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PIN Protection Monitoring Report

April-June 2025

Eastern and Southern Ukraine

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	2
Contextual updates.....	3
Key Findings	4
Research methodology	5
Priority needs and access to services.....	6
The situation of older persons and persons with disabilities	9
The situation of women.....	10
The situation of children.....	11
Freedom of movement and restrictions on mobility	12
Civil status and documents.....	14
Standard of living.....	15
Housing, land and property.....	17
Social services.....	19
Safety and security	20
Recommendations	21
Annexes.....	22

Introduction

This report presents the results of the second round of protection monitoring conducted from April to June 2025 in eastern Ukraine (in Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, and Donetsk oblasts), and in Mykolaiv oblast in the country's south.

The aim of the protection monitoring, is to identify trends in the protection situation, determine risks and threats directly affecting the well-being and safety of the civilian population, highlight key issues crucial for the affected population, and identify major barriers to accessing critical services in the oblasts under study.

The data obtained in the second round allows for detecting changes in the protection environment compared to the previous round (January to March), identifying new protection challenges, and refining priorities for humanitarian response within existing and future programs. This contributes to more informed strategic planning and decision-making in humanitarian assistance

The oblasts covered by this monitoring remain among the most vulnerable in the context of the humanitarian crisis caused by the full-scale war. Ongoing shelling, damage to civilian infrastructure, forced displacement, and limited access to basic services create significant challenges to ensuring human rights and providing humanitarian protection¹.

¹ **United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).** (2025, January). *Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2025*

Contextual updates

As of the second quarter of 2025, the security situation in eastern and southern Ukraine remains tense. In Kharkiv Oblast, the number of attacks on the city of Kharkiv has increased, with 112 incidents recorded during the reporting period. These included nighttime strikes using Shahed-type loitering munitions, the resumption of guided aerial bomb attacks (for the first time since November 2024), and the first recorded use of FPV drones against the city. In addition, Russian forces continue offensive operations in the eastern part of the oblast, prompting an expansion of the mandatory evacuation zone. According to official data, as of the end of June, 78 people had been killed and over 600 injured in the oblast since the beginning of the year².

Dnipropetrovsk oblast experienced an increase in the number of attacks involving artillery, short-range drones, and aerial bombs during the second quarter of 2025. This placed additional strain on the healthcare system, social services, and other critical infrastructure. With the frontline approaching the administrative boundaries of the oblast, shelling intensified in eastern hromadas, which led to the mandatory evacuation of families with children from Novopavlivska, Velykomykhailivska, Mezhyvska, and Malomykhailivska hromadas. As a result of shelling alongside missile strikes on large cities, 107 people were killed and another 560 were injured².

The situation in Donetsk Oblast remains one of the most critical due to the ongoing offensive by Russian forces along the entire front line. This has resulted in restricted humanitarian access in areas of active hostilities and a complete lack of access in territories captured by Russian forces during the second quarter (approximately 1,000 km²). Despite the reduction in territory under Ukrainian control, the number of attacks has increased from 5,280 in the first quarter to 6,500 in the second. As a result of the attacks, 208 people were killed and around 700 were injured².

In Zaporizhzhia oblast the situation remained tense but without significant changes in the dynamics of hostilities. Frontline movement was minimal as was the increase in shelling incidents. Nevertheless, recorded strikes on populated areas resulted in the death of 29 civilians, alongside 216 people with injuries of varying severity².

In Mykolaiv oblast the number of attacks increased by one third compared to the first quarter. Shelling rose from 325 to 418 incidents, of which 18 occurred directly in the city of Mykolaiv. The most vulnerable hromadas remain Ochakivska and Kutsurubska, which account for over 75% of all incidents. The attacks resulted in the death of 9 people and the injury of another 56 civilians².

Overall, the second quarter of 2025 was marked by a significant rise in attacks involving long-range weaponry, resulting in nearly a twofold increase in the number of casualties compared to the previous period. During this time 692 people were killed and more than 4,700 wounded across the country².

² Conflict & Humanitarian Data Centre (CHDC)

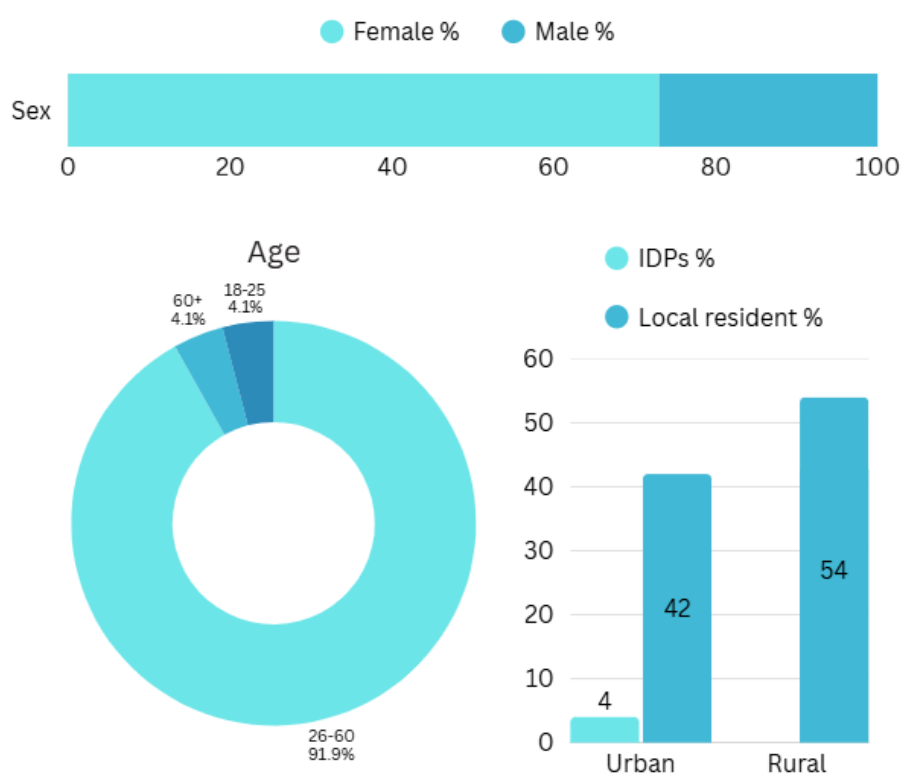
Key Findings

- In **Kharkiv oblast**, amid intensified **attacks on residential areas** and the **destruction of critical infrastructure**, the issue of **access to safe shelters** has become more severe. The highest number of **negative assessments** regarding the overall **security situation** was recorded in hromadas within **Donetsk oblast**. Various oblasts continue to face **risks** related to the presence of **mines** and **unexploded ordnance**, as well as incidents of **violence, abductions, and arbitrary detentions**.
- In **Mykolaiv oblast**, key **infrastructural and environmental problems** are compounded by an urgent need for **hromada restoration and development** following **occupation and shelling**. Uncertainty remains regarding **reconstruction programs** and **housing documentation**. Issues with **water access, contamination** of water bodies, and the partial lack of **safe educational institutions** also persist.
- Amid worsening problems with **access to safe housing**, the main barrier to receiving **compensation for damaged or destroyed property** remains the **absence or loss of ownership documents**. Mentions of this problem sharply increased from **54% to 75%**, particularly affecting **internally displaced persons** and intensifying their **social and economic vulnerability** against the backdrop of **deteriorating security conditions**.
- The issue of **women's employment** remains one of the key challenges, as in the previous monitoring round, linked to a lack of **flexible forms of employment** and limited access to **vocational training and retraining programs**.
- The problem of insufficient **comprehensive support for children** affected by the war has intensified. This includes a lack of opportunities for **recreation and extracurricular activities**, which complicates **socialization** amid **mixed and remote learning** conditions. The absence of **in-person education** and contact with **peers and teachers** negatively impacts children's **psychological well-being**.
- Concerns regarding the risk of **gender-based violence (GBV)** remain relevant. Key informants associate this with the **complicated mental state** and **behavioral changes** of men related to their **military service**. Some cases may remain **unreported** due to **stigma** and the **risk to survivors**.
- The problem of **restricted movement for men of conscription age** persists. This negatively affects men's **psycho-emotional state** and their ability to secure **formal employment**. At the same time, there is an **increased burden on women**, who are forced to take on **expanded household responsibilities** without **adequate support**.
- The **lack or insufficiency** of **public and social transport**, as well as the **high cost of private transportation**, remain key **barriers to accessing services**, especially for residents of **rural areas** and other **vulnerable groups**.

Research methodology

Protection monitoring data was collected using a questionnaire developed internally by PIN. Data collection was conducted through interviews with key informants (KIs), including representatives of city authorities (58%), civil society organizations (22%), health and education specialists (15%), and hromada activists and volunteers (5%). The questionnaire included both closed and open-ended questions, allowing for the collection of quantitative and qualitative data. Data triangulation was performed through analysis of secondary sources, validated by the key informants. A total of 74 interviews with key informants were conducted from March 23 to June 6, 2025. The second monitoring round involved both key informants from the previous stage and new respondents. This approach ensured a balance between tracking changes over time and expanding information sources by incorporating new perspectives and experiences. The majority of respondents were non-displaced persons (71 respondents, representing 96%), while 3 respondents (4%) were internally displaced persons. Interviews took place across five oblasts: 30 in Mykolaiv, 15 in Kharkiv, 13 in Dnipropetrovsk, 8 in Donetsk, and 8 in Zaporizhzhia. Detailed demographic characteristics of key informants are presented in Figure 1.

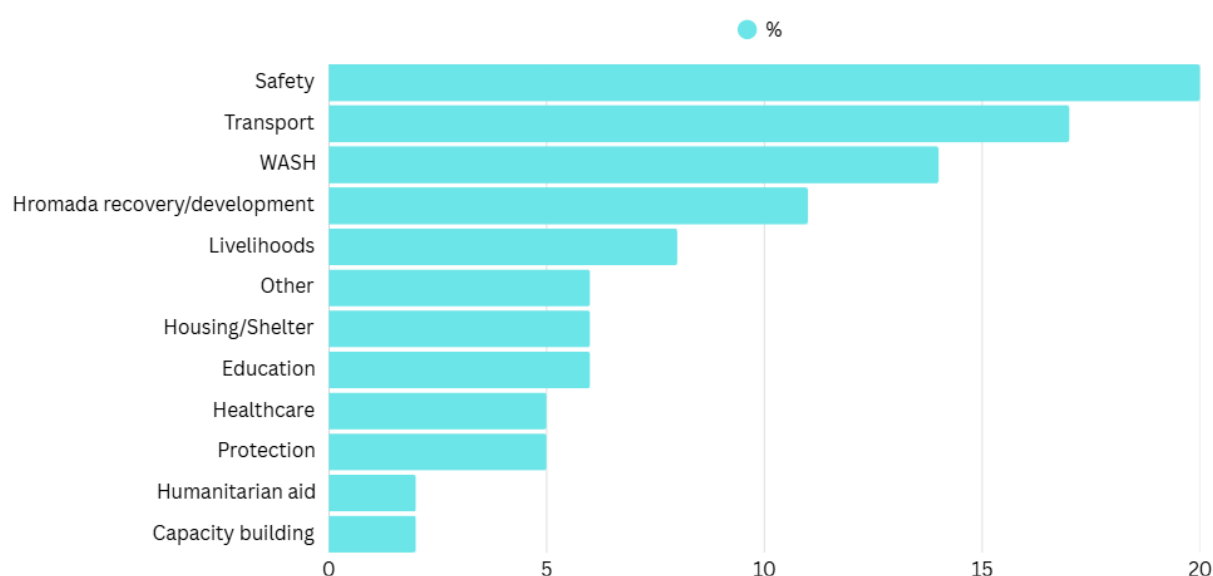
Fig. 1. Demographics of key informants



Priority needs and access to services

In Mykolaiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, and Donetsk oblasts, key informants identified priority needs of their hromadas across several sectors. Of these, 20% indicated security, 17% - transportation/logistics, 14% - water, sanitation, and hygiene, 11% - hromada recovery and development, and 7% - livelihoods (Fig. 2). Compared to the previous round of protection monitoring, several notable changes have been identified. Safety has risen to the top priority, likely reflecting the deterioration of the overall security environment, including intensified shelling and escalation of military operations by the Russian Federation. While WASH needs decreased slightly, this is potentially a result of improved infrastructure or the rise of new pressing needs such as hromada recovery and development. This reflects the growing demand for restoring living conditions in areas affected by occupation. Housing/shelter has become a distinct concern, primarily due to increasing difficulties in obtaining compensation for damaged property.

Fig. 2. Priority needs and access to services



According to key informants in Mykolaiv Oblast, the urgent needs of the population have changed. Notably, a need for the recovery or development of certain hromadas has emerged, reaching 33%, which is likely related to the consequences of past occupation and hostilities in these areas. Based on staff observations and information gathered during field visits, people returning to these hromadas after demining processes report facing challenges related to shelter provision, as well as the functioning of schools and kindergartens.

Reconstruction certificates, housing acquisition, and legal matters related to property ownership (e.g., inheritance disputes, unregistered ownership), which are especially critical due to the widespread destruction and damage of housing during earlier hostilities. These

challenges particularly affect those who are returning or being relocated to these hromadas from other areas.

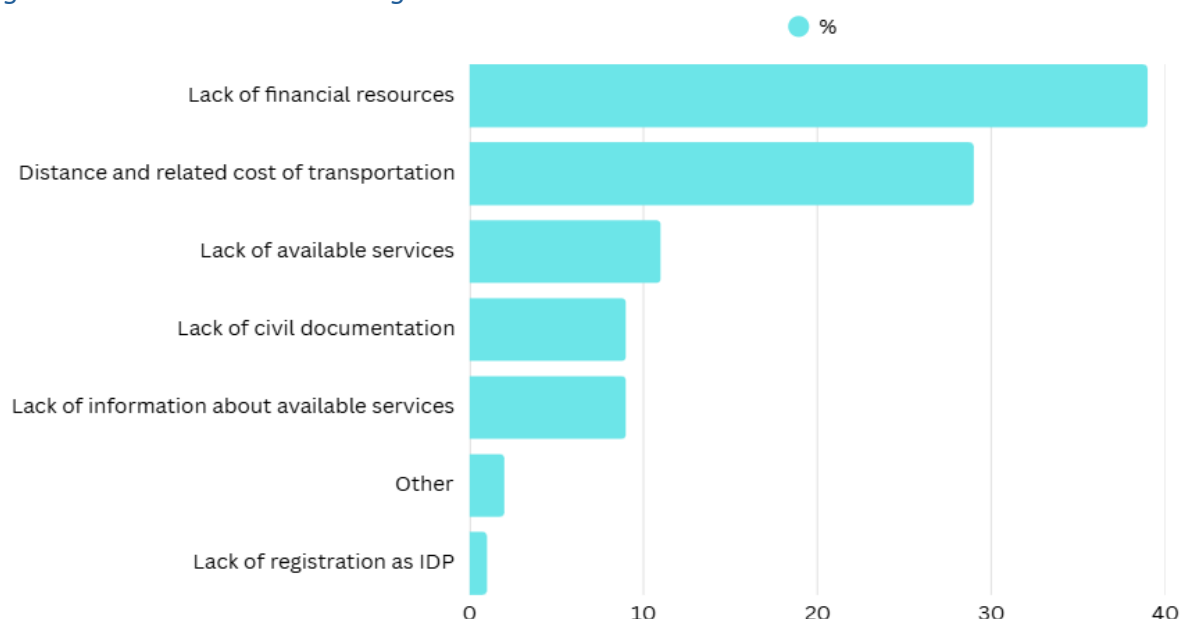
Meanwhile, transportation issues (26%) remain a key challenge, largely due to a shortage of drivers due to mobilization efforts, the limited availability of vehicles which are only gradually being provided to hromadas, and the destruction of roads and bridges in some areas. Quality water supply (17%) also continues to significantly impact the daily lives of residents. Although pipe replacement has begun in some settlements, large areas remain uncovered, and in some villages water supply is completely absent. Contamination of water bodies and rivers caused by hostilities continues to complicate access to safe drinking and water for domestic use.

In Kharkiv oblast, key informants placed special emphasis on security issues (33% compared to 13% in previous round), particularly access to protective shelters. According to them, most hromadas currently have only very basic shelters, which do not provide adequate protection for the population given the overall deterioration of the security situation in the oblast.

Needs in hromadas of Zaporizhzhia and Donetsk oblasts vary. Key issues include safety concerns, lack of water supply systems in some settlements (WASH), limited transportation options, and challenges with housing restoration.

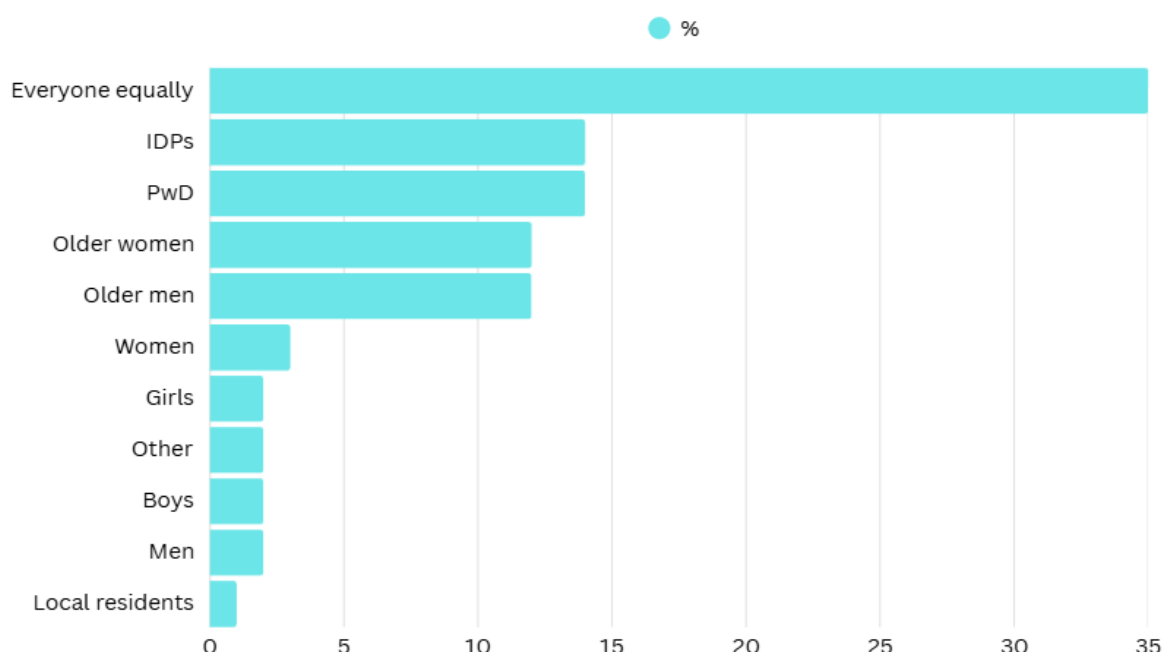
The main barriers to accessing essential services (Fig. 3) for all five oblasts are lack of financial resources (39%), which is partly linked to employment challenges, transport problems (29%), and lack of available services (11%). Regarding transport issues, key obstacles remain the deterioration of public transport functioning, absence of social transport, and poor road conditions. Lack of accessible essential services in some hromadas such as administrative service centers (TsNAPs), social protection services, healthcare facilities, and employment services; absence of civil documentation; and limited access to information about available social programs and services remain key problems, especially for vulnerable groups, recent evacuees, and people who are not accustomed to using digital means to obtain information.

Fig. 3. Main barriers to accessing essential services



Key informants report that the aforementioned barriers generally affect all people equally (35%), while internally displaced persons, people with disabilities, and older men and women represent the most vulnerable groups in this regard (Fig. 4). Internally displaced persons, in particular, face serious challenges in finding temporary housing, adapting to new hromadas, and often lack access to long-term free shelter after evacuation from dangerous areas, which complicates their situation. Additionally, a significant portion of IDPs do not have sufficient financial resources to replace lost documents. IDPs remain especially vulnerable due to the lack of access to adequate housing and low income levels, which limit their ability to meet basic needs.

Fig. 4. Social groups most affected by barriers



The situation of older persons and persons with disabilities

Older people and persons with disabilities in all five oblasts face significant and similar barriers. According to key informants interviewed during the second round of monitoring, the greatest challenges for older people are lack of family support (28%), limited access to necessary financial resources to meet their needs (24%), and inability to obtain healthcare services (18% compared to 7% in the previous round), which is partly due to the absence of rehabilitation facilities and basic medical access (pharmacies, etc.) in some hromadas. Additionally, 13% face difficulties in receiving care. This increases the risk of social isolation and further exacerbates their vulnerability.

For older persons, services such as medical rehabilitation (12%), provision of shelter (11%), supported living (11%), and transportation services (11%), particularly the critical need for social taxis, are scarcely available but vital for maintaining dignity and well-being, especially in terms of access to medical and social protection services, which remain difficult to obtain.

It should be noted that many persons with disabilities face similar challenges. One of the main problems is lack of access to financial resources, as indicated by 24% of key informants. In addition, 18% face a lack of family support, and 16% experience difficulties accessing necessary healthcare services.

In the second monitoring round, key informants highlighted limited access to assistive devices for persons with disabilities as one of the priority issues. This concerns both the shortage of rehabilitation equipment at the hromada level and limited state support in providing such devices, especially under martial law conditions when many social protection centers may be closed, have relocated, or are not functioning.

Among the main barriers related to service access, respondents mentioned the absence or shortage of mobility aids, hearing aids, limited access to assistive devices with specialized features, and so on. There were also separate mentions of a lack of infrastructural solutions, particularly ramps in social and administrative institutions.

Existing social services (such as territorial centers) do not always have the capacity to fully meet requests for assistive devices, and waiting times or the need for self-purchase leave a significant portion of persons with disabilities without necessary support. These specialized services are limited in part due to a critical shortage of qualified personnel and resources, while available state support often remain unknown to those who need them.

The situation of women

Issues around women's employment remain acute (mentioned by 44% of KIs compared to 43% in the last round). Despite the increase in employment opportunities for women due to labor shortages, balancing paid work with childcare and household responsibilities remains a key barrier for women to access employment, further confirming the negative impact of gender roles on the division of household duties. At the same time, lack of leisure and extracurricular activities for children has emerged as another concern for women. Limited access to educational institutions, school closures and remote schooling for children exacerbate existing difficulties, given the prevailing burden on women as primary caregivers. Due to mobilization, displacement, loss of family members, and traditional gender roles, the primary burden related to household chores and caring responsibilities largely falls on women, reducing their participation in socio-economic processes and narrowing opportunities for professional development.

As in the previous quarter, certain key informants once again noted instances of gender-based violence (GBV) in certain hromadas, particularly in Mykolaiv oblast. This is likely linked, among other factors, to the return of men from the frontlines, the consequences of prolonged separate living arrangements of family members, difficulties adapting to civilian life. Although the number of KIs mentioning GBV as a critical issue has not increased compared to the previous round, risks related to GBV remain a major issue flagged by key informants.

These findings are supported by assessments conducted by DRC (January-March 2025)³, which report an increase in domestic violence, sexual harassment, and psychological pressure. Key risks include the return of men from the front with physical and psychosocial trauma, family tensions caused by separation, adaptation challenges, and pressure surrounding mobilization. This complex context highlights the importance of GBV prevention and response services, alongside gender-sensitive psychosocial support services.

³ Danish Refugee Council (DRC). (2025, January). *Rapid GBV Assessment: Mykolaiv and Kherson Oblasts*.

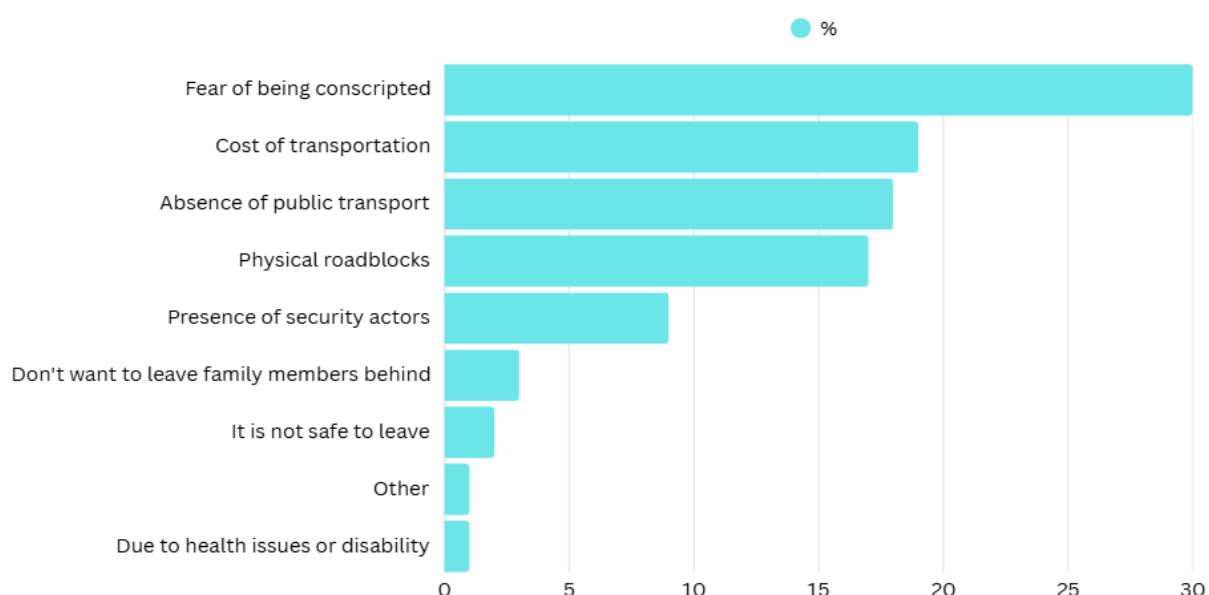
The situation of children

Regarding children, among the key challenges identified in this monitoring round are the lack of leisure and extracurricular activities (26% of mentions). Children's recreational facilities and clubs remain mostly closed, depriving them of opportunities for recreation, socializing, and after-school learning. This complicates socialization (25% of mentions by KIs) against the backdrop of mixed and remote learning. Security concerns, particularly the absence of shelters in schools, are especially severe in Kharkiv oblast, resulting in the voluntary departure of many families with children from these communities. The shift to remote learning is accompanied by technical difficulties related to the online format, family relocations, and possible power outages. Furthermore, the lack of in-person education and social contact with teachers and peers negatively affects children's emotional state and mental health.

Freedom of movement and restrictions on mobility

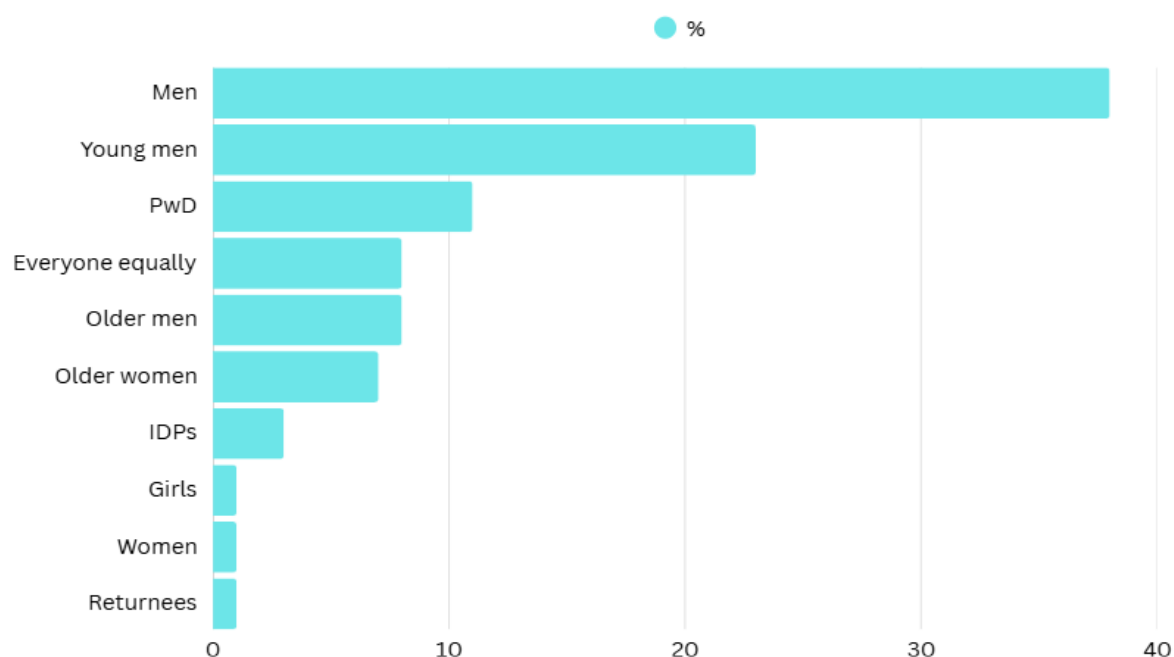
Data from the second round of monitoring indicates that the main restrictions on mobility and obstacles to freedom of movement remain economic, physical, and security-related. The lack of public transportation in many hromadas is among the most pressing issues, as it significantly limits mobility particularly for vulnerable population groups. The high cost of private transport further compounds challenges accessing social, administrative and medical services. In addition, the presence of checkpoints and concerns over potential mobilization continue to act as serious barriers to movement (Fig. 5), primarily affecting men of conscription age (25-60 years).

Fig. 5. Obstacles that restrict free movement and mobility



In the second round of monitoring, KIs mentioned a slight easing in mobility restrictions related to mobilization measures in certain hromadas of Kharkiv oblast. In contrast, in Dnipropetrovsk and Mykolaiv oblasts, this issue remains relevant, with mobilization-related factors continuing to significantly affect people's freedom of movement. As shown in Figure 6, men (38%) and youth (23%) were most frequently mentioned among the groups facing the greatest limitations. Persons with disabilities and older people were also frequently identified, due to their reliance on accessible transport and support services.

Fig. 6. Social groups most affected by restrictions of movement



Poor road conditions, particularly in remote areas, create additional challenges for mobility. This affects all social groups, especially those who rely on transportation to access essential services.

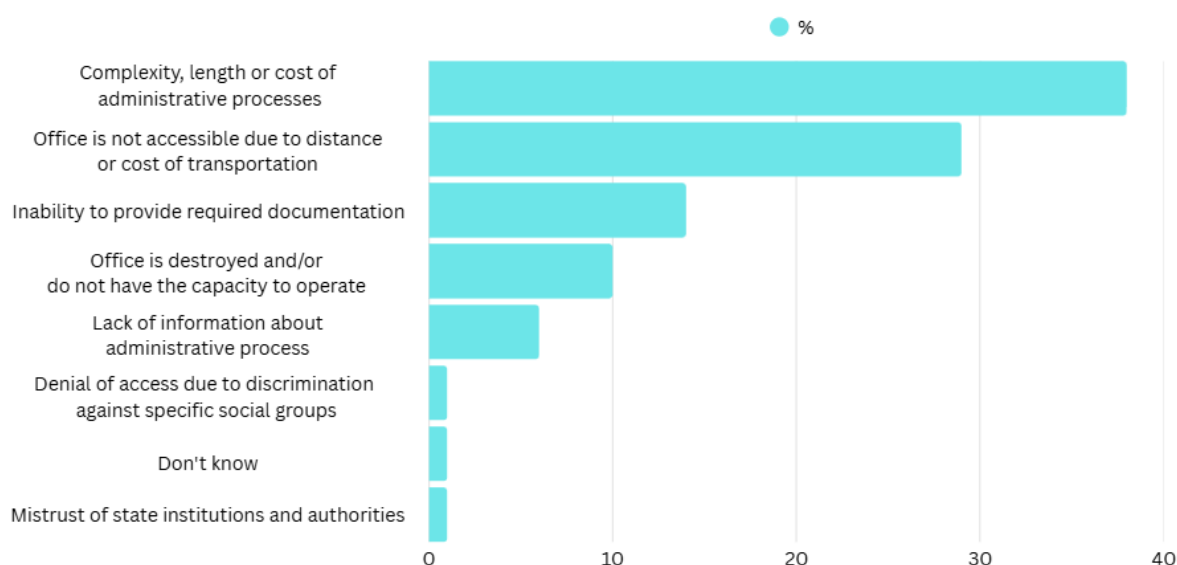
As in the previous monitoring round, the complete absence of public and social transport in some hromadas, logistical challenges between settlements, poor road infrastructure, high costs of private travel, security concerns and mobilization measures remain the main barriers to freedom of movement for many residents of the monitored oblasts. These factors hinder access to social, medical and administrative services and increase the financial burden on households.

Civil status and documents

The situation regarding the issuance and renewal of personal documents in the monitored oblasts remains challenging. According to key informants, individual cases of difficulties are common (42% of mentions), while no problems at all were noted in only 23% of mentions. As in the previous round, challenges primarily concerned the renewal or issuance of civil documentation. These issues are often the result of lost documents or the inability to access administrative institutions, particularly in frontline or remote hromadas.

The main barriers to obtaining documents (see Fig. 7) include complex administrative procedures (38%), transportation-related problems (29%), the lack of prerequisite documentation required to complete the process (14%), destruction of document issuance centers (10%), and lack of information about administrative procedures (6%). The situation in Mykolaiv oblast remains among the most critical. Key issues include the absence of renewal centers in several hromadas and the lack of public transport to reach administrative offices. Additional factors that worsen the situation include long distances and the high cost of private transportation.

Figure 7. Main barriers to obtaining personal documents



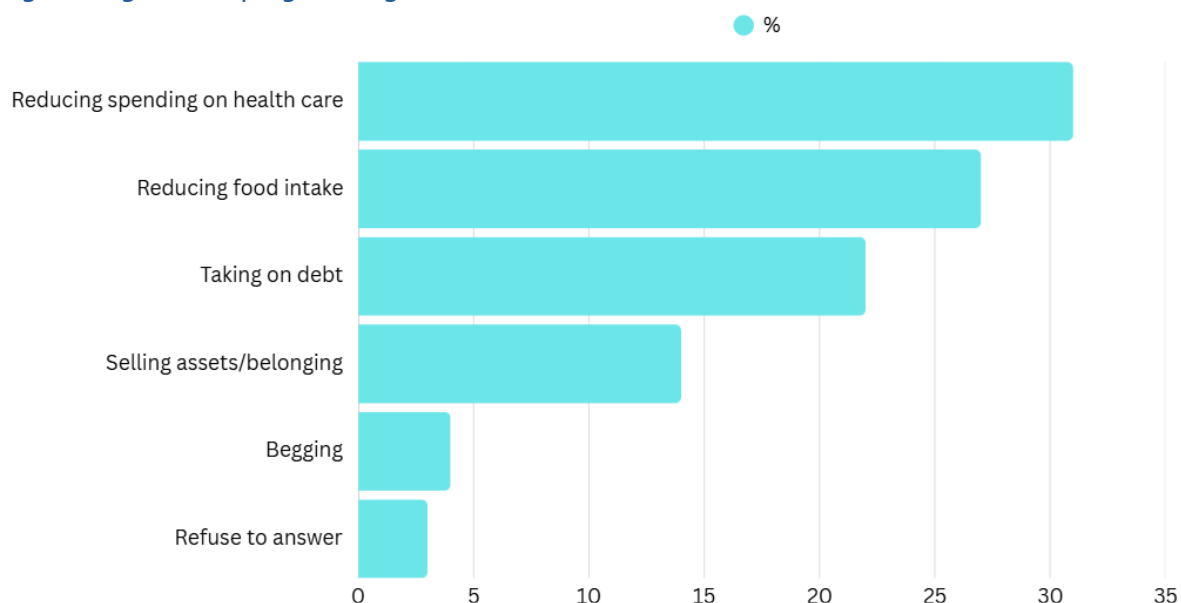
According to key informants, to overcome these challenges, people mainly turn to state, charitable, and humanitarian centers. Some travel to other hromadas or oblasts or use mobile administrative service centers and online platforms. At the same time, a significant number of individuals do not respond to the issue at all or postpone addressing it, while others are forced to work informally due to the lack of required documents. This can increase the risk of exclusion from state or humanitarian assistance, loss of access to social benefits, and long-term consequences such as lack of formal work experience, pension contributions, and social protections.

Standard of living

According to 78% of key informants, basic needs are being met at a moderate or good level, which represents a deterioration compared to the previous round of monitoring (92%). There are still individuals, particularly older people and persons with disabilities, who are unable to meet their basic needs independently and are forced to resort to negative coping mechanisms to access essential resources (Fig. 8).

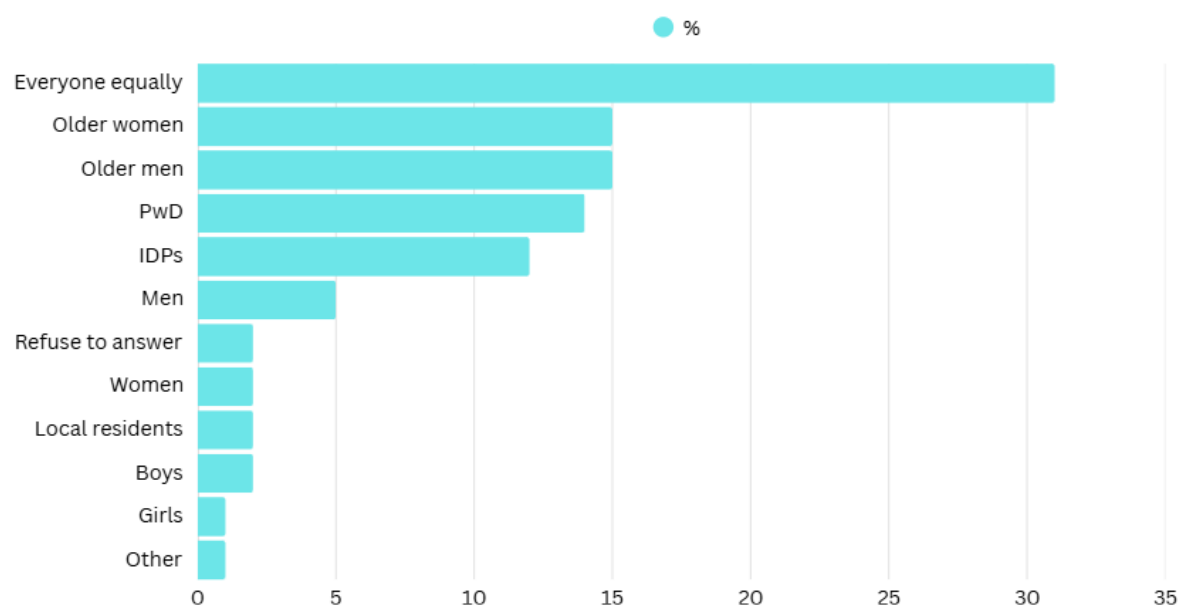
As in the first round of monitoring, the majority of key informants reported that people in their hromadas are reducing spending on healthcare services (31%) and food consumption (27%). A significant portion (22%) are also taking out loans, borrowing money, or selling personal belongings, indicating a lack of sufficient resources to cover expenses and meet basic needs.

Fig. 8. Negative Coping Strategies



These issues affect all people to some extent (31%), however, according to key informants, men and women of older age groups suffer the most (15% each), followed by internally displaced persons (IDPs) at 14% and people with disabilities at 12% (Fig. 9). For these groups, difficulties in accessing social benefits and medical services remain particularly severe, along with physical and social limitations that impact their ability to secure stable incomes or seek assistance. State and family support for older people is often insufficient, forcing them to significantly economize even on critically important needs such as nutrition and healthcare, thereby increasing their vulnerability.

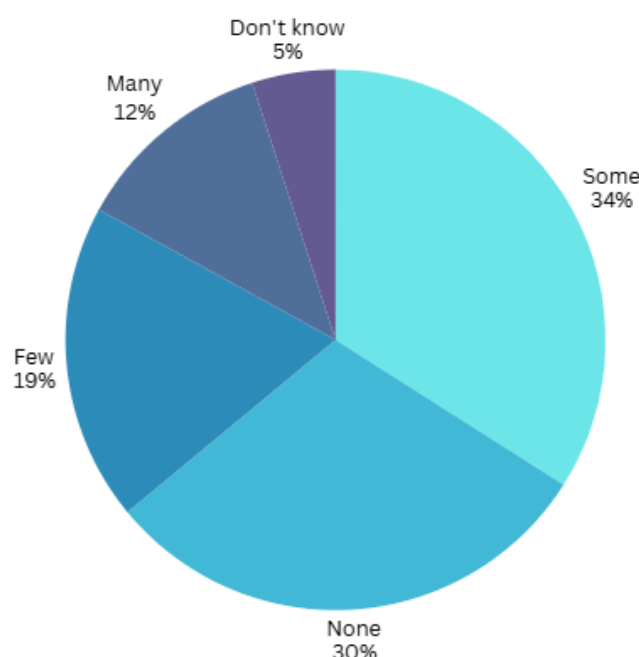
Fig. 9. Social groups most affected by difficulties related to lack of essential resources



Housing, land and property

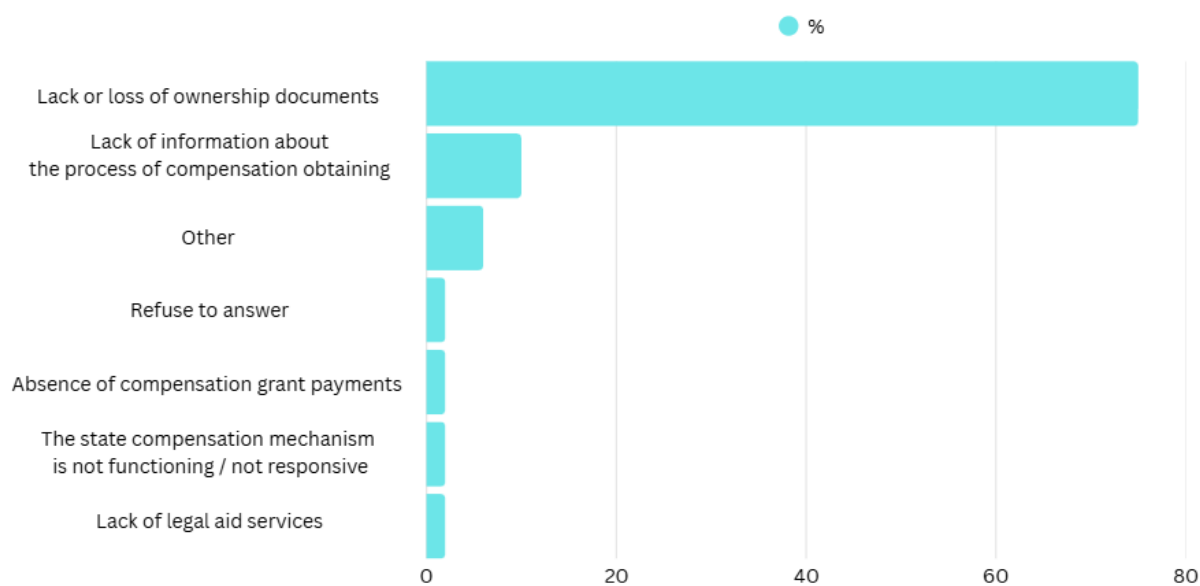
The results of this monitoring round indicate a deterioration in access to safe housing compared to the previous quarter. Only about 30% of key informants reported that no one in their hromadas lives in damaged, unfinished, or uninhabitable buildings, whereas in the previous round this figure was 37%. Meanwhile, 53% stated that few/some people are still forced to live in such conditions, and 12% indicated that there are many such cases (Fig.10).

Fig. 10. People living in destroyed or uninhabitable buildings



As in the previous round, the majority of key informants confirmed that people in their hromadas can receive financial compensation for damaged or destroyed property (90%). At the same time, the main barrier to obtaining such compensation remains the absence or loss of documents proving ownership of the property (75% of responses) (Fig.11). This indicator has increased significantly compared to the previous study (54%); reaching a critical 96% of responses in the Mykolaiv oblast likely linked to the ongoing housing-related legal issues in de-occupied areas, new displacement/returns. Additionally, key informants again noted a lack of information about the compensation process itself and other administrative obstacles, which also slow down and complicate access to payments.

Fig. 11. Main barriers to receiving financial compensation for damaged housing



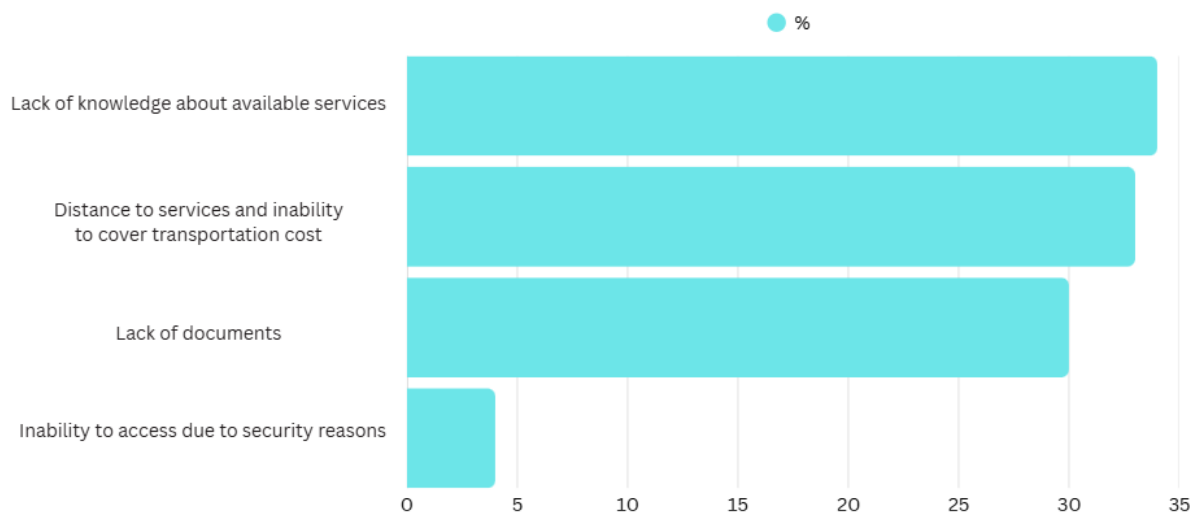
Social services

97% of key informants across all five surveyed oblasts reported that the main social services offered by the state are available in their hromadas but barriers to access persist. Various social protection actors operate and provide relevant programs.

The biggest barriers to utilizing social services (see Fig. 12) remain insufficient awareness of their availability (34%), which is particularly pronounced in Kharkiv oblast (68% of responses from the region). Additionally, a significant number of key informants noted other challenges such as distance to services and inability to cover transportation costs (33%), as well as the lack of necessary documentation (30%), which is especially characteristic of Mykolaiv oblast (58% of responses from the region).

Key informants emphasized that among the most commonly missing documents are personal identification (passport, ID code), medical records, and documents confirming family composition. The absence of these documents complicates access to state support and has negative consequences for the social adaptation and integration of internally displaced persons into new hromadas. This also causes feelings of helplessness, marginalization, insecurity, and psychological stress. Furthermore, a shortage of social service personnel was noted, which also adversely affects the overall situation.

Fig. 12. Main barriers to accessing social services

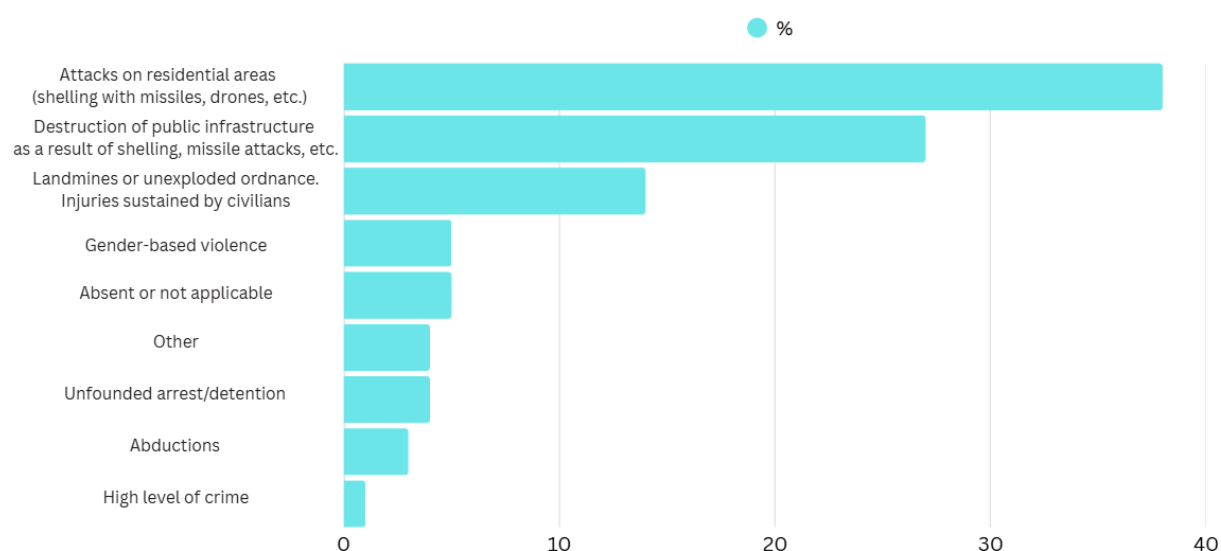


Safety and security

Overall, key informants reported people are feeling relatively safe in their hromadas (64% of mentions at moderate or good levels), while 34% indicated a low level of safety, describing the situation as poor or critical. The highest proportion of negative safety assessments was recorded in Donetsk oblast, which is linked to the close proximity of some hromadas in this oblast to the frontline.

The main security concerns across the oblasts remain attacks on residential areas (38%) and the destruction of infrastructure due to shelling (27%) (Fig. 13).

Fig. 13. Main security issues in the hromada



Certain hromadas across different oblasts face risks related to the presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance (14%), which complicates movement and causes injuries among civilians. Gender-based violence, abductions, and arbitrary detentions have also been reported as concerns by KIs.

Regarding access to shelters, the situation varies significantly between oblasts. Dnipropetrovsk oblast is noted as the safest in this regard, with 77% of key informants reporting that residents in Dnipropetrovsk hromadas can access shelters in case of danger. In contrast, the worst indicators were recorded in Zaporizhzhia and Kharkiv oblasts, where only 25% and 27% of the population, respectively, have access to shelters. This issue particularly affects persons with disabilities and older adults, for whom accessing shelters is highly challenging. Similar difficulties were also reported by respondents from other oblasts.

Recommendations

- Continue fostering **cooperation** with **local authorities** and **humanitarian organizations** to increase the availability of **safe shelters** and make sure **existing shelters meet safety standards**.
- **Improve the provision of information** to the population about **available social services**, including by **enhancing remote assistance mechanisms** in settlements located far from raion or hromada administrative centers.
- Expand **support programs** for people in need of **assistive devices** and ensure they are **informed** about **available services** and **how to access them**.
- Support **initiatives** for comprehensive **restoration of housing infrastructure**, especially in the **de-occupied hromadas** of **Mykolaiv oblast**, and simplify **procedures** for obtaining **compensation** for damaged or destroyed property by removing **documentation barriers**, including by **expanding access to legal aid services and assistance** with the **renewal of essential documentation**, which are critical for **internally displaced persons** and **returnees**.
- Increase **flexible employment** opportunities for **women**, particularly by expanding opportunities for **part-time work**, **professional training**, and **retraining**, actively involving **employers** in creating **inclusive working conditions** that address **gendered barriers to accessing employment**, including **childcare arrangements**.
- Expand **support infrastructure** for **children** by opening new and improving existing **safe recreational** and **educational spaces**, continuing to implement **psychological support** and **social adaptation programs**, especially in **high-risk oblasts** such as **Kharkiv**.
- Strengthen **the availability** of and **access to support services** for **survivors of gender-based violence (GBV)** and raise **awareness** of available **assistance mechanisms**. Ensure that **GBV referral pathways** are **regularly updated**, **widely disseminated**, and **aligned** with **Protection Cluster standards** to enable a **safe, timely, and survivor-centered response** across all sectors.
- Provide targeted **social and economic support programs for women** to enhance access to employment opportunities, to mitigate the consequences of **restricted mobility** among **men of conscription age**, which affect their **psycho-emotional state** and **employment opportunities**.
- Deliver **humanitarian services** using **mobile approaches** to reach those with **transportation difficulties**, especially in **remote and rural hromadas**, and implement **financial support mechanisms** to cover **private transport costs** to improve access to **social, medical, and administrative services**.

Annexes

List of acronyms

Acronym	Full name
GBV	Gender based violence
BHA	Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
CSs	Collective Sites
ASC	Administrative Service Centre
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
FPV	First Person View
KI	Key Informant
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

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