

City of Lviv

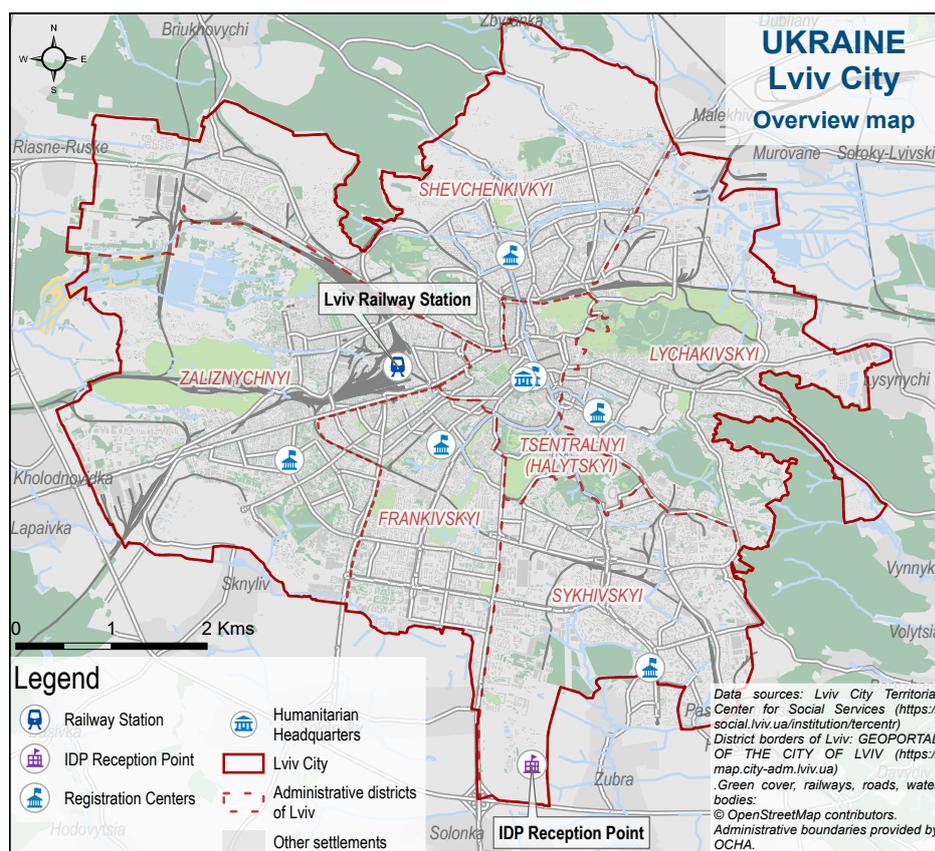
Context and methodology

Since the escalation of the Ukrainian conflict on Thursday 24 February 2022, a large number of people have been displaced from conflict affected areas leading to both refugee flows into neighboring countries and build-up of internally displaced people (IDPs) in western and central oblasts within Ukraine. Lvivska oblast is currently receiving the highest IDP inflows, both due to its relatively safer western location and the proximity of border crossing points with neighboring countries.

As of March 11th, Oblast-level authorities have reported the arrival of approximately 400,000 IDPs in Lviv Oblast, whereas the Oblast had an estimated population of around 2.5 million people prior to the conflict. To respond to the needs of IDPs, a large number of humanitarian actors are in the process of establishing presence in Western Ukraine, and familiarizing with existing national and local-level structures of coordination with the objective of supporting the relief effort.

This brief aims to provide background on the current processes through which arriving IDPs are provided with assistance upon arrival in Lviv, based on information collected through secondary data review (SDR) as well as Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) conducted with local volunteers, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGO).

Map 1 : IDP registration centers and reception point in Lviv



Arrival of IDPs and registration process

Arrival in Lviv

IDPs from conflict-affected areas are arriving to Lviv either by trains or other means of transport (ex. public transport, personal cars, etc.). Most IDPs come from Donetsk, Luhanska, Kharkivska, Sumska, Chernihivska, Kyivska oblasts and Kyiv and Kherson cities. Most of the IDPs arriving in Lvivska oblast are women and children, as well as older persons. Arriving men are asked to come to enlistment offices and get registered. Volunteers meet IDPs near the Main Railway Station in Lviv.

As of March 11th 2022, the Lvivska oblast civil-military administration reports that approximately 400,000 IDPs are currently in Lviv oblast. Among them, 135,000 have formally registered with local authorities for shelter assistance. Lvivska Oblast receives 30 trains per day, with close to 25-30,000 IDPs arriving on daily basis.

The estimation of the overall number of IDPs in Lviv is complex due to the rapidly evolving displacement situation, and the fact that IDPs who are not in immediate need of support to identify temporary accommodation are much less likely to be registered. Observation shows that a significant proportion of IDPs arriving in Lviv are hosted directly with family and friends, or rent apartments through their own means.

Access to information upon arrival

Upon arrival at the train station, volunteers provide IDPs with information on shelter possibilities, registration points and transport logistics. In some case, volunteers are directly affiliated with civil-military coordination and can relay the official messaging regarding available assistance and the registration process. However, such information may also be provided by volunteers coming from loosely coordinated grassroots networks, including religious groups, and therefore may not always reflect official messaging.

Registration

There is currently no central national IDP registration system in Ukraine. As such, the registration process and the process of estimating overall number of IDPs established within the Oblast are left to the discretion of Oblast authorities.

In Lviv, IDPs who need immediate assistance are able to register at 6 specially established registration centers (see above Map 1). Additionally, there is a reception point, where assistance and temporary housing for IDPs are coordinated. Volunteers and local authorities often provide transport from the railway station to the reception point for IDPs in the

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most vulnerable situations (women, children, people with disabilities). IDPs have the possibility to register and stay up to 72 hours there, waiting for housing.

Within the current assistance structure, it appears that assistance provided to IDPs is closely associated with the registration process, and therefore it may be difficult for unregistered IDPs to obtain immediate assistance. Moreover, information about registration is largely provided upon arrival at train stations, so IDPs arriving through other means may not be aware of the registration process or the location of reception points within the city.

Availability of services and housing upon arrival

A humanitarian coordination headquarter has been established in Lviv and currently centralizes donations of humanitarian assistance while coordinating the dispatch of such assistance across Ukraine more widely and across the various communal shelters where incoming IDPs are offered temporary shelter. Recently humanitarian headquarters were also opened in oblast raions (see Map 2).

Upon arrival in Lviv, IDPs can access a variety of services to meet their immediate emergency needs. Among such services, Oblast authorities have set up a center for medical and psychological help for IDPs arriving at the railway station and in need of urgent care. In addition, together with State

Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU), Oblast administration set up 80 heating points and 80 points for food distribution.

Communal shelters

Humanitarian headquarters and registration centers also support with the referral of IDPs to communal shelters (both temporarily and permanently). Currently, IDPs are hosted in hostels, sanatoriums and boarding houses. Other temporary shelters include repurposed municipality buildings, like schools, industrial platforms, kindergartens, libraries, theatres etc. The Mayor of Lviv reported that 440 cultural and educational institutions. In addition, the premises of 85 religious organizations in Lviv are used to provide shelter to IDPs on temporarily basis. For IDPs staying in Oblast collective centres, local authorities and volunteers provide basic necessities directly at the centers (ex. clothes) and food items at those sites.

According to humanitarian KIs, there is currently confusion among humanitarian actors regarding the location of such centers, which is hampering efforts to reach IDPs with information about additional, and more specific, types of assistance available to them, or to conduct further comprehensive assessments regarding the situation of people in need. This is compounded by questions regarding how to best provide support for unregistered IDPs.

Reported Humanitarian Situation

Displaced people

- Most IDPs come from conflict affected regions of the country: Donetsk, Luhanska, Kharkivska, Sumka, Chernihivska, Kyivska oblasts and Kyiv and Kherson cities.
- Since the conflict escalated, Lviv Oblast administration has registered 400,000 IDPs. In Lviv, more than 200,000 IDPs has registered by the city council.

Access to Basic Services

- Disrupted access to education services, and to transportation and/or fuel supply are reported as general concerns in the area.
- Other concerns include a lack of medicine, cash, and food.

Shelter

- Among the types of housing available to IDPs in the area are: collective centers, free accommodation with family and friends or with volunteers, and rented accommodation, as apartments/rooms in hostel.
- In total, premises of about 500 cultural and educational institutions and more than 100 religious organizations used to provide shelter for IDPs.

Information needs

- Reported lack of information on free housing or availability of rented housing for families.
- Information on the situation at borders points to EU countries (for example, places where you can safely cross the border, crossing points that are less crowded, how to get there) is also insufficient.

Needs of IDPS

- Insufficient cooking facilities, child safe spaces, and sanitary/hygiene items are reported in collective centers.
- Additionally, provision of psychosocial supports and legal services are reported as lacking in collective centers.

Other concerns in the area

- A key issue in finding rental housing due to the increase in the price of rent. Besides, KIs report cases of fraud surrounding housing arrangements
- There are reported difficulties with operational capacities in railway due to the large daily flows of IDPs.
- Air raid alerts are also reported as a source of concern.

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Map 2: Humanitarian headquarters in Lvivska Oblast

