



**Media coverage of Internally Displaced Persons in the Ukrainian mass media**  
Sumy, Chernihiv, Zhytomyr, Vinnytsya, Dnipropetrovsk, Kirovohrad, Poltava and Cherkassy regions  
**Funded by the European Union**

# Media Monitoring Report

North and Centre of Ukraine  
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# Media Monitoring Report

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This is the fourth of the monitoring reports which will be published in the framework of the project 'Regional Voices: Strengthening conflict sensitive coverage in Ukraine's regional media', funded by the European Union. The project is implemented by a media consortium led by the Thomson Foundation, and consists of the European Journalism Centre, 'Spilnyi Prostir' Association, MEMO 98 and the International Institute for Regional Media and Information.

The total 24 regional monitoring reports on coverage of IDPs in the local Ukrainian media (regional monitoring reports, comparative cross-regional monitoring reports, comparative monitoring reports by monitoring periods and final report) will be prepared in between 2015 - 2017. The first media monitoring report assessed the findings from 1 to 23 October 2015, the second monitoring report assessed the findings from 15 to 28 February 2016, and the third monitoring report assessed the findings from 1 to 14 June 2016<sup>2</sup>.

The overall objective of the project is to decrease any potential areas of conflict through balanced news output in the regional media, thereby contributing to a decrease in communal tensions, specifically between internally displaced persons (IDPs) and their host communities. This will be achieved through strengthening regional media's ability to respond to

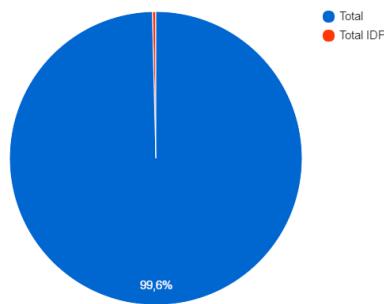


CHART 1. The share of IDPs-related coverage in total monitored coverage on all monitored regional TV channels during the fourth monitoring period  
NCtv

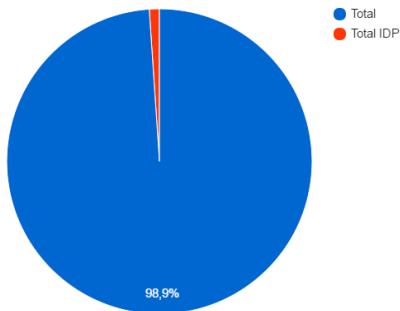


CHART 2. The share of the IDPs-related coverage in total monitored coverage provided by all print regional media during the fourth monitoring period  
NCPr



<sup>2</sup> All the previous reports can be found at <http://regional-voices.eu/en/monitoring> or <http://www.prostir-monitor.org/reports/>



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conflict through enhanced independence and quality content as well as by strengthening regional media access to networks, both within Ukraine and beyond its borders.

The project envisions development of an early warning capacity of incendiary coverage of conflict-related issues through consistent media monitoring and evaluation of participating regional media. Spilny Prostir and MEMO 98 jointly prepared methodology of monitoring the media coverage of IDPs and trained 65 regional analysts to conduct quantitative and qualitative analysis of the regional media coverage in connection with the above-mentioned topic.

Between 10 - 23 October 2016, the monitoring team conducted the fourth and final monitoring with a special focus on how the topic of IDPs has been reported. The monitoring sample consisted of a total of 204 monitored media (51 TV channels, 65 print media and 88 online media outlets) in 24 regions of Ukraine divided into four main parts:

- \* East (Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv oblasts;)
- \* North/Centre (Sumy, Chernihiv, Zhytomyr, Vinnytsya, Dnipro, Kirovohrad, Poltava, Cherkasy);
- \* South (Odessa, Kherson, Zaporizhya, Mykolayiv, Autonomous Republic of Crimea);
- \* West (Volyn, Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil, Khmelnytsky, Chernivtsi).

The sample of monitored media in the northern and central regions (oblasts) of Ukraine was sufficiently representative and included 72 media outlets in the region (18 TV channels, 23 newspapers and 31 websites). In comparison with the previous monitoring period there was a change - due to technical causes a newspaper from Kryvyi Rih (Dnipro region), namely Western Donbass, was not included.

### 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

\* In comparison with the previous period, monitored media of the North and Central parts of Ukraine provided overall less active IDP-related coverage. For instance, in Sumy and Zhytomyr regions media presented only one publication each.

\* Positively, the language and terminology concerning IDPs was generally correct and media overall avoided sensationalism. In Cherkassy and Vinnytsya, some instances of humanized life stories were noticed.

\* There were a number of instances of the exceptionally professional and quality reports, particularly in Vinnytsya region.

\* While there were few cases of imbalanced coverage, in particular in Vinnytsya, the monitoring revealed lack of analytical materials concerning the IDP-related issues.

\* A pattern of frequent reference to the official statements of authorities without any fact-checking was observed by monitored regional media. In addition, the IDP-related publications reflected the statistical data only and limited their coverage to the official events.

\* In Poltava some media still use the term 'refugees' was deployed within the reports where IDPs were reflected in a rather negative manner.

\* There were some instances of hidden advertising, indicating 'plugola' materials, in particular in Dnipro and Chernihiv.

### 3. QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The sample of monitored media in the Northern and Central regions (oblasts) of Ukraine included 71 outlets in the region (18 TV stations, 22 newspapers and 31 online media outlets). The sample included at least one TV station and one state-owned newspaper from each of the eight regions, whereas the remaining monitored media were privately owned.



The results of the previous monitoring periods revealed that the IDPs-related issues formed only a marginal part of the media coverage – in a range from 0.4 per cent on television and to 1.1 per cent in print media). In comparison, it represented lesser extent than in the third monitoring wave (it varied from 2.5 per cent % of total television news programmes airtime to 2.9 per cent of the total space in the newspapers).

### 3.1 TV CHANNELS

The monitored TV channels in the Northern and Central oblasts of Ukraine provided a total of 0.4 per cent of their newscasts' air-time to the IDPs-related coverage (some 18 minutes for all the monitored channels combined), what represented some 4 seconds daily per channel. This is tangibly less than during the third media monitoring wave when a total volume of IDPs-related content on all monitored channels amounted to 125 minutes (2.5 per cent) which meant some 30 seconds daily per channel.

The most covered issue was quite visibly social adaptation and community life (66.9 per cent). As for the other topics, media reported about the following ones - accommodation (8.7 per cent), business (7.8 per cent), government assistance (6.4 per cent), education (6.3 per cent) and employment (3.7 per cent).

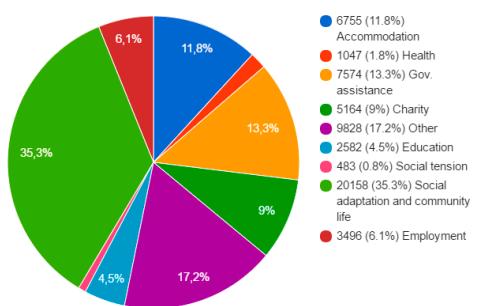


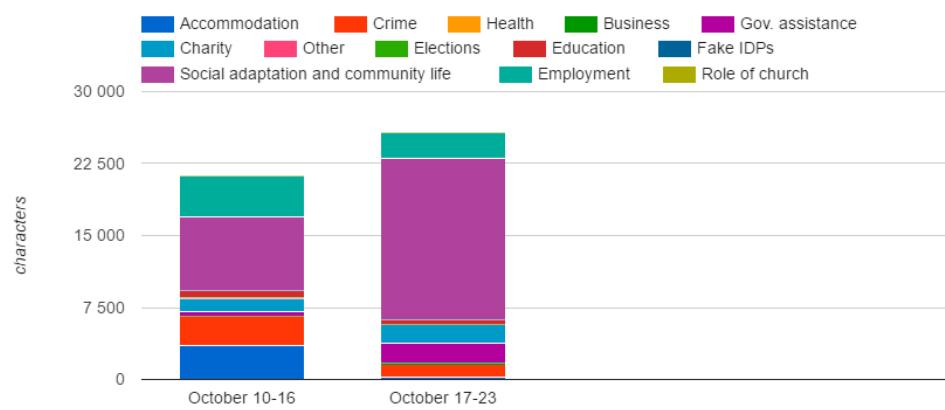
CHART 4. The share of different topics in IDP-related coverage on all monitored TV regional channels.

NCTVTopics

As for the monitored subjects, several of them received considerable coverage, such as volunteers (36.4 per cent), regional state administrations (26.7 per cent), IDPs per se (15.2 per cent), international organizations (12.9 per cent) and NGOs (8.7 per cent).



CHART 3. The share of IDPs-related coverage in total monitored coverage in print and online media divided according to the topics covered  
NCInt





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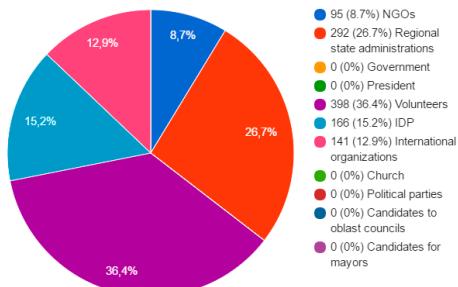


CHART 5 The share of different subjects (entities) in IDP-related coverage on all monitored TV channels.  
NCTvSub

In terms of tone, the monitored TV channels portrayed all the monitored subjects exclusively in a neutral and positive manner.

### 3.2 PRESS

When compared to TV channels, the monitored local newspapers provided a more active coverage of IDPs (1.1 per cent against 0.4 per cent), however, in comparison with the previous monitoring wave, the level of coverage decreased quite significantly (1.1 per cent against 2.9 per cent).

The newspapers dedicated the most of their IDPs-related reporting to the topic adaptation and community life (35.3 per cent). There were also some other topics that were presented to some higher extent, such as government aid (13.3 per cent), accommodation (11.8 per cent), charity (9 per cent), employment (6.1%) and education (4.5 per cent).

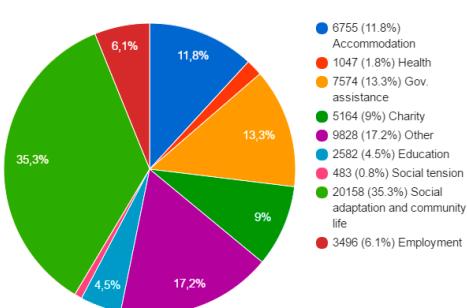


CHART 7. The share of different topics in IDPs-related coverage provided by the monitored regional newspapers  
NCPrTopics

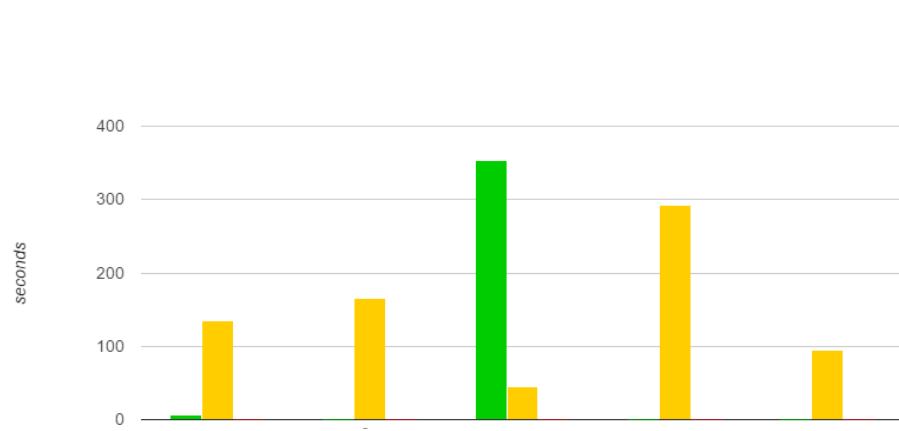


CHART 6. The breakdown by tonality for the monitored subjects (entities) in IDP-related coverage on all monitored TV channels of the region.  
NCTvTone

As for the monitored subjects, IDPs themselves received the highest media coverage, almost the half of the relevant information - 49.9 per cent. Presentation of other subjects was as follows - regional state administrations (19.7 per cent), NGOs (16.4 per cent), government (8.1 per cent) and volunteers (5.9 per cent).

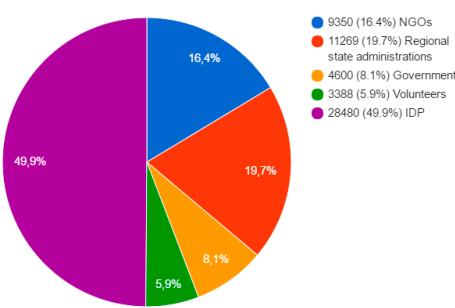


CHART 8. The breakdown by shares of different subjects in IDPs-related coverage provided by all the monitored regional newspapers  
NCPrSub

As for the tone of the coverage, an overwhelming majority of the materials were presented in neutral or positive manner. It is noteworthy to mention that only IDPs per se received a small portion of negative coverage (2 per cent of IDPs-related information). Such coverage was caused by the article from the Vinnytsya newspaper Channel 33<sup>2</sup>. In the article (a letter from a reader) a woman villager explained a negative experience with the IDPs living in Bryanka village from the Luhans'k

<sup>2</sup> Canal 33 newspaper, 12 October, 'IDPs leave for 'LNR' having accomodation and car as gifts' available at <http://33kanal.com/podilska-radnicja/pereselenci-vtekli-u-lnr-khoch-mi-yim-podaruvati-10954.html>

oblast. The letter suggested that while being invited and received an aid in the Vinnytsya oblast, the family of IDPs eventually returned to the Luhans'k oblast, however, with a village-owned thermal camera which was purchased from the contributions of the villagers. Regrettably, the article does not reflect any viewpoints of the newspaper or the IDP's, nor it does provide some details, such as a village name. It is important to mention that the newspaper provided similar one-sided letter from the readers that contained critical remarks towards the IDPs also during the first monitoring wave (October 2015).

### 3.3. ONLINE MEDIA

All monitored online media (31 in total) devoted to IDP-related stories total of 47,040 characters (approximately 25 pages of A4-format). In comparison, it represents slight decrease with a previous media monitoring wave, where it amounted to 53,383 characters (approximately 30 standard A4 pages).

The most covered topic in monitored websites was social adaptation and community life (52.1 per cent). Other topics were presented less significantly,

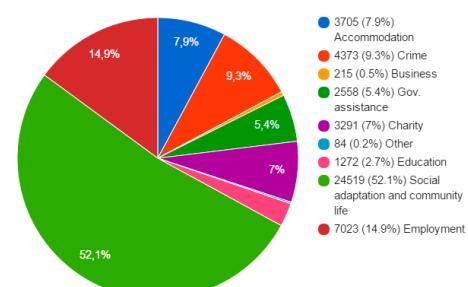


Chart 10. The breakdown by shares of different topics in IDPs-related coverage provided by the monitored regional online media. NCIntTopics



including employment (14.9 per cent), crime (9.3 per cent), accommodation (7.9 per cent), charity (7 per cent) government aid (5.4 per cent) and to a low extent also education (2.7 per cent).

Among the monitored subjects, the IDPs per se by far dominated the coverage (68 per cent). While the regional administrations received some considerable coverage as well (16.6 per cent), other subjects were covered less visibly, including the international organizations (5.6 per cent), volunteers (4.7 per cent), NGOs (2.8 per cent) and the government (2.4 per cent).

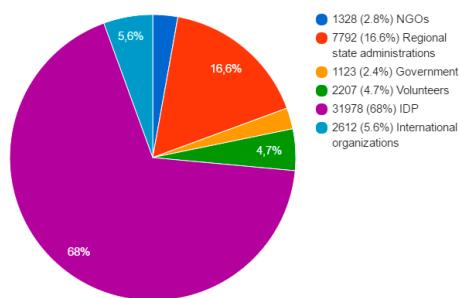


CHART 11. The breakdown by shares of different subjects in IDPs- related coverage provided by all monitored regional online media.

NCIntSub

In terms of tone of the publications, online media presented the monitored subjects mostly in a positive and neutral manner. Only IDPs per se received a negative coverage (7 per cent of all the IDPs-related information), caused by Poltava online media '0532' issue of criminal chronicles that emphasizes IDP status of a '38-year-old IDP from Donbass nearly stabs she- Poltava-citizen' accused of crime.

#### 4 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

In Cherkassy, television channels largely ignored the coverage of the IDPs-related materials, while the newspapers and online mass media narrowed the level of coverage in comparison with the previous monitoring wave. Still, there were some instances of positive approach. For example, the Nova doba (The New Day) newspaper continued to publish the information on IDPs on its page 10, adopting a systemic approach of the topic. In its 13 October issue, it published a material presenting a touching life story of a 92-year old IDP from Donetsk Mrs. Alexandra Skrebets<sup>3</sup>. The monitoring team also observed the case of combined advertising and

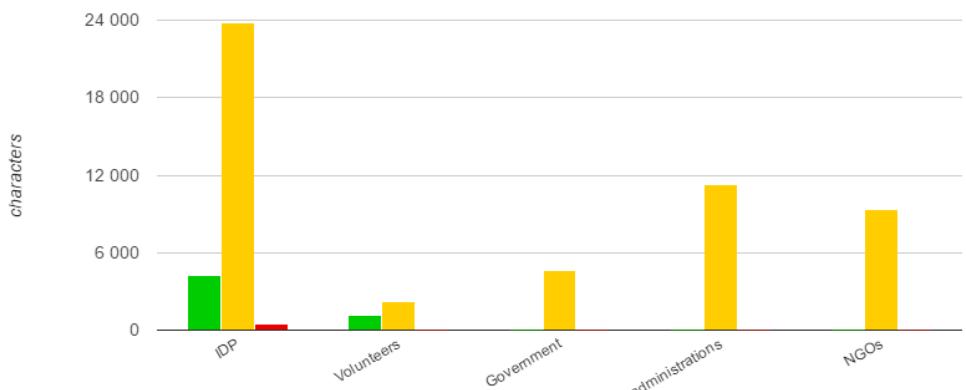


CHART 9. The breakdown by tonality for the monitored subjects (entities) in IDPs-related coverage provided by all the monitored regional newspapers  
NCPrTone

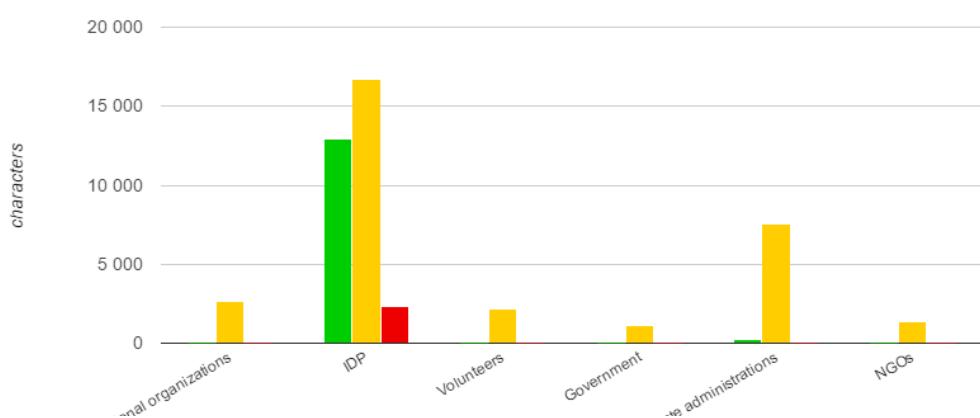


CHART 12. The breakdown by tonality for the monitored subjects (entities) in IDP-related coverage provided by all the monitored regional online media.  
NCIntTone.png

<sup>3</sup> Nova doba (New Day) newspaper, 13 October (issue #41), 'Long life between both wars', available at <http://novadoba.com.ua/32683-dovge-zhytya-mizh-dvoma-vynamy.html>

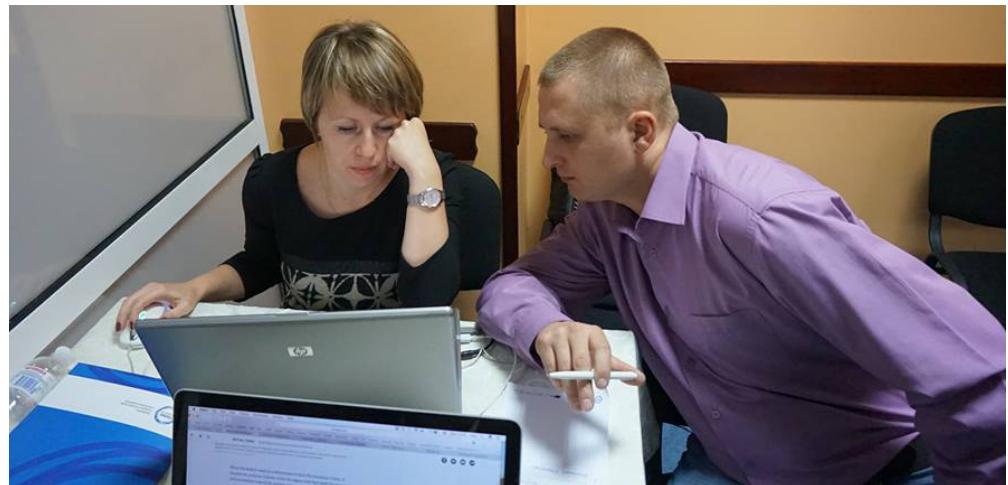


IDPs-related coverage in the newspaper Vechirni Cherkassy<sup>4</sup>. The material was indicated and published under the advertising section 'Local brand', and provided a humanized business story. The material was dedicated to the destiny of the Donetsk and Luhansk branches of a fashion company AVK that were forced to close, but it continued to support families of its employees from the territory of military action with pre-paid trips or temporary job offers in its Kyiv and Dnipro enterprises.

The Chernihiv branch of the National Tele-Radio company Siver Center did not provide any IDPs-related coverage in its main news programme. Some coverage of IDPs was offered by the Desnyans'ka pravda informing about the football festival held on 13 October within the Football Federation of Ukraine's project 'Play Away, Play Everywhere', under the auspices of the UEFA Foundation for Children which was aimed to support children, including the IDP children from Crimea and Donbass<sup>5</sup>. On the other hand, another newspaper's material contained various characteristics of a sponsored article - it was dedicated to aid provided to the IDPs by The Ukrainian Perspective foundation chaired by Olexander Vilkul, deputy for Oppositional Bloc<sup>6</sup>. An informational value of such material in the Chernihiv newspaper was dubious since it was dedicated to the IDPs in Dnipropetrovsk and other regions, but was not related to the Chernihiv region.

In Dnipropetrovsk region, each of monitored TV channels dedicated to the coverage of the IDPs-related issues one report focusing on the work of the Rinat Akhmetov's Foundation Humanitarian Center). There was a noteworthy publication in Zorya newspaper concerning the foundation of a temporary settlement for the IDPs in Nikopol, in which one of the IDPs voiced critical remarks concerning several construction aspects of the settlement<sup>7</sup>. The newspaper continues its cooperation with the charity foundation 'Dopomoha Dnipro' (Dnipro's Aid) and receives some financial aid from the Government of Canada. Based on the cooperation, the newspaper started to publish regular materials concerning the IDPs.

In Kirovohrad region, the fourth media monitoring wave indicated an overall decrease in the number



of reports and articles dedicated to the IDPs-related issues as well as a number of analytical or investigative materials. At the same time, if speaking about presentation of various viewpoints, an effort to create a civil society dialogue, it is necessary to note that, alike the previous media monitoring wave, regrettably, all the monitored media regularly offered only the information from one source, that often appeared to be an official source, which disabled a balanced coverage. For example, in a material from a Kirovohrads'ka Pravda informing about the high school graduates from Crimea and Donbass who will be able to enter the state educational institutions in 2017 per approved quota<sup>8</sup>. However, the report was entirely based only on the information provided by the press release of the Ministry of Education. Positively, the media deployed correct terminology without any sensationalism. The monitoring team revealed a successful instance of a humanized life story in the report of the Kyiv oblast state tele-radio company Kirovohrad that informed about an IDP-mother of six kids who move to Kirovohrad oblast from Horlivka<sup>9</sup>.

The media of Poltava oblast also presented a lower portion of reports concerning the IDPs. Nonetheless, there was a successful material on the oblast TV channel Ltava dedicated to social adaptation of the IDPs, soldiers of the anti-terrorist operation (ATO) and their families<sup>10</sup>. Meanwhile, the website Telehraf-Kremenchuk published the material where

the author used the term of 'refugees' instead of IDPs<sup>11</sup>. Also, another online source 0532.ua in one of its articles in a sensational fashion emphasized the IDP status<sup>12</sup>. On the other side, the website published an array of informative materials concerning the IDPs - 'Poltava installs rubbish bins for collecting belongings of those in need'<sup>13</sup> as well as 'Poltava opens regional center of Ukrainian Leadership Academy'<sup>14</sup>.

Monitored media from Sumy region, in particular television and online sources, provided no materials concerning the IDPs. At the same time, a publication in the Sumshchyna newspaper informing about a five-day workshop organized by the Thomson Foundation in cooperation with the IRMI Institute aimed to improve writing skills of the Ukrainian regional journalists on vulnerable situations and topics arising during the armed conflicts, including the IDPs, was the only reference of this type in the print media<sup>15</sup>.

In Vinnytsya, media monitoring findings showed the similar results as in a number of regions described above – the media offered only a handful of IDPs-related reports. At the same time they often lacked more analytical or investigative nature, which were entirely omitted in the print

11 Telegraph -Kremenchuh online media, 23 October, 'Yanukovich's dogs and Kremenchuh paws', available on [http://www.telegraf.in.ua/topnews/2016/10/23/sobaki-yanukovicha-ta-kremenchuk-chotirilap\\_10057357.html](http://www.telegraf.in.ua/topnews/2016/10/23/sobaki-yanukovicha-ta-kremenchuk-chotirilap_10057357.html)

12 0532 online media, 11 October, '38-year-old IDP from Donbass nearly stabs she- Poltava-citizen', available at <http://www.0532.ua/article/1399426>

13 0532 online media, 12 October, 'Poltava installs rubbish bins for collecting belongings of those in need', available on <http://www.0532.ua/news/1401089>

14 0532 online media, 23 October, 'Poltava opens regional center of Ukrainian Leadership Academy', available at <http://www.0532.ua/article/1412639>

15 Sumshchyna newspaper, 20 October, 'Journalists to learn at training'.

4 Vechirni Cherkassy (Evening Cherkassy) newspaper 19 October (issue #42), 'AVK: little Ukraine in one company'

5 Desnyans'ka Pravda, 20 October, 'Football festival in Koryukivka'

6 Desnyans'ka Pravda, 20 October

7 Zorya newspaper, 19 October, 'In Nikopol module-routes and swings'

8 Kirovohrads'ka Pravda, 11 October (issue #71), 'The Ministry of Education changes the rules of admission to universities next year'

9 Kirovohrad Kyiv oblast state tele-radio company, 20 October (live broadcasting), report 'She-IDP', available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s1B17M0sq64>

10 Ltava TV channel, 18 October, report 'Man live not by theater alone', available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ch-KNgLmXe4o>, (from 16:45 to 18:40 min)



and online media. Positively, in all the reports the monitored media used the correct language and terminology and avoided sensationalism in the IDPs-related coverage. However, the cases when media did not offer various viewpoints in the short IDPs-related materials were rather frequent. There were no records when other people's stories and their reprints might have been deployed. The real journalistic success was the story from the Dnipropetrovsk oblast in which five different respondents were introduced to present their opinions on social adaptation of IDPs in a temporary settlement in Dnipro<sup>16</sup>. In addition, a work of the cameraman is exceptional. The monitoring team revealed an interesting life story aired by VITA TV in a report 'Truhanivs'ka Sich' where passengers on the 'Unity of Ukraine' train expressed interest to the lifestyle of the Donets'k National University students<sup>17</sup>. Regrettably, none of these stories were followed-up and were never repeated in the summaries of the week. Similar to the latter TV report was the material published by the newspaper RIA dedicated to the students of the same university in which they recalled their pre-military life and their first days in Vinnytsya<sup>18</sup>. These memoirs were made public in the framework of the project 'Life first' supported by the Government of Canada.

In the monitored media of the **Zhytomyr oblast**, there was only a single IDPs-related material noticed throughout the fourth monitoring wave. On 19 October the newspaper 20 khvylyn (20 minutes) published the material that was dedicated to the eviction of IDPs from a temporary accommodation<sup>19</sup>. However, there were no report concerning the IDPs on television or posted online on the websites.

With a view to a number of noticed problems that compromised professional journalistic standards, in particular resemblance of political or commercial promotion presented as usual news (so-called plugola), lack of balance or cases of incorrect terminology, the monitoring team would propose to the media of the Northern and Central regions several recommendations concerning the coverage of IDPs-related issues.



16 Vintera TV channel, 11 October, available at <https://youtu.be/0HNIDWhBSs?t=8m3s>

17 VITA TV channel, 21 October, report 'Vinnytsya – 1st railway stop on "Train of Unity"', available at <https://youtu.be/LVe3oto-zcx4?t=5m5s>

18 RIA newspaper, 19 October, 'Students - IDPs to recall their first days in Vinnytsya'

19 20 Khvylyn newspaper, 19 October, 'Foreigners not to live here: no rooms left in hotel repaired as per donor-funded programs', available at <https://zt.20minut.ua/yudi/chuzhi-tut-ne-zhitimut-vidremontovanomu-inozemnim-koshtom-goteli-mis-10553375.html>



Generally, it is recommended to dedicate more attention to the issues and topics related to the IDPs. More specifically, the recommendations are as follows:

- \* To provide more comprehensive, analytical and investigative reporting on the IDPs;
- \* To prevent hidden advertising and promotional materials,
- \* To avoid sensationalism, incorrect terminology and lack of balanced;
- \* To adhere to a watch-dog role of the media instead of passive relying on the official information provided by the local administrations.
- \* To prevent negative stereotypes in the IDPs-related coverage and to focus more on specific 'life-stories' illustrating the instances of successful co-existence of the IDPs in the local civic society communities;

\* To address security where the reports on the IDPs can cause some threat to their relatives in the occupied territories of Donbass.

The implementing organizations are convinced that implementation of the recommendations will provide an important guidance to prevent bias and at the same time to improve the quality of media content. In addition, potential sources of social tension, in particular between the internally displaced persons and their hosts, could be weakened through the balanced coverage of events.