



Media coverage of Internally Displaced Persons in the Ukrainian mass media  
Ukraine: (Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Kherson, Mykolayiv, Odessa, Zaporizhya)  
Funded by the European Union

# Media Monitoring Report

South of Ukraine  
February 2016

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# Media coverage of IDPs in the Ukrainian mass media

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This is the second of the monitoring reports which will be published in the framework of the 'Regional Voices: Strengthening conflict sensitive coverage in Ukraine's regional media' project implemented by the Thomson Foundation, the European Journalism Centre, Association Spilnyi Prostir, MEMO 98 and the Institute for Regional Media and Information<sup>1</sup>.

The overall objective of the project is to decrease 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 by strengthening regional media's ability to respond to the conflict through enhanced independence and quality of 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, including on election coverage, of participating regional media. Spilnyi Prostir and MEMO 98 jointly prepared methodology of monitoring the media coverage of IDPs and trained 65 regional analysts (in Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Odessa) to conduct quantitative and qualitative analysis of the regional media coverage in connection with the above-mentioned topic.



<sup>1</sup> The first monitoring reports can be found at: <http://regionalvoices.eu/2016/01/07/media-monitoring/>



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Between 15 – 28 February 2016, the monitoring team conducted the second monitoring of a number of monitoring exercises, with a special focus on how the topic of IDPs has been reported. The monitoring sample consisted of a total of 205 monitored media (50 TV channels, 65 print media and 90 online media outlets) in 24 regions of Ukraine divided into four main parts:

- ★ **Eastern part** (Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv oblast)
- ★ **Northern/Central parts** (Dnipropetrovsk, Cherkasy, Chernihiv, Kirovohrad, Poltava, Sumy, Vinnytsya, Zhytomyr)
- ★ **Southern part** (Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Kherson, Mykolayiv, Odessa, Zaporizhyya)
- ★ **Western part** (Chernivtsi, Ivano-Frankivsk, Khmelnytsky, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil, Volyn, Zakarpattia)

Following the first monitoring period, the monitoring team introduced some changes in the media sample, resulting from the fact that some previously monitored media –local TV-station VTV+, newspaper Khersonskiy Visnyk and online publication Khersonskie Vesti did not pay particular attention to IDPs. As such, they were replaced by YaTB TV station, Khersonskie Fakty newspaper and Khersonskie Fakty online edition.

### 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

★ Similar to the first monitoring period, the media in the Southern regions continued to cover the IDP topic in a rather limited, superficial manner, mostly in the context of other subjects and problems.

- ★ There are not only IDPs but also some media which were forced out of the Crimean peninsula and currently operate in other Ukrainian regions.
- ★ There was a lack of IDP-related stories in general and those with a more analytical and investigative approach in particular.
- ★ There were only a very few cases when media focused on human side of IDP stories.
- ★ There were instances of using somebody else's stories and their republishing.
- ★ There were a number of cases when media did not keep balance and providing only 'one-sided' coverage accompanied with poor sourcing.
- ★ Journalists generally did not question official statements by authorities or ask them probing questions and did not pay enough attention to verification of facts.
- ★ Media in general avoided sensationalism when reporting on IDPs. Media in general used correct language and terminology when addressing IDPs.

### 3. QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The sample of the monitored media in the Southern regions of Ukraine included 35 most popular top-rated outlets in the region, divided as follows:

- ★ 10 local TV-stations – one state-owned and one or two major private channels per oblast;
- ★ 11 newspapers – at least one state-owned publication and several major private ones per oblast;
- ★ 14 online media – most visited news-oriented websites in each oblast.

The monitoring findings of the second period revealed that the IDPs-related topics attracted even less media attention in comparison with the first monitoring period (the share of allocated time and space ranged between 0.9 per cent in monitored TV channels to 0.8 per cent in print media).

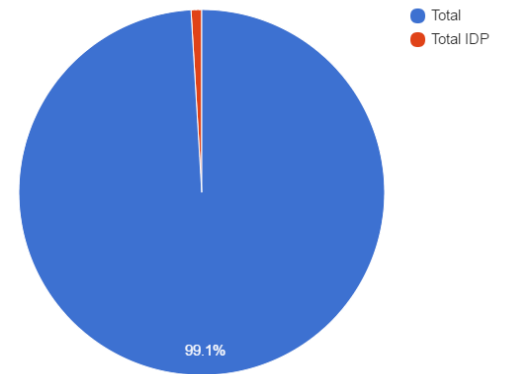
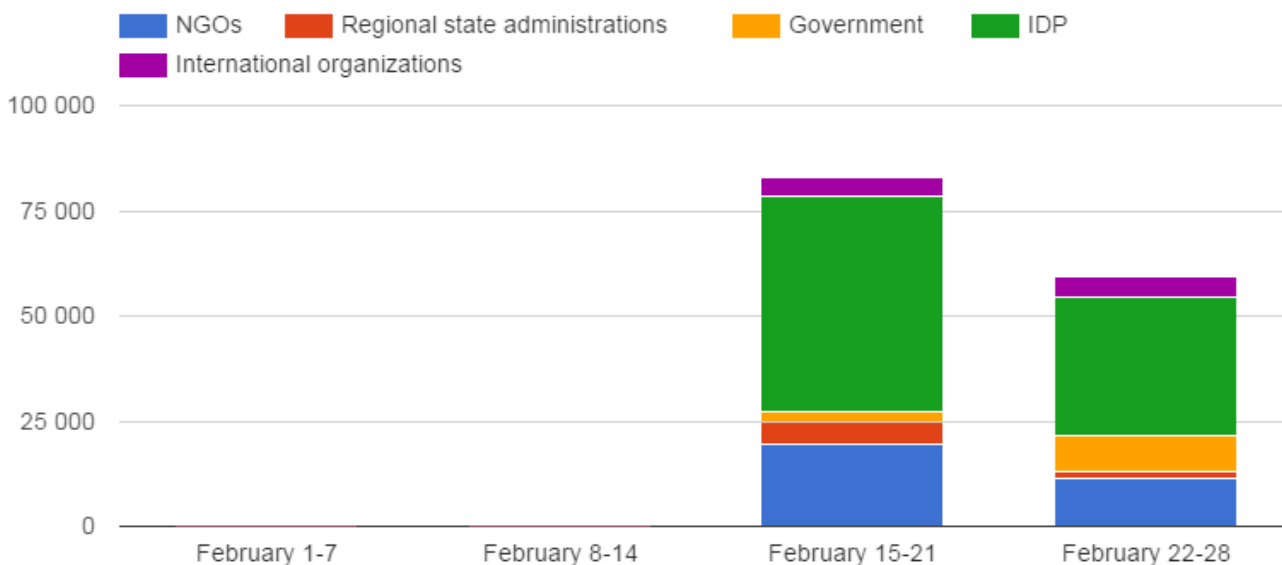


CHART 1 (ABOVE) The share of IDP-related coverage of the total monitored coverage in all monitored TV channels during the second monitoring period (15-28 February 2016)

CHART 2 (BELOW) The share of the IDP-related coverage of the total monitored coverage in all print media





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### 3.1 TV CHANNELS

The monitored channels dedicated some 28 minutes (1.675 seconds) of their news coverage to the issues concerning IDPs in the second monitoring period. It amounted to 0.9 per cent of total 51 hours (186.111 seconds) of news programmes, what represents only 2 min per day for all 10 monitored channels altogether, or some 10 seconds per channel a day (this was a decrease against 1.4 per cent of IDP-related share of coverage in the first monitoring period).

The most covered issues were in particular accommodation (38.3% of total volume of IDP coverage), education (23.4%), social adaptation and community life (19%).

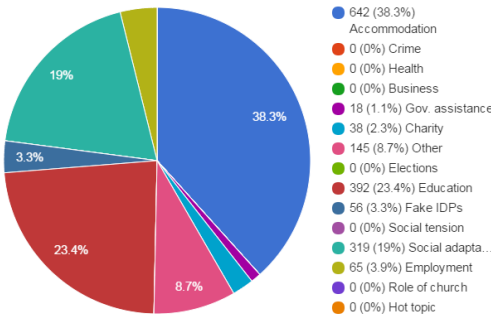
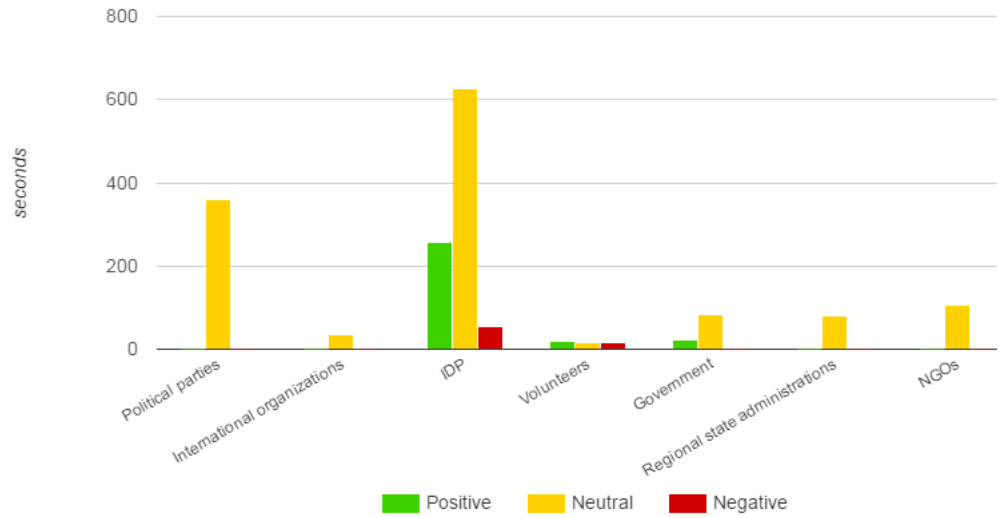
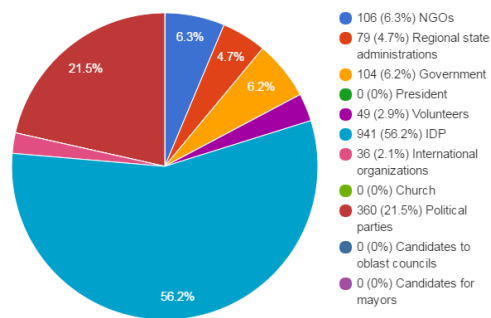


CHART 3 (ABOVE) The share of the coverage on all monitored TV channels devoted to different topics in the IDP-related stories

Concerning the monitored subjects, the most covered subjects within IDPs-related stories were IDPs per se (56.2% of total volume of IDP coverage); followed by political parties (21.5%); NGOs (6.3%); government (6.2%); regional state administrations (4.7%); volunteers (2.9%); and international organizations (2.1%).





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CHART 4 (PREVIOUS PAGE, BOTTOM LEFT) The share of the coverage devoted to different subjects (entities) monitored in the framework of IDP-related stories on all monitored channels

In terms of tone, IDPs were presented in mostly neutral and positive way. Their coverage amounted also to a portion of negative information (in absolute terms it was the most among all the monitored subjects). As for the coverage of other selected subjects, a neutral tone prevailed.

CHART 5 (PREVIOUS PAGE, TOP RIGHT) The coverage of the tone in which the monitored subjects (entities) were portrayed in the framework of IDP-related stories on all monitored channels

#### 3.2 PRINT MEDIA

Local monitored newspapers showed indifference as far as the IDP-related stories are concerned as they amounted to not more than 0.8 per cent of their total relevant-related space.

Among the most covered topics were mainly state aid (33.6% of total volume of IDP-related coverage), charity (33%), accommodation (16.5%), social adaptation and community life (12.3%), as well as crimes (0.6%), employment (0.4%).

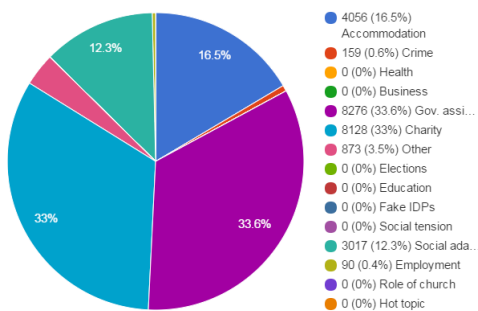
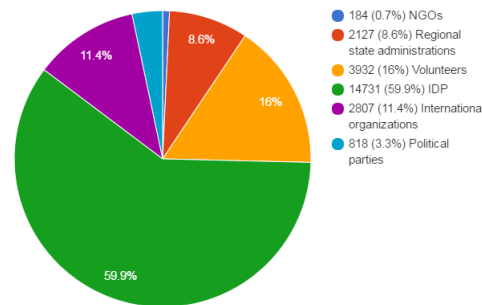


CHART 6 (ABOVE) The share of space allocated to IDP-related issues in all monitored print media

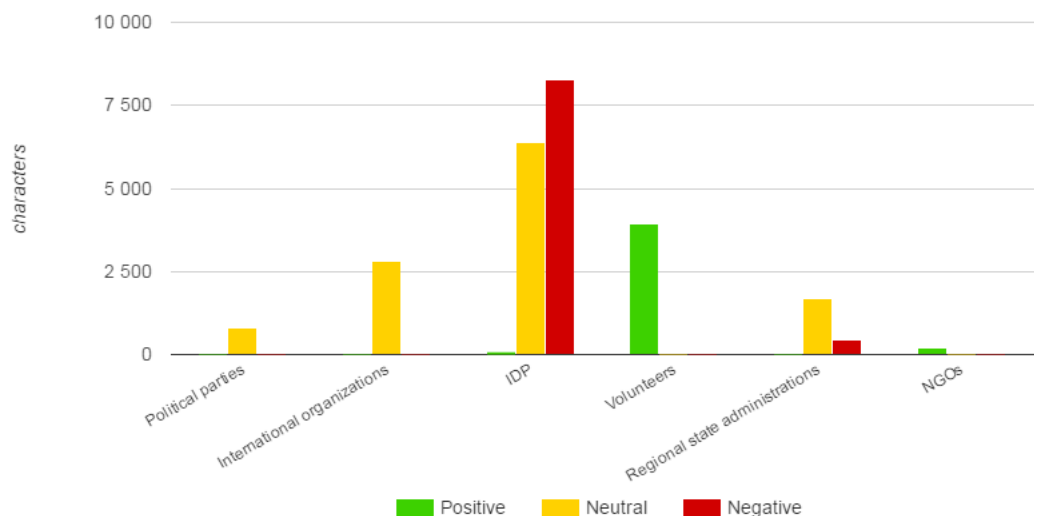
As for the monitored subjects, IDPs themselves received a dominant share (59.9% of total volume of IDPs-related coverage), followed by other subjects, such as volunteers (16%), international organizations (11.4%), and regional state administrations (8.6%).

CHART 7 (BELOW) The share of the coverage on all monitored print media devoted to different subjects (entities) monitored in the framework of IDP-related stories



As for the tone of the coverage, monitored newspapers portrayed IDPs in a negative (in absolute terms it was the most among all the monitored subjects) and neutral manner. Some negative coverage was also given to regional state administrations. As for other subjects, while volunteers and NGOs were portrayed exclusively in a positive manner, international organizations and political parties were portrayed exclusively in a neutral manner.

CHART 8 (BELOW) The coverage of the tone in which the monitored subjects (entities) were portrayed in the framework of IDP-related stories in all monitored print media.



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#### 3.3 ONLINE MEDIA

The monitored online media devoted to IDP-related stories a combined total of 121 273 characters (some 67 standard A4 pages) in the second monitoring period.

The online media devoted most of their attention to the following IDP-related topics: the social adaptation and community life (19.7% of total volume), accommodation (12.4%), charity (7.6%), and state aid (5.9%).

Among the monitored subjects, IDPs themselves received the biggest portion of coverage (56.6% of the total volume of IDPs-related coverage). The other presented subjects were NGOs (25.3%), then the central government (9%), international organizations (5.3%), and regional state administrations (3.8%).

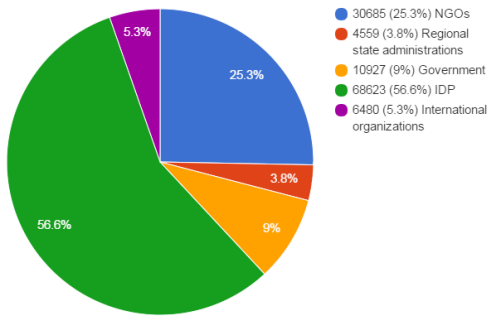


CHART 10 (ABOVE) The share of the coverage devoted to different subjects (entities) monitored in the framework of IDP-related stories in all monitored online media

Neutral tone prevailed in online reporting concerning the IDP-related stories. While IDPs themselves were portrayed mainly in a positive and neutral manner, international organisations, government and regional state administrations were portrayed in a neutral manner. The coverage of NGOs amounted also to a small portion of negative information.

#### 4 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The qualitative analysis of the second monitoring period revealed that overall the IDP-related issues continue to be covered only in a limited amount in

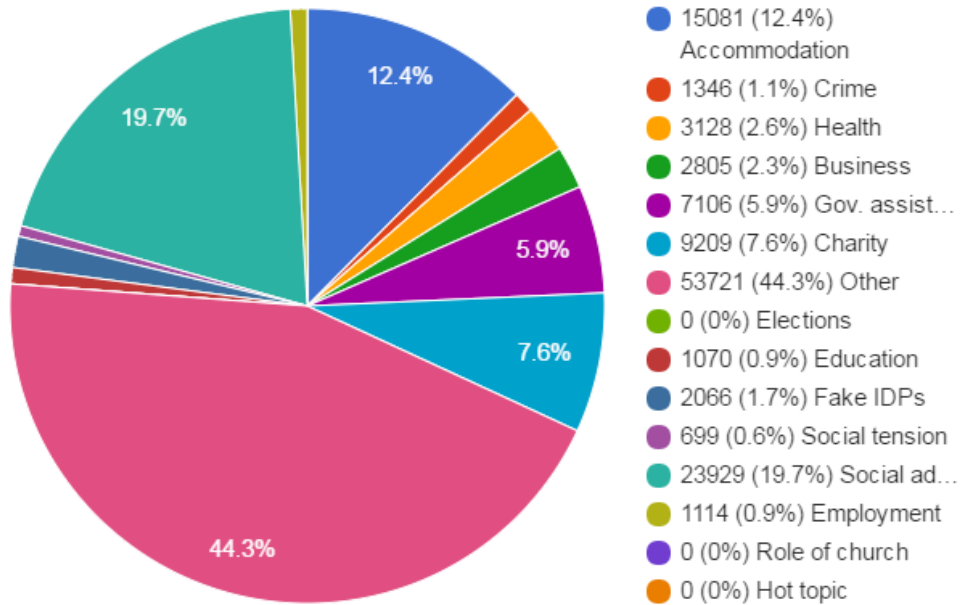
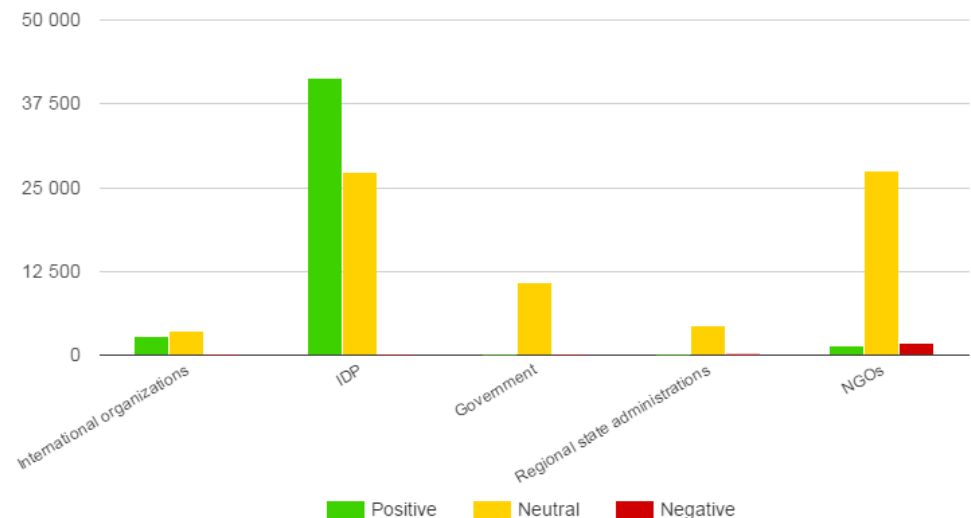


CHART 9 (ABOVE) The share of the coverage on all monitored online media devoted to different topics in the framework of IDP-related stories

CHART 11 (BELOW) The coverage of the tone in which the monitored subjects (entities) were portrayed in the framework of IDP-related stories in all monitored online media



<sup>2</sup> Ukrainian activists and Tatars are trying to prevent food and other commodities that they consider of higher quality and cheaper, to reach Crimea by blocking the roads.



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the media from the Southern regions. Similar to the first monitoring period, IDPs were more frequently present in the Crimea-based media as well as in media internally displaced from the Crimean peninsula. As for the trends noted in the Crimean media, they occasionally published stories on Crimean Tatars, politicians, athletes, activists from the campaign “civil blockade of the Crimea”, without mentioning the fact that the subjects of these stories were IDPs<sup>2</sup>.

Similar to the first monitoring period, the website ‘Crimea Realities’ produced the biggest number of stories on IDPs from among the monitored media in this region. This website presented stories which included analysis, examination of a specific problem and providing of an extended coverage of human stories on IDPs and relevant-related topics. The most presented topics included the Ukrainian Forum on IDPs from Crimea and Donbass in Kyiv; examination of the complaint filed with the court by human rights activists demanding cancellation of IDPs’ apartments’ inspections; monitoring the level of awareness of IDPs regarding access to health care services; initiative of the Crimean IDPs<sup>3</sup>.

The monitoring team of the Zaporizhzhya oblast observed that the monitored media used human stories’ for a more detailed and interesting coverage of the subject. For instance, the website ‘061’ created an archive of video-stories depicting IDPs who live in Kyiv. These stories were done in the framework of an international project and are aimed at a wider Ukrainian audience.

The online edition Prestupnosti.net (‘No to. Crimes’) in Mykolayiv publicized a post of January 25 with a story on the death of a 49-year old Roma who died of heart ischemia and whose family was planning to sue his doctor over the death. The material contained a human story perspective and included several information sources. While the intention was to present the facts in a neutral manner, it also contained a misunderstanding of the terms ‘refugee’ and ‘IDP’.

A similar case was observed on the Zaporizhzhya website ‘Golos’ where in the framework of a news programme (15 February 2016) a journalist used incorrect terminology mixing IDPs with refugees (‘Approximately seven thousand of refugees leave the Zaporizhzhya oblast’).

The item on 26 February featured cadets who moved from Crimea to Odessa to finish their studies. The item was dedicated to graduates of the Nakhimov Higher Naval Institute who refused to take an oath before Russia two years ago and moved to Odessa<sup>5</sup>. This year they finished their studies on the basis of the Odessa Naval Academy.

In Kherson oblast during the second monitoring period, a TV spot was shown on YATB TV Channel depicting IDPs, which lacked balance. The item featured a political leader who was shown while visiting a hostel (where IDPs live) and who promised to help. He was the only one to be given an opportunity to speak. This item was clearly of a promotional nature and lacked any proper analysis of IDP-related issues.

Some articles and items in the regional media were critical of IDPs. Journalists however were not the ones criticizing directly IDPs in the framework of these stories. For example, on 17 February TV-5 from Zaporizhzhya broadcast an item covering a charity campaign of volunteers from Red Cross Foundation called ‘International Kindness Day’. It was specifically dedicated to the fact that local citizens from remote villages had an opportunity to receive warm clothes in the framework of the campaign. The story stated that several times a week Red Cross employees went to IDPs but “International Kindness Day” was devoted only to assistance provided to local people – and not IDPs. A Red Cross Foundation volunteer opined: ‘This was arranged for the local citizens exclusively since currently we already provide a lot of assistance to IDPs’. The material included negative tone against IDPs.

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<sup>3</sup> For more information, see the links to the above mentioned stories: Participants of the civic campaign on blockade of Crimea that called on the fellow citizens ‘to block all Russians’; Ukrainian forum of IDPs from Crimea and Donbass started in Kyiv on 15 February 2016 <http://ru.krymr.com/content/news/27552681.html>; Accommodation issue - Crimean Tatar family in Lviv oblast’ on 16 February 2016 at <http://ru.krymr.com/content/article/27555064.html>; In Lviv IDPs from Donbass rallied in protection of their rights on 18 February 2016; In medical institutions of Kyiv volunteers check the level of provision of medical aid to IDPs on 24 February 2016 at: <http://ru.krymr.com/content/news/27571214.html>; Activist of Crimean blockade calls on ‘blocking all Russian’ on 19 February 2016 at: <http://ru.krymr.com/content/news/27562898.html>

<sup>4</sup> See the item at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HMYSV-oom4r>

<sup>5</sup> See the item at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ImVRG6xGe\\_Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ImVRG6xGe_Y)

