



Media coverage of Internally Displaced Persons in the Ukrainian mass media
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Media Monitoring Summary Report

East, North-Centre, South,
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 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 Khersonskiyi 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

- ★ There was a lack of IDP-related stories in general and those with a more analytical and investigative approach in particular.
- ★ In most of their stories, journalists merely reflected on the current situation with IDP, without aiming for a long-term vision or more profound public discussion on how to resolve problems of IDPs in a particular region.
- ★ The monitoring team identified a number of violations of professional standards.
- ★ Journalists generally did not question official statements by authorities or ask them probing questions and did not pay enough attention to verification of facts.
- ★ There were a few examples of materials that looked like they were paid for as they lacked some basic journalistic standards.
- ★ Media in general used correct language and terminology when addressing IDPs, without any clear attempt to discriminate and used picture and videos in a correct way, in line with the portrayed topics and issues.
- ★ There were, however, a few examples when media discriminated IDPs, featuring them in a negative way or referring to them as ‘refugees’.

- ★ There were instances of using somebody else’s stories and their republishing in some local media.
- ★ Media in general avoided sensationalism when reporting on IDPs.
- ★ There were some positive examples when media focused on human side of IDP stories.

3. QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The overall sample of monitored media in all 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 205 most popular and top-rated local outlets all around the country, divided as follows:

- ★ 50 local TV-stations – one state-owned and one or two major private channels per oblast;
- ★ 65 newspapers - at least one state-owned publication, several major private ones per oblast;
- ★ 90 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 1.4 per cent in monitored TV channels to 0.5 per cent in print media in the Southern regions; between 1.2 per cent in monitored TV channels to 0.6 per cent in print media in the Western regions; between 1.2 per cent in monitored TV channels to 1.6 per cent in print media in the North-central regions; and between 19.4 per cent in monitored TV channels to 3.2 per cent in print media in the Eastern regions).

The media in Eastern part of the country gave the biggest share of the IDP-related coverage whereas the media in the Western part devoted the smallest share.

The most covered topics were social adaptation and community life, state assistance, and ‘fake IDPs’, whereas the least covered topics were the role of church and health issues.

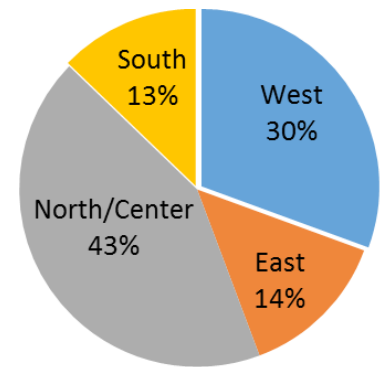
The most covered subjects in all monitored media were IDPs, NGOs, the central government, and the regional state administrations.

3.1 TV CHANNELS

50 monitored channels dedicated some 218

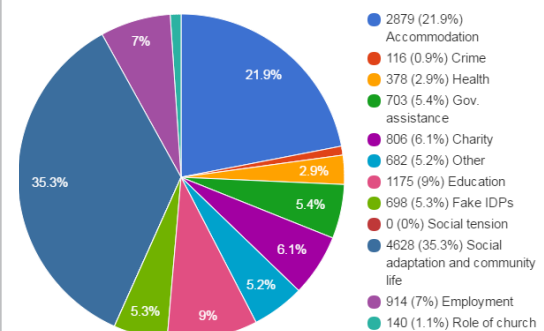
minutes (3.6 hours) of their news coverage to the issues concerning IDPs in the second monitoring period. It amounted to 1.4 per cent of total 261 hours of news programmes, what represents only some 16 min per day for all 50 monitored channels altogether, or some 19 seconds per channel a day.

CHART 1 (BELOW) The share of the coverage on all monitored TV channels devoted to different topics in the IDP-related stories.



The total time devoted to IDP-related stories by TV channels in four different regions was distributed as follows: in the Western part it was a combined total of 67 minutes; in the Northern and Central part it was some 94 minutes; in the Eastern part it was some 30 minutes; and in the Southern part it was 28 minutes.

The most covered topics were in particular social adaptation and community life (35.3% of total volume of IDP coverage), accommodation (21.9%), education (9%), employment (7%), charity (6.1%), state assistance (5.4%) and fake IDPs (5.3%). The least covered topics were the health issues (2.9%), the role of church (1.1%) and crime (0.9%). The TV channels from the Eastern part of Ukraine devoted more significant coverage to problems related to abuse of the status of IDPs (fake IDPs).





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CHART 2 (PREVIOUS PAGE) The share of the coverage on all monitored TV channels devoted to different topics in the IDP-related stories divided by four regions.

The most covered subjects in all monitored channels were IDPs themselves (47% of total volume of IDP coverage), followed by regional state administrations (14.5%), volunteers (14.4%), NGOs (10.9%), international organizations (6%) and the central government (3.4%).

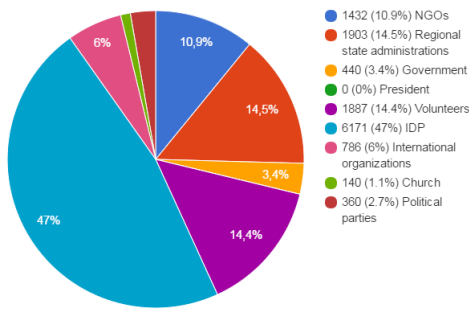
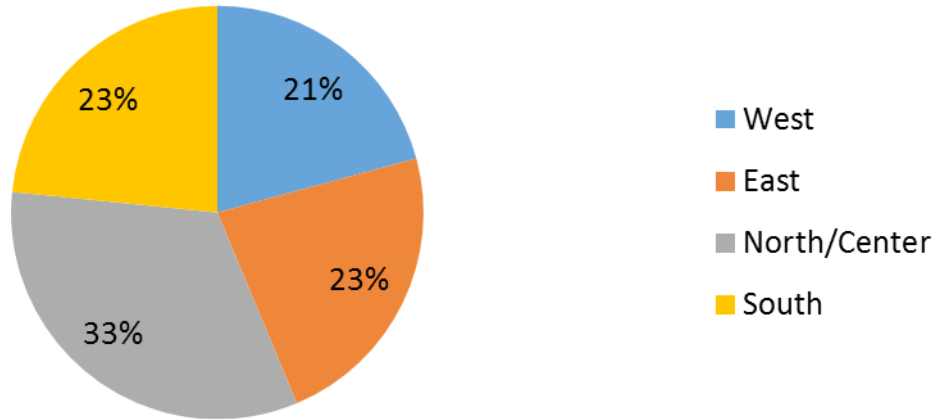


CHART 3 (ABOVE) The share of the coverage on all monitored TV channels devoted to different subjects (entities) in the IDP-related stories.

CHART 4 (TOP RIGHT) The share of the coverage on all monitored TV channels devoted to IDP themselves in IDP-related related stories divided by four regions.

Chart 4 shows the share of the coverage on all monitored TV channels devoted to IDPs themselves from a regional perspective. Most of the coverage was devoted by channels in the North/Center part of Ukraine followed by other three regions that allocated almost equal portions to IDP themselves. When looking at the share of the coverage given to IDPs themselves in comparison with other subjects in individual regions, it ranged from 79% of the IDP-related coverage in the North and Central part of Ukraine to 49.9 % in the Western part.

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. The other subjects who also received negative coverage were government and regional state administrations. While the government was portrayed mainly in negative and neutral manner, the regional state





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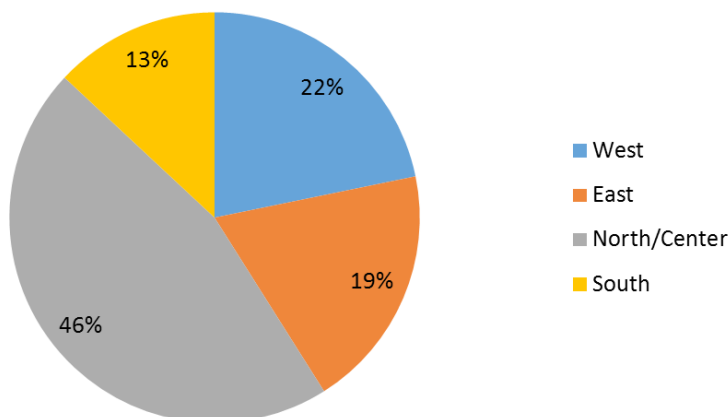
administrations were portrayed mainly in a positive and neutral way.

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

The total space (counted in the number of characters) devoted to IDP-related stories by newspapers in four different regions was distributed as follows: in the Western part it was a combined total of 41 040 characters; in the Northern and Central part it was 86 539 characters; in the Eastern part it was 36 313 characters; and in the Southern part it was 24 599 characters.

CHART 6 (RIGHT) The share of the IDP-related coverage of the total monitored coverage in all print media divided by four regions.



The most covered topics were social adaptation and community life (31.8%), government assistance (15.9%) and charity (11.9%). The least covered topics were role of church, business, health, crime and 'fake IDPs' (less than 2% altogether).

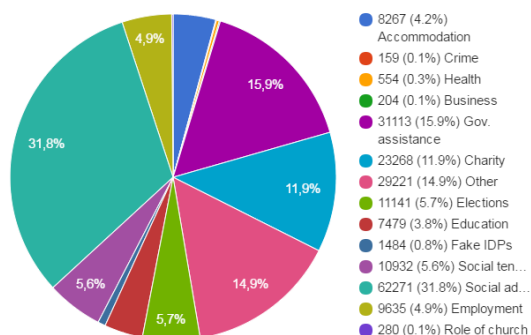
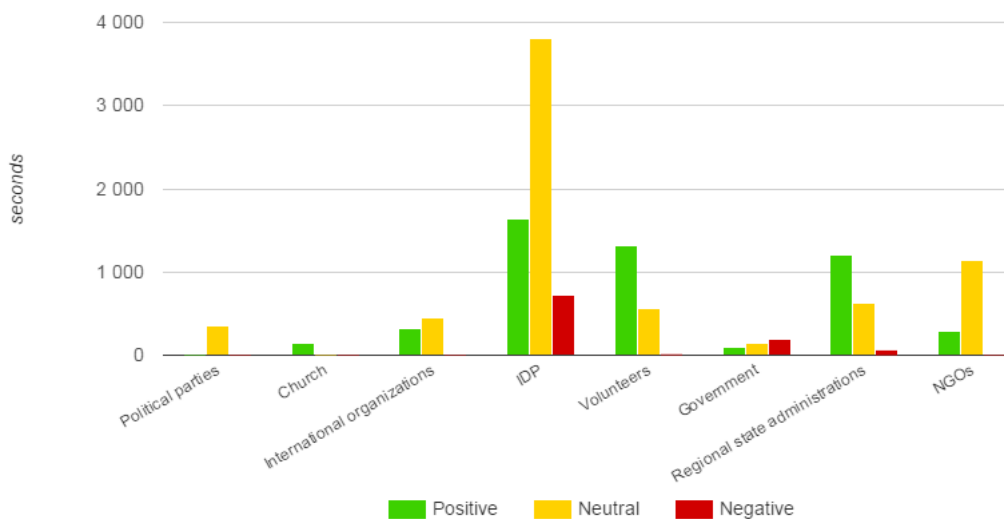


CHART 7 (LEFT) The share of the coverage on all monitored print media devoted to different topics in the framework of IDP-related stories

The total time devoted to IDP-related stories by TV channels in four different regions was distributed as follows: in the Western part it was a combined total of 67 minutes; in the Northern and Central part it was some 94 minutes; in the Eastern part it was some 30 minutes; and in the Southern part it was 28 minutes



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The share of the coverage devoted to IDPs themselves (in correlation to other monitored subjects) in the IDP-related stories ranged from almost 68 % of the coverage (devoted to IDP-related stories) in the Western part of Ukraine to 41 % in the Eastern part.

When looking at the coverage of monitored subjects in all four regions combined, the most covered subjects were IDPs themselves (59.2% of total volume of IDP-related coverage), followed by regional state administrations (18.9%), political parties (6.3%), and NGOs (5.2%).

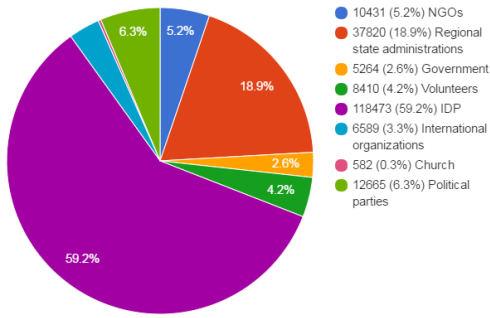


CHART 8 (ABOVE) The share of the coverage devoted to different subjects (entities) monitored in the framework of IDP-related stories on all monitored newspapers.

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. Regional state administrations were the only monitored subject to receive more negative than positive coverage.

CHART 10 (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.

3.3 ONLINE MEDIA

The total space (counted in the number of characters) devoted to IDP-related stories by online media in four different regions was distributed as follows: in the Western part it was a combined total of 46 695 characters; in the Northern and Central part it was 89 079 characters; in the Eastern part it

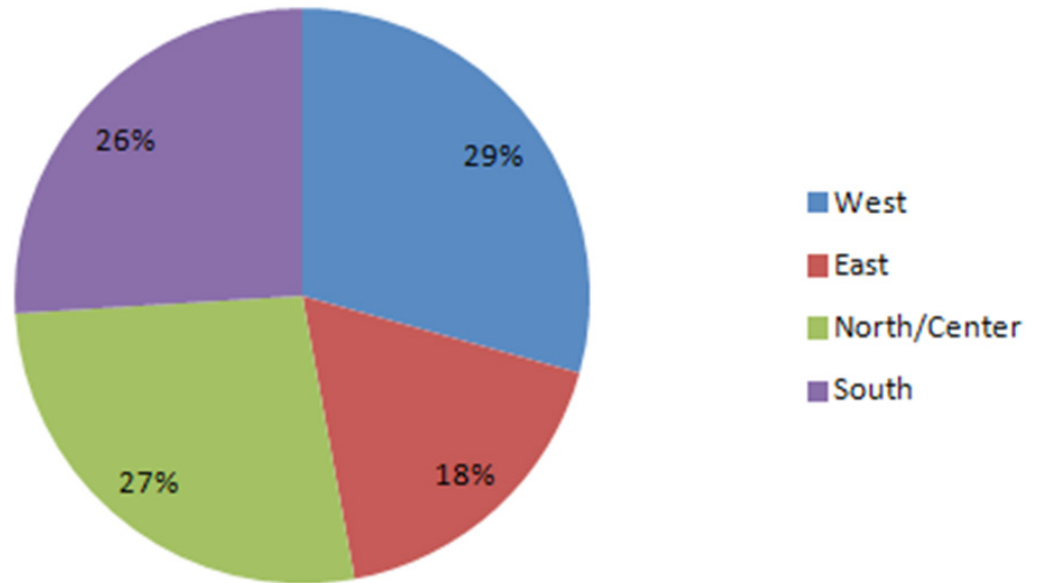
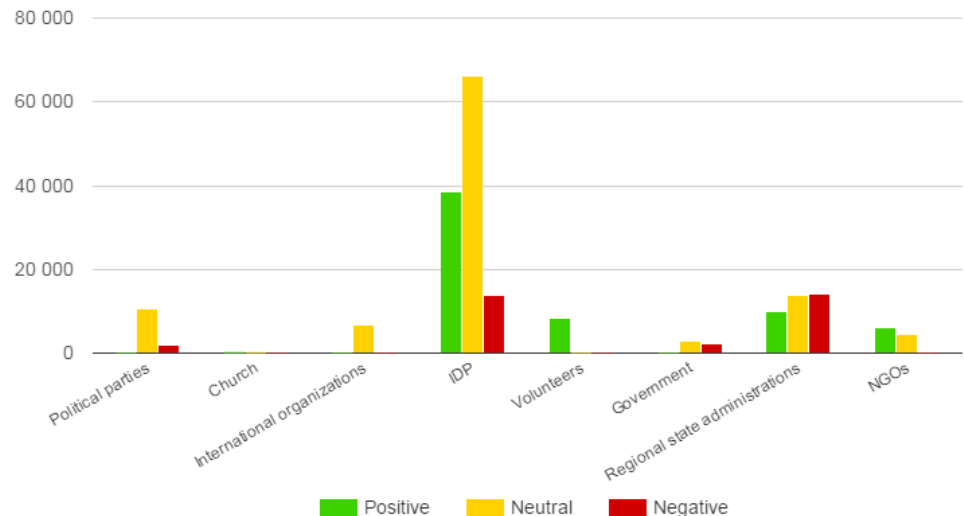


CHART 9 (ABOVE) The share of the coverage on all monitored print media devoted to IDPs per se in the IDP-related stories divided by four regions





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was 230 769 characters; and in the Southern part it was 121 273 characters.

CHART 11 (RIGHT) The share of the IDP-related coverage of the total monitored coverage in all print media divided by four regions.

The most covered topics in the regional online media were social adaptation and community life (21.2%), government assistance (18.1%), 'fake IDPs' (15%), accommodation (7.1%) and charity (5.5%). Other topics including social tension, crime, health, education, employment and business received less attention.

CHART 12 (BELOW) The share of the coverage on all monitored newspapers devoted to different topics in the IDP-related stories divided by four regions.

The share of the coverage devoted to IDPs themselves in the IDP-related stories ranged from 69.6% of the coverage (devoted to IDP-related stories) in the Northern/Central part of Ukraine to 35.7% in the Eastern part.

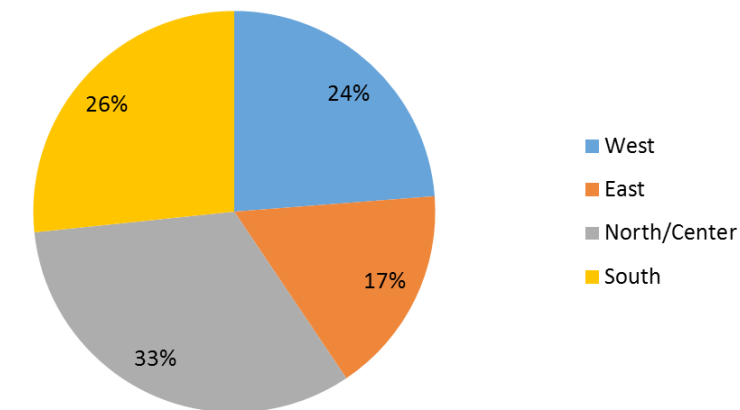
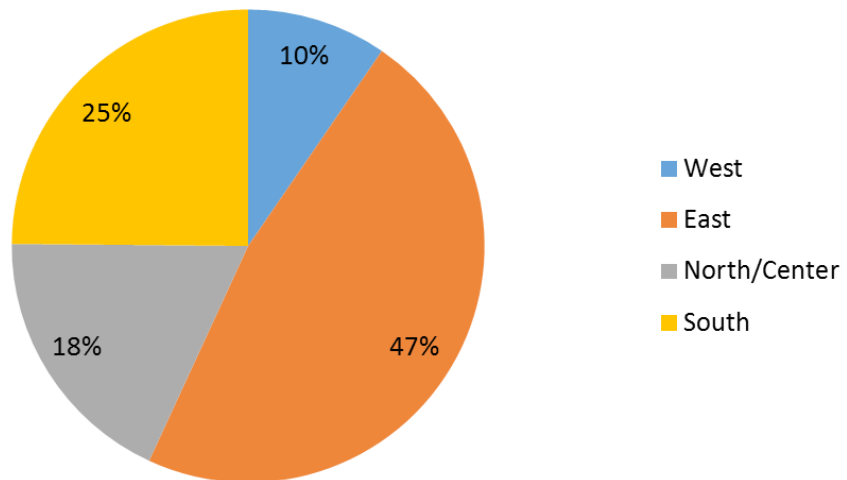
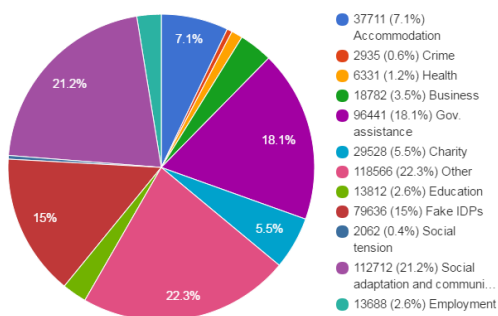


CHART 13 (ABOVE) The share of the coverage on all monitored online media devoted to IDPs per se in the IDP-related stories divided by four regions.

In most of their stories, media merely reflected on the current situation with IDP, without aiming for a long-term vision or more profound public discussion on how to resolve problems of IDPs in a particular region



The most covered subjects in all monitored channels were IDPs themselves (48.3% of total volume of IDP coverage), followed by government and NGOs (18.9% and 18.6% respectively), regional state administrations (8.7%) and international organizations (4.1%). Volunteers, church and political parties received less than 1% each.

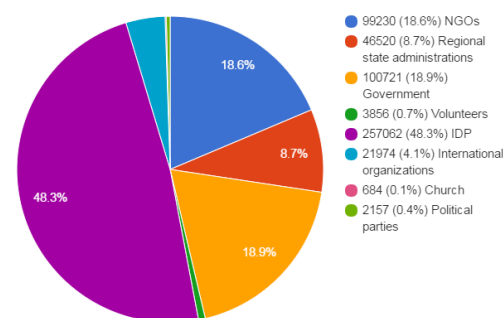


CHART 14 (ABOVE) The share of the coverage devoted to different subjects (entities) monitored in the framework of IDP-related stories on all monitored newspapers.

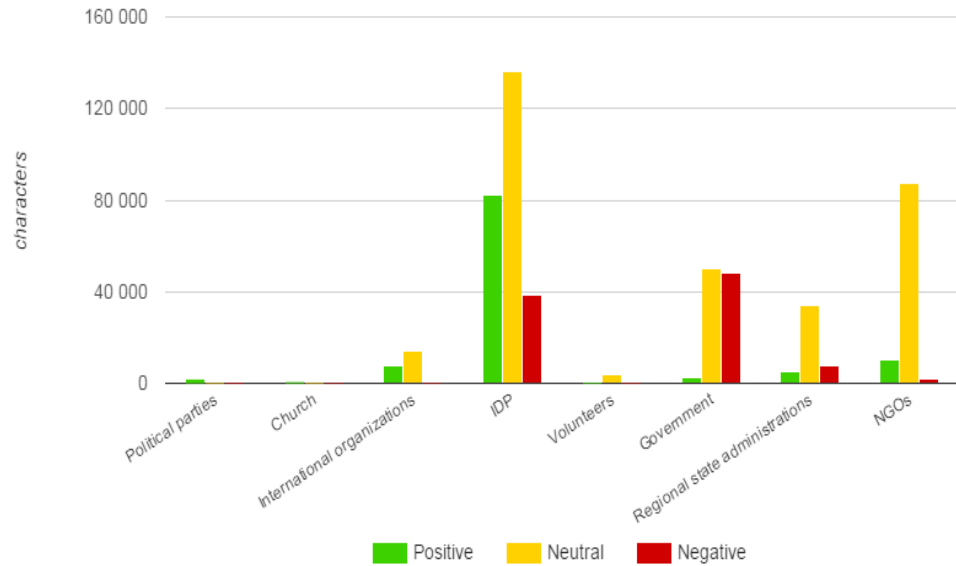


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In terms of tone, while IDPs were presented mostly in a neutral and positive way, their coverage amounted also to a small portion of negative information. The biggest portion of negative information was devoted to central government. Other subjects received mainly neutral coverage.

CHART 15 (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.



4. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

There was a general lack of IDP-related stories in the majority of monitored regions. Moreover, it can be said that materials providing analytical and investigative approach were largely missing. In most of their stories, media merely reflected on the current situation with IDP, without aiming for a long-term vision or more profound public discussion on how to resolve problems of IDPs in a particular region. In addition, journalists generally did not question official statements by authorities or ask them probing questions and did not pay enough attention to verification of facts.

At the same time, however, there is a need to mention that there were also some positive examples when media focused on human side of IDP stories. For example, on 18 February 2016, the Cherkassy newspaper 'Nova doba' published an article describing how three small children were saved from fire by a 15-year old IDP in Bukovyna². In addition, Vinnytsya TV channel BITA featured a story on IDP with special needs, illustrating specific problems IDPs on wheelchair face, how they cope with them and what should be done to resolve them². Zaporizhya web-site '061' created a specific section of video-stories on IDPs who live in Kiev and describe the way they arranged their households. Moreover, on 18 February, newspaper Molodyj bukovynets and a local TV channel Chernivtsi (in a program called Unified country featured on 17 February) familiarized their readers and viewers with a successful experience of employment and adaptation of IDPs in Chernivtsi and Slovyansk done through entrepreneurial initiatives by IDPs themselves. In another example, TBA TV channel featured a story of an IDP family adaptation through which it raised the issue of land allocation for the construction of houses for IDPs



²To see the item, see the Vita news from 26 February at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=75bFOhg8AZI&feature=youtu.be>



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(featured on 17 and 20 February).

While there were IDP-related stories where media presented different points of view and using various sources, there were a number of stories which lacked balance or some other professional standards. For example, the monitoring team came across some materials which were aimed at promoting particular politicians in connection with the IDP-related stories. On 26 February, the Luhansk-based online publication *Tribun* featured a story titled 'An MP assists children of IDPs in the Luhansk region to have his voice heard in the society'. It was dedicated to activities of Member of Bilokurakin District Council Tetyana Vizma, representing Petro Poroshenko's Block 'Solidarity'. The owner of the 'Tribun' is Denis Denyshchenko, who at the same time works as the Head of the Luhansk oblast organization also representing the same party as Ms. Vizma.

The monitoring team identified a number of cases when negative tone was used to address IDPs. For example, journalists of Kharkiv-based ATN and OTB-novyny did not present any independent views to counterbalance the official statement according to which tens of thousands of IDPs were placed on the list of security chiefs (featured on ATH on 24 February), with IDP welfare payments suspended due to the suspicion of bribery. In another example, some Ivano-Frankivsk online media featured a story of "fake IDPs" (citizens of Ivano-Frankivsk oblast who allegedly acted as if they were IDPs) who allegedly sought material assistance in the

Netherlands and then returned to Ukraine (Фіртка. if.ua, 'Mass media: the citizens of Ivano-Frankivsk design scheme to get money out of the government of the Netherlands' galka.if.ua, 'Netherlands destroyed by refugees from Prykarpattya who escaped from the war in Donbass?'³).

Moreover, some local media discriminated IDPs by portraying them negatively. For example, on 17 February TV-5 from Zaporizhzhya broadcast an item covering a charity campaign of volunteers from the 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 the 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.

In addition, on 21 February the Chernivtsi-based online publication "From and to" presented IDPs in a negative manner in a story titled 'Yatsenyuk: 150 thousand IDPs not to receive hundreds of millions any longer' (stating BBC as the original source) due to termination of state assistance payments to 'fake' IDPs referred to swindlers.

In addition, the monitoring team observed instances of open discrimination against IDPs. For

example, in a story featured on a website called *Zakarpattya.net* on 18 February titled "In Uzhhorod four IDPs from Donetsk who stole money from a store detained"; in which journalists used words such as 'sticky fingers of IDPs' or IDPs investigated for a crime'. In the story, the journalist did not name specific culprits but created negative image of a socially vulnerable group - IDPs.

Only in a very few cases, the media reported on power abuse and criticised the authorities. For example, on 22 February, the website 'Behind Zbruch 22' published a story titled 'MP from Ternopil oblast earns money on IDPs from Donbass' dedicated to a joint disclosure by the Security Service of Ukraine and military prosecutor's office of illegal activities of an MP who was accused of demanding money from IDPs from Donbas⁴.

There were some stories where the monitoring team observed using of incorrect terminology. For example, in a material published on 24 February the Kharkiv-based website *www.057.ua* used a term fake refugees while referring to real IDPs⁵. Another example of incorrect terminology was when the Zaporizhzhya-based website *Golos* referred to IDPs as refugees (on 15 February in the title 'Approximately 7 thousand refugees left Zaporizhzhya oblast').

Furthermore, the monitoring team also identified instances where media used pictures and illustrations incorrectly. For example, on 17



⁴To see the story, visit :<http://zz.te.ua/deputat-z-ternopilschyny-nazhyvavsya-na-pereselentsyah>

⁵To see the story, visit: <http://www.057.ua/news/1134196>



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February the website 'ProCherk' published an article titled 'In 2016 the benefits for IDPs will not be reduced' – a picture of children from an unknown campaign was used (they keep in their hands a poster reading in Ukrainian 'We love Ukraine' and flags of Afghanistan and Rwanda are shown).

There were also some cases evaluated by the monitoring team as discriminatory against IDPs through a negative coverage. For example, on 18 February, the newspaper 'Volyn-Nova' published a story on citizens from the Eastern part of Ukraine who were relocated to Russia titled: 'REFUGEE? TO SYBIR!'. The monitoring team considered the title to be manipulative.

There are not only IDPs but also some media that were forced out of the Crimean peninsula and currently operate out of other Ukrainian regions – for example Crimea Realities web site. It featured detailed materials where journalists intended to analyse specific issues. 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 IDPs⁶.



⁶For more information, pls 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>