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STATE POLICY TO SUPPORT INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

The full-scale military invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation has brought to the forefront the urgent issue of effectively utilizing the country's labor resources amid a sharp increase in the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs), many of whom are women with children fleeing the horrors of war. This situation necessitates the development and implementation of a well-balanced state policy regarding IDPs. An additional factor contributing to the urgency of this issue is the prolonged hostilities and the complete destruction of a significant number of settlements in the combat zones, which has effectively ruled out the possibility of many IDPs returning to their homes as they existed before 2022. Two hypotheses are tested: first, that a significant number of IDPs are satisfied with state payments, refusing to look for a job or retraining in anticipation of the end of active hostilities in order to return to their places of permanent residence or as close to them as possible; second, that there is a relationship between the

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ДЕРЖАВНА ПОЛІТИКА ПІДТРИМКИ ВНУТРІШНЬО ПЕРЕМІЩЕНИХ ОСІБ

Проблема оптимального використання трудових ресурсів країни найбільш гостро постала, коли за воєнного часу різко зросла кількість внутрішньо переміщених осіб (ВПО), значну частину яких становлять жінки з дітьми, що тікали від жахів війни. Це потребує розробки та реалізації виваженої державної політики щодо переселенців. І додатковим чинником її актуалізації виступає затягування бойових дій з повною руйнацією значної кількості населених пунктів у зоні збройного протистояння, що практично виключає повернення багатьох ВПО до місць, де вони мешкали до 2022 р. Висунуто дві гіпотези: по-перше, що значна частина ВПО задовольняється державними виплатами, відмовляючись від пошуку роботи або перекваліфікації в очікуванні припинення активних бойових дій задля повернення у місця постійного проживання або якомога ближче до них; по-друге, що існує залежність між працевлаштуванням ВПО на постійній основі та відстанню вимушеної міграції. Науковий пошук проведений за



employment of IDPs on a permanent basis and the distance of forced migration. The research employed methods of scientific abstraction, analysis, synthesis, comparative analysis, and systematization. It has been established that as a result of Russia's full-scale military aggression against Ukraine, a significant portion of IDPs were not only forced to seek refuge in new places of residence but also had to accept the reality of not being able to return to their native homes, instead having to rebuild their lives from that point onward. Findings indicate that, due to the implementation of state policy toward IDPs, only a relatively small proportion opted to return to territories temporarily occupied by Russia. The majority of displaced persons found employment in their new locations; however, a significant number were forced to accept low-paying jobs. It was determined that government assistance was generally sufficient to cover housing rental costs. At the same time, the spread of various forms of abuse related to the receipt of state aid by IDPs led to a gradual narrowing of the pool of individuals eligible for such payments. It was also found that the employment of internally displaced persons largely depends on the efforts of local authorities aimed at creating new jobs. Nonetheless, the widespread employment of IDPs in low-wage positions highlights the untapped potential to improve the effectiveness of their labor utilization by ensuring their skills, knowledge, and expertise are more fully and appropriately applied.

Keywords: Russia-Ukraine war, state policy, internally displaced persons, labor market, population employment.

JEL Classification: E24, E27, E29.

використання методів наукової абстракції, аналізу, синтезу, компаративного та методу систематизації. Визначено, що внаслідок повномасштабної воєнної агресії РФ проти України значна частина ВПО не лише були змушені шукати притулку на новому місці проживання, а й постали перед необхідністю відмовитися від повернення до рідних домівок і з огляду на це були змушені будувати життя. Завдяки реалізації державної політики щодо ВПО лише порівняно невелика їх частина віддала перевагу поверненню на тимчасово окуповані російською територією. Більшість переселенців працевлаштовувалися на новому місці проживання, проте значна частина з них вимушена погодитися на порівняно низькооплачувану роботу. Державна допомога переважно виявилась достатньою для оплати оренди житла. Водночас поширення різного роду зловживань, пов'язаних з отриманням переселенцями допомоги від держави, зумовило поступове обмеження кола тих, хто мав право на отримання виплат. Визначено, що працевлаштування ВПО значною мірою залежить від зусиль місцевої влади, спрямованих на створення нових робочих місць. Водночас вимушене залучення переселенців переважно до низькооплачуваної праці вказує на невикористаний потенціал, який можна реалізувати ефективніше, надаючи їм можливість працювати за фахом і застосовувати свої знання, уміння та навички.

Ключові слова: російсько-українська війна, державна політика, внутрішньо переміщені особи, ринок праці, зайнятість населення.

Introduction

The current Russian-Ukrainian war, which began in 2014, has led to the emergence of a relatively large number of internally displaced persons (IDPs), a significant part of whom were mothers with children. The vast majority of IDPs chose regions that were close to the combat zone as their place of residence. This decision was motivated by the desire to return home as soon as possible after the end of the war, as well as the hope of being able to adapt to a new place. In addition, some IDPs had relatives living in eastern Ukraine. However, hopes for a quick end to the war turned out to be in vain, and as early as 2014, Ukraine was faced with the need to solve the problem of housing and employment for about 1.6 million people, and in June 2023, after the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation, about 7 million Ukrainian citizens became displaced persons, of whom 4.8 million are registered as IDPs (Gamalii, 2023, June 29).

The growth in the IDPs number has highlighted the need to determine the directions of development and implementation of state policy regarding this category of citizens. Such a policy should not only protect the state from social upheavals but also make the most of the potential of IDPs in their new place of residence by involving them in productive work, taking into account professional opportunities. After the full-scale military invasion of the Russian Federation, the use of the labor potential of IDPs became even more important due to the fact that about 6 million citizens left the country, fleeing the horrors of war abroad. The sharp reduction in the number of working-age population required the implementation of comprehensive measures aimed at optimizing the use of labor resources in the face of their further reduction due to the increasing pace of mobilization. The problem has become so acute that projects for the mass involvement of foreigners – labor migrants have arisen and still exist in Ukraine to cover the shortage of workers.

Libanova focused on certain aspects in her works (2022, March 18; 2023, October 19; 2024), noting that forced stay away from home, deprivation of a familiar job (even if part of the earnings is preserved) can open up opportunities for acquiring a new profession. In particular, the digitalization of the economy creates a large number of jobs for IT specialists, and a significant part of the refugees have a good education, and this should be taken advantage of. The author emphasized that given the inevitable territorial differentiation of the country in terms of economic development parameters, environmental capacity, logistical conditions, settlement characteristics, and risks due to proximity to borders with aggressive neighbors, state policy on external migration should take into account the characteristics of each territorial cluster. For his part, Zhinkin (2025, March 13) focused on the analysis of innovations proposed by the state for IDPs in 2025, considering the trend towards optimizing pension payments and social assistance from Ukraine, taking into account their receipt by IDPs from the Russian Federation.

Scientists focus on the prospect of attracting a large number of external labor migrants for the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine and the growth of their number depending on how effective the integration of IDPs in their new place of residence will be. In Dynnyk's work (2024), the provision of administrative services to internally displaced persons are analyzed, and it is noted that ASNs have acted as centers of humanitarian assistance for IDPs. The author focused on the importance of establishing clear procedures and requirements for authorities regarding the provision of administrative services in emergency situations, ensuring the safety and confidentiality of such citizens during the provision of administrative services in wartime, as well as determining responsible institutions and officials for ensuring the provision of administrative services in wartime.

The research put forward two hypotheses: first, a significant part of IDPs is satisfied with state-guaranteed benefits and refuses to look for low-paid work or retraining in anticipation of the cessation of active hostilities in order to return to their places of permanent residence or as close as possible

to them. Second, there is a relationship between the employment of IDPs on a permanent basis and the distance of forced migration: the greater the distance, the more IDPs prefer such employment.

The aim of the research is to characterize the state policy towards internally displaced persons with a determination of its effectiveness and outline issues that require additional regulation or have now lost their relevance. Achieving the aim, the following methods were used as: scientific abstraction, analysis, synthesis, comparative and systematization.

The structure of the article includes two parts: the first analyzes the regulatory and legal regulation of assistance to IDPs with a description of its target direction and main means of implementation, the second determines the effectiveness of state policy towards IDPs in view of the goals and capabilities of the state to implement such a policy in the conditions of the modern russian-Ukrainian war.

1. Legal and regulatory framework for assistance to internally displaced persons

Considerate use of the IDPs potential involves concentrating efforts aimed at creating satisfactory living conditions in a new place while simultaneously:

- ensuring the stability of the region's infrastructure, housing and communal facilities in conditions of increasing load;
- creating favorable conditions for the development of business initiatives and relocation of production with the allocation of land plots for its placement in terms of the specifics of promising logistical connections;
- promoting employment of IDPs, provided that relevant vacancies and requirements for employees are outlined;
- improving the skills and ensuring retraining of IDPs, taking into account the determination of the relevant labor resource potential of the region;
- determining optimal conditions for the integration of IDPs into the life of local communities, taking into account factors that may negatively affect the growth of social tension.

In accordance with the Procedure for Providing Housing Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons, approved by Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 332 (2022, March 20), it is determined that from May 2022, assistance will be provided to IDPs who have moved from the temporarily occupied territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, territories of territorial communities located in the area of military (combat) operations or who are temporarily occupied, surrounded (blocked), as well as IDPs whose housing is destroyed or unfit for habitation due to damage and who have submitted an application for compensation for the relevant losses by May 20, 2022, in particular through the Unified State Web Portal of Electronic Services, or subject to the submission of documentary confirmation from local government bodies of the fact of

damage/destruction of real estate due to military operations, terrorist acts, sabotage caused by the military aggression of the Russian Federation.

The procedure for granting assistance determined by the Cabinet of Ministers lacked the ability to obtain confirmation of the fact of the destruction of residential premises by local government bodies, some of which had ceased their work due to hostilities. For many IDPs, confirmation of the fact of the destruction of housing through the Unified State Web Portal was also a problem due to hasty departure and the inability to record the scale of the destruction of housing.

At the same time, the Cabinet of Ministers quite logically determined that assistance would not be provided to IDPs who were registered as such before February 24, 2022. In regions that are not included in the list of administrative-territorial units, on the territory of which payers of a single contribution to compulsory state social insurance who are registered in the relevant territory may be provided with assistance within the framework of the "e-Support" Program, approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 204 (2022, March 5), with the exception of persons who received monthly targeted assistance to IDPs to cover living expenses, in particular for payment of housing and communal services. This approach limited the provision of assistance to those who, after the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation, remained in the territories temporarily occupied by Russia (TTO) until 2022. This decision of theirs was most likely the result of a conscious choice not related to appreciation of Ukrainian citizenship. Of course, in some cases, elderly people did not have the opportunity to leave for the territories controlled by Ukraine due to their health. However, most of those who remained on the TTO from 2014 to 2022 did so for other reasons, and after the full-scale invasion, some men preferred to participate in the war against Ukraine on the side of Russia.

Therefore, in accordance with the Procedure for Providing Housing Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons, approved by Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 332 (2022, March 20), it is necessary to undergo electronic identification and authentication using an integrated electronic identification system, an electronic signature based on a qualified electronic signature certificate, or other means of electronic identification that allow for unambiguous identification of the person.

In the future, the receipt of assistance by IDPs will be increasingly limited. Thus, from August 1, 2023, assistance was assigned for six months to an internally displaced person who first applied for assistance, and is paid monthly to the IDP or an authorized person for an internally displaced person in the event of the recipient's incapacity or child in the amount of UAH 3,000 for persons with disabilities and children and UAH 2,000 for all other persons. From November 1, 2023, assistance was assigned for six months to a family that first applied for assistance and is paid monthly to one of the family members.

From August 1, 2023 the right to receive assistance was lost by those who purchased a vehicle under five years old, purchased a land plot, apartment or house for an amount of UAH 100.000 or more (except for housing located in territories where hostilities are (were) ongoing, indicated in the list of territories for which the date of completion of hostilities (termination of the possibility of hostilities) or temporary occupation has not been determined, if the purchase was made before the date of inclusion in the list of territories of active hostilities, possible hostilities or temporary occupation, or housing that was destroyed) or had deposits of UAH 100.000 (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 1226, 2023, November 21).

Those who receive a subsidy or are part of the household of a person who receives a subsidy to pay for the cost or part of the cost of renting (rental) housing have also lost the right to receive assistance (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 94, 2024, January 26).

At the beginning of 2025, the Government of Ukraine simplified the procedure for receiving pensions and insurance payments for IDPs, Ukrainians living abroad and on temporary residence permits. Uniform conditions for the payment of pensions have been determined for all citizens of Ukraine, regardless of their place of residence. In addition, citizens have the opportunity to receive pensions to the account of any bank in Ukraine, and not only Oschadbank, as before. The Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 299 (2025, February 11) determined that by December 31, 2025 persons residing in the TTO of Ukraine, and persons who, during the temporary occupation of the territories, left for the territory controlled by Ukraine and who, on the date of entry into force of the Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on Regulating the Issue of Calculating Insurance Length of Service and Pension Provision", received a pension, information about non-receipt of a pension from the pension provision bodies of the Russian Federation. In addition, in the absence of information in the territorial bodies of the Pension Fund of Ukraine about the physical identification as of December 31, 2025 by recipients temporarily residing outside Ukraine or residing in the TTO of Ukraine, from January 1 of the year following the calendar year in which the person is obliged to undergo identification, the payment of a pension (monthly lifelong cash support) shall be terminated (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 299, 2025, February 11).

In October 2022, the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, together with the Ministry of Digital Economy and PJSC "Ukrfinzhytlo", launched the "eOselya" program, which was supposed to facilitate the purchase of housing, including for IDPs. In 2024, the terms of the program were expanded for the purchase of private houses and townhouses. However, that year, Ukrainians on

general terms at 7% (40% of the total number of borrowers) took advantage of the program the most. In second place were military personnel and security forces at 3% – a total of 403 loans (34%) and only in third place were internally displaced persons – 128 loans (11% of the total) (eOselya, n. d.). It can be assumed that the instability of employment and the relatively low wages of a significant part of IDPs deter them from participating in the program. Buying a home is also viewed with caution due to the constant russian shelling of Ukrainian cities and the uncertainty of the terms of the armed confrontation within the framework of the current russian-Ukrainian war.

2. Effectiveness of the state policy on internally displaced persons

In spring 2022, thanks to the coordinated efforts of the Defense Forces of Ukraine, it was possible not only to stop the enemy's advance, but also to force him to retreat in a number of strategic directions. By the summer of that year, it became clear that a relatively quick end to hostilities would not occur, and therefore the absolute majority of IDPs would not be able to quickly return to their previous places of residence. This led to the actualization of the problem of their long-term employment.

Sociological surveys revealed that a large proportion of IDPs did not find work, which was probably due to the expectation of a relatively quick return to their homes. In the fall of 2022, among respondents living in the east, the share of unemployed was the largest (44%), while the lowest was recorded in the west (30%). At the same time, in Ukraine, the share of employed people (in the usual mode) remained the highest in the west (47%), while in the east the share of employed people in this mode was only 21%. However, the share of those employed in remote/part-time employment ranged from 14% (in the west) to 27% (in the east). In the southern regions, the shares of employment (in the usual mode) and unemployment were distributed in almost equal proportions (35 and 36%, respectively). In the central regions, a higher share of employed people (41%) was maintained compared to 32% of unemployed people (Sociological Group "Rating", 2022, October 17). This distribution allows us to state that the dependence of permanent employment of IDPs on the distance of their internal migration: those who moved further preferred permanent employment to a greater extent than those who moved relatively close. This situation continued, which led to the preservation of a relatively large number of IDPs who, for one reason or another, refused to find employment. Most IDPs preferred to move to large and small cities (*Figure 1*), which is probably due to their previous residence in cities. The urban lifestyle turned out to be more familiar. In addition, in the minds of a significant part of IDPs, it is in cities that one can find relatively high-paying jobs.

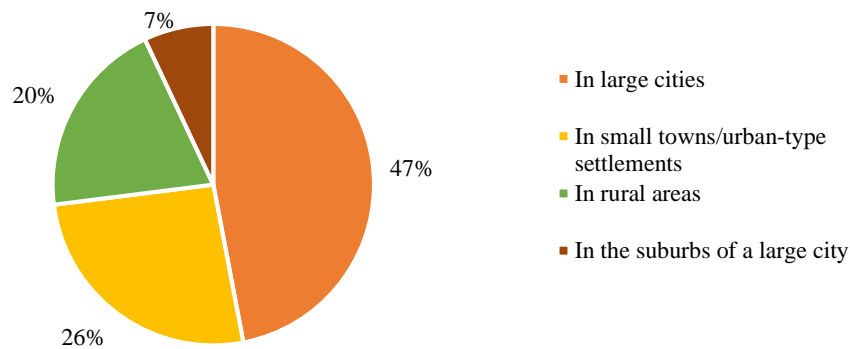


Figure 1. Share of IDPs by type of settlement

Source: (IOM, 2024, April, p. 6).

The main difficulties when searching for a job in Ukraine were the lack of jobs in their specialty (reported by 55.3% of respondents, including 58.3% of men and 51.8% of women), low wages for available vacancies (44.9, 41.2 and 49.4% respectively), and insufficient qualifications compared to the employer's requirements (14.9, 14.7 and 15.3% respectively). And, despite this, the willingness to obtain new education is low – only 8.9% of respondents are ready for this, including 9.6% of men and 8.2% of women. It is the low level of wages that most displeases Ukrainians in the workplace (reported by 45.9% of those who work, including 41.4% of men and 50.4% of women) (Libanova, 2023, October 19).

In November 2023, then the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories I. Vereshchuk noted that almost 40% of citizens who receive assistance as IDPs exist mainly on these funds, since they have not found work at their new place of residence or such work is low-paid (Albul, 2023, November 11). Moreover, the problem of employment of IDPs has much deeper roots than the lack of jobs at their new place of residence.

At the beginning of 2025, the labor market in Ukraine recovered by 93% compared to 2021. In February 2025, employers posted 98,736 vacancies on the Work.ua portal, which is 4% more than in January. The number of vacancies increased most noticeably in Zhytomyr (+7%), Kirovohrad, Rivne, Chernivtsi and Mykolaiv regions (+5%). A third of all vacancies fell in Kyiv and Kyiv region, 9% each in Lviv and Dnipropetrovsk regions, 6% in Odessa, 3% in Kharkiv region. And this happened despite continuous russian shelling. At the same time, the number of job seekers, although slightly decreased compared to January, still remained high. The number of candidates, reviews and the average competition index remained at the level of June 2023, when the labor market began to enter a state of personnel shortage (Financial Club, 2025, March 10).

In Ukraine, in the conditions of the russian-Ukrainian war, the labor market entered a state of labor shortage, which actualized the retraining of workers, and perhaps the most for IDPs. Thus, the largest share of those surveyed in 2016 declared a professional mismatch of the current job with the acquired and applied professional knowledge from the previous place of work (less than

20% of IDPs). The most alarming fact was that the majority of respondents were unemployed at the time of the survey (slightly more than 60%). Even of those 14.2% who managed to find work in their specialty, 6.3% received significantly lower income than before, 7% received almost the same, and only 0.9% had a higher income than they had before resettlement. One of the effective steps to improve the employment of displaced persons is to establish an effective system of professional training and retraining. Almost half of the surveyed IDPs expressed their readiness to change their specialty, type of activity, and take special courses (Ryndzak, 2016, pp. 120–127).

Thus, IDPs have been granted the right to a voucher for education. The voucher can be used to study in 155 professions and specialties in the fields of IT, construction, transport, education, medicine, agriculture, social services, etc. The person chooses the profession, educational institution within Ukraine and the form of study (full-time, part-time or distance learning) independently. Education is provided by institutions of professional (vocational and technical), professional pre-higher and higher education, enterprises, institutions and organizations that have a license for such educational activities. The voucher provides the right to study free of charge at educational institutions or with an employer according to the list of professions and specialties approved by the Ministry of Economy (Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, 2024, September 27). The holder of the voucher can obtain a junior specialist, skilled worker, junior, regular bachelor's or master's degree free of charge or at a discount, if he enters the next educational level after the previous one. However, if a person already has a master's degree, they cannot use the voucher to study at a postgraduate or doctoral level. At the same time, they have the opportunity to enroll in a master's degree in another field.

In 2023, more than 18 thousand citizens of Ukraine received vouchers for education, and a total of UAH 252 million was financed under the program. That year, the largest number of vouchers was issued for the following professions and specialties: psychology, social work, education, medicine, construction and civil engineering, chef, driver. In 2024, 20 thousand people took advantage of the program, and the state financed their education in the amount of UAH 223 million. Among the most popular specialties and professions studied with vouchers in 2024 were: nursing (3629 vouchers issued); psychology (3144); preschool education (861); medicine (557); chef (1775); driver (1354); tractor driver (603); confectioner (447) (Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, 2024, October 18). Since the beginning of 2025, 4500 citizens have taken advantage of the opportunity for retraining (Financial Club, 2025, March 10). The scale of retraining is not very large, perhaps because training is mainly based on vocational and technical educational institutions. And after completing their training, IDPs mostly cannot count on a high-paying or prestigious job in their new place of residence. At the same time, for some young people, vouchers have become significant support in obtaining a profession.

The problem in relations between employers and employees in Ukraine remains that employers are mainly interested in the results of the enterprise's activities, which allows maximizing profits, and when choosing a production

technology, managers proceed from minimizing costs and manageability. At the same time, the majority of employees, who are most concerned about the number of wages, are little interested in production technologies, although they determine the requirements and functionality. That is why a situation has arisen when the majority of employers and employees do not show interest in the implementation of new production technologies, and the main subject of bargaining in the labor market – the content of labor, volumes and requirements for the workforce – remains uncertain for all parties. This complicates the formation of a single adequate price even for the same work, and any price that spontaneously formed in the market and acquired the force of inertia (trend) deforms the incentives to coordinate supply and demand. Hypothetically, these differences should be resolved through greater formalization and standardization of the content and volumes of labor, as well as requirements for the workforce. However, the existing social and administrative institutions in Ukraine are not set up for this (Tsymbal & Yarosh, 2020).

By the way, the scale of dissatisfaction with the actual salary of those who work, and the potential salary of job seekers is practically identical. And in both cases, women are more dissatisfied with their earnings. They also pay less attention to the dangerousness of working conditions, the complexity of the work and – contrary to expectations – the formality or informality of registration. Differences in dissatisfaction can be explained by the gender specificity of employment: women work much less in dangerous/harmful conditions and more often perform fairly simple duties, receive much lower wages and are therefore forced to agree to shadow conditions, sacrificing their own social security at the same time (Libanova, 2023). This happens with the de facto tacit consent of the state in conditions when the shortage of workers is becoming increasingly noticeable.

At the same time, the formation and implementation of state policy on IDPs is negatively affected by regular hostile shelling aimed at terrorizing the civilian population. A study of the dependence of internal migration on Russian shelling revealed that they are a significant incentive for citizens to move to other regions of Ukraine, and this is also facilitated by the targeted destruction of a number of cities in eastern Ukraine by the Russian army. Thus, from September 30 to October 12, 2022, Zaporizhzhia was subjected to particularly brutal shelling. If we compare these tragic events with the statistics of departures from the city and Zaporizhzhia district, we can state that almost 25% of all departures lasting 5 or more days for the entire period under study (4 months) took place only during a week – from October 6 to 12, 2022 (almost 60 thousand trips). In November 2022 the head of the Dnipropetrovsk Regional Council stated that 70% of Nikopol residents do not spend the night at home, leaving the city for the night and returning to work during the day. Nikopol district is characterized by the largest negative migration balance in the entire Dnipropetrovsk region – 52%. Moreover, the difference between long-term departures and arrivals was over 19 thousand trips, which, according to the most conservative estimates, is no less than 7–8% of the district's population (Savchuk, 2024).

Tracking the movements of citizens using the geolocation data of their mobile phones made it possible to determine that during the period of intensive enemy missile and drone attacks from October 1, 2022, to January 31, 2023, almost 7.8 million trips outside the area of residence for five days or more were recorded. If trips within one region are not taken into account, there would be 5.1 million such trips. Only about 34% of trips lasting 5 days or more took place within the region of residence. Moreover, an increase in the number of internal migrants was also observed in the case when the Russian Federation was particularly openly resorting to nuclear blackmail (OPORA Civil Network, 2023, June 29).

Such displacements of citizens due to enemy shelling hinder the planning and implementation of measures aimed at supporting IDPs, since most often Ukrainian citizens prefer to return to their homes as soon as possible in the absence of enemy shelling, avoiding registration as IDPs.

An idea of the number of registered IDPs allows us to form data (*Table*).

Table

Estimated population by displacement status

Region	IDPs' Number	
	actual	number of people who returned
Cherkasy	103 000	65 000
Chernihiv	68 000	201 000
Chernivtsi	63 000	25 000
Dnipropetrovsk	479 000	283 000
Ivano-Frankivsk	98 000	60 000
Kharkiv	414 000	702 000
Khmelnyskyi	105 000	45 000
Kirovohrad	97 000	40 000
Kyiv city	343 000	1 027 000
Kyiv region	268 000	709 000
Lviv	160 000	128 000
Mykolaiv	141 000	218 000
Odessa	235 000	196 000
Poltava	178 000	60 000
Rivne	42 000	33 000
Sumy	93 000	150 000
Ternopil	47 000	38 000
Vinnitsia	113 000	98 000
Volyn	27 000	52 000
Zakarpattia	72 000	27 000
Zhytomyr	53 000	165 000
Donetsk	no data	no data
Zaporizhzhia	no data	no data
Luhansk	no data	no data
Kherson	no data	no data
Place of residence unknown (in Ukraine)	5000	12000
Total	3 548 000	4 734 000

Source: (IOM, 2024, April).

Taking into account the main provisions of the Strategy of State Policy on Internal Displacement for the period until 2025 (Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, No. 312-r, 2023, April 7), where the main need of IDPs after displacement is determined to be providing them with a place for temporary residence (stay), the state has focused its attention on this aspect of the policy. The Strategy notes that the lack of a sufficient number of residential or other premises suitable for temporary accommodation of IDPs leads to the fact that such persons decide to leave abroad or prematurely return to the abandoned place of residence. At the same time, after the start of large-scale armed aggression against Ukraine, the number of places for compact settlement of IDPs has significantly increased. In such conditions, the state has prioritized not so much the employment of IDPs as the creation of conditions for them to refrain from returning to their previous place of residence. And in general, this approach has proven to be quite effective.

In April 2025 People's Deputy, Member of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Human Rights, Deoccupation and Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine, National Minorities and Interethnic Relations M. Tkachenko reported that about 150 thousand people returned to the TTO, of which about 70 thousand to the temporarily occupied Mariupol (Ukrinform, 2025).

Using the comparative method of scientific search, taking into account the above data, it is possible to state that as of April 2025, from 2.5 to 3.3% of IDPs returned to the TTO. However, as of February 2025, only 34% of IDPs have stable jobs, almost 20% have found a less qualified job or one with a lower salary (Radio Svoboda, 2025, February 20).

Conclusions

The state policy towards IDPs is mainly focused on keeping them in their new place of residence in government-controlled areas by providing payments to cover utility bills. State assistance generally allows for renting housing in the new place of residence and has proven to be an important factor in keeping IDPs from returning to the TTO so far. Of course, the conditions in the new place of residence in the vast majority of cases are not comparable to those that IDPs had in their permanent place of residence. However, the government's measures aimed at helping IDPs have become an important factor in their decision to rebuild their lives in a new place.

At the same time, the state should significantly strengthen measures aimed at facilitating the employment of IDPs, especially in the context of a shortage of skilled workers and the real prospect of this problem deepening in the near future.

Employment of IDPs is hampered by the destruction of a significant number of businesses, which has had a negative impact on the development

of the Ukrainian economy and, consequently, the ability of entrepreneurs to increase wages.

The research generally confirmed the hypothesis that permanent employment depends on the distance IDPs were forced to leave, as employment rates increase from the east to the west of the country. At the same time, it has been determined that IDPs are not sufficiently involved in retraining, the main reason being the prospect of receiving relatively low wages after changing their profession or specialization.

A significant number of IDPs still think about the possibility of returning to their places of permanent residence in the event of an end to active hostilities. This belief is not widespread only among those whose settlements were completely destroyed or severely damaged during the war, and their restoration cannot be a priority for the state, especially in mono-functional settlements.

Increasing the level of wages may prove to be a determining factor that will not only keep IDPs from returning to the territories temporarily occupied by Russia but will also become a predominant factor in engaging them in the implementation of innovative projects and modernization of the post-war economy of Ukraine.

Further research should focus on possible changes in IDP policy due to increased mobilization, the location of new businesses, and the creation of logistics hubs.

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