

IDP Pathways to Employment in Vinnytsia

Vinnytsia, July 22, 2026

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CONTENTS

- 1** **Current employment situation and financial well-being**
- 2** **Changes following relocation to Vinnytsia**
- 3** **Reasons for losing employment after displacement**
- 4** **Skills development and vocational training**
- 5** **Plans**

Methodology and Research Coverage



Research focus: examining the employment situation, barriers and reasons for unemployment, and local-level employment support mechanisms.



Participation criteria: working-age IDPs (18-59 years old) who relocated to Vinnytsia due to the negative consequences of the war, regardless of the year of displacement (after 2014 or after 2022) and irrespective of whether they have an official IDP certificate.

Limitations:

The sample is non-probability, and the findings should therefore not be considered statistically representative.

The study is based on a **mixed-methods approach:**

Surveys

Structured surveys of
400 IDPs in Vinnytsia

In-depth interviews

15 interviews with IDPs
of different age, gender,
employment status, and
family situation.

**7 interviews with
specialists** in reskilling
and vocational training

1 focus group discussion
with 7 participants +
1 interview with
employment specialists

The detailed research methodology is available at the following link:

https://repository.impact-initiatives.org/document/impact/3a7c0fbf/UKR2602_ToR_IDP_Pathways_to_Employment_to_share.pdf



Current employment situation and financial well-being

Most surveyed IDPs are employed full-time, with lower employment levels among respondents aged 51-59, partly linked to early retirement



65% are economically active
(**56%** employed and **9%** self-employed)

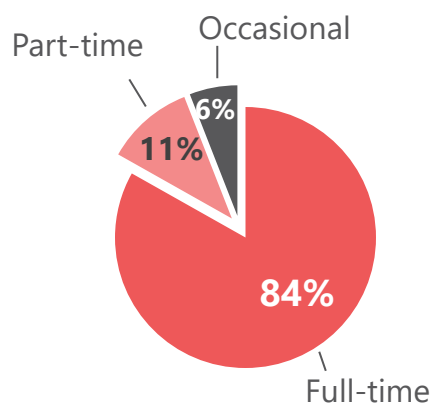
25% were not employed / **8%** were studying / **3%** were retired



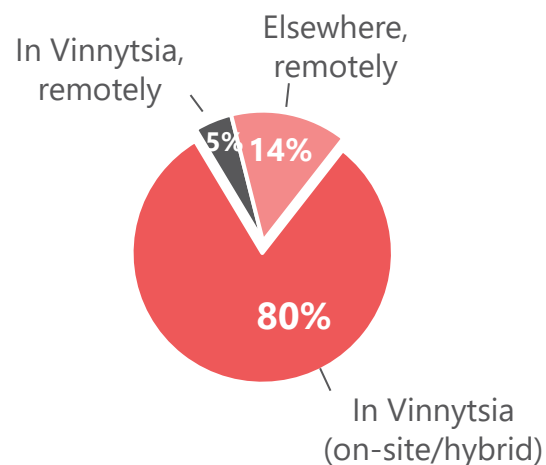
Although the share of employed respondents aged 51-59 is lower than among those aged 36-50 (62% vs. 75%), this is not accompanied by a significantly higher share of unemployed respondents (28% vs. 24%).

✦ In contrast, among respondents aged 51-59, a higher share had already retired (9%), and the prevalence of disability was considerably higher.

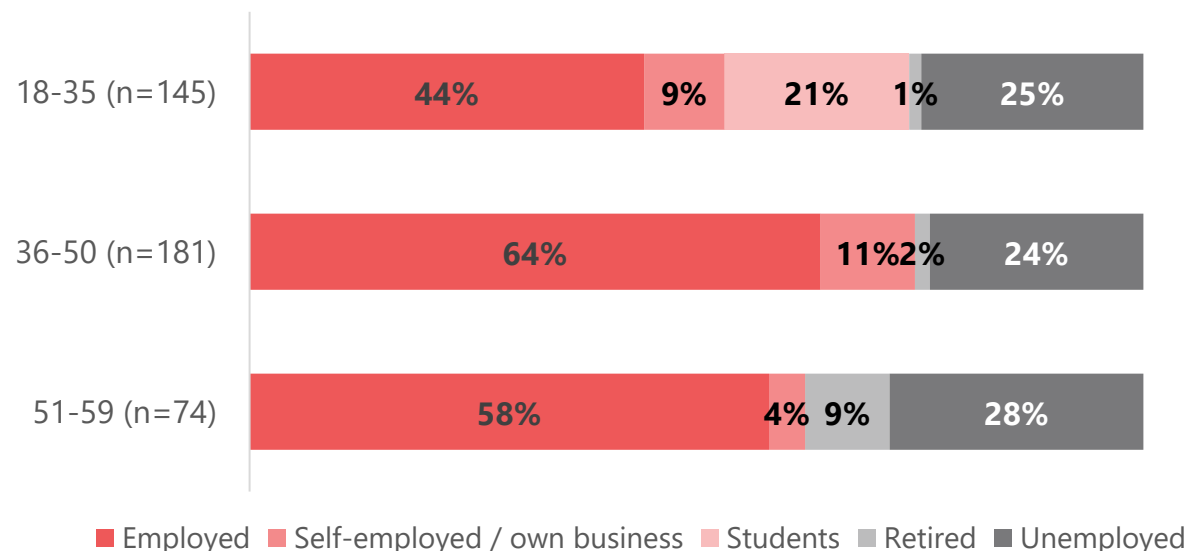
EMPLOYMENT TYPE



LOCATION



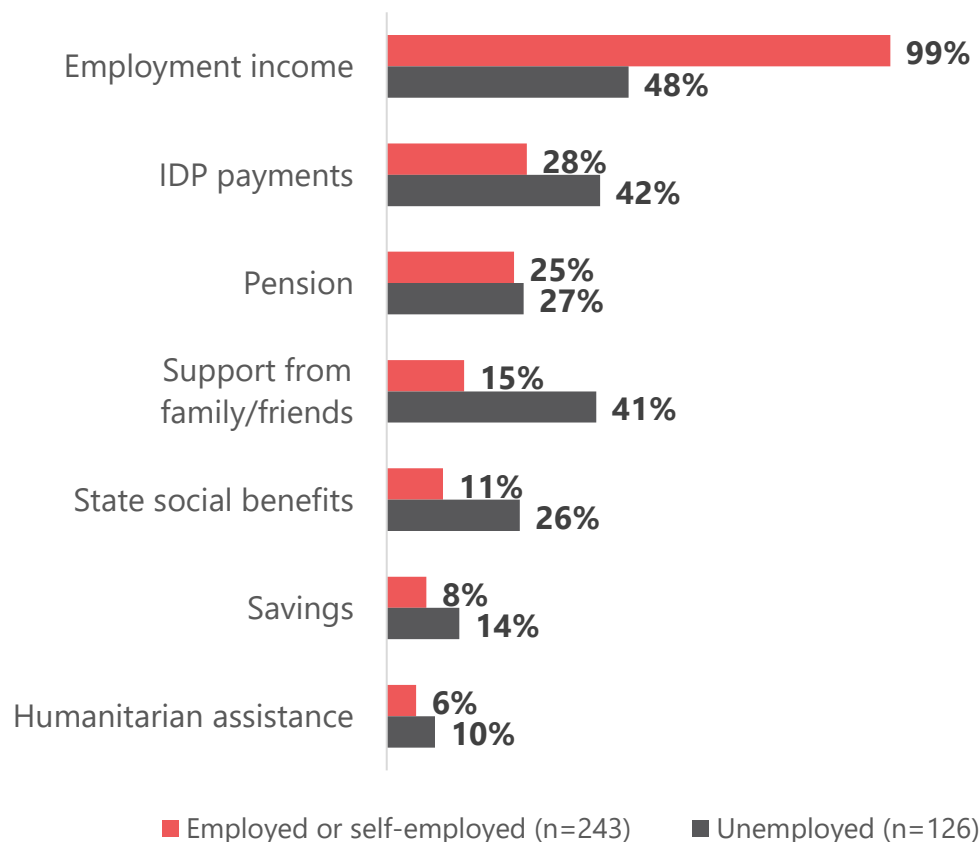
Employment among IDPs by age group



Many surveyed IDP households continue to face financial vulnerability

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

*The question allowed for multiple answers



52% had an income **below 10,000 UAH** per person in the household.

16% — **below 5,000 UAH.**

 75% of surveyed IDPs rented housing and 6% — a room, while **63% described rent as a significant or very significant burden.**



One in three (33%) reported receiving IDP assistance payments

In contrast, respondents who had stopped receiving IDP assistance payments often described them as an important source for covering rent, while the loss of these payments was perceived **as a factor negatively affecting their well-being.**



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.

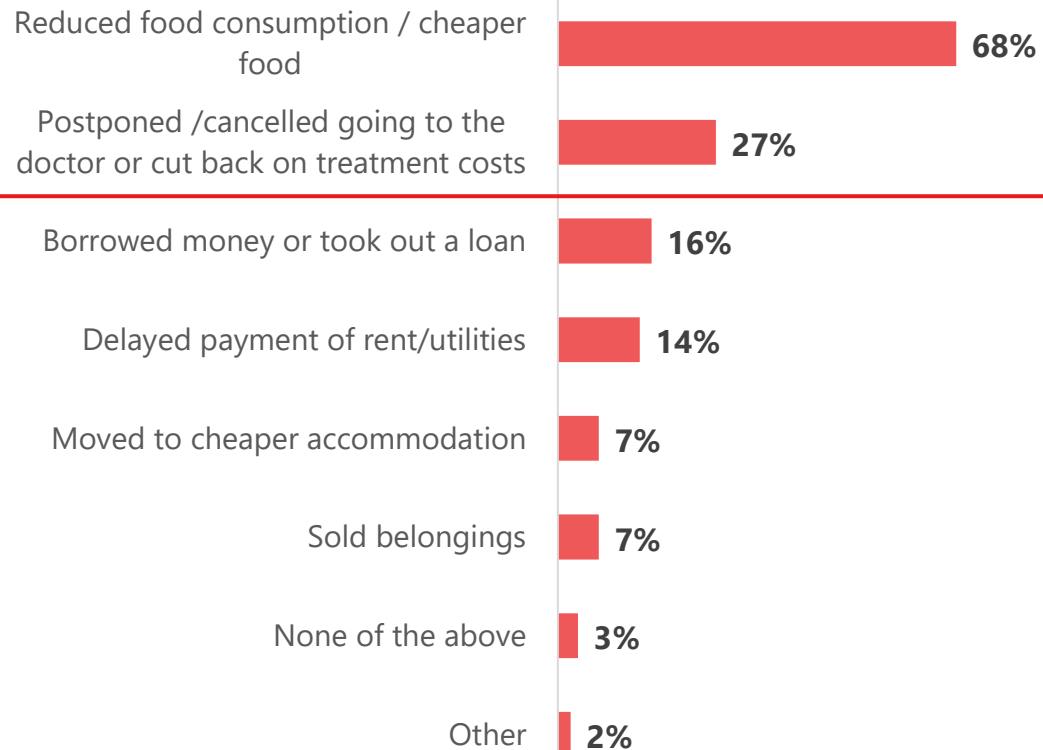


*Employment income among unemployed respondents comes from other household members' earnings.

The majority of surveyed IDP households reported reducing expenses due to a lack of funds

Measures taken by IDP respondents due to a lack of funds

*The question allowed for multiple answers



n=400



80% of respondents reduced certain expenses or looked for additional sources of income due to a lack of money. Households most often cut spending on **food, medical services, and treatment.**



16% of respondents reported having to rely on loans or credit due to financial constraints.



The credit card is constantly in use.



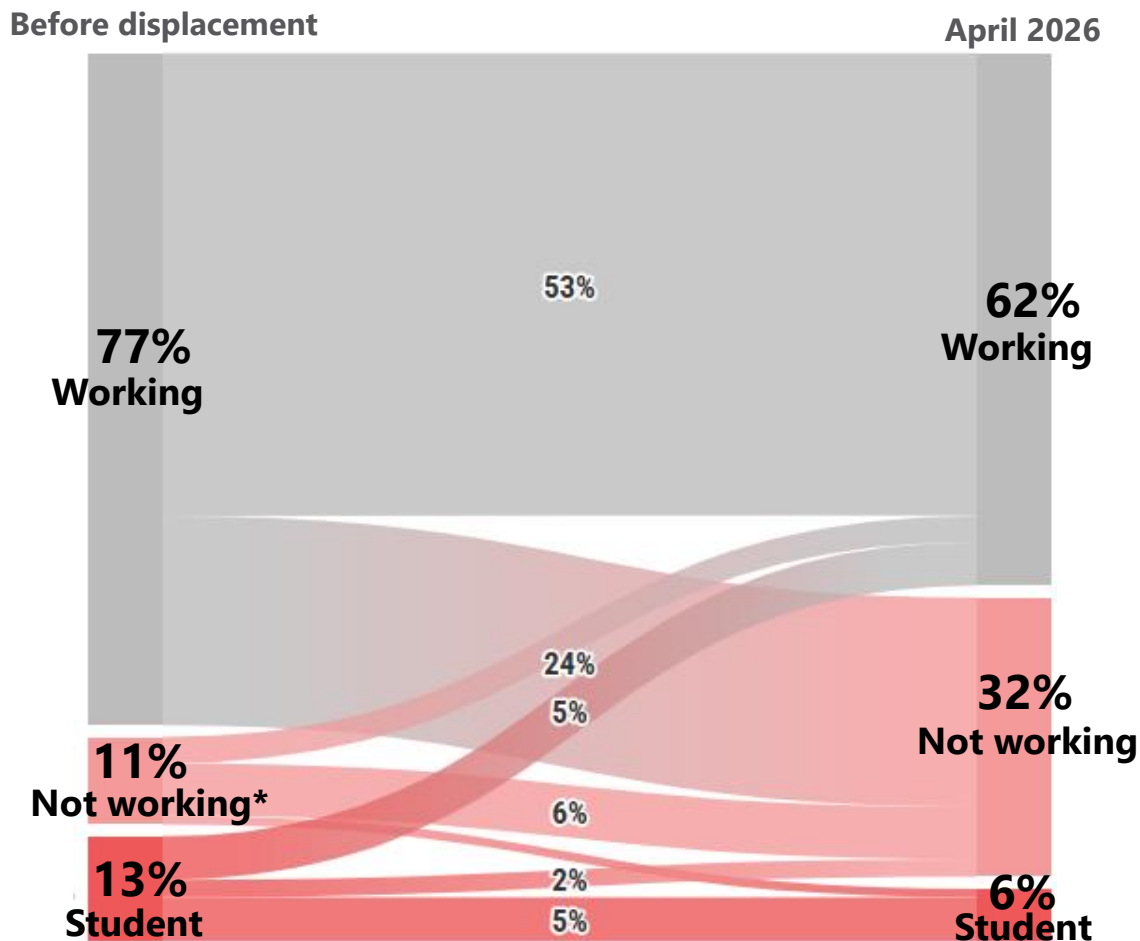
Although unemployed respondents reported reducing expenses slightly more often than employed respondents (**84% vs. 78%**), the difference is relatively small, which may indicate that **financial vulnerability is widespread among IDPs regardless of employment status.**



Changes following relocation to Vinnytsia

How did the employment situation change after moving to Vinnytsia compared to respondents' situation before displacement?

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



Three-quarters of surveyed respondents (75%) relocated to Vinnytsia in 2022-2023 and have been living there for at least three years. **Despite this, employment has not yet recovered to previous levels:**



77% → 62%: the share of employed respondents decreased compared to before displacement

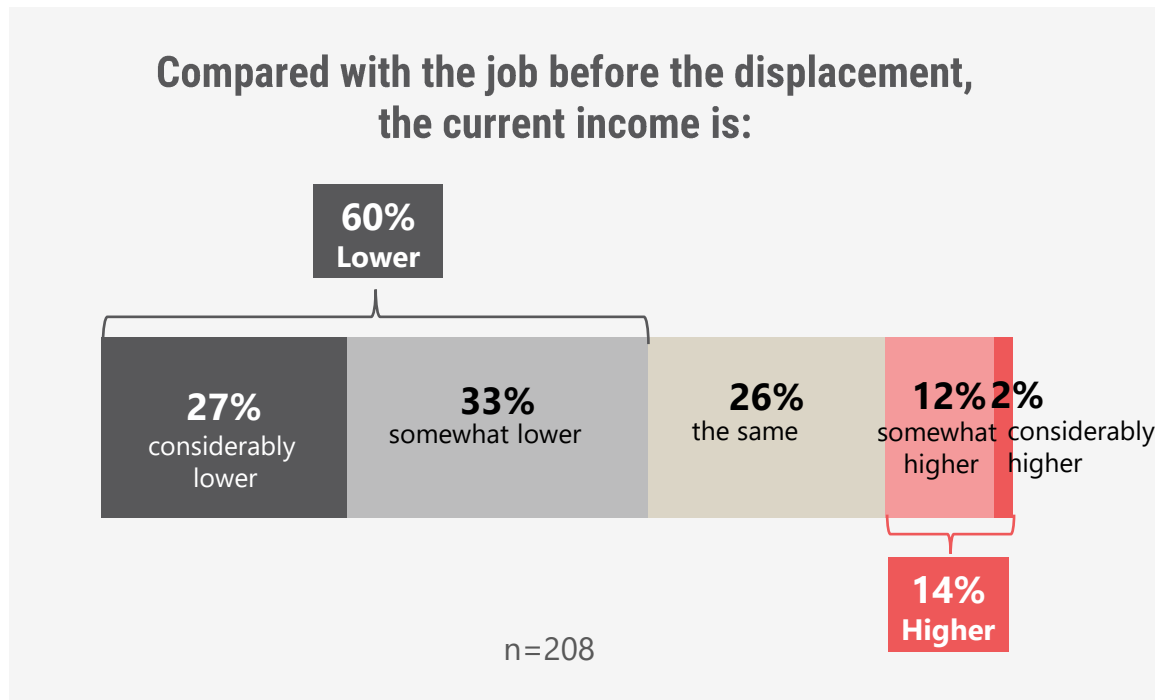


Nearly one in three of those who were previously employed (or 24% of all respondents) remain unemployed.

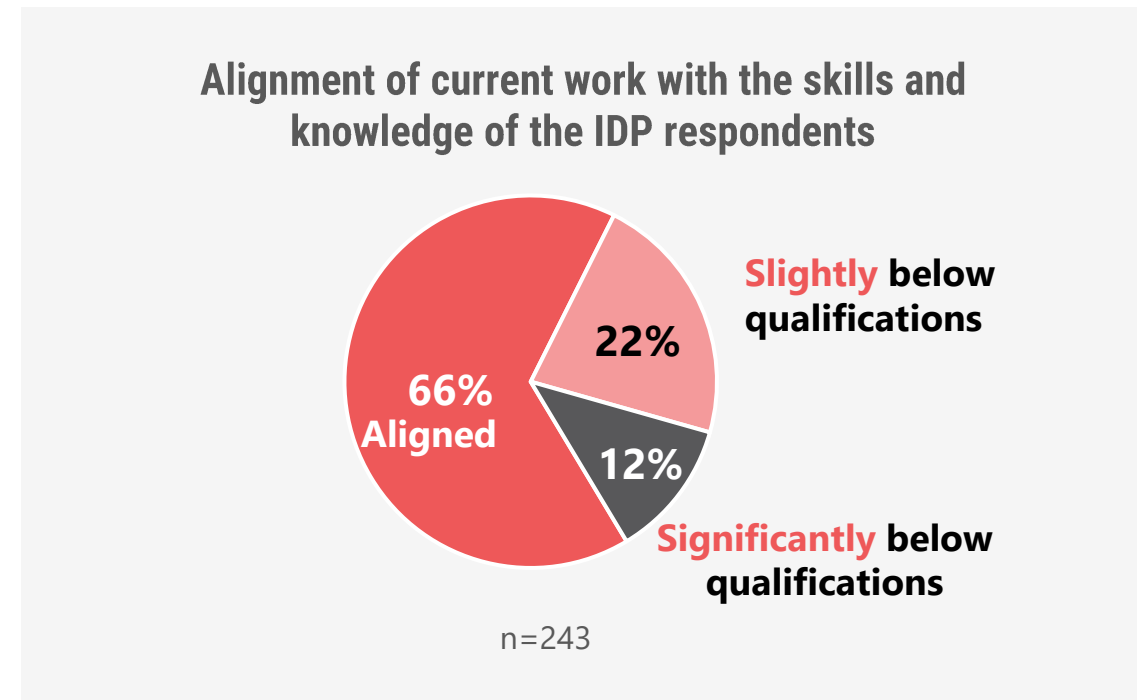
*Those engaged in episodic work (temporary or irregular employment) are included in this category.

Employment after relocation did not always result in a lower qualification level, but was often associated with reduced income

For many employed IDP respondents, income levels remained lower after relocation compared to before displacement:



At the same time, many respondents did not report a decrease in the qualification level required for their current job:





Reasons for losing employment after displacement:

- *Care responsibilities*
- *Qualification mismatches*
- *Psychological well-being*

Most respondents were willing to work but faced barriers, while around one-third were not looking for employment

AMONG THOSE NOT CURRENTLY EMPLOYED:

67% wanted to work:

they either actively searched for a job or wanted to work but were not engaged in job search activities.

One in three (33%) *were not looking for a job and did not have the desire or motivation to find one.*

Among those willing to work, the main barriers were:

1

Family and personal circumstances

Childcare responsibilities, health conditions

2

Qualification mismatch

Lack of jobs matching their qualifications or required skills

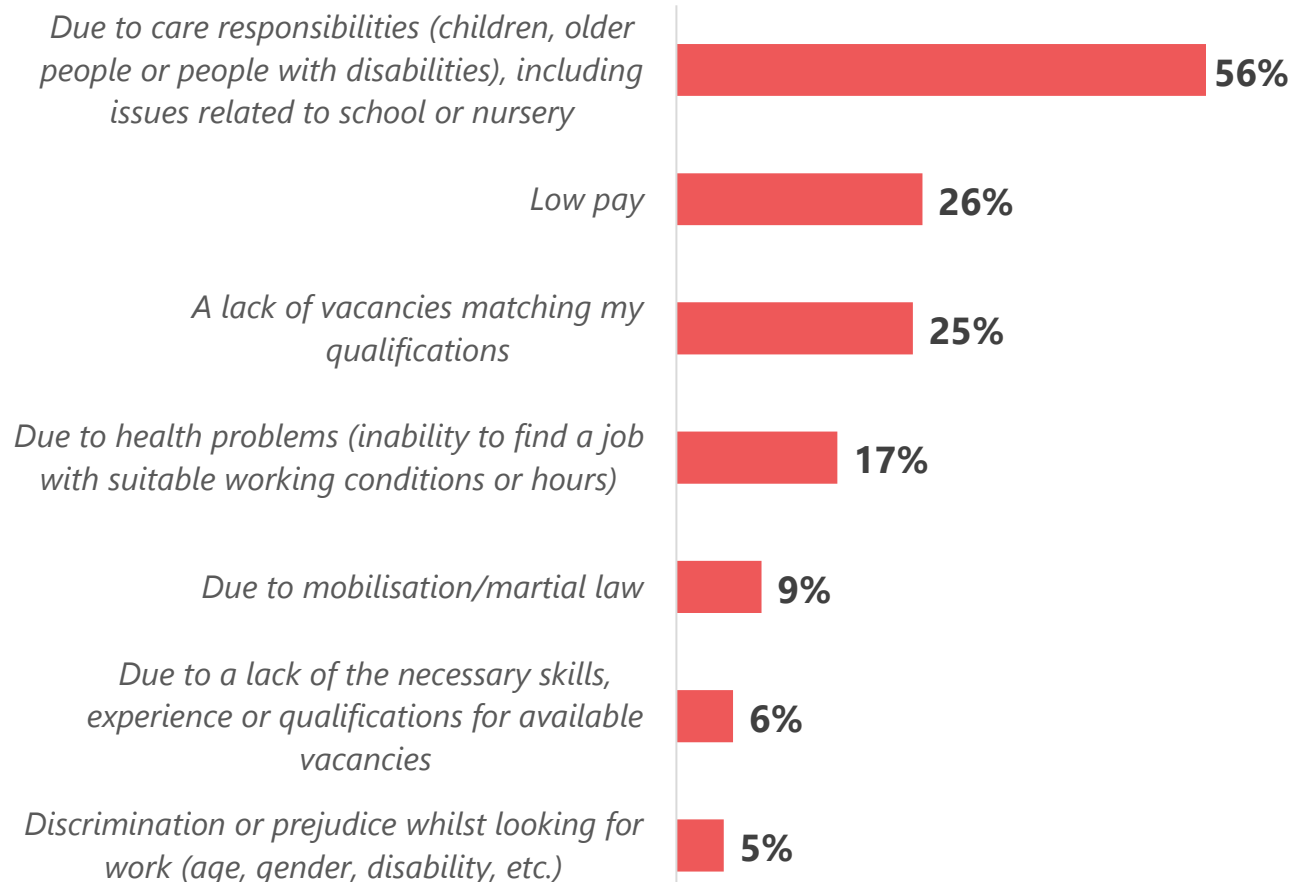
3

Working conditions

Primarily, low wages

Top 7 barriers to employment among the IDPs surveyed who are looking for work or would like to work

**The question allowed for multiple answers*

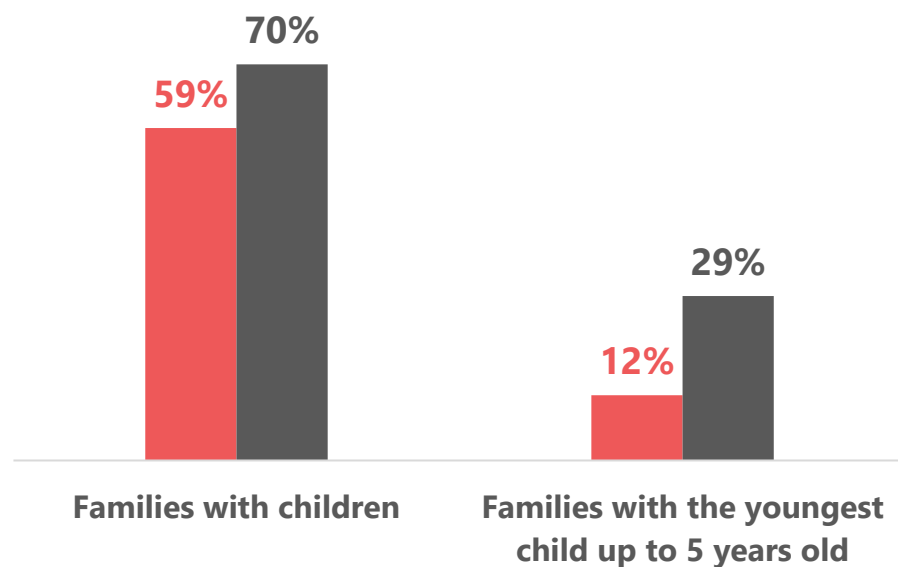


n=77

Women with children, especially mothers of preschool-aged children, were the group most at risk of losing employment after displacement

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

■ Still working (n=208) ■ Stopped working (n=93)



Surveyed women were more likely than men to report **not being employed (32% vs. 11%)** and having primary responsibility for daily care of children, older people, or people with disabilities (**52% vs. 21%**).

Those with childcare responsibilities were not always willing to return to work:

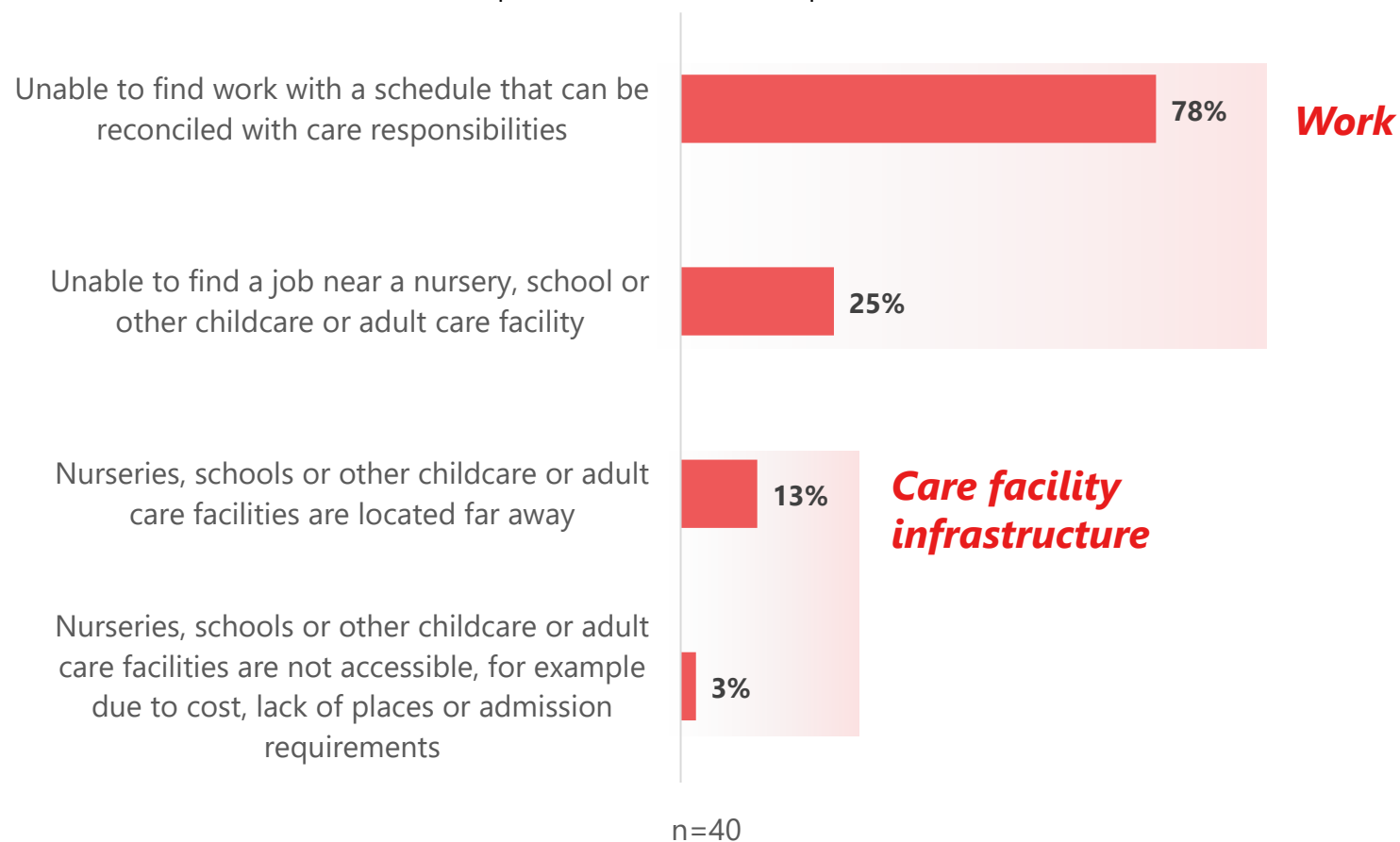


One in three non-employed surveyed parents who identified childcare responsibilities as the reason for not working did not plan to enter the labour market, as caregiving was their conscious priority at this stage of life.

For many surveyed parents, the main barrier was the difficulty of combining work with family responsibilities

Barriers to employment related to caring for children or other family members

*The question allowed for multiple answers



*The key challenge was not primarily the availability of kindergartens or other care facilities, but the lack of job opportunities that could be **combined with childcare responsibilities**.*

Flexible work arrangements are a necessary condition for many IDP respondents' employment, especially women with children

Those who identified **childcare** as their primary responsibility more often mentioned flexible work arrangements and somewhat less often reduced working hours:



61%

— cannot work in jobs requiring permanent physical presence at the workplace: 48% require a hybrid format (several days working from home), while 11% require a fully remote format.



60%

— can only work with a flexible schedule.



45%

— can only work half-days



25%

— looked for irregular or occasional work.



In contrast, 93% of vacancies in Ukraine involve work requiring physical presence at the workplace, indicating a mismatch between the needs of some IDPs and the conditions prevailing in the labour market.

For the majority of surveyed parents, the main barrier was the difficulty of combining work with family responsibilities

Existing support mechanisms

did not always help address these challenges.

During interviews, respondents shared the following examples:



"Municipal Nanny"

Women most often mentioned this programme, which they viewed as an opportunity to return to work, but were unable to use it due to its eligibility conditions.



"Vlasna Sprava"

One of the business grant recipients wanted to temporarily suspend her participation in the programme after becoming pregnant; however, such an option was not available.



Kindergarten places

Another respondent reported that her child had to wait for a long time to be admitted to a kindergarten due to the lack of available places, despite being entitled to priority admission.

“

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.

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.

If I had a nanny, I could work without any problems. I would use part of my salary to pay for her services.

”

Educational attainment is one of the factors influencing the likelihood of re-employment after relocation

Among surveyed IDPs who retained or regained employment after relocation, people with higher education **were more common (72% vs. 51%)**:



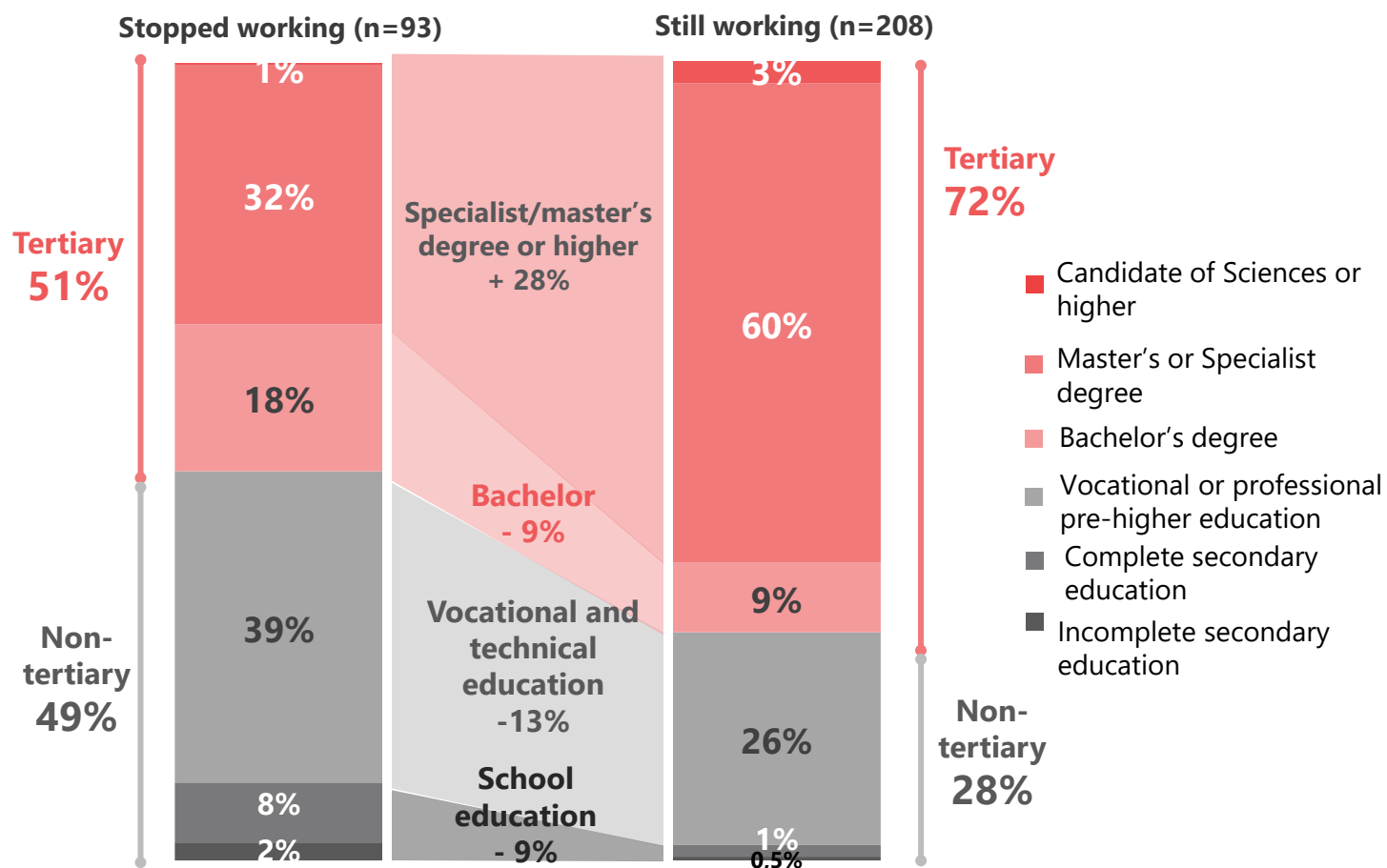
The largest difference was observed among those with a **Specialist's or Master's degree**: the likelihood of re-employment was **twice as high** (60% vs. 32% among those who stopped working).



For those with a Bachelor's degree who had worked before relocation, by contrast, **the chances of finding employment in Vinnytsia were lower**: 9% vs. 18%.

In contrast, education below the higher education level, **including vocational education, reduced the likelihood of re-employment among those who had worked before relocation** (49% vs. 28%).

Comparison of the educational backgrounds of surveyed IDPs who were employed before the war but stopped working after relocation, with those who continued to work:



Previous professional experience also affects the likelihood of returning to work

Return to work after forced displacement is uneven and depends not only on motivation, but also on the previous professional profile of IDPs.

How **the type of occupation** before relocation influenced employment prospects after arrival in Vinnytsia:



Among employed IDPs, professionals such as **accountants, psychologists, lawyers, and IT specialists were more common** (48% vs. 28%).



Among those who did not regain employment, **people from service and administrative occupations** were more common – salespersons, administrators, cooks, and hairdressers; **34% vs. 19%**.

Despite the overall labour market shortage, some types of IDPs' professional experience may be less in demand or harder to adapt to the new local context.

How the **level of professional qualification** before relocation influenced the employment prospects of surveyed IDPs after arrival in Vinnytsia:

Comparison of the professional qualifications of those who were employed before the war but stopped working after relocation, with those who continued to work

STILL WORKING (n=208)

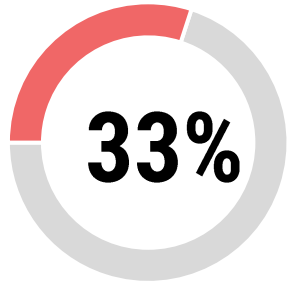


STOPPED WORKING (n=93)



■ High and mid-high ■ Average ■ Low

Psychological well-being influences readiness to seek employment and the ability to stay employed



33% of surveyed IDPs were not looking for work / did not have the desire or motivation to find employment



- Some surveyed IDPs and experts describe psychological stabilisation as an **important precondition for labour market participation**.



- The consequences of relocation may include a **loss of confidence in one's professional skills and difficulties adapting to a new environment**.

*I think I lost a lot of time because I did not seek psychological support and tried to adjust on my own. When I started seeing a psychologist, I began reflecting more on my life and setting new goals for myself. **I started looking for a job**, and things became much easier*

All my successful cases were achieved with the support of a psychologist. [...] During the first consultation, I conduct a needs assessment and understand that the person is still very far from returning to work. [...] The priority, in my view, is motivational counselling — there can be up to five sessions within one case, when you talk to the person and help them regain confidence that they can succeed.

— Employment counsellor, non-governmental organisation

Some surveyed IDPs experienced biased attitudes from employers during their job search



31%

Among surveyed IDPs who had ever searched for work, some experienced biased attitudes or discrimination during their job search

Reasons behind bias:



16%

By IDP status



8%

By age



7%

By region of origin

Although these cases were more common at the beginning of displacement, IDPs reported that some employers still perceive them as **temporary workers or doubt their employment stability.**

“*The perception that IDPs are temporary people who may leave and move away was present in every workplace.*”



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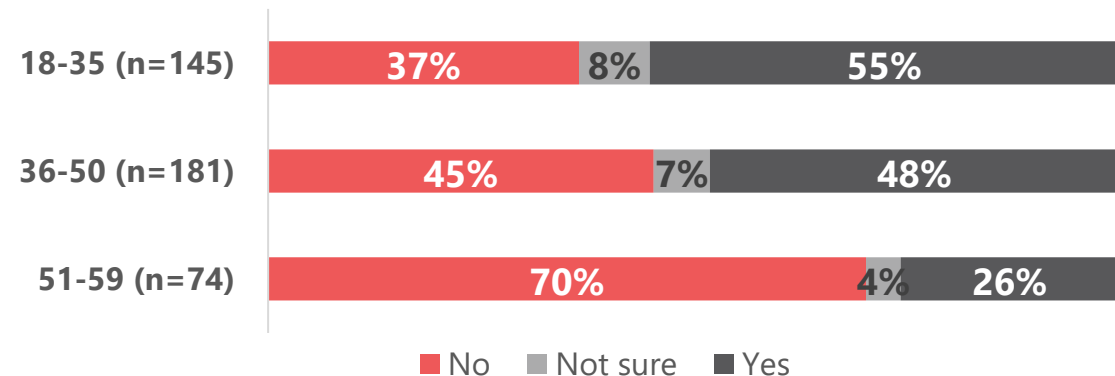
Skills development and vocational training

Need for training and skills development

Nearly half of surveyed IDPs (47%) reported the need for new knowledge and skills **to improve their career prospects or professional opportunities.**

This need is highest among younger age groups but remains relevant among older respondents as well.

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

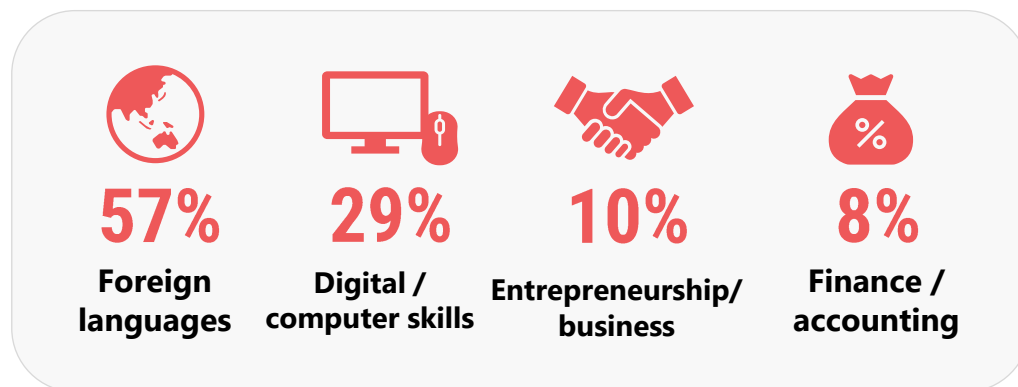


41%
Advancing in
current
profession

vs.

22%
Learning a new
profession /
reskilling

MOST COMMONLY IDENTIFIED AREAS FOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT



*Respondents often mentioned **learning a foreign language to access remote work opportunities** or positions in international organisations.*



The need for training was not limited to searching for a new profession. For many IDPs, the need for training was related to adapting to new labour market requirements or updating skills after a forced break in employment.

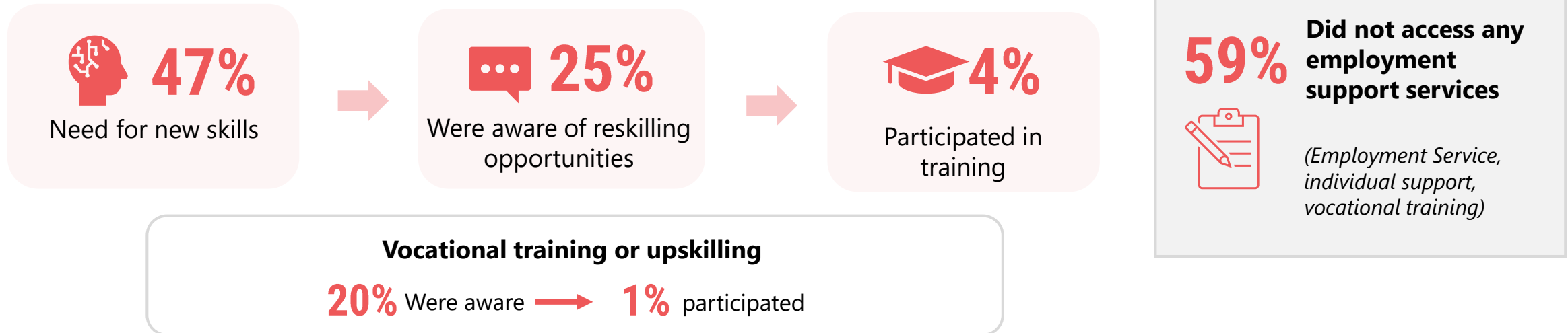


After a few years, I had already forgotten how to work with a computer... If I were asked to work with spreadsheets now, I wouldn't be able to do it anymore.



Despite the high demand for professional skills, most surveyed IDPs had not participated in training programmes

GAP BETWEEN NEEDS, AWARENESS AND ACTUAL PARTICIPATION



Some respondents found employment or information about opportunities through acquaintances or social media and therefore did not turn to formal services.



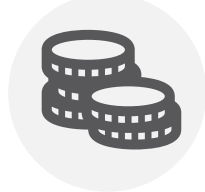
Lower levels of participation in programmes do not always reflect low awareness or distrust towards them.

Despite motivation, IDPs' participation in training is often hindered by practical barriers



Financial constraints

Long training programmes often mean a loss of income, while financial support is not provided by all programmes



Low expected returns

When the pay offered after completing the courses is low, the time investment seems unwarranted



Eligibility criteria

Some IDPs were unable to participate due to programme requirements (date of displacement, age, participant category).



Mismatch with participants' needs

Not all courses matched respondents' professional backgrounds or personal circumstances



Inconvenient schedule

Training is often conducted during working hours, which limits participation among employed IDPs

“ It is not enough to simply give people the opportunity to learn... When a person is studying, they are not working. They still need to earn a living ”
— Reskilling specialist

The most effective programmes are those that combine training with practical support and employment opportunities



**In-demand
profession**



**Financial support
during training**



Follow-up support

Training tailored to employers' needs

Programmes were most effective when the acquired skills matched the actual needs of the local labour market and were linked to further employment opportunities.



We try to train people based on employers' needs and refer them to jobs.



Financial support

For many IDPs, the opportunity to receive a stipend, grant or other forms of support during training was a critical condition for participation.



People need to be guided from the very beginning to the very end... One or two setbacks, and all their confidence disappears.



Individualised support

Programmes that included mentoring, career counselling and post-training support were particularly valued by respondents.



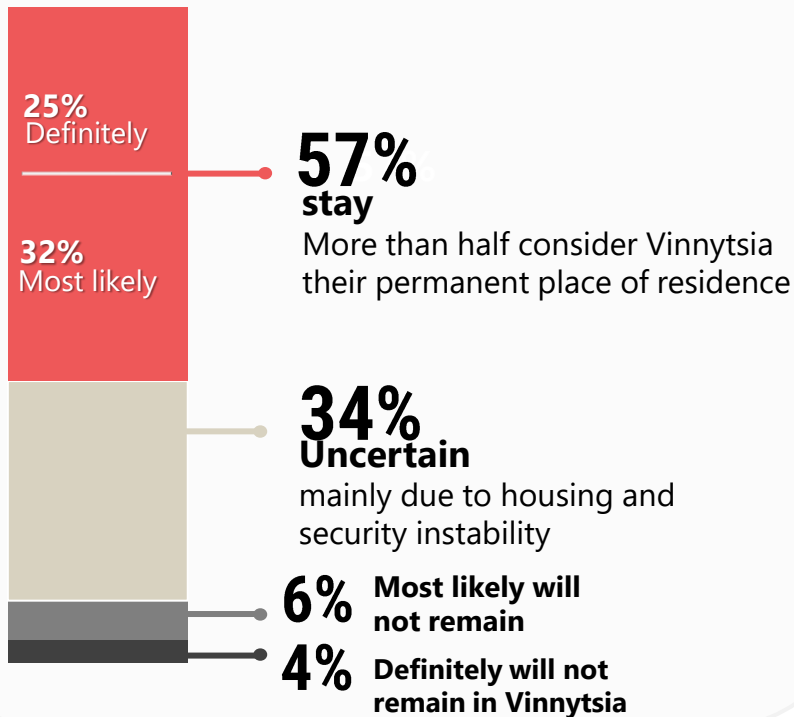
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Plans

The majority of interviewed IDPs see their future in Vinnytsia

Surveyed IDPs' plans for staying in Vinnytsia in the future

n=400



Even if the situation improves and the possibility of returning home emerges, many IDPs no longer plan to return.

"I have grown to love this city – I already see it as home."

Uncertainty ≠ plans to relocate

"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"

"Nothing really keeps me anywhere. I always tell my children, 'Don't get too attached to any one place'"

"It comes down to housing: we can be asked to leave at any time, and we may have to change our neighbourhood, or even the city"



Employed and unemployed IDPs demonstrate similar plans regarding their future stay in Vinnytsia. This suggests that unemployed IDPs are also likely to remain in Vinnytsia, making their employment a long-term challenge for the community.

Thank you for your attention!

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Questions



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Other analytical products:

Collective sites:

- Progress towards the integration of IDPs in collective sites in Vinnytsia:
 - [February 2024](#)
 - [September 2023](#)
- Dashboard: «[IDP Collective Site Monitoring](#)» (includes 72 sites in Vinnytsia Oblast)

Socio-economic analysis:

- [Socioeconomic assessment of micro, small and medium enterprises in Vinnytska oblast](#) – February 2024
- [Rapid Economic Assessment in Vinnytsia Oblast](#) — June 2023

Refugee return:

- Dashboard: [Ukrainian refugees and returnees to Ukraine](#)
- Life after returning: [Livelihoods, needs and intentions of returnees to Ukraine](#)
- Unsafe returns [dashboard]: [what makes refugees return to Ukraine and settle in the frontline areas of the country?](#)
- Unsafe returns [report]: [what makes refugees return to Ukraine and settle in the frontline areas of the country?](#)
- Back, but not necessarily home: [refugee experiences upon returning to Ukraine and becoming IDPs](#) – August 2024
- Predictors of return: [What do we know about Ukrainian refugees returning home since the full scale invasion?](#) – November 2023