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# Access Study

## Understanding Effective Coverage and Barriers to the Ukrainian State Social Protection System

December 2024



In collaboration with



## PeReHID Initiative

The PeReHID Initiative (PI) is a technical assistance collaboration between the Ministry of Social Policy, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO), the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Food Programme (WFP), the Collaborative Cash Delivery Network (CCD), the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Right to Protection (R2P), and the Social Protection Technical Assistance, Advice, and Resources Facility (STAAR) / DAI Global UK Ltd.

The overall objective of the PeReHID Initiative is to support the transition of parts of the humanitarian caseload into an inclusive, shock-responsive national social protection system. To this end, the PeReHID Initiative fosters a shared understanding between the Government of Ukraine and humanitarian actors on increasing alignment and linking humanitarian cash transfers and humanitarian services with national social assistance and social service programmes. Moreover, the PeReHID Initiative supports the Government's agenda to reform the social protection system to make it more adequate, adaptive, and shock-responsive to the current context of an ongoing full-scale invasion.

The PeReHID Initiative was officially endorsed by Order 186-N of the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Social Policy, Order 186-N, on the Establishment of the Working Group (Coordination Center) of the PeReHID Humanitarian Aid and International Development Reform Project for Ukraine on the Transition from Emergency Humanitarian Aid to the Creation of a Sustainable System of Social Protection of the Population Aimed at Overcoming Shocks Caused by the Armed Aggression of the Russian Federation Against Ukraine. 2023. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1224-23#Text>. Accessed on 18 July 2024.

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# Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Form
BHA	USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
CATI	Computer-assisted telephone interviews
CCD	Collaborative Cash Delivery, NGO network
CMU	Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine
CSO	Civil society organization
FGD	Focus group discussion
GMI	Guaranteed Minimum Income programme (Assistance for Low-Income Families)
HNRP	Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan
HUS	Housing and Utilities Subsidy programme
IDP	Internally displaced person
ILO	International Labour Organization, United Nations agency
IOM	International Organization for Migration, United Nations agency
KII	Key informant interview
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, and other community members
MoSP	Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine
MPCA	Multi-purpose cash assistance
MRTtoT	Ministry of the Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine
MSEC	Medical and social expert commission
MSNA	Multi-sectoral needs assessment
NGO	Non-government organization
OCHA	United National Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights
REACH	REACH is an international joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT)
RDD	Random digit dialling
R2P	Right to Protection, Ukrainian NGO
TSNAP	Ukrainian state administrative service center
SPSS	Statistical Product and Service Solutions software
SRS	Simple random sample
SSSU	State Statistics Service of Ukraine
UAH	Ukraine hryvnia
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees <i>also known as the United Nations Refugee Agency</i>
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USR	Unified Social Register of Ukraine
WFP	World Food Programme, United Nations agency
WHO	World Health Organization, United Nations agency

# Executive Summary

The *Access Study: Understanding Effective Coverage and Barriers to the Ukrainian State Social Protection System* is a mixed methodology research that aimed to fill some of the existing evidence gaps regarding effective coverage of Ukraine's social protection both nationwide and across different vulnerable population groups. It also explored barriers to access and attempted to propose how the impact of these can be diminished.

For the purposes of the quantitative assessment, effective coverage was defined as the number of individuals receiving benefits from a specific social protection programme (or a group of programmes) as a share of those that are eligible. This indicator was estimated based on survey data for the four largest programmes, apart from pensions, contained within the portfolio of the Ministry of Social Policy (MoSP). These are the State Social Assistance for Low-Income Families (also known as the Guaranteed Minimum Income programme, or GMI), Housing and Utilities Subsidy (HUS), IDP Allowance, and disability programmes (group). The above represented 74% of the MoSP's social assistance budget in 2023.<sup>2</sup>

Findings of the quantitative survey were complemented with key informant interviews and focus group discussions. The primary purpose of these was to understand barriers to access more deeply and to inquire about potential solutions directly from beneficiaries.

Access to social protection in Ukraine's occupied areas was assessed exclusively via qualitative means consisting of key informant interviews.

The main findings of the study are as follows:

**Effective coverage of social assistance programmes is uneven and low overall.** The results of the quantitative survey suggest that effective coverage nationwide is uneven across programmes. For IDP Allowance and disability, it amounted to 81% and 70% respectively, while for GMI and HUS, effective coverage was estimated at just 35% and 28%. Weighted by programme size in 2023, the overall effective coverage was assessed at roughly 50%.

While this result should be interpreted only as indicative, it has important implications for both the MoSP and humanitarian actors, as it does suggest that the size of the potential social assistance caseload may be significantly higher than what is visible to the system now.

**Coverage for IDPs is lower than for the general population.** Effective coverage demonstrated some important differences across population groups. Specifically, the quantitative data revealed that on average, displaced households are significantly worse covered by means-tested programmes and lack knowledge or are misinformed about them.

These findings suggest that even more efforts should be directed towards solutions for the internally displaced.

**Humanitarian aid recipients enjoy higher effective coverage.** In contrast to IDPs, recent recipients of humanitarian aid were found to benefit from higher coverage by state programmes on average when compared to the population at large. Focus group discussions revealed that humanitarian organisations often supplement aid provision with counselling on state social protection and assistance with application procedures. This additional support is likely the primary reason for the improved coverage observed.

These efforts appear to be effective and should therefore be maintained. Moreover, humanitarian agencies should be encouraged to continue offering information and application assistance, even as budgets for cash assistance diminish over time.

**Digital application methods enhance coverage.** Households that reported using digital platforms, at least partially, to apply for social protection benefits showed higher effective coverage on average across nearly all programmes. Despite this, survey data revealed that only 20% of households in the general population were utilizing digital tools at the time of data collection.

<sup>2</sup> Encompasses all non-contributory social protection programmes. Does not include pensions.



This finding suggests barriers hindering the use of digital platforms should be examined more closely. Focus group discussions highlighted digital literacy, particularly among older populations, as a critical issue that relevant stakeholders could already begin to address.

**Key barriers to access: information, infrastructure, and bureaucracy.** Among these, the quantitative survey identified lack of information as the most widespread issue. Between 20% and 49% of eligible but non-recipient households reported either being unaware of programmes or misinformed about eligibility criteria.

These findings imply that improving awareness should be a key policy target for both the government and humanitarian agencies.

Infrastructure issues—such as limited physical access for people with disabilities and the need to travel long distances—as well as bureaucratic hurdles, like complex application processes, were more frequently highlighted in focus group discussions and key informant interviews.

**In occupied areas, access to state social protection remains limited.** Based on interviews with key informants, the main access barriers were identified as (1) limited access to cash payments, (2) restricted ability to digitalize all communication with the Ukrainian authorities, and (3) fear of persecution by the occupying forces.



# 1. Introduction

The *Access Study: Understanding Effective Coverage and Barriers to the Ukrainian State Social Protection System* endeavoured to understand challenges that Ukrainian citizens and permanent residents confront when accessing state social protection programmes. This entailed measuring the effective coverage of the top four largest programmes provided by the state, determining factors that influence coverage, and gauging barriers to access that those likely eligible for benefits face.

The study was conducted under the auspices of the PeReHID Initiative's (PI) Technical Assistance Facility, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the International Organization Migration (IOM).

## 1.1 Purpose

The Ukrainian social protection system is both extensive and complex, encompassing various groups of recipients and forms of support. Most programmes are targeted, intentionally excluding certain segments of the population. However, as with any system, some eligible individuals inadvertently fail to receive benefits due to a range of unintended factors. The full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 likely intensified this issue.

This study was prompted by the limited assessments available that estimate the prevalence of access challenges in Ukraine, particularly following the onset of the full-scale war. A survey conducted by REACH in January 2023 identified significant barriers faced by households attempting to access social assistance. These included long queues to submit paperwork (reported by 38% of respondents), delays in being added to the system (29%), and difficulties in obtaining support from a counsellor (24%).<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, the REACH Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA) in 2023 found that households in the eastern-most government-controlled regions reported the highest levels of access barriers. However, neither study sought to quantify how often access challenges result in eligible individuals being excluded from programmes.<sup>4</sup>

Using data from before 2022, the International Labour Organization (ILO) attempted to estimate the effective coverage of some of Ukraine's social protection programmes in its latest World Social Protection Report.<sup>5</sup> However, this analysis was only able to compare administrative data on recipients with back-of-the-envelope estimates for the eligible population, yielding highly unreliable results.

In addition to addressing some of the knowledge gaps related to coverage, this study aimed to support the Government of Ukraine, as well as humanitarian and development organisations, in formulating recommendations to reduce access barriers. Furthermore, it sought to enhance the understanding of humanitarian actors on how aid delivery could be more effectively targeted given the gaps in state support.

## 1.2 Scope

The *Access Study* included a national quantitative survey which focused on Ukrainian citizens and permanent residents located in areas of the country under government control at the time of the exercise. This was followed by focus group discussions to enrich the findings. The situation of Ukrainians living in areas under occupation was examined by a qualitative component only; no persons residing in occupied areas were contacted directly for reasons of safety.

<sup>3</sup> REACH Initiative, Access to Government-Led Social Assistance Programmes in Selected Regions of Ukraine, January 2023

<sup>4</sup> REACH Initiative, 2023 MSNA Bulletin, November 2023.

<sup>5</sup> [World Social Protection Report](#)

## 1.3 Population Groups

While the *Access Study* was designed to address the whole of the population on the territory of Ukraine, one of its objectives was to provide insight into the accessibility of state social protection for different population groups. These are listed below.

### 1.3.1. IDPs

Since February 2022, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine rapidly increased from the 1.5 million registered in March 2021, to 8.6 million in March 2022.<sup>6</sup> The latest October 2024 estimate of individuals displaced after 24 February 2022 stands at 3.56 million as per the IOM General Population Survey.<sup>7</sup> In 2024, the overall number of people in need of assistance in Ukraine totalled 14.6 million according to the UN, although humanitarian programming aimed to reach 8.5 million people;<sup>8</sup> by September 2024, the UN and its partners had reached 7.2 million people in need within the calendar year.<sup>9</sup> The forcibly displaced are a prioritized group of concern for humanitarian actors due to the group's heightened vulnerabilities. Displacement can be an immensely destabilizing factor in the life of an individual. The loss of home often is compounded by the loss of employment. The possible separation from family often includes leaving a social support network in the hometown. Moreover, living in displacement usually entails significant expenses which were not required in the residence of origin, such as rent.

The stratum of displaced persons was explicitly included in the quantitative components of the study. This was based on the premise that IDPs are likely to have worse access to state systems for a number of reasons, including the rapid transition into a much more financially distressed state and the possibility of having incurred a loss or destruction of key documents. It was also thought that there may be displaced persons who cannot or are unwilling to formally register as IDPs independent of their need of social protection. These hypotheses were tested during the study.

### 1.3.2. Residents of Distressed Areas

It was hypothesized prior to data collection that access to state social protection programmes may have significantly deteriorated in places which came in proximity to the fighting. To have a clear definition of these areas, the study classified as “distressed” rayons (or districts, second-level administrative regions) of Ukraine that were identified as having catastrophic or extreme need in the 2024 Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP).<sup>10</sup>

### 1.3.3. Recipients of Humanitarian Aid

Cash assistance formed a cornerstone of the humanitarian response in Ukraine, providing support to over six million war-affected individuals in 2022, and 4.02 million in 2023.<sup>11</sup> To better inform programming, a sample of recipients of such aid was drawn from a list of beneficiaries jointly supplied by the country offices of UNHCR, IOM, and UNICEF. It was initially hypothesized that this group is covered worse by state social protection than the general population.

<sup>6</sup> UN Update on IDP Figures in Ukraine, 5 April 2022

<sup>7</sup> IOM/Global Data Institute Data Tracking Matrix, <https://dtm.iom.int/ukraine>

<sup>8</sup> OCHA, *Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024*, updated 3 January 2024.

<sup>9</sup> OCHA, <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ukraine/>, updated October 2024.

<sup>10</sup> OCHA, *Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024*, updated 3 January 2024.

<sup>11</sup> Data include only Cash Working Group-reported multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA)



## 2. Methodology

The *Access Study* relied upon a mixed methodology, employing both quantitative and qualitative research methods to present as comprehensive an understanding as possible as to the ability of citizens and permanent residents of Ukraine to benefit from available state social protection programmes.

The following components were included:

1. Scoping key informant interviews
2. A quantitative survey
3. Focus group discussions
4. Qualitative assessment of Ukrainian areas under occupation

In addition, relevant literature was reviewed throughout the study. For more information, please see the bibliography at the end of this report.

### 2.1 Scoping Key Informant Interviews

In December 2023 and January 2024, 27 key informant interviews (KIIs) were carried out to inform the scope of the study, conduct a preliminary assessment on access barriers, and to guide the quantitative questionnaire. Profiles were determined with the UNHCR Protection Unit. All KIIs except those at the national level were conducted by UNHCR and partner organizations' field teams; national-level KIIs were conducted by the study's authors.

The profiles and locations of the interviews can be found in Annex 1. The guide is located in Annex 2; the questions are found in Annex 3.

### 2.2 Quantitative Survey

The quantitative survey was composed of two separate sub-surveys, both of which gathered data via computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI). One was conducted nationwide from May to July 2024, employing random digit dialling methodology (RDD), which included both new randomly generated phone numbers and random numbers generated previously by IOM for the General Population Survey.<sup>12</sup> The other was based on a simple random sample (SRS) of households that have received humanitarian aid either from UNHCR, IOM, or UNICEF since January 2023. Data collection for the latter occurred in July 2024.

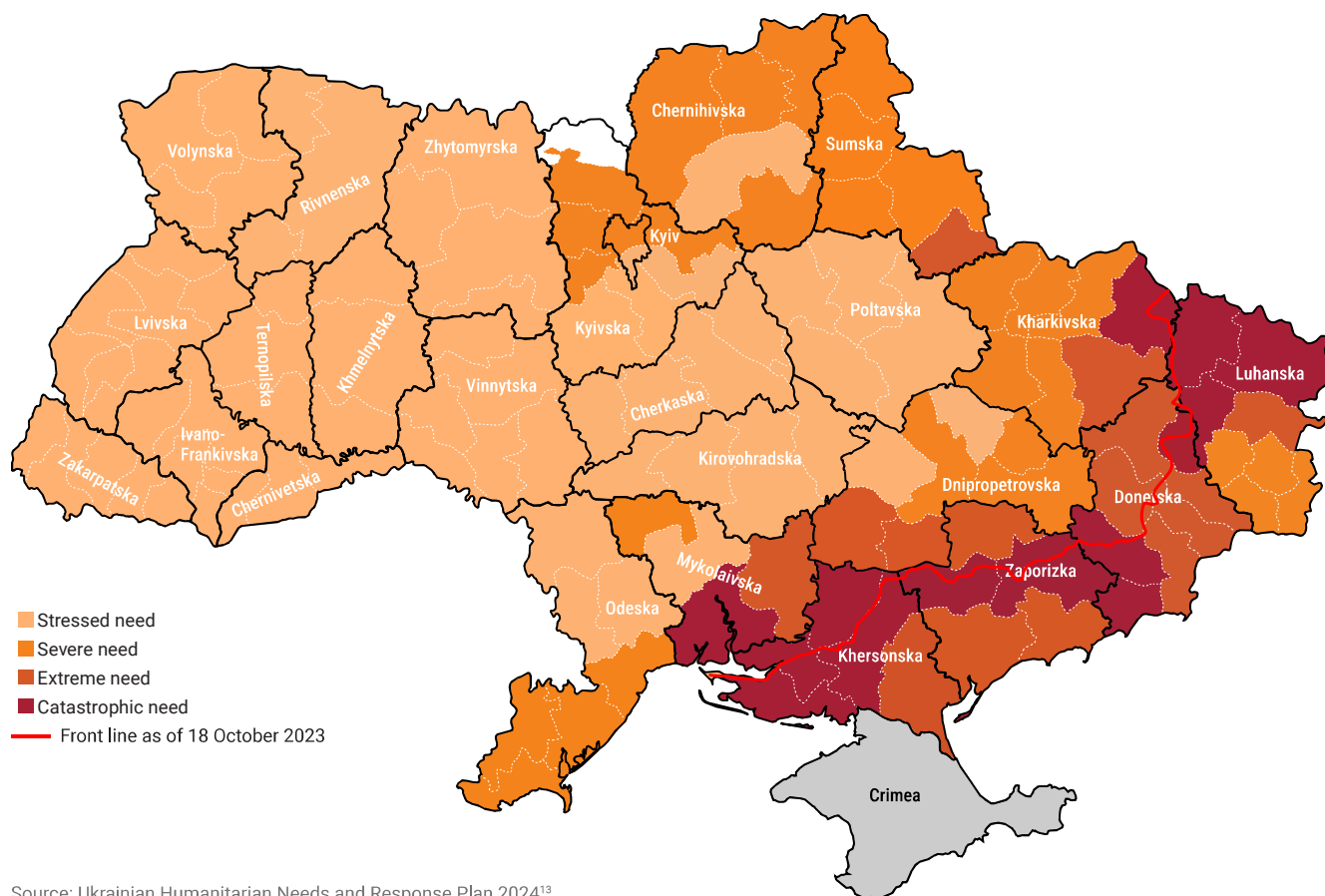
Both sub-surveys assessed household and, where applicable, individual access to state social protection programmes, including four specific social assistance programmes and old-age pension.

Areas of Ukraine that have been affected by the war to a greater degree were labelled as "distressed." More precisely, these were defined as rayons designated as having extreme or catastrophic humanitarian needs as per the 2024 *Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan* (HNRP) consolidated by the United National Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) on behalf of the Humanitarian Country Team and partners in December 2023.

<sup>12</sup> [IOM General Population Survey, round 16](#)



Map 1. Assessment of intersectoral severity of needs (distressed areas in red and dark orange)



Source: Ukrainian Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024<sup>13</sup>

The sampling unit for the nationwide survey was a household (represented by a telephone respondent) that was simultaneously identified by the following characteristics:

### 1. Area of residence

- Distressed – defined as the rayons (districts) which have catastrophic or extreme humanitarian assistance needs as per intersectoral assessments, according to the HNRP.<sup>14</sup>
- Non-distressed – rayons classified as having severe or stressed needs for humanitarian assistance, as per the HNRP.

### 2. Rural or urban setting

- Urban – a “city” or an “urban-type settlement”, as defined by the State Statistics Service of Ukraine (SSSU).
- Rural – a “village” (typically less than 10,000 residents), also as per the definition of the SSSU.

### 3. Population group

- IDP – defined as a household of which at least one member has changed their physical place of residence either (a) in 2022 because of the full-scale war or (b) in 2014 due to the conflict in the Donbas or the annexation of Crimea. For the purposes of this study, a displaced individual was considered to be an IDP even without a government-issued IDP certificate.
- Non-IDP – defined as a household which had no members that changed their physical place of residence either in 2014 or in 2022 for the above-mentioned reasons.

<sup>13</sup> Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024

<sup>14</sup> Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024

The humanitarian aid recipient sub-survey only distinguished between households living in distressed and non-distressed regions in terms of stratification.

The sample size for the nationwide survey was initially constructed to target a 95% confidence level with a maximum margin of error of  $\pm 5.0\%$  for proportions (without taking into account RDD post-stratification weighting). Together with a 5.0% buffer, the number of observations was set at 405 per population stratum. During the process of data collection, it became possible to increase the sample size for IDPs living in distressed and non-distressed regions to 528 and 892, respectively. This is equivalent to maximum standard errors of  $\pm 4.5\%$  and  $\pm 3.4\%$ .

The two strata for the humanitarian aid recipient survey targeted 405 observations each. This provided a  $\pm 5\%$  margin of error for proportions at 95% confidence interval for the underlying population, which consisted of all households that have received cash payments from UNHCR, IOM, or UNICEF since January 2023, excluding government-provided contacts. The Ukrainian government provided some contact information to humanitarian agencies via the eDopomoga digital platform. Not all agencies were at liberty to use these contacts for the purposes of the questionnaire, so they were excluded from the underlying population.

**Table 1. Summary of observations per stratum in the overall survey**

Area	Population group	Density	Sample size	Methods
Non-Distressed	Non-IDP	Urban	405	RDD
Non-Distressed	Non-IDP	Rural	405	
Distressed	Non-IDP	Mixed	405	
Non-Distressed	IDP	Mixed	892	RDD, mostly based on contact list from IOM General Population Survey.
Distressed	IDP	Mixed	528	
Distressed	Humanitarian aid recipients (IDPs and non-IDPs)	Mixed	405	Recipient lists from UNHCR, UNICEF, and IOM
Non-Distressed	Humanitarian aid recipients (IDPs and non-IDPs)	Mixed	406	Recipient lists from UNHCR, UNICEF, and IOM
<b>Total</b>			<b>3,446</b>	

Source: PeReHID survey data

## 2.2.1 Overview of the Sample

The overall data sample consists of 3,446 households and 9,684 individuals. The average household size was found to be 2.3 in the general population sub-sample (RDD) and 2.8 in the sub-sample of humanitarian aid beneficiaries (list-based sampling).

Other key household characteristics are presented in the table below:

**Table 2. Main household characteristics in the two sub-samples**

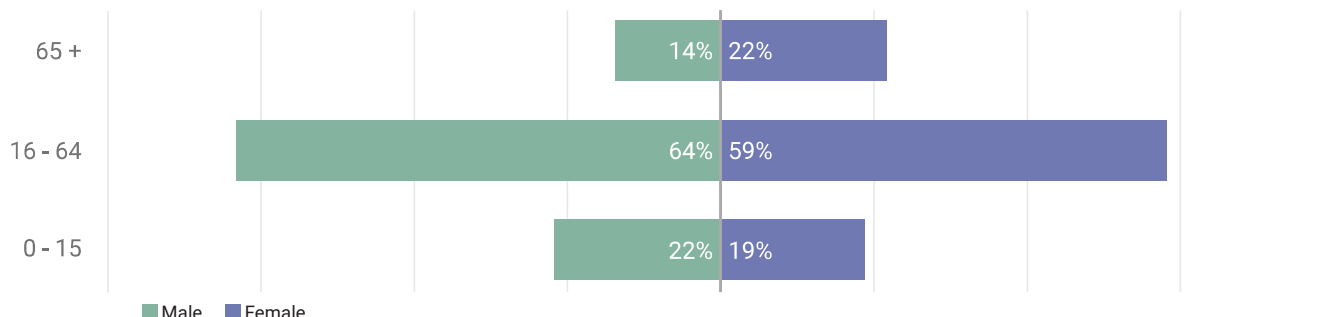
	General population	Humanitarian aid recipients
Number of households	2,635	811
Average household size	2.3	2.8
Share urban	67%	66%
Share displaced	11%	47%
Share in distressed areas	20%	50%
At least one member with disability status	18%	24%
At least one member 65+	34%	46%

Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: For the general population, shares are provided after post-stratification and RDD weighting. No weighting was done for the humanitarian aid beneficiary sub-sample.

At the individual level, the share of individuals with disability status stood at 9% and 10% in the general population and the humanitarian aid beneficiary sub-samples, respectively. Demographic breakdowns by main age groups are indicated in the charts below.

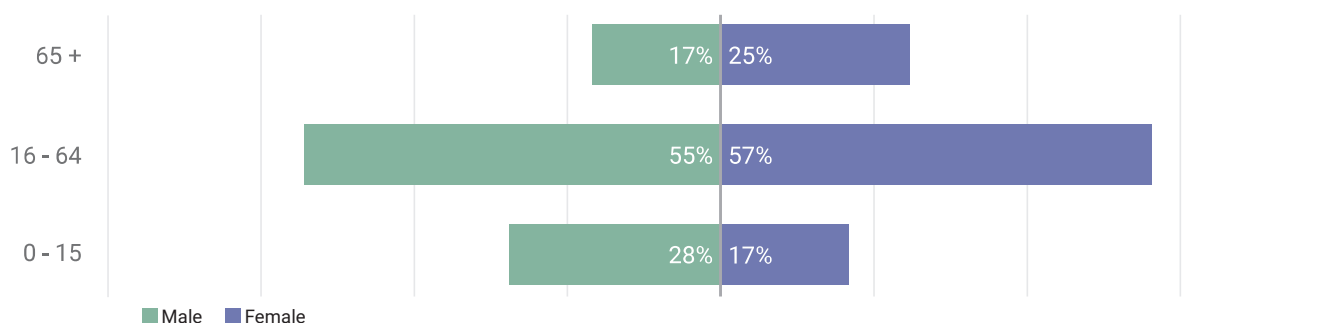
**Figure 1. Individual demographics: General population**



Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: Shares are provided after post-stratification and RDD weighting

**Figure 2. Individual demographics: Humanitarian aid recipients**



Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: No weighting applied

## 2.2.2 Quality Assurance

To enhance the overall data quality, regular checks were conducted at all stages of data collection. These included reviewing metadata and performing logical checks on the side of the data providers (Ipsos and Multicultural Insights).

As data was collected by two agencies, attention to the coordination of the survey was critical. This was assured by the establishment of a common protocol for the conducting of interviews, joint meetings with the agencies, and a control of preliminary data as it was submitted. Both agencies compiled data in an identical SPSS template to ease merging.

The full quality assurance scheme for the survey can be found in Annex 4.

## 2.3 Focus Group Discussions

To enhance the knowledge rendered by the quantitative data, 38 focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted by UNHCR and partner organizations' field teams in May and early June 2024. The qualitative questions focused on population profiles identified by the UNHCR Protection Unit and scoping KIIs. Participatory groups included IDPs, the non-displaced, or were mixed. Discussions took place across the country to ensure the differing security contexts were taken into consideration. The questions probed the ability of persons affected by the war to benefit from support to the state and the nature of the obstacles, if any, to receive payments and support services. Respondents were also asked to indicate any solutions they see to barriers that they or others around them face. Each category of focus was replicated in differing parts of the country, to reflect the varying geographical circumstances which influence vulnerabilities.

The discussions were designed to evoke the following information:

- Current access to the state social protection system
- The nature of any access challenges
- Availability of assistance measures to overcome access barriers and possible other solutions to access barriers
- Protection concerns stemming from enrolment in state social protection programmes

The profiles and locations of the focus groups can be found in Annex 5. The guide is located in Annex 6; the questions are found in Annex 7.

## 2.4. Qualitative Assessment of Occupied Areas

The geographical delineation of areas under occupation is in accordance with lists published and periodically updated by the Ministry for Reintegration and Temporarily Occupied Territories (MRTOT).<sup>15</sup> These lists include parts of Donetsk, Luhanska, Zaporizska, and Khersonska oblasts as well as the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (hereinafter Crimea).<sup>16</sup> Also of note is that specific stretches within the occupied areas, namely some 30 kilometres east and south of the frontline, are particularly difficult to reach, as they are not only occupied but also present security concerns.<sup>17</sup>

Map 2. Ukraine: Areas under occupation (17 October 2024)



Source: UNHCR (based on data from OCHA and DeepStateMap.Live)

<sup>15</sup> <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0608-24#Text>

<sup>16</sup> Additionally, some references or experiences refer to people's situations when under occupation in areas that have since come back under the control of the Government of Ukraine, such as areas of Kharkivska and Mykolaivska oblasts. In these cases, focus is placed upon people's experiences of social protection payments while under occupation.

<sup>17</sup> GTS Workshop "Cash is King", 23 October 2023, Kyiv. Please note that the expression "near the frontline" in this qualitative assessment is only concerned with occupied areas near the frontline.



The qualitative assessment of Ukrainian state social protection in areas under occupation was based upon desk research and key informant interviews carried out from April through July 2024. It cannot claim representativity.

Due to the sensitivity and difficult accessibility of the topic, all interviews were conducted in accordance with the “do no harm” principle of good practice and it was assured that they presented no inherent risk for the persons interviewed. There was no direct communication with people currently in occupied areas. The interviews were conducted with people who have attempted to apply for and receive state social protection in occupied areas of Ukraine and those who have extensive knowledge of the conditions for such applications (e.g. relatives of residents of occupied areas). Interviews were held with persons and representatives of government structures and non-governmental organizations located in areas under government control, either in person or online.

## 2.5. Limitations

### 2.5.1. Quantitative Survey

The data collected and analysed in this study is primarily derived from the information provided by survey respondents and participants in focus group discussions. Survey enumerators were equipped with formulas designed to assess eligibility for specific social protection programmes. However, it is important to note that some eligibility criteria were simplified for practical purposes<sup>18</sup> and the responses provided by participants could not be independently verified. Consequently, the actual figures may differ from those reported and should be interpreted with caution.

Quantitative data collection was amassed by two agencies for reasons related to the data ownership of the RDD-based IDP contact list from the IOM General Population Survey. This led to some inconsistencies<sup>19</sup> in the way the surveys were administered by the data collection agencies. However, these inconsistencies are not believed to have impacted the overall results significantly.

As sampling and data collection occurred via the telephone, the results likely underrepresent households living in areas with poor telephone coverage or areas where coverage was temporarily affected by the war.

Ukrainians living outside of Ukraine were not surveyed, despite the fact that they may still access state social protection programmes.

The data may also overrepresent households in need of social protection, as their members may have been more interested in completing a survey that focuses on such topics. Given that the goal of the analysis was to estimate effective coverage, however, the impact of this bias is not believed to significantly affect representativity.

### 2.5.2. Programme Adequacy

The study did not delve into the adequacy of any state social protection programme.

### 2.5.3. Social Services

Although the quantitative survey and focus group discussions did pose questions about access to social services,<sup>20</sup> the information obtained was not useful for analysis. Survey respondents generally indicated services which they would like to have rather than which they had attempted to access. The FGD responses indicated a conflation between the social assistance and social service programmes.

<sup>18</sup> For instance, when determining HUS eligibility, the income benchmark was based on self-reported utility expenditures instead of expenditures based on consumption norms.

<sup>19</sup> One agency collected data on up to six individuals per household, prioritizing adults, while the other collected all of the available information.

<sup>20</sup> From the survey: “Based on your awareness, please indicate which of the following social services your household is entitled to” and “Has your household or any of its members applied for any social services provided by the state over the last 12 months?”

#### 2.5.4. Qualitative Assessment of Occupied Areas

The situation of Ukrainians living in areas under occupation was examined by a qualitative component of this study; however, no persons residing in occupied areas were contacted directly for reasons of safety. The qualitative nature of this section of the study depends largely upon information obtained from people who successfully accessed state social protection from occupied areas. This may constitute an inherent bias as those who were unsuccessful may have been less likely to communicate with the study and its interlocutors.

#### 2.5.5. Marginalized Groups

Quantitative data was not collected for some potentially socially marginalized groups such as the Roma and LGBTQIA+ communities and people living with HIV due to both the sensitivity of identification questions and expectations of a small sample size. In addition, KIs and FGDs did not uncover concerns regarding these population groups that were relevant for access to state social protection.



## 3. Overview of State Social Protection in Ukraine



### Social Protection

“Social protection is a set of policies and programmes aimed at preventing and protecting all people against poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion, throughout their life cycle placing a particular emphasis on vulnerable groups.

This means ensuring adequate protection for all who need it, including children; people of working age in case of maternity, sickness, work injury or for those without jobs; persons with disability and older persons. This protection can be provided through social insurance, tax-funded social benefits, social assistance services, public works programs and other schemes guaranteeing basic income security and access to essential services.”

UNICEF, *Global Social Protection Framework*, 2019

Social protection is a human right set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Convention of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; states are obliged to provide such social security, including social insurance, to the fullest availability of their resources. During emergency situations, including armed conflicts, the protection of these rights is crucial despite the reality of displacement and devastation often significantly undermining the provision of and access to social protection.<sup>21</sup>

### 3.1. Ukrainian Social Protection Legal Framework

The Constitution of Ukraine defines social protection as a system of measures to protect the population from social risks. Social protection is guaranteed for citizens by Article 46 of the Constitution, declaring “the right of citizens to social protection, which includes the right to be provided with social security in case of full, partial or temporary loss of capacity, loss of the breadwinner, unemployment due to circumstances beyond their control, as well as in old age and in other cases determined by law.”<sup>22</sup> Social protection is extended to permanent residents as well.<sup>23</sup> Whereas it is not the sole ministry responsible, Ukrainian legislation does place the majority of social protection programmes under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Social Policy and its Pension Fund.

The social protection system provides for over 70 different types of social assistance and social insurance for more than 90 socially vulnerable categories of people, over 60 types of social assistance for more than 70 categories of people based on their professions, and about 15 categories. In addition to vulnerable groups, such as those with low income or in difficult life circumstances, the system also covers individuals entitled to benefits based on their professions, such as civil servants, military personnel, or scientists.<sup>24</sup> In recent years, several additional programmes have been established in support of the war-affected people, including specific assistance for IDPs. For an effective overview of prominent Ukrainian social assistance and insurance programmes potentially available to the general population, please see Annex 8.

The subsistence minimum is one of the key parameters of Ukrainian social protection. According to Article 6 of the Law of Ukraine on State Social Standards and State Social Guarantees, the basic state minimum living standard is established by the statutory subsistence minimum. The statutory subsistence minimum is a politically agreed and legislated threshold to calculate the benefits level for many social assistance programmes.<sup>25,26</sup>

<sup>21</sup> United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR), *Protection of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Conflict*, 2015. p.2.

<sup>22</sup> <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3773-17#Text>

<sup>23</sup> Permanent residents are persons of foreign citizenship who are granted permanent residency by the State Migration Service of Ukraine Those officially granted refugee and stateless statuses in Ukraine are granted permanent residency. As such, inclusion in the system hinges upon the ability to demonstrate Ukrainian citizenship or permanent residency.

<sup>24</sup> Center for Public Expertise, *Systems of Social Protection and Social Care in Ukraine: The Real State and Prospects for Reform*, 2009.

<sup>25</sup> PeReHID Initiative, *Mapping and Analysis of Life-Cycle and Shock-Responsive Social Assistance Programmes in Ukraine*, Forthcoming.

<sup>26</sup> According to the Law of Ukraine On the State Budget of Ukraine for 2024, the subsistence minimum per person per month was set at UAH 2,920 from 1 January 2024, while in 2024 the minimum wage was put at UAH 8,000 per month in April 2024.



## 3.2. Social Protection Programming

The Ukrainian social protection system consists of social assistance, social insurance, and social services. Social assistance is non-contributory and financed through the general taxation. Social assistance consists of payments to provide support for vulnerable individuals or households during life-cycle events or shocks. Social insurance programmes require contributions from participants to cover life events such as unemployment, illness, and pensions in old age.<sup>27</sup> Social services typically provide in-home care and assistance for the disabled, older people, or those with medical needs, for persons located in rehabilitation and emergency shelters, or for persons in difficult life circumstances.<sup>28</sup> The provision of social services is placed with the local territorial units or self-governments (hereinafter hromadas), with financing being sourced predominantly from local budgets as well. As such, available social services may vary between hromadas.

The social protection system is centered predominantly upon a life cycle principle and includes support for specific profiles such as disabilities, unemployment, being a single head of household, or having a large family. Some benefits are universal, while many are based upon means-testing or prior contribution. The thresholds established in means-testing programmes are generally based upon the statutory subsistence minimum.<sup>29</sup>

In old age, there are two types of pensions for which one can apply: the contributory pension in the form of social insurance, which depends upon the applicant's age and employment record, and social assistance to persons not entitled to old-age pension.<sup>30</sup> Those who are not eligible for old-age pension<sup>31</sup> and can demonstrate an income under a certain level qualify for the latter. The pension system is deemed to cover the majority of older persons in Ukraine,<sup>32</sup> given that they meet eligibility criteria including age, pension-contributing work experience, and health concerns.<sup>33</sup> Most old age pension programmes are incompatible with one another and only one can be chosen, even when a person is eligible for several different programmes.<sup>34,35</sup> Pensions are distributed by the Pension Fund of Ukraine; pension amounts are determined by legislation which also specifies time limitations in which they can be paid.

<sup>27</sup> PeReHID, *Mapping and Analysis of Life-Cycle and Shock-Responsive Social Assistance Programmes in Ukraine*, Forthcoming.

<sup>28</sup> The Law of Ukraine on Social Services defines social services as "actions aimed at preventing difficult life circumstances, overcoming or minimizing their negative consequences for individuals/families who are in such circumstances" and focuses on long-term, systematic interventions aimed at addressing complex social issues. For a list of the types of social services under Ukrainian legislation, please refer to Annex 9.

<sup>29</sup> PeReHID Initiative, *Mapping and Analysis of Life-Cycle and Shock-Responsive Social Assistance Programmes in Ukraine*, Forthcoming.

<sup>30</sup> Non-contributory state social assistance is available to unemployed individuals who have reached the general retirement age but do not qualify for a pension due to insufficient official experience. Under Ukrainian law, individuals are eligible for pension insurance at 60 if they have worked for 31 years, at 63 with 21 years of work, and at 65 with at least 15 years. If an individual reaches the retirement age but lacks the required work experience, they are eligible for state social assistance instead of a pension.

<sup>31</sup> Persons with less than 15 years of work experience cannot receive pension insurance.

<sup>32</sup> According to the Pension Fund of Ukraine, as of 1 January 2024, 9,937,408 pensioners were registered with the Pension Fund of Ukraine, of which 7,705,735 pensioners receive an old-age pension, with an average pension of UAH 5,247.94. As of 1 April 2024, the number of old-age pensioners was 7,408,015, with an average pension of UAH 5,743.27. Over 50% of IDP households are estimated to consist of at least one family member who is over 60 years old. (UKRAINE Human Development Update In Focus: Disability and Inclusion February 2024)

<sup>33</sup> PeReHID Initiative, *Mapping and Analysis of Life-Cycle and Shock-Responsive Social Assistance Programmes in Ukraine*, Forthcoming.

<sup>34</sup> PeReHID Initiative, *Mapping and Analysis of Life-Cycle and Shock-Responsive Social Assistance Programmes in Ukraine*, Forthcoming.

<sup>35</sup> In addition to the pension itself, older persons may be entitled to age-specific benefits, including social assistance and social services. (Center of Analysis of Public Finance and Public Administration, *Analysis of the Effectiveness of Legislative Regulation of the Provision of Social Assistance in Ukraine for the Main Target Groups*, 2021, Link: [https://kse.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Sotsialni-dopomogi\\_doslidzhennya-1.pdf](https://kse.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Sotsialni-dopomogi_doslidzhennya-1.pdf)) In the case of pensions, legislation is frequently amended and there is the possibility to apply for a recalculation of entitlements through an administrative or court procedure. (PeReHID Initiative, *Mapping and Analysis of Life-Cycle and Shock-Responsive Social Assistance Programmes in Ukraine*, Forthcoming.)

## 4. Effective Coverage of Selected Programmes

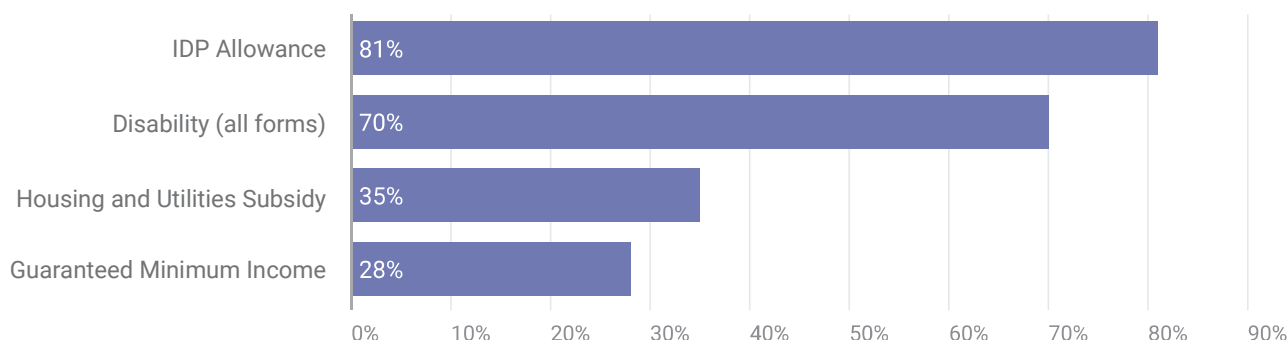
The Access Study estimated effective coverage for Ukraine's four largest social assistance programmes based on survey data. These are:

1. Assistance Programme for Low-Income Families (Guaranteed Minimum Income)
2. Housing and Utilities Subsidy (HUS)
3. Allowance for Internally Displaced Persons
4. Disability assistance (all forms)

According to PeReHID Initiative estimates, the Government of Ukraine directed more than 70% of all social protection expenditures towards these four programmes in 2023. In the case of each selected programme, the survey aimed to establish whether households (or their members) fulfilled key eligibility criteria and defined the households as "likely eligible" if so. Effective coverage was then calculated as the number of households (or individuals in the case of the disability programme) which had received benefits over the last 12 months as a share of those that were likely to be eligible for them.

The summary of effective coverage nationwide by selected programme is presented below. Weighted by programme size (equal to spending in 2023), the mean effective coverage stands at 50% and can be considered a proxy for overall effective coverage within the social protection system of Ukraine.

**Figure 3. Effective coverage in the general population by programme**



Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

The study also asked questions about old age pensions. In this module, the aim was to examine the presence of access barriers rather than to attempt to estimate effective coverage, as there are many programmes and no simple way to establish eligibility. If the respondent indicated that a household member had reached the eligible age for pension, further inquiries were made as to whether that individual was indeed receiving pension, and if not, what were the reasons.

### 4.1 Assistance Programme for Low-Income Families (GMI)

The social assistance programme for the state social assistance for low-income families,<sup>36</sup> or hereinafter Guaranteed Minimum Income (GMI) programme, is Ukraine's last-resort support designed to address the most economically vulnerable households. Introduced in 2000, this means-tested social assistance programme is provided to households which permanently reside in Ukraine and, for reasons beyond their control, have an average monthly to-

<sup>36</sup> In Ukrainian: Державна соціальна допомога малозабезпеченим сім'ям



tal income that is less than the statutory household subsistence minimum. Applications for assistance can be submitted in person at local social protection offices, at administrative service centres (TSNAP<sup>37</sup>), by mail, or through Diia, the online state portal to access different state services including several social assistance programmes.<sup>38</sup>

The GMI started to expand in 2020. In the years 2021–2023, with the increase in the GMI income eligibility threshold, the number of GMI programme recipient families grew to 1.7 million persons, expanding coverage to about 5% of the population. In 2023, 62% of GMI programme participants were unable to work and 74% of funds allocated to the GMI went towards the lowest income quintile of recipients. Roughly 7% of Ukraine's total social assistance funding in 2023 was dedicated to the GMI, according to PeReHID estimates.

Eligibility for the GMI programme is regulated by a dedicated law<sup>39</sup> and is based primarily on the amount of monthly household<sup>40</sup> income after tax and checked against a threshold equal to the aggregate of all subsistence minimums of household members (these are individually dependent on age, employment status, the presence of disability, etc.). Additional checks of existing assets and additional income sources,<sup>41</sup> such as whether the household owns more than one apartment or car, are also conducted.

The survey attempted to mirror the main government criteria to establish the “likely eligibility” of respondent households. This encompassed inquiring about the level of net household income (whether it is below or above the qualifying threshold<sup>42</sup>) and asking directly if the respondent household owns more than one apartment or car or if aggregate household member cash deposits stand above 100,000 Ukrainian hryvnia (UAH).

For analytical purposes, households were classified into one of five “GMI status” groups based on the answers provided: (1) have received GMI over the last 12 months; (2) do not qualify for GMI (fail one or more checks and have not applied); (3) likely qualify for GMI but have not applied for it; (4) applied for GMI but received a rejection; or (5) applied for GMI and are waiting to hear back. In the general population (RDD sampling) the distribution of these groups was found to be as follows.

**Table 3. Distribution of respondent households by GMI benefits status**

Received benefits over the last 12 months	6%
Do not qualify	76%
Likely qualify but did not apply	15%
Applied but received a rejection	2%
Applied and awaiting decision	2%

Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: The total number of observations stands at 2,548. Non-responses removed

To calculate effective coverage, the total number of households that had received benefits over the last 12 months was divided by the number that has either received them or likely qualified for GMI (the total eligible pool). Rejections were assumed to be legitimate, as these were a result of an actual check conducted by the government (and roughly half of those rejected reported income above the qualification threshold). The resulting indicator amounted to 28%, which implies that little more than one in four “likely eligible” households are covered by the programme.

<sup>37</sup> In Ukrainian: ЦНАП, Центр надання адміністративних послуг

<sup>38</sup> Diia, Ukrainian for “action,” was developed to digitalise different public services such as electronic court, application for affordable mortgages, or application for social protection programmes. As of January 2023, 52% of Ukrainians used Diia. Diia can produce and store digitised versions of documents (e.g. ID or educational certificates) for easy and quick use. Diia can also generate certificates to verify and calculate social assistance and social insurance due. (PeReHID, Ukraine: Using Diia to Establish Income for Means-Testing and to Confirm Social Protection Enrolment Background Paper, 2024)

<sup>39</sup> Law of Ukraine “On state social assistance to low-income families,” No. 1768-III adopted on June 1, 2020

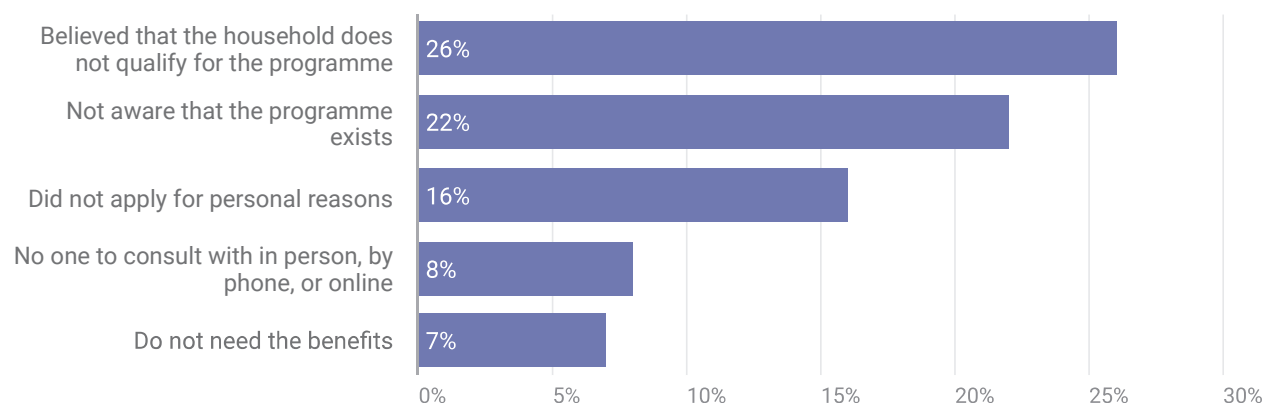
<sup>40</sup> The law refers to a family rather than a household and specifies explicitly which members can be included.

<sup>41</sup> In Ukrainian: перевірка майнового стану

<sup>42</sup> The threshold was dynamically computed based on answers about household characteristics and the subsistence minimum in place at the time of data collection.

Households classified as “likely eligible” were also asked to provide a reason for not applying for benefits. The most common answers selected indicated a lack of awareness (“believed that the household does not qualify for the programme” or “not aware that the programme exists”) or a personal decision to not proceed with the application (some respondents indicated that others need these benefits more). Roughly 8% of respondents said that they did not have anyone with whom to consult about the GMI.

**Figure 4. Top reasons for not applying for the GMI programme**



Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

## 4.2 Housing and Utilities Subsidy (HUS) Programme

Households that struggle with the costs of energy and communal services can apply for the Housing and Utilities Subsidy (HUS) programme, which provides financial support for the payment of utility bills and the costs of household heating fuel.<sup>43</sup> The list of services for which subsidies can be granted is regulated by Article 5 of the Law of Ukraine on Housing and Utility Subsidy. The HUS does not target the poorest specifically, but rather aims to help low-income households.

Once Ukraine’s largest means-tested social assistance programme, the government has taken steps to improve HUS targeting accuracy while gradually reducing its costs since 2018. That said, in 2023, the HUS still represented 11% of the total social protection budget, according to PeReHID estimates.

Subsidies are granted equally to Ukrainians, permanent residents, and recognized stateless persons living in apartments or private houses. Legislation stipulates that the subsidy is granted if the expenses for paying for utility services exceed 15% of the average monthly total household income.<sup>44</sup> As for the GMI, eligibility criteria also include a verification of existing assets and additional income sources, such as determining whether more than one apartment or car is owned by the household or if total cash deposits of all members exceed a certain threshold.

Subsidies are paid monthly for housing services and utilities such as gas, electricity, heating, and water; subscription fees for consumers of public utilities as well as for liquefied gas, and for solid and liquid household stove fuel are paid once per year. The amount of the subsidy is calculated as the difference between the cost of housing and communal services within social norms and standards and the amount of the mandatory payment. Typically, applications must be made to the programme every six months or if the household’s financial situation changes. During martial law,<sup>45</sup> however, households that benefited from the housing subsidy in the 2020-2021 heating season were

<sup>43</sup> Overview of the Ukraine Government’s Housing and Utilities Subsidy Programme and the Guaranteed Minimum Income Programme | socialprotection.org

<sup>44</sup> Resolution CMU No. 1156 On the New Size of Expenses for Housing and Utility Services, the Purchase of Liquefied Gas, Solid and Liquid Fuel for Domestic Use in the Case of Providing a Housing Subsidy. Legally, the law refers to a family rather than a household, and specifies explicitly which members can be included.

<sup>45</sup> Law of Ukraine on Approval of the Decree of the President of Ukraine on the Imposition of Martial Law in Ukraine from 24.02.2024 No 2102-IX

automatically enrolled without re-application for the 2022-2024 heating seasons.<sup>46,47,48</sup> Applications for the HUS are made through the local Pension Fund offices either in person or by mail. Additionally, documents can be submitted at local social protection offices, local self-government bodies, at TSNAP, via the Pension Fund online portal, or through Diia.

To gauge effective coverage of the HUS programme, households were surveyed about monthly utility expenses during the heating season in addition to their monthly net incomes. If the responses indicated eligibility, further questions were posed according to the programme's disqualification criteria. Households that passed this second phase were labelled as "likely eligible." For analytical purposes, households were then assigned one of five "HUS status" groups based on the information collected: (1) have received HUS benefits over the last 12 months; (2) do not qualify for HUS (failed one or more checks); (3) likely qualify for HUS but have not applied for it; (4) applied for HUS but were rejected; or (5) applied for HUS but waiting to hear back.

**Table 4. Distribution of respondent household by HUS benefits status**

Received benefits over the last 12 months	19%
Do not qualify	40%
Likely qualify but did not apply	36%
Applied but received a rejection	5%
Applied and awaiting decision	1%

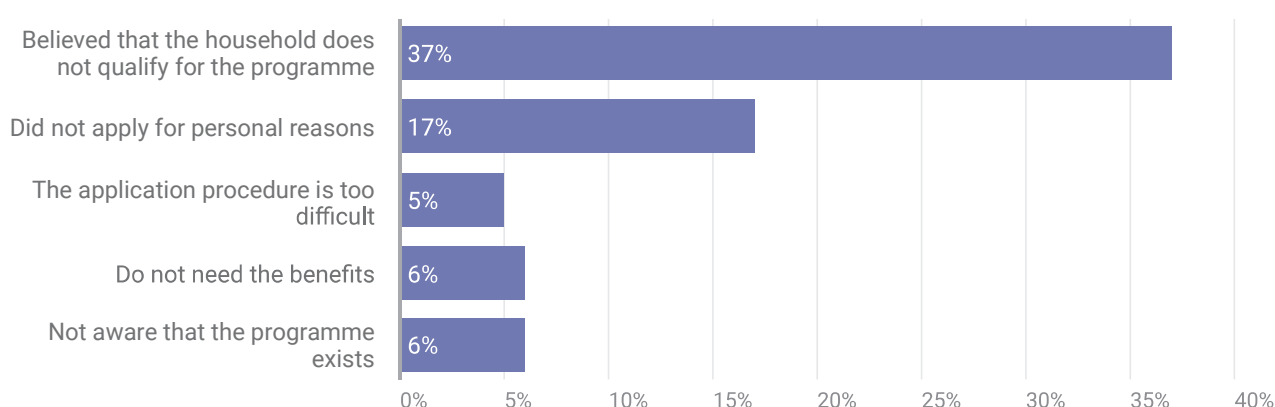
Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: The total number of respondents stands at 2,314. Households with non-response on eligibility criteria were removed

As with the GMI programme, in order to calculate effective coverage of HUS, the total number of households that received benefits over the last 12 months was divided by the number that has either received the benefits or likely qualifies for HUS. Rejections were assumed to be legitimate. The resulting indicator stands at 35%, which means that roughly over a third of eligible households are covered by the programme in the general population.

Households classified as likely eligible were also asked to supply a reason for not applying. Similarly to GMI, the most common answers selected indicate a lack of understanding of the programme or a lack of awareness ("believed that the household does not qualify for the programme" or "not aware that the programme exists") or a personal decision to not proceed with the application. Roughly 5% of respondents indicated that the application procedure is too difficult.

**Figure 5. Top reasons for not applying for the HUS programme**



Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

<sup>46</sup> Households that received the housing subsidy in a non-cash form; or the subsidy was assigned at the actual place of residence; or was appointed without taking into account persons who do not live at the place of registration. See: Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers №505 of 19 May 2021, <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/505-2021-%D0%BF#Text>

<sup>47</sup> The housing subsidy is calculated separately for the heating and non-heating seasons. The estimated average benefit level per household in 2023 was UAH 1,330 per month [zvit-2023.doc (live.com), p. 96].

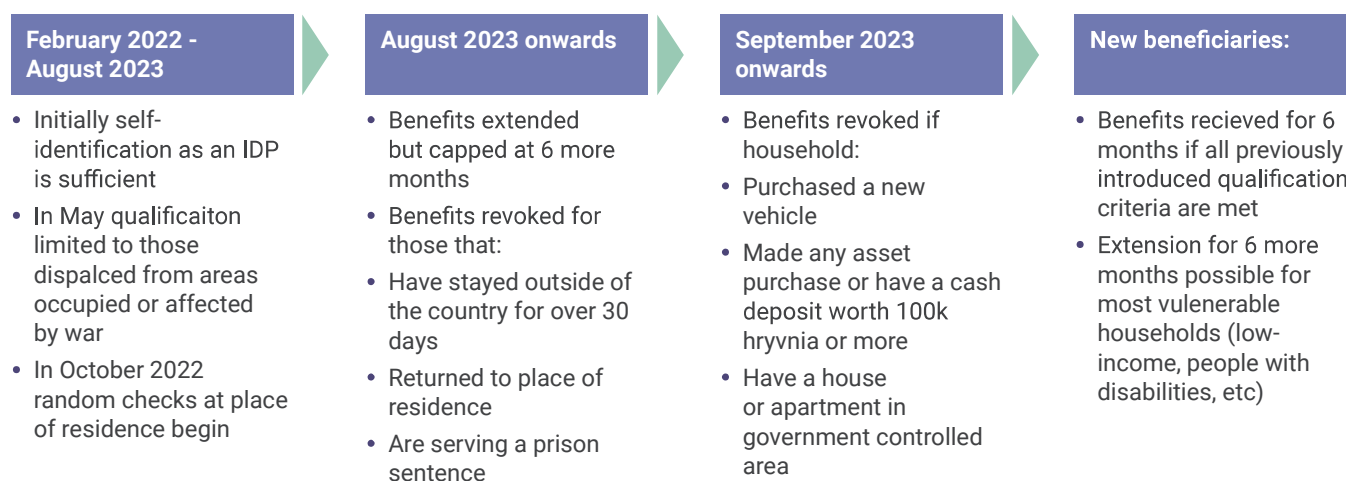
<sup>48</sup> <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/pfu-subsydii-na-opaliuvalnyi-sezon-prodovzhat-avtomatychno>

## 4.3 IDP Allowance Programme

The Allowance for Internally Displaced Persons programme was launched in March 2022, substituting the targeted state assistance to IDPs initiated in 2014. The allowance was set by the Law on Ensuring the Rights and Freedoms of Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine<sup>49</sup> and guarantees IDPs the “same rights and freedoms as other persons in accordance with the legislation of Ukraine and international agreements.” This programme, designed to be shock-responsive, offers financial assistance as a vital component of social protection for the forcibly displaced. In 2023, the IDP Allowance remained the largest programme in terms of state spending, with 42% of the state social protection budget being directed towards it, according to PeReHID estimates.

Since the adoption of the initial law in 2014, changes to IDP support have been implemented through various cabinet resolutions and, most importantly, Resolution No. 332 on IDP Allowance. While at the onset of the full-scale invasion, the programme only required individuals to identify themselves as IDPs via registration and be issued an IDP certificate, the government realized that the scope needed to be narrowed to keep expenditures under control. Starting in May 2022, the IDP Allowance was only provided to persons displaced from residences included on an official list of areas experiencing hostilities or from occupied areas as well as to individuals whose houses were damaged or destroyed, irrespective of location. To verify continuous eligibility for the IDP Allowance, the National Social Service of Ukraine launched random checks in places of residence in October 2022 as those returning to their original places of residence were no longer eligible for IDP registration and the respective allowance. A further narrowing of focus occurred in August and September 2023, when the payment period was limited to six months of extension. Targeting shifted from individuals to households as of November 2023, as, henceforth, new applications for the programme were to be made at the household level. Qualitative means-testing mechanisms were also introduced; households found to have a high level of savings or to own a vehicle manufactured less than five years prior were excluded from the programme. Similarly, if a household member was found to own an apartment or home in government-controlled area, benefits would also be revoked. As of March 2024, these criteria applied to all new applicants.

Figure 6. IDP Allowance programme evolution timeline



For survey purposes, a displaced household was defined as one which contains at least one member displaced either (a) since 2022 because of the full-scale war or (b) since 2014 due to the conflict in the Donbas or the annexation of Crimea.

For calculating the effective coverage of the IDP Allowance programme, only those displaced households that fulfilled the following conditions were considered: (1) at least one member displaced after February 2022 (as per the programme’s targeting), and (2) at least one member displaced before September 2023 (prior to the introduction of additional eligibility criteria). As was the case for the GMI and the HUS, households were assigned one of the

<sup>49</sup> Law No. 1706-VII on Ensuring Rights and Freedoms of Internally Displaced Persons, dated 20 October 2014.



mutually exclusive IDP benefit statuses based on survey responses. The possible statuses were: (1) have received benefits over the last 12 months; (2) likely qualify for benefits, but do not have any household members formally registered as IDP; (3) likely qualify but did not apply for benefits for an unknown reason; (4) likely qualify for benefits, but not aware of them; (5) applied for benefits, but received a rejection; or (6) applied for benefits and waiting to hear back.<sup>50</sup>

The distribution of displaced households by IDP benefit status in RDD sample is provided below:

**Table 5. Distribution of respondent households by IDP benefits status**

Received benefits over the last 12 months	78%
Likely qualify, no members with IDP certificate	8%
Likely qualify, did not apply for benefits for unknown reason	6%
Likely qualify, not aware of benefits	5%
Application for benefits rejected	2%
Applied and awaiting decision	1%

Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: Only households that have been displaced between February 2022 and September 2023 are included. The total number of respondents stands at 1,128. Non-responses were removed

To compute effective coverage, all households displaced before September 2023 were considered to be “likely eligible” unless they had received an official rejection while applying. Households that had applied for benefits but were still awaiting the decision were excluded, as this implied that their application is subject to stricter eligibility criteria (whether they indeed will receive benefits is also unclear). This approach yielded an effective coverage estimate of 81%.

Survey respondents with displaced household members lacking registration were asked to provide a reason for not possessing an IDP certificate. The distribution of responses is provided below:

**Table 6. Why does this IDP household member not have an IDP certificate?**

Decided not to apply for personal reasons	34%
Does not qualify for IDP certificate	29%
Other	25%
The application for IDP certificate was rejected	12%

Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: The total number of respondents stands at 561

The most common response was that no application for the IDP certificate was made for personal reasons. As this option was selected significantly more frequently by men (39% of responses as compared to 25% for women), this may indicate an avoidance of contact with administrative bodies to decrease the chances of military conscription.

Why a household member may be ineligible for an IDP certificate as per governmental procedures was further probed via free-form responses. Typically, this resulted in answers suggesting difficulty with proving residence in a war-affected area before relocation (e.g. registration at a different address or renting without an official contract) or having lived in an area which had not been included on the official list of those affected by hostilities prior to the war.

<sup>50</sup> Households previously included into the IDP Allowance programme but subsequently excluded during the programme due to the tightened eligibility criteria and checks were counted as included (having received benefits) by the survey if they had indeed received benefits at least once over the last 12 months under the previous criteria.

## 4.4 Disability Programmes

According to the MoSP, the number of people with disabilities continues to grow in Ukraine; as of September 2024, 2.8 million people with a disability require some form of assistance.<sup>51</sup> The war has exacerbated chronic diseases due to the shelling of civilians, mass displacement, and the massive maiming of civilians and military personnel. It has also caused infrastructural damage which hinders access to medical services and specialized doctors in certain areas.

People living with disabilities in Ukraine have the right to almost 100 types of state support depending on their profile (approximately 50 types of benefits, 30 types of social assistance and 17 types of social services).<sup>52,53</sup> One of the largest, titled Social Assistance to Persons with Disabilities from Childhood or Children with Disabilities,<sup>54</sup> focuses on minors. Other notable programmes include Social Assistance to Persons and Children with Disabilities Injured as a Result of Explosive Objects<sup>55</sup> and the Disability Pension.<sup>56</sup> In 2023, roughly 15% of the state social protection budget went towards disability benefits of different types, according to PeReHID estimates.

Eligibility for most disability programmes is subject to official recognition of a disability by a medical and social expert commission (MSEC). The commission bases its decision on the medical history and the results of a physical examination and medical testing and defines the group (for adults) or category (for children) of disability and duration of disability status. All applications for benefits must be accompanied by medical or social certificates; both certificates and programme applications must be renewed annually. In the context of war, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Resolution No. 225 on Issues of the Procedure for Conducting Medical and Social Expertise during the Period of Martial Law in Ukraine does allow for a determination of disability status in absentia for those who had the status of children with disability upon reaching the age of 18 with a referral by the medical commission.

For the purposes of the quantitative survey, effective coverage to the multiple disability programmes was gauged through disability status, as it functions as a gateway to assistance. To this end, survey respondents who indicated household members with “illnesses, injuries, or congenial conditions that have led to persistent health disorders” (a proxy for disability, 25% of the total sample) were asked to indicate whether formal disability status was present. If not, a reason was asked to be provided. Based on this information individuals with suspected disabilities (indicated to have “illnesses, injuries, or congenial conditions that have led to persistent health disorders” by the respondent) were assigned to one of the following mutually exclusive disability benefit status groups: (1) have official disability status; (2) do not believe that they have disabilities (even though they have persistent health disorders); (3) chose not to apply for official disability status for personal reasons; (4) do not have official disability status due to access barriers (long distances to travel, queues are too long, etc.); (5) do not have official disability status as the application procedure is too difficult; (6) do not have official disability status and did not provide a reason; (7) do not have official disability status due to a lack of information available and opportunity for consultations; (8) the application for official status was rejected; (9) other.

<sup>51</sup> “Social budget–2025: increase in funding for raising children in a family environment, targeted support for those who need it, preservation of payments for IDPs,” <https://www.msp.gov.ua/news/24033.html>

<sup>52</sup> Center of Analysis of Public Finance and Public Administration. Analysis of the effectiveness of legislative regulation of the provision of social assistance in Ukraine for the main target groups. July, 2021.

<sup>53</sup> Frequently solicited programmes include Social Assistance to Persons and Children with Disabilities Injured as a Result of Explosive Objects, Social Assistance to Persons with Disabilities from Childhood or Children with Disabilities, Carer Allowances for Persons with Disabilities from Childhood or Children with Disabilities, and Disability Pension.

<sup>54</sup> In Ukrainian: Державна соціальна допомога особам з інвалідністю з дитинства та дітям з інвалідністю

<sup>55</sup> In Ukrainian: Одноразова компенсація та щорічна допомога особам з інвалідністю та дітям з інвалідністю, постраждалим внаслідок дії вибухонебезпечних предметів

<sup>56</sup> In Ukrainian: Пенсії по інвалідності

**Table 7. Distribution by disability benefit status (of those reporting “persistent health disorders”)**

Have official disability status	35%
Do not believe they have a disability	23%
Did not apply for official status for personal reasons	12%
Do not have official status: long distance to travel, long queues, etc	7%
Do not have official status: procedure too difficult	6%
Do not have official status: reason unknown	6%
Do not have official status: lack information and resource for consultation	3%
Application for official status rejected	1%
Other	8%

Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: The total number of respondents stands at 1,873. Non-responses were removed. The “other” category includes individuals that did not apply for status for the following reasons: they found old age pension to be superior to disability pension (2% of the sample); they were recently diagnosed (2%); they had no status and there was no information as to whether or not they applied (3%); and they were waiting to hear back after the submission of the application (1%)

As the presence of a disability that would likely qualify for official status could not be assessed via telephone in the survey,<sup>57</sup> only individuals who attempted to apply for official status or indicated a clear desire to do so<sup>58</sup> were assumed to belong to this category. Thus, household members who did not believe they had disabilities or those who opted not to apply for status for personal reasons were assumed to not be qualified. Effective coverage was then calculated by dividing the number of individuals with status by those who either had status or were prevented from applying by different barriers (e.g., access issues, difficulty of the procedure, lack of information). The resulting indicator stands at 70%, which implies that slightly less than one in three people with a likely qualifying disability are not receiving due benefits.

## 4.5 Old Age Pensions

Under martial law,<sup>59</sup> the Pension Fund of Ukraine continues to provide services both in its centres and remotely, including within hromadas and at administrative and social service centres. Ukrainian law also provides for receiving pensions abroad, covering those citizens who moved due to the war and Ukrainians who have reached retirement age while living abroad. These services can be accessed remotely through the Pension Fund’s electronic services portal and Diia. All pensions are paid monthly through banks and post offices. As of 1 April 2024, the Pension Fund of Ukraine reported that 83% of pension payments were made through current bank accounts, reaching 8.35 million recipients, while 1.8 million pensioners (17.7%) received their pensions via the national postal service, Ukrposhta.<sup>60</sup> The survey did not attempt to establish effective coverage of old age pensions, as there was no simple way to determine eligibility. Instead, a focus was made on determining the presence of access barriers. The old age question module was initiated if a household member over 50 years old was present on the household roster as very few people receive pension before this milestone.

In the total subsample of 1,968 individuals, who, according to the respondents, had reached pension age, 86% were found to be receiving pension. Those not receiving it tended either not to have applied for pension or did not have a long enough official employment record (5% of the sample for each category). Both reasons appear logical, given that individuals not receiving pensions were found to be on average 12 years younger than those receiving it (57 versus 69 years old).<sup>61</sup> Only 2% mentioned that they could either not confirm job records or that their applications for pension were rejected, suggesting that the presence of access barriers is low in the government-controlled areas.

<sup>57</sup> For example, poor eyesight might be indicated to be a persistent health disorder by the respondent, but the condition would likely not qualify unless it was very severe.

<sup>58</sup> Clear desires to apply were indicated when respondents specified barriers which prevented them from applying. Such barriers as the application procedure being too difficult, trouble finding the right information or someone to consult with, and having to travel too far were most commonly reported.

<sup>59</sup> Law of Ukraine on Approval of the Decree of the President of Ukraine on the Imposition of Martial Law in Ukraine from 24.02.2024 No 2102-IX

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.pfu.gov.ua/2165273-zvit-pro-robotu-organiv-pensijnogo-fondu-ukrayiny-u-i-kvartali-2024-roku/>

<sup>61</sup> In accordance with Article 26 of the Law of Ukraine on Compulsory State Pension Insurance, individuals are eligible for pension insurance at 60 if they have worked for 31 years, at 63 with 21 years of work, and at 65 with at least 15 years. If an individual reaches the retirement age but lacks the required work experience, they are eligible for state social assistance instead of a pension.



**Table 8. Distribution by old age pension benefits status**

Receiving pension	87%
Not receiving pension: did not apply	5%
Not receiving pension: official employment record too short	5%
Not receiving pension: reason not clear	2%
Not receiving pension: cannot confirm employment history	1%
Not receiving pension: application rejected	1%

Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: Shares are of those household members that were indicated by the respondent to have reached pension age in their opinion (1,968 individuals)





## 5. Accessing Benefits Among the Population Strata

Quantitative data analysis overall indicated that IDPs tend to suffer from lower effective coverage as compared to the general population. The reverse was found to be true for recent recipients of humanitarian aid.

### 5.1. IDPs vs non-IDPs

The effective coverage of IDPs as compared to non-IDPs was found to be significantly lower in two of the three state social protection programmes examined in this study: namely, the GMI and the HUS. The survey aimed to establish whether IDP households (or their members) fulfilled key eligibility criteria and defined them as “likely eligible” if so. Effective coverage was then calculated as the number of IDP households (or individuals in the case of the disability programmes) which had received benefits over the last 12 months as a share of those that were likely to be eligible for them.

**Table 9. Effective coverage by social protection programme and population stratum (IDP vs non-IDP)**

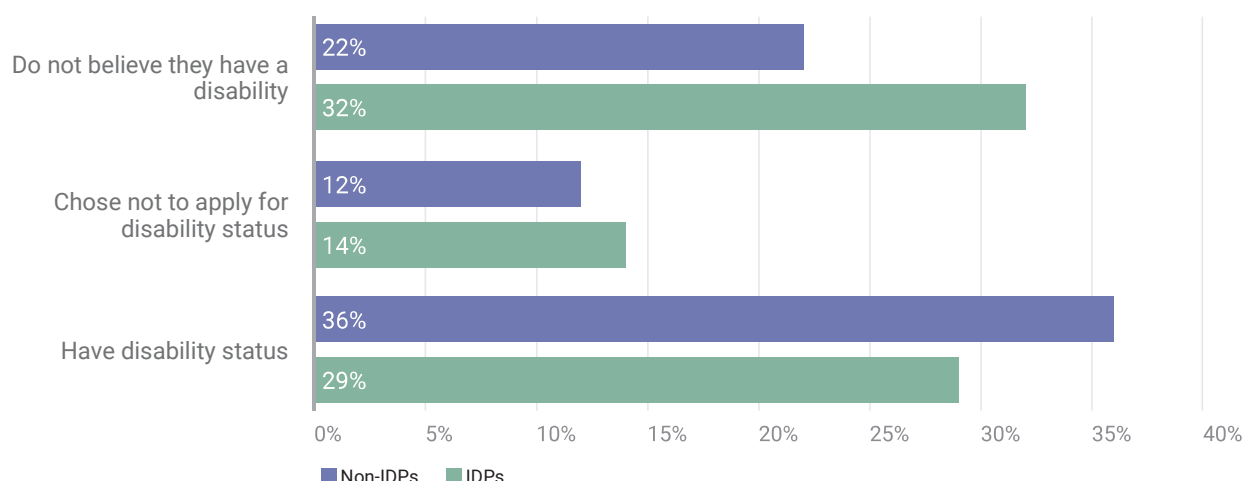
	IDPs	Non-IDPs
GMI	17%	30%
HUS	21%	37%
Disability	72%	69%

Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: GMI and HUS effective coverage has been calculated at the household level, while for disability programmes it is calculated at the individual level

Regarding disability benefits, IDPs demonstrated similar coverage rates to non-IDPs; however, a larger share of IDPs with “persistent health disorders” either chose not to apply for disability status due to personal reasons or believed their health issues were too mild to qualify. Additionally, fewer IDPs were formally recognized with disability status. These trends may indicate a tendency for IDPs to more frequently self-exclude from disability benefits, potentially due to other compounding hardships they face. Another possible explanation is that individuals with more serious health conditions are less likely to relocate due to the war, which means that they are more frequently found in the non-IDP population group.

**Figure 7. Distribution of IDP and non-IDP responses regarding disability status**

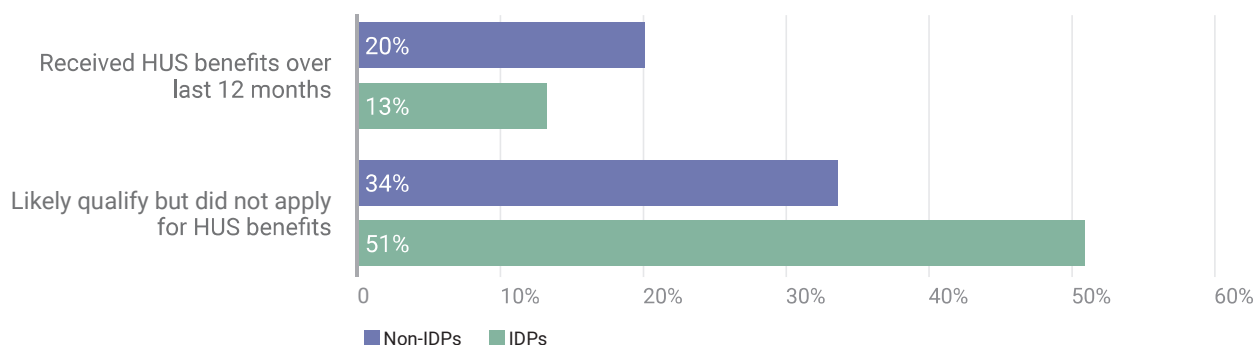


Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: Percentages have been calculated based on the distribution of responses to survey questions

For both the GMI and HUS programmes, IDPs applied significantly less frequently for benefits despite likely having met the eligibility criteria. Receiving the IDP Allowance does not disqualify a household from accessing other social protection benefits. Despite the income focus of both programmes—and the severe income shocks IDPs have faced due to the war—a smaller proportion of IDP households reported programme access in the past 12 months.

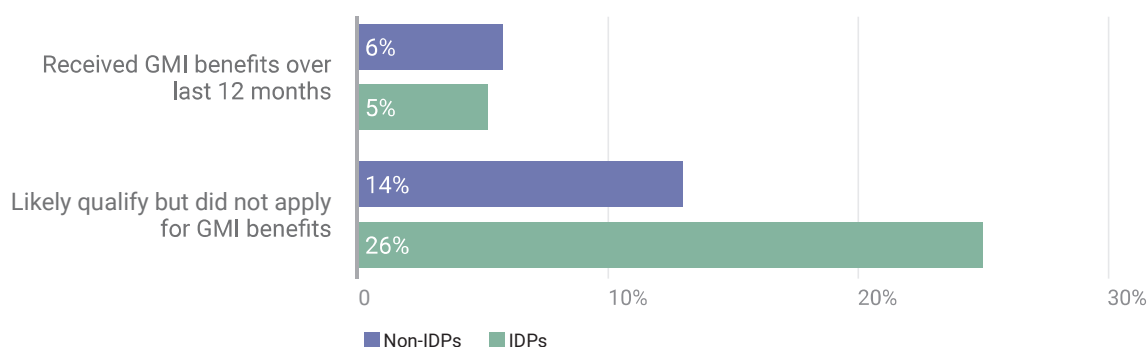
**Figure 8. IDPs vs. Non-IDPs: HUS benefits status**



Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: Percentages have been calculated based on the distribution of responses to survey questions

**Figure 9. IDPs vs. Non-IDPs: GMI benefits status**



Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: Percentages have been calculated based on the distribution of responses to survey questions

When households deemed likely to qualify for benefits were probed about reasons for not applying, both IDP and non-IDP respondents indicated a lack of awareness which was significantly more pronounced in the cases of IDPs. They also conveyed misconceptions about eligibility and cited personal circumstances which led them not to apply. Other barriers were mentioned less frequently.

**Table 10. Top reasons provided by likely eligible households for not applying for the GMI and HUS programmes**

Reasons eligible households did not apply	GMI		HUS	
	Non-IDPs	IDPs	Non-IDPs	IDPs
Not aware of benefits	19%	36%	5%	15%
Believed household did not qualify	26%	24%	34%	45%
Chose to not apply for personal reasons	17%	13%	16%	12%
No one to consult with in person or by phone	8%	10%	1%	7%
Application procedure too difficult	6%	3%	8%	2%

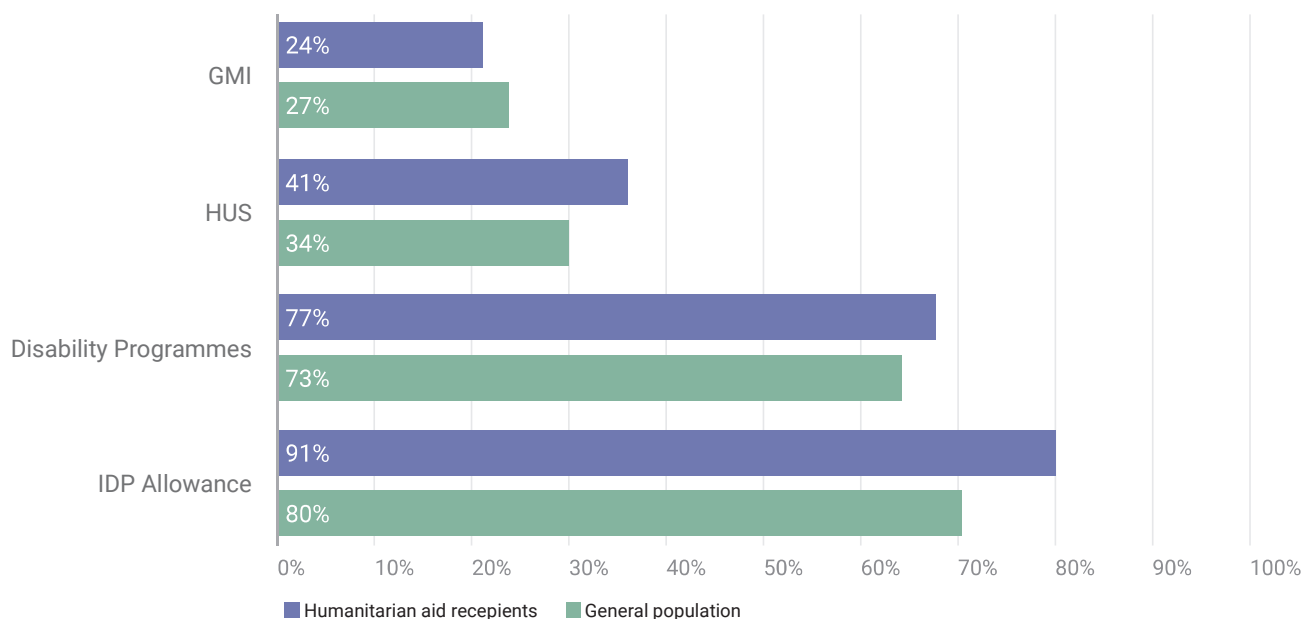
Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: Percentages of responses are calculated only for households that passed eligibility criteria for each of the indicated programmes but did not apply for them

## 5.2. Humanitarian Aid Recipients

In contrast to IDPs, households which have recently received humanitarian aid (at least once since 1 January 2023) were found to benefit from better social protection programme coverage on average, when compared to the general population. This is less apparent only for the GMI programme, where coverage appeared marginally worse for humanitarian aid recipients than it did for the overall national population. That said, the difference is not statistically significant.

**Figure 10. Effective coverage: Humanitarian aid recipients versus the general population**



Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Data from the sample also demonstrated that humanitarian aid recipients have more frequently received programme benefits. This is likely to be a result of two factors: (1) on average having greater need, and (2) being better positioned to overcome access barriers.

The first factor is corroborated by a few different observations: a higher share in the humanitarian aid recipient households have a low income (qualifying for the GMI), and a higher share are displaced (47% versus 11% in the general population after weighting). The presence of the second component can be assessed from the data (it is essentially captured by effective coverage) but cannot be explained by the survey directly. A possible rationale is that recipients of humanitarian aid receive more information about and support with applying for state social assistance programmes from humanitarian actors. Such a practice was confirmed by one humanitarian agency which provided its recipient list for the survey.

**Table 11. Distribution of the sample by programme benefits status**

Programme	Programme benefit status	General population	Humanitarian aid recipients
GMI	Likely eligible but did not apply	16%	26%
	Received benefits over the last 12 months	6%	9%
HUS	Likely eligible but did not apply	35%	44%
	Received benefits over the last 12 months	18%	30%
IDP Allowance	Likely eligible but did not apply	20%	9%
	Received benefits over the last 12 months	77%	89%
Disability Status	Do not have status: unintended barriers	14%	10%
	Have disability status	39%	36%

Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: IDP Allowance shares are calculated as percentages within the subsamples of displaced households in both the general population and the group of humanitarian beneficiaries

The primary barriers reported by households and individuals who met the eligibility criteria but did not apply closely mirror those observed in the general population. For both the HUS and GMI programmes, the leading challenge is limited awareness and understanding of qualification criteria. Individuals likely qualifying for disability status also cited the complexity of the application process and physical access issues as significant obstacles. While these barriers tended to appear more frequently among non-applicants within the humanitarian aid recipient group, they became significantly less pronounced when factoring in those who have received programme benefits successfully.

**Table 12. Top three barriers to access for the GMI, HUS, and disability status for humanitarian aid recipients**

Programme	Barrier to access	General population	Humanitarian aid recipients
GMI	Believed household did not qualify	25%	26%
	Not aware of benefits	19%	30%
	No one to consult with in person or by phone	9%	5%
HUS	Believed household did not qualify	40%	39%
	Procedure too difficult	6%	7%
	Not aware of benefits	5%	11%
Disability Status	Application procedure too difficult	31%	36%
	Not aware of benefits	14%	18%
	Physical access barriers for people with disabilities	13%	18%

Source: PeReHID calculations based on survey data

Note: Percentages of responses are calculated only for households that passed eligibility criteria for each of the indicated programmes but did not apply for them

In the IDP Allowance programme, where reasons for non-application were assessed indirectly, findings indicate that fewer displaced households receiving humanitarian aid reported a lack of members with IDP certificates, and fewer were unaware of the benefits (2% and 1%, respectively, compared to 8% and 5% in the general population).



## 5.3. Impact of Other Vulnerability Characteristics on Effective Coverage

To assess how effective coverage is influenced by different vulnerability characteristics beyond belonging to the population of IDPs, an ordinary least squares (OLS)<sup>62</sup> regression with dummy variables was fitted for each programme. In each model, the dependent variable was set to 1 for a household or individual that was receiving benefits and at 0 in case of “likely eligibility” (as defined in section 4). This approach enabled a breakdown of effective coverage by factors that either positively or negatively impact access on average. Another interpretation of the regression results is that the likelihood of a “likely eligible” household or individual receiving benefits changes by a specific percentage based on their vulnerability characteristics.<sup>63</sup>

For all household-level programmes, the following vulnerability characteristics were tested both in terms of magnitude and statistical significance: (1) living in a rural as opposed to urban area; (2) living in a distressed region; (3) having at least one member with official disability status in the household; (4) belonging to the IDP population (not tested for the IDP Allowance); (5) having at least one older person (65+) in the household; (6) being a recipient of humanitarian aid over the past two years; (7) all primary decision-makers<sup>64</sup> in the household being women or men (as opposed to mixed gender) (8) not knowing how to (and/or never trying and/or being unable to) use digital platforms to apply for social assistance.

For disability benefits, vulnerability characteristic testing was conducted for: (1) living in a rural rather than an urban area; (2) living in a distressed region; (3) belonging to the IDP population; (6) being 65 years or older;<sup>65</sup> (5) gender; (6) living in a household that received humanitarian aid since January 2023; (7) living in a household where members did not know how, never tried, or were unable to use digital platforms to apply for state social protection programmes. Statistical significance was tested in order to determine whether differences found in the sample could be interpreted as representative for the underlying population.

**Table 13. GMI programme effective coverage regression results**

GMI	Coverage/ Probability	Statistical significance
<b>Intercept (baseline household approximation)</b>	<b>27%</b>	
+ Rural	-3%	
+ Distressed	7%	low
+ At least one member with disability status	1%	
+ IDP	-11%	high
+ At least one older person	-1%	
+ Recipient of humanitarian aid	-2%	
+ All primary decision-makers are female	6%	
+ All primary decision-makers are male	0%	
+ Digital platforms not used	-1%	

Source: PeReHID estimates based on survey data

Note: The baseline household possesses the following characteristics: urban area, non-distressed location, no members with disability status present, non-IDP, no older (65+) members, not a recipient of humanitarian aid, primary household decision-makers are of mixed genders, members use digital platforms to apply for at least some social protection programmes or services. High, medium, and low statistical significance refer to p-values below 0.001, 0.01, and 0.05, respectively

<sup>62</sup> More specifically, a linear probability model with robust standard errors was used.

<sup>63</sup> Of note, is that interaction terms were not tested due to a limited number of observations.

<sup>64</sup> Primary decision-makers were defined as adults aged 16-64. For households with no members in this age range, primary decision-makers were defined as being 65+.

<sup>65</sup> The age of 65+ was set as being an older person. This was determined largely in connection to a common age of eligibility within evolving Ukrainian legislation on old-age pension programmes.

Testing GMI effective coverage across all specified characteristics revealed two statistically significant factors: household displacement and location in a distressed area. Displacement was found to negatively impact coverage, reducing it on average by 11 percentage points compared to the baseline. As discussed in section 5.1.1, “likely eligible” IDP households apply less often and face higher levels of informational barriers.

In contrast, residing in a distressed area was found to correlate with a seven-percentage-point increase in coverage on average, possibly indicating that households in these regions receive more effective support in navigating the application process.<sup>66</sup>

**Table 14. HUS programme effective coverage regression results**

HUS	Coverage/ Probability	Statistical significance
<b>Intercept (baseline household approximation)</b>	<b>32%</b>	
+ Rural	2%	
+ Distressed	-2%	
+ At least one member with disability status	8%	medium
+ IDP	-16%	high
+ At least one older person	20%	high
+ Recipient of humanitarian aid	11%	high
+ All primary decision-makers are female	2%	
+ All primary decision-makers are male	8%	
+ Digital platforms not used	-10%	high

Source: PeReHID estimates based on survey data

Note: The baseline household possesses the following characteristics: urban area; non-distressed location; no members with disability status present; non-IDP; no older (65+) members; not a beneficiary of humanitarian aid; primary household decision-makers are of mixed genders; members use digital platforms to apply for at least some social protection programmes or services. High, medium, and low statistical significance refer to p-values below 0.001, 0.01, and 0.05, respectively

For the HUS programme, five vulnerability characteristics significantly impacted effective coverage: IDP status (-16 percentage points); presence of a household member with disability status (+8 ppts); presence of at least one older person in the household (+20 ppts); receipt of humanitarian aid (+11 ppts); and lack of access to or knowledge of digital application platforms (-10 ppts).

The negative impact of being an IDP aligned with findings from the GMI programme, showing a consistent trend of displacement-related factors reducing coverage. The positive impact of having older (65+) or disabled members in the household on coverage is less intuitive. One explanation for this is that these groups possess a stronger familiarity with the social protection system, which serves as an important advantage where programme awareness is a primary barrier. Supporting this theory is the fact that 33% of households with at least one older member reported receiving HUS benefits in the past 12 months, compared to only 11% of households without older members.

The increased coverage among humanitarian aid recipients (+11 ppts) aligned with information from focus group discussions, where participants highlighted that aid deliveries often involve multi-functional teams providing comprehensive case management, including legal aid, social transportation, and accompaniment to social institutions.

The negative impact of not using or not knowing about digital application platforms indicates that, unlike in the case of the GMI, these tools play an important role in improving coverage for HUS.

<sup>66</sup> The distressed area is increasingly the focus of humanitarian agencies' multisectoral programming, as confirmed by one such agency.

**Table 15. IDP Allowance programme effective coverage regression results**

IDP	Coverage/ Probability	Statistical significance
<b>Intercept (baseline household approximation)</b>	<b>84%</b>	
+ Rural	-2%	
+ Distressed	5%	low
+ At least one member with disability status	6%	low
+ At least one older person	2%	
+ Recipient of humanitarian aid	11%	high
+ All primary decision-makers are female	-1%	
+ All primary decision-makers are male	-18%	high
+ Digital platforms not used	-8%	high

Source: PeReHID estimates based on survey data

Note: The baseline household possesses the following characteristics: urban area, non-distressed location, no members with disability status present, no older (65+) members, not a recipient of humanitarian aid, primary household decision-makers have a mixed gender, members use digital platforms to apply for at least some social protection programs or services. High, medium, and low statistical significance refer to p-values below 0.001, 0.01, and 0.05, respectively

For the IDP Allowance programme, regression results indicated the presence of three highly statistically significant characteristics (receiving humanitarian aid, having all primary household decision-makers being male, and not using digital platforms for application), with two additional characteristics showing low significance (residing in a distressed area and having at least one household member with an official disability status).

Households in which all primary decision-makers are male demonstrated a substantial decrease in effective coverage (-18 percentage points). This is likely related to the fact that these households more frequently lacked members with official IDP certificates despite being displaced (23%, compared to 5% and 6% for those with female or mixed-gender primary decision-makers, respectively).

The characteristics of receiving humanitarian aid, having a household member with a disability, living in a distressed area, and lacking digital application access showed similar effects on coverage as observed in the HUS programme, with positive coverage impacts for aid recipients and negative impacts for households unable to use digital platforms.

**Table 16. Disability programmes (effective coverage by official disability status) regression results**

Disability	Coverage/ Probability	Statistical significance
<b>Intercept (baseline household approximation)</b>	<b>89%</b>	
+ Rural	1%	
+ Distressed	-7%	medium
+ IDP household	-1%	
+ 65+ years old	-18%	high
+ Gender (female)	-6%	low
+ Household is a recipient of humanitarian aid	8%	medium
+ Digital platforms not used	-6%	low

Source: PeReHID estimates based on survey data

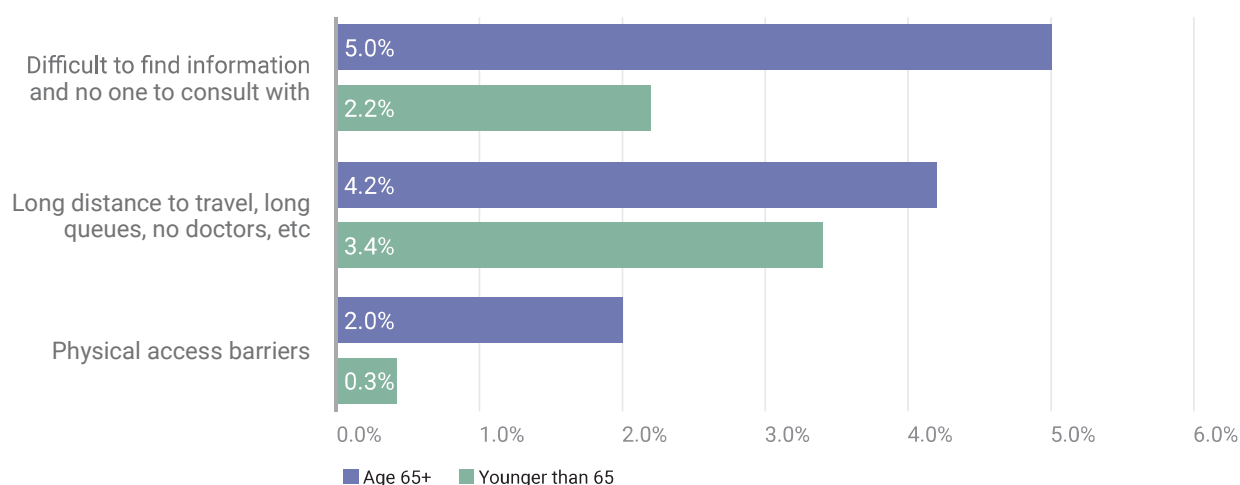
Note: The baseline household possesses the following characteristics: urban area, non-distressed location, no members with disability status present, no older (65+) members, not a recipient of humanitarian aid, primary household decision-makers have a mixed gender, members use digital platforms to apply for at least some social protection programs or services. High, medium, and low statistical significance refer to p-values below 0.001, 0.01, and 0.05, respectively

Regression analysis for disability programmes revealed a decline in effective coverage for individuals aged 65 and older (-18 percentage points, high statistical significance), females (-6 ppts, low statistical significance), those living in distressed areas (-7 ppts, medium statistical significance), and individuals from households that do not use digital platforms for applying for social assistance (-6 ppts, low statistical significance).

The negative impact of living in distressed areas is particularly interesting, as it contrasts with the positive results for the GMI and IDP Allowance programmes. One explanation for this could be that the application of disability status is much more involved and requires applicants to go through an in-person medical examination, which could be more difficult to obtain in locations closer to hostilities.

Worse disability coverage for persons of older age contrasts with findings for the coverage of HUS. There are a couple of possible reasons for this difference. One is that information barriers are overall less of a factor for disability programmes (as described in chapter 6), which means older persons are unlikely to possess a significant advantage in terms of information when compared to the younger population. In fact, the collected data indicates older disability benefit recipients actually reported information-related concerns somewhat more frequently (5% versus 2%). Another is that, as highlighted by key informant interviews, older persons may be more reluctant to go through the more procedurally-taxing MSEC examination, which is a key requirement for disability status. Financial incentives may also be involved, as old-age pensions frequently offer higher benefits than disability pensions.

**Figure 11. Top barriers to disability status: Age 65+ vs. younger than 65**



Source: PeReHID estimates based on survey data

Note: The percentages provided are based upon all respondents who report "persistent health disorders" (2,484 observations, including the humanitarian subsample)

As compared to men, women more frequently did not apply by choice or stated that their conditions did not constitute disabilities (45% of the sample versus 37%). This may imply a higher rate of self-exclusion.



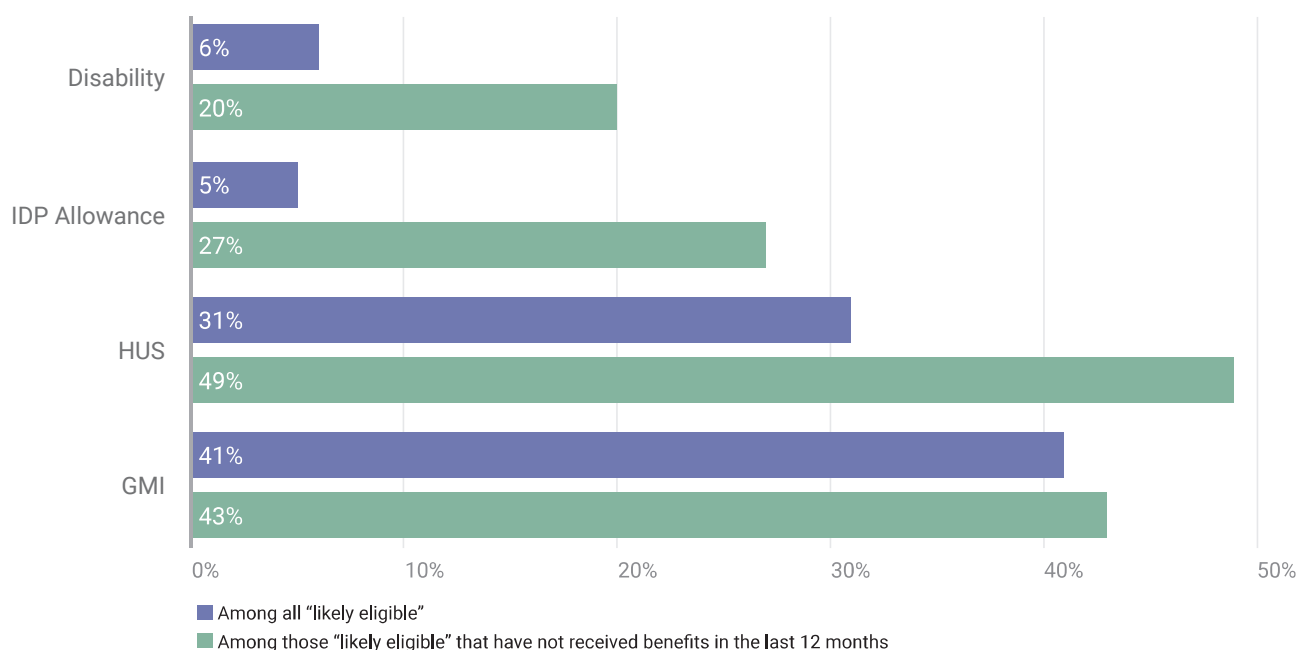
## 6. Understanding Barriers to Social Protection

### 6.1 Access Barriers

#### 6.1.1 The Information Barrier

Not being informed about benefits or believing that one is not eligible for them emerged as one of the most prominent barriers to access across all programmes. This was especially the case for HUS and GMI, where close to half of the “likely eligible” respondents who have not received benefits over the last 12 months indicated a lack of awareness.

Figure 12. Prevalence of information barriers by programme



Source: PeReHID estimates based on survey data

Note: “Likely eligible” respondents, as defined in Section 4.

As in the case of effective coverage, to test how much more frequently certain households or individuals face information barriers, regression analysis<sup>67</sup> was used. The dependent variable was coded as 1 for facing an information barrier if a “likely eligible” household (as defined in section 4) reported a lack of information or a misconception about the programme as a reason for not applying. These were illustrated through responses such as “not aware that such a programme exists,” “thought that that the household does not qualify for this programme,” or “difficult to find the relevant information.” The dependent variable was coded as 0 for not facing an information barrier if the household had: (1) received benefits over the last 12 months; (2) applied for benefits; (3) not reported any information-related reasons for not applying.

In the case of household programmes, the dependent variables were selected to test the following characteristics: (1) living in a rural as opposed to urban area; (2) living in a distressed region; (3) all primary household decision-makers<sup>68</sup> being women or men (as opposed to mixed gender); (4) having at least one member with a confirmed disability in the household; (5) belonging to the IDP population (not tested for the IDP Allowance); (6) having at least one older person (65+) in the household; (7) being a recipient of humanitarian aid over the past two years; and (8) sources from which the household received information about social assistance (e.g. neighbours, social workers, the internet, television).

<sup>67</sup> A linear probability model with robust standard errors was employed.

<sup>68</sup> Primary household decision-makers were defined as adults aged 16-64. For households with no members in this age range, primary household decision-makers were defined as being 65+ years of age.

For disability programmes, the regression tested: (1) living in a rural rather than an urban area; (2) living in a distressed region; (3) gender; (4) belonging to the IDP population; (5) being 65+ years old; (6) living in a household that received humanitarian aid over the past two years; and (6) sources from which the household receives information about social assistance.

**Table 17. GMI programme information barrier regression results**

GMI	Information barrier frequency	Statistical significance
<b>Intercept (baseline household approximation)</b>	<b>34%</b>	
+ Rural	3%	
+ Distressed	4%	
+ At least one member with disability status	7%	
+ IDP	14%	high
+ At least one older person	0%	
+ Recipient of humanitarian aid	-3%	
+ All primary decision-makers are female	-5%	
+ All primary decision-makers are male	3%	
+ Information source: social workers	-14%	low
+ Information source: lawyer	-45%	high

Source: PeReHID estimates based on survey data

Note: The baseline household possesses the following characteristics: urban area, non-distressed location, no members with disability status present, non-IDP, no older (65+) members, not a recipient of humanitarian aid, primary household decision-makers are of mixed genders, and information is being drawn from an undisclosed source. High, medium and low statistical significance refer to p-values below 0.001, 0.01, 0.05.

Regression results for the GMI programme aligned with the effective coverage analysis, showing that displacement significantly raises the likelihood of encountering information barriers (+14 percentage points). This indicates that IDPs are more susceptible to being uninformed or misinformed about the GMI as a population group.

Conversely, testing for information sources revealed that households receiving guidance on social protection programmes from lawyers or social workers were much less likely to experience limited access due to information gaps.

**Table 18. HUS programme information barrier regression results**

HUS	Information barrier frequency	Statistical significance
<b>Intercept (baseline household approximation)</b>	<b>39%</b>	
+ Rural	-4%	
+ Distressed	2%	
+ At least one member with disability status	-4%	
+ IDP	11%	high
+ At least one older person	-12%	high
+ Recipient of humanitarian aid	-5%	
+ All primary decision-makers are female	-2%	
+ All primary decision-makers are male	-10%	low
+ Information source: social workers	-10%	low
+ Information source: lawyer	-36%	high
+ Information source: work in this field	-24%	high

Source: PeReHID estimates based on survey data

Note: The baseline household possesses the following characteristics: urban area, non-distressed location, no members with disability status present, non-IDP, no older (65+) members, not a recipient of humanitarian aid, primary household decision-makers being of mixed genders, and information is being drawn from an undisclosed source. High, medium, and low statistical significance refer to p-values below 0.001, 0.01, 0.05.

Table 19. IDP Allowance programme information barrier regression results

IDP	Information barrier frequency	Statistical significance
<b>Intercept (baseline household approximation)</b>	<b>10%</b>	
+ Rural	1%	
+ Distressed	-1%	
+ At least one member with disability status	1%	
+ At least one older person	0%	
+ Recipient of humanitarian aid	-5%	high
+ All primary decision-makers are female	0%	
+ All primary decision-makers are male	2%	
+ Information source: social workers	-10%	high
+ Information source: village council	-7%	high
+ Information source: lawyer	-7%	medium
+ Information source: phone hotline	-4%	medium
+ Information source: work in this field	-10%	medium

Source: PeReHID estimates based on survey data

Note: The baseline household possesses the following characteristics: urban area, non-distressed location, no members with disability status present, non-IDP, no older (65+) members, not a recipient of humanitarian aid, primary household decision-makers being of mixed genders, and information is being drawn from an undisclosed source. High, medium, and low statistical significance refer to p-values below 0.001, 0.01, 0.05.

Information barriers in the case of the IDP Allowance programme were found to be less frequent for recipients of humanitarian aid (-5 percentage points, high statistical significance), which is in line with the effective coverage findings.

On information sources, statistically significant impacts were established for those who reached out to social workers, village councils, lawyers, telephone hotlines, or had household members who worked in the social protection sector.

Table 20. Disability programmes information barrier regression results

Disability	Information barrier frequency	Statistical significance
<b>Intercept (baseline household approximation)</b>	<b>3%</b>	
+ Rural	1%	
+ Distressed	0%	
+ IDP household	1%	
+ 65+ years old	2%	
+ Gender (female)	0%	
+ Household is a recipient of humanitarian aid	0%	
+ Information source: neighbours or relatives	2%	
+ Information source: local administrative office	-3%	low
+ Information source: lawyer	-4%	high
+ Information source: examining legislation	-3%	medium
+ Information source: phone hotline	-4%	high

Source: PeReHID estimates based on survey data

Note: The baseline household possesses the following characteristics: urban area, non-distressed location, no members with disability status present, non-IDP, no older (65+) members, not a recipient of humanitarian aid, primary household decision-makers being of mixed genders, and information is being drawn from an undisclosed source. High, medium, and low statistical significance refer to p-values below 0.001, 0.01, 0.05.

Finally, in the analysis of disability programmes (proxied by official disability status), no household characteristics were found to have a statistically significant impact on the likelihood of encountering information barriers. In contrast, receiving information from local administrative offices, legal advisors, or hotlines significantly decreased the likelihood of being uninformed or misinformed. Additionally, some respondents reported reviewing legislation to understand the available programmes and eligibility criteria. This proactive approach also significantly reduced the probability of facing information barriers.

### 6.1.2 Infrastructure and Bureaucracy Barriers

In comparison to the information barrier—particularly evident in the HUS and GMI programmes—other barriers were less prominently reflected in the quantitative data. This phenomenon resulted from two key factors: (1) a smaller actual prevalence of other barriers and (2) a crowding-out of respondents' answers by the information barrier (if respondents are not aware of a programme, they are significantly less likely to report other issues).<sup>69</sup>

In view of this combination, and due to a lower number of observations, disaggregation by different household characteristics was found largely to be uninformative. The most significant three barriers ranked by their prevalence in the general population emerged as follows: (1) the application procedure being too difficult; (2) the need to travel too far to apply; and (3) the presence of physical access barriers at application points that impede access for people with disabilities. Percentages have been presented for each of the population strata determined at the design stage of the survey. The IDP Allowance programme has been excluded from this analysis due to a differently-structured questionnaire module.

**Table 21. Prevalence of top three barriers by programme**

		Humanitarian		IDP		Non-IDP		
		Distressed	Non-distressed	Distressed	Non-distressed	Distressed	Non-distressed	Non-distressed
Application too difficult	GMI	4%	5%	4%	3%	2%	11%	2%
Application too difficult	HUS	4%	6%	2%	3%	4%	8%	4%
Application too difficult	Disability	12%	11%	13%	12%	15%	10%	13%
Need to travel far	GMI	2%	0%	1%	1%	5%	3%	0%
Need to travel far	HUS	1%	2%	2%	1%	7%	2%	1%
Need to travel far	Disability	2%	4%	9%	4%	5%	8%	0%
Physical access barriers	GMI	3%	2%	0%	1%	1%	0%	2%
Physical access barriers	HUS	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%
Physical access barriers	Disability	7%	4%	3%	3%	7%	6%	5%

Source: PeReHID estimates based on survey data

Note: Percentages represent the number of respondents that have indicated one of the mentioned barriers (a reason for not applying for benefits) as a share of the "likely eligible" pool (including those receiving benefits or having disability status).

<sup>69</sup> In questions which allow for multiple responses, certain quasi-exclusive answers, such as "I am not aware", significantly decrease the probability of selecting additional responses.

At programme level, disability stood out as having a higher prevalence of all three barriers. Notably, this programme also demonstrated a much smaller frequency of information-related complaints (i.e. the “crowding out” effect was less pronounced in this case). For HUS and GMI programmes, it is worth noting that the non-displaced population living in distressed areas more frequently reported long distances for applications as issues. The paradox that IDPs in distressed areas reported this problem less frequently is likely explained by the presence of other issues (e.g. lack of information, deciding not to apply “for personal reasons”).

## 6.2 Navigating Routes to Access: Feedback from the Field

To enrich the quantitative findings and to inform recommendations, the study also conducted 38 FGDs and 27 KIs. Participants were asked to discuss barriers faced by those in need of social protection, solutions that are currently being employed to overcome them, and what kind of support would be of most benefit.

Overall, it was observed that potential and current programme beneficiaries relied on a combination of informal networks, social media, and NGOs to fill information gaps and overcome bureaucratic challenges. Although FGD participants were not questioned about eligibility criteria directly, the vast majority of respondents belonged to vulnerable population groups, such as IDPs, persons with disabilities, and older persons. It can be reasonably presumed that most were likely eligible for at least some form of state assistance.

### 6.2.1 The Information Barrier

The quantitative portion of the study detected that many eligible individuals lacked awareness about social protection programmes, often mistakenly believing that they did not qualify, or they were unaware of the programme’s existence. Such a lack of knowledge was also frequently cited during FGDs. For instance, a female FGD participant in rural Kyivska Oblast shared that persistent confusion about her mother’s eligibility for disability assistance delayed their access to much-needed benefits until she could eventually receive guidance.

To address these issues, individuals reported relying on informal networks and NGOs for guidance. Social media platforms such as Telegram and Facebook, as well as community Viber groups, were said to be commonly used to stay informed and connect with others facing similar challenges. Local platforms such as “VPO Rivne” on Viber were noted as essential resources for vulnerable groups, such as single mothers, offering updates on available social services. Several respondents mentioned accessing information through official sources like the Ministry of Social Policy’s website and the e-Veteran platform, designed specifically for veterans. Additionally, some communities, such as Velyka Mykhailivka in Odeska Oblast, publish information about local services and initiatives on their website. Individuals reported having to make repeated calls or visits to local administrative offices, village councils, or TSNAPs in order to clarify requirements or seek additional information. Focus group participants noted a lack of accessible and clear information about social programmes. IDPs in Kyivska Oblast vocalized their wish for the Department of Social Protection simply to publish all current information about social protection programmes on a single Telegram channel.

NGOs such as Right to Protection (R2P) and NEEKA were also said to play a critical role, providing essential, accessible information that helps individuals determine their eligibility for social protection programmes.

In terms of solutions, FGD participants proposed targeted information campaigns as a way to bridge awareness gaps, utilizing trusted local channels to ensure accessibility and relevance. They also highlighted the need for creating and maintaining up-to-date, centralized digital information platforms or dedicated social media pages for local governments to communicate important information and legislative updates effectively. Trusted community media groups, such as “Bilbasivka Today,” were identified as valuable platforms for disseminating state-endorsed information, as their credibility can help build trust and inform eligible individuals effectively. For rural areas, participants recommended distributing leaflets and banners with clear, straightforward language, avoiding legal jargon. These materials could be placed in high-traffic locations, such as schools, clinics, and local government offices, to maximize reach and accessibility.



## 6.2.2 Infrastructure Barriers

Although less frequently reported in quantitative data, FGDs in rural and distressed areas consistently mentioned obstacles related to distance, lack of public transportation, and accessibility at application sites. One explanation for this discrepancy could be that FGD participants on average were more knowledgeable about social protection programmes, which means that they more frequently attempted to apply and therefore were more frequently exposed to a range of barriers.

For many individuals—especially older persons, persons with disabilities, and those in remote areas—reaching TSNAPs was reported to entail considerable travel time, costs, and physical effort. For example, non-displaced participants in distressed areas cited the inconveniences of long travel distances and infrequent public transport schedules for accessing benefits. A few respondents also mentioned issues like steep stairs and the lack of ramps at application centres, making it difficult for people with mobility challenges to apply for assistance. IDPs residing in urban settings generally cited fewer physical access issues.

Some individuals reported making repeated trips to government offices to bring requested, outstanding documentation or to resubmit applications. In some cases, when physical access was said to be challenging, NGOs and community volunteers provided transportation assistance. For instance, IDPs in Zaporizhzhia shared that Proliska-Zaporizhzhia's inclusive transport services were crucial in enabling access to social protection programmes, while older residents in Kharkivska Oblast reported relying on community volunteers for similar assistance.

In terms of solutions, FGDs participants mainly asked for better public transportation opportunities in remote locations.

## 6.2.3. Digital Accessibility and Literacy Barriers

FGD respondents noted that, while digital tools have been invaluable in improving access to information and services, they also introduced new challenges. An R2P monitoring report from May-June 2022 stated that 85% of people used the Diia portal for different administrative processes like IDP registration,<sup>70</sup> further evidence of the widespread use of online application platforms. The benefits of these cannot be enjoyed by all, however, due to issues such as a lack of digital literacy or poor connectivity, especially in rural areas. In Rivnenska Oblast, for instance, FGDs expressed a need for digital literacy training, while an older, non-displaced KII participant shared her struggle with online application forms, finding them overly complex and encountering issues like session timeouts during multiple attempts to complete the process. One non-displaced KII participant shared her struggle with online application forms, finding them overly complex and encountering issues like session timeouts during multiple attempts to complete the process.

Many individuals relied on informal support from family members, friends, or community networks to navigate digital platforms. In some cases, NGOs provide assistance with online forms or offer digital literacy workshops to help people engage with digital application processes. For example, in Velyka Mykhailivka, Odeska Oblast, communities noted that R2P offered critical guidance, assisting residents in understanding programme requirements and completing digital applications.

In terms of solutions, focus group participants strongly advocated for digital literacy workshops that could be delivered by community volunteers or NGOs in community centres. Participants also suggested that simplification of online application portals could improve accessibility for those less familiar with technology.

## 6.2.4. Bureaucracy Barrier

Despite being less prominent in quantitative data, qualitative findings frequently highlighted bureaucratic challenges as a critical issue. Many IDPs and non-IDPs in distressed areas said they struggle with complex application requirements for social support for persons with disability, with respondents citing documentation issues, delays, and insufficient guidance from authorities. IDPs in rural Vinnytska Oblast emphasized that many of them had their applications for IDP Allowances rejected for reasons which were not explained to them; they wished to understand these reasons. A displaced mother in Kyivska Oblast narrated how she was referred back and forth between several institutions when seeking to help her older mother apply for disability assistance. It was only due to her own perseverance that her mother received benefits, she claimed.

<sup>70</sup> Right to Protection, Monitoring Report, "Experience in Using Digital Public Services," May-June 2022.

Many FGD respondents also cited support from NGOs such as Ya Mariupol and the Danish Refugee Council, which offer legal counselling to assist individuals in accessing state social protection and other necessary services. One KII highlighted a veteran with disabilities who chose to hire a private lawyer to manage his application, enabling him to overcome documentation challenges. Veterans and persons with disabilities frequently reported needing legal assistance just to navigate the application forms and required supporting documents.

Both FGDs and KIIs emphasized the need for simplified application forms and the removal of redundant steps in the application process.





## 7. Qualitative Assessment of Occupied Areas

Due to security concerns, the Access Study could not gather data directly from occupied areas, rendering an effective coverage estimate infeasible. Instead, the study utilized key informant interviews (KIIs) to qualitatively identify primary access barriers. Findings revealed that, although most beneficiaries experienced an automatic extension of their benefits post-occupation and digital channels facilitated remote application for new programmes, several key factors hindered effective access – namely: (1) limited access to cash payments; (2) restricted ability to digitalize all communication with the Ukrainian authorities; and (3) fear of persecution by the occupying forces.

### 7.1 Practical Aspects of State Social Protection in Occupied Areas

International humanitarian law (IHL) is a set of rules that seeks, for humanitarian reasons, to limit the effects of armed conflict. IHL also regulates the relationship between the occupying power and people living in these areas, especially the rights and obligations of the occupying power and the people. According to IHL, the circumstances do not excuse the state whose territory is under occupation from its international human rights law obligations to citizens in those occupied areas.<sup>71,72</sup>

Per the international legal framework, the relationship between Ukraine as an occupied state and its citizens living in occupied areas is governed by a multitude of Ukrainian laws and executive orders. While Ukrainians in occupied areas currently legally retain the same rights to social protection as those in other parts of the country,<sup>73</sup> key informants reported that, in practice, access is unequal. The most notable barriers faced by this population are indicated below.

- **Limited access to cash payments.** Key informants noted that while most social protection beneficiaries received an automatic extension of benefits post-occupation, many encountered substantial difficulties in accessing cash payments. With cash deliveries via the national postal service (Ukrposhta) no longer feasible, all payments to recipients in occupied areas are now deposited into Ukrainian bank accounts. However, access to these funds is limited because Ukrainian bank cards cannot be used with Russian ATMs and payment terminals due to the suspension of Visa and Mastercard services.<sup>74</sup> Transfers to banks located in Ukrainian territory beyond Ukrainian control is prohibited by law.<sup>75</sup> Additionally, the National Bank of Ukraine (NBU) prohibits transfers to Russian banks,<sup>76</sup> and most Russian banks have been disconnected from SWIFT, the primary cross-border payment system globally.<sup>77</sup>
- **Restricted ability to digitalize all communication with the Ukrainian authorities.** Another important challenge highlighted during interviews is the difficulty of moving all communication with Ukrainian authorities online. Although the Government of Ukraine has made considerable efforts to digitalize most official exchanges with current and potential social protection beneficiaries, certain interactions still require in-person presence. A prominent example is the official recognition of disability status by an MSEC, a critical requirement for obtaining disability benefits. Additionally, key informants reported that many residents in occupied areas lack sufficient digital literacy to utilize online platforms, with older populations being particularly affected.<sup>78</sup> This issue is further complicated by Russian internet operators frequently blocking access to Ukrainian websites, making it necessary to use advanced tools such as VPNs, which further limits accessibility.

<sup>71</sup> Legal instruments also list the occupied state's rights and obligations. Article 43 of the Hague Regulation of 1907 states that the national government retains a role in ensuring its citizens have access to legal protections, even if limited by occupation; articles 50 and 51 of the Fourth Geneva Convention encourage states to provide civil and administrative services to occupied populations. Article 2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights obliges states to take steps to ensure the protection of the rights of citizens, including advocating internationally for their safety and well-being.

<sup>72</sup> OHCHR, "Report on the Human Rights Situation in Ukraine 1 August 2022 – 31 January 2023", 24 March 2023, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/ukraine/2023/23-03-24-Ukraine-35th-periodic-report-ENG.pdf> p. 12.)

<sup>73</sup> The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Resolution No. 162 on the Features of Pension Payments and Delivery, and Financial Assistance During the Period of Martial Law, 26 February 2022, <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/162-2022-%D0%BF#Text>

<sup>74</sup> <https://newsroom.mastercard.com/news/press/2022/march/mastercard-statement-on-suspension-of-russian-operations/>, <https://usa.visa.com/about-visa/newsroom/press-releases/released.18871.html>

<sup>75</sup> Part 1 Resolution of the National Bank of Ukraine, 6 August 2014, No. 466 On the Suspension of Financial Transactions, <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/v0466500-14#Text>.

<sup>76</sup> <https://bank.gov.ua/ua/news/all/natsionalniy-bank-poslabiv-nizku-zaboron-na-operatsiyi-v-inozemniy-valyuti>

<sup>77</sup> <https://www.swift.com/news-events/news/message-swift-community>

<sup>78</sup> ACAPS Ukraine Thematic Report, 1 August 2024, p.5

- **Fear of persecution by the occupying forces.** Evidence from KIIs also highlighted a psychological barrier that inhibits individuals from freely applying for and receiving state social protection. This barrier stems from a growing fear of being identified as a recipient of such assistance. Since 2022, pressure to obtain Russian Federation documents has increased in occupied areas and possessing Ukrainian documents has become associated with potential repercussions, according to key informants.

## 7.2 Coping with Access Barriers

The qualitative assessment highlighted that citizens of Ukraine living in occupied areas have adopted various strategies to cope with their new life circumstances. The most notable methods for overcoming access barriers to Ukrainian state social protection are indicated below, mindful of the “do no harm” principle.

- **Involving third parties to facilitate online communication with the Ukrainian authorities**

Although the introduction of digital exchanges with representatives of the social protection authorities, banks, and other institutions has proven to be very effective for those living in occupied areas, not everyone can utilize this option. Electronic challenges include low technical skills, lack of digital devices, the absence of a Ukrainian SIM card or phone network (necessary for some activation codes), and the blocking of Ukrainian websites by the occupying power. When websites are blocked, the need to purchase and use a VPN becomes an additional barrier. People often seek help from friends and relatives, and in some cases, third parties who assist for a fee. While such paid assistance helps overcome the digital access barrier in some cases, it also directly reduces the final amount of assistance received by state protection recipients.

- **Help from a relative or friend in government-controlled areas**

Key informants described that the presence of a helpful relative or friend in government-controlled areas is a large factor in being able to overcome access barriers to state social protection under occupation. Such help entails, for example, an individual who can access information, buy Ukrainian SIM cards, physically go to the necessary state institution (e.g. Pension Fund, TSNAP), or hire a lawyer to make a claim.

- **Travelling to government-controlled areas**

Since the start of the full-scale invasion in 2022, there has been no possibility to cross the frontline for civilians. That said, the journey is still possible to make via borders with third countries. Some key informants reported making the trip but indicated it to be arduous and expensive and possibly outweighing the benefits that it brings.

- **Receiving “cash in hand” through informal channels**

Various schemes operate to deliver cash (or shop credits) to people in areas under occupation. Key informants stated that informal intermediaries assist in the conversion from Ukrainian hryvnas deposited into a bank account into “cash in hand” Russian roubles. Such service providers establish exchange rate and demand fees, usually a percentage of the sum transferred. Again, while such paid assistance may overcome the barriers to accessing funds, it also directly reduces the final amount of assistance received by state protection recipients.

## 7.3 Other Sources of Social Protection in Occupied Areas

The findings of the *Access Study* also highlight that, in the case of lacking or limited access to state social protection in occupied areas or in parallel to such access, people can and do apply for social protection programmes from the occupying power. They also sometimes receive humanitarian cash transfers. These other sources of subsistence bear no prejudice to the fact that citizens of Ukraine living in occupied areas are constitutionally guaranteed state social protection but expresses the fact that citizens may seek or be compelled to seek other forms of assistance when Ukrainian state social protection is not accessible.



### 7.3.1 Social Protection by the Occupying Power in Occupied Areas

International humanitarian law (IHL) defines an occupying power's obligations toward the civilian population residing in areas occupied as well as the obligations of the occupied state towards its citizens residing in occupied lands. According to IHL, any occupying party must continue to comply with its human rights obligations in the areas it occupied.<sup>79</sup> Furthermore, IHL states that the "occupying Power does not acquire sovereign rights to the occupied territory,"<sup>80</sup> emphasizing that military occupation is temporary and all measures taken during occupation should bear as little prejudice as possible to restoring the status quo ante.<sup>81</sup> During the period of occupation, the occupying party is required to provide for education, food and medicine,<sup>82</sup> public safety, and health care as needed to meet the basic needs of the population.<sup>83, 84</sup> All laws of the occupied state, including any human rights or other international conventions to which it is a party, "shall remain applicable in the occupied territory unless the occupying power is 'absolutely prevented' from doing so."<sup>85, 86, 87</sup>

The social protection systems of Ukraine and of the Russian Federation, both Soviet successor states, are structurally similar. While statistics are not available, key informants indicated that many people living in occupied areas may access social protection from the Russian Federation.

However, the application of the social protection system of the Russian Federation to the occupied areas included the requirement of a Russian passport.<sup>88</sup> While in 2022, certain administrative transactions in occupied areas could still be executed with Ukrainian documents, this has become increasingly difficult if not impossible.<sup>89</sup> Key informants reported that in certain parts of occupied areas, receiving a passport is dependent on surrendering one's Ukrainian passport. The lack of a Ukrainian passport would likely constitute a barrier in any attempt to access Ukrainian state social protection.

### 7.2.2 Humanitarian Cash Transfers

Another source of subsistence for people living in occupied areas was identified by key informants as that of humanitarian cash transfers. Certain international and national non-government organizations address the needs of the most vulnerable with humanitarian aid in the form of online cash transfers. These organizations employ similar technical methods for reaching people in occupied areas; however, they do so in the context of the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence. Such humanitarian cash transfers cannot lower the access barriers to actual state social protection but may alleviate the need to overcome such barriers and serve to fill a gap when – for whatever reasons – these cash transfers can be obtained while state social protection payments cannot.

<sup>79</sup> Noam Lubell, "Human Rights Obligations in Military Occupation" *International Review of the Red Cross*, no. 885, vol. 94, spring 2012, <https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/review/2012/irrc-885-lubell.pdf> p. 319.

<sup>80</sup> Mikhail Orkin and Tristan Ferraro, "IHL and occupied territory," 26 July 2022, <https://blogs.icrc.org/law-and-policy/2022/07/26/armed-conflict-ukraine-ihl-occupied-territory/>.

<sup>81</sup> European Parliament Directorate-General for External Policies, "Occupation/annexation of a territory: Respect for international humanitarian law and human rights and consistent EU policy", 2015, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2015/534995/EXPO\\_STU\(2015\)534995\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2015/534995/EXPO_STU(2015)534995_EN.pdf) p. 17

<sup>82</sup> Geneva Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, Article 55, 1949.

<sup>83</sup> European Parliament Directorate-General for External Policies, "Occupation/annexation of a territory: Respect for international humanitarian law and human rights and consistent EU policy," 2015, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2015/534995/EXPO\\_STU\(2015\)534995\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2015/534995/EXPO_STU(2015)534995_EN.pdf) p. 55; Mikhail Orkin and Tristan Ferraro, "IHL and occupied territory", 26 July 2022, <https://blogs.icrc.org/law-and-policy/2022/07/26/armed-conflict-ukraine-ihl-occupied-territory/>.

<sup>84</sup> The Hague Regulation of 1907, which contains obligations towards the civilian population under occupation. The Fourth Geneva Convention provides detailed protection for civilians in times of occupation, stating that the occupying power has an obligation to maintain public order and ensure the provision of food, medical supplies, and other essential services. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1976), and International Customary Law deal with a state's duties to ensure the right to social security.

<sup>85</sup> Article 43 of the Hague Regulations Concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land, annexed to the Hague Convention IV

<sup>86</sup> OHCHR, "Report on the Human Rights Situation in Ukraine 1 August 2022 – 31 January 2023", 24 March 2023, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/ukraine/2023/23-03-24-Ukraine-35th-periodic-report-ENG.pdf> p. 12.

<sup>87</sup> For positive obligations of the state towards residents of occupied territories, see <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/fre#%22itemid%22.%22001-114082%22%22%22>

<sup>88</sup> OHCHR, Human Rights Situation during the Russian Occupation of Territory of Ukraine and its Aftermath, 24 February 2022 – 31 December 2023, Geneva, 24 March 2024, pp.2-3, 26.

<sup>89</sup> According to the key informant, the rules applied by the occupying power are not harmonized over the occupied areas, and often "localized." For example, a certain document can still be used a city of Donetsk Oblast, but not in a village in Luhanska Oblast.



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## 8. Key Findings and Recommendations

The findings and subsequent recommendations are directed at the government, development actors, and the humanitarian community, highlighting possible areas for cooperation.

### 8.1 Effective Coverage and Barriers to Social Protection

The *Access Study* attempted to gauge how well the state social protection system is able to deliver benefits to those whom it addresses. To this end, effective coverage was estimated across the Government of Ukraine's four largest programmes, which represented 74% of the state social assistant budget<sup>90</sup> in 2023. These are the GMI, HUS, IDP Allowance, and disability (group).

#### 8.1.1. Finding: Effective Coverage of Social Assistance Programmes is Uneven and Low Overall

The results of the quantitative survey suggest that effective coverage nationwide is uneven. For IDP Allowance and disability programmes (estimated via access to disability status), it amounted to 81% and 70% respectively, while for GMI and HUS, effective coverage was estimated at just 35% and 28%. Weighted by programme size in 2023 (according to MoSP budget spending), the overall effective coverage can be assessed at roughly 50%.

<sup>90</sup> Excluding pensions

While this result should be interpreted as indicative, it still has important implications for the government, and for humanitarian and development actors, as it suggests that the size of the potential social protection caseload may be much higher than that which is visible to the system now.

### 8.1.2. Finding: Coverage for IDPs is Lower than for the General Population

Effective coverage showed significant disparities across different population groups. Quantitative data revealed that displaced households are on average significantly worse covered by means-tested programmes: the HUS and the GMI. Although coverage for disability programmes was found to be roughly on par with non-IDPs, a smaller proportion of displaced individuals with “persistent health disorders” applied for status, suggesting a higher rate of self-exclusion.

- **Recommendation: Investigate the low coverage of IDPs vis-à-vis that of the general population more thoroughly to address access barriers more effectively.** Some barriers have been already uncovered by this study, with lack of information being chief among them. One example of how this could be tackled is through joint awareness-raising campaigns that combine the credibility and authority of government entities with the accessibility and community-centred methodologies of humanitarian organizations.

### 8.1.3. Finding: Humanitarian Aid Recipients Enjoy Higher Effective Coverage by State Social Protection

In contrast, recent recipients of humanitarian aid were found to benefit from better coverage on average when compared to the population at large. This result was consistent across most programmes included in the study.

Information from focus group discussions suggests that individuals engaging with humanitarian organizations often receive counselling on state social protection and assistance with the application process, which likely contributes to improved access.

- **Recommendation: Counselling and assistance with applications for state social protection programmes should be sustained by humanitarian actors.** This conclusion is supported by data from the quantitative survey. Furthermore, humanitarian agencies should be encouraged to continue providing information and application support, even as budgets for cash assistance decrease over time.
- **Recommendation: Incorporate effective coverage of state social protection into future humanitarian cash programme targeting.** The fact that humanitarian aid recipients were found to be better covered by state social protection on average than countrywide implies that many members of this group can no longer be characterized as the most vulnerable. This means that humanitarian cash assistance should be rotated towards those who are prevented from receiving social protection by access barriers.

### 8.1.4. Finding: Digital Application Methods Enhance Coverage

Households which reported using digital platforms, at least partially, to apply for social protection benefits showed higher effective coverage on average across nearly all programmes. Despite this, survey data revealed that only 20% of households in the general population were utilizing digital tools at the time of data collection.

- **Recommendation: Examine in more detail the barriers hindering the use of digital platforms and implement strategies to address these.** While this study uncovered some reasons for the relatively low uptake of digital channels through FGDs, a more comprehensive examination is needed. Digital literacy, particularly among older populations, was raised as a critical issue that stakeholders could already begin to improve.
- **Recommendation: Implement measures to enhance digital literacy for those meant to utilize social protection online tools.** FGD participants requested measures to improve the ability of communities to take advantage of online social protection tools. Some examples include training and video courses for vulnerable groups and older people to improve their digital literacy. Projection equipment could be procured by NGOs for villages, where Diia education videos can be broadcasted for all residents, increasing their awareness, and fighting with disinformation. Community-based initiatives that facilitate digital literacy for all categories of people could also be supported and scaled.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Third Age University Chernivtsi <https://www.city.cv.ua/press-center/novyny/slukhachi-universitetu-tretogo-viku-otrimali-sertifikati-3598>



- **Recommendation: Prioritize ease of use of digital platforms.** FGD participants stressed that digital literacy skills may not be enough to overcome some complicated online platforms (the digital cabinet of the Pension Fund was noted as such an example). Steps should be taken to ensure that these become straightforward to use.

#### 8.1.5. Finding: A Key Barrier to Access Is Lack of Information

Amongst the identified barriers of information, infrastructure, and bureaucracy, the quantitative survey identified lack of information as the most widespread issue. Between 20 and 49 percent of eligible but non-recipient individuals reported either being unaware of programmes or misinformed about eligibility criteria.

FGDs highlighted that the lack of systematic information dissemination by responsible persons at local levels and the shortage of printed information (e.g. brochures, fliers) detailing the criteria for receiving assistance and services contributed to this issue. The lack of a centralized online resource as well as the use of legalistic language in official communications were also mentioned as contributing factors.

- **Recommendation: Enhance the dissemination of state social protection programme information.** To enhance communication effectiveness, FGD participants recommended implementing an outreach strategy which considers preferred communication channels identified by households. Depending on the region, these can be telephone lines, mobile phone text messages, social media platforms, printed information in the form of brochures and fliers, or direct meetings with community representatives. Pooling all information into centralized online resources was also suggested. Language should be kept simple, as official communication with legalistic language was characterized as sometimes too complex.

Practical examples of diversifying communication channels proposed by FGD participants include:

- Installing community notice boards in public spaces, such as markets, bus stations, or community centres, where individuals can easily access updated information in formats such as large print or illustrated posters.
- Collaborating with schools and healthcare centres in rural areas to provide printed brochures or organize community meetings where information can be explained in simple terms, avoiding legal jargon, to ensure wide-reaching and effective communication.
- Training social office staff to effectively communicate information over the phone when solicited.
- Engaging community activists and local organizations to help disseminate information and assist eligible individuals with the application process, ensuring they have access to both physical and digital resources.

#### 8.1.6. Finding: Infrastructure and Bureaucracy are Additional Access Barriers

Infrastructure challenges, such as poor physical access for people with disabilities, and bureaucratic barriers, including a complex application process, were also identified in the quantitative data. While these challenges were reported less frequently than issues related to information access, households encountering information barriers often did not initiate the application process at all and, as a result, could not have experienced or reported challenges specific to application procedures.

- **Recommendation: Enhance logistical and structural access for persons with disabilities.** While the survey results suggested that the effective coverage for disability programmes is already relatively high at 70%, FGDs emphasized that improvements in transport to apply for social protection and accessibility to the state buildings themselves are still needed. Specifically, participants suggested providing communities with expanded public transport especially fitted for accessibility to facilitate access to services for individuals with limited mobility and for those in rural areas.
- **Recommendation: Improve access in remote areas.** One approach could involve the deployment of mobile units staffed with representatives from relevant state agencies (e.g., the Pension Fund, social services/resilience centres, TSNAPs). These units would assist individuals in remote areas or those with limited mobility in completing applications and accessing services. Implementation should begin in the most distressed or recently reclaimed hromadas and then expand to other regions. The currently deployed joint humanitarian/state mobile units in certain areas can serve as a starting point.



- **Recommendation: Simplify application procedures where possible.** This recommendation is particularly important for disability programmes, for which almost a third of potentially eligible non-applicants in the general population listed difficulty of the process as a barrier. FGDs cited the establishment of a “one-stop-shop” with centralized services as a possible solution. Such venues would accept and process applications for all social programmes.
- **Recommendation: Increase the footprint of legal assistance programmes.** Focus group participants emphasized the critical role of the legal assistance they received from NGOs in obtaining social protection benefits. Expand the provision of free legal counselling and specialized assistance to guide applicants for state social protection benefits. These services could be those provided by state actors, humanitarian actors, or as a joint effort. Such legal support may also extend to those currently without documentation to replace key pieces. Legal counselling would also be beneficial in addressing individual concerns which may prevent them from applying for social assistance.

## 8.2 Access in Occupied Areas

Based on interviews with key informants, the main access barriers to social protection benefits in occupied areas were identified to be: (1) limited access to cash payments; (2) restricted ability to digitalize all communication with the Ukrainian authorities; and (3) fear of persecution by the occupying forces.

### 8.2.1. Finding: Limited Access to Cash Payments

The qualitative assessment in occupied areas of Ukraine demonstrates that the state has proffered access. However, practical access to cash payments remains limited due to the inability to utilize Ukrainian bank cards in occupied areas and the isolation of the Russian banking system.

- **Recommendation: Remain amenable to potential solutions to ease access to personal bank accounts in government-controlled areas.** The Government of Ukraine currently has little room for manoeuvre in assuring bank accessibility for its citizens and permanent residents in occupied areas. However, as the socio-political circumstances develop, potential solutions may arise.

### 8.2.2. Finding: Restricted Ability to Digitalize All Communication with the Ukrainian Authorities

Although the Government of Ukraine has made considerable efforts to digitalize most official exchanges with current and potential social protection beneficiaries, certain interactions still require in-person presence.

Additionally, key informants reported that many residents in occupied areas lack sufficient digital literacy to utilize online platforms, with older populations being particularly affected.

- **Recommendation: Continue attempts to improve the digital literacy of Ukrainians living in occupied areas thoroughly widely used digital channels.** Teaching materials can be disseminated through social media that has not been blocked such as Telegram, Viber, and WhatsApp groups.

### 8.2.3. Finding: Fear of Persecution by the Occupying Forces

Key informants related that clear barriers to accessing Ukrainian state social protection in occupied areas were fears for security when contacting Ukrainian authorities, accessing Ukrainian websites online, or simply possessing Ukrainian documentation.

- **Recommendation: Draw on available alternatives to social protection in occupied areas.** Encourage discussion and coordination between humanitarians and the government to support Ukrainian citizens in occupied areas. There may be lessons to draw from the similarities between state social protection payments and humanitarian cash transfers.

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## Table of Annexes












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## Annex 1: Key Informant Interview Profiles

All persons interviewed were identified by the TAF, UNHCR, or its partners based on the persons' professional positions or ability to represent their communities. All persons interviewed were briefed on the purpose of the study and consented to recorded conversations.

Interviewees included representatives of regional-level Departments of Social Protection, city-level Departments of Social Protection, rural residents, non-government organizations, civil society organizations, and vulnerable groups both in and outside of the displacement context (e.g., people with disabilities, older persons, women, marginalized social groups, persons with chronic diseases, children). UNHCR and NGO partner field teams conducted the field-based key information interviews, reaching oblasts near the front line and those which were formerly under occupation (Khersonska, Kharkivska, Zaporizska, Chernihivska, Sumska), and oblasts which host large numbers of IDPs (Lvivska, Vinnytska, Zakarpatska, Kyivska). Interviews with authorities from the Ministry of Social Policy and a leading national NGO were carried out by PeReHID Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) members in April 2024.

The table demonstrates the location and profile of all key informants interviewed.

Oblast	Characteristic	Ministry of Social Policy	National level NGO/CSO	Department of Social Policy (oblast)	Department of Social Protection (city-level)	Rural Hromada Social Protection	NGO/CSO	PWD (non-displacement)	PWD (displacement)	Older persons (non-displacement)	Older persons (displacement)	GBV survivors (women) (non-displacement)	GBV survivors (women) (displacement)	Roma (displaced)	HIV (chronic disease) (displaced)	Parents of children with disabilities (displaced)	Former combatants with disabilities
Zaporizka	front-line				Head of IDP Unit, DoSP, Oblast												
Donetska	front-line			Director, Oblast DoSP		Director, Social Services, Oleksandrivka Village Council											
Khersonska	de-occupied/ front-line			Oblast DoSP			Charitable Fund Center of Community Programmes										
Kharkivska	de-occupied/ front-line				Head of Social Monitoring Department, DoSP, Kharkiv City	Head, DoSP, Izium City											
Chernihivska	de-occupied					Head of Ivanivka Hromada	Head, NGO Zhynochii Format										
Sumska	de-occupied				First Deputy, DoSP, Sumy City												
Lvivska	IDP																
Vinnitska	IDP																
Zakarpatska	IDP																
Dnipropetrovvska	IDP					Head, DoSP, Solone Hromada	NGO Source of Support										
Kyivska	IDP and de-occupied			Director, Oblast DoSP	Head of DoSP, Brovary District												
Kyiv (city)	national-level	MoSP Expert	NGO Right to Protection														

## Annex 2: KII Guide and Introduction

### UNHCR/Perehid Inclusion & Access Study

#### Scoping KII – January 2024

#### Guide

##### Setting the stage:

- Arrange the meeting with the key informant and at least two UNHCR/partner staff members (one interviewer and one helping to keep track of everything that has been said during the meeting).
- Select a space where the interviewee will feel comfortable and can speak freely.
- Arrange the room so that the interviewee and interviewers are sitting comfortably, in a circle or another arrangement which is conducive for an inclusive discussion.
- If an interpreter is used, place the interpreter to the side of the two parties that are communicating but slightly apart from both, and not directly in between. The interpreter should not block the line of vision: communication is between you and the person you are speaking to (not the interpreter).
- Offer snacks or refreshments before or during the discussion, as appropriate.
- Recall that this will be done throughout other oblasts and communities and that this is a methodology UNHCR and its partners use to ensure a meaningful assessment and advocacy efforts.
- Ask permission to record the interview and simultaneously write notes from the interview. If permission is not granted or if it is decided for any reason that recording would be inappropriate, one colleague should type as close to a transcript of the conversation as possible.
- Communicate with persons with disabilities about the interview beforehand. Ask them and their carers about their communication preferences, and what works best for them in terms of the timing and space of the meeting. You can also offer for friends or siblings to act as “support persons” during discussions.

##### Sample introductory text (recommended):

##### For all interviewees

“ Hello, my name is [say interviewer’s name] and I am working with [say the name of the organization that facilitator is working for]. Thank you very much for having agreed to talk to us today. You were invited today to speak as a member of [agency/vulnerable group/community which participant represents]. We are here together with [let other members of the team introduce themselves, i.e. providing their names and organizations]. We are trying to understand better about the ability of persons affected by the war to benefit from state social protection programmes<sup>94</sup> – and, when they have trouble receiving payments or receiving services, the nature of the problems.

This interview is part of a larger study that UNHCR together with other agencies is conducting on the state social protection system for war-affected communities so that we can make recommendations to the Ministry of Social Policy on changes to consider as part of a larger project. We would like to ask you some questions so we can hear your views and experiences on this topic. The information you provide will help us to create questions for a large survey among the war-affected population.

This interview should take approximately 30 minutes. Your participation is voluntary and you can choose not to participate or not to answer certain some questions. You can end the interview at any point if you wish to do so.

##### Option 1: If the interviewee is a state, oblast, or local authority or a member of an NGO/CSO:

“ The main purpose of this interview is to help write the survey questions. No information will be attributed to you on the surveys. However, if the information you provide is very relevant, we may wish to quote you in the final analytical report. In that case, the information would be linked to your position and agency/organization. During

<sup>94</sup> State social protection = social assistance plus social services. Social assistance means the financial assistance given to eligible citizens and permanent residents. These may also be known as social transfers, social payments, or social benefits. They are inclusive of pension, unemployment benefits, low-income benefits, child support, utilities subsidies, etc.



this interview, we hope you can provide us with information about the state of the social protection system and obstacles to receiving social assistance and accessing social services within the boundaries of the region or community.

#### Option 2: If the interviewee is a representative of a vulnerable group/ vulnerable profile

“ The main purpose of this interview is to help write the survey questions. No information will be attributed to you on the surveys. If the information you provide is very relevant, the information may be shared anonymized as part of a larger analysis of views, opinions and recommendations from the larger population groups we have been consulting with, in the form of a report, in order to inform the Ministry of Social Policy and humanitarian agencies about your experiences accessing the state social protection system. The task of these interviews is to collect a list of specific problems and challenges in receiving social assistance and access to social services.

#### For all interviewees

- “ If you agree to participate, you will not receive any direct financial or other personal gain in exchange for your participation.
- “ We expect that the study will be finalized in June 2024. If you are interested in reading it, we will be happy to share it with you once it becomes available. Kindly just let us know and, if so, please provide your contact information.
- “ Do you agree to start the interview? If yes, do you have any questions before we start?

#### Facilitating the discussion:

- Please do follow the questions provided in order to capture that information which we seek. However, we are also interested in knowing what we did not know to ask. If relevant information is offered, do follow it up.
- For all questions, allow the interviewees themselves to expand upon their answers as they desire. If the interviewee introduces a relevant area for additional conversation, following the initial discussion, steer the conversation by asking narrower questions and by confirming your understanding.
- Keep effective communication in mind. Pay attention to whether interviewees are staying engaged and on topic, or diverting, becoming silent, or expressing any frustration, anger, confusion and/or disagreement (whether verbally, through body language or expressions). If so, recognize their feelings, offer a little break, suggest continuing discussion with a different topic and return to a question that raised emotions at the end of the interview.
- Encourage interviewees to speak about what they have experienced themselves or observed in their communities. Encourage the provision of details. Ask for examples.
- Avoid talking to people ‘through’ an interpreter. Address and make eye contact directly with the participants, not with the interpreter, regardless of if you speak the language or not.

#### Capturing the discussion:

- The interview should be recorded at all times where interviewee agrees to that, and written notes should be taken simultaneously. If permission is not granted or if it is inappropriate to record for any reason, one colleague should type as close to a transcript of the conversation as possible.

#### Closing the discussion:

- Ask participants if they have any questions or final comments.
- Recall that this will be done throughout other oblasts and communities and that this is a methodology UNHCR and its partners use to ensure a meaningful assessment and advocacy efforts.
- Thank them for the time and for sharing their views and information, and remind them about the next steps, including how the results will be used to formulate surveys and the resulting data will be analyzed in a report in June 2024.

## Annex 3: KII Identification and Questions

### UNHCR/Perehid Inclusion & Access Study

#### Scoping KIIs – January 2024

#### Key Informant Interviews

##### Identification Instructions. Interview Questions

- UNHCR Protection field teams shall run KIIs from 11-25 January 2024 (2 weeks) in order to assure we have a full scope of the issues pertaining to inclusion in and access of state social protection programmes.<sup>95</sup>
- We are particularly interested in KIIs in the following oblasts – not all have to be covered, but we are aiming for a range of contexts:
  - *near the frontline*: Kharkiv, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia
  - *formerly occupied*: parts of Chernihiv, Sumy, Kherson oblasts
  - *IDP hubs*: Dnipropetrovsk, Vinnytsia, Lviv, Zakarpattia oblasts
  - *formerly occupied and IDP hubs*: Kyivska Oblast
- We propose a distribution of the following interviews total (spread throughout the oblasts):
  - 2-3 regional-level Department of Social Policy
    - senior level/ social protection and humanitarian issues (head or deputy head)
  - 3-4 city-level Departments of Social Protection
  - 4-5 rural hromadas
    - senior official in charge of humanitarian issue (including social protection)
  - 2-3 NGOs/CSOs focused on social protection issues including provision of social services
  - Representatives of vulnerable groups
    - In two different geographical contexts:
      - Persons with disabilities
      - Older persons
      - GBV survivors (women)
    - In the context of displacement
      - Roma (marginalized social groups)
      - Persons with HIV (chronic disease)
      - Parents of children with a disability (children, persons with disabilities)
      - Older person (collective site)
    - 1 former combatant with a disability (MoSP versus Ministry of Veterans Affairs service access)

#### = 22-26 interviews, in total throughout Ukraine

- Results can be given in the form of a written transcript or in form of an audio recording with written notes. Please highlight key themes/phrases/messages.

<sup>95</sup> State social protection = social assistance plus social services

### What we want to learn:

- Measuring effective coverage of state social protection system, encompassing: (a) social assistance (financial benefits and in kind) and (b) social services of differing population groups.
- Access barriers for different population groups with focus on factors existing before February 2022 and factors caused by the full-scale war.
- Challenges in access to social protection programmes for population groups that arose or increased since the beginning of the full-scale war.
- Availability of assistance measures to overcome access barriers.
- Protection concerns stemming from enrolment in state social protection programmes.

Two target groups of interviewees: (requiring different sets of questions)

- state, oblast, or local authority representative, or a member of an NGO/CSO
- a representative of a vulnerable group/vulnerable profile

### Public authority or NGO/CSO representatives:

1. Please describe the procedure of applying for the state social protection programmes (social assistance/benefits and social services specifically) in your hromada/region? How are these services administered? How are these payments provided?
2. What means and channels of information dissemination/awareness raising is used to communicate about the kinds of state social protection programmes available and relevant eligibility criteria?
3. Has the demand for the different kinds of state social protection changed since the full-scale war has begun, in particular for:
  - a. social assistance<sup>96</sup> (which exactly)?
  - b. social services (which exactly)?
4. Has the demand for some social assistance or social services has disappeared, decreased or increased, which ones?
5. Do you have enough resources/employees to process all applications for assistance/ services? How are queues managed for in-person visits? Are they typically long? Can all assistance and services be fully applied for electronically instead of in-person?
6. (*city municipality/hromada level only!*) Does the city municipality/hromada have designated representatives to communicate with vulnerable groups or people in need?
7. According to your observations, can you confirm that there are certain features (barriers, procedural differences, time constraints, etc.) of applying for social assistances or social services in the following areas:
  - a. in small hromadas?
  - b. in rural areas?

If yes, what are the differences and specific features?

8. Have you heard any complaints of the inability to access state social protection (including social assistance and social services):
  - a. in general?
  - b. since February 2022?

<sup>96</sup> Social assistance means the financial assistance given to eligible citizens and permanent residents. These may also be known commonly as social transfers, social payments, or social benefits. They are inclusive of pension, unemployment benefits, low-income benefits, child support, utilities subsidies, etc.

- c. regarding inaccessibility of information on the launch of new or changes in current state social protection programs?
- d. any specific cases/examples?

If yes, what are the nature of the complaints?

9. What is the infrastructure available to residents of your community/region for applying for social benefits to and receiving social services:
  - a. Open hours for in-person application?
  - b. Ability to access equally digitally and in-person?
  - c. Public transportation available to the facilities/ centers/ departments?
  - d. The facilities accessible (architecturally) for the disabled and the older people?
  - e. Is there public outreach for the immobile or rural populations?
  - f. Is there any kind of assistance or tutorial for the use of digital procedure (or access)?
10. Are you aware of men not registering for state social protection programmes so as not to be targeted for mobilization?

If yes, what is your experience with this? Which programmes?

11. Do you know of cases when persons in need were refused social assistance or social services? How do they "survive" without such support?
12. Have you serviced Ukrainians who are currently refugees (temporary protection status) abroad trying to access their Ukrainian state social protection? What was the experience?
13. Have you experienced veterans (especially discharged in the last 6 months) applying for or receiving social assistance or social services from the government?
14. Are you aware of any bureaucratic, infrastructural or other problems with the registration of social benefits or receiving social services in the hromada/municipality/region?
15. Are you aware of areas within your oblast or geographically near you where access to social protection programs (social assistance and/or social services) is poor? If so, what are the main barriers there, in your view?

#### **Vulnerable group representatives:**

1. Are there any specifics of the procedure of applying for state social protection programs in your hromada/municipality/region? Please elaborate...
2. Where do you get information about available state social protection programs (social assistance and social services specifically) that you can apply/use in your hromada/municipality/region? Please specify the main sources...
3. Do you know who (designated facility or public official) is responsible for communicating with people who need social support, benefits, or services, or people with needs and helping to solve their problems in your hromada/municipality?
4. Do you have any complaints about the work of the designated facility/public official regarding the registering need in social assistance or in social services:
  - a. in general?
  - b. since February 2022?
  - c. regarding inaccessibility of information on the launch of new or changes in current state social protection programs?
  - d. any specific cases/examples?

If yes, what are the nature of the complaints?



5. What is the infrastructure available in your hromada/municipality/region for applying for social payments and receiving social services (and please provide relevant details):
- a. open hours for in-person assistance?
  - b. ability to access equally digitally and in-person?
  - c. public transportation available to the facilities?
  - d. facilities accessible for the disabled and older people?
  - e. public outreach for the immobile or rural populations?
  - f. assistance/tutorial for the use of digital procedure (or access)?

Please provide relevant details....

6. Do you have any complaints about the accessibility, availability or quality of certain social services in your hromada/municipality? Please elaborate...
7. What social assistance or social services are you entitled to but cannot apply for or receive in your community/municipality/region?
8. Have you ever been denied social assistance or social services? If yes, which form of assistance or services and for what reasons? Please elaborate...
9. Have you ever refused social assistance or social services? If so, which ones and why?
10. Have you encountered other bureaucratic, infrastructural, or other obstacles in the process of obtaining social assistance or social services that you need and to which you are entitled?
11. Are you aware of areas where access to social protection programs is poor? If so, what are the main barriers there, in your view?
12. Is there any kind of information which you are afraid to provide to authorities in the process of applying for social assistance or social services (ie, for fear that it will worsen your situation)?

## Annex 4: Survey Quality Assurance

Type of check	Relevant action point(s)
Survey Meta Data	<p>All records have <b>unique IDs</b> or UUIDs.</p> <p>① <i>Action needed:</i> Any duplicates should be deleted and recorded in the data cleaning log.</p>
Data Protection	<p>All <b>information that can be used to identify individuals or households is removed</b> from the dataset before sharing the data even within the team. Only the data focal will have the access to that information. Examples: GPS coordinates; names; phone numbers, etc</p> <p>① <i>Action needed:</i> Remove or securely extract all personally identifiable information.</p>
Survey Meta Data	<p>Final dataset is <b>consistent with intended sampling strategy</b> i.e.:</p> <p>(1) Interview locations/ points and the intended sampling locations/ points are consistent, unless there is a clear rationale (and the limitations of this are well understood). This should be checked regularly to provide feedback to the data collectors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular tracking during data collection should be conducted to cross-check the sample collected against the originally intended sample. This could be done by: (1) preparing an overview map overlaying intended sampling locations with locations where data was collected and (2) maintaining a tracking spreadsheet comparing targets per location per stratum</li> </ul>
Enumerator Metadata	<p>Enumerator <b>interview speed</b> (i.e. time taken for the survey) is reasonable.</p> <p>A benchmark will be established based on the length of questionnaire by each stratum. And it will be checked with the survey duration. The benchmark should be set by the considering multiple survey type (big/small HH, different skip logic).</p> <p>① <i>Action needed:</i> If the duration of the survey is lower than expected, additional follow-up should be done if possible.</p>
Enumerator Metadata	<p>None of the enumerators consistently follow the <b>shortest questionnaire path OR exact same path</b> i.e., providing same responses across multiple records.</p> <p>For example, if it is noticed that one enumerator (identified by enumerator ID variable) has a tendency to enter identical responses across multiple respondents, this may be an indication of data falsification. In such cases, it will be followed-up with enumerators to clarify.</p> <p>① <i>Action needed:</i> A clear rationale should be identified for such paths to demonstrate that interviews/ data is not being falsified.</p>
Logical Checks	<p>There are <b>no inexplicable or impossible outliers</b> i.e., an observation/ a specific data points that lies an abnormal distance from other values in the dataset. For example, if the average income in a specific area is around 500 USD/ month and a household reports an income of 100,000 USD, this could be the result of a data entry error.</p> <p>① <i>Action needed:</i> All outliers should be identified, investigated, and corrected as appropriate.</p> <p>① <i>Action needed:</i> It is also important that identified outliers are not automatically assumed to be incorrect and deleted without follow up. In the example provided above, such high-income levels could be possible, e.g., if the household size is bigger than the average for that area. In other words, sometimes what is suspected as an outlier might not necessarily be one.</p>
Logical Checks	<p>There is <b>logical coherence between the different responses</b> within a record.</p> <p>During daily data cleaning at country level, the types of logical inconsistencies to look out for and the action to be taken if such an inconsistency is identified should be clear for everyone working on the cleaning process.</p> <p>① <i>Action needed:</i> Inconsistencies between questions should be identified, investigated, and corrected as appropriate.</p> <p>① <i>Action needed:</i> Follow up questions should be double checked for coherence with top level questions (e.g., reported levels of access to food and use of strategies to cope with a lack of food).</p> <p>① <i>Action needed:</i> Double check that within each variable, all data has the same unit (e.g., number of days or currency in US dollars) in all rows.</p>
Data Formatting	<p>Dataset is in a <b>clean, tidy and usable format for purpose of analysis</b></p> <p>① <i>Action needed:</i> "Other" responses have been recoded into existing categories or new categories as relevant</p> <p>① <i>Action needed:</i> Missing data fields are left blank or replaced by NA (not available) where needed.</p> <p>① <i>Action needed:</i> Within each variable, it is checked that all data has the same unit (e.g. number of days or currency in US Dollars) in all rows.</p> <p>① <i>Action needed:</i> For numeric variables, if for data collection other codes were introduced (ie. 999 – not recommended), these are replaced by blank or NA in the final cleaned dataset.</p>

# Annex 5: Focus Group Discussion Profiles

Participation was strictly voluntary and explicitly independent from any financial reward, personal gain, or humanitarian assistance benefit. All participants were 18 years of age or older. Each group consisted of four to 12 participants and lasted from approximately 60 to 90 minutes. Participants were informed that they could choose not to answer any question. All responses remained fully confidential. Names and identifying information were not recorded. However, if any information or experience was especially relevant, it may be mentioned anonymously in this report.

The table demonstrates the location and profile of all focus group discussions.

Oblast	Geographic Profile	IDP (urban)	IDP (rural)	Rural areas (non-IDP)	Families with Low Incomes	People with Disabilities	Older People	GBV Survivors (women)	Roma	Parents of Children with Disabilities	Families with Military-Age Men	Families of Service Members	Former Combatants	Former Combatants with Disabilities	Total Groups
Dnipropetrovvska	front-line	Women 18-59		Mixed Age/ Sex		Mixed IDPs/ Non-IDPs									3
Donetska	front-line			Women 18-59			Mixed Sex				Women Mixed Age IDP/Non-IDPs				3
Poltavska	front-line		Men 18-59							Women IDPs 18-59					2
Zaporizka	front-line				IDPs Mixed Age/Sex								Mixed Sex 60+ Men 18-59		3
Kharkivska	de-occupied/ front-line		Women 60+						Mixed IDPs/ Non-IDPs			Mixed Sex/ Age			3
Chernihivska	de-occupied		Mixed Age/ Sex Women 60+												2
Sumska	de-occupied									Women non-IDPs 18-59					1
Zhytomyrska	IDP hub	Men 60+				IDPs Mixed Sex/Age									2
Kyivska	IDP hub and de-occupied	Women 60+			Two-Parent HH Women IDPs										2
Lvivska	IDP hub							Women 18+ Mixed IDPs/ Non-IDPs			Men 18+ IDPs/Non-IDPs		Men 18-59 Non-IDPs		3
Volynska	IDP hub		Women 18-59			Non-IDPs Mixed Sex 18-59								Men 18-59	3
Rivenska	IDP hub			Men 60+	Single-Headed HH Women 18-59 IDPs							Women 18-59 IDPs/ Non-IDPs			3
Zakarpatska	IDP hub	Collective Center Residents Women 18-59	Collective Center Residents Mixed Sex 18-59						Women IDPs/ non-IDPs Women Non-IDPs						4
Vinnyska	IDP hub	Men 18-59	Mixed Age/ Sex												2
Khersonska	de-occupied/ front-line			Women 60+ Men 18-59											2
<b>Total Groups</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>38</b>



## Annex 6: FGD Guide and Introduction

### UNHCR/PeReHID Inclusion & Access Study

#### FGDs – May 2024

#### Guide

##### Setting the stage:

- Select a space where POCs will feel comfortable and can speak freely without others being able to hear them, ideally with a quiet space and a safe outside space for children and others who may feel less comfortable in a confined space.
- Arrange the room so that participants are sitting comfortably, in a circle or another arrangement which is conducive for an inclusive discussion.
- If an interpreter is used, place the interpreter near the facilitators(s). The interpreter should not block the line of vision: communication is between you and the person you are speaking to (not the interpreter).
- While POCs arrive, ask them to review and sign the UNHCR release form. Offer snacks or refreshments before or during the discussion, as appropriate.
- Each group should be **4-12 persons**. Although some POCs may qualify for multiple forms of assistance or meet several different profiles, in general each group should focus on one of the target profiles.
- When planning a group, look into the profiles of the participants and discuss with a psychologist (if available in your organization) the need for a psychosocial support specialist, in case any of the discussions trigger difficult emotions.
- For children, a ratio of 1:5 adult facilitators should be respected. Limit every discussion to 45 minutes and schedule a maximum of two groups per day.
- Recall that this will be done throughout other oblasts and communities and that this is a methodology UNHCR and its partners use to ensure a meaningful assessment and advocacy efforts.
- Have participants sign the release form and ask permission to take notes during the interview. One colleague should type as close to a transcript of the conversation as possible.
- Communicate with persons with disabilities or special needs about the interview beforehand. Ask them and their carers about their communication preferences, and what works best for them in terms of the timing and space of the meeting. You can also offer for friends or siblings to act as “support persons” during discussions.
- Leave enough time after the scheduled discussion time so that you do not have to leave right away or make space for another group.

##### Introductions (general guidance):

- Introduce each member of the facilitation team and their role in the discussion. Invite members of the FGD to introduce themselves as well.
- Explain the role of UNHCR/Partner.
- Explain the Access & Inclusion Study and its goals: Highlight: i) the objectives of the survey ; ii) why participation is important; iii) an outline of the process and next steps (including what the survey may - and may not - lead to) and iv) how participants may receive the report later.
- Explain consent and confidentiality: Explain that we take notes to capture the important points of discussion. What we discuss may be shared to improve programmes. Underscore that individual names and other identifying personal information will not be recorded or shared with anyone, including the government. Note the release form as part of the introduction and have a colleague collect the signed forms before the discussion begins.
- Set some ground rules for the discussion: Suggest a few ‘ground rules’ to be sure that everyone feels comfortable (eg. mobile phones off or on silent, one person speaks at a time, no wrong answers, **no reports/discussions on individual cases**, etc). Seek agreement on these from participants and ask if they have others to add. Indicate whether and when there will be any breaks in the discussion.

## Introductions (sample text):

My name is xxx, I work for [UNHCR/partner] in [Location], I will be asking questions/taking notes/interpreting today.

UNHCR's mandate is to support, protect and seek solutions for asylum-seekers and refugees, IDPs, IDP returnees, refugee returnees, persons at risk of statelessness, as well as those affected by war, and to advocate for their rights with government(s) and other actors. UNHCR is working with the Government of Ukraine and other international agencies on the PeReHID Initiative, which supports a sustainable transition from emergency humanitarian response to stronger national systems, particularly Ukraine's social protection reform program.

This discussion is part of a larger study that UNHCR and other agencies are conducting on the state social protection system for war-affected communities. We are trying to understand better about the ability of persons affected by the war to benefit from support from the state<sup>97</sup> – and, the nature of any problems they have receiving payments or receiving services. This feedback will help us to make recommendations to the Ministry of Social Policy on changes to consider as part of a larger project.

This group discussion should take approximately 60 to 90 minutes. Your participation is voluntary and you can choose not to participate or not to answer certain some questions. If you agree to participate, you will not receive any direct financial or other personal gain in exchange for your participation.

Participation is fully confidential. Your name and identifying information will not be recorded and will not be included in the report or shared with any government agencies. If your information or experience is particularly relevant, it may be included as a key example of the report's findings, but it will not be linked to your name or any unique information that could be used to identify you. Knowing this, are you comfortable and do you consent to participate in this discussion? Thank you, if you haven't already, please sign the release form you received when you arrived and my colleague will collect them now before we begin.

We expect that the study will be finalized in August 2024. If you are interested in reading it, we will be happy to share it with you once it becomes available. Kindly just let us know and, if so, please provide your contact information.

Do you have any questions for us before we begin the discussion?

## Facilitating the discussion:

### ● Asking Questions:

- Please do follow the questions provided to ensure consistent information collection across FGDs. However, we are also interested in learning about what we did not know to ask. If relevant information is offered, do follow it up.
- Use conversational, not overly formal language. Avoid jargon and acronyms that may not be understood by everyone.
- If a response to the question is not clear, or if you think the interviewee may have misunderstood the question, please feel free to repeat or rephrase the question.
- For all questions, allow the participants themselves to expand upon their answers as they desire. If the participant introduces a relevant area for additional conversation, following the initial discussion, steer the conversation by asking narrower questions and by confirming your understanding.
- Also note when participants are using passive voice. Consider following up on examples that used passive voice to clarify who was saying or doing the relevant activity.

### ● Encouraging Participation:

- Pay attention to whether participants are staying engaged and on topic, or diverting, becoming silent, or expressing any frustration, anger, confusion and/or disagreement (whether verbally, through body language or expressions). If so, recognize their feelings, offer a little break, suggest continuing discussion with a different topic and return to a question that raised emotions at the end of the interview.

<sup>97</sup> If asked, you can say that State social protection = social assistance plus social services. Social assistance means the financial assistance given to eligible citizens and permanent residents. These may also be known as social transfers, social payments, or social benefits. They are inclusive of pension, unemployment benefits, low-income benefits, child support, utilities subsidies, etc.

- Pay attention to who is talking and who is not. Some participants may need encouragement to speak or only speak if they have eye contact or other verbal or non-verbal clues from you. Please also pay attention to whether participants are having frustrated reactions or closing down in response to the statements of other participants.
- Encourage participants to speak about what they have experienced themselves or observed in their communities. Encourage the provision of details. Ask for examples.
- Logistics:
  - Avoid talking to people ‘through’ an interpreter. Address and make eye contact directly with participants, not with the interpreter, regardless of if you speak the language or not.
  - Offer a space for questions during the discussion.
  - As needed, manage expectations. Explain the constraints and operational conditions under which UNHCR operates. If we cannot address protection concerns, UNHCR can and will advocate for them. Clarify that you are not personally in a position to take any strategic or major decision as a result of what is discussed and remind what the next steps for the survey will be.

#### **Capturing the discussion:**

- Written notes of the FGD should be taken simultaneously. If permission to record is not granted or if it is inappropriate to record for any reason, one colleague should type as close to a transcript of the conversation as possible.
- Consider having one facilitator also make notes on a whiteboard or large paper during the discussion, while another team member takes notes.

#### **Closing the discussion:**

- Ask participants if they have any questions or final comments. Ask if they have any recommendations for similar exercises in the future.
- Recall that this will be done throughout other oblasts and communities and that this is a methodology UNHCR and its partners use to ensure a meaningful assessment and advocacy efforts.
- Thank them for the time and for sharing their views and information, and remind them about the next steps, including how the resulting data will be analyzed in a report in August 2024.

#### **After the focus group discussion:**

- Notes on the FGD will be typed up and shared with [insert contact].
- Prepare the list of individuals who wished to receive the final report and share with [insert contact].
- Share any especially noteworthy comments or recommendations for other FGDs with [insert contact].

# Annex 7: FGD Identification and Questions

## UNHCR/PeReHID Inclusion & Access Study FGDs – May 2024

### Background, Identification Instructions and Interview Questions

#### Background

- UNHCR Protection field teams and partners shall run FGDs from May through June 2024 (approximately 6 weeks) in order to assure we have a full scope of the issues pertaining to inclusion in and access of state social protection programmes.
- We are particularly interested in FGDs in the following oblasts – not all have to be covered, but we are aiming for a range of contexts:
  - *near the frontline*: Kharkiv, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Mykolaiv, Kherson oblasts
  - *formerly occupied*: parts of Chernihiv, Sumy, Kherson oblasts
  - *IDP hubs*: Dnipropetrovsk, Vinnytsia, Lviv, Zakarpattia oblasts
  - *formerly occupied and IDP hubs*: Kyivska Oblast
- FGD results can be given in the form of a written transcript or in form of an audio recording with written notes. Please highlight key themes/phrases/messages.

#### Identification Information

- Overall, the goal is to conduct 30-50 group discussions in total throughout Ukraine. We propose that participants in the FGDs for the following groups, spread throughout the oblasts. The target profiles are included in the chart below:
  - In order to cover different social protection programmes, we suggest that FGDs for representatives of the following groups:
    - In different geographical contexts:
      - Low-income families (2-4 groups, including at least 1 group with low-income families with both parents and 1 group with families with single-headed households)
      - Persons with disabilities (2 groups)
      - Parents of children with a disability (2 groups)
      - Older persons (2 groups) GBV survivors (women) (1 group)
      - Residents of rural areas (5 groups)
    - Service members, including:
      - Former combatants with disabilities (MoSP versus Ministry of Veterans Affairs service access) (1 group)
      - Applicants for and recipients of Veteran (of war/ATO) and Participant in Hostilities status (2 groups)
      - Families of service members (4 groups)
    - Among IDPs:
      - IDPs in urban areas (5 groups), residing in collective centres (1 group) and rural areas (5 groups)
      - Roma (marginalized social groups) (2-4 groups)
      - Families with military-age men (2 groups)



### What we want to learn:

- Measuring effective coverage of state social protection system, encompassing: (a) social assistance (financial benefits and in kind) and (b) social services of differing population groups.
- Access barriers for different population groups with focus on factors existing before February 2022 and factors caused by the full-scale war.
- Challenges in access to social protection programmes for population groups that arose or increased since the beginning of the full-scale war.
- Availability of assistance measures to overcome access barriers.
- Protection concerns stemming from enrolment in state social protection programmes.

### Questions:

*The below list of questions is general and can be used for each FGD. Some of the questions are deliberately repetitive, in order to make sure we capture as much information as possible. However, if a question has already been answered by a previous question, please feel free to skip it or adapt it (for example, if the FGD participants have already mentioned their experience applying for payments online, there is no need to ask if online applications are available).*

**For certain groups, there are suggested follow-up questions, listed in Annex A.**

1. Where do you get information about available state social protection programs (social assistance and social services specifically) that you can apply/use in your hromada/municipality/region? Please specify the main sources...
2. Do you know who (designated facility or public official) is responsible for communicating with people who need social support, benefits, or services, or people with needs and helping to solve their problems in your hromada/municipality? How would you rate their work?
3. What infrastructure available is in your hromada/municipality/region for applying for social payments and receiving social services (and if so, please provide relevant details)?
  - a. [Note to Interviewers: note if any of the below are mentioned. If any of these items is not mentioned, consider asking following up to ask specifically whether it is available:
    - i. Open hours for in-person assistance
    - ii. Ability to access appointments/services digitally and in-person
    - iii. Public transportation to the facilities
    - iv. Public outreach (including mobile units) to immobile or rural populations
    - v. Assistance/tutorial on how to apply, including using digital procedures]
4. Are there any specifics of the procedure of applying for state social protection programs in your hromada/municipality/region? Please elaborate...
5. Do you have any feedback about the accessibility, availability or quality of certain social services in your hromada/municipality? Or do you have or know of any critical comments about the work of the designated facility/public official regarding the registering need in social assistance or in social services? Please elaborate...
6. How do you think the accessibility, availability or quality of social services in your hromada/municipality could be improved?
7. Are there social assistance or social services that you or others are entitled to but cannot [or do not want to] apply for or receive in your community/municipality/region? Which ones and why?
8. Have you ever been denied social assistance or social services? If yes, which form of assistance or services and for what reasons? Please elaborate...
9. Have you ever refused social assistance or social services? If so, which ones and why?

10. Have you encountered other bureaucratic, infrastructural, or other obstacles in the process of obtaining social assistance or social services that you need and to which you are entitled? Are there any other considerations you have when deciding to apply for social assistance or social services?
11. Are you aware of areas where access to social protection programs is poor? If so, what are the main barriers there, in your view?
12. How do people make ends meet in areas where this access or availability of social protection or other aid is poor? [OR] What do you think people would do if [aid/programme] was not available? What do you think would reduce or remove these barriers?
13. Is there any kind of information which you are nervous about providing or do not wish to provide to authorities in the process of applying for social assistance or social services (ie, for fear that it will worsen your situation)?
14. Have you observed any changes in the accessibility of information or services, or the quality of government services since 2022? What are they?
15. Is there anything else that you think is important for us to know about social protection programmes in your area?

### Follow-Up Questions for Specific Groups

#### Internally Displaced Persons

1. Do you see a difference in procedures in comparison to your habitual place of residence?
2. Do you feel you are or have been treated differently because of your habitual place of residence?

#### Persons With Disabilities

1. Do you have or do you know others who have had issues with accessing social assistance or social services because the building was not accessible?
2. Are there accommodations that you think could be made to improve accessibility?
3. Do you feel that the officials you interact with are adequately informed/equipped to help persons with disabilities? Would you recommend any changes in terminology used by service providers?
4. Have you noticed any difference in treatment based on the type of disability (e.g., disabilities from birth vs disability received during the war)?

#### Older Persons

1. If you or a member of your household has reached the age of pension, are you receiving it?
2. Has there been any change in the last two years regarding your ability to collect your pension?
3. Have you used any of the digitalized services (Diia, etc.) and did you feel comfortable using it? If no, what would make you feel more comfortable using digitalized services?

#### Roma

1. (For IDPs) Do you see a difference in procedures in comparison to your habitual place of residence?
2. Do you feel you are or have been treated differently because you are Roma?

#### For Women-Only FGDs (IDPs, Former Combatants, etc.)

1. Do you feel you are or have been treated differently because of your gender?
2. Are there steps you think the government could take to be more responsive to women's needs?

#### (Families with) Military-Age Men

1. Do you consider the martial law regulations or mobilization rules when deciding to apply for social assistance or other services from the government? Do you think these rules affect other people's decisions?
2. Do you think families with service members or military-age men are treated differently than families without?

## Annex 8: Social Assistance and Social Insurance Programmes of Ukraine

Collaborative Cash Delivery Network, Ukraine Cash Consortium, et al, Summary – Tools from the Discussion Paper on Alignment Options for Humanitarian Cash with the Ukrainian Social Protection System, 2023, Link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/alignment-options-humanitarian-cash-ukrainian-social-protection-system>

SP System	Maternity/0-6 Years Old	School Age Children	Working Age Adults	Old Age
Non-Contributory	Maternity benefit	Assistance for Low Income Families (GMI)		
		☀ Allowance for Internally Displaced Persons/Social Assistance for Evacuated Persons and Persons Living in Newly Accessible Areas		
		☀ Social Assistance to Persons and Children with Disabilities Injured as a Result of Explosive Objects		
	Childbirth Grant / Baby Box		♿ State Social Care Assistance	
			♿ Disability Pension	
			♿ Social Assistance to Persons with Disabilities from Childhood or Children with Disabilities	
	Municipal Nanny		Housing and Utilities Subsidy (HUS)	
			☀ Compensation of Expenses for Temporary Accommodation of IDPs	
			☀ Compensation for Damaged and Destroyed Property	
		Allowance for Single Parents		
Contributory		Social Pension: Social Assistance to Persons Not Entitled to a Pension		
		♿ Guardianship Allowance/ SA to Orphans and Children Deprived of Parental Care and Financial Support to Caretaker/ Assistance to a Person Caring for a Sick Child/ Alimony Benefits/ SA for Foster Care		Old-Age Pension
		♿ Temporary Disability Benefit	Unemployment Benefits	
			☀ Compensation to the employer for Labour Costs for Employment of IDP	
			♿ Temporary Disability Benefit (Sickness Benefit / Care for a Sick Family Member)	
			♿ Disability Pension	
	Maternity benefit		Insurance against Industrial Accidents and Occupational Diseases that Caused Disability	
			☀ Partial Unemployment Benefits	

■ Universal

■ Means-Tested



☀ Conflict-Related

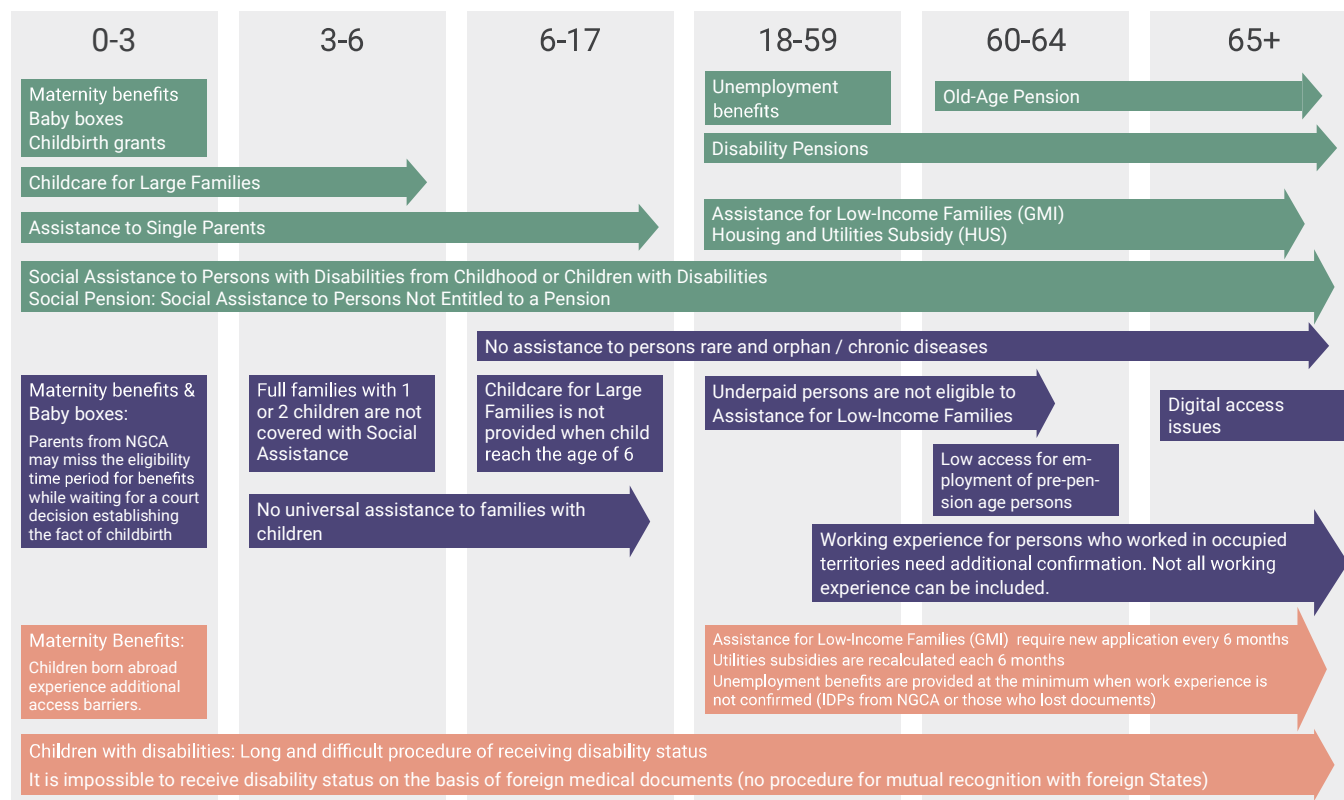


♿ Disability-Related

*Italics: Not covered in Study*

Source: Content and analysis generated by CCD

## Coverage, Legal Gaps and Access Barriers



■ Coverage ■ Coverage gaps ■ Access barriers



## Annex 9: Summary of Social Services in Ukraine

Social Services Summary (According to the Social Service Classifier)	
<b>001.0 Providing information</b>	
<b>002.0 Counseling</b>	
002.1 Consultative hotline	
003.0 Mediation	
<b>004.0 Representation of Interests</b>	
<b>005.0 Shelter</b>	
005.1 Night shelter	
006.0 Short-term accommodation	
<b>007.0 Social prevention</b>	
008.1 Care and upbringing of children in family-like conditions	
009.01 Assisted living/accommodation for the elderly and people with disabilities	
009.02 Assisted accommodation of homeless persons	
009.03 Transit assisted accommodation/ educational social apartment (house)	
<b>010.0 Social support</b>	
010.1 Social support of families/persons in difficult life circumstances	
010.1 Social support of families/persons in difficult life circumstances	
010.2 Social support of families raising orphans and children deprived of parental care	
011.0 Social support during employment and at the workplace	
012.0 Emergency (crisis) intervention	
013.0 Social adaptation	
013.1 Social and labor adaptation	
014.0 Social integration and reintegration	
<b>015.0 Care</b>	
015.1 Home care	
015.2 Inpatient care	
015.3 Day care	
015.3.1 Day care for children with disabilities	
015.4 Palliative care	
<b>016.0 Personal assistant</b>	
<b>017.0 Social rehabilitation</b>	
017.1 Social rehabilitation of persons with intellectual and mental disabilities	
017.2 Social and psychological rehabilitation	
017.3 Social and psychological rehabilitation of persons with drugs or psychotropic substances addiction	
017.4 Socio-psychological rehabilitation of persons with gaming addiction	
<b>018.0 Temporary rest for persons caring for children/ persons with disabilities</b>	
018.1 Temporary rest for parents or persons who replace them, who take care of children with disabilities	
018.2 Temporary rest for persons caring for persons with disabilities, persons with incurable diseases, diseases requiring long-term treatment	
019.0 In-kind assistance	
020.0 Support during inclusive education	
021.0 Physical assistance of persons with disabilities who have disorders of the musculoskeletal system and move around in wheelchairs, with intellectual, sensory, physical, motor, mental and behavioral disorders	
022.0 Sign language translation	
023.0 Transport services	

The list of social services is given in accordance with the Social Services Classifier, approved by the Order of the Ministry of Social Policy No. 429, dated 23 June 2020 (<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0643-20#Text>).



