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SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN UKRAINE: PERCEPTIONS FROM IDPS VS. THE HOST POPULATION

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ABSTRACT. The social integration of internally displaced persons in Ukraine is analysed based on 5 dimensions of social integration: economic, political and religious, social, socio-psychological, and integration into cultural and sports life. The study was conducted using a nationally representative sociological survey of internally displaced persons (500 respondents) and the population of host communities (850 respondents). Differences in the perception of integration are investigated based on comparing the assessments of internally displaced persons and the population of the host communities. The highest integration is obtained in the socio-psychological, political and religious dimensions. The lowest level is in integration into community life. An important empirical result is the lower scores of the population compared to IDPs in almost all 21 criteria for integration. This is an indirect sign of significant social distance and lower readiness of the population of host communities, compared to IDPs themselves, to seek opportunities for interaction. The cluster analysis reveals the links between the most significant factors for successful integration: mutual respect between IDPs and local residents, tolerance, active engagement in local policy-making, and support for country defence. The most crucial obstacles to successful integration according to IDPs' judgements are lower possibilities compared to the local population in participation in projects aimed at local communities' development (65,3%), entrepreneurship development (60% of responses), and participation in decision-making regarding the community development (55,9%). The findings are important for developing policies to reduce the social exclusion of IDPs in areas where integration is below average.

Keywords: internally displaced persons, local communities' governance, social integration, social protection.

Introduction

The problem of forced migration is becoming increasingly important due to the war in Ukraine. Thus, according to the United Nations Refugee Agency, more than 6.2 million refugees are officially registered in Europe alone, and there are about 6.8 million refugees globally (UNHCR, 2024). Internal displacement is even more widespread and is compounded by the fact that people continue to live in countries where the risks that drove refugees from their places of origin persist for a longer time. The most common causes of internal displacement are armed conflict/violence and natural disasters. According to the IDMC (2024), at the end of 2023, there were 75.9 million internally displaced people in 116 countries worldwide, of whom 7.7 million were internally displaced by disasters and 68.3 million by conflict and violence. The number of internally displaced people has increased by 51% over the past five years, driven by escalating and protracted conflict in Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, and Ukraine. At the same time, in 2023 alone, military conflicts caused 20.5 million new internal displacements.

According to the IOM (2023), there were more than 3.6 million internally displaced persons at the end of 2023 in Ukraine. Such a large number of people, finding themselves in other communities, in an unfamiliar living environment, can become an important resource for community development, strengthening local capacity and enriching it with new human capital. Conversely, if there is insufficient integration into communities, persistent social exclusion, conflicts, and other social problems can arise. The search for effective levers to manage the social integration of internally displaced persons is complicated by the fact that there are currently no scientific and methodological approaches to assessing social integration that, firstly, would comprehensively illustrate the most important areas of interaction based on the system of human needs, and, secondly, could be applied in two ways: in assessments of IDPs and the population of host communities based on a set of identical criteria. A set of such criteria is proposed and tested by Roshchuk et al. (2024) based on an expert approach.

This paper aims to study the social integration of internally displaced persons by comparing the assessments of IDPs and the population of host communities according to a system of criteria that includes economic, political, and religious, integration in community life, socio-psychological, cultural and sports integration. The research objectives are a bilateral (population and internally displaced persons) assessment of integration based on defined criteria and the identification of the most successful and critical areas of integration. These objectives were achieved by processing data from a nationally representative sociological survey and analysing the data using statistical methods with the IBM SPSS Statistics 20 software.

Such research and comparison of assessments of the target group and the population as representatives of the new social environment is conducted for the first time, which, together with the developed criteria of social integration and the assessment scale, constitutes the scientific novelty of the study.

1. Literature review

Changes in the population composition caused by the intensification of migration processes are one of the most discussed objects of economic science. The importance of this issue is due to the impact of external and internal movements on the state of socio-economic security in places of inflow and outflow of migration flows, including changes in the composition of communities. To develop effective mechanisms for regulating migration processes, research on the causes and consequences of population movements is being

intensified. Typical areas of such research include: factors of “pull” and “push” of migrants (Mishchuk & Grishnova, 2015); changes in labour market conditions (Al-Dalahmeh & Dajnoki, 2021; Urbański, 2021; Kőműves et al., 2024), including those of highly educated workers (Oliinyk et al., 2022; Pyatnychuk et al., 2024), and changes in earnings (Kersan-Škabić & Blažević Burić, 2022) caused by the outflow or inflow of additional labour due to migration; changes in social taxes caused by changes in the country’s social policy (Szymańska, 2022).

In addition, there are a number of special studies on external and internal population movements. Intensive external migration (immigration) sometimes violates the principles of social justice established in a particular society (Mishchuk et al., 2019) and leads to changes in the entrepreneurial (Kuděj et al., 2023) and socio-cultural environment (Burliai et al., 2023). In turn, this leads to restrictive shifts in extra-regional migration governance (Brumat & Feline Freier, 2023) and creates various barriers for migrants (Badalić, 2023; Palmer & Piper, 2023; Sabary & Ključnikov, 2023). At the same time, studies of the impact of internal displacement on the development of local communities focus on the need to change the development plans of such communities (Khymynets & Holovka, 2022; Zayats et al., 2024) and the violation of social justice concerning local residents, in particular, in terms of starting and running a business, access to financial resources (Ashourizadeh et al., 2022), and social protection instruments (Vičković & Škuflić, 2021).

Recently, internal displacement has been a frequently discussed multidimensional international topic. This type of displacement is one of the most impactful human mobility experiences, both for the affected people, the host community to which the people move, and even for the people of the area from which the people have been displaced (Orendain & Djalante, 2021). At the same time, it is important to understand the differences in the interpretation of such related concepts as IDPs and refugees. According to Draper (2023), IDPs and refugees are both forced or involuntarily displaced from their permanent place of residence, but IDPs are displaced within the national borders of their state, while refugees are displaced outside them. Therefore, IDPs can expect protection from their own state, while refugees cannot (Draper, 2023). The humanitarian status of internally displaced persons, designed to meet immediate needs and protect people, is enshrined in international documents (UNHCR, 2015).

Internal displacement exacerbates people's vulnerability as they lose their livelihoods, homes, social networks, and access to essential services (Zewude & Siraw, 2024). Thus, internal displacement creates different needs for everyone who is forced to change their place of residence. In the process of meeting these needs, IDPs face a variety of challenges related to their very survival, physical security, livelihood, or their limited freedom of movement (Husieva et al., 2020). Various authors include the following needs of IDPs: housing, food, medical care, employment, and income (Krakhmalova, 2018; Perelli-Harris et al., 2023). The differences in international law regarding the rights of IDPs and refugees significantly complicate the satisfaction of these needs. According to Schimmel (2022), IDPs lack international legal protections, their rights and needs are often overlooked and met with indifference and a lack of sufficient humanitarian response from the United Nations, its agencies and member states, and global humanitarian NGOs.

Internal displacement due to conflict and violence often causes high levels of psychological vulnerability and poor mental health among affected persons (Quirke et al., 2022; Perelli-Harris et al., 2023; Tassang et al., 2023). According to Kupriianova et al. (2023), the status of IDPs may be associated with a constant anxiety, depression and “negative expectation” of the danger that is definitely yet to come, because of not leaving the borders of a literal “dangerous territory”. Also significant are the problems of low involvement of IDPs in decision-making in the communities where they live, and the growing level of intolerance towards them by the local population. As noted by Kudelia et al. (2018), newcomers often

become the “first to be blamed”, turning into a marginalised group excluded from community life, which is an irritant and a cause of increased social tension in the community.

It is important to note that the analysis of scientific publications showed that the problems faced by IDPs largely depend on their personal characteristics, which should be considered when developing measures to overcome them. Among the factors with a negative impact on the subjective well-being of IDPs are economic hardship, inadequate housing, and/or weak social support (Perelli-Harris et al., 2023). Similar conclusions are drawn by Zavisca et al. (2023) regarding housing holds and its important role in integration, because homeownership is both widespread and a vital source of people’s sense of wellbeing, security, and normalcy. Zewude B. and Siraw G. (2024) emphasise that ethnic identity shapes internally displaced persons’ (IDPs’) decisions regarding the choice of post-displacement resettlement situations—that is, return, local integration, or resettlement. When developing strategies for social support and adaptation of IDPs, it is advisable to focus on factors such as gender, age, presence of children, emotional or financial support from relatives or friends (Ngwu et al., 2023), and to understand displacement patterns and create the necessary conditions for IDPs to return, it is necessary to take into account sex, basic labour-market cohort, and origin location (Mykhnenko et al., 2022).

Today, the problem of social integration of IDPs is one of the key issues in addressing internal displacement. “Social integration” refers to a sense of belonging, and the inclusion of people in various social activities (Jayakody et al., 2022). At the same time, social integration is seen as an active process involving both parties: internally displaced people and host populations (Chuiko & Fedorenko, 2020).

Despite the simplicity and clarity of the interpretation of the concept of “social integration”, the assessment of this process is quite controversial and does not have an unambiguous approach and composition of indicators. This situation is due to the fact that in different periods of research, significantly different problems could arise in the process of integration of the internally displaced population. Therefore, the object of scientific interest of researchers could differ.

For example, Chuiko and Fedorenko (2020) believe that the degree of integration of internally displaced persons is a cumulative indicator of socio-economic, socio-psychological, cultural-communicative and socio-political elements. The main criteria of integration, in their opinion, are lack of motivation to return to the previous place of residence, high overall level of community trust, employment (availability of jobs), housing security and overall housing satisfaction, high level of current financial status, informal communication with community representatives, identity with the local population, great hardship. Mitchneck et al. (2009) propose a more generalised approach to this problem, namely, to study the level of integration in two dimensions - personal and in terms of establishing links with the social environment.

An interesting approach is proposed by Titar (2016), which is to assess the level of integration of IDPs by the following criteria: access to public services, means of survival, mechanisms of property compensation, availability of employment and income generation opportunities. The author also proposes some indicators to assess the success of integration, such as the number of conflicts and the strength of tensions between IDPs and the community, the socio-demographic and economic well-being of displaced persons, and the percentage of IDPs who have resettled again. However, these indicators do not cover all aspects of social integration of IDPs and raise some doubts about the possibility of using generalised and partial indicators simultaneously.

Kudelia et al. (2018) have developed a comprehensive IDP Integration Index that measures integration opportunities by sub-indices such as access to urban infrastructure,

capacity of city authorities, and interaction. In our view, this approach is somewhat narrow and does not consider integration in other important aspects, such as cultural integration.

Two approaches to recognising the success of IDP integration proposed by Slobodian (2019) are also worthy of attention. According to the first approach, the integration of IDPs is considered successful when long-term solutions are achieved in the main aspects of integration (protection and security, living conditions, issues related to housing, land, and property, access to livelihoods, documentation, participation in community life). According to the second approach, integration is deemed successful or unsuccessful based on the results of comparing the situation of IDPs with the local population (e.g., by income).

Somewhat different from the publications already discussed are those that propose to measure the level of integration by the gap in the so-called “subjective well-being” of IDPs and the local population. Perelli-Harris et al. (2023), when defining “subjective well-being”, focus on a measure of overall life satisfaction.

Scientific discussions on the problem of internal displacement largely concern the study of the consequences of such displacement for the host community, which can be negative (increased burden on local budgets, the need to amend community development plans, and the burden on the labour market (Aysa-Lastra, 2011; Ivlevs & Veliziotis, 2018; Khymynets & Holovka, 2022; Schuettler & Caron, 2020) and positive (an additional resource for community development, including through the integration of IDP entrepreneurs), including through the integration of IDP entrepreneurs (Almohammad et al, 2021; De Luna et al., 2016; Kachkar & Djafri, 2022; Khymynets & Holovka, 2022; Přívara, 2020).

Local authorities have a leading role in promoting the social integration of IDPs. It is they who should direct their efforts to stimulate social responsibility of both local stakeholders of territorial development and internally displaced persons. Important aspects of this responsibility include the responsibility of various media, which can form both a positive and negative image of IDPs, presenting them as victims or as a threat (Amores et al., 2019). Therefore, cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organisations is key to the successful integration of IDPs into the community and avoiding their rejection (Shaposhnykova & Prystai, 2024).

Today, there is no doubt about the need to assess the social integration of IDPs. However, there is currently no unified methodological toolkit for such an assessment. Such a methodology for assessing the integration of IDPs into communities should be based on the ideas of social justice, respect for rights, and the use of such opportunities at a level not lower than that of permanent residents (Roshchuk et al., 2024).

In general, the analysis has shown that most authors focus on the problems and consequences of integration for IDPs themselves, as well as opportunities to improve their social protection. Unfortunately, the issue of direct assessment of the criteria that can be used to measure the success of IDP integration, the extent to which they have equal rights and opportunities with the local population and feel they belong to the new community, remains insufficiently studied.

Our study aims to assess and compare the social integration of IDPs in Ukraine, based on their self-assessment and the assessment of host community residents.

2. Materials and methods

The method of data collection for the purposes of the study was a sociological survey:

- the sample of the host community population includes 850 Ukrainian citizens aged 18 and over;
- the IDP sample includes 514 people aged 18 and over.

Both samples included citizens of all oblasts, except for the temporarily occupied territories of Crimea, Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson oblasts. The sample is quota, stratified, representative of the region of residence, type of settlement, age and gender of respondents.

The *population sample* was calculated according to the statistical data of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine as of 01.01.2022, as more recent data were not published during the war. Sample representativeness error: with a confidence interval of 0.95 does not exceed for indicators close to: 50% - 3.36%; 25% and 75% - 2.91%; 10% and 90% - 2.02%; 5% and 95% - 1.47%; 1% and 99% - 0.67%.

The *sample of internally displaced persons* is calculated according to the data provided in the IOM report for October 2023 (IOM, 2023). Sample representativeness error: with a confidence interval of 0.95 does not exceed for indicators close to: 50% - 4.32%; 25% and 75% - 3.74%; 10% and 90% - 2.59%; 5% and 95% - 1.88%; 1% and 99% - 0.86%.

The responses of the target group respondents were obtained using the CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interview) method with the use of street interviews.

The study was conducted between 24 June and 23 July 2024.

The analysis was conducted in the sequence of addressing the following research tasks:

RT1: Determine general perceptions of integration and assess integration levels according to specific criteria, comparing the evaluations of IDPs and the local population;

For generalized evaluations of integration, a response scale was used: “completely,” “partially,” and “not at all.”

Average values for each integration criterion were calculated based on predefined criteria (Roshchuk et al., 2024): (1) economic, (2) political and religious, (3) integration in community life, (4) socio-psychological, (5) cultural and sports integration. In total, 21 factors within these five groups were evaluated by respondents using the following scale: 1 point – integration below the level of local residents; 2 points – integration at the level of local residents; 3 points – IDPs demonstrate initiative in new communities exceeding the efforts of local residents.

The comparison of the views of the two target groups on the current state of IDP integration was based on the premise that successful integration corresponds to a score of 2 points, indicating the establishment of long-term connections, low risks of conflicts, and the formation of long-term mutual benefits from the full integration of new residents (e.g., for the labour market, demographic reproduction, etc.).

RT2: Identify and prioritise obstacles to successful integration based on IDP evaluations;

RT3: Cluster integration factors to identify successful areas and the most significant gaps, as assessed by IDPs.

The tasks were accomplished using IBM SPSS Statistics 20 software. A significance level of $\alpha=0.05$ was adopted for the study. Pearson chi-square test of independence was employed to examine the significance of responses of two groups. Cohen w was used as the effect size measure to test goodness-of-fit in evaluating results within RQ2. To interpret the results the following scale of w -Cohen's was used: $0.00 < 0.10$ - negligible effect; $0.10 < 0.30$ - small; $0.30 < 0.50$ - medium; 0.50 or more - large (Cohen, 1988, p.227).

3. Conducting research and results

As part of addressing *RT1*, the following results were obtained, evaluating the differences in perceptions of integration levels among different groups of respondents.

The ability of the host community to create favourable conditions for the adaptation and integration of IDPs, to effectively engage the human potential of IDPs who can become a “community development resource” can become one of the main competitive advantages of specific territorial communities and a driver of their progressive development.

Comparison of assessments of the level of integration of IDPs by the population (Fig. 1a) and IDPs themselves (Fig. 1b) reveals certain contradictions.

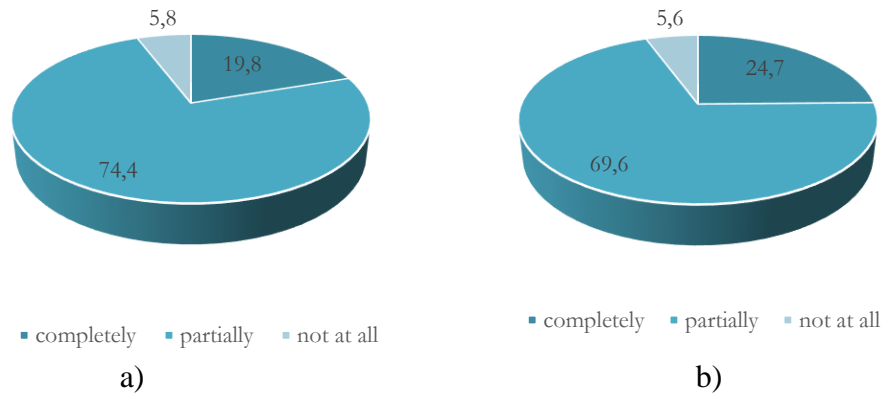


Figure 1. Assessment of the level of integration of IDPs (a - population estimates, b – IDPs’ estimates)

Source: *own research*

Thus, the difference between the number of respondents in host communities who consider the integration of IDPs to be partially successful and IDPs’ self-assessment of such integration is 4.8%. At the same time, 4.9% more IDP respondents believe that they have fully integrated into host communities (compared to the assessment of full integration by the population). At the same time, respondents’ answers about unsuccessful integration into host communities have similar indicators and amount to 5.8% for the population and 5.6% for IDPs’ self-assessment.

Pearson’s chi-square test indicated high significance of responses in both groups ($p < \alpha$, $p = 0.0000$ in each group). Therefore, the data were used for further analysis.

Comparing regional estimates (Fig. 2), there are no significant disproportions in the responses of respondents belonging to the IDP category and the population of host communities. Thus, among IDPs, the largest share of people who have fully integrated into the new environment lives in the western regions of Ukraine (27.8%). Among the population of host communities, residents of the central regions of Ukraine declare full integration.



Figure 2. Assessment of the level of integration of IDPs by regions of Ukraine (a - population estimates, b – IDPs' estimates)

Source: *own research*

There are also no significant disproportions in the self-assessment of integration of IDPs with different levels of education (Fig. 3). Thus, among those without higher education, 26.3% of respondents report full integration into host communities. In contrast, the level of full integration of IDPs with higher education is 22.9%.

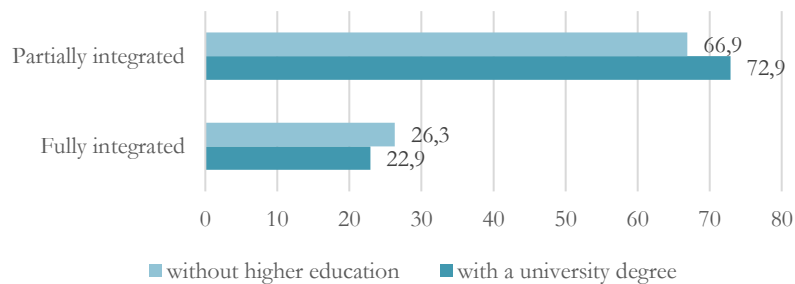


Figure 3. Self-assessment of the level of integration of IDPs depending on their education, %
Source: *own research*

The analysis of gender aspects of IDPs' integration (Fig.4) has led to the conclusion that there are no significant deviations in the assessment of the level of integration among female respondents - 21.6% of female IDPs consider themselves fully integrated into host communities, 23.3% of the population in the communities believe that female IDPs are fully integrated. As for men, there is a discrepancy in assessments - 28.4 percent of male IDPs consider themselves fully integrated, but only 15.4 percent of the population in host communities share this opinion.

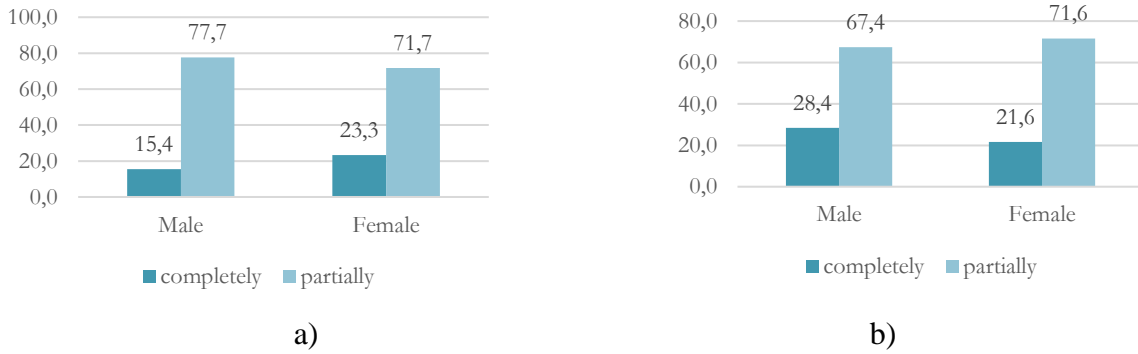


Figure 4. Assessment of the level of integration of IDPs by the population of different genders, % (a - population's assessment, b - IDPs' assessment)

Source: own research

There is a difference in assessments of IDP integration depending on the size of the territorial community (Fig.5). For example, 18.6% of the population of large regional centres assess the integration of IDPs as successful, while among IDPs living in such communities, the integration assessment is 23.1%.

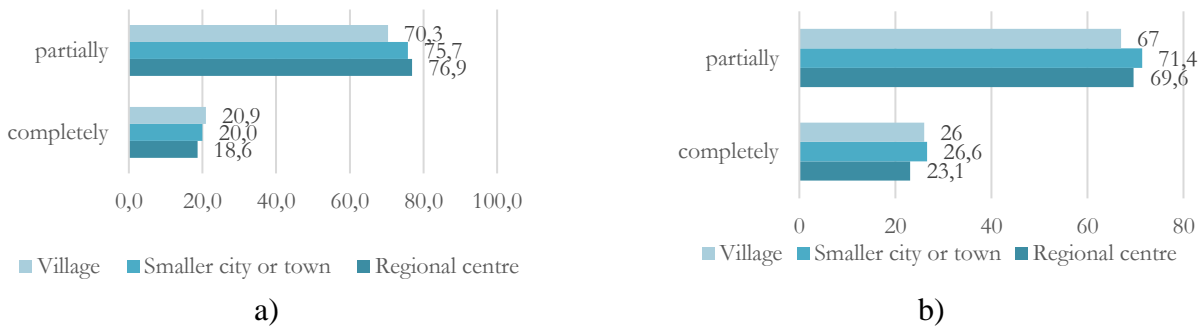


Figure 5. Assessment of the level of integration of IDPs depending on their place of residence, % (a - population estimates, b – IDPs' estimates)

Source: own research

An analysis of the age-specific features of IDP integration (Fig.6) revealed that the largest share of fully integrated IDPs is young (63.2%). Among older persons (60 years and older), 24.8% are fully integrated. The most difficult to integrate into host communities are persons aged 50 to 59 years.

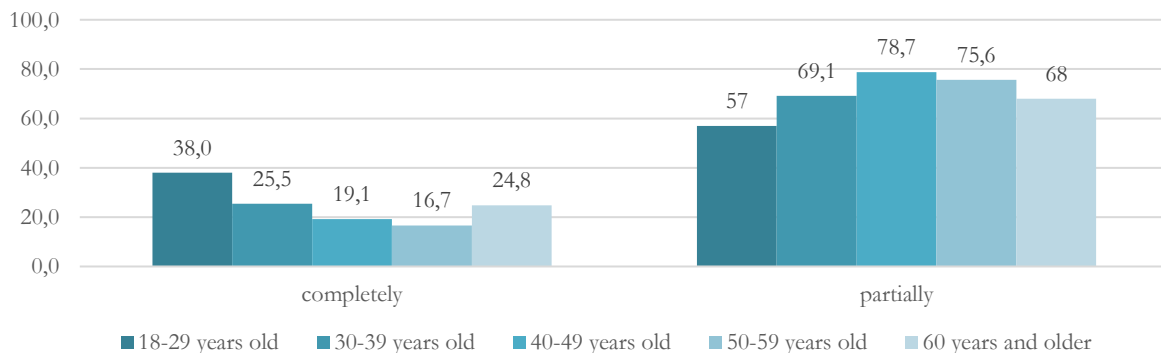


Figure 6. Self-assessment of the level of integration of IDPs of different ages, %

Source: own research

To assess the level of integration of IDPs into territorial communities, respondents were asked to answer a series of questions divided into 5 “blocks” that affect the degree of social integration of IDPs and their social well-being: political and religious integration, economic integration, integration into cultural and sports initiatives of the community, integration into community life and socio-psychological integration. When formulating questions for individual categories, the dimensions of IDPs’ integration were considered in terms of the socio-cultural approach and the resource approach.

Economic integration includes indicators of IDPs’ material well-being, housing and security needs, labour force participation, etc.

Political and religious integration reflects the need for IDPs to participate in the political life of the community, in the development, adoption, and implementation of decisions in the community.

Integration into community cultural and sporting initiatives includes the need for IDPs to be accepted and culturally identified with members of the host community.

Integration into community life includes the need to create and build community social capital as a resource for IDPs.

Each of the components that form the blocks of questions allows us to determine the systemic impact on the degree of integration of IDPs, which is reflected in the level of social well-being.

For 4 of the 6 proposed components of economic integration (Table 1), IDPs reported a higher level of integration than the host community population. However, assuming that the score of 2.0 is the indicator of full integration (at the level of the host community population), only 3 criteria of economic integration can be identified that exceed this value: employment (search for work and ways to earn income), compliance with labour and tax legislation. When assessing the level of entrepreneurial activity (including relocation of business to the host community), respondents with IDP status identified their activity in this area as lower than the population of the host community. The scores for the components of participation in grant and project activities were also lower. The population of host communities did not identify any criterion of economic integration that would indicate the full integration of IDPs.

In general, according to the proposed components of the economic criterion, the average assessment of the level of integration of IDPs and host community residents is almost identical but remains insufficient, which may indicate partial economic integration.

Table 1. Comparative assessment by the criterion of economic integration

Components of the criterion	IDPs	Population
1.1. Active job search and other legal ways to generate income	2.09	1.92
1.2. Adherence to labour law (as employees and as employers)	2.12	1.98
1.3. Entrepreneurial activities (including relocated businesses)	1.33	1.73
1.4. Compliance with tax legislation	2.17	1.89
1.5. Participation in grant and project activities for local community development and/or personal business	1.43	1.72
1.6. Income in line with knowledge and skills	1.87	1.85
Average score	1.84	1.85

* in colour grey – level below typical for local residents (2,0); in colour blue – the most critical values

Source: own research

According to the criterion for political and religious integration (Table 2), IDPs' self-assessment generally exceeds that of the population but is still within the range of lower activity levels than that of the host community. Nevertheless, one component of this criterion, which characterises a tolerant attitude to religion, is rated higher by IDPs than by host community residents. However, IDPs identified a low level of decision-making activity at the local level compared to the host community population.

Table 2. Comparative assessment by the criterion of political and religious integration

Components of the criterion	IDPs	Population
2.1. Monitoring political events at the community level; participation in discussions and debates	1.80	1.76
2.2 Tolerant attitude toward representatives of different religions	2.24	1.95
2.3. Involvement in decision-making at the local level, including in community budget matters	1.47	1.59
Average score	1.84	1.77

* in colour grey – level below typical for local residents (2,0); in colour blue – the most critical values

Source: own research

A comparison of the average scores for the criterion of participation in community life (Table 3) shows similar attitudes among both IDPs and the population of host communities. However, there is still a differentiation in the components of the criterion. Thus, IDPs assess their degree of integration lower than the corresponding assessment of the population of host communities in terms of participation in human rights initiatives, public control, activities of NGOs, etc. On the other hand, IDPs assess their activity in civic initiatives for improvement, environmental protection, and individual social responsibility with a slightly higher score than the population of host communities.

Among the components of the criterion for participation in community life that IDPs themselves define as having a high level of integration are support for the Armed Forces and opposition to russian aggression: here, IDPs assess their level of integration as 2.18 points.

Table 3. Comparative assessment by the criterion of participation in community life

Components of the criterion	IDPs	Population
3.1. Participation in human rights initiatives, protection of personal rights, and the rights of local residents	1.52	1.73
3.2. Advocacy for community interests, participation in public oversight, etc.	1.50	1.59
3.3. Participation in the activities of public organisations (including those addressing IDP issues) and charitable activities	1.54	1.75
3.4. Support for the Armed Forces and countering russian aggression in available forms	2.18	1.98
3.5. Participation in local initiatives related to territorial development	1.62	1.61
3.6. Participation in environmental protection activities	1.62	1.55
3.7. Refusal to consume certain goods and services for political or environmental reasons	1.92	1.70
Average score	1.70	1.70

* in colour grey – level below typical for local residents (2,0); in colour blue – the most critical values

Source: own research

When assessing the components by the criterion for social and psychological integration, (Table 4) IDPs identified their level of activity in all three components as higher than that of the host community population.

Table 4. Comparative assessment by the criterion of social and psychological integration

Components of the criterion	IDPs	Population
4.1 Respect and absence of conflicts concerning local residents	2.34	1.93
4.2. Respect from local residents	2.22	1.98
4.3. Desire to establish friendly relations with local residents	2.29	2.04
Average score	2.28	1.98

* in colour grey – level below typical for local residents (2,0)

Source: own research

IDPs' self-assessment of participation in community cultural and sports initiatives (Table 5) is somewhat higher than that of the population but still does not exceed the level of activity of local residents in both criteria.

Table 5. Comparative assessment by the criterion of participation in community cultural and sports initiatives

Components of the criterion	IDPs	Population
5.1. Participation in cultural events in the community	1.76	1.74
5.2. Support for initiatives promoting a healthy lifestyle and sports	1.75	1.72
Average score	1.76	1.73

* in colour grey – level below typical for local residents (2,0)

Source: own research

Goodness-of-fit based on w-Cohen's were used for each of the component of social integration on both groups. They were calculated for the Pearson's chi-square, considering that $\alpha = 0.05$ and $df = 1$. Comparing the empirical (Table 6) and critical value of Pearson's chi-square (3.841) it is possible to conclude that the data are reliable for findings about social integration level indicated in tables 1-5. Besides, for the most of components (despite 1.4 and 1.5 for IDPs and 1.5 and 3.7 for population) effect size calculated by w-Cohen's can be evaluated as medium and large. No one component can be ignored, as even in the four cases highlighted in grey, the effect was small but not negligible.

Table 6. Chi-Square and w-Cohen's values for components of social integration in two groups of respondents

Component*	IDPs		Population	
	Chi-Square	w-Cohen's	Chi-Square	w-Cohen's
1.1	68.763	0.366	459.655	0.732
1.2	53.611	0.323	255.273	0.545
1.3	102.918	0.447	104.895	0.350
1.4	38.132	0.272	149.375	0.417
1.5	24.405	0.218	61.655	0.268
1.6	159.136	0.556	157.837	0.429
2.1	292.887	0.755	312.732	0.604
2.2	433.432	0.918	275.287	0.566
2.3	121.595	0.486	157.837	0.429
3.1	99.370	0.440	209.529	0.494
3.2	87.440	0.412	195.921	0.478
3.3	102.918	0.447	248.769	0.538
3.4	401.004	0.883	273.026	0.564
3.5	156.918	0.553	310.322	0.601
3.6	115.829	0.475	136.322	0.399
3.7	206.763	0.634	28.364	0.182
4.1	502.070	0.988	574.364	0.818
4.2	498.125	0.984	504.620	0.767
4.3	502.070	0.988	594.168	0.832
5.1	177.440	0.588	300.774	0.592
5.2	141.829	0.525	231.837	0.520

* - according to the numbering in tables 1 – 5;
in colour grey – small effect.

Source: own research

In general, the comparison of IDPs' and the population's assessments of the 5 criteria corresponds to the overall assessment of integration into host communities (Fig.7). Thus, the activity of IDPs that exceeds the indicators of the host community population is observed only in terms of social and psychological integration.

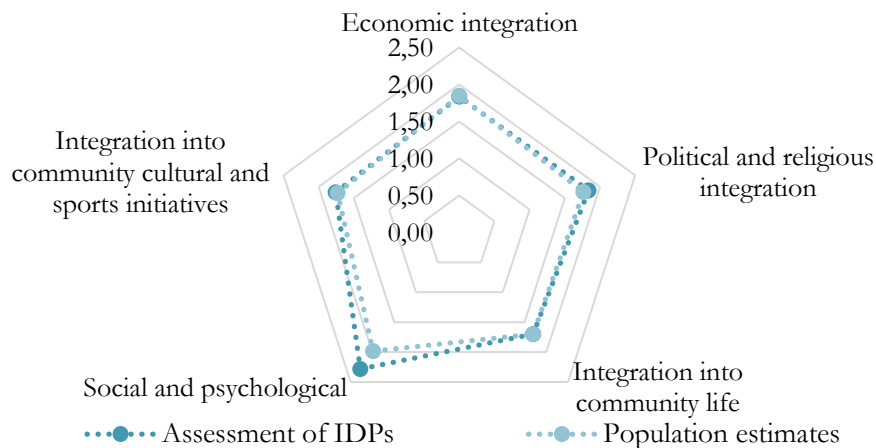


Figure 7. Assessment of social integration of IDPs by criteria

Source: own research

However, if the overall score for both the population and IDPs exceeds the indicator corresponding to activity at the level of local community residents, the overall average for the integration criteria is still lower. It indicates no systemic impact on the degree of IDP integration.

To address *RT2*, responses from IDPs who consider themselves fully integrated into the host communities were grouped. This approach was used to obtain the most objective perspective on the obstacles, focusing on individuals who genuinely strive for long-term connections. Consequently, their responses are free from negative subjective judgements and biases toward the host community. The results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Components of integration assessed by IDPs as insufficient, %

Components of participation in community development	% of GDPs, who identify the component as insufficiently satisfied
Participation in grant and project activities for local community development and/or personal business	65.3
Entrepreneurial activity (including relocated businesses)	60.0
Involvement in decision-making at the local level, including in community budget matters	55.9
Advocacy for community interests, participation in public oversight, etc.	53.1
Participation in the activities of public organisations (including those addressing IDP issues) and charitable initiatives	52.6
Participation in human rights initiatives, protection of personal rights, and the rights of local residents	51.5

Source: *own research*

The results indicate that the top three obstacles in the ranking of barriers to achieving full integration are primarily related to opportunities to participate in project activities aimed at community development, support for business activities, and involvement in decision-making concerning the local budget.

Similar issues are evident in the areas of participation in human rights initiatives and public oversight, which 51,5% and 53,1% of respondents, respectively, identified as insufficient. Another significant barrier highlighting the distance between IDPs and the local population in community development is the low participation in public organisations, charitable projects, or other forms of social activity.

These barriers may reflect both institutional influences and the shortcomings of integration policies, as well as subjective factors such as a lack of time due to the priority of resolving personal and household issues. Nevertheless, the presented data point to significant challenges in integrating IDPs into host communities. Considering that only factors identified by more than 50% of respondents were included in the ranking of obstacles, it can be concluded that these issues are indeed widespread and critical for IDPs. This is especially true for economic activity, participation in grant initiatives, community governance, and human rights advocacy. The findings highlight the inadequacy of existing support mechanisms for IDP integration and the need to foster and develop positive practices.

In addressing *RT3*, a cluster analysis of integration criteria was considered using IBM SPSS Statistics 20, specifically applying Ward's method.

The dendrogram of the IDP integration factor into local communities is presented in Figure 8, with the factor labels corresponding to those listed in Tables 1-5.

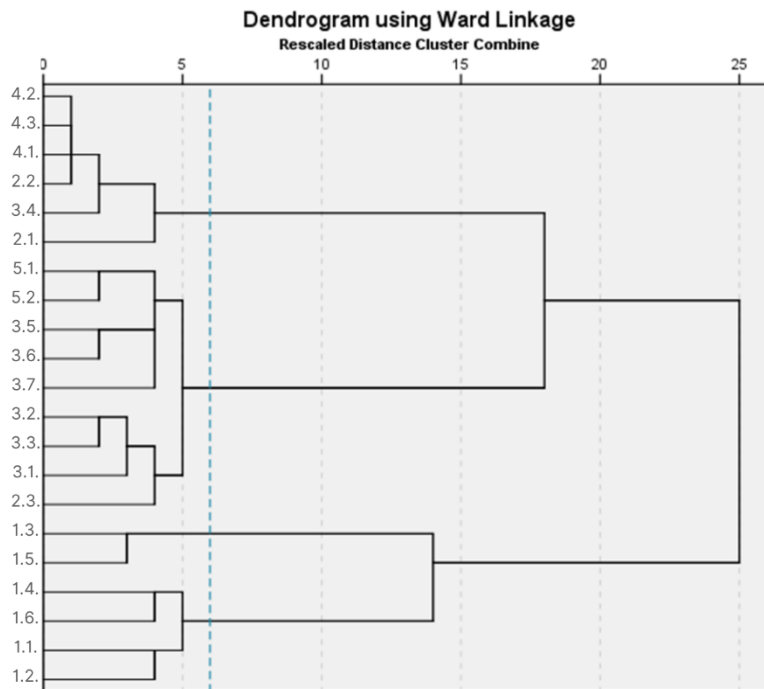


Figure 8. Dendrogram of IDP integration factors into local communities
Source: *own research*

The analysis identified four clusters, with their detailed characteristics provided in Table 8.

Cluster 1 represents a group of factors indicating successful integration, with an average score of 2.18 within the cluster. A gradual decline in integration scores down to Cluster 3 highlights the areas requiring the most attention. Specifically, the average score in this cluster is 1.38.

Cluster 1 includes six components related to socio-psychological, political, and religious integration and integration into community life. High self-assessment of tolerance toward individuals of different faiths and a willingness to establish friendly relationships demonstrate the potential for harmonious coexistence.

Cluster 2 consists of nine components embracing community life integration, political and religious integration, and socio-psychological integration. Limited participation of IDPs in cultural events, sports initiatives, and charitable activities underscores challenges in building connections in these areas. Particular attention is drawn to low scores related to human rights activities, public oversight, and participation in local initiatives. While overall socio-psychological integration appears relatively high, the low scores in this cluster suggest that IDPs remain relatively detached from public life. The most critical issue in this cluster remains participation in decision-making regarding community development.

Table 8. Components of Clusters and Criterion Values

Cluster No.	Components of Integration Criteria	IDP self-assessment	Mean
1	4.1. Respect and absence of conflicts concerning local residents	2.34	2.18
	4.2. Respect from local residents	2.22	
	4.3. Desire to establish friendly relations with local residents	2.29	
	2.1. Monitoring political events at the community level; participation in discussions and debates	1.80	
	2.2. Tolerant attitude toward representatives of different religions	2.24	
	3.4. Support of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and resistance to russian aggression in available forms	2.18	
	5.1. Participation in cultural events in the community	1.76	
2	5.2. Support for initiatives promoting a healthy lifestyle and sport	1.75	1.64
	3.1. Participation in human rights initiatives, protection of personal rights, and the rights of local residents	1.52	
	3.2. Advocacy for community interests, participation in public oversight, etc.	1.50	
	3.3. Participation in the activities of public organisations (including those addressing IDP issues) and charitable activities	1.54	
	2.3. Involvement in decision-making at the local level, including in community budget matters	1.47	
	3.5. Participation in local initiatives related to territorial development	1.62	
	3.6. Participation in environmental protection activities	1.62	
3	3.7. Refusal to consume certain goods and services for political or environmental reasons	1.92	1.38
	1.3. Entrepreneurial activity (including relocated businesses)	1.33	
4	1.5. Participation in grant and project activities for local community development and/or personal business	1.43	2.06
	1.1. Active job search and other legal ways to generate income	2.09	
	1.2. Adherence to labour laws (as employees and employers)	2.12	
	1.4. Compliance with tax legislation	2.17	
	1.6. Income in line with knowledge and skills	1.87	

Source: *own research*

Cluster 3 includes only two indicators of the economic integration criterion. Combining these data with the previous analysis of respondents' answers, it is evident that while the overall economic integration of IDPs is quite high, there is a significant shortcoming in the form of a low level of entrepreneurial activity and initiative in community development projects. These factors cause the overall low level of integration within this cluster.

Cluster 4 also combines components of the economic integration criterion, but it focuses on job searching, income generation and social responsibility in taxation issues. The positive effect is achieved due to individual success and motivation to earn an income. Besides, there is a high responsibility to adhere to tax legislation, positively impacting the overall low level of integration within this cluster of factors.

Conclusion

The process of social integration of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine requires a detailed study in view of rapid demographic changes and the need to deter the population from further migration, which in the case of external migration is often irreversible. Our study offers a new perspective on the assessment of integration in terms of such key aspects as economic, social and psychological, civic, political, and cultural integration. The methodology was tested by means of a sociological survey at the national level. The results give grounds to conclude that IDPs demonstrate a relatively high level of adaptation in the economic sphere, in particular through employment and participation in the economic processes of host communities. However, political integration, religious activity, participation community life, and socio-psychological integration remain insufficient. At the same time, a significant difference in the perception of its level by IDPs and host communities was found in many criteria of integration, which also indicates the presence of social distance and insufficient awareness of integration issues. Particular attention is drawn to the data on the limited participation of IDPs in local governing and community life, which increases the isolation of this group.

The results obtained can be used for the purposes of continuous monitoring of the social integration of IDPs to develop policies and programmes to strengthen the interaction between the local population and IDPs, in particular, by enhancing intercultural communication, improving mechanisms for including IDPs in community development processes, and enhancing the development and use of their human capital. This will help reduce social tensions in the identified areas of insufficient integration, contributing to the sustainable development of communities.

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