



Media coverage of Internally Displaced Persons in the Ukrainian mass media
Volyn, Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil, Khmelnytsk, Chernivtsi regions
Funded by the European Union

Media Monitoring Report

West of Ukraine
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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 Information¹.

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.



¹ 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 did not pay particular attention to IDPs. As such, Karpaty TV station was included in the media sample and the closed newspaper Zakarpatska Pravda was replaced by Uzhorod.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- ★ In comparison with the first monitoring period, media in Western regions covered the IDP topic less actively.
- ★ Similar to the first monitoring period, there was a general lack of stories and articles with a proper

analysis of the IDP-related issues.

- ★ Media in general used correct language and terminology when addressing IDPs. There were, however, a few examples when media discriminated IDPs, featuring them in a negative way.
- ★ However, most of materials about IDPs were presented in a neutral manner.
- ★ Similar to the first monitoring period, the monitoring team found that a number of stories about IDPs lacked balance.
- ★ Media often featured “official statements” by the authorities, presenting the issues from a “power” perspective without balancing them by the opinions from the IDPs. Moreover, journalists were generally not critical towards official statements by authorities and rarely did any proper fact checking.
- ★ At the same time, however, there were a few instances when media focused on human stories when portraying IDPs, showing signs of quality reporting.

3. QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The sample of monitored media in the Western regions of Ukraine was rather extensive, with the media ownership, potential impact, and ratings as the criteria of selection. As a result, the sample composed of 65 most popular and top-rated outlets in the region, divided as follows:

- ★ 19 local TV-stations – one state-owned and one or two major private channels per oblast;
- ★ 26 newspapers – at least one state-owned publication, several major private ones per oblast;

- ★ 21 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 1 per cent in monitored TV channels to 0.4 per cent in print media).

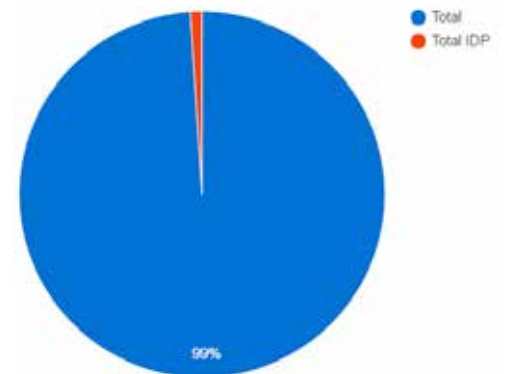
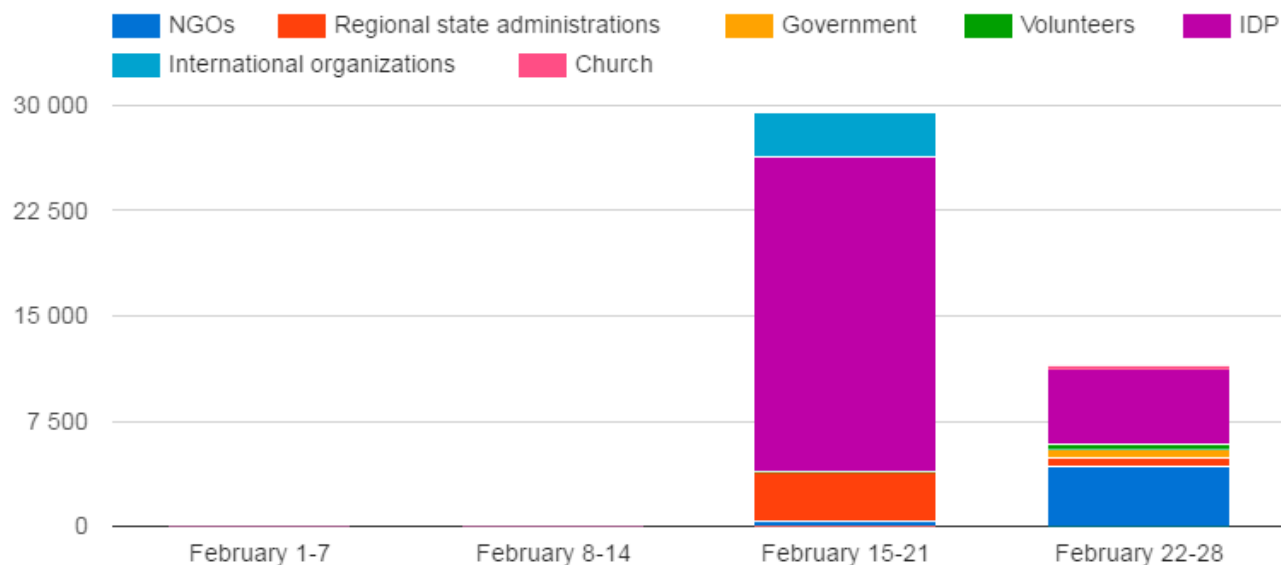


CHART 1 (ABOVE) The share of IDP-related coverage of the total monitored coverage in all monitored TV channels during the second monitoring period (15-28 February 2016)

CHART 2 (BELOW) The share of the IDP-related coverage of the total monitored coverage in all print media divided according to the topics covered.





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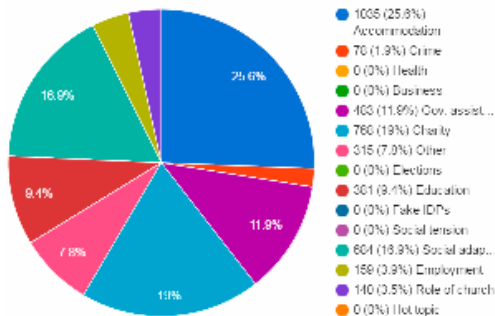
3.1 TV CHANNELS

The monitored channels dedicated approximately 1 hour and 7 min (4043 seconds) of their news coverage to the issues concerning IDPs in the second monitoring period. It amounted to 1 per cent of total 107 hours (387117 seconds) of news programmes what represents 5 min per day for all 11 monitored channels altogether, or some 26 seconds per channel a day.

The most covered issues were in particular accommodation (25.6%), charity (19%), social adaptation and community life (16.9%), state aid (11.9%), and education (9.4%).



CHART 3 (BELOW) 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 (50.2% of total volume of IDP coverage); followed by NGOs (17.4%); regional state administrations (10.3%); volunteers (8.8%); international organizations (4.9%) and church (3.5%).

In terms of tone, while IDPs were presented in mostly neutral and positive way, their coverage amounted also to a small portion of negative information (322 seconds). The government proportionally received even more negative coverage (amounting to 195 seconds).



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



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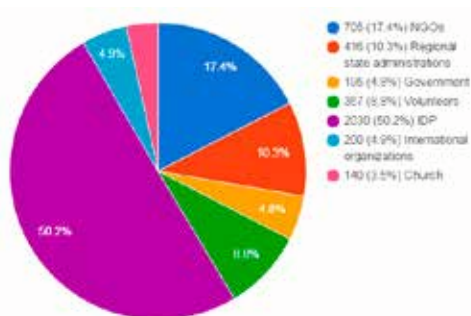


CHART 5 (BELOW) The coverage of the tone in which the monitored subjects (entities) were portrayed in the framework of IDP-related stories on all monitored channels.

3.2 PRESS

In comparison to monitored TV channels, local monitored newspapers showed even less interest as far as the IDP-related stories are concerned as they amounted to not more than 0.4 per cent of their total relevant-related space.

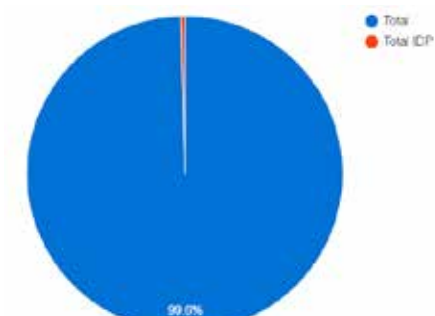
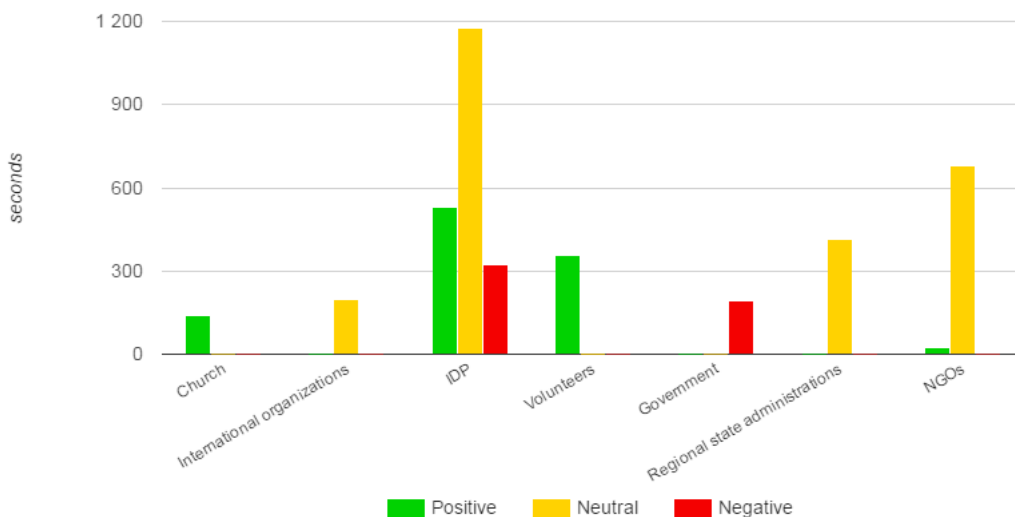


CHART 6 (ABOVE) The share of IDP-related coverage of the total monitored coverage in all print media during the second monitoring period (15-28 February 2016).

Among the most covered topics were social adaptation and community life (23.8%), as well as employment (21.1%).

The monitored channels dedicated approximately 1 hour and 7 min (4,043 seconds) of their news coverage to the issues concerning IDPs in the second monitoring period. It amounted to 1 per cent of total 107 hours (387117 seconds) of news programmes





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CHART 7 (RIGHT) The share of the coverage on all monitored print media devoted to different topics in the framework of IDP-related stories.

Regarding the coverage of subjects, newspapers most actively informed on IDPs per se: 67.6% of the total volume of IDP-related coverage, followed by NGOs (11.3%), regional state administrations (10%), and international organizations (7.9%).

As for the monitored subjects, IDPs themselves received a dominant share (67.6% of total volume of IDPs-related coverage), followed by other subjects, such as NGOs (11.3%), regional state administrations (10%) and international organizations (7.9%). The government, volunteers and church received only 1.5%, 1% and 0.7% respectively.

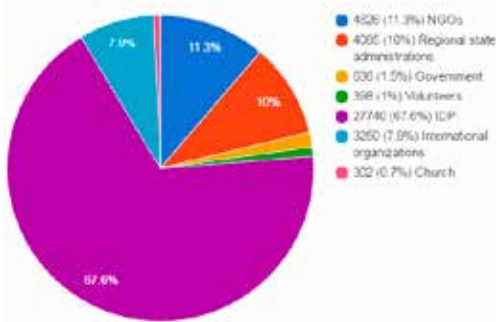
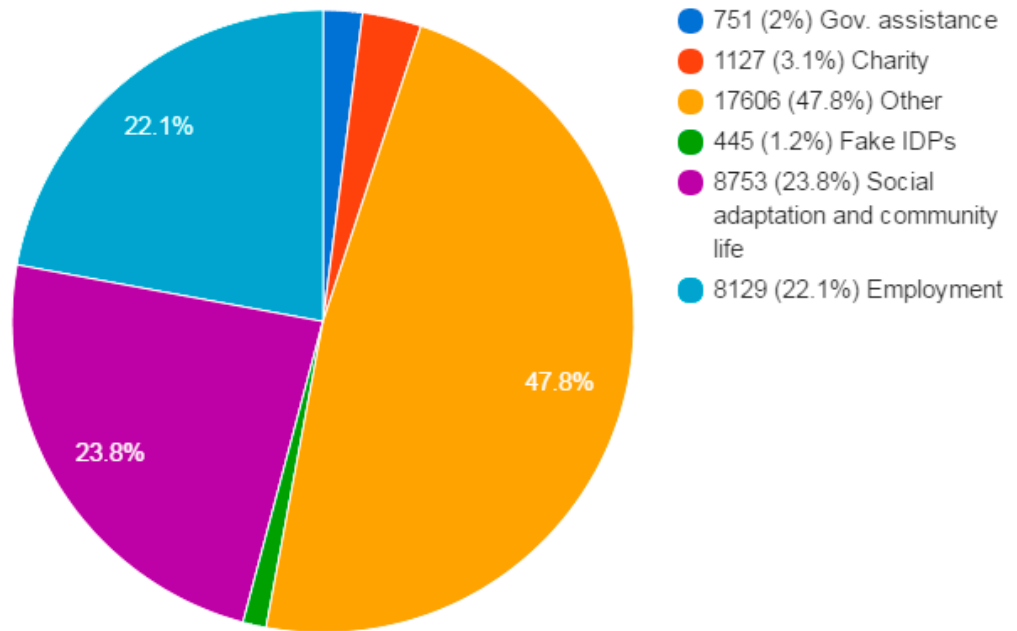
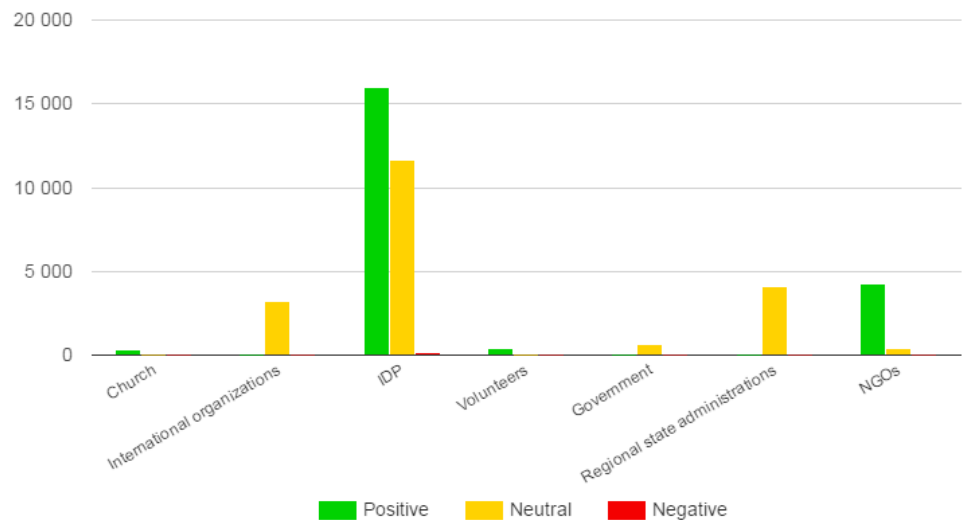


CHART 8 (ABOVE) The share of the coverage devoted to different subjects (entities) monitored in the framework of IDP-related stories on all monitored print media.

As for the tone of the coverage, monitored newspapers portrayed IDPs in a positive and neutral manner, with a very small portion of critical information as well. While international organizations and regional state administration received mainly neutral coverage, the media portrayed NGOs mainly in a positive manner.

CHART 9 (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.



3.3 ONLINE MEDIA

The monitored online media devoted to IDP-related stories a combined total of 44 187 characters (some 23 standard A4 pages) in the second monitoring period.

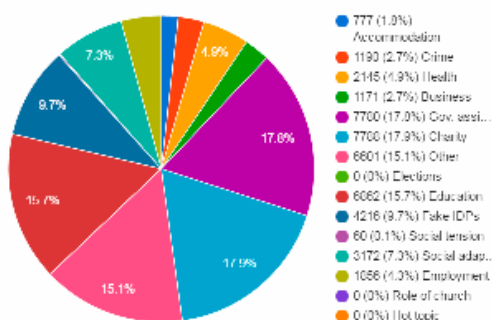


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The online media devoted most of their attention to the following IDP-related topics: charity (17.9%), state aid (17.8%), education (15.7%), and fake IDPs (9.7%). Topics as health, social adaptation and community life, employment, criminality, business and accommodation received less attention.

CHART 10 (BELOW) The share of the coverage devoted to different topics monitored in the framework of IDP-related stories on all monitored online media



As for the monitored subjects, IDPs themselves received a dominant share (49.8%), followed by NGOs (28.5%), and regional state administrations (11.4%). International organizations, volunteers and government received much less coverage.

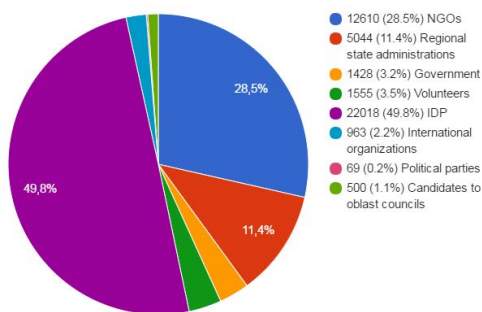
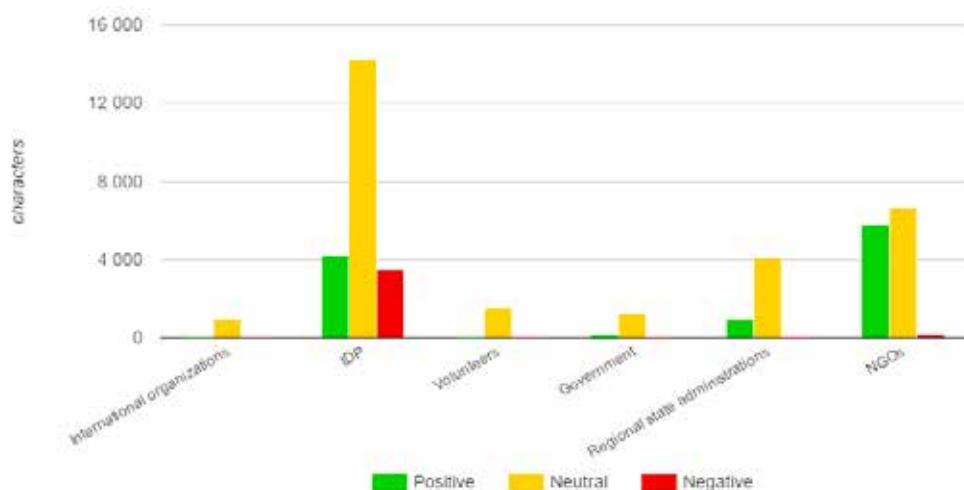


CHART 11 (ABOVE) The share of the coverage devoted to different subjects (entities) monitored in the framework of IDP-related stories in all monitored online media

Neutral and positive tone prevailed in online reporting concerning the IDP-related stories. While IDPs themselves were also presented in neutral and positive way, a portion of their coverage was negative (for example an article titled 'MP from Ternopil region profited from Donbass IDPs'.²

CHART 12 (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.



4 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The portrayal of IDP-related subjects in the media of Western regions of Ukraine was similar to the situation in other regions. Media monitoring of the second period revealed that some trends identified in the first monitoring continued. These trends included shortcomings which are at odds with professional standards, including lack of balance, striving for sensationalism, human stories converted into tabloid content, poor sourcing and overall lack of long-term vision that would aim to create a more profound public discussion.

In Chernivtsi, IDP-related problems received very little coverage in the local media (two newspaper articles, five TV items and 8 online articles). Of 15 stories featured in Chernivtsi media, only 5 were actually prepared by local Chernivtsi journalists – the rest of them were prepared by journalists from other regions or by central media.

The majority of featured IDP-related materials were not real stories with some background analysis but rather superficial statistical reports on providing assistance, fund-raising, and other events related to IDPs

² See the article 'Za Zbruchem' from 22 February at: <http://zz.te.ua/deputat-z-ternopilschyny-nazhyvavsya-na-pereselentsyah>



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All these stories were missing more comprehensive analysis and contextual information. The majority of featured IDP-related materials were not real stories with some background analysis but rather superficial statistical reports on providing assistance, fund-raising, and other events related to IDPs.

At the same time, however, journalists of TV channels 'Chernivtsi', TVA and newspapers 'Molody bukovinets' succeeded in focusing on the human stories when portraying IDPs. On 18 February, 'Molody bukovinets' newspaper (as well as 'Chernivtsi' Tele-radio company 'Yedyna krayina' on 17 February) presented stories demonstrating successful employment and adaptation of IDPs in Chernivtsi and Slovyansk (which were presented as their own entrepreneurship initiatives). On 17 and 20 February, referring to the case-study of adaptation of an IDP family, TVA TV channel raised up a problem of allocation of land to construct houses for IDPs. In addition, IDPs received also some negative coverage in the online media. For example, on 21 February, 'Vid i Do' online media published an article presenting problems with state aid payments which went to fake IDPs who just try to "parasite" on the situation titled 'Yatsenyuk: 150 thousand IDPs will no longer receive hundreds of millions grivnas', describing termination of state aid payments to the 'fake IDPs' called 'the fraudsters'.

Most of stories featured in the media from Ivano-Frankivsk oblast presented the problems of IDPs in a rather limited and superficial manner, with journalists showing that they are unable to work with different sources of information. Meanwhile, several local internet media (Фіртка.if.ua³, Galka.if.ua⁴) referred to the so-called 'refugees' (fraudsters, citizens of Ivano-Frankivsk oblasts) who go to Netherlands to register and obtain state aid formalize in the Netherlands material aid and return to their homeland of Ukraine.

While the media did not present variety of sources in their IDP-related reporting, they generally did not use ambiguous sources or did not present dubious and unverified information as facts against IDPs. Media in general used correct language and terminology and the monitoring team did not observe any media outlet addressing IDPs as refugees.

There were very few IDP-related stories in



³See the article titled "Media: Ivano-frankivsk people invented scheme, how to fraud money from the government of the Netherlands" from 18 February 2016 at: <http://firtka.if.ua/?action=show&id=99785>



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Khmelnysk media. If to comment on the only one IDP-related story featured on TV channel 'Podillya-Centre' in the program 'Podil panorama', the channel used correct language and terminology, balance of views and variety of sources. However, it should be noted that while preparing the story, journalists could have done more to provide a proper analysis and contextual information to the story. Miss Olena, an IDP with two children from Donetsk, told that upon her arrival she immediately had registered for assistance at the 'Caritas' charity fund. However, the story did not cover a more detailed analysis regarding the places where, except for the fund, IDPs could request assistance. Moreover, there was no information available regarding the state authorities that are supposed to provide assistance to such a category of citizens.

There were a very few IDP-related stories on Lviv TV channels. For example, ZIK TV Channel covered IDP-related stories in the framework of their Daily Review program (26 and 27 February 2016)⁵. The story was presented in a neutral manner but only provided an official point of view in the form of measures the government has taken vis-à-vis the state aid for IDPs. For instance, one of the stories broadcast on February 26 was dedicated to the anniversary of Crimea occupation. Similar to Lviv television, Lviv print media did not

provide ample coverage of IDP-related problems and issues either. The media reporting was rather item driven, without aiming for a long-term vision or more profound public discussion. By comparison, the Lviv online media, Zahid.net, Gal.info and Lviv portal, covered a wider range of topics than broadcast or print media, focusing not only on the Lviv region but on the entire Western part of Ukraine. However, in the second monitoring period, these outlets featured a combined total of only 11 stories devoted to IDP-related problems. These stories focused mainly on the official statement by the authorities, presenting the issues from a "power" perspective without balancing them by the opinions from IDPs. Moreover, journalists were generally not critical towards official statements by authorities and rarely did any proper fact checking.

Similar to other regions, media in Rivne oblast did not provide very active coverage of IDP-related issues either. At the same time, media in general used correct language and terminology and the monitoring team did not observe any media outlet addressing IDPs as refugees. The majority of stories were based on the official statement by the authorities, presenting the issues from a "power" perspective without balancing them by the opinions from IDPs or anyone else. It should be noted that Rivne media attempted to select proper language

and terminology when it comes to IDPs – not to distort the content of the stories.

For instance, on February 17, 'ERVE' website featured a story titled "In Rivne oblast more than three thousand IDPs live informing on the number of IDPs and the extent of state assistance IDPs receive. There was however no proper research and fact checking whether these data correspond to reality, whether IDPs are registered in a timely manner, or whether all IDPs have been offered the state aid. An interesting item was featured on RTB TV channel of the Rivne Oblast at 19.00 on 22 February 2016. It was titled "Native Language Day" and focused on internally displaced children during a festival devoted to Ukrainian language.

Similar to other regions, there was a general lack of stories and articles with a proper analysis of the IDP-related issues in Ternopil. In general, the media briefly covered topics such as social adaptation, presenting the stories mainly in a neutral manner and using correct language and terminology. For example, private channel TV-4 (which has good TV ratings) allocated only a very marginal coverage of IDP-related issues (5 seconds). As for online media, on February 22, the web-site 'Beyond Zbruch' featured a story titled "People's deputy from Ternopil oblast makes



⁴See the article titled "Netherlands devastated by Carpathian "refugees" who escape the war in Donbass" from 18 February 2016 at: <http://www.galka.if.ua/niderlandi-rozoryuyut-prikarpatski-bizhentsi-yaki-tikayut-vid-viyni-na-donbasi>

⁵See the stories at: <http://zik.ua/tv/video/34680> <http://zik.ua/tv/video/34716>



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money on IDPs from Donbass” informing that the Security Service of Ukraine jointly with the military procurator’s office disclosed illegal activity of some members of the Ternopil’s local city council who demanded money from Donbass IDPs in order to speed up processing of their documents.⁶

There was a general lack of stories and articles with a proper analysis of the IDP-related issues in Volyn. There were a few cases when media discriminated IDPs, featuring them in a negative way. For example, Volyn Nova newspaper published an article on 18 February 18 2016, on citizens from the Eastern part of Ukraine who arrived to Russia titled: ‘REFUGEE? TO SIBERIA!’. The monitoring team considered the title to be manipulative. At the same time, media avoided sensationalism when reporting on IDPs and there were a few cases when media focused on human stories. For example, the article in the newspaper ‘Volyn-Nova’ titled ‘Ousted by the war’ which featured a story of a family that was forced to leave its home because of the war. In addition, another example of a human story was an article in Volyn-Nova the newspaper published on 23 February titled ‘Aza, a Donetsk citizen: nobody can understand an IDP like another IDP’ which featured an IDP from Donetsk who came to Volyn to help other internally displaced persons and demobilized ATO warriors.

Similar to other regions, there was also a general lack of stories and articles with a proper analysis of the IDP-related issues in Zakarpattya. Local online media devoted most attention to IDP-related issues. However, the information was very superficial, limited to statistical data and statements by police. In addition, the monitoring team observed a few examples where IDPs were discriminated. For example, the website ‘Zakarpattya.net’ featured a story on 18 February 2016 titled ‘Four IDPs from Donetsk detained in Uzhhorod for cash robbery’ which included not only accusations in respect of some specific persons but also general negative assessments towards IDPs (the article also included negative words when referring to IDPs such as IDPs with dirty hands). In most of other materials, IDPs were presented in a neutral way but the stories lacked balance of views, with journalists using mainly official statements by authorities without a proper fact checking.



⁶See the item at: <http://zz.te.ua/deputat-z-ternopilschyny-nazhyvavsya-na-pereselentsyah>

⁷See the article at: Volyn Nova’ newspaper, Thursday, February 25, 2016, #1935