











“Challenges of ensuring the integration of internally displaced persons into host communities: Behavioral determinants”

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CHALLENGES OF ENSURING THE INTEGRATION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS INTO HOST COMMUNITIES: BEHAVIORAL DETERMINANTS

Abstract

Internal migration caused by the war of Russia against Ukraine (with the active phase starting in February 2022) has increased the socio-economic burden on the host communities welcoming internally displaced population from the frontline and occupied territories. On the other hand, it intensifies behavioral reflections of local residents on the integration of internally displaced persons (IDPs). The study aims to identify opportunities, challenges, and prospects for IDPs' adaptation in host communities (a case study of Lviv oblast, Ukraine). The paper conducted a sociological survey among 2,500 respondents in November 2022–February 2023. The results show that the lack of housing, lack of permanent employment, language contradictions, and forced limited contact with relatives who remain in the combat zone are existential barriers to the integration of IDPs into host communities. The study identified such opportunities for the integration of IDPs into the host society: reducing the risk of depopulation of territories, reducing imbalances in the local labor market in certain sectors of the economy, strengthening social cohesion, developing small businesses, and improving social infrastructure. The respective challenges include increased social tension, competition for jobs and housing, shortage of places in preschool institutions, and disproportionate distribution of budget funds between the local population and IDPs. Conflicts between IDPs and local residents, as well as IDPs and local authorities, require a proactive position of local authorities to initiate psychological support programs and create communication platforms for the exchange of individual experiences and discussion of psychological and emotional issues.

Keywords

adaptation, war, survey, internally displaced persons,
behavioral economy, households, Ukraine, communities,
local governments, conflicts

JEL Classification

H72, H80, I31

INTRODUCTION

The large-scale internal and external population movements caused by the Russian-Ukrainian war have led to unpredictable consequences for Ukraine's economic development and the financial and economic capacity of separate communities. These include the loss of human capital, migration of business and intellectual property, large-scale redistribution of labor resources in the regions, a decrease in intellectual and human resources, the spread of social vulnerability and inequality, depopulation of territories, and a critical decrease in the economic capacity of economic sectors.

The migration crisis is not new to Ukraine. However, current internal migration (unlike in 2014) is characterized by a high level of insecurity, chaotic movements, increased social vulnerability, and weakening of the economic resilience of IDPs (financial, social, and housing).

Moreover, it is worth mentioning illegal trafficking of people to the Russian Federation, high probability of external migration (due to the loyal policy of European countries in supporting Ukrainians), and increased problems of social and psychological adaptation of IDPs (conflicts with community residents, weakening of stress resistance, etc.). According to the IOM (International Organization for Migration), the number of people who have been forced to leave their homes in Ukraine has reached 6.5 million. During the year of the war, there were 5.4 million IDPs and 8.0 million refugees in Ukraine (IOM UN Migration, 2023).

Meeting the basic needs of IDPs and positive attitudes toward the host community are triggers for their rapid adaptation to the new environment and further integration into the host society, which is a determinant of the economic capacity of communities. At the same time, the growing problem of IDP integration leads to an increased socio-economic and psychological burden on host communities, which requires central and local governments, active representatives of civil society (volunteers, NGOs, and charitable foundations), community members, and displaced persons themselves to develop mechanisms for IDP integration. Behavioral determinants of integration processes are an important prerequisite for solving the problem of internal displacement in Ukraine.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Forced migration processes result from socio-economic shocks and uncertainty, including conflicts, violence, persecution, human rights violations, or natural disasters (The UN Refugee Agency, 2022; Verme, 2017). The increased number of internally displaced persons and the duration of their stay outside their homes (67% of cases of forced displacement last five years or more) (The World Bank, 2022; IOM UN Migration, 2023) requires a change in approaches to managing such processes. IDPs' needs are diverse: finding a job, providing education for children, providing permanent housing, and psychological adaptation in the host community. This requires changes in the policies of governments, local authorities, and international organizations and the involvement of a wider range of stakeholders, including residents of host communities, in addressing the problems of displaced persons (Ruiz & Vargas-Silva, 2013; Kreibaum, 2016; Adong et al., 2020; The World Bank, 2022).

The unspoken consensus on the recognition of internally displaced persons as a responsibility of international humanitarian organizations has lost its relevance. There is an urgent need to find sustainable solutions to ensure the livelihoods of both internally displaced persons and their hosts. This has led to the need to involve development-oriented institutions (the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, etc.) to resolve these issues and to establish close cooperation between them and

international humanitarian organizations (Verme, 2017; World Bank Group, 2017). Moreover, there is a need to change the paradigm of forced displacement for the EU in different contexts – political, social, demographic, economic, behavioral, and psychological. This has led to new scientific research to solve the urgent problems in this area (UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe, 2022; Rizzi et al., 2022; Kossowska et al., 2023).

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are the most numerous and least protected of the forcibly displaced: globally, this group accounts for 62.5 million people (58% of forcibly displaced persons) (The UN Refugee Agency, n.d.a). Internally displaced persons are persons forced to leave their homes or places of permanent residence as a result of or in order to avoid the consequences of armed conflict, civil violence, human rights violations, natural or man-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border (United Nations, 2001). Unlike refugees, who acquire the right to protection, asylum, education, healthcare, and freedom of movement in other countries, in accordance with the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (The UN Refugee Agency, n.d.b), IDPs are not entitled to these rights under international law. Meanwhile, the term “internally displaced person” is not a legal category (Concern Worldwide, 2022). National governments are responsible for protecting and assisting IDPs. At the international level, only the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

were developed in 1998, which define the concept of IDPs, as well as the rights and guarantees for their protection (United Nations, 2001). The UN General Assembly relies on this document in its dialogue on internal displacement. However, it is the national governments that formulate and implement policies for the accommodation and support of IDPs.

The main reason for the increased vulnerability of IDPs (compared to refugees) is that the states responsible for ensuring the rights and support of IDPs are the very parties affected by the crisis (war, natural disaster, food crisis, etc.). This has resulted in a significant decrease in their financial and managerial capacity to provide relevant services and fulfill their responsibilities. Prior to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Colombia, Afghanistan, Yemen, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, and South Sudan were the countries of concentration of 73% of all forced migrants, including internal ones – all countries with low economic development and a difficult political and security situation (George & Adelaja, 2022). Another significant reason for the vulnerability of IDPs is the difficulty of identifying them due to the absence or ineffectiveness of the registering process. Although geographic distance has a significant impact on IDPs' choice of location, this choice is essentially spontaneous (and less limited than for refugees in host countries) and depends on three factors: distance, security, and existing social/family ties (Ruiz & Vargas-Silva, 2017; Halkiv et al., 2022; Vasylytsiv et al., 2019).

IDPs prefer to be accommodated in host community households rather than in specific camps (Voznyak et al., 2023a). Accommodation in host communities has significant benefits, as it is an important factor in the integration of IDPs in a new place and the creation of new social networks. The problem is “the relative invisibility of IDPs” in host families and in host communities for the state and humanitarian organizations, which is why the scale of the internal displacement phenomenon is mostly underestimated (Davies, 2012; Voznyak et al., 2022). Moreover, the issue of support for members of host communities is not developed among humanitarian and economic mechanisms for overcoming the problem of forced internal displacement.

According to the results of more than twenty comprehensive studies by the World Bank in different countries at different times, the growing processes of forced internal displacement are a crisis for the country in which they occur and can lead to exacerbation of inequality and conflict in host communities (The World Bank, 2022; Verme & Schuettler, 2019). This process affects not only community members who are directly involved in hosting IDPs but also future generations of residents (Fransen et al., 2017; Ruiz & Vargas-Silva, 2018a, 2018b). The consequences of this impact are more pronounced the longer the displacement lasts, and the strength and nature of the impact on members of the host community vary according to the “place-based characteristics and personal dimensions” of individuals (age, gender, education, profession) (Mykhnenko et al., 2022; Levytska, 2022). The World Bank experts identify five groups of factors that determine the nature of the impact of forced displacement on the community, its residents, and IDPs who temporarily reside there:

1. the social, political, and economic landscape of host communities;
2. the behavior of host community actors;
3. the impact of IDPs on the socio-economic development of host communities;
4. state, regional, and local policies on forced internal displacement;
5. socio-economic conditions and behavior of IDPs (The World Bank, 2024).

Ukraine first faced the problem of IDPs during Russia's annexation of Crimea and eastern Ukraine in 2014, when there were 1.8 million IDPs in the country (Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, n.d.). During the long period (2014–2024) of forced internal displacement, Ukraine has developed a legal framework for ensuring the rights and freedoms of internally displaced persons. The definition of IDPs is harmonized with the interpretation in the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. This legal framework, unique compared to other countries, addresses the issues of IDP registration, ensuring their rights and freedoms, support in the event of loss of property, etc.

In shaping the policy of hosting, accommodating, and supporting IDPs, the state decided to work toward the integration of displaced persons into host communities rather than create IDP camps (Ukrinform, 2017), which confirms the role of territorial communities as state policy entities in the field of forced internal displacement.

In 2022, the scale of internal displacement tripled and coincided with the massive outflow of refugees from Ukraine, which further increased the burden on host communities. In these circumstances, the strengthening of horizontal relationships and increased participation of the population and businesses in receiving, accommodating, and providing the necessary assistance to IDPs have become the country's characteristic features. This behavior is caused by the impact of war on the behavior of individuals and social groups: changes in the system of individual preferences and increased social attachment and altruism (Mawson, 2007; Bauer et al., 2016; Savage, 2016; Drury et al., 2019; Adam et al., 2019; Dezechache et al., 2021; Voznyak et al., 2023b). The World Bank (2022) experts identified factors and assigned the role to behavioral aspects and the differences in their manifestation in different socio-economic and cultural conditions of host communities. Thus, one should address the host communities' attitudes toward IDPs in Ukraine and their differences from host communities in other countries through the prism of scientific principles of behavioral economics.

This study aims to identify opportunities for communities to integrate IDPs and to define challenges and prospects for IDPs' adaptation in host communities (a case study of Lviv oblast, Ukraine).

2. METHOD

A sociological survey was conducted among local residents of communities in Lviv oblast. It aimed to identify the challenges, features, and opportunities for the integration of IDPs into local communities in the context of war. The survey mainly focused on the identification of:

- (1) the attitude of community residents to IDPs and the level of conflict between them; the willingness of local residents to provide assistance to IDPs (financial, food, free housing, etc.);

- (2) opportunities and prospects for community development from the effective integration of IDPs;

- (3) challenges and barriers to the adaptation of IDPs in community life on the part of local authorities and residents.

The algorithm for the sociological sample included (1) the allocation of three strata in each community (the number of people per stratum was determined taking into account the number of permanent residents (at least 25 people per stratum); (2) random selection of households in settlements, where respondents were selected by a stochastic method. The respondents were legally capable individuals, a total of 2,500 people.

The field stage of the study covered the period from November 2022 to February 2023. The coefficient of variation of the relative standard error of the sample not exceeding 5% was chosen as the main characteristic of the survey reliability.

3. RESULTS

Interviews with local residents in Lviv oblast confirm the existence of certain difficulties related to the arrival of IDPs in their communities. This has manifested itself in increased tension and competition between the local population and IDPs for resources for people's livelihoods, scaling up of conflict situations, and even violations of the rights of both IDPs and locals. Other challenges include ideological differences between the local population and IDPs in terms of personal beliefs about war, religious norms, culture, personal values, language of communication, etc. Thus, on the one hand, only 31% and 38% of local residents do not feel or rather do not feel the presence of IDPs, and on the other hand, about 80% of the surveyed residents of Lviv oblast had experience of communication with IDPs.

26.4% of local residents assess the attitude toward IDPs as positive. More than half of the respondents (57%) say that their attitude depends on each separate case, and only 1.7% assess it as negative. Interestingly, the local population also assesses the attitude of IDPs toward them positively. Thus,

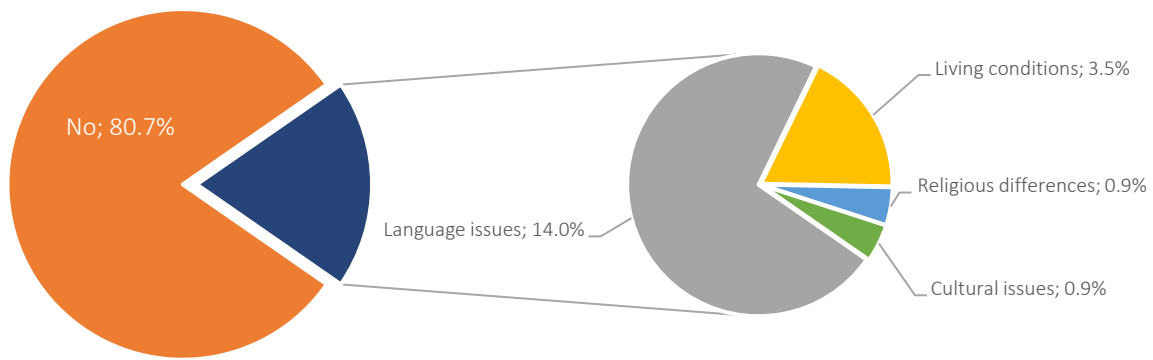


Figure 1. Causes of conflict situations that arose between the local population of Lviv oblast and IDPs

37.7% of respondents rate the attitude of IDPs toward the local population with 4 points out of a maximum of 5, and more than a third – with 3 points.

The processes of mutual adaptation of IDPs and local residents at the level of communication, information exchange, overcoming stereotypes, and resolving conflicts have become a challenge for the host communities in Lviv oblast. In addition, the friendly behavior of local residents has contributed to the development of positive attitudes toward IDPs and the avoidance of numerous inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts. However, the lack of a common mental consciousness and a common opinion on the language issue has also affected the level of conflict in the community. For example, 19.3 % of the local population had conflicts with IDPs. Language issues are cited as the main cause of conflict by 14.0% of respondents, living conditions by 3.5%, and religious and cultural differences by less than 1% (Figure 1). It is worth noting that 98% of the local population indicates that the language of communication with IDPs is Ukrainian.

Among the surveyed residents of Lviv oblast, 66.1% formed their personal opinion about IDPs based on their own experience with them, and 39.0% of respondents used information from acquaintances, relatives, and friends. Interestingly, only a fifth of respondents receive information from the media, including 12.7% from social media. Information about IDPs in some media outlets evokes positive rather than negative attitudes among local community members. According to the respondents, information about IDPs and host

communities is widely and comprehensively covered; however, local residents consider it reasonable to develop an objective attitude toward IDPs and the current situation based on their own or their relatives' experiences.

Providing assistance to IDPs (reception, accommodation, and provision of necessary financial, material, and other items) was one of the acute challenges for all host communities in the first days of the war. The population and volunteer organizations provided strong support. Due to the joint efforts of local governments, individual residents of the region's communities, organizations, and volunteers, Lviv oblast was able to provide IDPs with basic needs. Local residents of the community took the initiative to accommodate IDPs in their own homes. According to the survey, 9.2% of the respondents are still willing to accept IDPs for temporary residence free of charge, while 5.0% of the community residents are willing to do so with payment for utilities (Figure 2). As of the beginning of 2023, 5% of the local population of Lviv oblast accommodated IDPs in their own homes for an indefinite period, which indicates the friendly attitude of the residents and their desire to help IDPs with housing. Meanwhile, 80.0% of the surveyed population indicate that they are not ready to provide IDPs with housing at their own expense or in their own homes.

Despite the fact that residents of host communities have both positive and negative attitudes toward IDPs in their communities, almost all respondents say that IDPs need various types of assistance. The willingness of the local population to provide various types of assistance correlates with

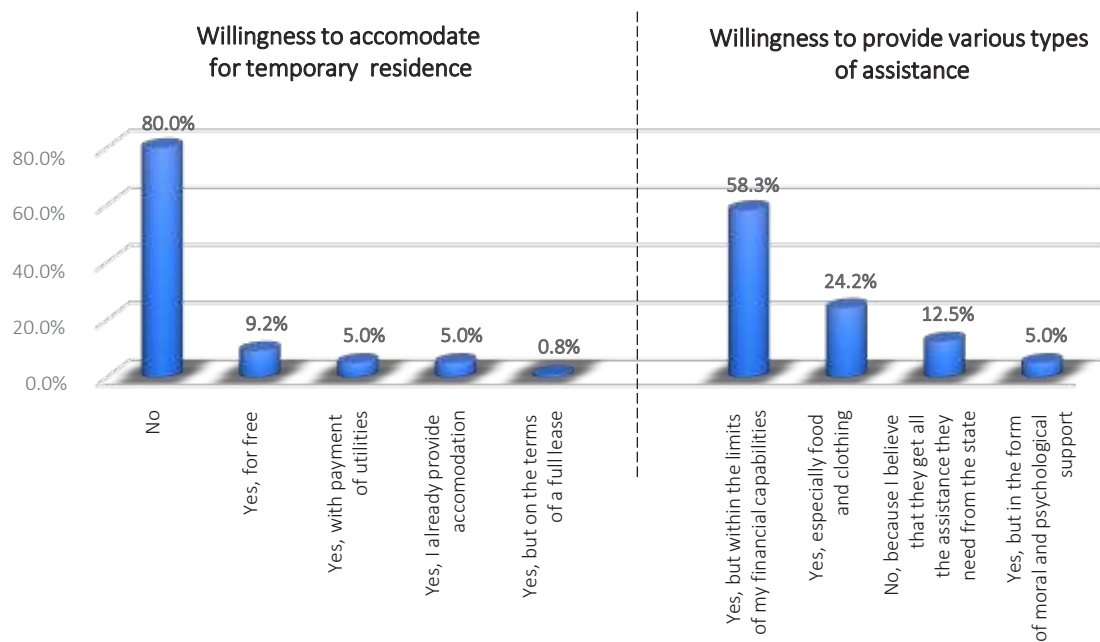


Figure 2. Willingness of the local population of Lviv oblast to provide temporary housing and other types of assistance

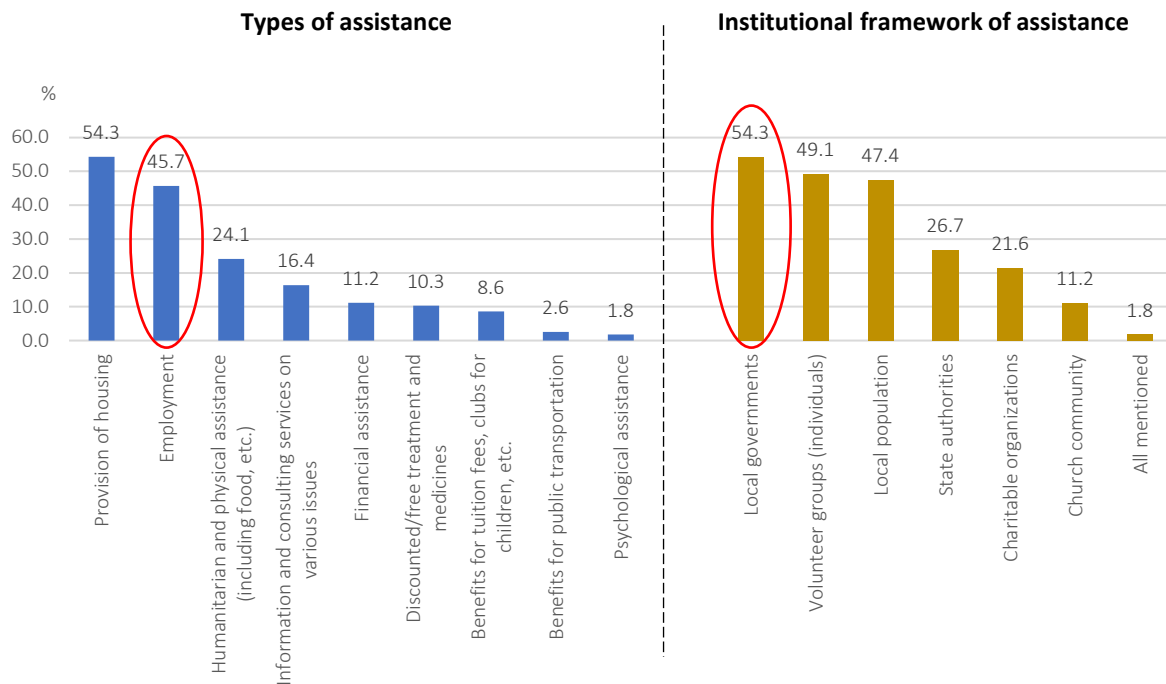
their financial and material capacity. This thesis is confirmed by the fact that 58.3% of the respondents intend to provide various types of assistance within their financial and material capabilities. About a quarter of the respondents are willing to provide assistance to IDPs but only with food and clothing; 5% of the local population can only provide moral and psychological support. There are also those residents (12.5%) who believe that IDPs already receive all the assistance they need from the authorities and local government.

The high level of community willingness to provide various types of assistance demonstrates the potential of communities to quickly adapt and integrate IDPs into the host society. Despite the significant efforts made by local authorities and community members to provide IDPs with everything they need, local residents believe that IDPs still have needs that require assistance from local authorities. For example, 54.3% and 45.7% of respondents believe that IDPs are most in need of housing and employment. A quarter of the local population of Lviv oblast is convinced that the basic needs of IDPs are not being met, which requires the efforts of state and local authorities to be directed to this end (Figure 3). It is worth mentioning that only 11.2% of the residents believe that IDPs need financial assistance the most, and

10.3% of respondents are convinced that assistance to IDPs should be in the form of free or discounted medical treatment and medicines. Interestingly, not a single community resident stated that IDPs do not need any assistance.

54.3% of surveyed local residents believe that IDPs receive the most assistance from local authorities, while 49.1% and 47.4% of residents believe that IDPs receive the most assistance from volunteer organizations and local residents. A quarter of respondents in Lviv oblast believe that the state authorities provide the greatest assistance to IDPs. The role of the church in the community in terms of providing IDPs with everything they need cannot be overestimated, as evidenced by the survey results (11.2% believe that the church provides the most assistance to IDPs among all institutions).

The results of responses to the question “Please select the statement that most accurately describes your views and beliefs about IDPs” confirm positive attitudes and sympathy for IDPs, especially those who have lost their property. There is an opinion among 30.2% of respondents that all IDPs need assistance. On the other hand, 37.9% believe that assistance should be differentiated; in particular, it should be provided only to those whose homes are destroyed and who have nowhere to return to. 19.0% of local



Note: Several answers were possible.

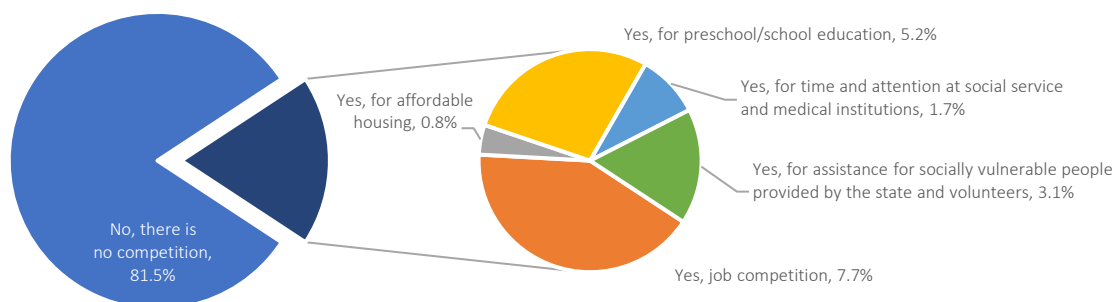
Figure 3. The types of assistance most needed by IDPs in Lviv oblast and the organizations that provide it: Opinions of local residents

residents believe that IDPs should return to their previous place of residence after the war ends. Instead, 12.9% of local residents think that IDPs need assistance only to adapt to life in the community.

The severe socio-economic upheaval caused by Russia’s full-scale war against Ukraine has led to significant changes in the labor market and employment in all (without exception) regions of Ukraine, including host communities. Disparities in the labor market of Lviv oblast resulting from structural imbalances have led to an increase in labor supply

in the community and, consequently, an increase in unemployment. Naturally, according to 7.7% of respondents, job competition is among the main reasons for competition between IDPs and local residents in the community (Figure 4).

Communities had problems with the institutional provision of preschool education even before the war. There was a shortage of places in kindergartens for local children, even if their parents had registered them on time. With the growing number of IDPs, especially preschool children, this



Note: Several answers were possible.

Figure 4. The main reasons for competition between IDPs and local residents of communities in Lviv oblast

problem has only become more acute, leading to increased competition between IDPs and local residents. Thus, 5.2% of surveyed local residents consider this reason to be the main cause of increased competition in the host community.

The full provision of social services to the population has become another significant challenge for the rear communities in the face of war. It is no secret that the increase in the number of IDPs has led to a slight increase in the pressure on social infrastructure. According to 46.7 % of surveyed local residents, the quality of social services remained unchanged after the arrival of IDPs in the communities, and only 10.8% noted a slight improvement. It is worth mentioning that the quality of social services has decreased in the community after the arrival of IDPs, with only pre-school and extramural education receiving the highest score (5) from 33.3% and 40.8% of respondents, respectively. The quality of health services provided by family doctors in the community was rated by 23.3% and 30.0% of local residents with 3 and 5 points. Regarding the quality of administrative services received by local residents in Lviv oblast, 21.7% of respondents feel that they have improved (score of 5). Interestingly, 19.2 % of the surveyed local population rate the quality of administrative services after the arrival of IDPs with the lowest score (1).

IDPs' plans to stay in local communities or return to their previous place of residence is one of the key issues in developing tools for integrating them into the community. Interestingly, according to 30.6% of the surveyed local population, IDPs intend to return home after the war, and only about 10% of residents are convinced that IDPs plan to stay in the community for permanent residence. More than half of the interviewed locals could not decide on the future plans of IDPs.

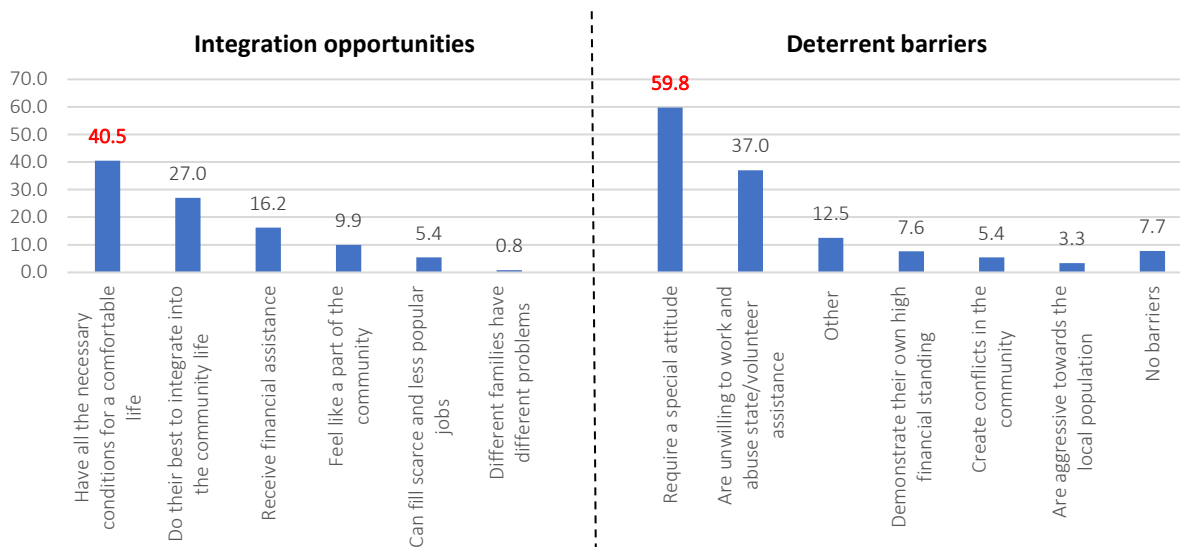
Conflicting results were obtained when respondents were asked about the positive and negative effects of IDPs in the community. 41.7% of the surveyed local residents say that there are no positive consequences, while 70.3% of the locals are convinced that there are no negative consequences either. It is worth mentioning that more than half of the surveyed residents, who had an opinion of positive consequences, had personal experience communicating with IDPs.

Among the positive consequences of IDPs in communities, local residents emphasize, first of all, an increase in the population of the territory (30.4%), which may, in the future, offset the risk of depopulation. Other positive effects identified by the local population include (1) an increase in the number of skilled workers (12.2%), (2) creation of new jobs (12.2%), (3) increased social cohesion (11.3%), (4) small business development (5.2%), and (5) repairs to schools, kindergartens, and roads (3.5%).

Residents of Lviv oblast mention an increase in tension in society (13.6%) and competition for jobs and housing (11.0%) as negative consequences of the arrival of IDPs. An insignificant share of local residents (6.8%) identify an increase in food prices. A small part of the community's local population notes the deterioration of the crime situation, lack of places in preschool educational institutions, overcrowding in schools, and disproportionate distribution of budget funds between the local population and IDPs.

When asked about the factors that hinder the integration of IDPs, the largest share of respondents (63.2%) say that IDPs have all the necessary conditions for adaptation in the community. Slightly more than a third of the local residents believe that the lack of housing is the main factor hindering the integration of IDPs. According to the local residents, other barriers include the lack of permanent employment (17.9%), the inability to communicate in their native language (12.0%), and the limited contact with relatives who remained in the combat zone (12.0%). The smallest share (2.6%) believes that the rejection of IDPs by local residents, which can be considered a cause of conflict in the community, is the main obstacle.

Next, 40.5% of surveyed local residents are convinced that IDPs have all the necessary conditions for a comfortable life in the community, and, therefore, the socio-economic environment contributes to their further adaptation. Less than a third of respondents note that IDPs are currently doing their best to integrate into community life. According to 16.2%, receiving financial assistance would facilitate further integration of IDPs into the communities of Lviv oblast (Figure 5).



Note: Several answers were possible.

Figure 5. Integration opportunities and intangible barriers that hinder IDPs’ adaptation to life in the region’s communities: Subjective assessment of local residents

When asked about intangible barriers that hinder the integration of IDPs into the community, over half of the surveyed local population believes that IDPs require a special attitude, and over a third of them testify that IDPs are unwilling to work and abuse the assistance of both local and state authorities and volunteer organizations. It is worth mentioning that 5.4% of local residents are convinced that IDPs create conflicts, in particular by demonstrating their own high level of financial standing (according to 7.6%). Other intangible barriers included unwillingness to speak Ukrainian, rejection of local culture, and desire to migrate further abroad.

4. DISCUSSION

There are fewer differences in the social identity of IDPs and members of host communities compared to differences between refugees and members of host countries. However, the interaction between these groups leads to the development of social characteristics of “us” (as members of the host community) and “them” (IDPs), which affects the behavior and attitudes toward each other (Tajfel et al., 1971; Adong et al., 2020). Supporters of the theory of parochial altruism postulate the formation of altruistic behavior within a social group and distrust and indifference in the attitude

of group members to actors from outside (Tajfel et al., 1971; Baumgartner et al., 2012). While agreeing that social groups develop common preferences or trust constraints that have a direct impact on the integration of new members, it is assumed that discrimination or favoritism expressed by members of one group toward another is not predictable and depends on a number of social, economic, psychological, behavioral, and cultural factors.

In the context of “imposing” the experience of military conflict, forced displacement, and violence on the behavior of members of the host community during the integration of new members, it is important to consider the specifics of changes in the psychology of behavior in emergencies. The newly acquired experience leads to the expansion of self-identification as part of social groups. This thesis determines that each individual has social identities based on belonging to certain groups in addition to personal identities. The idea of social attachment in this context is justified by the following aspects:

- 1) each social identity of an individual is the result of acquired norms, values, interests, and emotions;
- 2) when an individual or a group of individuals defines themselves within certain identi-

ties, he/she expresses related norms, interests, emotions, and values;

- 3) the model of social identity of group behavior assumes that its members move from personal to shared social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Drury et al., 2019).

The study of the interaction between members of host communities and IDPs through the prism of social identity is particularly critical. Refugees in host countries are carriers of different values, emotions, moral norms, and historical experiences, which shape the established understanding of who is “us” and who is “them” among the population of host countries. Meanwhile, collective assistance and support of refugees by communities in host countries in the context of their identification as members of common social groups can also be observed even despite these differences, which do not seem to lead to a common social identity.

A striking example of this behavior is the acceptance by Polish society of more than 3.5 million refugees from Ukraine (Wojdat & Cywiński, 2022). The scale of the Polish state and society’s “openness” to Ukrainian refugees is evident. In 2022, this country turned from one of the most homogeneous societies in Europe (a state that refused to accept internally displaced persons during the Syrian refugee crisis in 2015) to a country that ranked fourth in the world in terms of the number of refugees (Sierakowski, 2022). Scholars explain this phenomenon using the social identity approach but on the basis of a different initial factor – anticipatory fear of war – i.e., a common identity based on fear (Kossowska et al., 2023).

IDPs do not leave their country and, together with the residents of the host communities, are members of the same society, i.e., mostly bearers of the same values, moral norms, interests, and, what is no less important, common psychological trauma and experience of hostilities. According to behavioral experiments in more than 40 countries, the impact of military violence intensifies social cooperation and stimulates prosocial behavior (Mawson, 2007; Bauer

et al., 2016; Dezechache et al., 2021). Therefore, it is likely that the shared experience caused by large-scale events with a strong negative impact can lead to the emergence of a new social identity within the whole society (several generations have experienced these events). The emergence of a new social identity to some extent (which is not a constant, but a variable in time) will offset the division of host community members and IDPs into “us” and “them” and ensure the social attachment of residents of rear communities to those who suffered most during the war.

Scholars refer to the current tension as a consequence of the historical conflict as intergroup anxiety and emphasize the growing risk of losing a common identity in these conditions (W. Stephan & C. Stephan, 1985; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2009). “High levels of intergroup anxiety may make it difficult for members of different social identity groups to work together, particularly in the aftermath of major conflicts in society” (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2009).

Ukrainian society is not characterized by a high level of intergroup anxiety in the context of massive forced displacement during a full-scale war, which is evident by the results of the survey. The economic factor is also excluded from the list of possible causes of conflicts with IDPs against the background of linguistic and cultural contradictions. However, it is significant in shaping the behavior of host community members toward IDPs. Numerous studies in low-income countries have shown that forced displacement has a significant impact on the economic component, leading to a deterioration in the financial situation in host communities and, consequently, increased tension between members of these communities and displaced persons (Fomekong, 2021; Schuettler & Do, 2023). Instead, the results show that the decreasing role of this factor in shaping the behavior of host community members toward displaced persons indicates a relatively stable, satisfactory economic situation in the country. This is explained by the diverse support of Ukraine by partner countries and international institutions and organizations, as well as the state’s domestic policy on IDPs and host households.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed to identify opportunities for communities to integrate IDPs and to define challenges and prospects for IDPs' adaptation in host communities (a case study of Lviv oblast, Ukraine). The sociological survey among local residents of Lviv oblast showed certain difficulties associated with the arrival of IDPs in the communities. The challenges for ensuring the integration of IDPs in the communities of Lviv oblast include (1) low efficiency of mutual adaptation of IDPs and local residents at the level of communication, information exchange, overcoming stereotypes, and resolution of conflict situations; (2) inability of local authorities to meet the financial and material needs of IDPs (reception, accommodation, provision of necessary financial, material, and other things); (3) full provision of social services to the population (increase in the number of IDPs in the community has led to a slight increase in pressure on social infrastructure). The study reveals that the opportunities for the communities include an increase in the population of the territory (30.4%), improvement of the structural and quantitative characteristics of the labor market (12.2%), creation of new jobs (12.2%), strengthening of social cohesion (11.3%), development of small businesses (5.2%), and repair of schools, kindergartens, and roads (3.5%). The paper also identifies the main intangible barriers to the integration of IDPs into community life (unwillingness to speak Ukrainian, rejection of local culture, and desire to migrate further abroad).

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