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PIN Protection Monitoring Report

June 2026

Eastern and Southern Ukraine

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KEY FINDINGS

- Barriers to freedom of movement remain one of the most significant and cross-cutting protection concerns across monitored oblasts. Limited public transportation, high transportation costs, driver shortages, poor road infrastructure, and the lack of adapted transport solutions continue to restrict access to healthcare, social services, administrative procedures, and livelihood opportunities. Older persons, persons with disabilities, and people living in rural areas remain disproportionately affected.
- Safety and security concerns continue to intensify and increasingly affect access to services and overall well-being. Damage to public infrastructure and attacks on residential areas remain among the most frequently reported protection concerns. Protective shelters availability in general is limited and inaccessible shelter infrastructure continues to disproportionately affect older persons, persons with disabilities, and people with reduced mobility.
- WASH and infrastructure-related concerns have become more prominent compared to previous monitoring rounds. Key informants increasingly linked disruptions in water supply, heating, and electricity to both deteriorating security conditions and long-standing infrastructure damage. Needs related to hygiene items and basic humanitarian assistance were reported as particularly acute in frontline and evacuation contexts.
- Children continue to face multiple and interconnected protection risks related to insecurity and attacks on educational infrastructure. Key informants highlighted the continued impact of shelling, lack of shelter infrastructure in schools and kindergartens, prolonged reliance on online and mixed learning formats, and reduced opportunities for socialization, with dire impacts on children's psychosocial well-being. Concerns regarding children's psychological well-being and the long-term effects of disrupted education remain widespread.
- Older persons and persons with disabilities remain among the most vulnerable population groups. Financial hardship, limited access to healthcare and social services, shortages of social workers, inaccessible public infrastructure, lack of long-term care solutions, and transportation barriers continue to restrict their ability to meet basic needs and access necessary support.
- Economic vulnerability remains widespread despite some improvements in employment opportunities. While key informants reported slightly more positive perceptions of livelihood opportunities, potentially linked to grant programmes, self-employment initiatives, and vocational training, households continue to rely heavily on humanitarian assistance, informal employment, and negative coping strategies such as reducing food expenditures. These trends continue to increase exposure to protection risks.
- Social services remain generally functional, but structural barriers continue to limit meaningful access. Transportation challenges, limited awareness of available services, shortages of social workers, and gaps in care services remain key obstacles.
- Housing conditions and access to compensation mechanisms show signs of improvement, although important challenges remain. Key informants reported fewer households living in damaged housing and improved access to compensation for housing damage. However, documentation-related barriers, insufficient compensation amounts, labour shortages, and delays in reconstruction continue to hinder durable housing solutions.



INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of the fifth round of protection monitoring conducted from January to March 2026 in eastern (Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia oblasts), and southern Ukraine (Mykolaiv oblast).

The aim of 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 for the affected population, and identify major barriers to accessing critical services in the oblasts under study.

The data obtained in the fifth round allows for detecting changes in the protection environment compared to the previous round (October to December 2025), identifying new protection challenges, and refining priorities for humanitarian response within existing and future programs. This contributes to more informed strategic planning and evidence-based decision-making in humanitarian assistance.

The oblasts covered by 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 continue to create significant challenges to ensuring human rights and providing humanitarian protection¹.



METHODOLOGY

Protection monitoring data was collected using a questionnaire developed internally by PIN. Data was collected through in-person and remote interviews with key informants (KIs), including representatives of local authorities and public institutions (44%), civil society organizations and volunteers (46%), and health and education representatives (10%). 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 data sources. A total of 43 interviews with key informants were conducted from January to March 2026. The fifth monitoring round involved both key informants from the previous stage and new key informants. This approach ensured a balance between tracking changes over time and expanding information sources by incorporating new perspectives and experiences. The majority of key informants were non-displaced persons (36 key informants, representing 84%), while 6 key informants (14%) were internally displaced persons, and 1 respondent (2%) refused to answer. Interviews took place across four oblasts: 10 in Mykolaiv, 11 in Kharkiv, 13 in Dnipropetrovsk, and 9 in Zaporizhzhia.

Limitations:

Protection monitoring relies primarily on information provided by key informants and is therefore not statistically representative of the affected population. Findings reflect the perspectives and knowledge of those informants and may not capture the full range of experiences. As a result, identified trends or comparisons should be understood as indicative rather than conclusive, and they cannot be used to quantify the prevalence of specific protection risks. Donetska oblast was not included in this monitoring round due to security constraints and challenges in safely conducting key informant interviews. As a result, some findings are not directly comparable with previous rounds that included data from Donetska oblast.

¹ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). (2026, January). *Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2026*

PRIORITY NEEDS AND ACCESS TO SERVICES



Compared to the previous monitoring round, key informants reported several shifts in priority needs and barriers to accessing services across monitored oblasts. In particular, a higher number of key informants referred to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and infrastructure-related concerns, which were increasingly linked to both structural infrastructure issues and the deterioration of the security situation. Intensified attacks on critical infrastructure² reportedly resulted in prolonged disruptions in electricity, heating, and water supply across multiple oblasts, affecting both access to drinking water and the functioning of essential services. In Mykolaiv oblast, where WASH-related concerns had already been reported in previous monitoring rounds, key informants continued to highlight long-standing water supply issues linked to infrastructure damage dating back to 2022. At the same time, WASH-related needs, including hygiene items along with basic humanitarian assistance, were reportedly becoming more acute in frontline and evacuation contexts, particularly in Zaporizhzhia oblast.



Transportation-related barriers remained among the most frequently reported concerns across monitored oblasts and appeared to intensify in Dnipropetrovsk oblast compared to the previous round, continuing to significantly affect freedom of movement and in turn access to critical services. Key informants reported that transportation barriers limited access to healthcare, social and administrative services, particularly for older persons and persons with disabilities. Compared to previous rounds, a higher number of key informants referred to the need for social taxi services and specially equipped transportation solutions for persons with reduced mobility. Key informants continued to link transportation-related challenges to the low financial viability of transportation routes, driver shortages associated with mobilization, and the poor condition or absence of road infrastructure in some hromadas. In Mykolaiv oblast, where transportation challenges remained among the most critical concerns, key informants noted that nationwide increases in fuel prices reportedly made already limited transportation options even less affordable for residents. Transportation barriers were also increasingly linked to negative impacts on livelihood opportunities, as access to employment often requires commuting to district centres or neighbouring hromadas where there are more employment opportunities.



Attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure remain key protection violations affecting communities in monitored oblasts. An overall deterioration of the security situation, including through intensified shelling, continues to have a dire impact on civilian life, infrastructure, and overall physical and psychological well-being of affected communities. Insufficient protective shelter infrastructure and limited emergency response capacity in frontline and conflict-affected areas further increase vulnerabilities and hinder the effective protection of civilians. In particular, key informants highlighted the lack of protective shelters for schools and kindergartens, the need for additional “Points of Invincibility” in remote areas, and the absence of accessible protective shelter and evacuation infrastructure for persons with reduced mobility. Key informants also linked the worsening security situation to the deterioration of physical and mental wellbeing among both adults and children. In Zaporizhzhia oblast, several key informants additionally referred to increased needs for non-food items (NFIs) and repair materials to temporarily cover damaged housing following attacks.

² Danish Refugee Council (DRC). (2026, May). *Quarterly Protection Monitoring Report: January–March 2026*.

OVERVIEW³

Dnipropetrovska oblast

In Q1 2026, Russian Armed Forces made limited territorial advances in Dnipropetrovsk oblast, concentrated in the southeastern part of Synelnykove district, covering approximately 16.5 km². Despite minimal frontline changes, the humanitarian situation deteriorated due to intensified strikes on key logistics routes, particularly along the Pavlohrad–Pokrovsk axis used for interregional movement. Nikopol district remained one of the most affected areas, with a sharp increase in UAV-related strikes toward the end of the quarter. This led to disruptions in transport services and local livelihoods, increasing risks for civilians and humanitarian operations. Additional impacts were recorded on critical infrastructure, including temporary power outages and strikes on railway nodes, which further reduced the reliability and predictability of humanitarian logistics in the region.

Zaporizhzhia oblast

In Q1 2026, Zaporizhzhia oblast experienced a continued slowdown in Russian Armed Forces territorial advances compared to late 2025, driven by seasonal (winter) conditions, Ukrainian Armed Forces stabilisation measures, and localized counter-offensive activity. Despite reduced ground manoeuvre intensity, the overall security environment did not improve due to sustained high levels of air and UAV-related activity. One of the main threats to Zaporizhzhia city was the increased use of FPV drones on the southern outskirts of the city, indicating an expansion of their operational range toward urban peripheries. This creates risks for civilian movement, transport, and humanitarian operations, and may lead to a further increase in incidents if this trend continues. UAV strikes against moving vehicles at distances exceeding 40 km from the frontline further confirm an evolving threat profile. Despite the implementation of mitigation measures, distance from the

frontline can no longer be considered a reliable safety factor for civilian and humanitarian movements.

Kharkivska oblast

In Kharkiv oblast during Q1 2026, Russian Armed Forces advances remained limited compared to the end of 2025 and were concentrated mainly along the international border and the eastern bank of the Oskil River. Although territorial changes were minimal, Russian forces maintained sustained pressure on Ukrainian positions through repeated strikes on pontoon crossings, transport infrastructure, and other critical logistics assets. This approach appeared aimed at disrupting supply routes and constraining Ukrainian maneuverability rather than achieving rapid territorial gains. For humanitarian actors, the primary risks were driven less by shifts in the front line and more by deteriorating security conditions along key movement corridors. Recurrent strikes near transport hubs and river crossings increased risks for aid delivery and staff movement, while inconsistent application of access procedures at the local level created additional uncertainty for operational planning and implementation.

Mykolaivksa oblast

In Q1 2026, Mykolaivska oblast remained outside active frontline changes, with no recorded shifts along the line of contact. However, the region continued to experience regular long-range air and UAV strikes, reflecting its role as an important rear logistics hub. Strike activity primarily targeted energy and transport infrastructure, including railway assets, contributing to recurring disruptions in utilities and increased operational risks for humanitarian and civilian movement. Despite the comparatively lower frequency of strikes compared to other southern regions, the cumulative impact maintained elevated vulnerability across key urban and logistical areas.

³ Conflict & Humanitarian Data Centre (CHDC), INSO

VULNERABLE POPULATION GROUPS: PERSISTENT PROTECTION CONCERNS

Similar to the previous monitoring round, key barriers affecting vulnerable population groups remained consistent across monitored oblasts.



OLDER PERSONS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Main concerns (continued trends)

- Low financial capacity limiting access to basic needs incl. medicines, food, clothes, hygiene
- Lack of adapted accommodation and long-term care solutions
- Accessible transportation
- Physical accessibility of the institutions
- Shortages of social workers



EX-COMBATANTS

Main concerns (continued trends)

- Psychosocial support and rehabilitation
- Employment and economic reintegration
- Access to legal assistance, benefits and information
- Social isolation and community reintegration
- Capacity and coverage of veteran support services



CHILDREN

Main concerns (continued trends)

- Deterioration of psychological wellbeing due to war and insecurity
- Challenges related to online and mixed learning formats
- Safety risks, shelling, and lack of shelters in schools and kindergartens
- Lack of leisure spaces and extracurricular activities
- Reduced opportunities for socialization and peer interaction
- Continued impact of electricity outages and internet disruptions on education access and quality

"Due to the poor quality of the educational process, children increasingly manage their time without sufficient supervision. As a result, there has been an increase in juvenile delinquency, theft, and looting." — Key Informant, Kharkivska oblast.



WOMEN

Main concerns (continued trends)

- Increased caregiving burden, particularly in female-headed households
- Limited access to employment due to childcare responsibilities and mobility constraints
- Lack of personal space and opportunities for self-realization
- Significant emotional exhaustion

"Women heading households experience a significant increase in their daily workload, balancing childcare, household responsibilities, and the search for income opportunities. Limited financial resources restrict opportunities for rest, self-development, creating less personal space for themselves and their families." — Key Informant, Kharkivska oblast.



FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Freedom of movement restrictions remained shaped by a combination of security-related, physical, infrastructure and economic barriers across monitored oblasts. Similar to previous monitoring rounds, fear of mobilization continued to be the most frequently reported factor limiting freedom of movement among men in urban areas, with key informants referring to self-restrictions on movement due to concerns related to mobilization procedures and checkpoints.

At the same time, this monitoring round further highlighted differences in freedom of movement-related concerns between urban and rural areas. While fear of mobilization remained the primary concern reported in urban locations (60%) (Figure 1), key informants in rural areas (Figure 2) more frequently referred to the physical inaccessibility of transportation for older persons, persons with disabilities, and other persons with reduced mobility (71%). This was followed by the partial or complete absence of public transportation in some hromadas, including irregular transportation schedules, high transportation costs including private transportation, poor road conditions, and long distances to administrative and service centres. Mobilization-related concerns were also reported in rural areas, although less prominently than transportation accessibility barriers. This may partially correspond with reports from some governmental sources suggesting that a higher proportion of men of conscription age may have already been mobilized in certain rural communities.

Similar to previous rounds, key informants continued to link transportation-related challenges to the low financial viability of transportation routes, shortages of vehicles and drivers, and broader economic pressures affecting local transportation systems. Key informants noted that transportation providers are often unwilling to maintain routes in rural or frontline areas due to limited profitability and operational costs exceeding potential income.

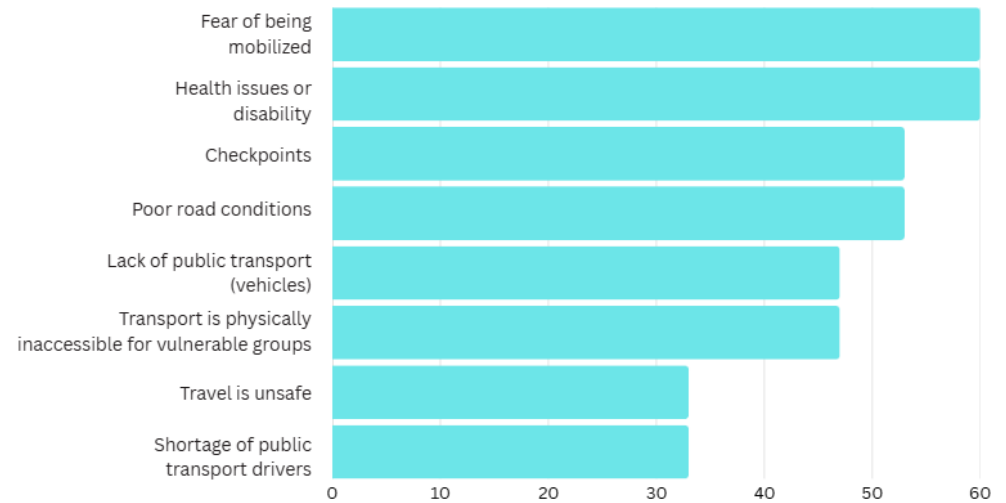


Figure 1. Obstacles that restrict free movement and mobility (urban %)

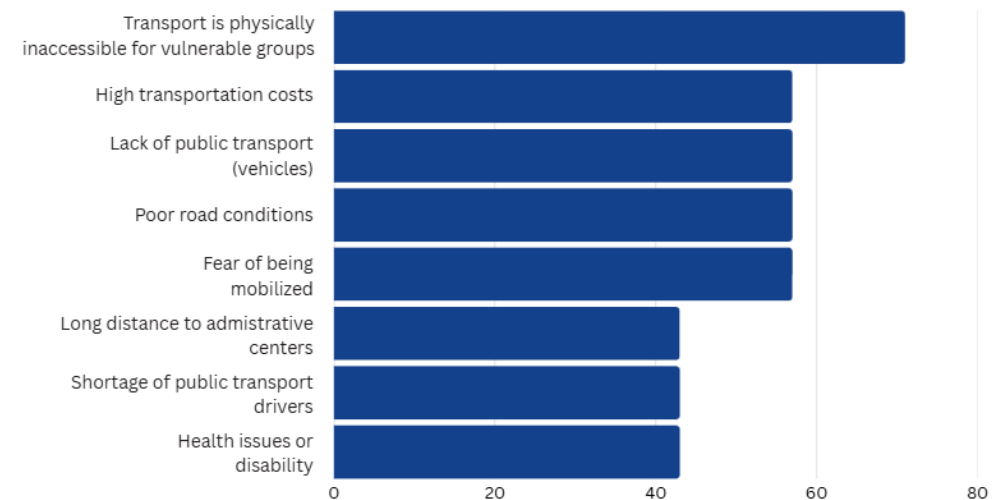


Figure 2. Obstacles that restrict free movement and mobility (rural %)



CIVIL STATUS AND DOCUMENTS

The process of issuing and renewing personal documents continued to be challenging across monitored oblasts. Similar to the previous monitoring round, challenges most frequently related to housing and property ownership documentation (74% of KIs selected this), followed by inheritance-related documents (70%) and personal identification documents (63%). A notable difference compared to the previous monitoring round was observed between urban and rural hromadas regarding barriers to accessing administrative services. In urban areas (Figure 3), the lack of information regarding administrative procedures became the most frequently reported barrier (53%), compared to 25% in rural hromadas (Figure 4). This may suggest that in smaller rural hromadas, information regarding administrative processes and available support mechanisms is often disseminated more quickly and informally through local authorities, community networks, and interpersonal communication channels.

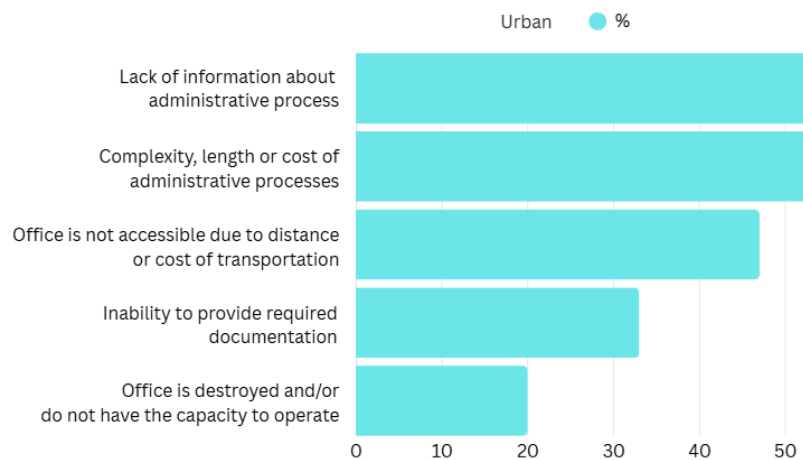


Figure 3. Main barriers to obtaining personal documents (urban %)

Key informants referred to several barriers resulting in the ability to obtain or renew documents, including limited awareness regarding available procedures, and the inability of some population groups to independently navigate administrative systems, with some KIs mentioning emotional exhaustion as a result. Key informants reported that some individuals, particularly men, remain unable to access formal employment due to unresolved military registration documentation issues, forcing some to rely on informal employment. This may expose affected individuals to exploitative labour conditions, including lack of employment protection, delayed wage payments, limited leave entitlements, and increased

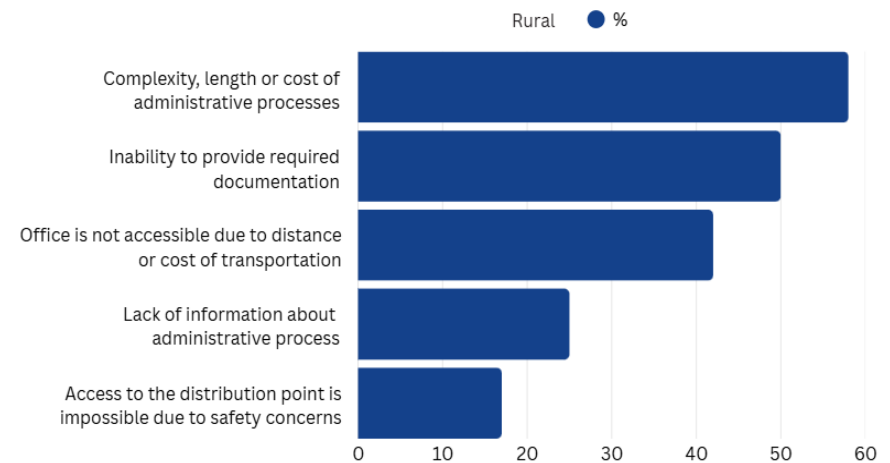


Figure 4. Main barriers to obtaining personal documents (rural %)

dependency on employers. At the same time, most key informants noted that state mechanisms for restoring documentation, including Administrative Service Centres (CNAPs) and related services, continue functioning across monitored oblasts, with several key informants particularly highlighting positive developments in the monitored hromadas of Dnipropetrovsk oblast. Key informants also frequently referred to the role of humanitarian organizations, local authorities, free legal aid services, hotlines, and case management support in assisting individuals with documentation-related procedures.



STANDARD OF LIVING AND EMPLOYMENT

Similar to the previous monitoring round, around 74% of key informants stated that basic needs in their hromadas are being met only at a moderate level, suggesting that the ability to satisfy essential needs remains limited. This situation reportedly disproportionately affects vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, older persons, ex-combatants, and IDPs.

For these population groups, difficulties in accessing governmental, including medical and social services are especially serious, compounded by physical and social limitations that affect their ability to secure stable income or seek assistance. State and family support for older persons is often insufficient, forcing them to significantly reduce spending even on essential needs such as food and healthcare.

Regarding employment opportunities, only 16% of key informants assessed the situation in their hromadas as good. Nevertheless, overall perceptions were slightly more positive than in the previous round, which may be linked to the increased availability of small business grants, self-employment support initiatives, and vocational training and retraining programmes. The most negative assessments were reported in Zaporizka oblast (Figure 5), likely reflecting the impact of ongoing hostilities, population displacement, business relocation, and broader economic disruption associated with the frontline context. These factors continue to constrain local labour markets and access to sustainable livelihood opportunities.

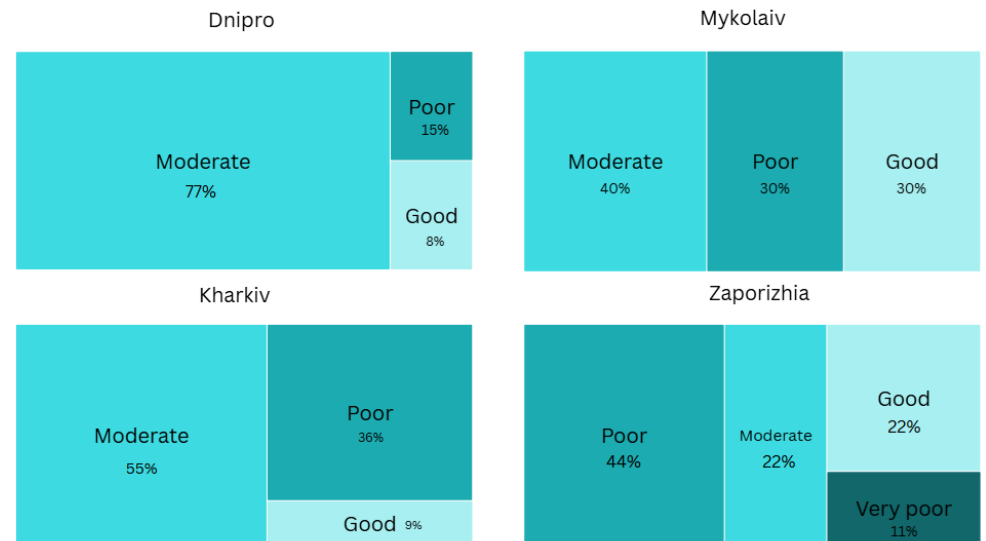


Figure 5. Employment opportunities in the location

The most common coping strategies identified in this monitoring round included increased reliance on humanitarian assistance (65% of responses), engagement in informal or irregular work (63%), and reducing food expenditures (60%). These findings suggest continued financial pressure on households, forcing some individuals to rely on informal and often unprotected forms of employment, external assistance, and negative coping strategies to meet basic needs. Such practices may contribute to increased economic vulnerability, negative health outcomes, and heightened exposure to protection risks.

Regarding available programmes aimed at improving access to employment, key informants most frequently referred to employment centres and job-matching services (72%), support for small businesses and start-ups (53%), and vocational training programmes (51%).



HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY

The results of this monitoring round indicate several positive developments compared to previous rounds. Firstly, according to key informants, the proportion of people reportedly living in partially damaged or otherwise uninhabitable housing decreased compared to the previous monitoring round. While in the previous round only 21% of key informants reported that nobody in their hromadas lived in damaged housing, this proportion increased to 47% in the current round. While differences in geographic coverage should be taken into account when comparing monitoring rounds, key informants across all monitored oblasts reported similar positive trends, potentially indicating gradual improvements in housing conditions and access to repair support (Figure 6).

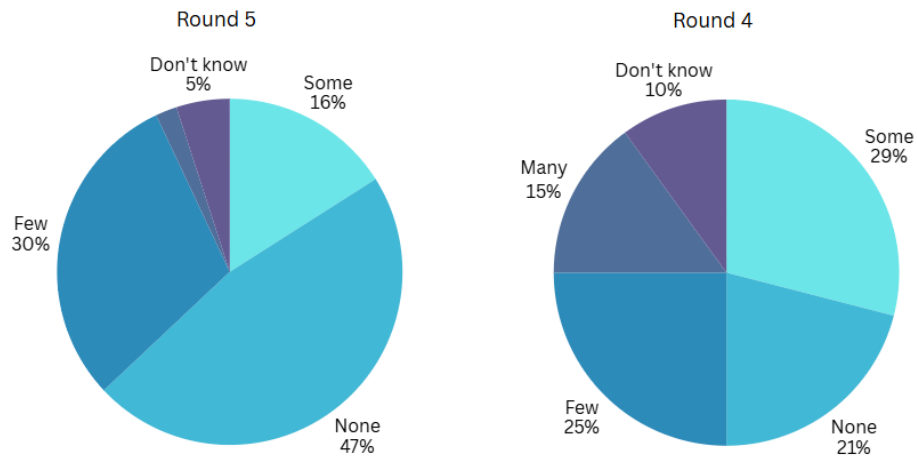


Figure 6. People living in destroyed or uninhabitable buildings

In addition, the share of key informants reporting that residents in their hromadas are able to access financial compensation for damaged housing increased to 92%, interrupting the negative trend observed since the first monitoring round. At the

same time, key informants continued to refer to persistent barriers affecting access to compensation mechanisms.

Similar to previous rounds, the lack or loss of property ownership documentation remained the primary barrier to obtaining compensation. However, the share of key informants referring to the lack of information regarding compensation procedures decreased from 42% in the previous round to 26% in the current monitoring round, which may cautiously indicate improving awareness regarding available compensation mechanisms and administrative procedures.

As in the previous monitoring round, key informants continued to highlight challenges related to the practical use of financial compensation for housing repairs. Key informants frequently noted that compensation amounts often remain insufficient to fully cover repair and reconstruction costs, requiring households to rely on personal savings, external assistance, or humanitarian support to complete repairs. Key informants also increasingly referred to shortages of contractors and labour force constraints linked to mobilization, which reportedly continue to delay housing assessments, repair works, and reconstruction processes in some hromadas.

Regarding coping mechanisms, key informants reported that many affected households continue relying primarily on self-recovery strategies and humanitarian support. According to key informants, some households including older persons attempt to address housing damage independently using temporary repairs, personal savings, or assistance from relatives.

At the same time, humanitarian organizations reportedly remain one of the key sources of support for affected households. Key informants frequently referred to assistance provided by humanitarian organizations, local authorities and local community representatives, particularly regarding consultations, legal guidance, and material support for housing repairs. In several cases, key informants noted that humanitarian actors continue covering needs that remain insufficiently addressed through state compensation mechanisms.



SOCIAL SERVICES

Similar to the previous monitoring round, the vast majority of key informants reported that most social services provided by the state remain available in their hromadas. The most frequently cited obstacles to access social services were the distance to service locations and transportation costs, followed by limited awareness of available social services. In Zaporizka oblast, key informants additionally highlighted security-related challenges affecting access to services. Some key informants also identified gaps in care and social support services, highlighting a critical shortage of social workers required to deliver existing programmes. Several KIs additionally referred to a degree of mistrust towards state institutions and social service providers among parts of the population, which was reportedly linked to previous negative experiences, and complex administrative procedure. In this monitoring round, several key informants also referred to increasing pressure on the Pension Fund and related social support systems, including due to the expanded responsibility for social and child-related payments⁴. According to KIs, this contributes to significant delays in accessing services and processing requests, including for social workers and case managers supporting vulnerable individuals.

“Online appointments formally exist, but in practice the queues are physical. There is complete chaos and confusion, and it is unclear how people are supposed to access services when everything takes so much time.” — Key Informant, Zaporizka oblast

According to key informants, the inability to access social services has a negative impact on people’s living conditions and overall well-being. KIs noted that unmet needs contribute to feelings of insecurity, increased vulnerability, and social isolation. When unable or unwilling to access formal services, individuals often rely on charitable organizations, civil society actors, or their own coping mechanisms.



SAFETY AND SECURITY

Overall, the safety and security situation remains challenging across the assessed oblasts. As in the previous round, access to protective shelters continues to be one of the main concerns reported by key informants that is increasing vulnerabilities of civilians to be exposed to protection violations in the form of indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure. In Mykolaivska oblast, 67% of KIs reported a lack of shelters, particularly in residential buildings, while in Kharkivska oblast this figure reached 50%. In terms of broader security conditions, key informants most frequently reported damage to public infrastructure (72%) and attacks on residential areas, including missile strikes and UAV attacks (63%), as the primary protection concerns (Figure 7). The presence of landmines and UXO was highlighted by 40% of KIs, representing an increase compared to 27% in the previous monitoring round. According to key informants, these challenges disproportionately affect older persons, persons with disabilities, and people with reduced mobility, as existing shelters are often not adapted to their needs and remain physically inaccessible.

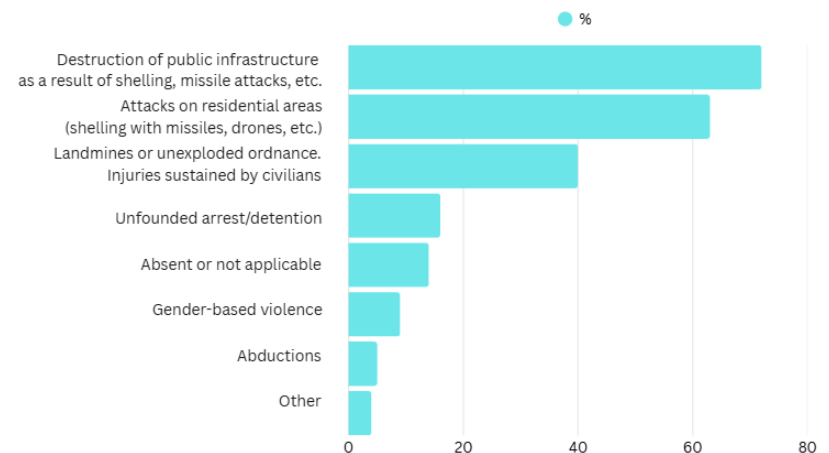


Figure 7. Main security issues in the hromada

⁴ Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine. (2026, January 1). *Відсьогодні набирає чинності Закон про підвищення «дитячих» виплат – що він передбачає*. Available at: [Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine](#)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Improve access to essential services, including healthcare, social services, rehabilitation programmes, and administrative procedures, by addressing transportation-related barriers. Particular attention should be given to expanding accessible transportation solutions for older persons, persons with disabilities, and residents of rural and hard-to-reach hromadas.
- Expand the coverage of safe and accessible protective shelter infrastructure in frontline and underserved hromadas and particularly in educational institutions. Particular attention should be given to ensuring that protective shelters, evacuation procedures, and emergency response mechanisms remain accessible for older persons, persons with disabilities, people with reduced mobility and children.
- Support continuity of essential WASH services in areas affected by infrastructure damage and insecurity. Humanitarian actors should continue providing targeted assistance to households facing disruptions in water, heating, and electricity supply, particularly in frontline and evacuation contexts.
- Expand psychosocial, educational, and recreational support for children, including safe learning environments, opportunities for socialization, extracurricular activities, and services addressing the long-term effects of insecurity, displacement, and prolonged reliance on online and mixed learning modalities.
- Continue supporting livelihoods through vocational training, employment services, self-employment initiatives, and small business grant programmes. Targeted assistance should prioritize economically vulnerable households that continue to rely on humanitarian assistance, informal employment, and other negative coping strategies to meet their basic needs.
- Support housing recovery and durable housing solutions through repair assistance, legal counselling, technical guidance, and support navigating compensation procedures. Particular attention should be given to households affected by documentation-related barriers, insufficient compensation amounts, labour shortages, and delays in reconstruction processes.
- Strengthen the capacity of social and care services through increased staffing, training, and retention of qualified personnel, particularly social workers and specialists supporting vulnerable population groups. Efforts should also focus on reducing administrative barriers and strengthening trust in available support systems and institutions.

ANNEXES

List of acronyms

Acronym	Full name
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
KI	Key Informant
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
NFI	Non-Food Items

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