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Refugees, IDPs or just Ukrainians? Local Online Media and Perceptions of Donbas Internally Displaced Persons (2014–2018)

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The purpose of this paper is to define, through content and frame analysis, the peculiarities in the representation of Ukrainian internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine's local media and to compare this case with previous findings about the general peculiarities of perceptions of IDPs in the mass media. Two Ukrainian news sites were studied (2014–2018), giving a total 328 news items. My study revealed that the mass media do not differentiate between the terms 'refugee' and IDP and describe these latter as passive people (174 mentions as opposed to 77 mentions for active people). However, in the Ukrainian case, IDPs were in the top three of the most popular sources at the beginning of the resettlement (2014–2015). Later, the coverage became an episodic one, with publications about the topic typically having only one source – officials. The mass media preferred such frames as: 'generalisation', 'victim' and 'help-receiver'. The 'threat' frame was less often used; however, some aggressive and manipulative phrases were disseminated. A 'criminal' frame was not at all popular. Thus, the local press may be an important forum for IDPs; Ukrainian journalists were interested in their stories although the coverage needs some improvement (a more 'active' angle, clear reference to IDPs as IDPs and not refugees and stories of socialisation etc.).

Keywords: Ukrainian migrants, Ukrainian mass media, IDPs, news sources, internet-journalism

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Introduction

Ukrainian IDPs are people who had to leave their homes because of the Russian-Ukrainian war, which began in February 2014.[1] Since 21 November 2013, there have been Euromaidan (or Revolution of Dignity) protests, as a result of which the President of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovych, fled to Russia and the Ukrainian parliament voted to remove him from power. The head of parliament, Oleksandr Turchynov, was appointed as Acting President. For pro-Kremlin propaganda, it was an opportunity to show Ukraine as a divided nation, with Donbas (the Donetsk and Luhansk regions) and Crimea being in the danger zone because of some mythical 'Maidan Nazis' and the Ukrainian government seen as a 'junta'. Any 'defense of Russian-speaking people' became a justification for the aggression. In February 2014, Russia annexed Crimea. In March, in the cities and towns of Donbas, numerous pro-Russian meetings were held and Russian-backed separatists proclaimed the formation of Donetsk and Luhansk as People's Republics. In April of that year, the separatists attacked and, in some cases, took over administrative buildings while Russian saboteurs seized several cities.

The National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine declared an Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO).[2] There was a debate in Ukrainian society about declaring war on Russia. However, an ATO was chosen in order to hold presidential elections. The ATO was conducted until April 2018, after which it was re-named the Operation of United Forces (OUF), with neither definition including the word 'war'. This also led to some speculation about the interpretation of the events and the roles of the different sides. For IDPs, it meant the uncertainty of their status. In Ukrainian society and the mass media, several terms were used: 'refugees', 'migrants' or just 'Donbas inhabitants'. Thus, it was not clear who these people were, how they and the locals could co-exist or whether they had any legal status. Nor was there an unambiguous understanding of their motives to leave: was it war, political persecution or possible repressions, economic motives (to get a pension, for example) or maybe even a degree of espionage for the separatists? Therefore it is important to discover how Ukrainian IDPs were represented, how their image was portrayed in the mass media and which frames were used by journalists in this situation of total uncertainty (not the war itself but an 'operation').

According to official data from the Ministry of Social Policy in March 2021, there were 1,461,822 registered IDPs in Ukraine. However, the number of unregistered migrants was much higher. For Ukraine it was 'an unprecedented exodus of civilians from the conflict-affected territories' (Ivashchenko-Stadnik 2017: 26). Ukraine was a country with one of the highest numbers of IDPs (Sasse 2017). In Ukrainian legislation, migrants in Donbas and Crimea are defined as internally displaced persons (IDPs), with their rights and freedoms guaranteed. Article 14 of the Law of Ukraine 'On ensuring the rights and freedoms of internally displaced persons' forbids discrimination on the grounds of status. The mass media, especially locally, may be extremely helpful in their coverage of IDPs' rights and freedoms and their integration into new communities. Journalists may control local authorities, help IDPs with their resettlement and provide useful information for both IDPs and the local inhabitants who want to support them. However, according to several migration studies, journalists often portray migrants incorrectly through, for example, discrimination, stereotypes and even hate speech (Don and Lee 2014; Leudar, Hayes, Nekvapil and Baker 2008; Lueck, Due and Augoustinos 2015; Mihelj 2004; Santa Ana 1999). In modern scientific discourse there is still a lack of research about the IDPs' representation in the mass media (Apuke and Tunca 2019) and, as a rule, not local but national mass media outlets are used. In my research, I study the representation of Ukrainian IDPs in the regional press. Additionally, with a relatively large corpus of texts (328 publications over five years) it will be possible to see how the image of Ukrainian IDPs was formed, which techniques to portray IDPs were used and whether they changed over time.

It should be taken into account that Ukrainian regional journalism has some weaknesses. Ukrainian professional media organisations stress the local mass media's violation of professional standards, dependence

on government and local authorities, lack of professional journalists, cases of pro-Russian propaganda and coverage of the dissemination of political advertising (see POID 2021), together with research by the mass media in Eastern and Southern Ukraine (IMI 2021). Therefore, it is important to discover whether the Ukrainian local mass media spread prejudices and stereotypes about IDPs or whether their coverage is correct and neutral.

The Ukrainian case has somehow remained almost invisible to the Western mainstream press (Ramasubramanian and Miles 2018). Nor has it been studied in depth in scientific discourse; the current Russian-Ukrainian war, Russian propaganda and Russian geopolitical ambitions are more popular for scholars. Bearing this in mind, it is vital to observe IDPs' image formation and transformation over a significant period of time. Are there any changes in representation and framing? Additionally, the local press is the focus of this research, because it is a crucial in terms of community integration (Nielsen 2015). Therefore, the media may see IDPs differently (not international or all-national mass media, which are usually analysed by media researchers). Local media may introduce migrants as equal members of local communities or may deepen the division between them. As Ivashchenko-Stadnik (2017: 30) wrote: 'IDPs need more support from the host community. In order to get access to more resources, they need credibility to be accepted by the locals. In that respect, host communities cannot be underestimated as potentially powerful agents of change in IDPs' new lives'. Of course, local mass media are also crucial for covering IDPs problems, encouraging host-community assistance and forming credible images etc.

Thus, in this article, two popular local news outlets from Kharkiv and Dnipro – atn.ua and 056.ua – are analysed between April 2014 and December 2018 (328 news items). These regions hosted the largest numbers of the migrants, except for the Lugansk and Donetsk regions, where the war has been ongoing. In this article, I define some similarities between the Ukrainian case and previous research about the general peculiarities of the representation of IDPs (mass media attention to IDPs, definitions of IDPs, IDPs' roles). However, there are also some differences in their image: journalists often use them as news sources and give preference to the generalisation of IDPs as a 'mass', 'victims' and 'help-receivers'.

Since 2014, the problem of IDPs' coverage by the Ukrainian mass media has been revealed predominantly in media critics and reports by Ukrainian NGOs. In some cases, content analysis was used and some important observations about the specifics of coverage were made. However, there is a lack of systematic research in which the mass media were studied over a long period of time, with several aspects of the coverage taken into account (the presence of the topic or particular instances of the violation of professional standards were reported as a rule). Therefore, this paper also aims to fill this gap and answer several research questions:

- local mass media attention on IDPs – Are there any changes over time in the local mass media's attention to IDPs?
- What definitions have been used for IDPs in the media both at the start of Russian aggression and later?
- How are IDPs represented, what news sources are used and what frames were the most popular during 2014–2018?

IDPs, state policies and the mass media

Weiss and Korn (2006: 14), when comparing different types of migrant, call IDPs 'the most vulnerable of the vulnerable'. According to these researchers, people who cross an international border – whether fleeing from war, from military conflict or from political persecution – may feel safe, because they can gain refugee status and, as a result, international help; whereas IDPs remaining in the country may experience obstacles or even threats from their government (2006: 14). This is why state policy towards IDPs is extremely important.

Nowadays the governments are recommended to take 12 steps (Guiding Principles) to protect and assist IDPs (from collecting the correct data about them to designing a state policy and appointing special institutions and officials). However, there must be some pillars to uphold such the policy.

Firstly, scholars propose the 'sovereignty as responsibility' principle (Cohen and Deng 2012; Weiss and Korn 2006). A state must be responsible for its citizens and IDPs in particular. 'A state should not be able to claim the prerogatives of sovereignty unless it carries out its internationally recognized responsibilities to its citizens, which consist of providing them with protection and life-supporting assistance' (Cohen and Deng 2012: 7). A state should care about IDPs' needs (Korn 2001), regulate 'relations between the displaced and the host community' (Christensen and Harild 2009: 5), establish fair norms for IDPs in order for them not to 'suffer opprobrium and sanctions' (Weiss and Korn 2006: 6) and be 'perceived as the enemy' (Cohen and Deng 2012: 6). The correction of 'social injustices' towards IDPs must be a priority (Koch 2015: 138). Of course, security problems for IDPs (threats to their well-being and even life) must also be resolved.

Secondly, the 'humanitarian rights agenda' (Hoffman and Weiss 2017: 23) in the case of IDPs should be considered. Governments or volunteers may provide IDPs with basic needs – nutrition, medicine, etc.; however, this is not enough. According to the statistics, 'the majority of the IDPs are women and children' (Korn 2001: 14) who sometimes cannot defend themselves. Thus, it is important for a state to be 'responsible for the human rights of its citizens [IDPs] as part of the essence of statehood' (Weiss and Korn 2006: 3).

Thirdly, it is the concept of 'critical humanitarism' which establishes relations 'between the providers and recipients'. The relations should be 'based on an ethic of care by the former that is recognized by the latter' (Hoffman and Weiss 2017: 25). Here, temptation may occur for 'the providers' to use IDPs for self-promotion – to generalise IDPs' positive attitudes towards the government, politicians and volunteers and to ignore their real problems.

Finally, it is a long-term policy or 'durable solutions' (Christensen and Harild 2009: 12) for IDPs. There is a disputable issue of when the problem of displacement will be resolved. Often, internal migration is perceived as 'a temporary problem, one that will disappear with the return or resettlement of the displaced' (Korn 2001: 17). However, this is not true. Resettlement, the end of a military conflict and the return of the IDPs may not be solutions: displacement only ends when (former) IDPs or refugees no longer have needs that are specifically linked to their having been displaced' (Christensen and Harild 2009: 13).

The attention of society, NGO activity and qualitative mass media coverage are extremely important in forming policy toward IDPs. In several countries, NGOs, volunteers and the mass media all drew attention to IDPs and their problems, whereas government responses were weak (Solod'ko and Doronyuk 2015). Pressure from society is important in order to encourage politicians and officials to act – and journalists should provide complete, accurate and objective information about a conflict and its consequences. Additionally, biased reporting of internal migration has 'a strong potential to shape both civil and state responses to IDPs' situation and influence policy decisions' (Bulakh 2017: 55).

Hoffman and Weiss (2017) came up with several functions for journalists who cover conflicts: to inform about possible cases of disaster, atrocities, hostile forces and war criminals; to provide data about possible victims of forces and criminals, to report on the activities of volunteers, organisations and agencies who help vulnerable groups, block hate speech and reveal disinformation, fakes etc. However, the main objective for the mass media is 'the construction of the humanitarian narrative – the stories about means and ends, successes and failures... [providing an explanation] why there is an "emergency"' and the logic driving humanitarian behaviour (Hoffman and Weiss 2017: 212). There may also be some problems in that the mass media may violate professional standards and use the topic of IDPs in their own interest: 'to be markets of misery' and 'to profit from pain' (Hoffman and Weiss 2017: 217). Sometimes the mass media were just not ready to cover these issues (Kacharava and Gvineria 2014: 23), which is why mistakes occur. However, sometimes it may

just be an unwillingness to perceive IDPs as equal human beings – people who have the same citizenship, the same rights and the same obligations as the rest of society.

Usually there are similarities between IDPs and locals because they are compatriots, thus empathy should be present in that the locals should know the context of the replacement and IDPs' motives for fleeing their homes. However, scholars who study IDPs' representation in the mass media of different continents and countries defined some bias and violation of professional standards. It is, of course, important to monitor the mass media for such violation, because it may lead to manipulative, incomplete coverage and, as a result, to discrimination against IDPs. Scholars from different countries highlight some basic violations in the topic's coverage. In many countries the mass media focus on help-giving and an exaggeration of governments' assistance. 'Help-giving' reports dominated in Kenya (Apuke and Tunca 2019: 171) and Azerbaijan, where journalists mainly covered 'the government policies and measures taken to improve the living conditions of displaced persons' (Arslan, Bobghiashvili, Djafarova and Hovhannisyan 2018: 27–28). Governments were also the prominent news source in the journalistic texts on the internally displaced persons from Swat (Hussain 2016). According to the observations from Georgia, the country's mass media mostly failed to 'focus on context, which includes the terms and lived effects of assistance programs', whereby, often, only pictures of help-giving prevailed (Koch 2015: 141). Additionally, political regimes may influence mass-media coverage. For instance, in Azerbaijan the state influenced the representation of the topic of IDPs (Makaryan and Chobanyan 2014). When describing occasions of help-giving, the use of images of IDPs in political game-playing may be observed. Scholars found that the coverage of of information on IDPs depends on mass-media ownership. Government mass media more frequently quoted officials, whereas private media portray IDPs as 'victims' (Apuke and Tunca 2019; Isola and Toba 2019). The private mass media may use IDPs' images in their own interests – for instance, to harm government positive representations (Apuke and Tunca 2021). Sometimes IDPs may be used to gain international financing (Koch 2012: 17), as 'a tool for political maneuvers' (Sammut 2001: 55) or to 'exploit the displaced population as visual reminders of victimization, even at the cost of prolonging their hardship' (Bacon and Lynch 2003: 66).

Let's differentiate the major peculiarities in the representation IDPs:

1. The generalisation of the situation for IDPs and ignorance of their voices and perspectives are also observed. Journalists use generalisations and stereotypes (Dunkan 2005). There are many observations about the ignorance of the 'daily hardships of displaced persons' (Arslan *et al.* 2018: 27–28) and their voice is not present in discussions about their future (Bruckner 2009); IDPs are not often quoted (Arslan *et al.* 2018).
2. IDPs may be represented as victims: helpless and having diseases (Ibrahim and Gujbawu 2017). Images of 'miserable' IDPs and IDPs in need are used in official discourses (Gureyeva-Aliyeva and Huseynov 2011). As Bulakh (2017: 51) writes, compassion for IDPs as victims 'overshadows the prejudice and stereotypes about them'. IDPs' passiveness is one more result of such a representation. If governments and other organisations are constantly shown as help-givers and IDPs cannot speak for themselves, their 'passive mentality' is also portrayed in the mass media and society (Koch 2012: 19).
3. IDPs are described as an obstacle. Journalists may refer to IDPs as 'our compatriots'; however, 'marginalization and exclusion' and 'de-personalization' were also observed (Arslan *et al.* 2018: 28). This occurred in some cases because of the assistance IDPs receive from the government and international organisations. For instance, in post-Soviet countries, where poverty was extremely high, IDPs receiving international and government assistance were criticised (Najafizadeh 2013). Sometimes IDPs were presented as an obstacle to the prosperity of communities in which they were settled, with journalism showing them as 'a problem' for the community (Harris-Brandts and Sichinava 2021).

Researchers also mentioned some positive features of the topic's coverage. In Ukraine, IDPs were perceived as 'semi-fellows and semi-citizens' (Ivashchenko-Stadnik 2017: 42) and 'our fellow citizens' (Bulakh 2017: 52). Thus, they were not 'heavily labelled as distant or unknown Others' (Bulakh 2017: 53), like migrants or refugees from distant countries. IDPs tended to benefit from 'powerful support within society by informal networks and volunteer groups, which united the efforts of locals and the displaced in an attempt to assist adaptation and new infrastructural challenges' (Sereda 2018: 128).

However, there were some prejudices, too. The image of IDPs in society and in the mass media may transform the status quo – for instance, at first some Ukrainians volunteered to help IDPs whereas, later, there were 'unfavorable comments about IDPs, which was also the case in media publications' (Bulakh 2017: 51). Scholars also mentioned this transformation of how IDPs are perceived: from a positive perception of 'IDPs as victims, they need assistance' to negative 'fake IDPs' (Rimpiläinen 2020: 483) or criminals (Bulakh 2017: 54).

After differentiating between the possible violations of the coverage of the topic of IDPs in the mass media, we now analyse the context of Ukrainian internal migration and the government's action. Researchers claim that Ukrainian government support was 'minimal' (Kuznestsova, Mikheieva, Mykhnenko and Gulyieva 2018), especially at the beginning of their resettlement. Afterwards, there was 'a lack of systematic work and logic' and government officials failed to coordinate the actions of different organisations and institutions (Solod'ko and Doronyuk 2015: 9). Furthermore, there was low trust in the government by IDPs; their negative experiences with official institutions were also mentioned (Mikheieva and Sereda 2015). The state did not play a leading role during the resettlement procedure and IDPs usually had to rely on their connections, friends and relatives (Mikheieva and Sereda 2015; Sasse 2017) and they did not influence state policy (Bazaluk and Balinchenko 2020; Solod'ko and Doronyuk 2015). As a rule, the international and Ukrainian mass media simply ignored them (Sasse 2017). However, there were numerous problems to cover:

- 'Multiple forms of social exclusion' of IDPs in Ukraine were discovered (Kuznetsova and Mikheieva 2020: 701); IDPs did not enjoy 'full citizenship' (Urbinati 2021).
- IDPs were not represented in legislative organs and were not able to take part in elections; there were obstacles to their free movement within the country, their document recovery, pensions and social payments; the mass media and other sources published no information about opportunities for IDPs such as international support; and local authorities' actions were not transparent (Platform of Civil Society Ukraine 2017).
- There were cases of discrimination during the search for housing and employment (Mikheieva and Sereda 2015).
- IDPs were paid less because of their status – 'the average salary for displaced women was half that of non-IDP women' (Kuznetsova and Mikheieva 2020: 691).
- IDPs experienced 'extreme difficulties in registering in their new place of residence', thus, it was almost impossible for them to gain access to secondary education and healthcare (Kuznestsova *et al*. 2018: 10).
- Special campaigns to promote the tolerant treatment of IDPs were organised (Smal and Poznyak 2016).

Although IDPs were under-represented in state discourse, in the mass media they were perceived as a single 'mass' and were generalised, i.e. 'constructed as a homogenous group rather than a diverse range of people, who face different issues and who have a wide range of needs' (Kuznetsova and Mikheieva 2020: 690). However, the most disturbing point concerned the mass media's creation of a fake differentiation between locals and IDPs on the basis of the latter's attitudes to the aggressor – the Russian Federation. Sociologists

observed some recurring stereotypes (that IDPs were pro-Russian and believed in the so-called '*Russkiy Mir*' / 'Russian World' (Voytyuk 2019).

As we know, the conception of the Russian world defines everyone who speaks the Russian language as being a part of this world: scholars define it as 'an imagined community based on the markers of the Russian language, the Russian culture and the common glorious past', a concept of Russian 'soft power' (Feklyunina 2016: 773). Moreover, according to numerous statements by Putin and other Russian officials, Russia should 'defend' the Russian-speaking population, even outside the borders of the Russian Federation. Thus, the people of Donbas also suffered because of this. Russian aggression stole their homes and sometimes members of their families; however, in the territories controlled by Ukraine, they were perceived as members of the Russian world – people who caused the war.

There were numerous speculations about IDPs, who 'were not able to defend Ukraine' (Bulakh 2017: 54), who were 'potential supporters of the separatists' (Kuznetsova and Mikheieva 2020: 690). IDPs and people from Donbas were perceived as 'hostile', in that Ukrainian society believed that Russian aggression was possible because of significant help from or collaboration 'by the locals' (Ivashchenko-Stadnik 2017: 27–28). Male IDPs, in particular, suffered because of such an attitude (Bulakh 2017: 54). State officials contributed to the creation of this 'pro-Russian image' by asking about IDPs' 'inclusion in the national community when checking on their status' (Urbinati 2021: 4–5), putting 'a marker of displacement' on them (Bazaluk and Balinchenko 2020: 11). IDPs (journalists in particular) mentioned to the sociologists that they did not feel part of a Ukrainian media nation (Voronova 2020). Thus, IDPs were the targets of the Kremlin information war as well. For years, Russian propaganda divided Ukraine into 'Russian' and 'Western' territories and denied Ukrainian sovereignty. Donbas, in this imaginary scenario, was definitely 'Russian', which is why, sometimes, it was extremely hard for some Ukrainian mass media and members of Ukrainian society to see a different picture – that of people from Donbas, who want to be Ukrainian citizens as well, who speak Ukrainian and share a Ukrainian identity. However, images of IDPs who may support separatists and are ready to ask Putin to save them, seemed to be more believable.

Thus, internal displacement was a challenge for both 'those who have been "on the move" or resettled and an unparalleled challenge for those who remain rooted in the host communities' (Ivashchenko-Stadnik 2017: 29).

Where IDPs *are* compatriots, they usually prompt positive attitudes. However, these positive attitudes may change over time. Thus, for the mass media, it is important to verify cases of negative images, threat metaphors and the spreading of crime reports.

There is always some exaggeration of government and officials' assistance to IDPs, whereas IDPs' actions and their real problems are ignored. As a rule, 'the receivers' do not see the individual stories of IDPs and deal with them '*en masse*' – i.e., lumping them together. Thus, there may be some problems with the balance and completeness of journalistic material: officials may be the newsmakers more often than IDPs. According to numerous observations, the government's assistance was minimal in the beginning, so it is also interesting to see, now, whether official sources commented on the situation at the beginning and whether the number of these comments increased over time. Here, officials' structural failure to solve IDPs' problems and cases of IDPs facing discrimination may not be so visible in journalistic outputs.

Speculations about IDPs' pro-Russian orientation and government and mass-media intentions to differentiate locals and IDPs should also be scrutinised and the numerous approaches to show IDPs as passive victims should be observed.

As for the mass-media representation of IDPs, especially in the local media, there is episodic systematic research. Moreover, at the same time, there are numerous examples of the violation of professional standards in journalistic texts on the topic that were observed by media critics and professional media organisations

(Institute of Mass Information, Detector Media published such pieces). Therefore, the contribution of this study is to define the peculiarities of the coverage of this topic in the Ukrainian local media.

Of course, every case of internal displacement is different; however, some similarities between Ukraine and other countries may be seen. As previously mentioned, IDPs are rarely quoted in the mass media, although the Ukrainian case is different. Previous research has shown that, in the regions of Dnipropetrovsk and Kharkiv, which are closer to the ATO zone, the mass media quite often used IDPs as a source; however, in other Ukrainian regions (Odesa, Mykolayiv and Kherson), officials and locals prevailed (see Steblyna 2015a). Thus, distance may matter. In neighbouring regions, journalists more often perceive IDPs as 'internal others' (Lueck *et al.* 2015), so the opinions of IDPs seem to be important. Approaches showing them as dangerous, as an obstacle, are rare.

Research objectives and questions

A review of the literature shows that there are some specifics of IDPs' representation in the mass media. IDPs usually get positive coverage – with approaches showing them as dangerous being minimal – and they are perceived as being quite similar to local inhabitants. However, some violations of professional standards may occur. There may be a tendency to show IDPs in a more negative context: as criminals or as obstacles, especially over time. Stereotypes, generalisations, a lack of context and a tendency to show them as helpless victims may also be used. To see the peculiarities of the Ukrainian case covered by the local press, these observations by scholars will be verified. Therefore, the research questions will be as follows:

RQ1 Does the local mass media focus on IDPs only during the 'hot phase of the military conflict?' In Ukraine there were many ceasefire agreements. However, the 'hot' phase was considered to be between 2014 and 2015, before the Minsk-2 agreements.

RQ2 Does the local mass media differentiate between the types – 'migrants', 'refugees' and 'IDPs'?

RQ3 Does the local mass media show IDPs predominantly as passive ('people who provided help', 'people who need assistance')?

RQ4 Do officials and locals dominate in news texts about IDPs?

RQ5 Is the coverage of IDPs unbiased? As was mentioned earlier, there are basic violations of IDP coverage, which may lead to discriminatory or manipulatory coverage: the focus on help-giving, generalisations, the representation of IDPs as victims and obstacles (like criminals or a burden or other danger to communities, especially being 'pro-Russian' and having some sympathy with separatists etc.). To answer this question, media frames and frequency will be taken into account: 'generalisation/IDPs *en masse*'; 'victims'; 'help-receivers', a 'burden/danger' and 'criminals'.

The research objectives will be as follows:

- to analyse mass-media attention to IDPs between 2014 and 2018 (both before and after the Minsk-2 agreements);
- to explore mass-media definitions of IDPs;
- to determine IDPs' roles as active or passive characters in mass-media texts;
- to define leading news sources in texts; and
- to distinguish IDPs' biased characteristics (with the help of the frames).

As for the frames, several of them will be used, according to the specifics of the coverage defined earlier.

1. A help-giving frame, to check the objectivity of the local mass media in their coverage of 'the providers' – how often the frame occurs, who is giving help (officials, volunteers, locals), how the IDPs are represented in a particular situation and can they comment on the situation of help-giving? Maybe IDPs are represented as people who are ready to help themselves? Here the most-common manipulations about IDPs will be analysed: their usage in so-called 'jeansa' publications – covered political advertisements. For 'jeansa' identification, a Pylyp Orlyk Institute for Democracy (POID) methodology will be used, as designed by leading professional media organisations which monitor mass-media content in Ukraine (see POID 2021).
2. Generalisation frame: to see if the local mass media are capable of solving the problem of the invisibility of IDPs – are IDPs presented en masse or is the local mass media capable of perceiving them as individuals?
3. Victim frame – to discover the completeness of IDPs' representation. Yes, it is important to describe all the hardships of displacement; however, IDPs are not only passive victims who suffer – they may have other roles, such as starting their life again in a new place.
4. Burden, danger frame – to analyse mass-media metaphors and comments about IDPs: are they represented as an obstacle to the community or do journalists see their successful socialisation?
5. Crime frame – how often are IDPs present in the crime chronical?

With these frames it will be possible to check whether or not the local mass media were ready to overturn the most-detrimental cases of IDPs' representation.

Material and methodology

This study uses content and frame analysis, conducted between 6 April (the beginning of the ATO) and 31 December 2018, based on two prominent local news sites in Eastern Ukraine – Kharkiv and Dnipro. These regions hosted the largest number of IDPs (because of their closeness to the ATO), except for the state-controlled territories of Donetsk oblast (550,000) and Luhansk oblast (290,000). Kharkiv oblast hosted 128,000 people and Dnipropetrovsk 75,000 (Slovo i dilo 2018). The news sites of Donetsk and Luhansk were not picked for the analysis because, at the beginning of the ATO, some editorial offices migrated from the occupied cities and pro-Russian separatists took over some offices.

Some similarities may be found between the inhabitants of the Donetsk/Luhansk and Kharkiv /Dnipro regions. Eastern Ukraine is predominantly known as a Russian-speaking region. The former Ukrainian president Yanukovych and his Party of Regions had the largest number of voters there during the 2010 elections. Ukraine's integration into the EU was not so popular in Southern and Eastern Ukraine (only 31–33 per cent in favour), according to the results of an all-Ukrainian survey conducted in 2018 by Ukrainian sociologist organisations the Kiev International Institute of Sociology, Sociology Group Rating and the Razumkov Center (see Tolina 2018; and earlier research of this problem by the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation 2016). Polls about attitudes towards Russia have shown that, in 2018, people of these regions had a predominantly positive attitude – 62 per cent in Southern Ukraine, 70 per cent in Eastern Ukraine (Pravda.com.ua 2018). Therefore, we can suppose that mass-media perceptions of the migrants might be more positive there.

The characteristics of analysed outlets

The criteria for the selection of news sites were their popularity, their focus on political and social news, publication of their content and whether or not they were created by staff journalists; relatively high marks were awarded for compliance with professional journalistic standards – POID data between 2015 and 2018 were used for the standards evaluation analysis (POID 2021). Two online media outlets were chosen:

- *Atn.ua* (Kharkiv). According to Similarweb data, the highest number of visits per month in the last 6 months was 323,000 (the population of the region was 2.6 million). It is the most popular local site in the region. The Ukrainian NGO Institute of Mass Information (IMI), in their media-ownership research, concluded that the site belongs to Arsen Avakov, the Ukrainian minister of Internal Affairs and a politician for the Narodnyi Front Party (Prokaeva 2015).
- *056.ua* (Dnipro). The highest number of visits per month was 462,000 (the population of the region was 3.2 million). It is one of the top five most popular sites. The site belongs to CitySites franchise and businessman Evhen Javtushenko is the Executive Director of the network (Vasina 2015). According to IMI research, politicians from the Party of Regions bought the franchise (the party belonged to the former Ukrainian president Yanucovych and is nowadays forbidden in Ukraine). These politicians influence the site's content (Sverdel 2015).

The selection of journalistic texts (sample)

As the period of this research is quite wide, the search option on the sites was used – tags '*pereselentsi*'/'migrants', '*bizhentsi*'/'refugees', 'Donbas' and Google search (*site:n*). Texts about refugees or migrants from other countries and historical texts about Ukrainian migration were all excluded from the list. Texts of all genres were analysed (news, blogs, interviews etc) and 328 items about Ukrainian IDPs were found on the two sites.

Methodology of the texts: content analysis

To define the peculiarities of the representation of Ukrainian internally displaced persons in the Ukrainian local media, the method of content analysis was used. According to van Dijk (2018: 232), 'Times, Place, Participants in various identities and roles are important', as are segments' position in the discourse (headline, lead, background), modalities ('what migrants must or may do'), implications and presuppositions and actor and action descriptions. Thus, for this paper, mass-media attention was measured and IDPs' definitions, modalities and roles in the texts were defined. To achieve this aim, summative content analysis was used, as it helps 'to investigate the usage of specific words', 'to discover underlying data meaning by quantifying words' (Hsiu-Fang and Shannon 2005: 1284).

At first, the number of texts per year was calculated and compared with the dynamics of the events at the front lines. Unequal attention to the topic (the large number of texts about IDPs during the hot phase at the front 2014–2015) means that they may be presented as a problem, as a burden to local communities. Little attention paid to them afterwards means that IDPs are under-represented in their communities.

Some Ukrainian professional media organisations published reports about the situation; however, their research was episodic. The observation periods were a week, a month or several months. The Pylyp Orlyk Institute for Democracy (POID) has been monitoring the topic since May 2017. According to their data, there were only 1 per cent of texts on IDPs in the regional press and online prior to 24 February 2022 (POID 2021).

Another organisation, the Institute of Mass Information (IMI), published several reports in 2016 and 2017. The authors concluded that, in 2016, 2 per cent of online and press reports, 4 per cent of TV broadcasts (IMI 2016) and, in 2017, 4 per cent of regional online texts and 5 per cent of TV broadcasts were about IDPs (IMI 2017a). Additionally, in 2015, research about IDPs was conducted by the Krym-SOS NGO in five Ukrainian cities and a few texts about IDPs were discovered (Prostir 2015). Thus, there is no research on the topic where large periods of time were studied; there are only a few observations about the little attention given to the topic in different Ukrainian regions during various periods of time. My research aims to solve this problem and to show the complete picture for at least two popular regional news outlets.

After the number of texts per year was calculated, participants in the texts were revealed, news sources were identified and definitions of IDPs were studied ('Ukrainians', 'the people from some Ukrainian region' '*pereselentsi*'/'migrants'; '*bizhentsi*'/'refugees'). The modalities were defined in general: either active IDPs – who can solve their own problems and be a part of their new community – or passive IDPs, who are unable to deal with their own problems and constantly rely on assistance.

Again, there were observations about the roles, the news sources and definitions of IDPs. For instance, in 2017, several Odesa mass-media outlets were studied and there were examples of both: '*pereselentsi*'/'migrants' and '*bizhentsi*'/'refugees'. The IDPs were portrayed mostly as passive (Steblyna 2017). The same problems were found in the Lviv region (Dovzhenko 2017). In 2015, the mass media in Southern Ukraine were studied: IDPs were not predominantly used as news sources, with IDPs from Crimea being the exception. The mass media from Kherson quoted their leaders, journalists and activists (Steblyna 2015b). Krym-SOS monitoring also showed that IDPs were predominantly described as passive (Prostir 2015). Thus, there are observations for some regions and mass media, however any systematic research is lacking. Furthermore, the dynamics of the situation were not studied – for instance, is there any difference in describing IDPs as active or as passive or are there any changes in the selection of news sources?

Lastly, IDPs' characteristics were studied using frame analysis, which helped to distinguish any biased representation of IDPs in the mass media. There were also numerous observations, predominantly made by professional mass-media organisations, about violations of professional standards in the regional mass media:

- IDPs were used in political propaganda or '*jeansa*' texts (Kolotvin 2017);
- negative attitudes about IDPs were formed (they 'caused' price increases and a rise in unemployment – Prostir 2015 – and poor service in hospitals – IMI 2016); some journalists spread fake news or provocations about IDPs (IMI 2017b);
- hate speech was mentioned; however, here IDPs were in 12th position compared to other objects of violation (IMI 2015); and
- there was speculation about IDPs receiving a lot of attention and help from different institutions, both international and local (Prostir 2015).

Thus, just a few isolated examples of violations of professional standards were shown. Only in the Krym-SOS study were typical mass-media mistakes gathered and described; however, the period was relatively short: 16 January–7 March 2015 (Prostir 2015). In my study, with the use of frame analysis, it will be possible to observe the main violations and their frequency from 2014 to 2018.

To conduct the research, several categories for the analysis were defined:

1. Number of texts per year.
2. Definitions ('*pereselentsi*'/'migrants' and '*bizhentsi*'/'refugees', 'the people from a certain city, town or region' or simply 'Ukrainians'). The texts from the sample were coded according to the definition used. Some texts contained two definitions, in which case the definition which was used first was considered.

3. Modalities of the IDPs. Two modalities were differentiated: active or passive. The texts were coded according to which verb was used with the definition (active or passive voice). The verb which was used first was considered.
4. Sources of information. The number of sources in the texts and the origins of the source were defined: officials – government, local authorities (both regional and city officials); international sources (governments or institutes), politicians (all-Ukrainian or local), activists, the police or state emergency services, the military, the mass media, experts, local people, volunteers and IDPs.
5. Frames.

Frame analysis

Here, frame analysis is understood as a form of content analysis, where frames (selection of certain phrases or characteristics) are elements of analysis. When studying the frames which were used and their frequency, it is possible to interpret the mass media's perception of a topic.

According to Entman (1993), framing is about 'selection' and 'salience': journalists prefer certain phrases and make these visible to their audiences using different techniques. However, some researchers claim that this popular definition leads to 'a conceptual fuzziness' and that, with this definition, it is hard to differentiate between framing, priming and agenda-setting. Thus, an alternative is proposed: to focus on 'equivalence-based definitions that are more directly tied to alterations in the presentation of information rather than the persuasive value of that information' (Cacciatore, Scheufele and Iyengar 2016). Therefore, the selection of certain news items is about agenda-setting and priming (Price and Tewksbury 1997). For instance, if the arrival of IDPs is considered to be newsworthy, this topic is published on the front page, whereas 'a story presentation' or 'the ways in which choices are presented to people' (Price and Tewksbury 1997: 182) are about framing. For example, journalists select arguments for and against IDPs' arrival in a certain place. According to Kahneman and Tversky (1984: 346), framing is 'a tool to demonstrate failures of invariance'. Elites, presenting the arguments and the choices in terms of ' losses and gains', influence society's perception of an issue. The locals' perceptions of IDPs is crucial as the latter need resources, assistance from the local authorities, jobs and places to live, etc. However, local elites may frame the IDPs' arrival according to their own interests and stress only the losses which will affect the community. Other elites use IDPs for self-promotion, thus society may be led to think that IDPs already have all their needs met by politicians or local authorities. In times of information overflow and high competitiveness for the media content, the elites' frames may just be accepted passively. Thus, a constant monitoring of such sensitive topics should be carried out to reconstruct the process of framing.

This is why framing analysis is widely used in migration studies. As Lahav and Courtemanche (2012: 484) claim, such analysis 'is key because immigration fears are often more subjective than objective'. Scholars may analyse 'metaphors, catchphrases, examples, visual images and statistics' to show this (Dekker and Scholten 2017: 208) and word choices and vocabularies are also discovered (Klein and Amis 2021). Collocates are used: 'words that appear near another word more often than could be expected by chance only' (Brouwer, van der Woude and van der Leun 2017). To identify frames, researchers study elements in the texts such as voices, problems, the attribution of roles, proposed solutions and calls for action (Roggeband and Vliegentha 2007: 8–9) or focus on language, reasoning or abstraction (Ransan-Cooper, Farbotko, McNamara, Thornton and Chevalier 2015).

However, occasionally methodological problems may occur. With an increasing number of studies of framing, a frame has become 'a quite abstract variable that is hard to identify and hard to code in content analysis' (Matthes and Kohring 2008: 258); thus, it is proposed to identify *some* elements of the frame (frame patterns) through hierarchical cluster analysis and not the frame as a whole. The researchers differentiate

between several frame elements: a problem definition, casual attribution, moral evaluation and a treatment (Matthes and Kohring 2008).

One further problem of modern frame analysis is data relevance. Nowadays, with a variety of possibilities of computer analysis, it is possible to use more data for longer periods of time. For instance, with collocational analysis, it is possible to show 'the choice of words to be used' – 'illegal' as an association with 'immigrant', for example (Gabrielatos and Baker 2008). Another possible option is concordance analysis, where the concordance is a 'list of a given word or word cluster with its co-text on either side' (Gabrielatos and Baker 2008: 15). With the methodology of computer analysis, studies have shown the usage of 'water metaphors' – (flood, pour, stream) and their distribution to refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants – and positive and negative treatments, according to the situation (Gabrielatos and Baker 2008: 22). Additionally, computer analysis helps to compare frames used in the mass media in different countries – for instance, with 16 different frames, national media discourses in 5 EU countries were compared (Heidenreich, Lind, Eberl and Boomgaarden 2019).

Thus, for text analysis, word selection was analysed (metaphors, IDPs' characteristics, words and phrases which appeared near IDPs in the texts, etc.) – 'a story presentation' (Price and Tewksbury, 1997: 182). Some of these findings may be used for future computer analysis (the role of IDPs, active/passive IDPs, news sources – see Table 1) to process more news texts and to avoid the problems of frame analysis.

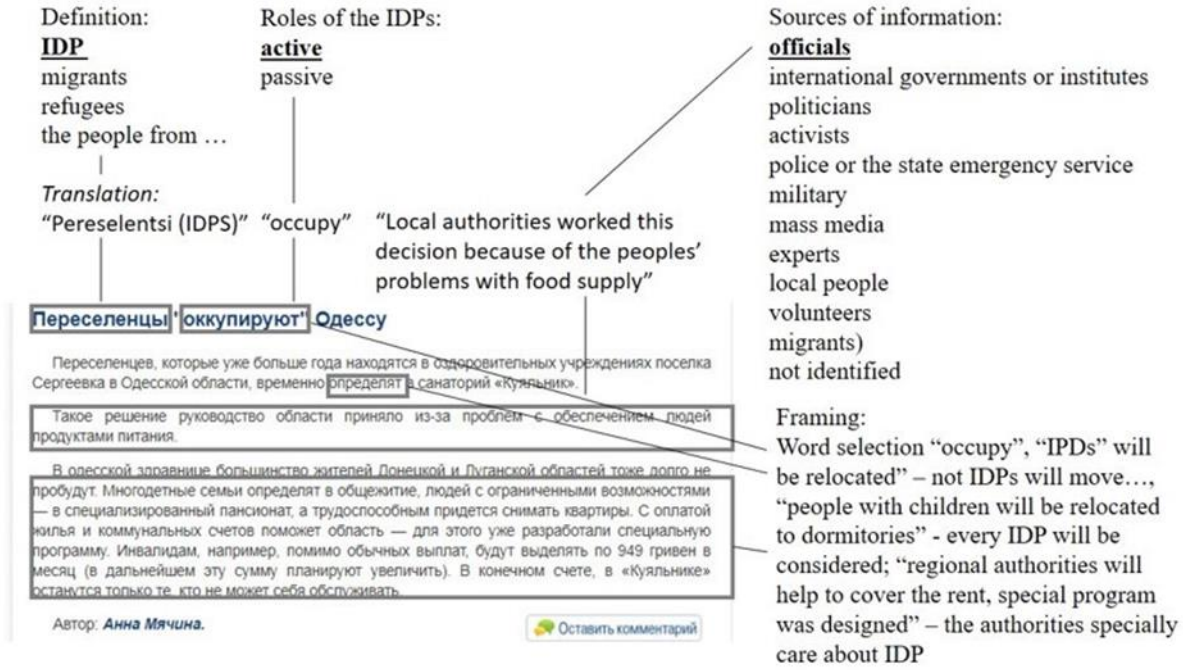
Table 1. Word selection and frames for the analysis

Word selection	Explanation	Frames
'tons of food', 'millions of hryvnias', 'millions/thousands of migrants'; 'number'of IDPs got 'number/amount' of aid; typologies (several types of migrant got several kinds of something); phrases 'all the IDPs', IDPs as objects (IDPs will be checked/relocated)	Not only aid or help but also emphasis on the size; Statistics about migrants without context, just facts and numbers	'generalisation/ IDPs *en masse*'
'people with TB', 'people who can't help themselves', 'poor people', 'desperate', 'sick', speculations about certain needs ('can't afford bread', 'can't find a job'), poor conditions	Not just different people with different backgrounds but judgments about some imaginative general characteristics	'victim'/ 'debased people'
local authorities transfer aid; locals organised a concert	The most typical scenes of help giving/receiving	'help-receivers'
'wave', 'flood', 'burden', 'occupation', 'explosion', 'people from Donetsk can't behave properly'; 'pro-Russian', 'inadequate', 'social explosion'	Generalisation metaphors; exaggerations; not just fact statement; speculations, judgments; typical threat metaphors	'burden'/'danger'
'an IDP attacked a local inhabitant'	Cases about crimes; mentions of IDP status without justification	criminals

Word selection and frames for the analysis

The matrix for the analysis is represented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Matrix for the analysis



Source: author's compilation.

At first, *definitions* of IDPs in the text were considered, after which the *roles of IDPs* and *sources of information* were determined. Eventually, word selection was analysed for the identification of *frames*. Figure 1 is an example of a text with the headline 'IDPs occupy Odesa'; thus, the definition is 'IDP', the role 'active'. In the text, a journalist refers to an official's decision, so the source of information is 'officials'. As for word selection, the author uses 'burden'/'danger', generalisations and help-giving frames. As 'burden'/'danger' was the first frame, it was considered for the general count.

Thus, with both content and frame analysis, it should be possible to answer all the research questions and, in particular, to understand when texts about the topic were predominantly published, which definitions were used, which roles of IDPs were exploited and which news sources and frames dominated. With the results, the peculiarities of IDPs' representation will be revealed.

Results: Ukrainian IDPs in online local mass media

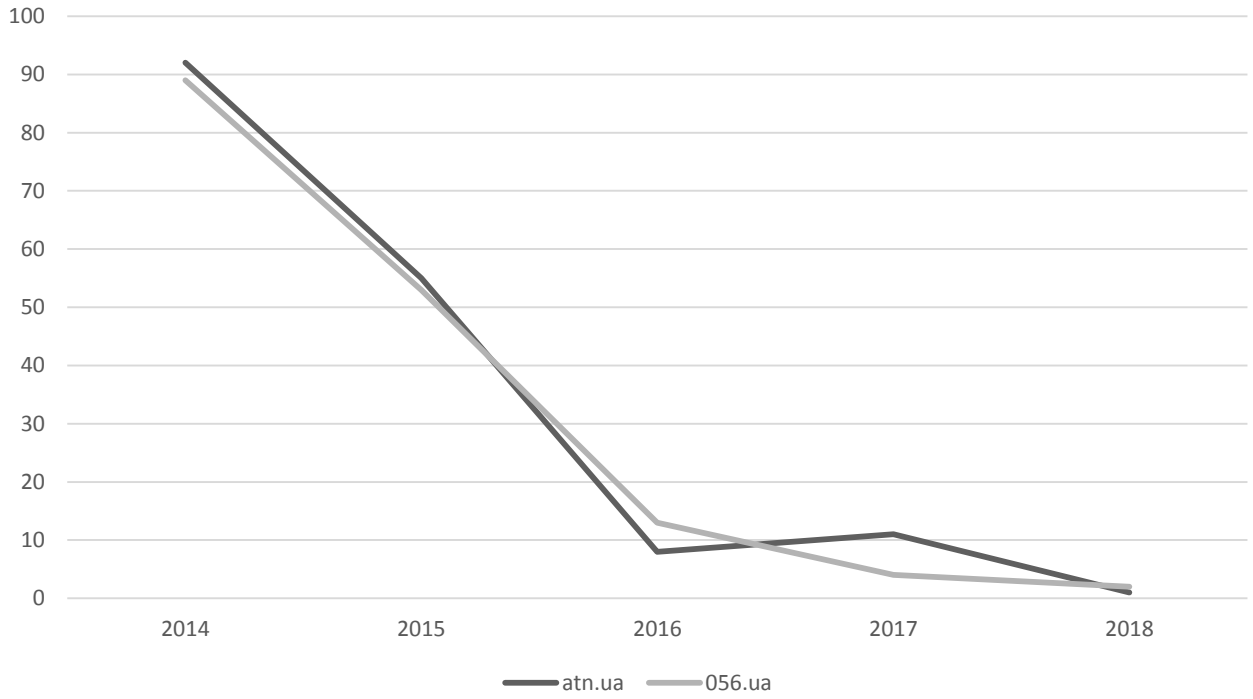
Nowadays the Ukrainian local mass media face many problems: Soviet traditions of dependence on local authorities, the lack of financing and staff and the questionable quality of journalistic publications. After the Russian aggression in 2014, with internal migration as its cause, several international programmes were launched for journalists to cover IDPs' problems, success stories and useful information. Nevertheless, initially journalists had to invent their own vocabulary to describe the new reality of war and of people from the Donetsk and Luhansk regions who were leaving their native lands because of bombing and persecutions. Of course,

mass-media professionals used to work with contradictable and overwhelming information covering both Russian aggression and internal migration. Let us begin with the analysis of text numbers and IDP definitions.

IDPs: refugees or people?

A significant decrease in attention paid to migrants as a topic between 2014 and 2018 can be observed (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Number of texts about migrants

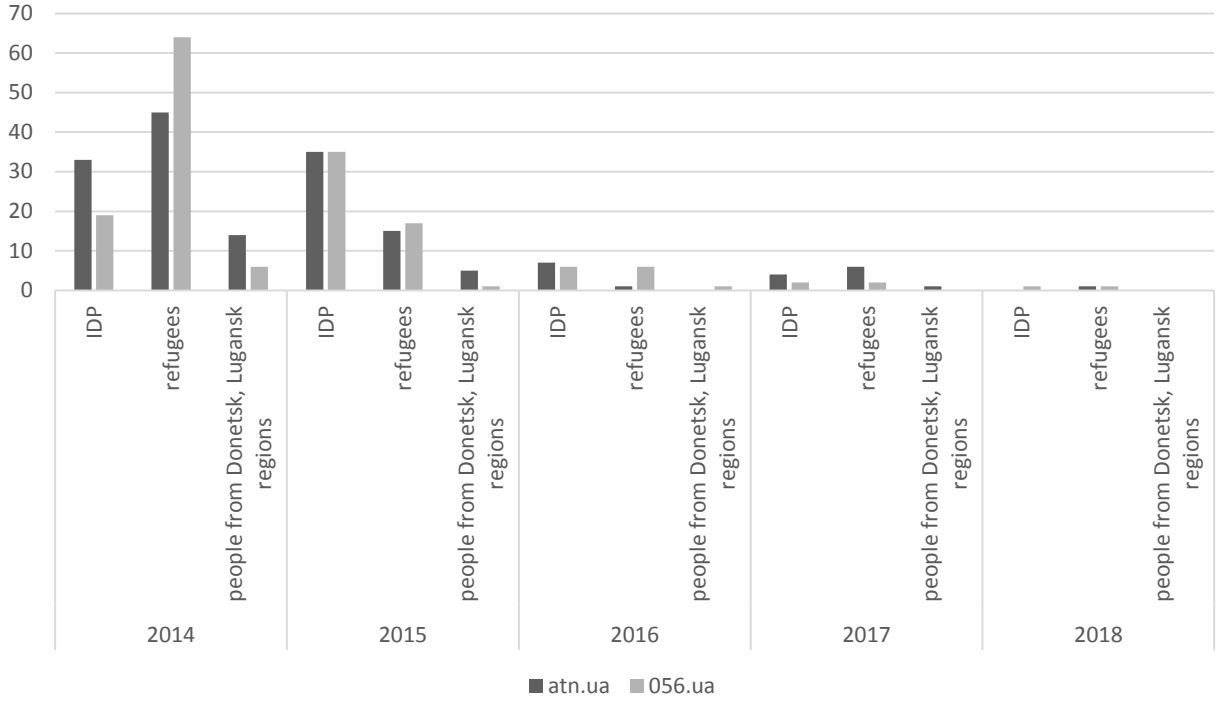


Source: author's compilation.

During the 'hot' phase, the mass media published the largest number of texts, so RQ1 is confirmed. Journalists covered the topic of when IDPs moved into their communities; however, the migrants' problems afterwards are not so closely observed: 8–13 texts per year in 2016 and just 1–2 texts in 2018. So, we may suppose that the local mass media do not pay enough attention to internal migration as a long-term problem.

As for definitions, with time, the IDPs' characterisation did not change much. Of course, both the annexation of Crimea and the war on Donbas were hard to predict, so Ukrainian journalists were not ready to write about the war and migrants. There were many discussions about suitable words and phrases. With the first 'wave' of the texts about IDPs in 2014, *056.ua* predominantly wrote about IDPs as 'refugees'; however, between 2015 and 2018, all options were used by both sites (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Migrants' labelling



Source: Author's compilation.

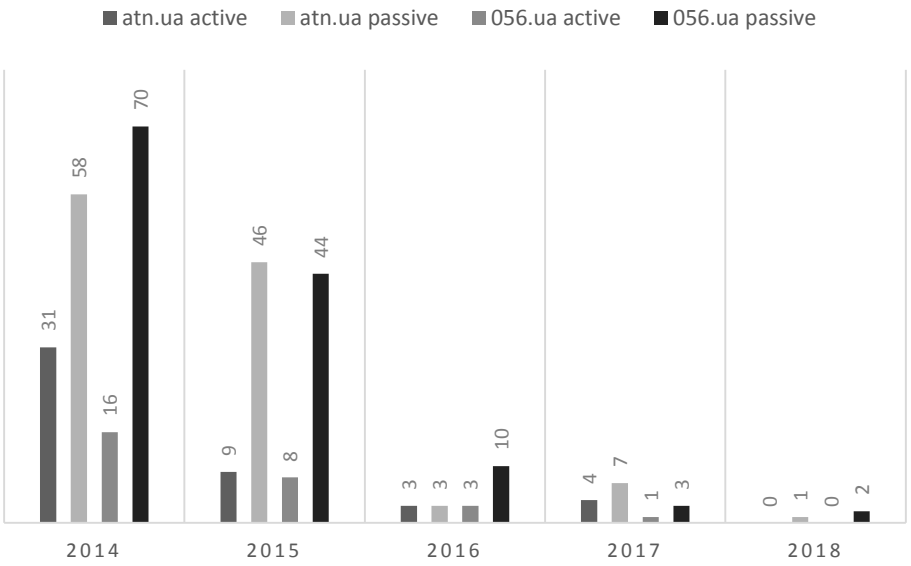
In 2014, journalists mentioned 'refugees' more often. If *atn.ua* exploited both definitions, *056.ua* named IDPs only as 'refugees' at first, so the people from Donetsk and Luhansk regions were perceived as foreigners (leaving some other country because of the conflict). Only after two months of the ATO beginning, on 10 June, journalists used the term '*pereselentsi*' ('migrants'). Additionally, the site created a tag '*beglyj*' (runaway) – an adjective which is often used in the expression 'a runaway criminal'. After 2014, the two sites exploit both options.

There is an interesting situation with phrases which name only the region where people lived before. Such phrases are predominantly neutral: 'families from the East of Ukraine' or 'people of Crimea' and can be considered as having a less-divisive effect. Therefore, journalists using these phrases do not set apart people from Donbas or Crimea as being special – they are simply people from a Ukrainian region, as every Ukrainian is. However, these phrases were not that popular and there was no increase in use of the phrase during the observation period. Thus, RQ2 is confirmed: journalists do not differentiate between the terms 'IDPs' and 'refugees' but use both, whereas neutral characteristics such as 'Ukrainians' or 'people from…' are rare.

Active/passive IDPs

To confirm general observations about the 'passiveness' of IDPs, the roles of internally displaced people (either active or passive) were counted. Both sites wrote about migrants as passive people, who were given help and assistance (see Figure 4). This approach did not change between 2014 and 2018.

Figure 4. Active or passive IDPs



Source: author's compilation.

Such situations occured because the sites preferred to cover news about events where aid was given to migrants (meetings with local authorities or international organisations or forums for IDPs). These texts were easy to produce because, as a rule, journalists used press releases and were not required to be at the scene of an event. Additionally, there were many publications in which the local authorities or politicians appeared (giving presents or making promises), with some of the texts having signs of '*jeansa*'. Thus, in times of high focus on the topic, with frequent texts about help being given from volunteers, governments or international institutions, the public may perceive migrants as having received sufficient care and attention. Thus, RQ3 is confirmed: IDPs are shown as passive, an observation which is true for both the beginning and the end of the observation period.

The news sources

IDPs were quoted quite often – however, predominantly during the 'hot' phase (see Table 2).

The types of news source

Officials, IDPs and local inhabitants/international sources were among the top three leading news sources. As a rule, officials dominated; however, for *Atn.ua* in 2015, IDP sources were even more popular than those of officials. With time, the focus on IDPs declined. *056.ua* did not mention them as sources in 2017–2018 nor did *Atn.ua* in 2018. For the latter, officials were more popular in 2017. Additionally, the sites represented two types of information policy with more local content (*056.ua*) and local, national and international content contamination (*atn.ua*). This is why, for *056.ua*, locals are popular – more popular than officials in 2015; however, for *Atn.ua* in 2015 international sources dominated. Thus, in the case of IDPs, attention to international sources leads to additional stress being laid on the 'help-giving' topic. For *056.ua*, the assistance of local people is mentioned frequently; politicians were popular as well, especially in 2014, when elections were held. As already mentioned, some politicians actively exploited the topic for self-promotion. For *Atn.ua*, politicians were not so interesting. It is also remarkable that volunteers were quoted less often than officials

on both sites. Officials' assistance was deemed more newsworthy. However, it was commonly acknowledged that volunteers' contributions were crucial for both the military and IDPs. For *Atn.ua*, the police were mentioned regularly; however, here, crimes *against* IDPs were reported (with just a few stories in which IDPs as criminals were mentioned). Publications from other mass media were not as popular, so the sites usually used their own stories and press releases from officials. Experts, the military and activists were represented mostly in 2014 – however, their participation was not that prominent.

Table 2. The types of news source

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	total
056.ua	Officials	41	31	5	0	0	77
	IDP	25	25	6	0	0	56
	Locals	19	34	4	1	0	58
	International sources	5	10	3	1	0	19
	Volunteers	12	9	2	1	0	24
	Police	6	1	2	1	0	10
	Mass media	9	6	0	1	0	16
	Politicians	17	5	3	0	1	26
	Experts	7	5	2	0	0	14
	Activists	6	2	0	1	0	9
	Military	7	1	2	0	0	10
	Not identified	3	2	0	1	0	6
atn.ua	Officials	48	15	1	6	0	70
	IDP	47	19	1	2	0	69
	Locals	18	2	0	3	0	23
	International sources	18	31	3	5	1	58
	Volunteers	13	3	2	0	0	18
	Police	16	10	1	0	0	27
	Mass media	2	1	0	0	0	3
	Politicians	4	0	1	0	0	5
	Experts	5	2	2	0	0	9
	Activists	6	3	0	0	0	9
	Military	4	1	0	0	0	5
	Not identified	0	0	0	0	0	0

Thus, RQ4 is partly confirmed: officials were mentioned more often; however, IDPs were also quoted. For *Atn.ua* they were in second place, for *056.ua*, third place. However, it is important to add that, in 2017–2018, IDP voices were not heard at all. Thus, over time, IDPs themselves were quoted quite rarely. However, a strong focus on IDPs does not imply a balanced and ethical representation, so let us now analyse their characteristics.

Migrants' characteristics

With frame analysis, IDPs' characteristics were studied and the most typical identified. Basic violations of the topic's coverage were also discovered. As a rule, journalists do not see individual personalities, thus some speculation about IDPs is disseminated. Journalistic routine also influences the coverage.

Generalisation

The generalisation frame was used mainly in publications about officials' activities and was borrowed from press releases. Sometimes numbers and other data were included in the background.

The sites preferred to mention numbers in order to show the scale of both the 'problem' and of aid:

- '127 families received aid';
- 'local authorities helped more than 100,000 migrants'; and
- '384,434 families applied for financial aid'.

In a number of publications, phrases like 'all IDPs' or 'all IDPs' children' were found. The use of numbers and the pronoun 'all' was one of the ways to show IDPs in general *en masse*, receiving a lot of help and attention. Moreover, all IDPs' needs are covered – local authorities are effectively solving the problem.

It is important that the numbers were usually mentioned without context. For instance, it was not clear whether the families who applied for help made up the majority or the minority. What aid was given and how many tons of it were distributed (do all IDPs receive it?). So, the numbers may be impressive but, as a rule, texts with numbers used official statistics as a source. A generalisation frame also occurred – when journalists did not have the possibility, time or intention to dig deeper into a story. One more aspect – texts with a generalisation framing were mainly written from the officials' perspective. As a rule, local authorities commented about the aid; however, IDPs were not asked if the aid was indeed useful.

Victims

Journalists also wrote about migrants as 'people who do not have the basic necessities', 'people who suffer', 'women with abortion cases'; they also mentioned numbers of those without employment and with diseases. Of course, journalists more often reported on complicated cases. However, the general observation was that all IDPs are poor – all of them suffer. Sometimes journalists just speculated: 'The majority of IDPs are poor people. They don't have enough money or any jobs. They need bread, grain, vegetables, nappies, medicine, children's clothes'.

In all the cases where journalists described IDPs as 'victims', concrete stories were rarely included. Thus, initially, the mass media created a stereotype of poor and desperate IDPs which they were later not able to backtrack on. Emotional speculation about sufferings was more important than personal stories. Sometimes journalists made connections between cases ('abortion', 'suicide') and IDP status. Individual stories about successful resettlement were rare. Thinking about journalistic routines, we can explain it thus: it is easier to write a story in a dormitory or a centre for IDPs – however, for a feature about a successful individual, one needs to look for contacts to dig deeper into the context, to set up an interview etc. Additionally, it was not that easy to find a successful example at the beginning of the war. However, afterwards there were many stories of IDPs who had launched their own business or set up art projects, volunteer organisations etc. The mass media, however, sometimes just ignored such facts because they did not match the paradigm of 'a desperate victim, looking for help from a local community'. In some cases, wealthy IDPs even irritated journalists: '[wealthy IDPs] drive expensive cars, violate traffic rules and demonstrate the boorish behaviour usual for Donetsk'.

Thus, the 'victim' frame was popular and did not allow journalists to show a complete and adequate portrait of IDPs.

Threat metaphors and danger

Typical metaphors about IDPs – such as 'flood', 'wave' or 'occupation' were mentioned mainly during the 'hot' phase. Journalists created a feeling of growing tension: there are too many IDPs, our city/region is not ready. The mass media used exaggerations: 'half of the country may resettle and a remaining half should be ready to deal with this'. The possibility of a 'social explosion' was also mentioned. Additionally, generalisations were extremely influential: the mass media constantly published official statistics with just the numbers of IDPs entering a region.

Sites sometimes stressed the migrants' pro-Russian position and, as a result, the need to check the people from Donbas. However, cases of separatism were observed in both Kharkiv and Dnipro. Meanwhile, journalists stressed that IDPs should be checked, because they may be 'stained with separatism'. There was also some speculation about the reasons for IDPs' resettlement: 'they move from their towns not because of pro-Russian supporters and terrorists but just because of the bombing'. However, bombing is a reason for internal migration. *056.ua* differentiated between 'adequate and inadequate migrants': on 18 March 2015, journalists of the site wrote: 'All affected people had moved from Donbas already'. There were also reports about 'fake' IDPs. So, as well as threat metaphors and speculations about 'predominantly pro-Russian' IDPs, journalists additionally differentiated between locals and people from the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. However, mentions of crime were rare (numbers of 'illegal' migrants were published; journalists reported some cases of crimes committed against migrants). Thus, despite the use of police reports to cover the topic, local Ukrainian journalists did not perceive migrants as criminals.

Help-giving

As previously mentioned, the main sources of the migrant topic were officials, the migrants themselves and locals or international sources. Thus, for local media the problem of resettlement was an opportunity to show a positive image of local authorities, international institutions and local inhabitants. Of course, journalists published only a few reports about IDPs helping other IDPs. Additionally, the popularity of volunteer movements in post-Maidan Ukraine should be taken into consideration. The sites used such expressions as 'people of Dnipropetrovsk who shared what they can', 'compassionate students, who help destitute people, sleep three hours a day', 'volunteers do their best'. Numerous publications of this type showed signs of '*jeansa*'. For instance, a Ukrainian oligarch, the former head of Dnipropetrovsk regional administration – Igor Kolomoisky – and his deputy, Igor Filatov, were mentioned and journalists stressed the 'effectiveness' of their actions, quoting their speculation about IDPs. Former 'Party of Regions' members Sergiy Tigipko, Rinat Akhmetov and Yuri Vilkul made claims about their own help for IDPs.

Let us now analyse some typical cases of '*jeansa*' about IDPs. There were several types: texts about politicians or local authorities who were represented as 'good Samaritans' and texts with statements about IDPs' situation. In the first type of text, reporters spoke of politicians and oligarchs who had solved all the needs of the IDPs; many numbers were included and reporters provided their readers with lists of goods, medicine and equipment which were presented as 'gifts'. Additionally, authors stressed the long-term assistance offered. Thus, a manipulative image occurred: every IDP's problems will be solved. For instance, in the text 'Tigipko's Fund bought medicine and equipment for military hospitals', an author reports that the hospitals received 'medicine of high efficacity' and modern equipment 'which had no analogues before'. There were also 15 photos of the hospital, happy medical workers, the equipment and the medicine. Mention was also made of the fact that the Fund constantly monitors all the needs of the hospitals – the people who suffered

in the zone of ATO and 'refugees' in particular. There were no comments by medical workers, patients. Thus, it is impossible to understand whether this assistance is effective and whether IDPs have any other needs etc.

The next text of this type is about Akhmetov's humanitarian trip: 'The first load of goods from Akhmetov's humanitarian trip is delivered to Mariupol for the refugees'. One author reports that 570 volunteers unloaded the trucks and mentions the goods in detail: tea, biscuits, sugar, juices etc.; in total 200 tons of aid and 200,000 individual packages. There is a quote by Mariupol's Mayor, who thanked Akhmetov. Finally, in the background of the text there is information about the next trip: 40 more trucks will be sent.

As with the second type of text, there were statements by officials claiming that everything is under control, the local authorities are excellent at their job ('Dnipropetrovsk is a main fortified area of Ukraine – we should thank Kolomoysky' – Lutsenko'). Opponents of the government were also presented in another group of texts which were published mainly before the elections. These created a different picture: the government did not manage the situation at all – 'refugees are second-class people', the government does not defend its own people but leaves them all alone etc. (Halyna Bulavka: 'Refugees and inhabitants of Eastern regions must not be second-class people for the government'). Thus, readers just received contradictable pieces of information, which might lead to the decline of trust in all sides and of the mass media as well.

Thus, in the 'victim' frame, journalists portrayed the desperateness of the migrants but, in the 'help-giving' one, they stressed the nobleness of local people, volunteers, politicians and local authorities. As a result, Ukrainian internal migrants became an effective background for positive images of cities, their communities, politicians and officials although the IDPs themselves were not shown to be part of them.

Thus, the last RQ5 is confirmed. Basic violations in the coverage of the topic of IDPs may be found in the Ukrainian local mass media. However, cases of hate speech and approaches to show IDPs as 'potential criminals' were not salient. Some frames were more popular than others. Journalists used the generalisation frame more often (156 mentions – for both sites). 'Victim' (70) and 'help-giving' (57) frames occurred constantly too. Frames connected with inconvenience or even danger were observed less frequently (37), while the 'criminal' frame was not popular (7).

Discussion and conclusion

According to previous discoveries in the field of Ukrainian local journalism, research numbers are quite comparable with the manner of covering other topics by the Ukrainian local media. Ukrainian news sites predominantly prefer to rely only on a single source as journalists usually do not have enough time to check out information and therefore use press releases and social networks posts; the government, the local authorities, politicians and the police are the main commentators in Ukrainian local media (Yeremenko 2016). Additionally, analytics are also not very popular among local journalists – before 24 February 2022, approximately 1 per cent of local press content was about IDPs (see POID reports). However, perceptions of IDPs in the mass media of the regions which are close to Donetsk and Luhansk and hosted the largest number of migrants, have some specifics.

Images of dangerous IDPs in the mass media are not frequent and some compassion can be seen. In general, the context of texts is positive. Additionally, the relatively high number of IDP news sources is also a positive tendency. As a rule, scholars who studied coverage of internal migration in the media, did not observe this (Apuke and Tunca 2019; Hussain 2016). In this particular case, IDPs were quite often used as news sources by Ukrainian local mass media – they were in the top three most popular sources (along with officials, locals and international sources). However, this observation is true only for 2014–2015 (the 'hot' phase). During this period, journalists used a variety of sources. Later, the coverage became more episodic and publications about the topic typically had only one source. Therefore, we may conclude that the local press may be an important

forum for IDPs, as journalists are interested in their stories. As the results of my content analysis have also shown, the Ukrainian local press published stories about IDPs predominantly during the 'hot' phase of the conflict; later, journalists' attention decreased significantly (so here some correlation between the number of texts about IDPs and IDPs' usage as news sources can be seen: the more texts, the more IDP sources).

The Ukrainian media did not work out a clear definition of IDPs: both 'refugee' and 'IDP' terms were used between 2014–2018. It is important to stress, however, that the term 'refugees' was used at the beginning of the Russian aggression on Donbas, which might anchor the attitude towards IDPs as some kind of foreigners. IDPs were, in fact, usually described as passive.

In this context, basic violations of the coverage of IDPs occurred. It was possible to see this with the help of frame analysis. Local journalists mostly used generalisations. IDPs were described as victims. IDPs' poverty and health problems became salient and newsworthy while their success stories were rarely seen. Aditionally, help for migrants was one of the prominent issues. Journalists were keen to show their own city, local authorities and local people in a positive context. As a result, people who received help were generalised, with the weakest and the poorest of them in the foreground, whereas people who gave help were shown as altruistic. The 'threat' frame was rarely used; however, some aggressive and manipulative phrases were disseminated. A 'criminal' frame was also not popular.

Thus, both the number of publications and the use of IDPs as news sources did not prevent local journalists from publishing stereotyped, biased coverage of internal migration. The actions of the 'providers' to help IDPs are the priority, whereas the perspective of the 'receivers' is ignored in many cases. It is remarkable that, in the media, official structures' failure to solve IDPs problems, especially at the beginning of the Russian aggression, was not mentioned at all. On the contrary, the journalists' reliance on the officials as news sources caused another image to form: that of local authorities doing their best to help IDPs.

Therefore, the local mass-media perspective should be taken into account in such studies. It is quite understandable that the national mass media may miss some important details and try to show a general picture, where IDPs' narratives seem not to be important. Thus, regional closeness to the military conflict matters. However, these observations need further investigation: it is important to compare the mass media of different Ukrainian regions as well as the local and the national mass media representations. Of course, for further discoveries, new media outlets (social networks in particular) should also be studied. For instance, Kenyan researchers compared blogs and the mainstream media and concluded that the blogs were more attentive to IDPs (Apuke and Tunca 2019). In Ukraine, volunteers actively used social networks to mobilise support from local communities and the dissemination of some resonant stories might additionally influence the representation of Ukrainian IDPs.

It is also important to come up with some recommendations for both mass-media coverage and the press offices of local authorities. IDPs' socialisation is important for local communities, therefore all sides should contribute. According to the results of the framing analysis, local authorities and politicians cared about their positive image and their press offices constructed messages with generalisation, victim and help-giving frames. However, such an approach does not mean that a complete picture can be shown which would enable the reader to understand the real needs of migrants and the strong and weak sides of policy towards IDPs. As for the mass media, it is important to work out some solutions with news sources: at first, journalists were able to find IDPs and represent their side of a story; however, later, other sources prevailed. Therefore, a vocabulary and some guidelines for the local mass media are important too – to prevent the spread of stereotypes and prejudices (see Appendix for the examples of violations of mass-media quotes). Additionally, a more 'active' angle should be used, as well as clear reference to IDPs 'as IDPs', not as refugees.

One of the most significant issues for the mass media is speculation about the pro-Russian sympathies of IDPs. As a rule, these speculations were not based on facts or statistics. Sometimes politicians' or officials'

comments about their sympathies were disseminated. In times of war, stereotypes about IDPs may be used as an instrument of manipulation. As a result, a divided society, where the fears and prejudices about different groups exist, may be a suitable target. This analysis did not mention special information campaigns or propaganda operations in the local mass media – just some rare cases. However, these cases may also be harmful. Such cases are included in the Appendix as well.

This study adds to the scholarship on the representation of IDPs in the mass media, with a focus on local journalism. The local media observed IDPs more closely, with journalists perceiving them as 'internal others' (Lueck *et al.* 2015) or 'good others' (Don and Lee 2014). Ukrainian journalists stressed the migrants' 'vulnerability', presenting them as 'worthy of care' (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2016). However, compliance with professional standards and special steps taken by the mass media are needed in order to see IDPs as equal members of local communities. '*Jeansa*', subjectivity, a lack of balance, accuracy and completeness may all be seen in texts about IDPs. Additionally, journalistic division between 'noble' locals and 'desperate' migrants may cause migrants' ignorance of local news sites. Thus, IDPs may not be engaging with local politics. As a result, a space for gossip, manipulation and disinformation may be formed which could be a problem in future post-war attempts to re-build and unite the country.

Notes

1. This research was conducted before the full-scale Russian invasion which has started on 24 February 2022. Along with the death of thousands of civilians, the destruction of civil infrastructures and of whole cities and towns, with the ensuing violence and atrocities, the invasion also caused internal migration. According to the International Organization for Migration, over 8,000,000 people fled the war (IOM 2023). The consequences of this migration, governments' and international organisations' responses and the mass media and social networks' reactions will be studied in the future. However, this paper highlights IDP representation between February 2014 – when Russian aggression began in Crimea and, later, in Donbas – and February 2022 – when Ukrainians all over the country, in many cities and towns, woke up to Russian missiles and bombs. By the end of the day, many had collected their belongings and fled from their homes.
2. According to Ukrainian legislation, the Council coordinates and controls executive authorities' actions in the fields of national security and defense – the Ukrainian President is the head of the Council.

Conflict of interest statement

No conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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Appendix

Quotes from the mass media – examples of the frames

GENERALISATION

In the Dnepropetrovsk region, a special centre was opened; it includes 28 public organisations (from environmentalists to feminists). And everyone is occupied with something – with PR, refugees, volunteer work – *IDPs mentioned in a list of items.*

'I've probably never had in my life so much kindness and warmth', one migrant said about Dnepropetrovsk residents. A woman made a difficult journey from the town of Torez, destroyed by separatists – *the IDP woman did not have a name.*

We can resettle refugees, dress them and arrange for overnight stays, donate blood and save them from bombing – *IDPs mentioned as some object which should be dressed etc.*

In Russia, refugees from Donbass are called 'demographic resources' and estimated at 400,000 people – *no individual cases (were called or were estimated).*

The press service also noted that IDP women gave birth to 2,598 children – *no individual cases, the number without any context*.

There are 810,000 IDPs from Donbass registered in Ukraine – Ministry of Social Policy – *the number without context.*

VICTIM

How pregnant refugees are saved in Dnepropetrovsk and dissuaded from abortions – *a stereotype of IDPs being ready for the abortion, IDPs are represented by 'pregnant women'.*

Here, unborn babies, pregnant women and single mothers are literally saved from death – *IDPs being on the edge of death, IDPs are represented by 'babies, women, single mothers'.*

The couple who jumped onto the rails in the Kiev subway turned out to be refugees from Donbass – *the detail about the 'refugee status' isn't important here; a reader may connect the fact of suicide with the status, however, this correlation may be false.*

Entrance is for free food. Kharkiv hosts festival to help IDPs from Crimea and Donbass – *IDPs can't afford the basic needs, like food.*

HELP GIVING

Here, in Dnepropetrovsk, children [IDPs] were immediately given toys – *'immediately given'.*

Our students are not indifferent to someone else's grief; they sleep only three hours a day – *altruism of 'the providers'.*

We help displaced people from Slavyansk in any way we can – *the local inhabitants do their best to help.*

The Centre does everything possible to make visitors from Donbass feel as comfortable as possible in Dnepropetrovsk – *again 'the providers' do their best.*

The EU countries will provide Ukraine with unprecedented humanitarian aid for IDPs – *'unprecedented' aid for IDPS.*

The authorities will do everything possible to make these houses [for IDPs] comfortable – *'will do everything possible'.*

Turkey provided 200 tons of humanitarian aid to IDPs from Donbass – *'tons' of aid.*

Less than a month has passed since the last shipment of humanitarian aid from Kharkiv to Donbass. Then our fellows-Ukrainians collected 326 tons of food, medicines; they didn't even forget to give Christmas trees to the children. Today, the total cargo has increased by four tons – as a part of the 'humanitarian aid' – about 1,000 food packages. 24 trucks will go to the territories liberated from militants. 17 cars leave Kharkiv, 7 more departed from Pavlograd – *'tons' of aid, food, 1,000 packages, more help will come.*

DANGER, BURDEN

Today, KamAZ vehicles of the dead are passing through the hands of these people [the local authorities]. The wounded pass through them. The main wave of refugees passed through them – *the wave.*

The flow of people does not stop even now – *the flow.*

If the situation in the eastern regions of Ukraine does not stabilise in the near future, a massive influx of refugees is expected from there – *IDPs destabilise the situation, 'a massive influx'.*

Of course, we would not want to turn into a transit zone, where tens of thousands of refugees will go, but we are preparing – *'zone' because of IDPs.*

First of all, there are questions for people who leave Snizhne, Slavyansk and Kramatorsk. They are very aggressive, they think that everyone here owes them; they do not want to work. Although people from Donetsk are more or less adequate – '*aggressive*', '*more or less adequate' IDPs.*

The migrants don't want to get any job. Especially those, who had a prestigious job before – *IDPs don't want to work.*

Today Mariupol is not ready to accept these people [IDPs]. The city is on the verge of a social explosion – *the explosion because of IDPs.*

Waves of Donetsk emigration (or occupation?) have been rolling over the city for more than a decade – *the waves, 'occupation'.*

PRO-RUSSIAN IDPs

At checkpoints, cars are regularly detained. Some strange 'refugees' with bruises on their right shoulder and traces of gun soot on their fingers drive from east to west of Ukraine – *IDPs described as militants, who were in combat against Ukrainian military.*

The regional administration will check all 'refugees' of military age who do not want to be registered temporarily and are also engaged in parasitism – *'fake' refugees, don't want to defend their country and join the military, parasites.*

Nina [an IDP] had to quit her work because of an 'anonymous message' with a complaint about her political views – *not normal political views for an IDP.*

According to the deputy head of the Dnepropetrovsk Regional State Administration, there are also many people among the IDPs who support the separatists – *it's not clear why the deputy head is so sure about separatism.*

Alexander led IDPs to the dacha in the summer. 'They lived practically for free, then I was fine with it, besides, they were acquaintances – he recalls. – They seemed like normal people, then they found an apartment, moved out. They didn't even say goodbye. After their departure we came to the dacha with my wife.

Everything mostly was fine, clean, only on the table was a note that killed us: 'We hate you anyway' – *IDPs who hate residents of Kyiv, because of political views.*

Adequate people from Donbas have already left – *people who stay there are inadequate, separatists.*

CRIME

There are about 50,000 illegal immigrants in the region – *the number without context, it isn't clear why these people don't want to register, are there any obstacles etc.?*

A family of refugees from Donbas was killed in Russia – *a false correlation: the killing was because of the refugee status.*

IDPs cannot be subjected to forced fingerprinting and, most importantly, they do not want to work – *All IDPs should be fingerprinted.*

Another mechanism of falsification will be a large number of displaced persons, whom we call refugees – *with the help of IDPs, the election will be falsified.*

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