernihiv Oblast, distance is by far the main barrier reported (48%).



In some villages it is a common situation that an ambulance has to arrive from the city, which may often take more than 30 minutes to reach the village in ideal circumstances (the road is not mud ridden and pontoon bridges are working)²⁰. Cost of medicines/consultation fees are widely reported as main barrier by IDP and host communities residing in Dnipropetrovsk (39%), Chernivtsi (40%) and Zaporizhzhia (55%) Oblasts.

Main barriers to access healthcare		
Distance	148	33.6%
Not all services are available	104	23.6%
Cost of medicines and/or consultation fee	64	14.5%
Lack of specialised services available	36	8.2%
Cost of transport to health facilities	26	5.9%
Waiting time is too long	24	5.4%
No barriers experienced	23	5.2%
Services were denied	9	2.0%
Lack of documentation received	7	1.6%

Graph 11: Main barriers to access healthcare

Psychological distress. Psychological distress linked with prolonged/multiple displacements, ongoing shelling/armed violence, loss of control over their lives, family separation and breakdown of community support mechanisms is significant among women, men and children. The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that up to 10 million Ukrainians (or a quarter of the population) are at risk of some form of mental disorder, ranging from anxiety and stress to a more severe condition²¹. Respondents in Kharkiv Oblast stated that the emotional and psychological effects of the ongoing conflict, with regular shelling and air sirens, were recognized concerns. Overall across monitored oblasts, in a setting where stigma is attached to mental health issues, 22% of household respondents reported lack of access to MHPSS services, mainly due to the unavailability of services in their location (67%) and lack of information about available services (27%). In Chernihiv Oblast, the ratio rises up to 38% of respondents reporting not being able to access MHPSS services.

²⁰ In Chernihiv, the bridge to access the city from the direction of Kyiv was destroyed and is still being rebuilt. In the meantime, a pontoon on the water has been built to facilitate access. However often this pontoon is not accessible due to the river freezing over causing damages to the pontoon or for other maintenance reasons.

²¹ “Ukraine – Rapid damage and needs assessment, February 2022-February 2023”, WHO, March 2023, available [here](#)



Besides persons with specific needs, especially isolated elderly and persons with disabilities who were unable to flee as a result of age or physical impairment and/or lack of financial resources and who suffer from the breakdown of their usual support system, adult men (including youth) who tend to be overlooked in the humanitarian response and face additional stress and self-restriction of movement linked with fear of conscription are affected by high levels of psychological distress. FGD participants in Kharkiv noted an increase in alcohol usage, including incidents of children being restricted at home with caregivers living dependent on alcohol. The same concern was reported in Lviv and Dnipropetrovsk Oblasts, especially in CCs where alcohol disorders are more visible. Substance abuse has reportedly led to incidents of violence (including domestic and intimate partner violence), thefts/robbery and sexual harassment.

Livelihoods and coping mechanisms

Access to livelihoods continues to be a prevalent issue in Ukraine, especially in conflict-affected areas and rural areas of return. Overall, across monitored oblasts, only 31% of respondents reported having at least one household member employed. The ratio is dropping down for IDPs (27%). In Lviv and Chernivtsi Oblasts, where mainly IDP households were monitored, 19% of IDP respondents reported employment of at least one household member.

IDPs and host communities are facing multiple barriers to access livelihoods. In conflict-affected areas where services are disrupted and companies have shut down or evacuated, there is a limited number of job opportunities. In areas with high concentration of IDPs such as in the western part of Ukraine, social tensions and conflicts over access to employment opportunities were reported. While IDP coordination councils at both regional and city levels in western Ukraine focus on advocating for IDPs' rights to be respected and fostering local integration within host communities, some of their representatives reported discrimination practices over access to livelihood opportunities affecting IDP communities. In addition, employers are often reluctant to hire IDPs as they do not guarantee stability and long-term employment.

To mitigate these issues, on 10th January 2023, the Cabinet adopted Decree #33 amending the programme on compensation for employers who hired IDPs during the Martial Law and 30 days after its suspension or termination (Decree #331 of 20 March 2023). The Cabinet raised the amount of compensation to be paid for two months from 6500 up to 6700 UAH for each employed IDP. To be eligible for the compensation, the employer may employ any IDP whether registered or not registered in the Employment Centre. On 24th January 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted Resolution #67, amending the programme on promoting employment of IDPs (Resolution #696)²². According to this resolution, the amount of compensation provided to employers who hire IDPs is now tightly linked to the minimum wage established by law (increasing from 6500 UAH to 6700 UAH); the compensation is also meant to cover training on professional development of IDPs (hired for 12 months and more). In case the employment relation with the IDP is terminated and the employer has already received the compensation, the compensation to the employer should be returned in full except in the case when another registered IDP unemployed person is hired for the position.

²² Legal Alert 89, DRC, January 2023, available [here](#)



To be eligible for such compensation the employer must hire an IDP officially registered as an unemployed person. As of March 20th, 2.4 million UAH were refunded for companies employing IDPs in Lviv Oblast²³. Lviv Regional Employment Centre reported that 163 IDPs were employed between January and March 2023 out of a total of 1161 IDPs who registered themselves with employment centres. Sectors in which IDPs obtained employment are wholesale and retail trade (27%) and processing industry (26%), administrative and auxiliary service (9%), healthcare (7%) and transport enterprises (7%).

Further to this, IDPs displaced from NGCAs often cannot resign from their previous jobs and subsequently are unable to apply for new job opportunities nor to receive unemployment benefits. For example, an IDP woman residing in Zaporizhzhia city indicated that she was unable to resign from her previous job because the company was located in NGCA and therefore could not register with the employment centre and receive unemployment benefits. Fear of conscription can also discourage men from registering with employment centres. While caregiving responsibilities for children and family members fall disproportionately on women during conflict times and access to kindergarten is very limited in Ukraine, single female caregivers are unable to look for full-time work.

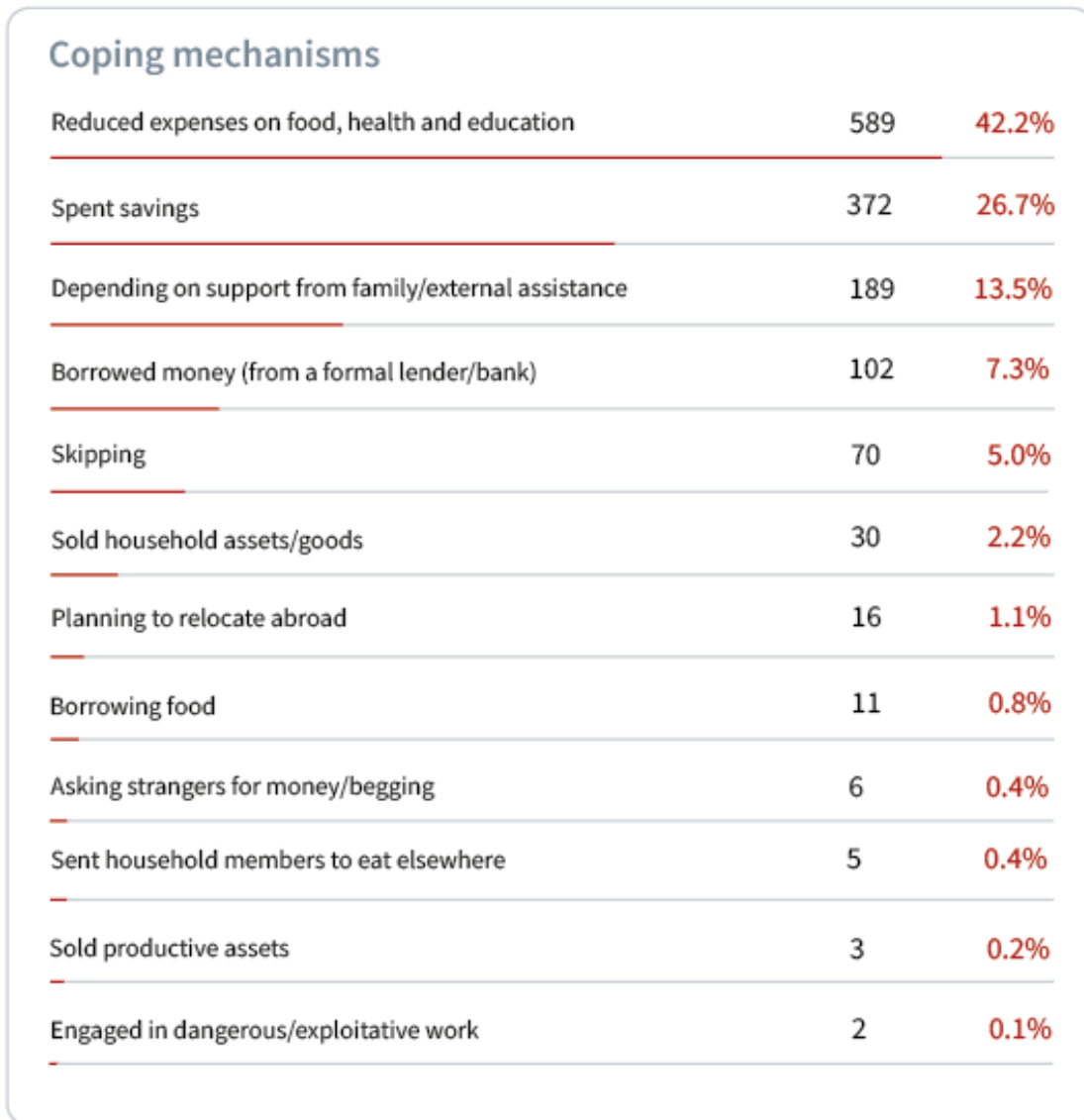
In Chernihiv Oblast, agriculture has been significantly impacted by the war. A rapid assessment conducted in March 2023 highlighted that a significant amount of the population relies on subsistence farming for food for their own consumption and income. This has been adversely affected by high prices of fuel, fertilizers, ploughing and seeds, destruction of assets, low profitability or selling agricultural products, landmine contamination, decrease in the number of consumers and demand for the produce, shortages in the labour force and limited access to lending and microloans available only with high interest rates. In Zaporizhzhia and Kharkiv Oblasts, where many people were relying on agriculture and entrepreneurship prior to the conflict, it was reported that farmers are facing considerable challenges due to land contamination and limited manpower linked with displacement and conscription.

Consequently, the majority of IDP households monitored across oblasts rely on State allowances (65%) and humanitarian assistance (17%), which creates a situation of dependency while individuals live in poverty. To meet basic needs, 61% of overall respondents reported reducing expenses on food, health and education, 39% reported spending their savings and 11% reported borrowing money. 77% of surveyed households reported facing barriers to cash assistance, with 86% of them reporting lack of information as the main barrier. In the East, the rates drastically increased, with 99% of surveyed respondents in Kharkiv Oblast, 92% in Dnipropetrovsk oblast and 89% in Zaporizhzhia Oblast reporting barriers in accessing cash assistance. This is in line with findings from a FGD conducted in Kharkiv city, where participants stated that the registration procedures are complicated, and reported a need for more information about the registration, the delivery modality of payment, and the time elapsed between registration and payment. In addition, DRC observed that less tech-savvy groups, including older persons and people with disabilities, face barriers to access (information on) available services, including online registration for cash assistance, due to their reduced mobility coupled with an inability to access online information due to lack of IT skills, lack of devices or lack of internet connection. As stated by a female IDP participant to a FGD conducted in Kharkiv city, “we do not have information, we have to look it up on the internet or ask neighbours.”

²³ “Since the beginning of the full-scale war, 1,266 forcibly displaced persons have been employed in Lviv Oblast”, Voice of Sokal, March 24th 2023, available [here](#)



These barriers, combined with an average of 79% of monitored households relying on State allowance and humanitarian assistance in those three oblasts, delays experienced in allowances' payment and exhaustion of financial resources, resulting in an environment where individuals, including the most vulnerable such as female-headed households, older persons and people with disabilities, cannot meet their basic needs and are significantly exposed to a multitude of protection risks, including usage of negative coping mechanisms, economic and sexual exploitation, and human trafficking.

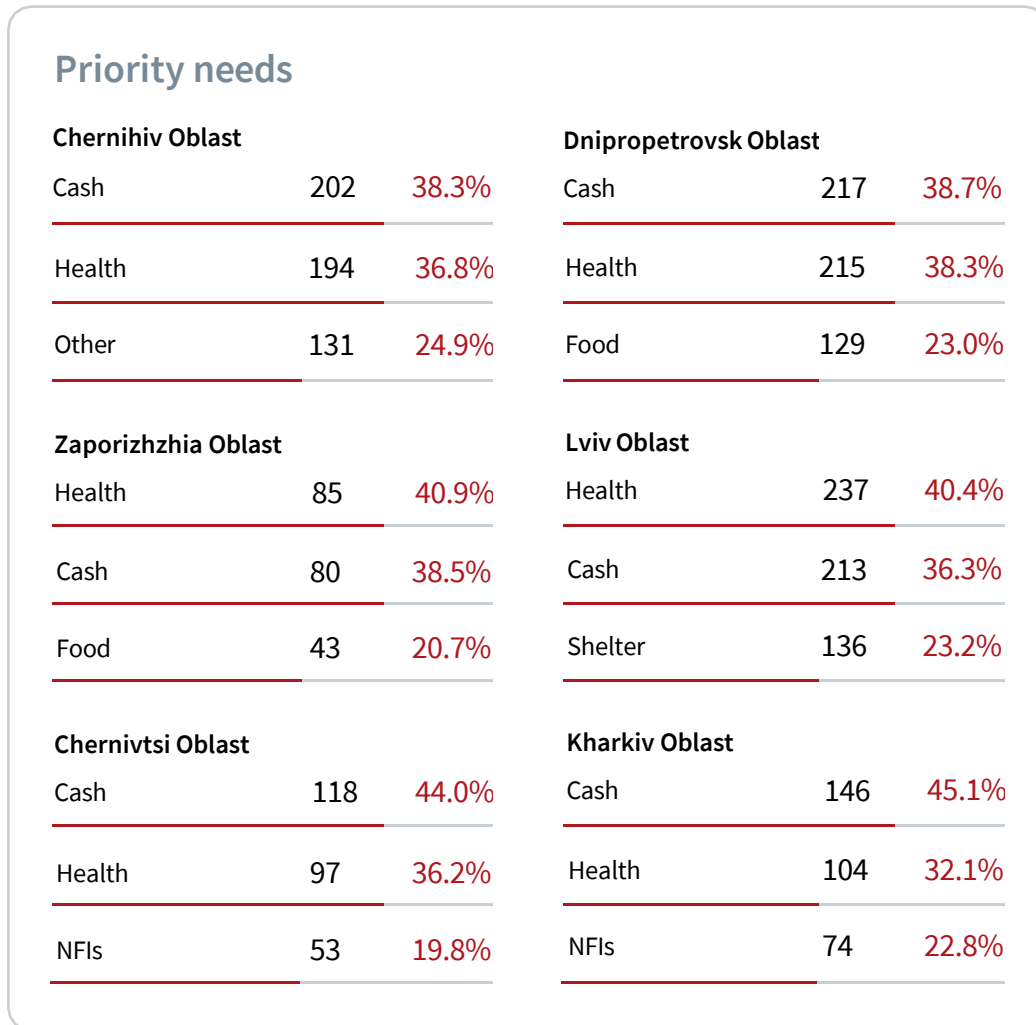


Graph 12: Coping mechanisms



Priority needs

Cash assistance remains the first priority need with 70% of respondents reporting it among their top 3 priority needs. Health is the second priority needs with 60% of respondents reporting it among their top first priorities.



Graph 13: Priority needs



Recommendations

To the authorities

- Upsurge the delivery of social services and benefits and ensure they are reaching hard-to-reach communities.
- Facilitate access to registration procedures for State allowances, including for people with disability and older persons; ensure disability registration process is meaningfully accessible.
- Provide specialised and free transportation for people with disability, including children with disability and their caregivers, and people with severe medical conditions, including in rural areas.
- Improve the conditions of collective centres, ensuring they are better provisioned with operational lifts, ramps and WASH facilities that are well-equipped for people with mobility impairment.
- Advocate with site management actors to ensure all individuals have access to the same services and have the same rights, without distinction on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class or political opinions.
- Ensure adequate funding is allocated to health and mental health services and that they are accessible.
- Ensure information, including on available services, ways to access them and eligibility criteria, is available in multiple diversified formats, adequately channelled using different communication methods, taking needs of less tech-savvy population groups into consideration, and ensuring physical reach of hard-to-reach communities.
- Support initiatives related to community empowerment and participation projects, including integration hubs and multifunctional community spaces.
- Continue supporting the IDPs and returnees' (re)integration into local labour markets. Efforts to relocate businesses, to enhance capacities of private and public employment services, to provide vocational training and skills enhancement modules for IDPs (including on entrepreneurship), need to be further supported.
- Equip schools and kindergartens with bomb shelters to get children back to school.

To the humanitarian community

- Increase information provision and assistance coverage in rural and hard-to-reach areas, including through mobile approach.
- Ensure information, including on available services, ways to access them and eligibility criteria, is available in multiple diversified formats, adequately channelled using different communication methods, taking needs of less tech-savvy population groups into consideration, and ensuring physical reach of hard-to-reach communities.
- Support in improving the conditions of collective centres, ensuring they are better provisioned with operational lifts, ramps and WASH facilities that are well-equipped for people with mobility impairment.



- Continue advocating for access barriers experienced by persons with mobility impairment to be removed and for tailoring assistance provided to specific needs.
- Deliver services and assistance for both vulnerable IDPs and conflict-affected individuals to diffuse potential social tensions and ensure support to the most vulnerable.
- Improve accountability to affected populations and facilitate information sessions to ensure awareness about the risks of exploitation and abuse in a humanitarian context.
- Increase awareness-raising on PSS topics and services to work towards reducing stigmatization and support the increase in delivery of MHPSS services.
- Increase awareness-raising on the disability registration process.
- Deliver legal aid support to settlements and villages located outside larger cities, including related to compensation for destroyed houses and access to social assistance benefits.
- Increase the provision of assistive devices until the State system functions and enhance the referral pathways to improve coordination.

Improve information provision concerning registering and delivering cash assistance and using delivery modalities accessible for all groups.
- Advocate with site management to ensure all individuals have access to the same services and have the same rights and take an active role in addressing systems of discrimination.
- Assess the possibility of providing livelihood interventions with a particular focus on engaging groups experiencing seclusion.
- Advocate for a general improvement of coordination mechanisms, to enhance and guarantee functioning referral pathways and complementary of interventions, including in areas located outside of the cities and including for specialized health and mental health services.
- Implement livelihood programming to support addressing basic needs of IDP, returnee and conflict-affected populations.
- Prioritize programming focusing on complementing/supporting existing national capacities.

Disclaimer:

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