



Media coverage of Internally Displaced Persons in the Ukrainian mass media
Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Kherson, Mykolayiv, Odessa and Zaporizhya regions
Funded by the European Union

Media Monitoring Report

South of Ukraine
October 2016

Prepared by
Spilnyi Prostir (Ukraine)
MEMO 98 (Slovakia)

Thomson Foundation
+44 20 3440 2440
46 Chancery Lane
London WC2A 1JE

thomsonfoundation.org





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 2016¹.

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 conflict through enhanced independence and quality content as well as by strengthening regional media

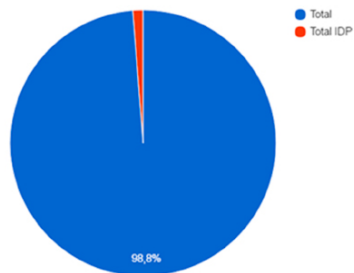


CHART 1. The share of IDPs-related coverage of the total monitored coverage in all monitored TV channels during the fourth monitoring period.
WestTv

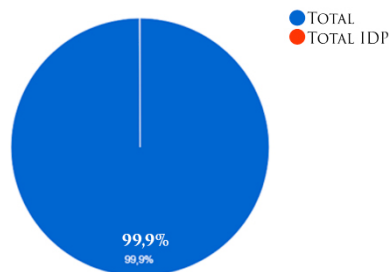


CHART 2. The share of the IDPs-related coverage of the total monitored coverage in all print media during the fourth monitoring period
WestPr



¹All the previous reports can be found at <http://regionalvoices.eu/en/monitoring> or <http://www.prostir-monitor.org/reports/>.



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. Spilnyi 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 Southern re-

gions of Ukraine was sufficiently representative and included 35 media outlets of this region. In comparison with the former monitoring wave, this sample underwent minimum changes. A newspaper 'Cryms'ka svitylytsya' that re-started its work beyond the boundaries of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea as well as television channel Chornomors'ka TRC that restored its broadcasting activities in the territory controlled by the Ukrainian government were added.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

* The monitored media in the Southern Ukraine provided somewhat superficial coverage of IDPs – they were covered mainly in the context of other themes and problems.

* The media in the Crimean peninsula covered IDPs-related issued most actively. On contrary, in Odessa and Kherson oblasts, some TV channels generally ignored IDPs.

* Positively, the monitoring did not reveal any cases of bias or distortion. At the same time, no IDPs-abusing statements were noticed. Nevertheless, a lack of analytical materials and investigative stories remains to be one of the observed problems.

* Additionally, there were a significant number of materials aimed at informing and also at resolving specific problems².

* Concurrently, the monitoring revealed some instances of that resembled paid materials (so-called 'plugola') in Mykolayiv TV and Zaporizhya print media. In addition, some media outlets presented their stories in a rather unappealing and dry manner despite an access to information and sources³.

* The media were overall balanced in their reporting. However, in Mykolayiv oblast, there were many instances of one-sided coverage, where the journalists often sourced only the official local

² Krym. Realii (Crimea.Reality) online media, 10 October. The material 'Resolution number 1035 needs to be reviewed – experts' informed about a decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine that regulates transfer of personal belongings through the administrative border with Crimea and which according to the human rights activists breaches the law for the defence of rights and freedoms of IDPs. There were a number of instances of positive practice on IDPs' life at a new residence. For instance, the features aired on 10 and 16 October by Mykolayiv TV concerning business-incubator project 'Druhe dykhannya' ('Second breathing') as well as the material by Kherson-based oblast state tele-radiobroadcasting company 'Skifiya' on the successful resolution of the problems of social adaptation problems experienced by the-IDP-students.

³ Trasa E95 online media, 11 October. A feature on IDPs where there is a threat of eviction from 'Kuyalnyk' sanatorium (<http://trassae95.com/all/archive/2016/10/11/odesskaya-oga-pomozhet-civilizovanno-vyselitj-pereselencev-iz-sanatoriya-kuyalnik-34295.html>)



Media Monitoring Report (South of Ukraine)

Media coverage of Internally Displaced Persons in the Ukrainian mass media p4

3.1 TV CHANNELS

During monitoring wave three the monitored TV channels dedicated to IDPs-related issues a bit more than 45 minutes (during the 3rd wave it was around 18 minutes), some 1.7 per cent of total nearly 44 hrs of news content. On a daily basis it meant that each TV channel provided to the topic the coverage of 18 seconds (it was 8 seconds in the course of the previous media monitoring wave).

As for the topics, the accommodation for IDPs was overwhelmingly the most covered IDP-related topic (58.1 per cent). It was followed by social adaptation & community life, and education which received 19.4 and 13.6 per cent, respectively. Other themes, such as state aid (3.2 per cent), charity (1.1 per cent) or health care (0.7 per cent) were presented only marginally.

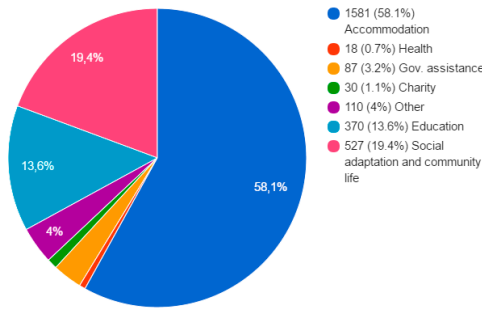


CHART 4. The share of different topics in IDP-related coverage on all monitored TV regional channels. SouthTVTopics

Concerning the monitored subjects, the most IDPs-related coverage focused on the IDPs per se (81.8 per cent). Other subjects were presented to a lesser extent, as follows: NGOs (7.9 per cent), regional state administrations (6.5 per cent), whereas government and volunteers received less than 2 per cent of the relevant coverage.

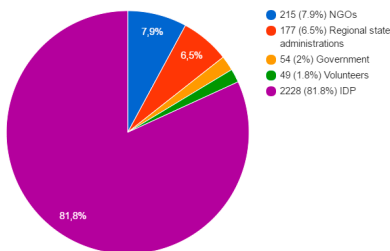


CHART 5. The share of different subjects (entities) in IDP-related coverage on all monitored TV channels. SouthTVSub

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

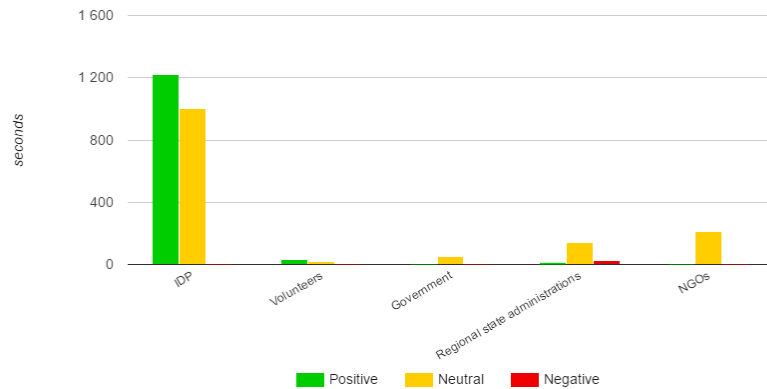


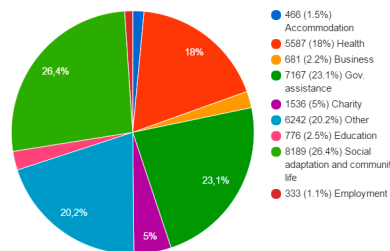
CHART 6. The breakdown by tonality for the monitored subjects (entities) in IDP-related coverage on all monitored TV channels of the region. SouthTVTone

In terms of tone, the monitored TV channels portrayed almost all the subjects in the IDP-related coverage in a neutral and positive manner. The regional state administrations were presented also in a negative manner (14% of all information concerning this subject). It was a consequence of the report aired by Pershyi Miskyi TV channel from Odessa, informing about the IDPs who were forced to leave the Kuyalnik sanatorium due to unsatisfactory living conditions (no electricity and water), provided by the regional authorities⁴.

3.2 PRESS

The coverage of the IDPs-related issues slightly increased during this monitored period (1.3 per cent in comparison with 1 per cent in the previous wave), however, it generally stayed on a very low level indicating rather indifferent attitude of local publications towards these issues.

If reporting, the following topics belonged to the most covered - social adaptation and community life (26.4 per cent), state aid (23.1 per cent) and health (18 per cent). On the other side, only marginal coverage received themes, such as education (2.5 per cent), health (2.2 per cent), accommodation (1.5 per cent) and employment (1.1 per cent).



⁴ Pershyi Miskyi TV channel, 17 October 2016, 'IDPs from the Donbas leave the sanatorium "Kuyalnik" and go back to the East', available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ncRSpBP_pCA

As for the monitored subjects, the IDPs themselves received by far a dominant share of print media coverage (88.4 per cent). Of all other subjects only two were provided with a coverage over 1 per cent - NGOs (8 per cent) and volunteers (2.8 per cent).

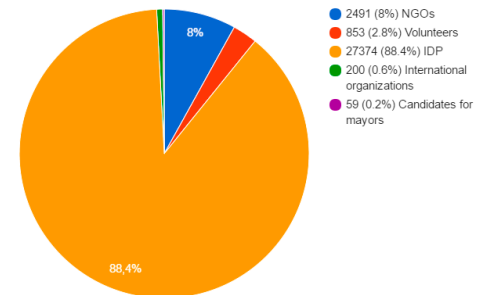


CHART 9. The breakdown by shares of different subjects in IDPs-related coverage provided by all the monitored regional newspapers SouthPressSub

As for the tone of the coverage, all the monitored subjects were presented in an exclusively neutral and positive tone.

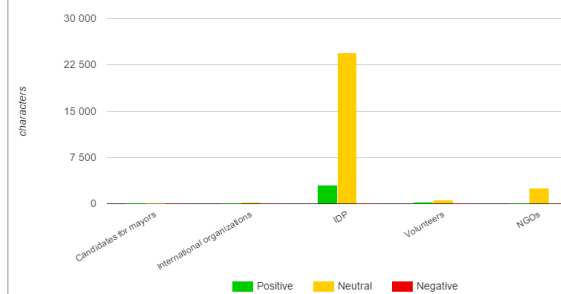


CHART 9. The breakdown by tonality for the monitored subjects (entities) in IDPs-related coverage provided by all the monitored regional newspapers SouthPressTone



3.3. ONLINE MEDIA

The monitored online media devoted to IDP-related stories total of 79 182 characters or nearly 44 pages of A4 format. In a comparison, it is less than in the course of the third media monitoring wave (when it was 121,582 characters, or 67 standard pages of A4 format).

Most of the coverage was provided to topics, such as health (23.8 per cent), accommodation (11.2 per cent) and business (9.6 per cent). Instead, topics like charity (3.6 per cent), social adaptation and community life (3.1 per cent), state aid (2.3 per cent) or 'fake IDPs' (1.1 per cent) were presented in a negligible manner. Significant share of publications were also devoted to the topics that were not followed specifically (indicated as 'other'). In particular to the citizen and human rights of IDPs that was widely covered in the context of the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers regulating the transportation of goods through administration border of Crimea⁵.

Another example of such specific topic was a material about orphan children from Crimea whose fate is not known to the Ukrainian authorities⁶.

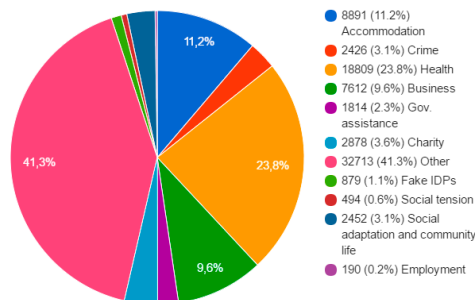


CHART 10. The breakdown by shares of different topics in IDPs- related coverage provided by the monitored regional online media SouthIntTopics

Among the monitored subjects, the coverage focused primarily (as in all other types of the media) on IDPs per se (76.1 per cent). From among other subjects, NGOs (6,9 per cent), regional administrations (6.2 per cent) and international organizations (4.5 per cent) received somewhat larger coverage, while go-

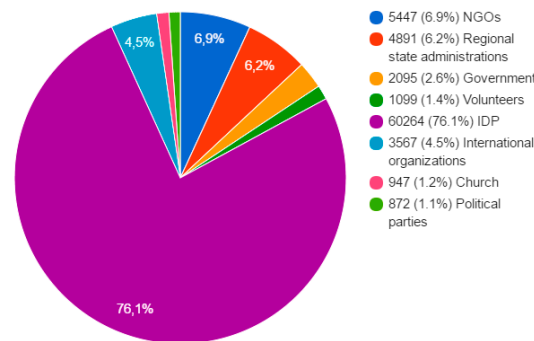
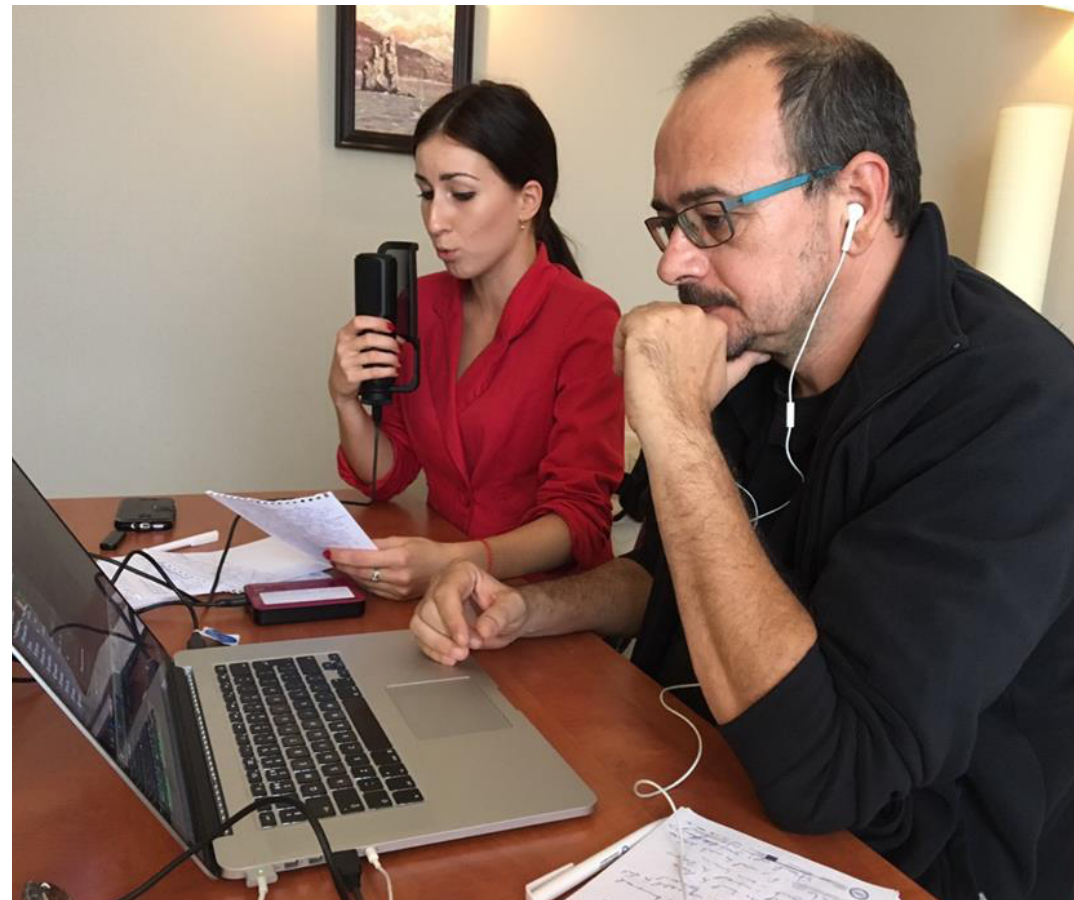


CHART 11. The breakdown by shares of different subjects in IDPs- related coverage provided by all monitored regional online media SouthIntSub

vernment (2.6 per cent), volunteers (1.4 per cent), church (1.2 per cent) and political parties (1.1 per cent) were provided with rather marginal portion of the relevant coverage.

In online media, neutral manner of presentation dominated in coverage of most of the monitored subjects. At the same time, some subjects, the government in particular (regional state administrations to lesser extent) were presented in a negative tone as well (67 and 23 per cent of all information about these subjects, respectively). Such coverage was connected to the IDPs who suffer from hardships while seeking new homes and jobs after being displaced, with the problems attributed to the respective authorities. In addition, there was a story reporting on a power abuse related to the IDPs' social payments⁷.

5 Krym. Realii (Crimea.Reality) online media, 10 October 2016, 'Resolution number 1035 need to be reviewed – experts' at, available at <http://ru.krymr.com/a/news/28042733.html>

6 Krym. Realii (Crimea.Reality) online media, 16 October 2016, 'In Ukraine, is awareness of the fate of only 60 orphans from the Crimea - Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine', available at <http://ru.krymr.com/a/news/28057059.html>

7 Kherson Online, 21 October, 'In Skadovsk Security Service of Ukraine unmasked the officials who organized the social payments for pseudo-IDPs', available at <http://khersonline.net/novosti/kriminal/69709-v-skadovske-sbu-razoblachila-chi-novnikov-organizovavshih-poluchenie-socypilat-psevdo-peresel-encam.html>



4 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The qualitative analysis of the fourth media monitoring period revealed that in the Crimea the 'IDP-media' (media outlets which were forced to relocate their offices outside of occupied territories) were most active in covering IDPs-related issues. The monitoring did not reveal any cases of bias or distortion in the aired or published materials, nor were noticed any IDPs-abusing statements from the side of journalists. At the same time, most of the the materials remained balanced in their tone.

Generally, the journalists' interest to the theme of IDPs significantly decreased. For comparison, while in the course of the previous wave online media devoted the issue over 121 thousands characters, and the TV channels in their prime time news broadcast it nearly daily, during the fourth monitoring wave the online media covered the issue with over 79 thousands characters and TV channels showed the IDPs only in some reports.

Meanwhile, it is noteworthy to mention a significant number of materials aimed at resolving some problems. For example, the online media QHA reported about the launch of a new IDPs-related service - a discount and benefits card. It was initiated by the NGO 'Ukrainian National Association of IDPs' that negotiated discounts with private schools, cafes and cinemas⁸. Also, the 'Krym. Realii' (Crimea. Reality) online media that informed about a decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine that regulates transfer of personal belongings through the administrative border with Crimea and which according to the human rights activists breaches the law for the defence of rights and freedoms of IDPs⁹. The newspaper "Evening Odessa" published the materials about the legal center useful for the IDPs seeking legal advice¹⁰.

The media of the **Zaporizhya oblast** provided rather passive coverage of IDPs. In most of the cases, the journalists covered the IDPs-related issues by the references to the authorized body, often without any visit to the actual side. All the coverage was exclusively factual and the principle of balance was adhered to in vast majority of the reports. As far as the language and terminology is concerned, the media presented reports in a correct way and

8 QHA online media, 20 October, 'The IDPs will have their 'Kyiv Citizens cards'', available at: <http://qha.com.ua/ru/obschestvo/ua-pereselentsyev-poyavyatsya-svoi-karti-kiyevlyan/166829>

9 Krym. Realii (Crimea.Reality) online media, 10 October 2016, the material 'Resolution number 1035 needs to be reviewed – experts', available at <http://ru.krym.com/a/news/28042733.html>

10 Vechernyaya Odessa newspaper, 18 October 2016, #117, 'Death in the occupied territory: how to obtain a death certificate'

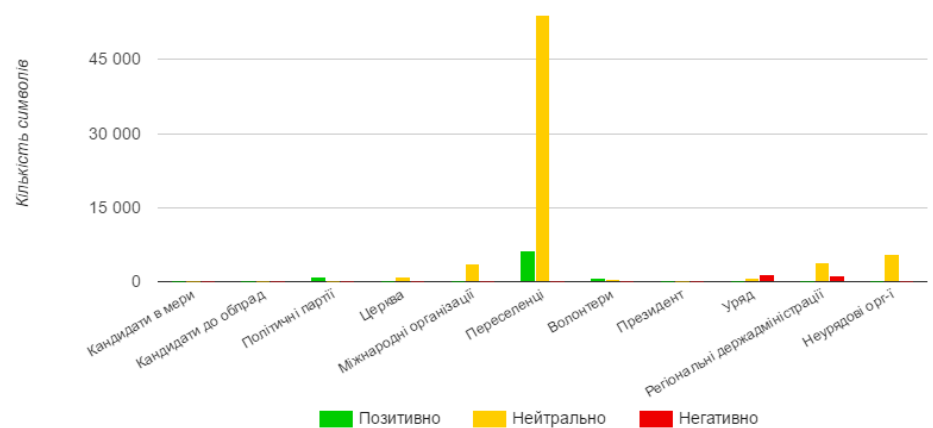


CHART 11. The breakdown by tonality for the monitored subjects (entities) in IDP-related coverage provided by all the monitored online media. SouthIntTone

did not use any biased language when referring to the IDPs. Positively in contrast to the previous monitoring waves, instead of 'refugees', the media opted for the term 'IDPs' more often. The journalists tended to avoid sensationalism in the coverage of IDPs.

It is also important to note that media reported on practical challenges of a day-to-day life, primarily healthcare and education. For instance, the Oblast state tele-radio company TRC Zaporizhya informed on the eye surgery problems of the oblast residents. As reported, besides the citizens, IDPs are given access to similar services as well and are enabled to address the department for additional medical assistance¹¹. In another instance, the report of TV-5 was dedicated to the difficulties of the 'inception' campaign at kindergartens. As presented, in some areas, namely in Berdyans'k this is an acute problem with only 50 per cent of kids under-six admitted to kindergartens and it appeared that such low rate was caused by the IDP-status of the applicants¹². The materials on this theme were humanized. For instance, the feature on kindergartens highlighted the story of the family that moved from Donbass and made their best to make some admission arrangements for a kid in the kindergarten.

In **Mykolayiv oblast**, the monitoring revealed a lack of reports on IDPs during the fourth monitoring

11 Oblast state tele-radio company TRC Zaporizhya, 13 October 2016, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M5D-6blneKoA> (from 21:37 to 23:54 min)

12 TV5 channel, 20 October 2016, 'Summary of the Day', available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fav6fCOoU&index=2&list=PLRv76fVAljWpntyxyuV0-vrIO6p6qmg2Z> (from 16:45 to 21:30 min)

wave, in both broadcast and print media, with no investigative or analytical reports offered. At the same time, the presented materials were regularly not balanced and without any relevant research or a focus on specifics of IDPs. Similarly, nearly all the monitored information lacked the balance, as the journalists failed to introduce different sources and often limited their reporting to one-sided stories. On the other hand, media overall deployed correct language and terminology in their IDP-related coverage and avoided sensationalism while unveiling the features on IDPs.

On 10 and 16 October TC 'Mykolayiv' featured the very same feature in two different programmes (in daily news 'Television novyny of Mykolayiv oblast' as well as in a weekly summary 'Dot the I'). It was dedicated to the project of a business incubator 'Second breath' that is being arranged in the Mykolayiv oblast. In comparison with the past, also disabled and the IDPs took part alongside the participants of Anti-Terroristic Operation (ATO). The project objective is to assist the vulnerable groups get adapted to the hard living conditions and help them find their place in the new living conditions. The project foresees the provision of psychological consultancies, support of business coaches on projects or ideas of the project participants. The feature included a 'humanized story' of a manager of the current project, who was a participant of the former project. The monitoring team fixed some instances which resembled paid materials (so-called 'plugola') where the information of promotional nature is presented as news story. It was dedicated to the activities of Nadiya Ivanova, an oblast council deputy, who took



one day to visit all the people requesting the aid, including a family of IDPs¹³. Similar features were also noted in the report about the help provided to the IDPs by The Ukrainian Perspective foundation chaired by Olexander Vilkul, a deputy for the Opposition Bloc¹⁴. While the information on the Foundation's activities was obtained from its press service, the report did not offer any fact-checking or information concerning similar help provided by other foundations. In addition, the IDPs were referred to as 'refugees' in the report.

The monitoring revealed that IDPs did not attract any special attention of Odessa media and they provided only limited coverage of IDPs - 1.9 per cent of total news programmes' content. Nevertheless, it represented a significant increase against the last media monitoring wave (in June 2016) with just 0.6 per cent. There were some instances where media focused on pertinent problems¹⁵. However, the media completely ignored the topic or context of the 'Kuyalnyk' sanatorium, which resonated in a whole country¹⁶. On the other side, Odessa media covered some positive instances of resolving problems and useful initiatives concerning the IDPs¹⁷.

The newspapers covered the IDP-related issues in a neutral tone and avoided sensationalism. However, they did not offer more comprehensive insights aimed at resolving problems. Instead, the journalists most often identified the problem through the official statements of the authorities, without any critical analysis or without an aim to generate a more broader civic forum at the local level to address the problem.

The media in **Kherson oblast** provided little coverage to IDPs. Television channels did not focus on IDP-related issues and did not disclose them. 'YATV' channel did not produce any single material or even a reference to them.

'Skifiya' oblast state tele-radio company was more active and provided some coverage on the topic –

¹³ Mykolayiv TV, 13 October.

¹⁴ Subbota Plus newspaper, 20 October, 'Three hundred of IDP families have received assistance from the Vilkul Foundation'

¹⁵ Trasa E95 online media, 11 October 2016, 'Odessa Oblast state administration to help evict IDPs from 'Kuyalnyk' sanatorium', available at <http://trassae95.com/all/archive/2016/10/11/odesskaya-oga-pomozhet-civilizovanno-vyselittj-pereselencev-iz-sanatoriya-kuyalnjnik-34295.html>

¹⁶ Odessa oblast authorities in 2014 dedicated the Kuyalnyk' sanatorium for the IDPs, however, the facility suffered continuous problems with water and electricity. As a consequence, the IDPs were forced to move to other regions or return to the occupied territories.

¹⁷ Trasa E95 online media, 20 October 2016, '300 kids from near-front zone to rest in Odessa', available at <http://trassae95.com/all/archive/2016/10/20/300-detej-iz-prifrontovoj-zony-priedut-na-otdyh-v-odessu-34522.html>.





on 12 October it covered social adaptation problems of the IDPs-students', whereas on 19 October, the journalists dedicated to IDPs a separate and original, channel-produced, report, a rare example in comparison with traditionally marginal coverage within other topics or taken from other sources. The most noteworthy was the approach as the journalists who arranged a special trip to Dnipropetrovs'k oblast where they covered three separate stories concerning social adaptation of IDPs, including different representatives of IDPs. In this full-fledged analytical material they avoided sensationalism and adhered to the principle of balance preserving correct terminology alongside. The presented IDPs shared their living stories at their new residences, including those related to the private business or activities in the civic organizations.

Among all the Kherson-based media, the 'Vhoru' newspaper was the most powerful in providing the most active and relatively balanced coverage of IDPs. Over the monitoring period, IDPs were covered in five materials. For instance, the publication 'How 32 thous. hryvnia turn eight'¹⁸ unveiled how, thanks

¹⁸ Vhoru newspaper, 13 October 2016, 'How 32 thous. hryvnia turn eight'.

to the intrusion of the legal enforcement officers, some doctors failed to steal some money from the-IDP. Another article¹⁹ tells about accommodation, access to healthcare services and other IDPs problems through life stories of the IDPs who were clients of free lawyer consultancy of the Kherson Regional Charity and Health Foundation. IDPs, lawyer, the chaplain and a psychologist are quoted. The stories are supplied with the contact information for receiving the services.

In the view to the noticed problems with compliance of the professional media-standards, in particular, by posting of 'plugola', a number of recommendations on how to improve the IDP-related coverage is proposed:

- o To raise the number of materials concerning the IDPs, most notably of analytical and investigative nature.
- o To publicize more 'human-based stories'.
- o To follow editorial policy of some media

¹⁹ Vhoru newspaper, 20 October, 'The warm heart of the steppe Chaplynka', available at <http://vgoru.org/index.php/lyustratsiya/item/8431-teploe-serdtse-stepnoj-chaplynki>

(in particular newspaper Vhoru).

- o To reject dissemination of 'plugola' features as inadmissible.

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.