

UKRAINE

IDP pathways to employment in Vinnytsia

IDP profiling
in urban areas

July 2026

Cover photo: Presentation of the study and expert workshop «IDP pathways to employment in Vinnytsia». Vinnytsia, 2026 © IMPACT Initiatives

About REACH

REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED, and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research – Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT). REACH aims to strengthen the capacity of humanitarian actors to make evidence-based decisions through the effective collection, management, and analysis of data before, during, and after emergencies. In this way, REACH contributes to providing communities affected by emergencies with the support they need. All REACH activities are conducted in support of, and within the framework of, inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. All REACH resources are available on the resource centre: <https://www.impact-initiatives.org/resource-centre/>. Further information is available on our [website](#).

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Summary

Introduction:

Most internally displaced persons (IDPs) have been living in Vinnytsia for about four to five years. Despite this, their employment levels remain lower than they were before they moved, and some of those who were previously employed have not returned to work. This suggests that for some IDPs, job loss caused by war and displacement has become not just a temporary challenge but a long-term problem, the effects of which are still felt today.

Since employment is one of the key factors in economic self-sufficiency and integration into community life, it is important to understand what exactly is preventing people from returning to work and which factors, conversely, contribute to successful employment. The findings of the study show that the difficulties faced by IDPs in finding employment cannot be explained by isolated barriers or by the labour market situation alone. These difficulties arise from the interplay of many factors — childcare, financial constraints, a mismatch between skills and labour market requirements, psychological factors and limited labour market flexibility. At the same time, employment alone does not necessarily translate into successful economic integration. This highlights the need for a comprehensive approach to supporting IDPs that focuses not only on facilitating access to employment but also on creating the conditions necessary for achieving economic self-reliance and well-being.

The findings are intended to help develop more targeted solutions and support programmes aimed at expanding employment opportunities and strengthening the economic integration of internally displaced persons.

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This study was implemented in collaboration with the Coordination Council on IDPs in the Vinnytsia Municipal Territorial Community, to whom we are sincerely grateful for their openness to cooperation, support and assistance.



Key findings and conclusions

1. **A substantial share of IDPs in Vinnytsia have still not regained the employment they lost after forced displacement: nearly one-third of those who were employed before the full-scale invasion had not returned to the labour market after relocating.** Although most respondents have lived in Vinnytsia for approximately four years, their employment levels remain below those observed before displacement. Overall, the share of employed respondents declined from 77% before displacement to 62% at the time of the survey, while a considerable 24% had still not re-entered the labour market. This suggests that, for some IDPs, job loss resulting from the war and displacement has become not merely a short-term consequence of relocation but a long-term challenge.
2. **The persistent employment gap compared with pre-war levels reflects the interplay of many interrelated factors rather than a single obstacle** — ranging from care responsibilities and financial constraints to a mismatch between skills and labour market requirements, psychological factors and limited labour market flexibility. The following findings illustrate how each of these factors affects IDPs' ability to return to work.
3. **Women with children, particularly mothers of preschool-aged children, were the group most at risk of losing employment after displacement, with caregiving emerging as one of the main barriers to returning to work.** Women were substantially more likely than men to report being unemployed (32% vs. 11%) and to bear primary responsibility for the daily care of children, older people, or persons with disabilities (52% vs. 21%). Among respondents who had been employed before displacement but stopped working afterwards, families with children were more common (70% vs. 59%), while the share of households with a youngest child under the age of five was more than twice as high (29% vs. 12%).

At the same time, those who cared for children did not always express a willingness to return to work. Nearly one-third (32%) of non-working parents who identified childcare responsibilities as the reason for not working reported that they would not seek employment even if appropriate conditions were available.

For parents who did want to work, however, the findings indicate that the main challenge was not access to childcare facilities themselves, but rather finding jobs compatible with caregiving responsibilities. Most respondents reported difficulties in finding employment with working hours that could be combined with childcare (78%), while a further 25% were unable to find jobs located close to a kindergarten or other childcare facility. By contrast, barriers directly related to childcare infrastructure were mentioned less frequently: 13% reported that childcare facilities were located too far away, while only 3% cited a lack of available places, unaffordable costs, or enrolment requirements.

Interviews also revealed practical difficulties in accessing existing public support mechanisms. In particular, despite IDPs' entitlement to priority enrolment, some children remained on waiting lists for extended periods due to a shortage of available kindergarten places. In addition, the eligibility criteria of the Municipal Nanny programme did not always allow families in need of such support to benefit from it.

- 4. For a substantial proportion of IDPs seeking to return to work, flexible working arrangements and remote or hybrid work are key prerequisites for employment.** Nearly half (44%) of unemployed respondents reported that they could work only if flexible working hours were available. A further 39% would consider only hybrid work arrangements, while 11% would accept exclusively remote work. These needs were even more pronounced among respondents combining job search with caregiving responsibilities: 60% required flexible working hours, while 61% would consider only hybrid or remote work. At the same time, the majority of employers in Ukraine (93%) offer jobs requiring physical presence in the workplace. This suggests a mismatch between the working conditions required by many unemployed IDPs and those currently prevailing in the labour market. Expanding the availability of flexible forms of work organisation may therefore be an important step towards improving labour market participation among this group of IDPs.
- 5. Although experts described Vinnytsia's labour market as experiencing labour shortages primarily in skilled trades and certain service occupations, IDPs with vocational education and previous experience in service and skilled trades occupations were more likely to be among those who had been employed before displacement but did not regain employment afterwards.** Among respondents who did not regain employment after displacement, 39% had completed vocational education (compared with 26% among those who remained employed), 34% had previously worked in service and administrative occupations (compared with 19%), and 14% had worked in skilled trades occupations (compared with 9%). In contrast, respondents who remained employed after displacement were considerably more likely to have completed higher education (63% versus 33%) and to have previously worked in professional occupations (48% versus 28%), including accountants, lawyers, software developers, psychologists and teachers. This discrepancy suggests that differences in employment outcomes across these occupational groups cannot be explained solely by the structure of the local labour market. While one possible explanation for the better employment outcomes among professional occupations is that their competencies may be more transferable across related fields of work¹, this does not explain why IDPs with vocational education and previous experience in skilled trades and service occupations were less likely to regain employment after displacement, despite experts reporting labour shortages in these fields. These findings suggest that labour shortages alone do not explain differences in employment outcomes and that additional barriers affecting vocationally trained IDPs warrant further investigation.
- 6. IDPs' psychological well-being may affect both their job search and their ability to remain employed. As a result, some specialists view psychological support as a necessary first step in the support process, even before the job search begins.** In particular, 33% of unemployed IDPs reported that they were not looking for work because they did not want to or were not planning to seek employment. According to some specialists, in certain cases, this may reflect the long-term consequences of forced displacement, including the loss of familiar surroundings,

¹Individuals in certain professional occupations, which typically require higher education, may possess more transferable competencies—knowledge and skills that can be applied across related fields of work, different occupations, sectors of the economy and work contexts, potentially facilitating occupational mobility and faster re-employment following job loss.

professional networks, and confidence in one's own abilities. This is echoed in the accounts of IDPs themselves: even after finding employment, feelings of insecurity may persist due to career interruptions and the need to rebuild one's professional life in a new environment. Specialists also described cases in which IDPs left their jobs after only a few weeks because of difficulties adapting or conflicts in the workplace, suggesting that psychological well-being may also influence job retention. At the same time, available free psychological support is primarily focused on addressing war-related trauma, while challenges specifically associated with adapting to a new place of residence and the loss of self-confidence following forced displacement remain less addressed.

7. **Regaining employment after displacement did not necessarily mean restoring pre-displacement income.** Although most IDPs who found work did not report a substantial decline in the professional level of their jobs (only 12% stated that their current position was considerably below their qualifications), for many, income remained lower than before displacement. Overall, 60% of employed respondents reported that their income had declined following forced displacement, with 27% reporting a substantial decrease. This is reflected in household financial well-being: half of all respondents reported a monthly income of less than UAH 10,000 per household member. Under these circumstances, rent meant a financial burden for 63% of respondents, while the discontinuation of IDP housing assistance further increased this pressure. As a result, 80% of respondents had been forced to cut back on expenses or find additional sources of money during the previous three months, and 16% had resorted to loans or credit. These findings suggest that employment alone does not necessarily mean overcoming the financial consequences of forced displacement.
8. **Despite demand for professional development, only a small proportion of IDPs participate in vocational training and employment support programmes.** Nearly half of the respondents (47%) reported a need to acquire new knowledge and skills to find a job or improve career prospects. However, awareness of available vocational training programmes in Vinnytsia remained lower than the demand for new skills: only 25% of respondents were aware of retraining programmes and 20% of professional development courses, while just 4% and 1%, respectively, had participated in them. Interviews suggest that, even when IDPs are aware of available programmes and are willing to participate, a range of practical barriers often limit participation. According to both IDPs and service providers, these barriers include the need, in some programmes, to forgo income during training in the absence of stipends; a limited range of training options that does not always match labour market needs or participants' professional interests; low expectations of increased earnings following programme completion; courses being delivered during standard working hours; and formal eligibility criteria that prevented some IDPs from participating. Overall, the findings indicate that many IDPs recognise the importance of professional development for expanding their employment opportunities and demonstrate a demand for acquiring new knowledge and skills. At the same time, translating this demand into participation may be hindered by a range of practical barriers.
9. **Most of the IDPs surveyed see their future in Vinnytsia, and their lower employment levels are unlikely to be explained by the temporary nature of their stay in the city.** More than half of the respondents (57%) plan to stay in Vinnytsia. A further 34% are undecided about their

future place of residence; however, interviews suggest that for many of them this reflects the impossibility of making long-term plans amid housing and security uncertainties, rather than an actual intention to move away. Only 10% of respondents plan to leave the city. At the same time, the results of a nationwide labour market survey show that 15% of employers cited frequent changes of residence as the main barrier to hiring IDPs, whilst 21% of employers planning to recruit staff did not indicate a willingness to hire IDPs. This may suggest that some employers continue to view IDPs as temporary workers. Conversely, unemployed IDPs were no more likely to plan to leave Vinnytsia. This suggests that the lower employment levels among IDPs are unlikely to be explained by the temporary nature of their stay in Vinnytsia, and that the issue of their employment should be viewed as a long-term challenge for the community.

Expert workshop: discussion findings

To discuss the research findings, an expert workshop was held in Vinnytsia on 22 July 2026. The workshop brought together approximately 25 representatives of local self-government bodies, state institutions, and civil society and charitable organisations working in the fields of social protection, employment, and support for IDPs.

Participants noted that the research findings largely reflect the key challenges faced by IDPs during job search and adapting to a new economic environment. During the discussion, experts also highlighted several factors that, in their view, are particularly important for long-term economic integration, including the quality of employment, the accessibility of support services, and coordination between IDPs, employers, and service providers.

The key conclusions from the discussion are presented below. A summary of the workshop participants' outputs, including proposed solutions, responsible actors, and potential implementation challenges, is provided in Annex 2.

Why does employment not always lead to economic integration?

According to participants, the gap between employment and actual economic self-sufficiency among IDPs is explained by a combination of several factors. First and foremost, experts pointed to the mismatch between wage levels and the real cost of living in Vinnytsia, in particular the cost of housing rental.

According to participants, social benefits can in some cases be comparable to the minimum wage, which means formal employment does not always noticeably improve a person's financial situation. This may particularly affect mothers with children, who may lose certain types of support when they take up employment.

Another factor was the difficulty of running a business: although some IDPs may wish to start their own business, adapting to a new market and the complexity of organisational processes can hinder the development of entrepreneurial activity and create risks of some IDPs shifting into informal employment.

Participants emphasised that economic integration depends not only on the fact of employment itself, but also on the quality of that employment: income stability, the extent to which actual working conditions meet employees' expectations, and the ability to combine work with other life circumstances.

Why do existing support mechanisms not always reach IDPs?

Unlike other barriers, which participants discussed within separate thematic sessions, the issue of access to existing support mechanisms was raised by participants at various stages of the workshop, from the general discussion to the development of solutions. Among the main reasons, participants cited IDPs' insufficient awareness of available programmes, prior negative experiences interacting with certain institutions, and a gap between expectations of assistance and the support they are actually able to receive.

Participants partly attributed this problem to the fragmentation of the support system. A person often has to search for each service separately: psychological support, career guidance, employment assistance. In the process, a person may lose access to necessary support due to the complexity of interaction between different institutions.

For this reason, several thematic groups independently raised the idea of a single point of entry – for example, a hotline or community case managers – that would assess a person's needs and then direct them to relevant specialists.

Which groups of IDPs may require additional attention?

Experts also drew attention to specific groups of IDPs who may need additional support due to specific barriers to employment and economic integration. In particular, this concerned IDPs with disabilities and households with family members who require ongoing support or care. According to experts, these groups may face limited access to services, insufficient awareness of available support opportunities, and difficulties adapting to a new environment.

Participants emphasised the importance of developing accessible social services, in particular services supporting families with children and people with disabilities, as well as introducing additional incentives for employers who hire people from various vulnerable categories.

Why is staff turnover among professionals supporting IDPs a concern, and how can it be addressed?

In addition to barriers directly related to the employment and support of IDPs, the workshop also raised the issue of the capacity of the institutions that provide such support. In particular, experts emphasised the need to retain the workforce capacity of organisations working with vulnerable population groups.

Amid the general shortage of staff, the loss of experienced and highly committed professionals is especially critical. Along with other challenges, constant contact with clients' difficult life circumstances increases the risk of secondary traumatisation, emotional exhaustion, and professional burnout for such workers. The loss of such workers means not only a further deepening of the staff shortage, but also the loss of institutional memory and expertise accumulated over years, which reduces institutions' capacity to provide quality support. It is therefore important to implement systemic measures for psychological support, and the prevention of professional burnout.

Which solutions do participants consider priorities?

In each thematic group, participants proposed their own options for solutions to overcome the barriers discussed, and then jointly identified which of them they considered priorities. For the most part, this was not about creating new separate programmes, but about strengthening and better coordinating already existing support mechanisms.

Among the proposed solutions, participants highlighted, in particular, the development of comprehensive support for IDPs during their job search (needs assessment, referral to relevant specialists, case management), strengthening career guidance and improving the alignment between training and employers' needs, and supporting employers in creating inclusive workplaces and overcoming biases toward certain categories of workers.

Separately, participants emphasised that stable employment depends not only on getting a job, but also on the availability of conditions that allow a person to keep it. Among such solutions, for example, were compensating employers for the cost of housing rental for IDP employees, programmes promoting flexible work arrangements, developing childcare and care services for people with disabilities, and strengthening psychological support during the job search and after employment.

List of Acronyms

FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
IDP:	Internally Displaced Person
KII:	Key Informant Interview
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation

METHODOLOGY

The study is based on a mixed-methods approach: a quantitative, structured survey of 400 IDPs living in Vinnytsia, as well as a qualitative component consisting of 15 in-depth interviews with IDPs, 7 interviews with specialists in the field of retraining and education, as well as 1 focus group discussion and 1 interview with specialists in employment and career support. This approach combines the perspectives of IDPs themselves with the practical experience of professionals working in employment support and professional adaptation. It not only helps identify the barriers people face when seeking employment but also provides a better understanding of which approaches and support measures facilitate employment, as well as when existing support mechanisms fall short of achieving the intended outcomes.

It is important to note that all results presented in the report based on the IDP survey are indicative of the 400 working-age (18–59 years) IDPs surveyed and their households and should not be interpreted as statistically representative of all IDPs in Vinnytsia. All data reflect the situation as of April 2026.²

FINDINGS

Displacement history

Three-quarters of the IDPs surveyed (75%) moved to Vinnytsia during the first two years of the full-scale invasion — in 2022–2023 — and had been living in the city for at least three years at the time of the survey.

The most common factor in favour of Vinnytsia compared with other potential safe destinations was the presence of relatives or acquaintances in the city — this was cited by 55% of respondents. For 20% of respondents, the choice of Vinnytsia was not linked to any specific advantages of the city and was rather random in nature, whilst employment opportunities or a specific job offer proved decisive for 13%³.

At the same time, the interview findings suggest that, although the presence of relatives or acquaintances was often the reason for choosing Vinnytsia, these connections were frequently merely formal or circumstantial and did not always provide substantial support after the move. In some cases, these were distant acquaintances, one-off contacts or people who were no longer living in the city at the time of the move. For some respondents, such connections served more as a pretext or an

² For further details on the methodology, see Appendix 1, “Research Methodology”

³ These findings are consistent with data from the [IOM DTM monitoring](#): an improvement in the security situation (45%) and proximity to family and friends (24%) are the main factors influencing the choice of destination for IDPs at the national level.

opportunity to choose Vinnytsia rather than as a decisive factor of support. Sometimes the decision to move to the city was described as a coincidence:

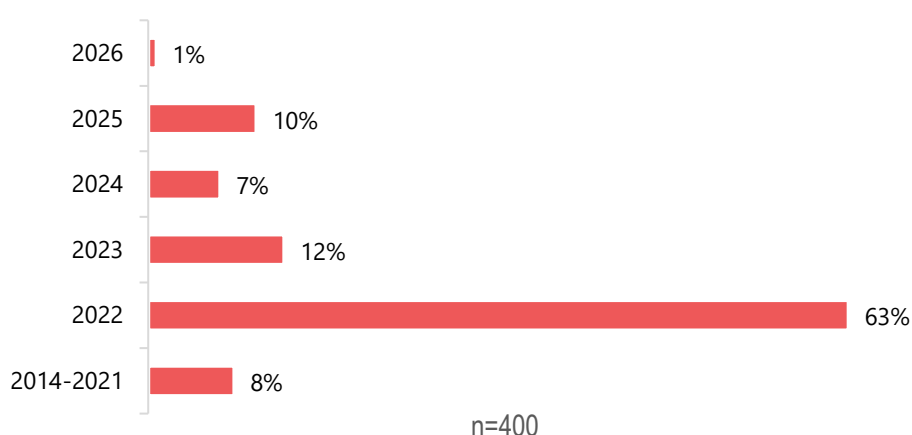
"I can't say I was very selective. [...] Someone I knew said, "Do you want to go to Vinnytsia for work?" [...] — "Of course." — 'Can you make it to Vinnytsia?' — "Of course." So off we went".

— Valentyn, 59⁴

"We ended up here quite by chance; we found ourselves in Vinnytsia [...] We received a phone call telling us that accommodation had been found here — if you'd like, come along. [...] I adore this city — it's my city of strength".

— Kateryna, 54

Figure 1. The year of arrival of IDP respondents in Vinnytsia



It is also worth noting that, for some of the interviewees, Vinnytsia was not their first place of residence following their forced displacement. Some respondents had already experienced one or more successive relocations before arriving in the city; consequently, Vinnytsia was often not the initial point of evacuation, but rather a place for subsequent settlement and adaptation.

At the same time, the interviews indicate that, for some IDPs, social ties in the city were already formed after the move. The interviews show that associations and initiatives set up by displaced people played an important role in this, enabling them to maintain contact with people from their home regions and restore a lost sense of community.

Family composition⁵

Children and care responsibilities within the family. Children live in 58% of households.⁶ Among households with children, 30% have a youngest child of pre-school age (up to and including 5 years old),

⁴ The names and ages of the respondents have been changed. The ages given are close to the original ones.

⁵ As the survey sample was selected using quotas based on gender and age, these characteristics are not presented in the section on family composition as survey results. The gender and age distribution of the IDPs surveyed is provided in Appendix 1, "Research Methodology".

⁶ A household is a single person or a group of people who live together, manage their daily lives jointly and can partially or fully share their resources (income and expenditure).

in 43% the youngest child is of primary school age (6–11 years old), and in 26% the youngest child is a teenager (12–17 years old).

Overall, 42% of respondents stated that they bear the main responsibility for the regular daily care of children, older people or people with disabilities. However, such responsibilities are more often carried out by women: 52% of women reported this, compared with just 21% of men. This may create additional barriers to employment for women who continue to be primarily responsible for care after displacement. These caregiving responsibilities have important implications for labour market participation, discussed later in the report.

Other categories of family members. More than a quarter (27%) of households include people with disabilities or those with long-term illnesses who require care from others. By comparison, this figure is twice as low among the non-displaced population — 13%⁷. This may indicate a higher level of vulnerability among IDP households and a greater prevalence of additional care and support needs compared with the non-displaced population, which, in turn, may contribute to lower employment levels among IDPs.

Furthermore, 14% of respondents reported that their household included former or active military personnel: 8% stated that veterans lived with them, and 6% said that their household included active military personnel.

Current situation with employment

More than half of the respondents (56%) were in employment at the time of the survey, 25% were not working, 9% were self-employed or ran their own business, and 8% were studying⁸. Among those in employment, the majority worked directly in Vinnytsia — either on-site or in a hybrid arrangement (80%). A further 14% work remotely for an employer based in another region or abroad, which may indicate that some IDPs have maintained employment links outside the city. Full-time employment (35+ hours per week) is the predominant form, accounting for 84% of those in employment, whilst part-time employment accounts for 11%.

Employment figures varied depending on the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. Among women, the proportion of unemployed was higher than among men: 32% versus 11%. More details on the links between gender, family circumstances and employment are covered in the section “Reasons for unemployment”.

Employment status also varied by age (Figure 2). All respondents who reported that they were studying belonged to the 18–35 age group, in which students accounted for 21% of those surveyed. Although the overall proportion of those in employment among respondents aged 51–59 is considerably lower than among those aged 36–50 (62% versus 75%), this is not accompanied by a much higher proportion of unemployed people: in these groups, the difference is only 4 percentage points (hereinafter ‘p.p.’)⁹ (28% and 24% respectively). By contrast, respondents of pre-retirement age were more likely to have

⁷ The figure of 13% was calculated based on open data from the [REACH Ukraine Multi-Sector Needs Assessment \(MSNA\) 2025](#), collected in July–August 2025 (n = 2,813). To ensure better comparability, the calculation included only households where the respondent was aged 18–59, in line with the selection criteria for this study. It should be noted that the MSNA data are aggregated at the national level; therefore, the comparisons provided should be regarded as indicative.

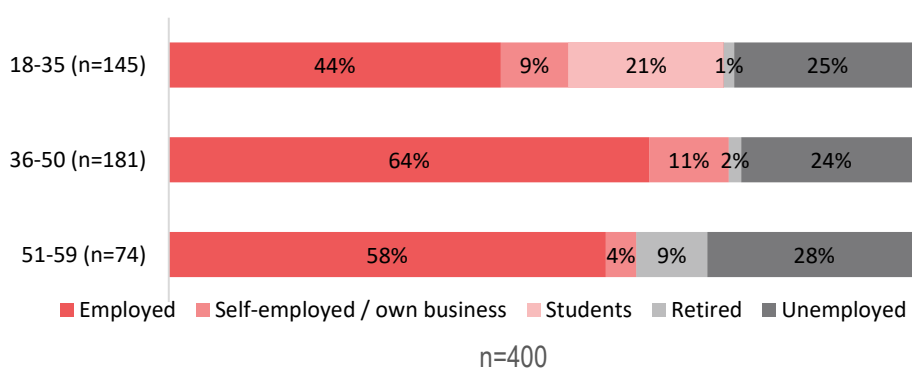
⁸ According to [IOM data \(‘Resilience at Work’, October 2025\)](#), 50% of working-age IDPs were employed (compared with 59% among non-displaced people). The proportion of self-employed people stood at 7% versus 12% respectively. According to the [IOM’s ‘Oblast Profiles’ \(GPS Round 22, January 2026\)](#), 17% of IDP households in Vinnytska Oblast had at least one unemployed person of working age (compared with 6% among the region’s total population).

⁹ Percentage points — the arithmetic difference between two percentages.

already retired (9%) and were also considerably more likely to have a disability. This suggests that the lower employment level observed in this age group may be partly associated with respondents' health status. Therefore, these findings should not be interpreted solely as evidence of labour market barriers related to age, such as ageism or a mismatch between workers' skills and job requirements. They may also reflect respondents' ability to work given their health condition and the availability of appropriate working conditions or accommodations. At the same time, these findings describe all respondents regardless of their employment status prior to displacement. The following sections focus specifically on IDPs who were employed before displacement, allowing for an assessment of how age is associated with job loss after relocation.

Having a job does not always mean there are no difficulties. Although 42% of employed respondents did not report any work-related challenges, the majority (58%) did report at least one challenge they had faced following employment. Figure 3 illustrates the most common of these.

Figure 2. Employment of IDPs by age group



The most reported challenges were physically demanding or exhausting work and overtime (26% each), as well as the lack of paid sick leave or annual leave (15%). In addition, 13% of employed respondents reported working multiple jobs simultaneously. However, the interviews suggest that this practice may be somewhat more common than the survey results indicate. Some respondents mentioned additional jobs or side work only during the course of longer conversations rather than in response to direct questions about employment. In some cases, they did not perceive informal work as a separate job or did not initially think to mention it.

For internally displaced people, the need to combine multiple sources of employment may be particularly relevant due to the additional financial burden of renting accommodation. Unlike the local population, IDPs are more likely to rent housing and less likely to rely on support from relatives, increasing financial pressure and creating a greater need for supplementary sources of income. One respondent described the exhaustion associated with juggling several jobs:

"Sometimes I get really tired, especially when I have to work at night. Then I come home, have to go volunteering, and then there's my own [main] job as well... Of course, I would like to find one job, a single job—with a decent salary".

— Hanna, 38

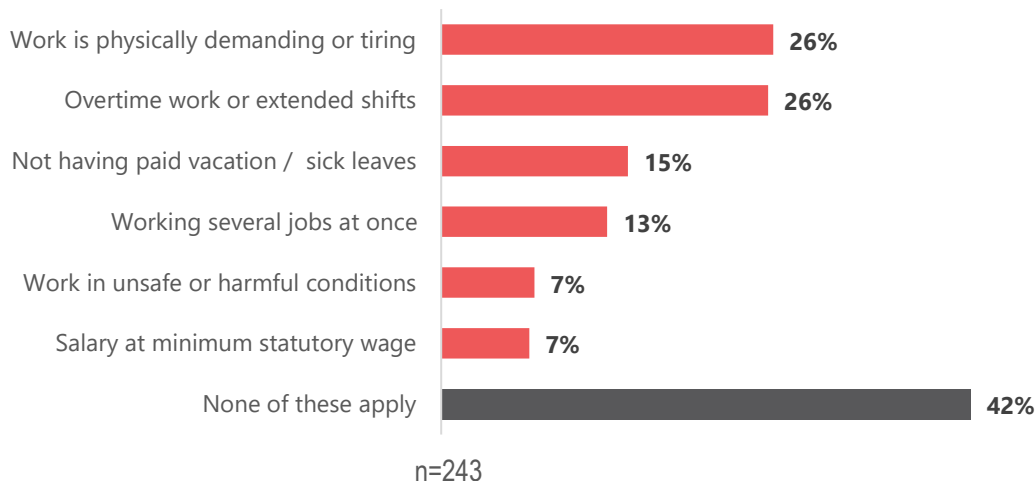
At the same time, formal employment did not always provide a sense of stability. Respondents, particularly those working in the civil society sector, often described their employment as insecure due

to fixed-term contracts, the risk of redundancy, and dependence on a particular employer or donor funding.

Despite these challenges, most employed respondents (77%) reported being satisfied with their job, while around one in five (22%) expressed dissatisfaction. This suggests that job satisfaction is not determined solely by working conditions.

Figure 3. Top 7 challenges in the workplace among employed IDPs

*The question allowed for multiple answers



Respondents more often associated job satisfaction with having a sense of purpose, opportunities for professional development, and positive relationships with colleagues. One participant, who switched from running her own business before displacement to working for a civil society organisation on a minimum-wage salary, described her experience as follows:

“Well, now that I’m working for the civil society organisation, I actually like it more. Because here I feel that I’m helping people. Back there [before forced displacement], it was just business—I sold people a bun or a loaf of bread. Here, I understand that I’m giving much more”.

“I think that’s probably one of the reasons I stayed. The team is wonderful—you feel like you’re at home, and that’s incredibly important, especially in the situation we’ve found ourselves in—that feeling of home”.

— Maryna, 32

Financial situation

Employment, including self-employment, was the main source of income for most respondents. Other commonly reported sources of income included IDP assistance payments, support from family and friends, pensions, state social assistance, savings, humanitarian aid, and loans and credit (Figure 4).

Despite respondents having several sources of income, household welfare remains rather low: half (52%) of respondents reported a monthly income less than 10,000 UAH per household member¹⁰, of which 16% earn less than 5,000 UAH.

Housing costs represented a substantial additional burden. 63% of respondents described rent as a significant or very significant financial strain, while only 5% did not pay for housing at all. One participant

¹⁰ The total household income divided by all its members.

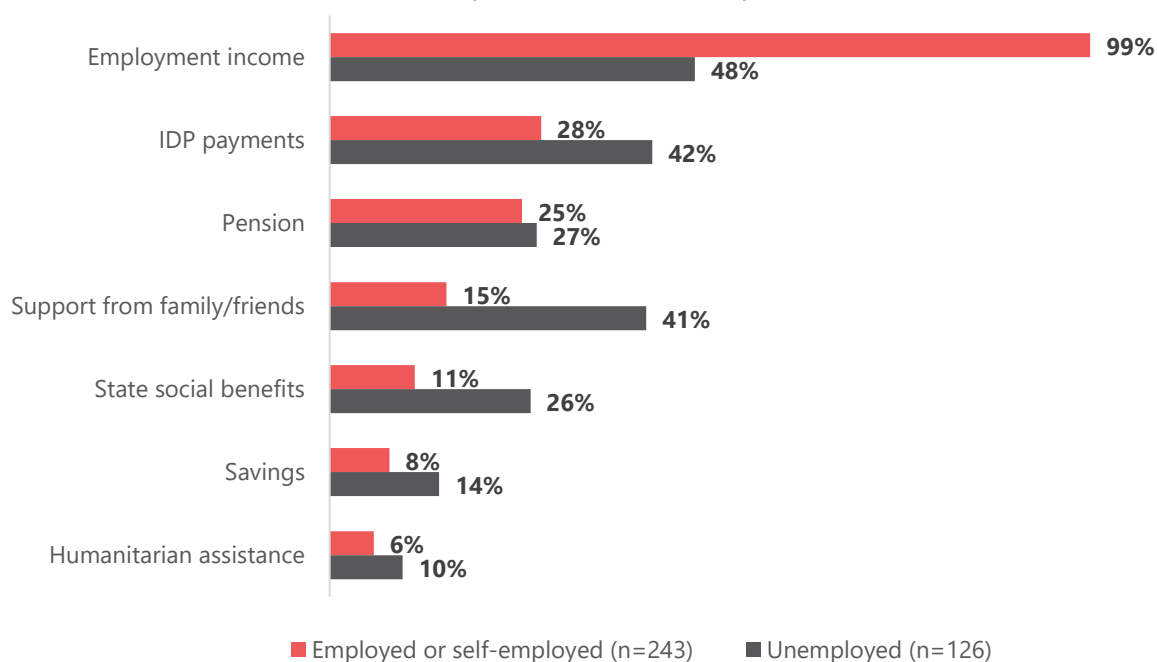
described a situation in which rent consumed a disproportionately large share of the household budget, and any rent increase made financial planning even more difficult:

“Every time the landlady comes, she raises the rent by one or two thousand hryvnias, every time. We keep asking her to let us stay for at least another six months. [...] I don’t know whether we’ll be able to stay in Vinnytsia”.

— Daryna, 45

Figure 4. Top 7 sources of income for IDP respondents, broken down by employment status

*The question allowed for multiple answers



For some respondents, IDP payments were an important source of funds for paying for accommodation. The discontinuation of these payments was linked to an increased financial burden associated with renting.

“The IDP payments have been cancelled. They tell everyone who’s working: “You should have adapted by now.” What does “adapt” mean? Have we adapted to the point of being able to buy our own flat? If only we had enough just to pay the rent. That’s our whole “adaptation.”

— Maksym, 58

“Although when the IDP support was available, it really helped with paying the rent. We could afford, shall we say, to buy ourselves some clothes and shoes. Now we can no longer afford that.”

— Iryna, 55

(a) Sources of income among unemployed respondents

The income structure of unemployed respondents reflected greater financial vulnerability. Although employment income remained the primary source of household income for 37% of unemployed respondents, this most likely reflected the employment of other household members rather than the

respondents themselves. Other most reported primary sources of income in this group were support from family and friends (27%), pensions (11%), and IDP assistance payments (9%).

One respondent, who lives in a dormitory for displaced people and does not have formal employment, describes her sources of income as follows:

“Most of the time, my relatives help me. The apartment I used to live in is under occupation and is being rented out, and my family keeps finding different ways to send me the money from that apartment. [...] At the beginning, I could still get some buckwheat, some cereal, or a voucher here and there, but now I don't receive any assistance at all”.

— Olena, 29

(b) Sources of income by age

Younger respondents were considerably more likely to receive support from family and friends, while older respondents more often combined employment income with pensions and social benefits. Among respondents aged 18–35, 36% reported receiving support from family and friends, which may reflect both lower levels of financial independence and greater access to family support. By contrast, respondents aged 51–59 had the most diversified income structure: alongside employment income (69%), pensions (41%), IDP assistance payments (38%), and state social assistance (20%) also played an important role.

(c) Sources of income by household type

Households that included a person with a disability were more likely than other households to receive pensions, IDP assistance, and state social assistance. Among these households, 50% received pensions, 48% received IDP assistance payments, and 35% received state social assistance. Similarly, households in which women had primary caregiving responsibilities for children were more likely to receive IDP assistance (47%), support from family and friends (33%), and pensions (34%). This may indicate that these households have a greater reliance on formal social assistance and informal support networks.

(d) Expenditures and cost-saving

Due to a lack of funds, most families had to cut back on spending; moreover, there was little difference between employed and unemployed respondents in this regard. During the three months preceding the survey, 80% of respondents reported having to cut back on or postpone certain expenses or find additional funds.

The most common ways of saving money were cutting back on food expenditure and postponing medical appointments or treatment costs (Figure 5).

Among all respondents, 16% resorted to loans or credit due to a lack of funds. Notably, this was more common among employed respondents (19%) than among those who were unemployed (10%), possibly because having a regular income makes it easier to count on repayment and makes credit a more accessible option, whereas for the unemployed, it may be a less realistic tool.

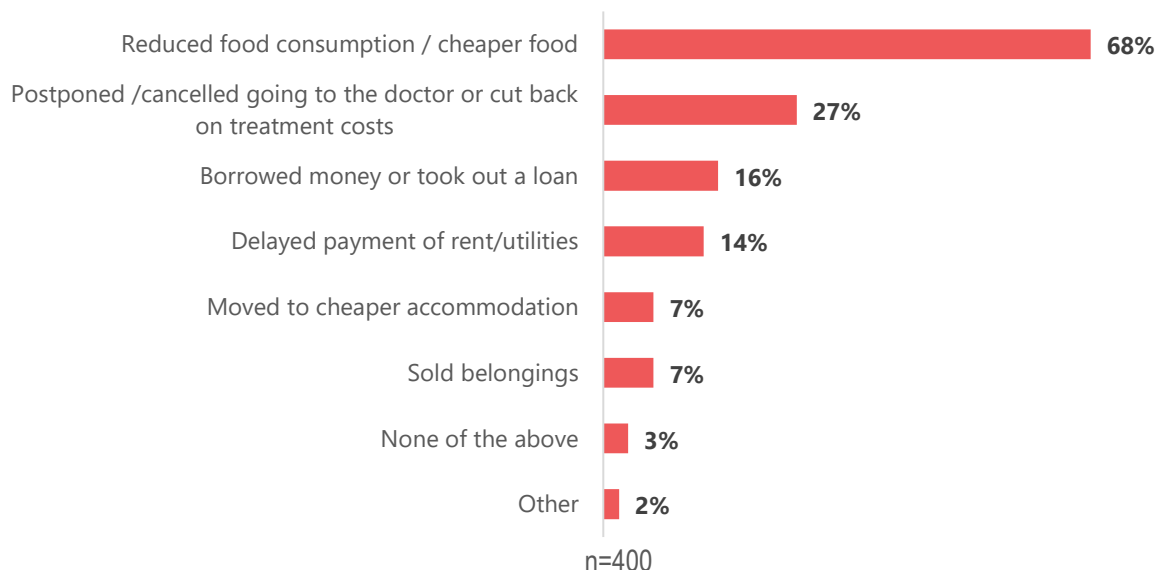
For some respondents, loans and credit cards have become a routine way of covering monthly financial shortfalls:

“Credit cards sometimes help us get through the month when we run short of money—they’re constantly in use”.

— Yana, 44

Figure 5. Measures taken by IDP respondents due to a lack of funds

*The question allowed for multiple answers



Some respondents also described accumulating debt as a consequence of the substantial costs associated with displacement:

“Right now, we only have enough for food. I have huge debts because of the move and all the related expenses. Relocating costs an enormous amount of money. There are so many things you have to buy straight away, plus the cost of transporting your belongings”.

These examples suggest that indebtedness deserves greater attention when assessing the financial situation of internally displaced people. Loans and debts accumulated during or as a result of displacement may continue to place a financial burden even on respondents who had already secured employment by the time of the survey.

Employment after displacement

(a) Changes in employment status

After displacement, some of the respondents who worked before relocation were able to find work again, whilst others never returned to the labour market.

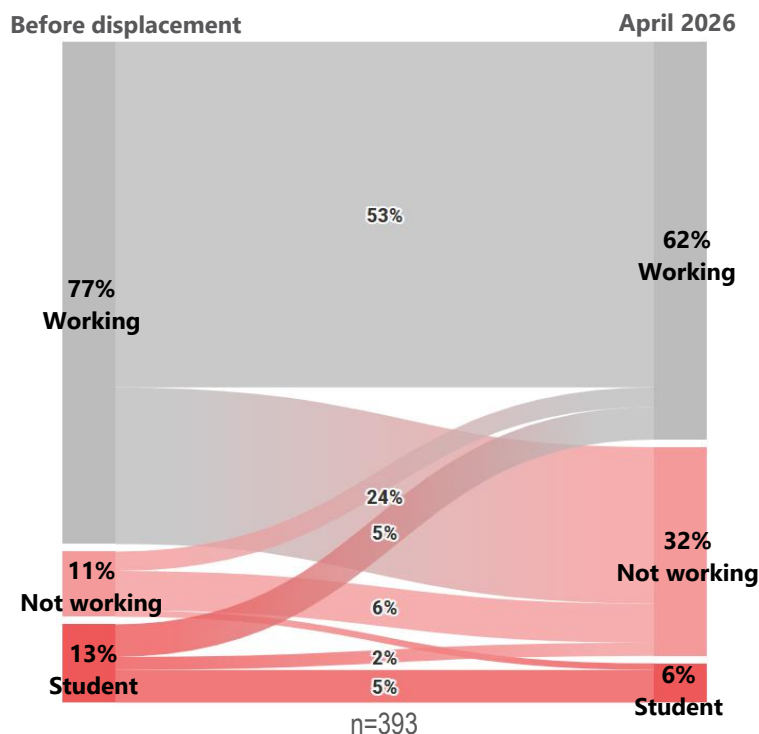
Figure 6 illustrates the main employment trajectories of respondents from the period before the forced displacement up to the time of the survey. Among respondents who were employed before the outbreak of the war, 53% continued to work after relocating to Vinnytsia, whilst 24% became unemployed¹¹.

¹¹ The sample of unemployed people also included those in occasional (irregular) short-term employment. All the analytical material relating to unemployed respondents refers specifically to this sub-sample of people.

Overall, the proportion of respondents engaged in work fell from 77% prior to the forced displacement to 62% at the time of the survey.

Moving forward, this section examines changes in the employment status and incomes of respondents who continued to work after relocation, whilst the reasons for job loss are analysed in the following section.

Figure 6. Employment trajectories: before forced displacement and at the time of the survey (April 2026)



(b) Alignment of work with knowledge and skills

Although a forced displacement was often accompanied by a change of job or professional field, such changes were not necessarily perceived by respondents as a career setback. Among respondents who were employed both before and after displacement, two-thirds (66%) stated that the level of their work generally matched their knowledge and skills, whilst 22% felt that they were working in a role that was slightly below their qualifications (Figure 7). Only 12% reported a substantial mismatch between the level of their work and their own knowledge and skills.

Respondents who felt that the level of their work was somewhat or well below their knowledge and skills (34%) were somewhat more likely to move from professional and specialist roles to service and administrative¹² professions. Although 40% of this group had worked in professional and technical roles before displacement, this figure fell to 30% after relocation, whilst the proportion in service and administrative roles rose from 28% to 43%.

¹² Employment categories are classified in accordance with the Ukrainian Classification of Occupations (DK 003:2010). For simplicity, professionals and specialists (code CP 2–3) have been grouped; at the same time, workers in the service and trade sectors, technical staff, as well as some non-manual elementary workers (code CP 4–5, and, partially, CP 9), have been provisionally grouped into the category of service and administrative professions.

These results may indicate that, for most respondents who were able to find employment after displacement, the transition to a new labour market was not accompanied by a substantial reduction in the level of their qualifications. However, the issue of matching professional experience, education and skills to the requirements of the local labour market was likely to be more pressing for those IDPs who were unable to find employment after displacement.

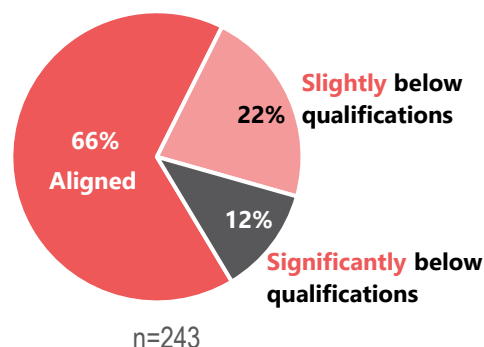
Nevertheless, as the accounts of some respondents suggest — even in cases where there was only a relatively moderate decline in the level of job qualifications, this could be felt quite acutely, as for them, work prior to their forced relocation was not only a source of income but also an important part of their sense of self. This may have been particularly acute for those in highly skilled sectors, such as technical specialists and engineers, as the structure of the local labour market, which was predominantly focused on the service and retail sectors, did not always allow them to fully utilise their qualifications. For them, changing jobs could mean not only a lower income but also a certain loss of professional identity. Further details on the differences in educational and professional characteristics between respondents who continued to work after displacement and those who became unemployed are examined in the section ‘Reasons for unemployment’, subsection “Education and qualification level”.

(c) Changes in income level

Although the majority of respondents did not report a decline in their skill level in their current job, changes in income levels following displacement were more pronounced (Figure 8¹³). For the most part (60%), income levels fell after displacement, with 27% reporting a substantial reduction in income. As noted earlier, most respondents are forced to find various ways to cope with meeting their basic needs, which may indicate that some IDPs have still not restored their income to a sufficient level, despite the fact that a relatively long time has passed since their displacement.

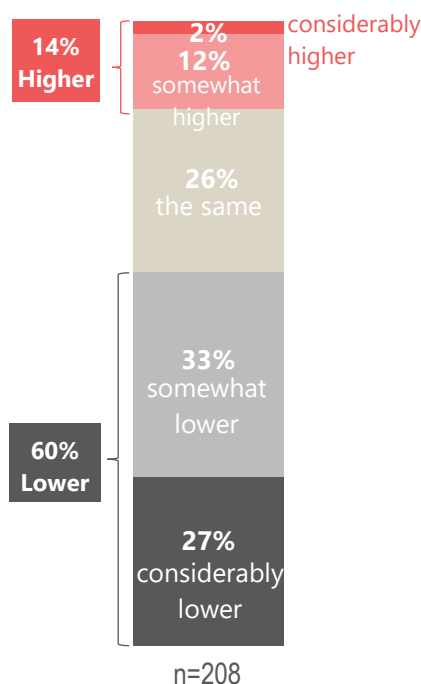
Thus, finding employment after relocation did not necessarily result in a loss of professional qualifications; however, for a considerable proportion of respondents, it was associated with a reduction in income.

Figure 7. Alignment of current work with the skills and knowledge of the IDP respondents



¹³ Respondents assessed whether their income from work had increased or decreased (taking price changes into account), without considering individual expenses such as rent.

Figure 8. Compared with the job before the displacement, the current income is:



Reasons for unemployment

Unemployed IDPs differed in their attitudes towards potential employment: the majority were interested in working, whilst some respondents had no plans to enter the labour market, namely:

67% were keen to work: they were either actively looking for work or wanted to work but were not actively looking.

33% did not look for work and had neither the desire nor the motivation to find it.

Among respondents interested in finding employment, three main groups of barriers can be identified, reflecting different aspects of the difficulties associated with entering the labour market. Most frequently, respondents cited circumstances related to their personal situation and family composition, in particular the difficulty of balancing work with childcare¹⁴ (56%) and health issues (17%) (Figure 9).

The second group of barriers concerned the mismatch between respondents' qualifications and available vacancies: a lack of jobs matching their professional experience or qualifications, or, conversely, a lack of the necessary skills for available vacancies (27% of responses in total).

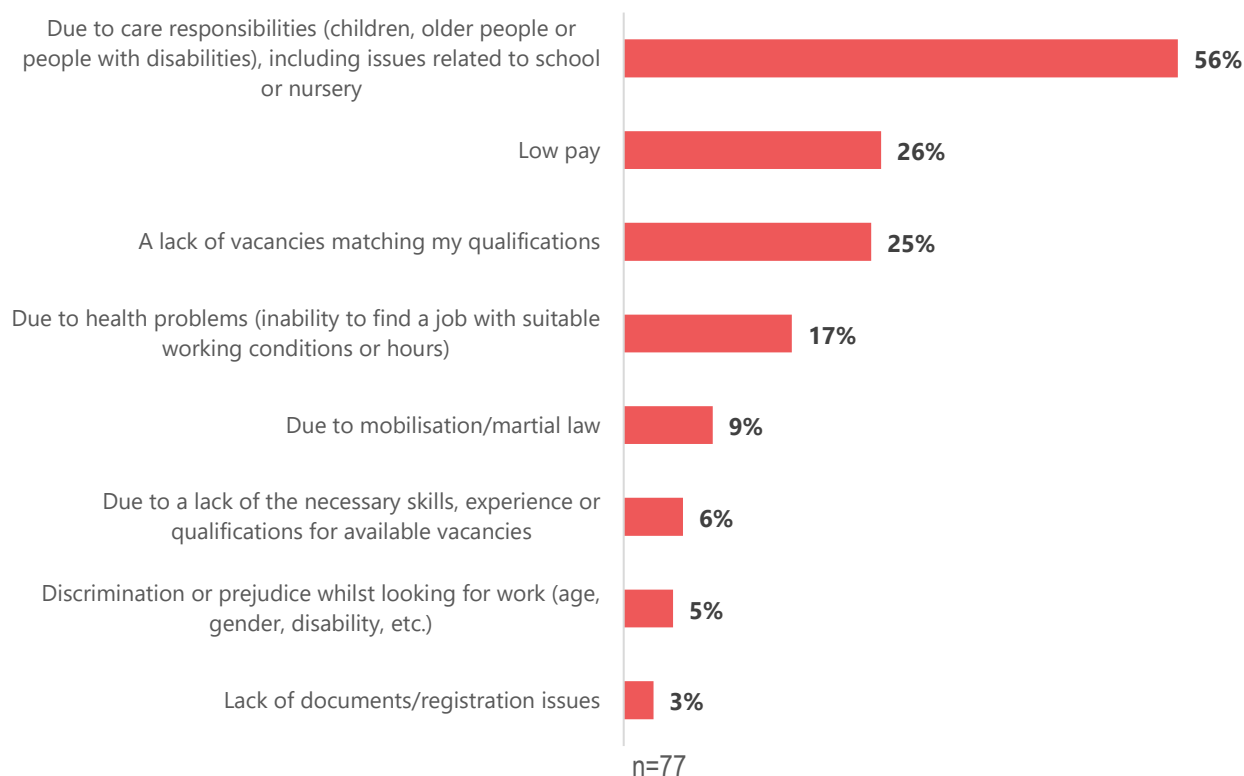
Respondents also highlighted unsatisfactory working conditions, primarily low pay (26%).

In the following sections, some of the barriers listed above are examined in more detail.

¹⁴ For more details on the type of employment sought by respondents who look after children, see the section "How long and what type of work are the unemployed looking for".

Figure 9. Barriers to employment among the IDPs surveyed who are looking for work or would like to work

*The question allowed for multiple answers

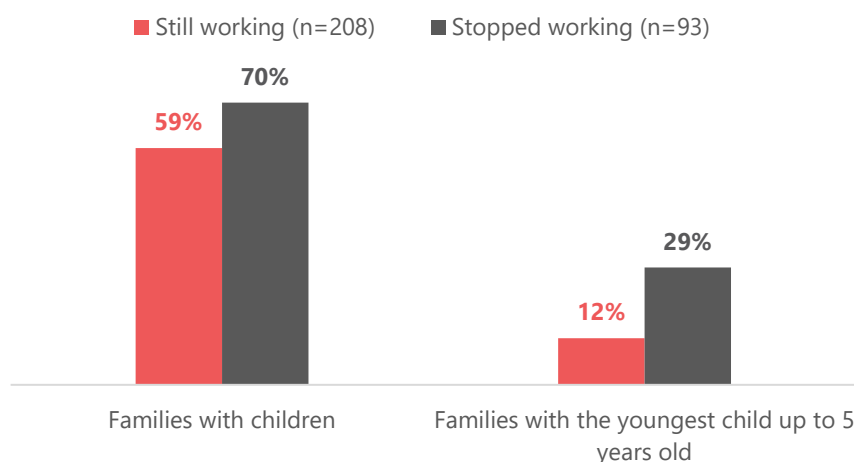


(a) Childcare

One of the most common barriers to employment cited by respondents was the difficulty of balancing work with childcare. However, the responses themselves do not make it possible to determine whether these difficulties were experienced by parents before moving to Vinnytsia, or whether they arose or intensified afterwards. To assess this, respondents who were not in employment prior to moving were excluded from the subsequent analysis. Instead, the analysis below compares IDPs who were employed both before and after displacement (53%) with those who had been employed before displacement but were no longer employed afterwards (24%). This allows for a better understanding of the circumstances related not only to general barriers in the labour market, but also to adaptation to life and the labour market in Vinnytsia following relocation.

The analysis showed that both the presence and the age of children were associated with employment retention after displacement. This relationship was particularly pronounced among women. Women with children were less likely to remain employed after relocating than women without children. The strongest association, however, was observed with the age of children: mothers of preschool-aged children (0–5 years) were the least likely to continue working after displacement.

Figure 10. Presence of children in the households of respondents who were employed before displacement: a comparison between those who continued to work and those who ceased working after moving to Vinnytsia



Overall, children were present in 70% of households where the surveyed IDP had stopped working after relocating (Figure 10), compared with 59% of households where the respondent had remained employed both before and after displacement. More specifically, 29% of households in which the respondent was no longer employed after relocating had a child aged five or younger, more than twice the share observed among households where the respondent remained employed (12%).

On the one hand, for some mothers of children aged 0–5, this pattern may reflect a temporary withdrawal from the labour market following the birth of a child after displacement. On the other hand, the findings are unlikely to be explained entirely by this factor alone. If this were the case, the labour market exit of some women following childbirth would be expected to be at least partially offset by the return to work of mothers whose children had grown older over time. However, the data show that employment remain lower among women with preschool-aged children.

This may suggest that, for some families, balancing paid work with caring for young children became more difficult after displacement than it had been previously. Following displacement, women often continue to bear primary responsibility for childcare while, at the same time, family separation may reduce their access to established support networks, including assistance from older relatives or from the children's fathers¹⁵.

Barriers related to care responsibilities

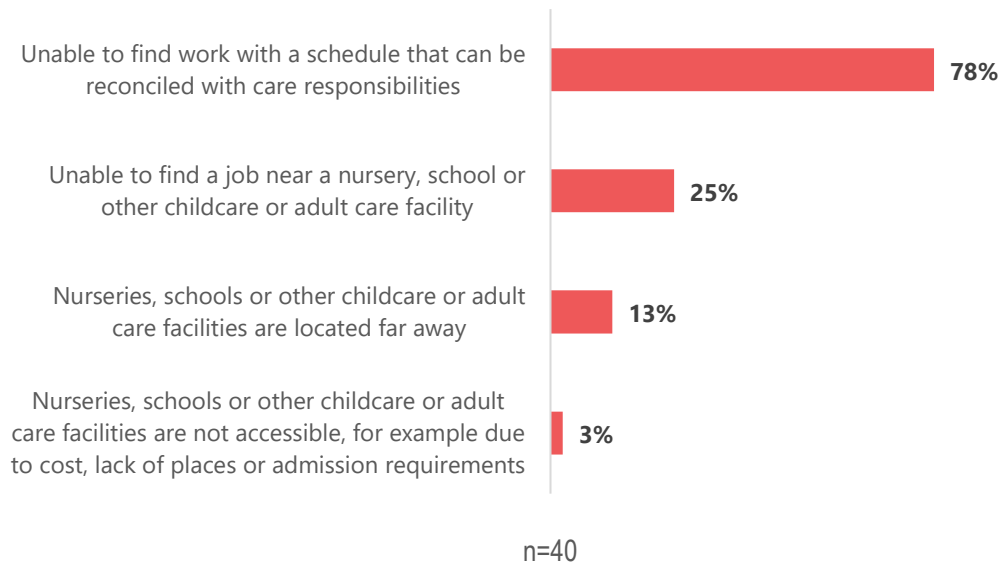
A more detailed analysis of respondents who wanted to work but identified childcare responsibilities as a barrier to employment suggests that the main challenge was not the availability of childcare facilities themselves, but rather the ability to reconcile their operating hours with parents' working schedules (Figure 11). Only 3% of respondents reported that kindergartens or other childcare services were inaccessible because of cost, a lack of available places, or other constraints, while a further 13% said that such facilities were located too far away. By contrast, one in four respondents (25%) reported being unable to find a job close to a childcare facility, and 78% said they could not find work with a schedule that could be combined with childcare responsibilities. **Taken together, these findings suggest that the availability of childcare services was noticeable, but not the main barrier to employment. Instead, employment opportunities appeared to depend**

¹⁵ According to IOM data, thematic brief 'Progress Towards Durable Solutions in Ukraine' (January 2025), 30% of IDP households reported being separated from their families because of the war, twice as often as among the non-displaced population.

primarily on whether work schedules and job locations could be reconciled with the opening hours and location of childcare facilities.

Figure 11. Barriers to employment related to caring for children or other family members

*The question allowed for multiple answers



When childcare is not a barrier

Childcare responsibilities did not necessarily imply a willingness to return to the labour market if appropriate conditions were available. Having children was the most frequently cited reason both among respondents who were not employed but were looking for work or wanted to work, and among those who had no intention of entering the labour market. However, these responses reflected different life circumstances. For some, childcare responsibilities represented a constraint on employment. For others, caring for their children was a conscious priority at that stage of family life. Notably, around one-third of non-employed parents who cited childcare responsibilities as the reason for not working (32%) did not, in fact, want to enter the labour market.

These groups are often combined into a single category of non-employed parents, which may lead to an overestimation of the prevalence of childcare-related barriers to employment. For the design of employment support measures, it may be useful to consider them separately. Expanding access to childcare services, flexible forms of employment, or remote work may help those for whom childcare responsibilities constitute a barrier to employment, **but such measures may not necessarily address the needs of the 32% of parents for whom childcare is a deliberate priority at this stage of their lives.**

Compatibility of care support programmes with the needs of IDPs with children

Notably, respondents who experienced difficulties related to childcare were generally aware of the support programmes available and actively sought to make use of them. For these women, the problem was not a lack of information, but rather that the conditions of the available programmes did not match their circumstances.

One of the respondents mentioned the shortage of places in nurseries. Ukrainian legislation grants internally displaced children priority access to public preschool education institutions¹⁶. However, where no places are available, this entitlement alone does not resolve the problem.

"I went to every kindergarten I could. They all told me, "We don't have any places available." I officially joined the waiting list because, technically, my children were supposed to have priority as IDPs. But I waited until the very end—my children ended up being the last ones on the list to get a place".

The Municipal Nanny programme was also mentioned in several interviews. Respondents who had considered using it described difficulties related to the age eligibility criteria and other participation requirements, which meant that the programme did not fit their circumstances.

Some employment specialists likewise described the programme as one that, in its current form, does not meet people's needs:

"There's the state-funded Municipal Nanny programme, [...] but it's completely ineffective. [...] The eligibility criteria... If the programme were adapted to the needs of women who want to work but have no one to leave their child with—if the eligible groups were expanded, the requirements made a bit simpler, and the whole programme redesigned so that it actually worked—then I think it could be a really good tool".

— Employment specialist

One respondent explained that she had looked for different forms of financial support to cover childcare costs but found none. In her view, this was one of the main obstacles preventing her from returning to work:

"It would be great if I could use the Municipal Nanny programme. I was looking for some kind of support that would help pay for a nanny. Unfortunately, I couldn't find anything like that. If I had a nanny, I could work without any problem. I'd happily spend part of my salary to pay for her services".

— Taisiia, 26

Beyond barriers related to childcare, respondents also described difficulties with other forms of government support, which likewise proved to be inflexible with regard to motherhood. In particular, one respondent who had received the "Vlasna Sprava" grant to start a business explained that after becoming pregnant, she was refused the opportunity to temporarily suspend the requirements of the grant programme:

"I got pregnant almost immediately after I received the grant. [...] I said that I would probably need to somehow pause the programme for a while. And they told me, no. [...] And if you want to go on maternity leave, you have to repay the entire grant from your own funds, close it, and then, basically, do whatever you want".

— Lisa, 27

¹⁶ Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On the Approval of the Regulations on Pre-school Education Institutions" of 12 March 2003, No. 305. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/305-2003-%D0%BF>.

According to the respondent, the possibility of such a pause would have allowed her to return to implementing her business project after the first months of childcare without having to abandon her business altogether.

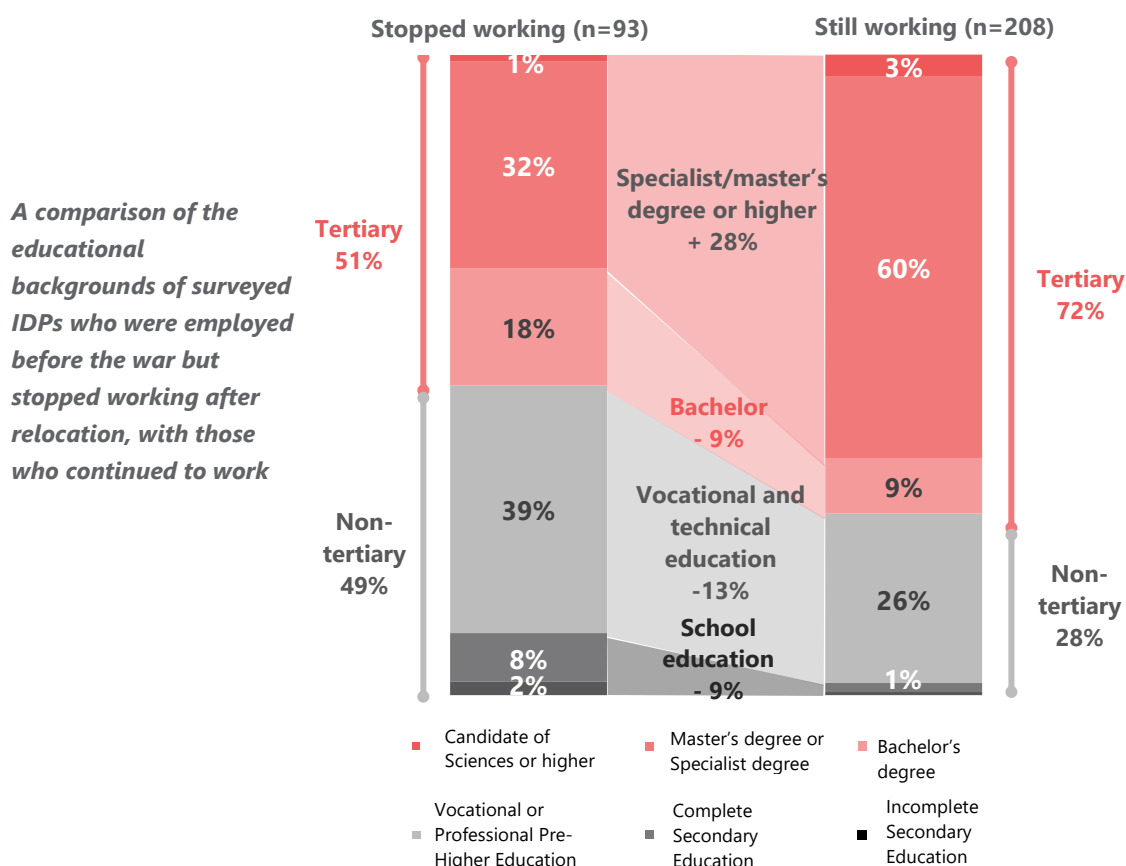
These examples may suggest that, for some IDPs, the key issue is not only whether support programmes exist, but also whether their eligibility criteria and design correspond to people's actual circumstances. As the interviews referred to national support mechanisms, these observations may also help to interpret the findings beyond the context of Vinnytsia.

(b) Education and qualification level

Among respondents who were employed prior to displacement, some of the largest differences between those who continued to work in Vinnytsia and those who stopped working after displacement were observed in relation to their level of education and professional experience. Respondents with a higher level of completed tertiary education were more likely to continue working after the move than those with vocational or pre-higher education.

The greatest difference was observed among people with a completed higher education (specialist, master's or higher degree, Figure 12): amongst those who continued to work, their proportion stood at

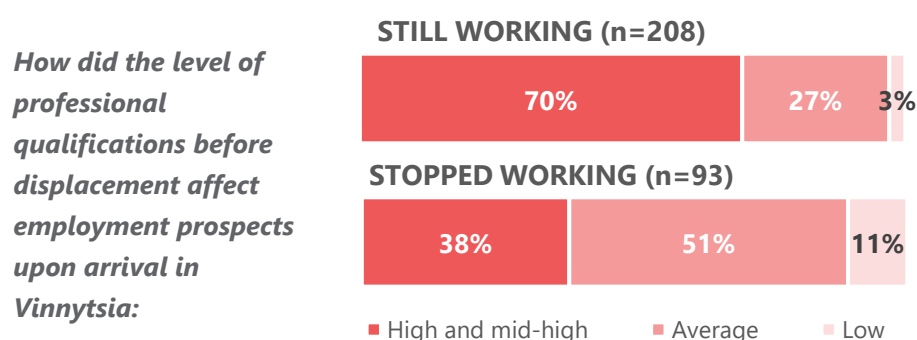
Figure 12. How was education before displacement linked to employment prospects upon arrival in Vinnytsia:



63%, whilst amongst those who stopped working, it was almost half that — 33%. By contrast, among respondents who lost their jobs following a forced displacement, those with vocational education were more common (39% compared with 26%).

A similar pattern was observed with regard to the level of professional skills prior to relocation. Respondents who, prior to the war, had held high- or medium-to-high-skilled positions¹⁷ were more likely to remain in employment than those in medium- or low-skilled occupations: amongst those who continued to work, such occupations accounted for 70%, whereas amongst those who stopped working, the figure was only 38% (Figure 13).

Figure 13. A comparison of the professional qualifications of surveyed IDPs who were employed before the war but stopped working after relocation, with those who continued to work



A further breakdown of occupations by sector and level of qualification provides a better understanding of exactly which occupational groups were responsible for these differences. Among respondents who continued to work after being forcibly displaced (Table 1), 48% had worked as specialists and professionals (e.g. accountants, lawyers, programmers, psychologists, teachers) prior to relocation, whereas among those who stopped working, the figure stood at 28%. At the same time, service and administrative occupations, in particular sales assistants, administrators, cooks, hairdressers and service sector workers, were considerably more common among respondents who lost their jobs after displacement (34% versus 19%). The proportion of managers and executives remained relatively similar in both groups.

Overall, the findings may suggest that professional experience that had been in demand in IDPs' regions of origin did not translate equally well to the labour market in Vinnytsia. IDPs with higher education and experience in professional occupations were more likely to regain employment after displacement, whereas those working in service, administrative, and manual occupations were more likely to remain unemployed. This may indicate that even relatively transferable occupations do not always transition easily to a new local labour market.

¹⁷ Employment categories are classified in accordance with the Ukrainian Classification of Occupations (DK 003:2010). For simplicity, managers and legislators, professionals and specialists (Code CP 1–3) have been grouped as a single category comprising occupations requiring high and medium-high levels of qualification; at the same time, technical staff, service and trade workers, skilled tool-operating workers, plant and machine operators and assemblers, as well as skilled agricultural workers (Code CP 4–8) have been provisionally grouped into the category of medium-skilled workers; workers in elementary occupations (Code CP 9) are grouped into the low-skilled category.

Table 1. Occupational groups by skill level and sector among those who were employed both before and after moving to Vinnytsia, compared with those who stopped working

Professional groups	STILL WORKING	STOPPED WORKING	Difference in p.p.
Professional and specialist occupations outside specific industries (accountants, lawyers, programmers, psychologists, teachers)	48%	28%	20%
Service and administrative occupations (sales assistants, administrators, cooks, hairdressers)	19%	34%	-15%
Managers and executives (department heads, directors, unit managers)	12%	12%	0%
Skilled technical occupations specific to certain industries, often heavy or extractive industries (engineers, process engineers, mechanics, industrial specialists)	10%	5%	5%
Technical and manual occupations (drivers, electricians, plumbers, fitters, general labourers)	9%	14%	-5%
A collective group comprising all other unclassified occupations (military personnel, farmers and other isolated occupations)	2%	7%	-5%
Total	100%	100%	
n	208	93	

(c) Gender and age

Not all age groups were equally successful in re-establishing their employment after relocating. Respondents aged 36–50, and men were the most likely to remain employed following displacement, whereas both the youngest and the oldest respondents, as well as women, were more likely to lose their attachment to the labour market and stop working after relocating.

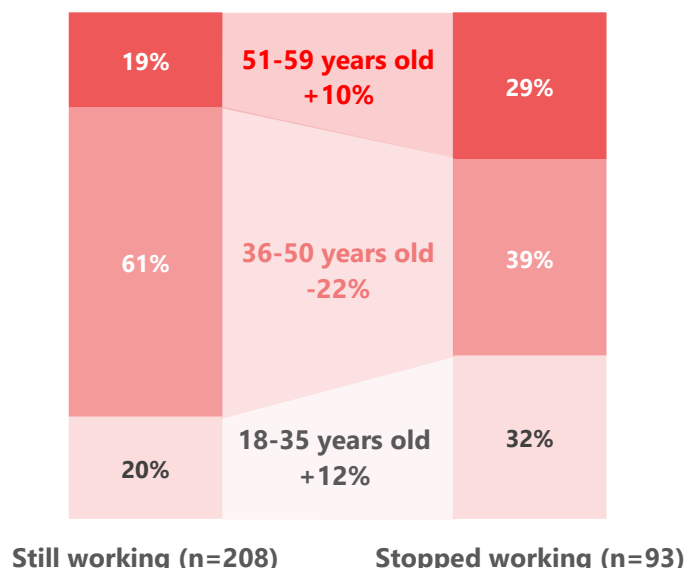
Age. Among respondents who remained employed after displacement, 61% were aged 36–50 (Figure 14), compared with 39% among those who stopped working after displacement. By contrast, respondents aged 18–35 and 51–59 were somewhat more represented among those who left employment after relocating (+12 and +10 percentage points, respectively). The higher share of unemployment among older respondents may suggest that they face greater difficulties re-entering the labour market following forced displacement. Although all respondents in this group had been employed before the war, some may have spent longer periods working for the same employer or within the same profession and, therefore, had less experience searching for a new job. After losing their previous employment, they may have been more vulnerable in an open labour market where they had to compete for new vacancies.

"I'm 41, and sometimes they only want people up to 30. For example, I wanted to apply for a bookkeeping job in tax accounting, but because I don't have experience, they won't even consider me. Even though I have the degree, I have the education, they won't even give me a chance to try. They won't even offer me a trial period".

— Hanna, 41

The experience described above also suggests that such difficulties may arise well before the age of 50. This may be particularly relevant for IDPs, as forced displacement often requires people to change occupations or gain experience in a new field. In such cases, age may make it more difficult to secure an opportunity to start working in a new profession.

Figure 14. A comparison of the age groups of surveyed IDPs who were employed before the war but stopped working after relocation, with those who continued to work



Gender. Women were more likely than men to stop working after relocating. Among men who had been employed before displacement (Figure 15), 80% remained employed after relocating to Vinnytsia, compared with 64% of women. As discussed in the previous sections, these differences may partly be explained by women's greater responsibility for childcare, particularly for young children, which can make it more difficult to enter the labour market. At the same time, the structure of labour demand may also play a role. According to employment specialists, men tend to find jobs much more quickly because of labour shortages in male-dominated occupations:

“Right now in Vinnytsia... there's a real labour shortage in jobs where employers specifically need men, where women simply can't replace them. I'm talking about skilled manual jobs—railway track workers, for example, that kind of vacancy. There's a huge shortage of men for those positions. Just look at transport companies—they're almost all facing a serious shortage of workers in traditionally male occupations.”

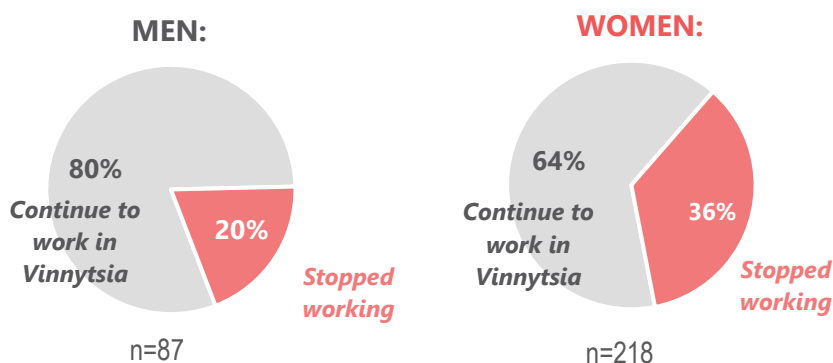
— Career counsellor, charitable organisation

“When men come to us looking for formal employment, in my experience, I can place them within a week—sometimes in just two or three days. Employers hire them very quickly”.

— Employer consultant in Vinnytsia providing career support services

Although employers' demand is often concentrated in occupations traditionally held by men, employment specialists reported that women make up the majority of clients seeking career counselling.

Figure 15. Among the employed before displacement:



After losing their previous jobs, women may face greater difficulties re-entering the labour market, both because of caregiving responsibilities and because of a structural shortage of vacancies in Vinnytsia that match their qualifications.

(d) Psychological state and motivation

One factor that may influence the employment of IDPs is their psychological well-being. Overall, 33% of respondents reported that they were not looking for work and had no desire or motivation to find a job. Interviews with IDPs and employment specialists suggest that this may be explained, at least in part, by people's psychological state following forced displacement.

Some participants viewed psychological stabilisation as an important precondition for becoming active in the labour market. Several reflected that they should have sought psychological support earlier:

"First of all, I think, you know, I should have seen a psychologist so I could adapt better... I think I lost more time because I didn't go to a psychologist and kept trying to cope on my own. Once I started seeing a psychologist, I began thinking more about my life, setting myself new goals. That's when I started looking for a job, and after that it became so much easier".

— Olena, 26

Employers also identify low motivation as a barrier to employment. According to a nationwide labour market study, 13.2% of employers consider a lack of motivation to be one of the key challenges when hiring IDPs.¹⁸

Employment specialists likewise emphasised that psychological well-being may be the first barrier that needs to be addressed, even before career support begins. In particular, they described situations in which people lost confidence and reduced their job-search efforts after receiving their first rejections from employers. In some organisations, this is precisely why a psychologist is involved from the very beginning of the support process:

"From my own experience, and from working with displaced people, I always say that this is, more than anything, psychological work. When someone is forced to leave, they leave behind their whole normal life. Life just stops, and they end up in this kind of vacuum, shut away in a

¹⁸ According to a representative [labour market survey for 2024–2025 conducted by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation and the State Employment Service of Ukraine](#).

shell. It's really hard for them to adapt, retrain, find another job. So, in a way, people end up in this sort of... suspended state".

— Representative of an NGO providing retraining services

Based on respondents' accounts, this loss of confidence does not appear to be linked solely to unsuccessful job-search experiences. Similar feelings were also described by respondents who were already employed at the time of the interview. According to their accounts, insecurity about one's professional abilities does not disappear immediately after finding a job. Rather, it may gradually build up as a result of career interruptions, the loss of professional networks, and the need to rebuild one's professional life in an unfamiliar environment. These accounts are reinforced by the observations of employment specialists, who described psychological well-being not as a temporary reaction to specific setbacks, but as a longer-term factor that may accompany people at different stages of their employment journey, both before and after finding work.

Interestingly, employment specialists consistently described the cases in which psychological support had been provided from the outset as those most likely to result in successful employment. One employment counsellor described motivational consultations as a distinct stage of support that may precede any practical job search:

"Every single one of my successful cases involved a psychologist. [...] At the very first consultation, I assess the person's needs, and sometimes it's obvious they're nowhere near being ready to think about work. [...] To me, the first priority is these motivational sessions. There can be up to five of them in one case. You're basically just talking to the person and genuinely helping them believe that they can do it".

— Employment counsellor, NGO

It is also worth noting that psychological barriers may arise not only during the job search but also after employment has been secured. Employment specialists described cases in which IDPs found a job but left after a relatively short period:

"There are people who get a job, work for a week or two, and then say, 'I don't fit in with the team,' or 'I'm having conflicts.' Then they find another job, work another week or two... and it's, 'Me and the manager just didn't get along.' [...] Maybe it's connected to their emotional state, their psychological state. [...] Maybe it's hard to socialise, hard to connect with new colleagues. [...] It's not that they don't want to work—they do look for a job, they do have that goal—but for one reason or another they keep leaving and starting all over again with a new job search".

— Employment specialist, NGO

Although the survey data do not allow for an assessment of how widespread such situations are, several employment specialists described similar experiences. This suggests that such challenges should be taken into account when analysing the causes of unemployment among IDPs. At the same time, 36% of IDPs who were unemployed at the time of the survey had previously been employed in Vinnytsia but had subsequently left their jobs. Although the reasons for leaving remain unknown, this finding may point to the importance of not only helping IDPs enter employment but also supporting their longer-term job retention.

Psychological support is generally available in Vinnytsia through a range of organisations. However, the existing free programmes are largely focused on addressing war-related trauma. By contrast, psychological difficulties associated specifically with forced displacement and adaptation to a new place

of residence—such as the loss of motivation, uncertainty about the future, or difficulties returning to a familiar way of life—may receive less systematic attention.

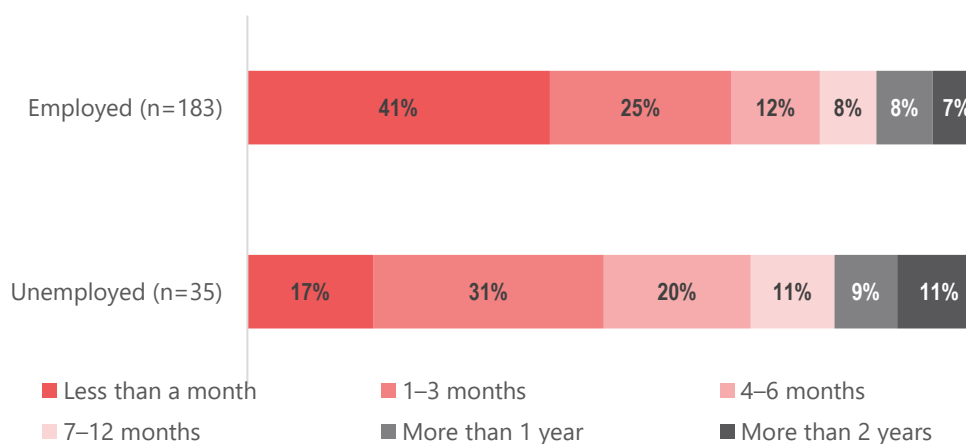
Job search duration and job preferences

(a) Time spent looking for a job

Among respondents who were not employed at the time of the survey, only 35% were actively looking for work, while 64% were not engaged in a job search. Among those who had subsequently found employment after relocating to Vinnytsia, the search for their first job was generally relatively short: 33% found work in less than one month, and 59% within three months. By contrast, a different pattern was observed among respondents who remained unemployed but were actively looking for work at the time of the survey. Only 17% had been searching for less than one month, while 20% had been searching for 4–6 months and another 20% for more than a year.

It is worth noting that finding a job quickly did not necessarily mean a better outcome in terms of qualification match or pay. Interviews with respondents suggest that those who found work quickly often accepted lower salaries than they had earned before forced displacement.

Figure 16. Job search duration before employment



At the same time, not being able to find a job quickly may sometimes be perceived as a failure and lead to premature discouragement. However, according to the employment specialists interviewed, a job search lasting one to three months is generally considered normal under current labour market conditions:

“People spend a week sending out CVs and expect someone to call them the very next day. Then it’s, ‘Why isn’t anyone getting back to me?’ They start thinking there’s something wrong with them. [...] You have to explain that, these days, taking up to three months to find a job is perfectly normal. Not every employer will be the right fit for them, and they won’t be the right fit for every employer either—and that’s just how the process works. You have to prepare people for that”.

— Employment specialist, NGO

For this reason, employment specialists described managing these expectations as a distinct and important component of career counselling. Conversely, a longer job search should not necessarily be

interpreted as a sign of passivity. It may instead reflect higher expectations regarding job quality and suitability, a narrower labour market for a particular qualification, or simply having the resources to spend more time searching for the desired job.

(b) Working arrangements

For many unemployed IDPs, the key issue was not only the availability of vacancies but also the opportunity to work under flexible conditions that could be combined with family responsibilities. This need was particularly pronounced among women with children. Among respondents who identified childcare responsibilities as the reason they were unable to find work, 77.5% reported that they could not find a job with a schedule that could be combined with caring for their children. Above all, this meant a need for greater flexibility—the possibility of working without a strictly fixed start or end to the working day and, at least occasionally, being able to work from home. The need for part-time employment was also evident, although somewhat less pronounced. The survey results provide a more detailed picture of the specific working conditions unemployed IDPs were looking for.

Flexible working hours. Nearly half of respondents (44%) reported that they could work only under a flexible schedule, without fixed start or finish time or fixed breaks, whereas only 32% said that a job with a fixed schedule would be suitable. Among respondents providing care for children or other family members, this need was even more pronounced: 60% could work only under a flexible schedule, while only 15% could work with fixed working hours, and a further 25% could consider only hourly or day-based work.

Physical presence at the workplace. Half of all unemployed respondents (50%) reported that they could not work in jobs requiring full-time physical presence at the workplace. Specifically, 39% would consider only a hybrid work arrangement, allowing them to work from home at least occasionally, while a further 11% could work only remotely. Among respondents with caregiving responsibilities, this share increased to 61%. Within this group, 48% could work only in a hybrid format, while a further 13% could work exclusively remotely.

Working hours. Full-time employment was sought by 39% of unemployed respondents, compared with only 30% among those with caregiving responsibilities. At the same time, part-time work was preferred by 45% of respondents providing care, compared with 39% of all unemployed respondents, while occasional or irregular work was sought by 25% and 21%, respectively.

A comparison between the working conditions sought by unemployed IDPs and the conditions of those already in employment points to a mismatch. Among respondents who were employed at the time of the survey, 84% worked full-time and 80% worked in jobs requiring physical presence at the workplace. Similarly, the majority of employers in Ukraine (93%)¹⁹ offer office-based positions. These findings suggest that one possible reason unemployed IDPs experience difficulties finding work is that the conditions offered by employers do not necessarily align with the circumstances of job-seeking IDPs, particularly women with children.

“Well, I can’t exactly split myself in two—looking after my child and working at the same time. So... I quit my job as a cashier. I registered with the Employment Centre again, but unfortunately, they couldn’t find anything for me because all the jobs had schedules that just didn’t work with looking after my child”.

— Yuliia, 30

¹⁹ According to a representative [labour market survey for 2024–2025 conducted by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation and the State Employment Service of Ukraine](#).

Discrimination during job search

Among respondents who had ever looked for work in Vinnytsia, nearly one in three (31%) reported experiencing prejudice from prospective employers during their job search. Overall, 16% of respondents who had ever searched for work reported discrimination based on their IDP status, 8% based on age, and 7% based on their region of origin.

The interviews suggest that one manifestation of discrimination based on IDP status, particularly during the early stages of the full-scale invasion, was the perception that displaced people were only temporary workers who would soon leave the city:

“At the beginning of the full-scale invasion... I kept hearing things like, “Yes, you have the experience, the education, everything—but you're not the right fit because you're an internally displaced person, and we know you'll leave. You'll only just settle in, and then it'll all be over and you'll go back.” Honestly, I found that really strange. Well, maybe I will go back—and that would be wonderful. Of course I want that. But until then, I still need something to eat.”

— Maryna, 44

However, in 2024–2025, some employers' reservations about hiring IDPs may have persisted. According to a nationwide labour market study²⁰, 15% of employers identified frequent changes of residence as the main barrier to hiring IDPs. In addition, 21% of employers planning to recruit staff did not indicate a willingness to hire IDPs. This share was higher among micro-enterprises, whereas larger companies were more likely to express willingness to do so. While this does not necessarily indicate direct discrimination, it may suggest that concerns about the stability of employing IDPs have persisted.

In addition to discrimination based on IDP status, interview participants also described cases of prejudice related to their region of origin and age. One focus group participant recalled that some employers were reluctant to hire IDPs from certain regions and that some landlords refused to rent housing to them. According to the participant, although such practices are less common now than they were in 2022, they have not disappeared entirely.

Age discrimination was not always reflected only in respondents' direct experiences of rejection. For some older respondents, it took the form of an expectation that employers would be reluctant to consider them because of their age:

“I'm already 57... All I can think about is what will happen in three years, when I'll have to retire... I really do want to keep working. But when it comes to finding a job... once you're in your fifties or sixties, not many people are willing to hire you”.

— Iryna, 57

The language issue was also mentioned in the context of employment and social integration. Some Russian-speaking IDPs described language as a barrier in the workplace for older people:

“A lot of older people speak Russian. That's also a big communication barrier... at work, yes, it really is”.

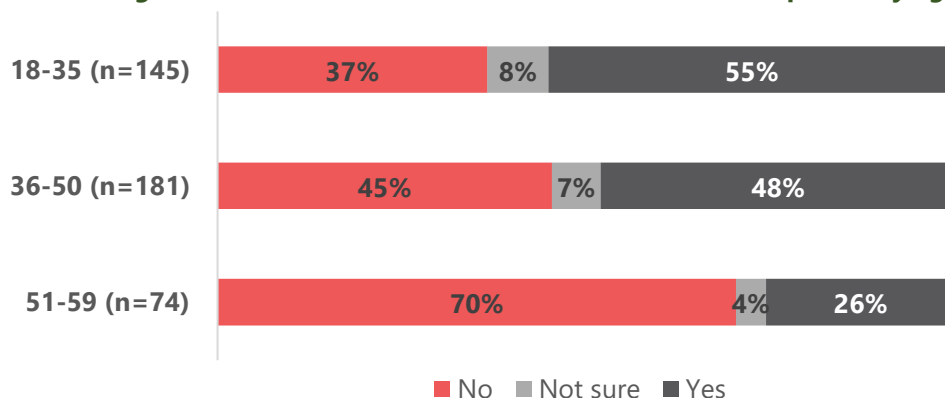
— Iryna, 57

²⁰ According to a representative [labour market survey for 2024–2025 conducted by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation and the State Employment Service of Ukraine](#).

Need for skills development and training

A substantial share of IDPs recognise the need to acquire new or additional skills and view learning as an important part of their professional development and adaptation. Nearly half of respondents (47%) reported needing new knowledge or skills to improve their career prospects or professional opportunities. This need varied considerably by age (Figure 17). While around one in two respondents under the age of 50 reported such a need, the share was half as high among respondents approaching retirement age (51–59), at 26%. Despite the lower proportion among older respondents, the need to develop professional skills remained relevant for this age group as well.

Figure 17. Self-assessment of the need for skill development by age group

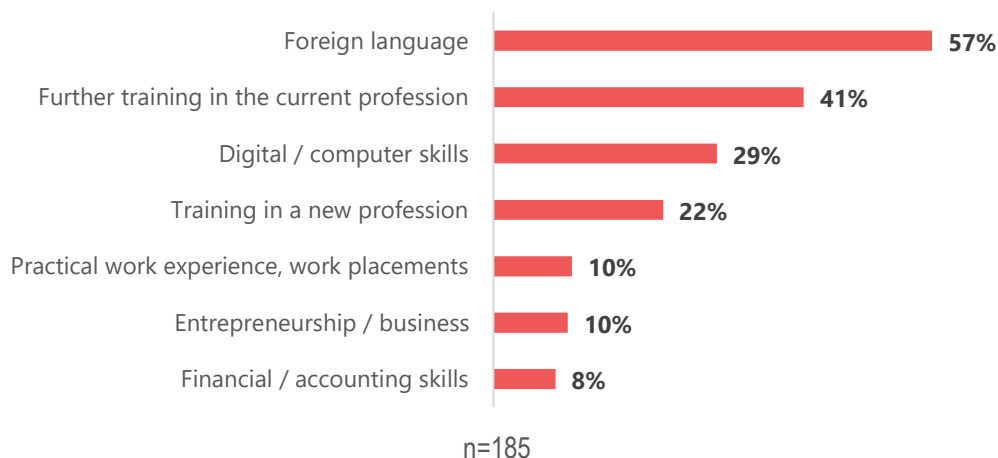


Among respondents who reported a need for skills development, the most common areas of interest were learning a foreign language (57%) and developing digital and computer skills (29%) (Figure 18). Some respondents viewed foreign language skills as a gateway to broader employment opportunities, ranging from remote jobs that could be combined with childcare responsibilities to positions in international work environments, which were generally associated with better working conditions. At the same time, 41% reported a need to strengthen their skills within their current profession. This was most common among respondents working in social, managerial, and administrative occupations, including psychologists, social workers, managers, civil servants, and accountants. The need was also frequently reported by respondents in service and skilled trades occupations, particularly cooks, hairdressers, and pastry chefs. A further 22% indicated that they were interested in changing professions entirely and developing an entirely new set of skills. Overall, the demand for skills development was broad, ranging from improving existing knowledge and competencies to complete career change.

At the same time, the reported need for training did not always translate into participation in such programmes. The following analysis examines whether IDPs in Vinnytsia are aware of available professional training and employment support programmes, who participate in them, and which groups remain beyond their reach.

Figure 18. Top 7 areas in which IDPs most frequently cited a need to develop their skills

*The question allowed for multiple answers



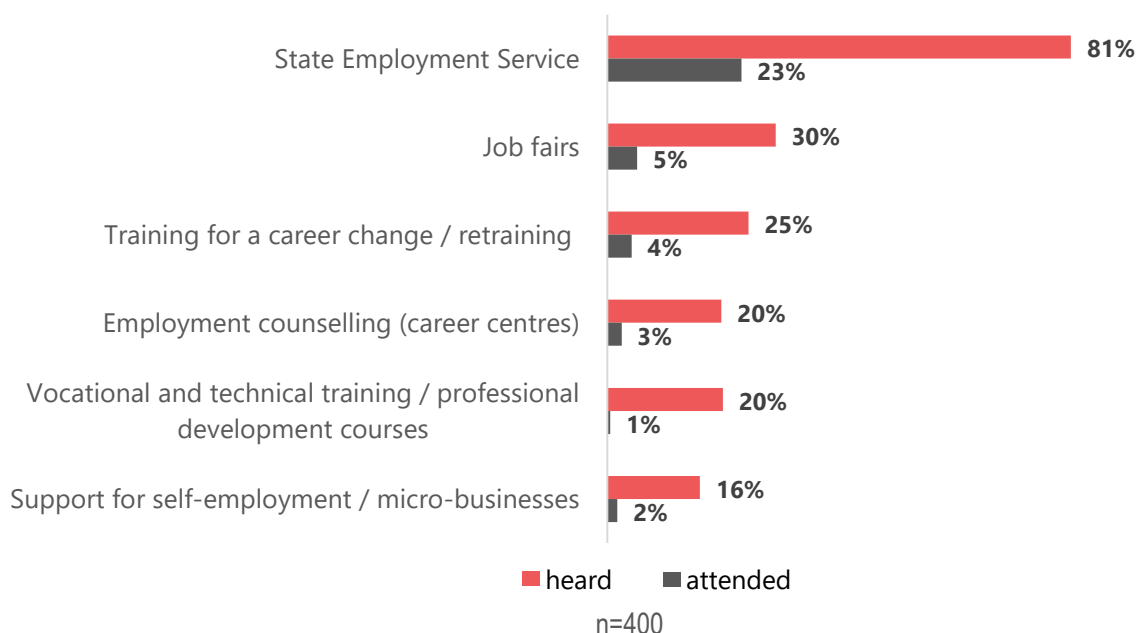
Access to professional training and employment support programmes

(a) Awareness of professional training and employment support programmes

The Public Employment Service remains the best-known employment support provider, with 81% of respondents reporting that they were aware of it (Figure 19). Awareness of other employment-related opportunities available in Vinnytsia was considerably lower: 30% of respondents were aware of job fairs, 25% of vocational retraining programmes, and 20% of career centres.

Figure 19. Employment support services and programmes in Vinnytsia that respondents believed they could turn to for assistance

*The question allowed for multiple answers



Regarding the use of employment support services in Vinnytsia, 23% of respondents had contacted the Public Employment Service at least once, 5% had attended job fairs, and 4% had participated in vocational training or retraining programmes. At the same time, 59% had not used any employment support service.

During the interviews, employment specialists explained that a lower-than-expected level of engagement with employment support services, despite the high demand for employment assistance, does not necessarily indicate barriers to access or ineffective outreach. Instead, some respondents who did not use formal employment support services reported accessing employment-related support through personal networks and social contacts. This is consistent with the experiences shared by IDPs, who often reported finding jobs or learning about employment support programmes through acquaintances, friends, or word of mouth, and therefore had no need to seek support elsewhere.

(b) Experience of attending the Employment Centre

Overall, IDPs assessed their experience with the Public Employment Service positively (Figure 20). Among respondents who had used its services, 72% considered the experience helpful: 32% reported that it had been very helpful, while a further 40% said that it had been somewhat helpful, addressing some of their needs. The most commonly reported outcomes were learning about available job vacancies (40%) and receiving unemployment benefits (35%) (Figure 20). At the same time, for some IDPs, an important outcome was not only practical but also emotional support: 17% reported that, after contacting the Public Employment Service, they felt supported and no longer alone in dealing with their situation. In addition, 16% reported that they had found a job. Far fewer respondents mentioned participating in training or courses (5%), improving their job-search skills (6%), or obtaining a new qualification or certificate (3%).

In addition to employment support, respondents also highlighted the role of the Public Employment Service in providing information about other forms of assistance. For example, one respondent learned about the possibility of obtaining an education voucher through an information session organised by the Public Employment Service at an NGO.

Figure 20. Experience of attending the Employment Centre

*This question allowed for multiple answers



Although job placements were mentioned less frequently, some respondents also described positive experiences with vacancies matching. One respondent recalled being hired for a position specifically intended for veterans:

“They said they were looking specifically for a veteran, someone with combat experience. [...] They said, ‘You’d be a perfect fit.’ And that’s basically exactly how it happened”.

— Oleksandr, 37

Conversations with respondents also helped to better understand the reasons behind the negative assessments. Most often, dissatisfaction was related not to the work of the Public Employment Service itself, but to the limited opportunities available in the labour market, primarily the lack of vacancies that matched respondents' experience, qualifications, or expectations.

The issue of trust in the Public Employment Service also emerged during the conversations. For some respondents, experiences with fraudulent job vacancies strengthened their trust in official job-search channels. In particular, one respondent explained that after encountering a fraudulent vacancy, she began relying only on verified sources of information. At the same time, according to employment specialists, some IDPs still had a low level of trust in the Public Employment Service:

“IDPs... they have this prejudice against the Employment Centre. Well, there’s just no real trust. They’ve still got these old ideas stuck in their heads, like, ‘Right, I’ll go there, and they’ll just have me running around from one company to another”.

— IDP support specialist, NGO

(c) Experience of attending professional training programmes

Reasons for seeking training

For some respondents, the need for vocational training and retraining was linked to the loss of professional skills following a prolonged interruption in employment. For others, it reflected the need to adapt to a new local labour market because of a mismatch between their previous professional experience and the structure of labour demand in Vinnytsia. This was particularly relevant for IDPs who had relocated from industrial regions, where a large share of jobs had been concentrated in large industrial enterprises.

“After a few years, I’d forgotten how to use a computer. I used to have those skills—I knew how to work with Word, Excel, spreadsheets. But now, if you sat me down and gave me work to do with spreadsheets, I wouldn’t be able to do it because, quite simply, I’ve forgotten. I just haven’t had a computer”.

— Olha, 25

“The question is how you can make a living in Vinnytsia—what you can do here, what kind of work there is. Every region has its own specifics. There’s no heavy industry here, no sea—none of what we were used to”.

— Liubov, 40

Who seeks training

According to training specialists, participants in training programmes for IDPs are most often middle-aged women who lost their jobs because of forced displacement or who are unable to find work in Vinnytsia in their previous profession.

“Most of them are women IDPs aged 30 to 55... They might be women coming back after maternity leave, or women who are still on maternity leave but want to return to their professional careers. They can also be women who are the heads of their households”.

— Career counsellor, charitable foundation

“Men don't register with us. Out of 100 unemployed IDPs, maybe one man will register”.

— Employment specialist

Barriers to participation in training

Despite recognising the need for training, participation in relevant programmes remained inaccessible for some respondents. The interviews point to several main groups of barriers.

Financial constraints. Long-term training often meant giving up income for several months, while stipends or other forms of financial support were not necessarily provided by each programme. For many IDPs, the choice between training and current earnings effectively became a choice between long-term opportunities and the immediate needs of their household.

“People don't just need the opportunity to learn—they also need to understand that while they're studying, they're not working. They still have to earn a living. They need social support... so that someone who's studying has some kind of financial support during that period. [...] Because not every project offers stipends. And people still have to pay for transport, put food on the table, buy the medicines they need, and so on”.

— Retraining specialist, vocational education institution

“That's the whole issue with training for IDPs. You have to choose: either earn money so you can live on something, or study in the hope that later you'll find a job and earn more. [...] Quite simply, people don't have enough money to invest in something that will only pay off in the long run”.

— Hryhorii, 35

Low expectations of income increase. Low expectations of higher earnings. Even when training opportunities were available, some respondents doubted that completing a course would lead to a meaningful improvement in their financial situation. If the jobs available after retraining offered relatively low wages, the expected return on training did not seem sufficient to justify the time and resources required. This was also reflected in the accounts of IDPs themselves:

“It won't pay off quickly enough to make it worth putting that much effort into it. I'd rather focus on earning more in the field I'm already in”.

— Nadiia, 31

Incompatibility of programmes with career aspirations or life circumstances. Some respondents reported that they could not find courses relevant to their profession, while the available options were not always seen as realistic opportunities for changing careers.

“I know they have floristry courses. Well, that's what I've heard—floristry, Ukrainian language, accounting, I think. But I never came across anything in cooking or pastry”.

— Karyna, 32

“Sometimes organisations offer a few training places... It's things like nail services, hairdressing—those kinds of service jobs you can retrain for—or massage therapy. [...] Starting over at 45 and learning how to do nails... I don't know. It just feels like that's more for younger women.”

— Daria, 42

Institutional barriers. According to the experts interviewed, some IDPs were systematically excluded from training programmes because of formal eligibility criteria. This applied, in particular, to people who had been displaced before 2022, older participants, or those who did not belong to the specified categories of vulnerability. As a result, even when motivated to participate, some IDPs were unable to access certain programmes because of their eligibility requirements.

“It's written right there that the programme is only for IDPs displaced since 2022. [...] So the people who were displaced earlier end up feeling discriminated against.”

— Training specialist, NGO

Perceived effectiveness of training

Both respondents and experts gave examples of programmes they considered successful. Most often, these positive assessments were associated not so much with completing the training itself as with achieving a tangible outcome—finding a new job, receiving a grant, obtaining an education voucher, or receiving practical support that facilitated subsequent employment.

For this reason, experts considered **programmes designed to meet a specific employer's recruitment needs to be the most effective.**

“We're now putting much more emphasis on explaining to employers that vocational training should be provided only in response to an employer's request. We can't simply train someone who's registered with us and receiving benefits, and then have them finish the training with nowhere to go. So we try to train people based on employers' requests and then refer them directly to jobs”.

— Retraining specialist

Programmes that **combined financial support with individual guidance** were viewed particularly positively. For example, one respondent who had participated in a grant programme to support the development of her own business highlighted its flexibility, the ability to decide herself how the funds should be spent, and the practical focus of the mentoring.

“You could spend as much on advertising as you actually needed—we wrote down the amount ourselves, and that's exactly what they gave us. The business plan wasn't just paperwork; it was a tool that helped you answer those questions for yourself. The mentors were realistic in what

they expected from us, and there wasn't any compulsory homework when you barely had enough time as it was".

— Oleksandra, entrepreneur, 25

According to the experts interviewed, the success of training programmes depends on the combination of three factors: the participant's motivation to acquire new competencies, the quality of the training, and the extent to which the skills acquired match actual labour market needs.

"To me, there are three main ingredients for success. First, the person's own willingness to gain new skills. Second, the expertise and professionalism of the instructors providing the training. And third, how relevant that profession is in today's labour market".

— Retraining specialist

Key challenges

Programme schedules. One practical barrier was the timing of training programmes. Many courses and workshops were held during standard working hours, limiting participation among IDPs who were already employed.

"Even the workshops, you know—every workshop for IDPs is held during working hours. So I keep thinking, 'Who are these for?' They're for people who aren't working".

— Training specialist, NGO

Insufficient post-training support. According to respondents, after acquiring new skills, people were often left on their own to look for work. A few unsuccessful job applications could quickly undermine both their motivation and their confidence that completing the training had been worthwhile. This suggests that the effectiveness of training programmes depends not only on the quality of the training itself, but also on the individual support provided to participants after completion.

"People need support from the very beginning, all the way to the end. That's the problem. They take the courses, they finish them, and then they don't know what to do next. They apply for one job, then another—it doesn't work out. And suddenly, all the confidence they had from completing the course just disappears. One or two failures, and that's it. If someone followed up afterwards and asked, 'How are things going? Didn't work out? That's okay, let's try somewhere else,' and a psychologist was there to support them—that would be the right approach".

— Iryna, 57

Programme outcomes monitoring. Approaches to monitoring programme outcomes also differed across organisations. Some experts reported maintaining contact with participants after training, including through phone calls or CRM systems, in order to track their subsequent employment. Others noted that monitoring was less formalised and was largely limited to participants returning for further support or maintaining informal contact.

Limited organisational resources. According to interviewees, both the scale and duration of programmes depend largely on donor funding, while administrative requirements and licensing procedures often make it difficult to expand them. In addition, delivering high-quality programmes requires substantial human resources, which many organisations lack.

Fragmentation of the support system. Experts noted that the absence of a single directory of programmes and service providers can make it difficult for professionals to navigate the available support, while IDPs often learn about training opportunities through personal recommendations or acquaintances.

One respondent gave an example of how such information spreads. She learned about the possibility of obtaining an education voucher by chance at an information event organised by the Public Employment Service. Afterwards, she shared the information with people she knew:

"I shared the information, and people started applying. I think about ten people in Vinnytsia enrolled in master's programmes because I recommended it".

— Anastasiia, 57

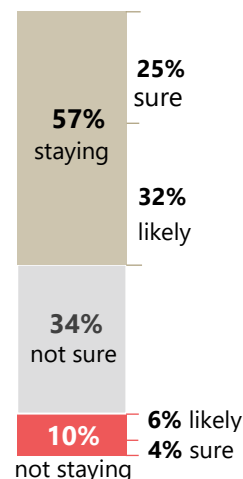
At the same time, according to the experts interviewed, the overall support system for IDPs is relatively well coordinated. Organisations generally know one another, cooperate with each other, refer clients between services, and have a good understanding of the support provided by other organisations.

Intentions to move

The IDPs surveyed had varying plans regarding their future stay in Vinnytsia. Alongside those who planned to remain in the city, there was also a substantial proportion of respondents who had no definite plans regarding their future place of residence (Figure 21).

Plan to stay in Vinnytsia (57%): more than half of the IDPs surveyed plan to stay in Vinnytsia. Comments from respondents suggest that for many, this is a firm decision: even if the situation improves and the opportunity to return home arises, they do not intend to return.

Figure 21. Plans of the IDPs surveyed regarding their future stay in Vinnytsia



"I've grown to love this city—I already think of it as home".

— Alina, 45

"We've settled in here already, made friends. Moving somewhere new all over again would mean new stress, a whole new round of adapting".

— Anastasiia, 32

Undecided about the future location (34%): One in three respondents was uncertain about where they would be living in the future. However, this uncertainty did not necessarily reflect doubts about staying in Vinnytsia or active plans to relocate. Rather, respondents' comments pointed to a broader sense of instability and the difficulty of planning for the future. Some associated this uncertainty with the possibility of losing their rented accommodation, while others referred to the awareness that the security situation could change dramatically again.

“Nothing really keeps me anywhere. I always tell my children, ‘Don’t get too attached to any one place’.”

— Oksana, 44

“It’s the housing situation. We could be asked to leave at any time, and then we’d have to move to another neighbourhood—or maybe even another city’.”

— Yuliia, 30

“If it becomes unsafe here, we’ll do exactly what we did in 2022—we’ll pack up our things and head off wherever we can. And after that... there’s no point making plans too far ahead right now’.”

— Stepan, 35

These accounts suggest that, for some respondents, uncertainty about the future was related less to plans to relocate than to the difficulty of viewing their current circumstances as permanent and making long-term plans.

Considering leaving Vinnytsia (10%): the share of respondents who reported plans to leave Vinnytsia remained relatively small. Among this group, the most common intended destination was another country (37%, or 4% of all respondents). A further 21% of those considering relocation (2% of all respondents) were considering returning home. This group also included respondents whose homes were located in temporarily occupied territories. The survey data do not allow for determining whether they were referring to returning in the near future or only after possible de-occupation.

At the same time, one respondent shared her observations about cases of IDPs returning to Mariupol while it remains under occupation. In her view, one reason for such returns may be the inability to find housing elsewhere.

“There are fewer and fewer people here now. People are leaving for other countries. And a lot of people are going back to Mariupol—sadly, they are—because they genuinely have nowhere else to live’.”

— Kateryna, 53

In addition to moving abroad or returning home, some respondents and experts mentioned another destination for relocation from Vinnytsia—other cities in Ukraine. According to their accounts, for some people from industrial cities who had relocated during the early stages of the full-scale invasion, the reason for moving again was the mismatch between their qualifications and the structure of the labour market in Vinnytsia, where industry is less developed than in their cities of origin. Under these circumstances, some IDPs chose not to retrain in Vinnytsia but instead moved to other cities, often closer to the front line, believing it would be easier to find work in their existing profession.

“People moved to Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia, Kryvyi Rih. Why? Because that’s where they can find work in their profession. Here, the only option is retraining. People couldn’t find their place here, so they moved on’.”

— Olena, 57

Overall, somewhat older respondents were more likely to report plans to leave. Among respondents aged 18–35, 8% stated that they planned to relocate, compared with 14% among those aged 51–59. At

the same time, older respondents who were considering leaving were more likely to be planning a return to their pre-war place of residence.

(a) The role of employment in future planning

Some respondents said they would consider relocating if more attractive employment opportunities became available, most often in larger cities.

"If, for example, I found a really good job in another city, I'd definitely think about moving".

— Fedir, 27

"I'll stay wherever the work is. If I'm offered a job in Kyiv, I'll move to Kyiv".

— Maryna, 51

At the same time, the survey findings do not suggest that unemployed IDPs are more likely to leave the city. Employed and unemployed respondents reported similar intentions regarding their future place of residence, and most respondents did not plan to leave Vinnytsia in the near future. This suggests that the lower employment level among IDPs is unlikely to be explained by the temporary nature of their stay in Vinnytsia. Rather, the employment of IDPs **should be viewed as a long-term challenge for the local community**.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Research Methodology

This study was conducted using a mixed-methods approach, combining a structured survey of IDPs (hereafter, the quantitative component) with semi-structured in-depth individual interviews and focus group discussions with IDPs and experts on employment and vocational training (hereafter, the qualitative component).

Both the quantitative and qualitative components used **purposive sampling**.

Minimum selection criteria for respondents to the IDP interviews (quantitative and qualitative methods): IDPs aged 18–59 who were forced to leave as a result of the war (including those who left from 2014 onwards) and who, at the time of the survey, had been living in Vinnytsia for at least three months. The following were not taken into account: formal IDP status and region of residence before the war.

(a) Quantitative Component

The study was constructed using a **quota-based non-probability sampling**. Data collection was conducted at 75 locations across Vinnytsia. Data collection took place from April 16 to May 5, 2026.

Due to the absence of a complete and accessible sampling frame for IDPs in Vinnytsia, probability sampling methods were not considered. As a result, a quota-based sampling approach was utilised, using the best available data to account for the gender and age characteristics of the target population. Thus, the sample formed is classified as non-probability, and the results obtained on this basis should not be considered statistically representative.

The gender and age quotas were established on the basis of IOM data¹⁹ for January 2026 (Table 2).

Limitations: due to the lack of sufficiently detailed data broken down by age, the '21+' age group was treated as equivalent to the '18+', whilst the age of 60 was treated as equivalent to 59. Furthermore, the source data is aggregated at the raion level, whilst the quotas are applied at the settlement level. Finally, the quota benchmarks are derived from IDP registration data after 2022, whilst the survey sample includes both unregistered IDPs and IDPs who relocated before 2022. A detailed justification of the methodology and a description of the limitations are available on the IMPACT Initiatives repository.²¹

Table 2. Breakdown of respondents by gender and age quota

Age and gender	Female %	Male %	Overall %	Female N	Male N	Overall N
18-30	14%	9%	22%	57	35	92
31-50	41%	18%	58%	163	71	234
51-59	13%	6%	20%	51	23	74
Overall	68%	32%	100%	271	129	400

²¹ The quota calculations were based on data obtained from the IOM Registered IDP Dashboard: <https://dtm.iom.int/online-interactive-resources/registered-idp-dashboard>.

(b) Qualitative component

The qualitative component explores various thematic areas, covering three distinct categories of participants:

1. Interviews with IDPs. Fifteen semi-structured in-depth individual interviews were conducted with internally displaced people living in Vinnytsia. The study covers three main employment profiles: employed, the unemployed who are actively seeking work, and the self-employed or entrepreneurs.

Diversity quota: to take into account the wide range of employment pathways resulting from diverse life trajectories, the study included:

- To capture the perspectives of different genders: five men and ten women (in a ratio of 1:3, in line with the gender distribution of IDPs in the Vinnytsia raion according to IOM data²²);
- To examine the links between family composition and employment: five IDPs (women) who are single parents;
- To understand labour market trends related to age and professional experience: three IDPs aged 51–59, four aged 18–30, and the remainder (eight) aged 31–50.
- To address various employment-related life situations: nine respondents in paid employment, three unemployed and three self-employed (small business owners);

2. Interviews with representatives of organisations implementing professional training programmes in Vinnytsia, including reskilling, upskilling and vocational training. Seven interviews were conducted with key informants. The informants were representatives of state vocational education institutions (2), staff from programmes run by NGOs and international organisations (3), state employment support agencies (1) and a private educational institution (1). The interviews focused on the development and implementation of programmes, the profiles of IDP programme participants, the involvement of employers and systemic barriers to access.

3. Interviews with case management and employment support specialists who assist IDPs in finding employment. This included one focus group discussion with seven participants and one key informant interview. Participants included representatives of public employment institutions, NGOs, and the private sector (a business association). The discussion involved frontline practitioners with experience supporting IDPs, including their expertise in referral pathway mechanisms and the provision of first-line employment support services.

All interviews were conducted from April 24 to May 4, 2026.

²² The detailed methodology is available at: https://repository.impact-initiatives.org/document/impact/3a7c0fbf/UKR2602_ToR_IDP_Pathways_to_Employment_to_share.pdf

Annex 2: Expert recommendations developed during the workshop for addressing key barriers to IDP employment across thematic areas

Based on the discussions held during the workshop, participants developed a number of recommendations aimed at addressing the key barriers to IDP employment. The recommendations are structured around three key thematic areas of barriers to IDP employment. For each thematic area, two recommendations are presented, each developed independently by one of the two workshop participant groups. Each recommendation also includes the responsible actors identified by participants, as well as potential challenges to its implementation.

Nº	Barrier area	Existing solutions	Proposed solutions	Details	Responsible actors	Challenges and risks
1	Personal and family circumstances (childcare or care for relatives, health problems, psychological exhaustion) that complicate employment	Psychologists at State Employment Centres, social service centres, resilience centres, the "Ty Yak" ("How Are You") programme, career counsellors at the State Employment Centre, Civil society organisations, charitable foundations, veteran support specialists.	Comprehensive employment support.	- Strengthening mechanisms for early identification of individuals who need additional employment support; - Improving the system for comprehensive needs assessment and inter-agency referral between service providers; - Introducing a clear coordination and support mechanism between different services until the necessary assistance is received.	Hotline (regional/municipal), staff of administrative service centres, community social managers (or other entry points where IDPs seek assistance). Followed by referral to narrow-specialty specialists.	- IDPs' lack of awareness of available support opportunities. - People getting "lost" between institutions (a person becomes disengaged, demotivated, etc.).
2		Provision of psychological support (Employment Centres and civil society organisations); civil society organisation-led projects; hotlines; Vinnytsia City Social Services Centres; referrals from family doctors; Resilience Centres.	Comprehensive round-the-clock psychological support. Organisation of informational activities on mental health care.	- Initial interview to identify the level of suicide risk and risk to others; - Crisis counselling; - Routing of psychological support according to the person's needs; - Improving the referral system between providers of psychological assistance.	Civil society organisations, charitable foundations, the Ministry of Health, family doctors, local authorities, and employers.	- Bias and stigmatisation; - Lack of awareness; - Stereotypical thinking; - Absence of comprehensive support at the place of residence.
3	Availability and relevance of training and employment services to the needs of different IDP groups.	State employment and retraining programmes.	Better matching between vacancies and available workforce.	- Incentivising employers to hire people from different population categories (people with disabilities, older people, parents with young children); - Providing subsidies and preferences to employers who hire these categories; - Expanding the regulatory framework; - Including more employers and population	State Employment Centre and local self-government bodies	- Low level of trust in the State Employment Service and authorities; - Not all employers meet the criteria for state programmes; - Insufficient funding.

				categories in the programmes.		
4		State programmes (vouchers, certificates, and grants). Civil society organisation-funded training programmes. Online learning platforms.	High-quality career guidance for both adults and youth at the state level. Establishing career centres in communities that profile according to local labour market demand.	Develop an algorithm for adult career guidance that takes labour market needs into account and ensures interaction with employers and educational institutions.	Local self-government bodies, the Ministry of Economy, employers, educational institutions.	• Limited funding sources for implementing such programmes. • Building a system for training career guidance specialists. • The need to create a toolkit for career guidance practitioners.
5	Employment does not always ensure economic integration (low incomes, high housing costs, and unstable employment conditions).	"eOselia" and other housing support initiatives, as well as rental subsidies for IDPs.	Development of incentive programmes for IDPs	• Providing IDPs with social housing in the community; • Transport benefits (public transport, e-scooters); • Retraining programmes for IDPs; • Providing state subsidies to employers for housing rental for IDP employees.	Local self-government bodies and other public authorities. State Employment Service, Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, educational institutions, the state, Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine.	• Insufficient funding; • Difficulty introducing legislative changes; • Limited housing stock, particularly a shortage of housing meeting established quality criteria.
6		Temporary accommodation sites; compensation of utility costs.	Economic stability through addressing IDPs' housing needs. Development of a state housing programme for IDPs, with the possibility of detailing it at the territorial community level according to needs.	• Preferential loans; • Mortgages with a rate of no more than 7% per annum for up to 30 years; • Subsidy programmes or additional benefits for employers who provide IDPs with housing (through construction or rental); • State budget subventions; • Construction of municipal housing; • Engaging international donors to fund such programmes.	Public authorities, business, donors, local self-government	• Long implementation timelines; • Bureaucratic procedures; • Conflict of business interests.