



Problems and needs of internally displaced persons

April 2022

We have been analyzing a public opinion since 2011
Досліджуємо громадську думку з 2011 року

The following people worked on the research:

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Method: qualitative research by the method of focus group discussions (FGD) with representatives of the target audience.

Number and duration of GD: 18 focus groups of 9-12 participants each.

Duration of each discussion: 100-120 minutes

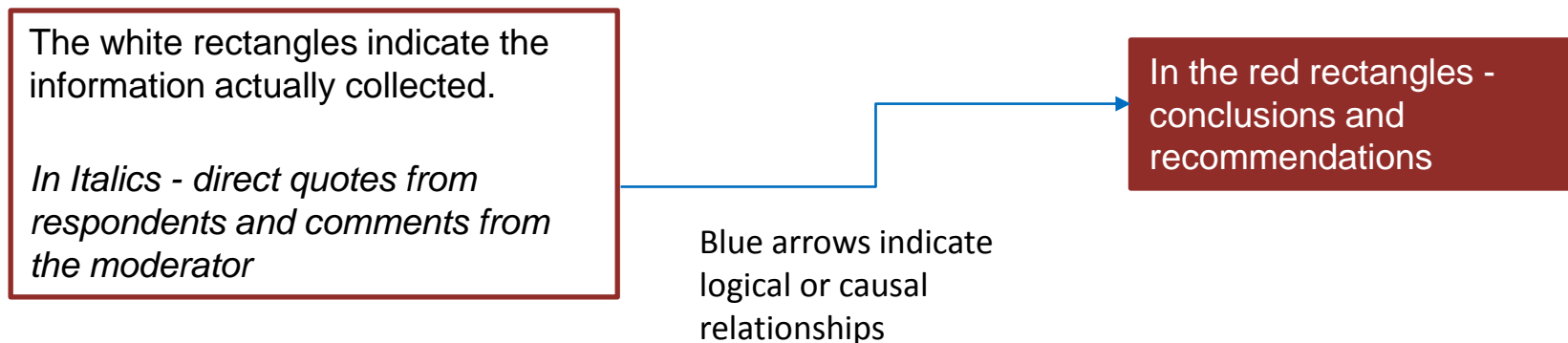
Geography and audience: Uzhhorod, Irshava, Drohobych, Lviv, Khmelnytskyi, Kamyanets-Podilskyi.

Three focus groups were held in each city:

- with IDPs;
- with activists and volunteers;
- with local citizens.

The purpose of the study: to identify the main problems and needs of IDPs, potential conflicts and ways to resolve them.

Legend:



In all groups the housing issue was mentioned as one of the most painful and important problems, as it cannot be solved completely in a quick way.

It is difficult to find housing **even for people who have the means**. The housing that can be rented is *"very expensive."* There are some statements that the rent has risen several times.

The issue of housing prices can be a strong reason for conflicts not only for IDPs, but also for the local population in particular.

"They do everything they can" is a common saying about cities. It is of both public institutions and local residents who *"let in for a nominal fee / payment for utilities / free."* The places of settlement are dormitories, where there are currently no students, educational institutions (schools and kindergartens, boarding schools), where people are placed in classrooms.

There are psychological problems of adaptation to new housing. In particular, people are not used to living in new conditions. And some urban people simply do not know how to live in villages (*"People who lived in the city, who are accustomed to the conveniences of the city"*).

Such phenomenon as volunteer realtors have emerged. These are people who refuse to look for clients for those who want *"too much money"* for rent and /or select housing for free for IDPs.

The statement that IDPs are too demanding arises in small towns and is a potential topic for making problems in mutual relations.



Various groups talk about "modular towns" as a solution (temporary or permanent) to the problem of housing shortages.

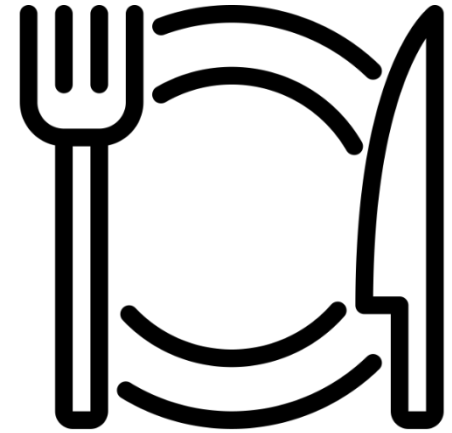
It is necessary, if not to solve the problem of overcrowding in schools and kindergartens, then at least to demonstrate that such a solution exists, and it has begun to be implemented.

The topic of IDP nutrition and products is mentioned by everybody as **extremely important**. Although it does not evoke such emotions as the topic of housing ("*The most relevant today are food products*").

It was said in all groups that IDPs were provided with food and basic necessities (primarily hygiene products) ("*Everything was in sufficient quantity, everything was distributed without problems*").

Almost all IDPs are grateful for food ("*I didn't think we would have so much food here*", "*People are left with nothing at all, it saves them*"). Although volunteers say they sometimes deal with ungrateful IDPs.

It was discussed very positively in regional centers that **the business was actively involved** in the work of providing food ("*I am very impressed with how the business got involved in such volunteer movements*"). This is noticeable in the case of food, as "*many institutions provide food for migrants for free.*" Both abstract "business" and specific institutions are mentioned ("*Pizzeria on my street bakes bread and sends it to migrants every day*").



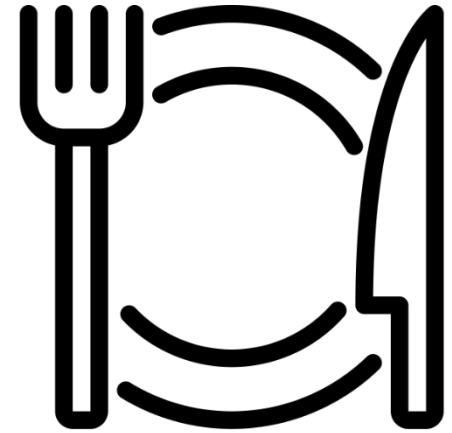
Among activists who prepare food (and are already tired of it), there is a demand "to provide conditions for IDPs to cook for themselves" (*although it is mentioned rarely, we can predict it will be mentioned more often in some time - analyst's note*).

In cities, sometimes there is a problem to get to the place where food is provided (*"To get to Zhovtneve we should pay for three people there and back for 8 UAH"*). It is a significant financial burden for some families or it is simply difficult for them to move with their children (*"If this is a family, children, who have no money, they will not go from the suburbs of the city to eat just once"*).

Refusal of ready meals is perceived as a great insult. Especially if the food was prepared by volunteers.

Sometimes there are complaints about protein and/or meat deficiencies. (*"Food is very carbohydrate", "Well, we need at least a piece of meat, so that children, people get some protein"*).

There are people who can cook for themselves, but they eat in public places. Issuing food kits would allow such people to cook for themselves, which would free up the volunteers



One IDP said he wanted to find a job just to be able to buy meat.

Limited menu is a problem for people who need a specific diet due to health problems (*"But if people are sick, they don't have what they need"*).

In different groups it is said that there are no problems with clothes (especially women's and children's) ("*Just a lot of clothes! All clothing distribution points are full*"). Several respondents reported problems with men's clothing. Even those respondents who spoke about certain difficulties often said that they were only details and that the main problems had been solved ("*They may be there now, but we are no longer making problems out of them*").

It is said separately about providing children with everything they need. A full range of things for all ages is mentioned: from infants to "adult" children. Food, toys, developmental items, things, hygiene products, etc. ("*Toys for children are brought very quickly*").

Charitable clothing is provided by various organizations located in different places. "Caritas" and "Red Cross" were mentioned. However, most often it was said about places, not about the names of funds - "*at the station*", "*where they are registered*", "*in the TsNAP (The administrative service centre)*" and so on.

There are enough clothes and hygiene products. The only problem is the fragmentation of funds and the lack of a single information system on where and what things can be obtained and what to do about it.



Not everyone was able to find animal feed. Especially when it comes to a specific food.

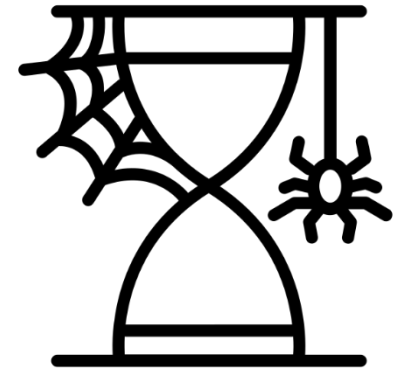
In several groups such a problem as "*Roma people*" who "*take a lot and it is impossible to stop them*" was mentioned, "*It is impossible to tell them that it is enough. They still come.*"

"Humanitarian" distribution points allow those who want to help to volunteer, because there is always a need to sort, collect, transfer, distribute, etc. ("*We even carried clothes there, some bags, and cots, strollers.*")

All IDPs who tried to go through bureaucratic procedures (registration, assistance, etc.) complained about problems with obtaining certificates, registrations, etc .:

- "Vouchers" for IDP registration are issued in April for June.
 - The system does not work / works poorly / constantly "hangs".
- There are complaints that it does not work across the country (*"Program that hangs all over Ukraine"*).
- Complaints about huge queues for registration (*"You stand in line to get a number in the queue. And you lose half a day for it"*).

Insufficient capacity of social protection bodies: the premises do not accommodate everyone, there are not enough workers and/or work places.



There are the same "bureaucratic" claims to the international aid organizations (UNO and IOM): queues, slow registration, etc. *"First, you pass the quest, register. This is for those people who have car accidents and housing problems"*).

Employees of these institutions take the most negative feedbacks from IDPs (*"They will curse Ukrposhta and the woman sitting there at the cash register"*).

The problem with expectations is that while the person is waiting, he does not receive help (*"While you wait, you cannot get any help"*) and does not do anything useful. Some respondents say that they are forced *"to go there as to work"*.

People receive different types of help from different institutions and through different procedures. As a result, they are confused, do not know where to go, spend a lot of time in queues. Therefore, creation of at least clear instructions on how to receive all types of assistance, as a maximum of a "single window" for their registration will greatly facilitate the lives of IDPs.

Work and salary

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The problem of lack of work for IDPs has been mentioned by everyone: local residents, volunteers, and IDPs themselves (*"I've been here for a month and a half and I can't find a job"*).

The fact that a person does not work creates a number of problems.

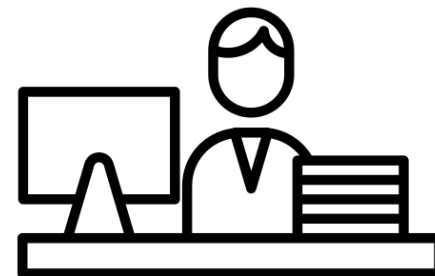
Lack of work is a reason for many to **leave their families** and move to other regions / countries.

People understand that the government and volunteers will not provide them with housing and food all the time. So they need a source of income.

Uncertainty about the future which negatively affects the moral climate at all levels (from man to society as a whole: *"People do not know how and what to live for, how to pay for housing, and so on"*).

A person without a job often experiences a number of psychological problems (feelings of uselessness, "wandering because of inaction", etc.: *"I do at least something, because I can fool around here without work"*). And work gives the chance *"not to think"*, *"somehow to switch"*.

These people are "saved" by volunteer work, where they feel they do something useful and necessary.



Various groups (mostly local ones) believe that if IDPs found work, they would not need free food (*"Many of them are willing to work"*).

It would be very useful to have a job search portal for IDPs or to interact with existing job search portals, which would create sections of vacancies for IDPs, and volunteers would provide them with information about such portals.

The traditional problem with the lack of jobs has sharply worsened after the relocation of a large number of "new" people (*"People want to have a job, they are looking for it. But there is nothing. Our unemployed people have the same problem"*).

Several people apply for each vacancy (according to the residents of the group in Khmelnytskyi). Even residents of Lviv, the largest city in the project, say their city *"can't provide so much work."*

One of the important areas of social support is participation in the creation of enterprises. It can be provided by Western investors through investments, soft loans and more.



Why IDPs need work:

- to ensure their own survival;
- to replenish stocks that are running out (*"We have a resource, but it is running out"*);
- to feel they are required;
- for self-realization;
- *"not to live at smb.'s expense"*;
- *"not to beg help in funds, but just buy what you need"*;
- *"not to have to go abroad"*;
- *"not to depend on someone"*;
- to move to a *"normal"* house (mostly from school to an apartment).
- to eat in a proper way (including eating meat);
- to earn money and continue their studies (for contract students).

In order to go to work, you need *"to do something with the kids."* (Analyst's note - the problem of children is more complicated for locals than for IDPs living compactly, because at school, through simple self-organization, a child can be given to neighbors or volunteers).

Systematic solutions for children are very necessary - volunteer centers that would at least partially take over the functions of kindergartens, assistance in self-organization of child care, assistance in resolving bureaucratic issues in the case of volunteer (or even partially commercial) kindergartens, etc.

There is a problem in the temporality of relocation of people:

- employers do not want to hire people who know that they have moved temporarily and can go home tomorrow (*"You do not meet our requirements, because we do not know how long you will stay here"*);
- IDPs themselves cannot guarantee that they will stay in the workplace.

This makes it reluctant to hire IDPs for serious work.

Volunteers and local residents talk about the need for retraining for IDPs (*"We need retraining and more courses as there are many problems with work"*).



Issues of culture and leisure are associated with the "Maslow Pyramid". After meeting the needs of basic necessities, people have cultural needs.

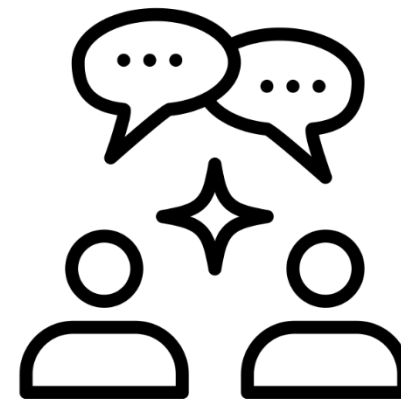
The fact that IDPs need to take cultural activities is more or less agreed in all groups.

- This is necessary to improve their psychological state (*"It will be easier for them. Imagine that they are 24 hours without work"*).
- We need to occupy people with something.
- *"Leisure is not just fun, especially for children."*
- Cultural events help *"to feel at home"*.
- A useful person must feel the local culture not to leave after the war.

The following cultural activities are described.

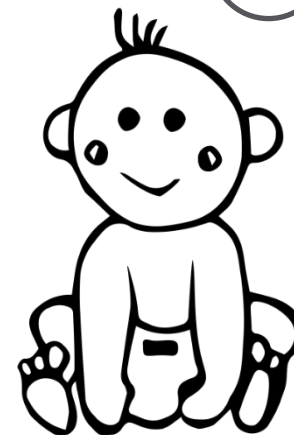
- Excursions (in one way or another were described everywhere: *"There are guides everywhere who agree to walk around the city"*).
- Art Hub for migrants at Khmelnytskyi Art Museum.
- Various free lectures.
- Children's puppet theaters.
- Foreign language learning for children and adults.
- Performances in theaters (both free for IDPs and for money spent on the needs of the Armed Forces).
- *"Some concerts are held."*

Cultural opportunities are quite diverse. However, the lack of them is still felt. This may be either due to the inability of existing volunteers to meet such needs, or due to the poor awareness of IDPs about such measures.



IDPs often claim that they simply do not know about cultural initiatives.

This is also a consequence of the information problem. It is enough to inform IDPs in details about all initiatives.



The demand for children's leisure is unsatisfied for a large part of both IDPs and city dwellers, despite numerous volunteer activities for children.

Existing workshops and events are often not systematic (*"It was made and then forgotten, no continuation"*).

Master classes do not grow into systematic "clubs" or "workshops". Accordingly, the skills that children receive there do not become systemic. On the other hand, parents cannot plan their children's education based on such initiatives.

It is difficult / impossible to find something that is suitable for a particular child or familiar to him/her.

The centers where the volunteers work are located far from the place where a specific IDP unit lives (*"I have already visited so many places in the district, but no workshops, no organized places"*).

It is important in large cities to do activities for children (both IDPs and citizens) in as many different areas of cities as possible.

In small towns, there are more claims that *"children are not developing"* or *"are not developing enough"*.

For parents, the task is often *"to take the child at least somewhere so that he/she does not spend time using the phone."*

Complaints about the lack of sports sections for children. It is especially important for those who were serious about sports before the war (*"My daughter goes in for karate. This is an Olympic sport... There are not such karate trainings, as at the Olympiad"*)

If parents are ready to give the child to the volunteers who are currently working and take them to the center where they work, then this problem can be solved.

Mothers (especially of preschoolers) *"have a double burden"*. Both physical (because it is necessary to deal with the child) and psychological (she is already an IDP, often lives in school, and here is a small child with all the difficulties).

There are centers in different cities where volunteers work with children. They are in libraries, volunteer centers, dormitories where IDPs live, etc.

Volunteers and staff not only take care of the children, but also allow parents to leave the child so that IDPs can *"go about their business"*.

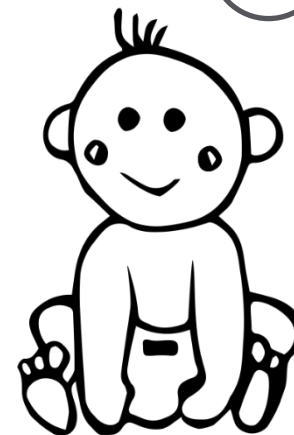
Local children have started to get involved in various volunteer projects made for IDP children from the very beginning (*"This is great because many people have even more opportunities to give a child away"*).

For children who are far away from their friends, making new connections becomes especially important (*"To find some kind of socialization here .. to communicate with peers"*).

Both locals and IDPs say that if conditions were created for them (actually if they were provided with premises), they would organize kindergartens themselves *"If a place is found, parents could raise their children in those kindergartens"*; the fact that such centers work, confirms it – analyst's note).

The task is to create conditions for it to be technically possible: premises, food, clear schedule, etc.

There are comparisons with other countries where *"children are immediately sent to a kindergarten/school/college"* (*"In Italy and in Germany"*).



This empowerment for all plays a very positive role. Especially in the absence of classes in schools.

Military enlistment office and conscription

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People who do not want to go to the military enlistment office are treated with condemnation, but often with understanding (*"We also have those who do not want to go there"*).

Motivations against the mass conscription were said mostly by women. More often - among IDPs, but local residents also sometimes spoke out against forced conscription.

- There were statements that only motivated people should be at war. And if a person is unmotivated, then *"he will do more harm."*
- Men are required *"to come to the military enlistment office"* very quickly, and they need more time to arrange everything for their families.
- Men who do not want to be registered must leave their families. As a result, there is neither the soldier nor the family (*"Keep in mind that you have to register immediately at the military enlistment office. And they do not come then"*).
- Women do not allow men to go to the military enlistment office.
- Nobody says what's going on there (*"Nobody says anything. So it's kind of behind the scenes"*).
- After the war, a person who did not want to fight will be ruined psychologically.



One-time proposals to legalize ransom from the army (*"Why not to legalize it for people who do not want to go to war.. Why not to make such a payment?"*).

The military enlistment office frightens everyone who is not a volunteer, and one of the reasons is the person does not understand what will happen to him next. So there is a need for explanatory work: people need to know about the procedures, what happens after going to the military enlistment office, what is registration, what happens after conscription, how those who go to war are selected, how the training takes place, etc.

Analyst's note: coming to the military enlistment office for registration is treated by most people as an automatic enlistment in the army. Despite the fact that not everyone is called up.

The first reaction to the question about the interaction of IDPs with local residents is almost always **absolutely positive**.

- General gratitude for taking home and giving a roof over the head (*"I am sincerely grateful to the city"*).
- Very friendly people.
- The absence of negativity is perceived as positive (*"I have not heard any negative attitude towards us"*).
- Willingness to help *"with the little things"* (*"Even at the market you will be told where to go, where it is cheaper, and how to get anywhere"*).
- Vendors at the markets can drop the price for IDPs, or even suggest where it is cheaper.
- IDPs say locals are *"much more polite than we are."*
- Locals greet IDPs *"without even knowing them"*.
- They speak about cases of petty care from strangers: for example, they gave a vine on Palm Sunday, talked kindly to a child, etc.).

IDPs themselves are worried about whether they are perceived positively (*"Some people are very worried"*).

IDPs understand if a volunteer or a worker who takes care of them speaks harshly or even rudely (*"Well, I understand that people are tired, there are many of them - and they are nervous"*).

IDPs are often surprised at how friendly they are treated (*"I thought we would be treated in a normal way, but I could not imagine such a friendly and good treatment"*).

Locals see and understand that visitors are often in a difficult psychological state (*"The child is afraid even of a candy", "migrants are very nervous"*).



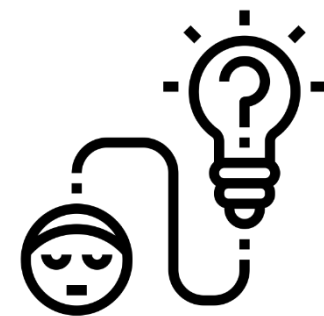
Among the negative reactions to IDPs, only the language issue was mentioned (*"Some of them quarrel over the Russian language"; the topic of language is discussed in detail in the section "Reasons of conflicts" - analyst's note*).

Activists and residents of various cities consider it positive that *"people saw that there are no Nazis in Western Ukraine."*

All groups of people who were surveyed (with some exceptions) say that IDPs may have psychological problems: *"All those who have left their homes have some moral problems," "These people have seen an active phase of the war." It could affect their psychological state."*

The following psychological problems were mentioned among other things:

- uncertainty in their future ("They do not know what will happen next");
- they are forced to leave;
- people do not feel safe;
- they miss their home (*"My child was born there, there were some memories"*);
- it is difficult to adapt to a completely new environment;
- they are afraid/worried about relatives who have not left the war zone or are under occupation;
- *"they lost their jobs"*;
- they are exhausted by relocation and related problems;
- *"victim syndrome: I am a victim, help me"*;
- misunderstanding of "one's place": what to do, what to do next, how to build relationships;
- some are offended by being treated as "disabled" (*"They feel inferior"*);
- desire to restore *"normal life"*;
- isolation, refusal to communicate;
- it is difficult to live together with other people in the same apartment.



There is a belief that the psychological problems of IDPs **decrease** after some time (*"When they began to get used, to adapt, they began to trust a little"*).

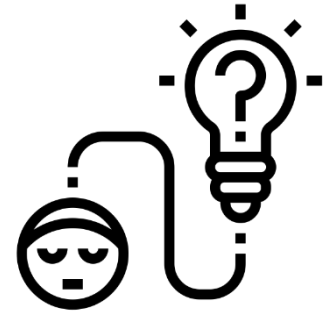
Respondents tend to single out the psychological **problems and needs of children**:

- consequences of stress from relocation;
- it is very difficult for children who have been under fire to come to a "peaceful life". There are several stories about how children react to sirens or loud sounds, that it is difficult for them to be in the kindergartens, etc.;
- lack of communication ("*There are places where children are*" hungry "for communication");
- loss of past life: old teams, friends, habits, clubs, classes;
- refusal to contact new people after relocation.

The fact that there is information on psychological assistance to individual respondents (especially the elderly) suggests that the problem with psychological assistance is mostly solved (*analyst's note: in fact, no, it will be discussed in a separate section*).

Communicating with some IDPs is a real challenge for activists. It was said both about the fact that there are "problem people" and that volunteers get tired of hearing about the problems of many IDPs ("*I meet people who need to be talked to, they need psychological help*").

Although in general most people understand that IDPs may have psychological problems, they begin to perceive them only in very obvious and vivid cases (tragedies or shelling, children's problems, etc.).



Just a fact of the emergence of new people, the increase in their number in small towns, where previously the population was only declining, is perceived as a positive phenomenon.

The general positive from the fact that *"the city came to life"* was manifested in almost all groups in all cities.

The feeling of unity of people around the common misfortune (*"Positive is our unity. Starting with the country and ending with our organizations"*).

The absence of negative changes is perceived as a positive change. Especially against the background of total bombing of other cities.

People from all over Ukraine found out that there are other cities in Ukraine (*"For many, Western Ukraine ended in Lviv"*). The stereotypes of both visitors about the western regions and locals about people from the eastern regions have disappeared (*"Now they came here and saw that we are the same Ukrainians as they are"*).

The city has become a "hub" for humanitarian aid. A statement which was said in Uzhhorod, Drohobych, Lviv. It is a significant positive.

New people with **new experiences for the city**. Many different positive feedbacks.



People have changed. It is said about both citizens and IDPs, often without distinguishing between them:

- They started to help each other more (*"People are sincere, they try to help a lot"*).
- They began to care more about the city (various groups spoke in the context of greater work of IDPs and in the context of the citizens themselves).

Economic benefits:

- People who came make a demand for services (*"They came and did this or that for a private entrepreneur, and there are income and taxes in the city"*).
- People buy products and as a result work places appear and taxes are paid (*"It's positive, revenue has increased"*).
- In the case of renting premises, IDPs give money to locals, pay utility bills, and provide minor repairs.

After the victory, some people will stay in the cities, which will give an additional impetus to the development of the city. Some people won't leave because their houses were destroyed and they have nowhere to return. Others - because they like to live here

Even when people return home after the victory, they will have established contacts with both locals and people from other regions, which will help further development and just friendship.

The development of activism is perceived as a clearly positive change. It was seen in one context or another in all groups.

Some activist groups mention that local authorities have started to work better (*"Cooperation and assistance with local and regional authorities has become very well"*).



Economic motives are important even for people who have a negative perception of visitors due to cultural or other issues (see the relevant slides).

Population density has increased. This fact is perceived as not strong, but negative.

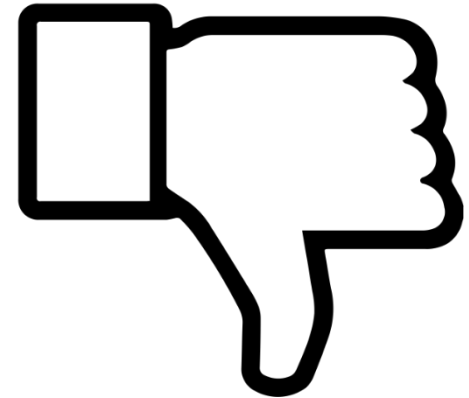
- General feeling and discomfort from a large number of people
- There are more cars: traffic jams where there were none before, and the lack of parking spaces has become more acute.
- Crowds in parks and other public places - it is impossible to be alone, busy cafes.

It became more dangerous on the roads. Visitors drive in a different way - more aggressively or simply atypically for locals. A one-time positive mention is that *"pedestrians are more often allowed to go by the cars with Kyiv license plates"*

Gradually, this problem disappears - visitors adapt to the style of driving in the cities where they came.

The cost of rent has increased. And not only for IDPs, but also for local ones. Some respondents said that apartment owners raised the price for older customers. It also became difficult to find housing for rent (*"It is simply unrealistic to find an apartment, and the prices are very high"*).

IDPs apply for jobs previously held by locals (single mentions).



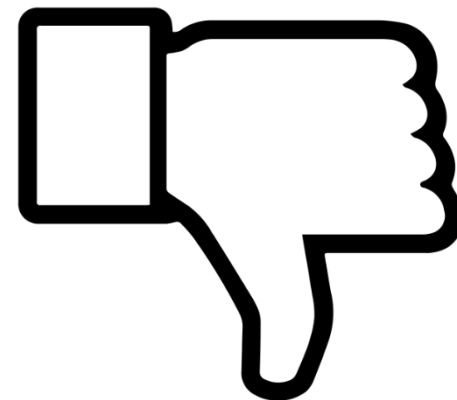
There is a claim that cities are becoming more "Russian-speaking" under the influence of IDPs. It is especially acute in Lviv region. It was mentioned both as a claim to IDPs (on the relevant slides) and as a negative change in the city IDPs made.

It is important to show the people who value local culture that IDPs **enrich** it. If possible – to show examples of such enrichment (the contribution of a visiting artist, for example).

Because of the war, men who went to work abroad cannot return. This is not a claim against IDPs, but it is an important aspect of local life:

- men whose families have left evoke negative emotions;
- men cannot go to the planned work abroad, which reduces the welfare of the family;
- men who went to war cannot return.

All problems of urban planning and general city management have become more acute (*most often problems with logistics were mentioned - analyst's note*)





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