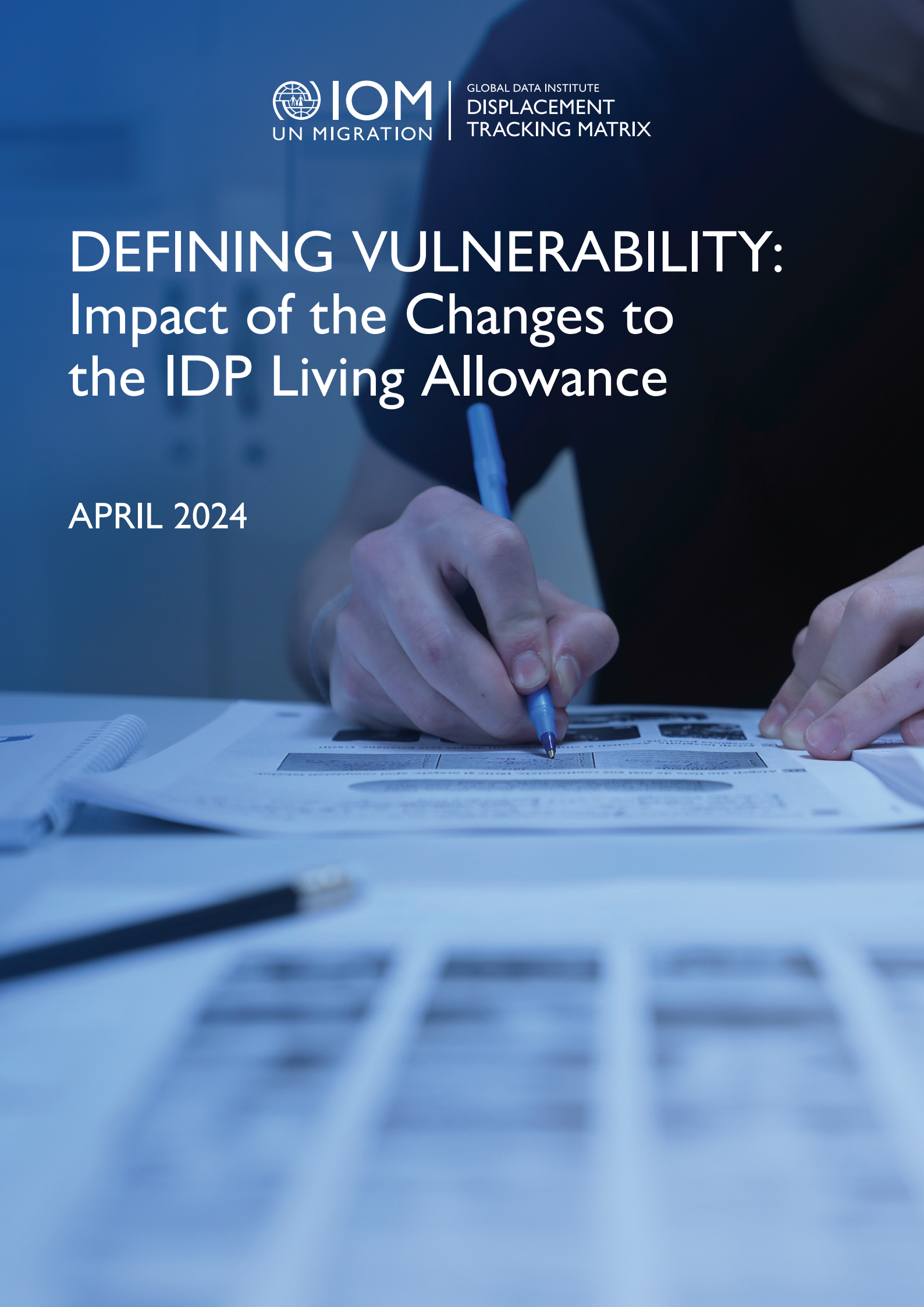


# DEFINING VULNERABILITY: Impact of the Changes to the IDP Living Allowance

APRIL 2024



## INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine that started on 24 February 2022 has caused widespread displacement. As of December 2023, an [estimated](#) 3.7 million people remained internally displaced in Ukraine. Internally displaced people (IDPs) face particular challenges meeting their needs, and rebuilding their lives, especially in situations of protracted displacement. When compared to the non-displaced population, IDPs were more likely to be unemployed in their areas of displacement, reporting specific [challenges](#) when looking for jobs, such as lacking adequate skills, discrimination from employers to hire IDPs and the impact of the war on key sectors of the economy. Moreover, IDPs also reported higher income loss due to the war and higher needs for humanitarian assistance across most sectors. In the absence of sufficient assistance these factors could result in increased socio-economic vulnerability among IDPs and pose a key barrier to their achievement of a durable solution to displacement.

The Government of Ukraine has sustained a programme of financial support to IDPs (referred to as the IDP living allowance). Until recently, all officially registered IDPs were eligible for this allowance. IDP registration was open to individuals who were forced to leave their residence as a result of, or to avoid, the adverse effects of armed conflict, temporary occupation, widespread violence, human rights violations, or natural or man-made disasters. This initially [applied](#) to those from across 14 oblasts across the country along with some specifically defined groups, and as of

August 2023, to individuals who had fled from territories where military activities were taking place or which were occupied, as well as individuals having evidence of property damage due to the war.

[Revisions](#) to the eligibility criteria that came into effect in March 2024 limited access to the IDP living allowance based upon a specific set of socio-economic vulnerability profiles. This introduction of additional criteria is intended to ensure that social assistance in Ukraine is capable of supporting the most vulnerable, both among those who have been displaced and the general population. However, this increases the risk of excluding some vulnerable individuals who may lose access to the IDP living allowance under the new criteria. This reduction in monthly household income could impact on the ability of vulnerable households to meet their basic needs and rebuild their lives.

**The purpose of this brief is to provide an overview of the estimated share and number of IDPs that may still be eligible for the IDP allowance under the new policy.** Using available secondary data, this thematic brief aims to provide an indicative overview of the share and number of IDPs that will not be eligible anymore, despite being vulnerable to a reduction in household income that could affect their ability to meet basic needs. The brief intends to inform and support advocacy and programming of humanitarian partners in complementarity with the new IDP allowance scheme.

## METHODOLOGY

A comprehensive analysis of eligibility for the IDP living allowance is precluded by the data available. The following analysis is based on the 2023 REACH Multi-Sector Needs Assessment ([MSNA](#)), in combination with the IOM General Population Survey (GPS) Rounds [13](#) to [15](#), as well as a recent IOM "Ukraine MPCA Eligibility Assessment".

MSNA data collection took place between June and August 2023. Interviews were conducted both in-person and remotely with 13,322 households. Household-level results are representative at a 95 per cent confidence level and with a 7 per cent margin of error for three sets of geographical strata: At the raion level, using face-to-face surveys in 25 raions across seven oblasts along the frontline (as of June 2023) and border; at the grouped-raion level using computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) surveys in 23 raions across nine oblasts, also situated along the frontline and border; and at the oblast level, stratified for rural-urban representativeness, using face-to-face surveys in 58 raions across 13 oblasts in the West and Center of Ukraine.

**The following steps were taken to analyse eligibility for the IDP allowance as per the new eligibility criteria:**

1. Where the relevant socioeconomic information was available from the MSNA dataset, the proportion of IDPs eligible under each specific criterion was estimated. The [definition](#) for each criteria can be found in the annex.
2. Depending on the criteria met under (1), each individual was then categorised as either being eligible for 'automatic renewal', being eligible for 're-application', or not being eligible under either category (as per the categorization of the criteria outlined in the annex). Following this, the proportion of individuals still eligible, overall as well as by category, was estimated;

3. The proportion of IDPs eligible under each category was multiplied with IOM's latest estimate of the number of IDPs in Ukraine, drawn from the General Population Survey (GPS) [Round 15](#), to arrive at an estimate of the number of eligible IDPs;
4. For an estimation of the proportion and number of individuals that may be particularly vulnerable to reductions in income, and with respect to their ability to meet their basic needs, the following indicators were considered:
  - a. Proportion of IDPs not eligible and in informal work / unemployed / living with disabilities or chronic illness;
  - b. Proportion of IDPs not eligible in households with a monthly household income per household member below the inflation-adjusted Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) of UAH 5,865 per member;
  - c. Proportion of IDPs in households having adopted or exhausted emergency-level coping strategies due to a lack of resources to meet basic needs.
  - d. These indicators were selected to provide an indication of different degrees of socio-economic vulnerability or gaps in access to sufficient resources to cover basic needs.


IDPs are defined as the individuals who have been forced to flee or to leave their homes or who are staying outside their habitual residence due to the full-scale invasion in February 2022, regardless of whether they hold registered IDP status.

# I. OVERVIEW OF ELIGIBILITY ESTIMATES

## 1. ELIGIBILITY UNDER THE NEW RESOLUTION

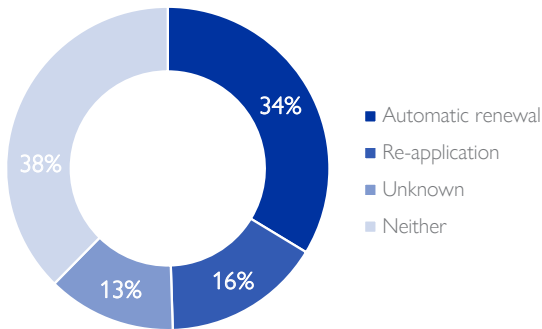
As of [September 2023](#), 77 per cent of all IDPs reported themselves or their households as having received the IDP living allowance. The data does not allow an estimate the proportion of those who reported receiving the IDP allowance and who will no longer be eligible for either automatic renewal, or re-application. All calculations are done on the entire *de facto* IDP population defined as the individuals who have been forced to flee or to leave their homes or who are staying outside their habitual residence due to the full-scale invasion in February 2022, regardless of whether they hold registered IDP status.

Eligibility under the new law resolution:

-  **50% (1.8 million) of all IDPs** are estimated to remain eligible for either automatic renewal or re-application
- 16% of all IDPs (580,000 individuals)** are estimated to remain eligible for automatic renewal
- 34% of all IDPs (1,261,000 individuals)** are estimated to be eligible for re-application

Under Resolution 332, it is estimated that a minimum of 16 per cent of all IDPs would remain eligible for automatic renewal, while a further 34 per cent of IDPs would be eligible for re-application under the new criteria (Figure 1). It is estimated that 13 per cent of all IDPs would not be eligible because of the change in criteria.

Figure 1: Percentage of IDPs estimated to be eligible



## 2. ELIGIBILITY RATES AND PROFILES

At least 82 per cent of retired IDPs remaining eligible, compared to 51 per cent of IDPs engaged in home or child care. Furthermore, 40 per cent of IDPs engaged in informal work, as well as those who are unemployed or suffering chronic illness or living with disabilities, are eligible for re-application, alongside 26 per cent of IDPs who are employed or self-employed. Among IDPs under the age of 18, at least 57 per cent were estimated to remain eligible for re-application (Figure 3).

Eligibility remains linked to employment status: those in paid work are less likely than other groups to be eligible. At the same time, an important share of IDPs who are working remain eligible due to their levels of income. Hence, the new eligibility criteria under Resolution 332 includes households with access to paid employment who remain socio-economically vulnerable.

Figure 2: Eligibility Rates by Vulnerability

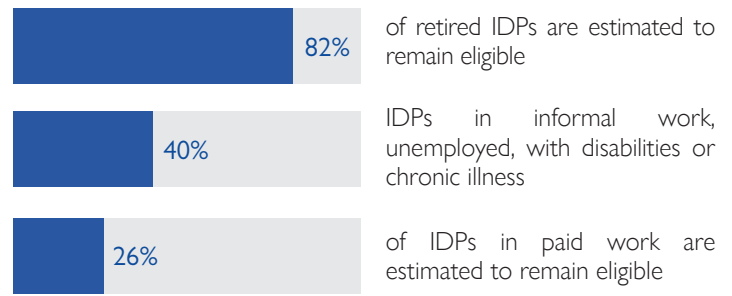
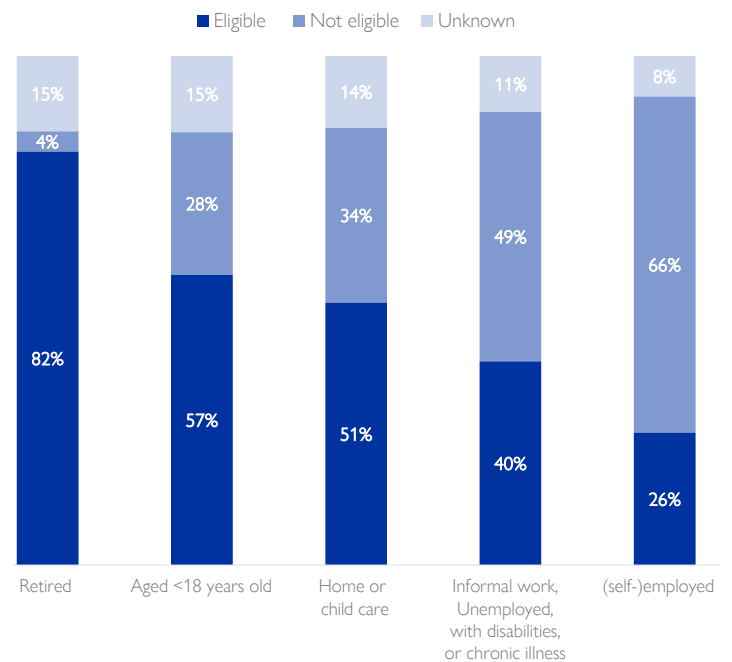


Figure 3: Percentage of IDPs by eligibility and employment status in the 7 days prior to data collection



Of those who remain eligible, the primary profiles are:

- Being a part of a household where members in employment or self-employment were earning an income per household member below UAH 9,444, with at least one child under the age of 14.

**36%** of eligible IDPs are part of a household where members are employed or self-employed, earning an income per household member below UAH 9,444 and with at least one child under the age of 14

- Being part of a household where the average amount of pension per pensioner is less than the minimum amount of UAH 9,444.

**31%** of eligible IDPs are part of a household where average pension per pensioner is below UAH 9,444

## 2. ASSESSING THE ELIGIBILITY OF VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS AND HOUSEHOLDS

### I. Employment type:



**9% of all IDPs (338,000 individuals)**

are estimated to be ineligible despite being in informal work, unemployed, or suffering chronic illness / living with disabilities

### II. Income below Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB):



**13% of all IDPs (489,000 individuals)**

are estimated to be ineligible despite being in households with a monthly household income below the MEB<sup>1</sup>

### III. Use of negative coping strategies:



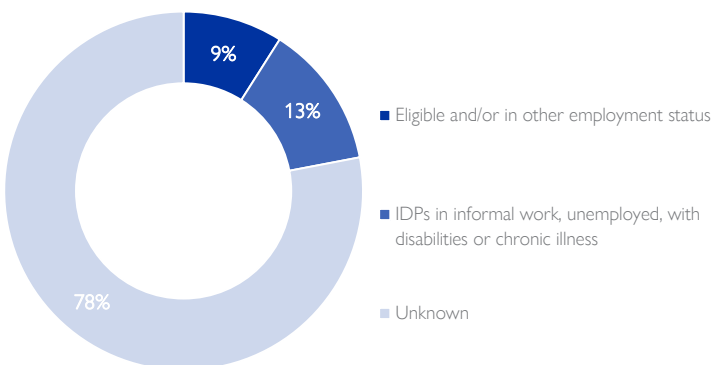
**4% of all IDPs (161,000 individuals)**

are estimated to be ineligible despite being in households that resorted to emergency-level coping strategies to meet basic needs

## 1. EMPLOYMENT TYPE

As noted above, eligibility and employment status are related. As a result, employed and self-employed IDPs were less likely to be eligible than other IDPs. Nevertheless, among those not eligible, 25 per cent of individuals are in informal work, unemployed, suffering chronic illness or living with disabilities. This corresponds to a minimum of 9 per cent of all IDPs (338,000) being in informal work, unemployed, or suffering chronic illness / living with disabilities and being ineligible (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Percentage of IDPs not being eligible while in informal work, unemployed or suffering chronic illness / living with disabilities



At least 19 per cent of IDPs in informal work, unemployed, suffering chronic illness or living with disabilities were living in households with a household income per household member above the MEB. Nevertheless, the majority of individuals without paid work may be unable to make savings, impacting their ability to meet their basic needs in the future, which may render their households vulnerable to changes in provision of allowances.

<sup>1</sup>Latest technical note on Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) in Ukraine is available [here](#)

## 2. INCOME BELOW MINIMUM EXPENDITURE BASKET

Despite a clear relationship between household income and eligibility (Figure 5), at least 13 per cent of IDPs (489,000 individuals) remain ineligible despite having been in households with a total income below the MEB (Figure 6). These individuals may be particularly vulnerable towards not being able to meet their basic needs in the absence of access to sufficient economic opportunities and assistance.

Figure 5: Percentage of IDPs ineligible while being in households with a household income per member below the MEB

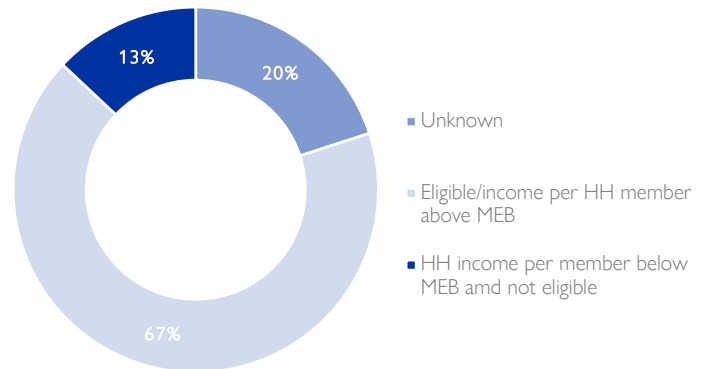
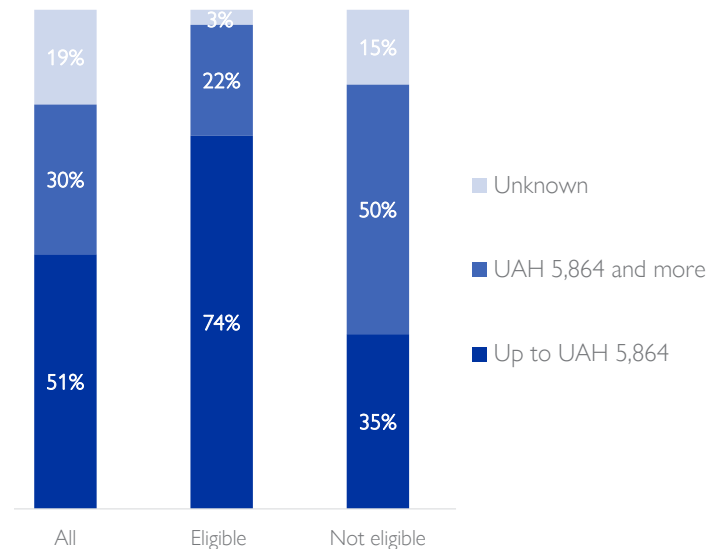


Figure 6: Percentage of IDPs, by reported monthly household income per household member



## 3. USE OF NEGATIVE COPING STRATEGIES

Similarly, there is a clear relationship between the adoption or exhaustion of livelihoods-based coping strategies and eligibility (Figure 7).

At least 18 per cent of all IDPs remain ineligible despite having been in households who adopted or exhausted livelihoods-based coping strategies to meet their basic needs (Figures 7). This includes at least 4 per cent of IDPs (161,000) who resorted to emergency-level negative coping strategies. These individuals may have already exhausted less extreme coping strategies, be at risk of an erosion of coping strategies altogether or be unable to meet their basic needs.

Figure 7: Percentage of IDPs being ineligible and in households having adopted or exhausted livelihoods-based coping strategies<sup>2</sup>

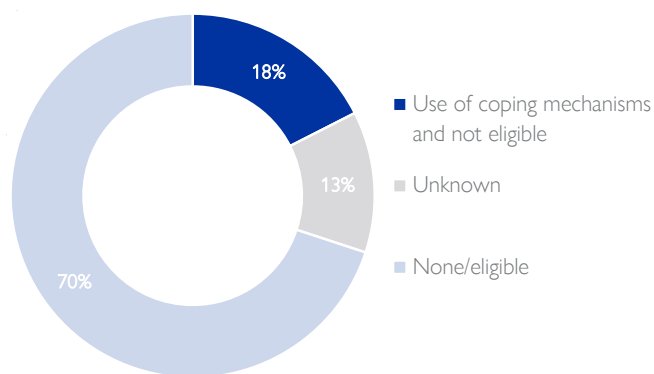
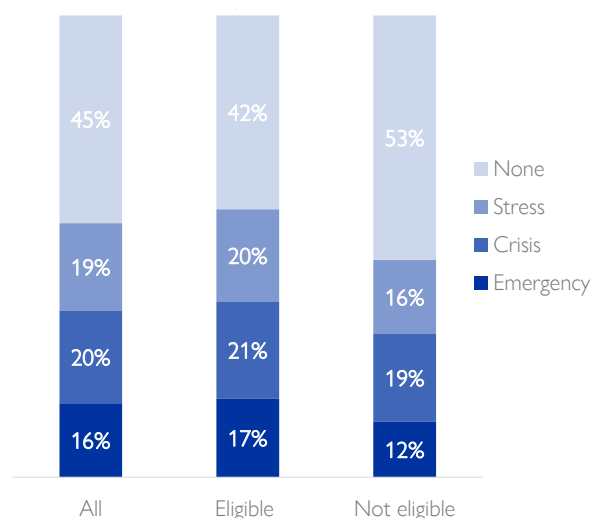


Figure 8: Percentage of IDPs, reporting having adopted or exhausted livelihoods-based coping strategies in the 30 days prior to data collection



| Coping strategies | Description   |
|-------------------|---|
| Stress            | Spending savings; purchasing food on credit or borrowing food; sending household members to eat / live with another family or friends, or eat at a food bank / soup kitchen / collective centre distributing food; selling household assets / goods |
| Crisis            | Selling productive assets or means of transport; reducing essential health expenditures; reducing essential education expenditures  |
| Emergency         | Moving elsewhere; using degrading sources of income, illegal work, or high risk jobs; selling house or land   |

## VULNERABLE YET INELIGIBLE

Under the new eligibility criteria, certain vulnerable IDP profiles may find themselves ineligible for the IDP allowance due to several reasons:

**Undocumented Disabilities:** Despite significant disabilities or chronic illnesses hindering their ability to work or engage in daily activities, some individuals may find themselves ineligible because they are not officially recognized as disabled by the state. This may occur due to various factors, including not meeting the state's definition of disability, lack of awareness about registration processes, inability to access required medical documentation, or administrative barriers.

**Unregistered Unemployment:** Certain unemployed individuals may be ineligible because they are not formally registered as such at employment centers. This obstacle could arise from challenges in navigating bureaucratic procedures, concerns about conscription, lack of awareness about registration requirements, or limited access to employment services, particularly in conflict-affected areas with disrupted infrastructure and administrative systems.

**Family-structure Constraints:** Some individuals may encounter obstacles in meeting eligibility criteria due to requirements related to having children. This situation could disproportionately affect households without children facing unemployment or having low incomes.

Despite being ineligible for the IDP allowance under these criteria, these individuals may still struggle to meet their basic needs due to lower incomes, limited earning opportunities, absence of social protection mechanisms, or the additional financial burden of managing unregistered chronic illnesses or disabilities without adequate support. Essentially, they represent a vulnerable segment of the displaced population ineligible for the IDP allowance despite their evident need for assistance.

## LIMITATIONS

The most impactful limitation of this study is that not all criteria could be included in the analysis as six out of ten are included. Moreover, most criteria could not be operationalized exactly as per their definitions in the new policy. Their operationalization, as well as the overall results, should therefore be understood as providing a proxy of eligibility under the new criteria.

Secondly, MSNA data collection took place nine months ago, and socioeconomic conditions may have evolved since then. Nevertheless, analysis of socioeconomic indicators from GPS Rounds 13 and 15 indicates a relatively stable situation between June and December 2023.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the MSNA data is assumed to still be sufficiently reflective of the current situation for the purpose of this brief.

Thirdly, for the purpose of this analysis, any person living in a household which did not stay at their habitual place of residence

at the time of data collection and reported having left their habitual place of residence as a result of the escalation of the war on 24 February 2022, is considered an IDP. This designation may not always correspond to people's official status as registered IDPs.

Finally, certain population groups could not be included in the analysis (refer to the annex for more information). As a result, the share of eligible individuals may be underestimated. In addition, for 13 per cent of individuals or 10 per cent of households, results are not available, mainly due to households having refused to or not having been able to report their income.

Please refer to the annex for a detailed overview of the eligibility criteria, their operationalization for the purpose of this analysis, and associated limitations.

<sup>3</sup> Reported levels of unemployment, for instance, remained relatively stable between GPS rounds: In Round 13, 20% of IDPs reported having been unemployed (compared to 10% of returnees, and 8% of non-displaced individuals). In Round 15, 17% of IDPs reported having been unemployed (compared to 11% of returnees, and 7% of non-displaced individuals). Any differences between population groups and over time have to be interpreted taken into consideration a margin of error of at least 2% (at a confidence level of 95%). Round 14 was not used to allow enough time (six months) for comparison between the two rounds utilized.

## ANNEX

As per Resolution 332, the eligibility criteria are split into two sets of criteria: (1) Those granting an immediate extension of the allowance; and (2) those allowing for an extension following re-application. The following table provides an overview of the eligibility criteria, their operationalization for the purpose of this analysis, and any associated limitations.

Table 1: Eligibility criteria as per Resolution 332 (source: Protection Cluster), their operationalization for the purpose of this analysis, and associated limitations

| CRITERIA   | DEFINITION  | LIMITATIONS  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Automatic extension for 6 months for the following IDPs:</b>  |   |  |
| <b>[Pensioner]</b> Pensioners whose pension does not exceed UAH 9,444 as of January 1, 2024 (four subsistence minimums for persons with disabilities);   | Any IDP whose employment status in the seven days prior to data collection was reported as 'Retired (not working)' or 'Retired (but still working to receive additional income, or just prefer working)', <b>AND</b> the amount of 'Pension for all reasons (age, military, except of disability allowance)' in the 30 days prior to data collection reported by the household of which did not exceed UAH 9,444 per the number of retired (working or not working) in the household.   | The reported total amount of pension received by the household divided by the number of pensioners in the household does not necessarily reflect the amount of pension received by each pensioner in the household. <b>The result therefore only constitutes a proxy estimate of eligibility under this criterion.</b> |
| Persons with disabilities of group I or II, children with disabilities under the age of 18, seriously ill children;  | Not included  | The number of eligible individuals will be underestimated.   |
| Orphans and children deprived of parental care under 23, particularly those adopted or raised in family-type group homes; and foster parents and adoptive parents.   | Not included  | The number of eligible individuals will be underestimated.   |
| <b>Extension of allowance for 6 months based on new application for IDPs whose family income does not exceed UAH 9,444 per person AND:</b>   |   |  |
| <b>[Childcare (HH)]</b> There is an employable unemployed person in the family or among the recipients of assistance, who takes care of a child under 14 years, of three or more children under the age of 18, <b>AND</b> children are unable to attend childcare and educational institutions, <b>OR</b> education is in a mixed format (offline and online); <b>OR</b> | All children up to the age of 17, individuals aged 18 to 22 whose employment status in the seven days prior to data collection was reported as 'Student, not working' or 'Student and in paid work', and up to two additional adults (persons aged >17) <sup>4</sup> in IDP households with at least one individual whose employment status in the seven days prior to data collection was reported as 'Doing housework, looking after children or other persons (unpaid)', <b>AND</b> that had at least one child under 14 <b>OR</b> at least three children under 18, <b>AND</b> that reported at least one child aged 5 to 14 <b>OR</b> at least three children aged 5 to 17 as not having been enrolled in formal school during the 2022/2023 school year or as not having regularly attended in-person learning, <b>AND</b> the total amount of income in the 30 days prior to data collection reported by the household of which did not exceed UAH 9,444 per household member. | NA   |

<sup>4</sup> It is understood that for the purpose of determining eligibility for the IDP allowance under Resolution 332, a family is considered to include husband, wife, children, adopted children, children raised by foster parents in family-type orphanages, adopted children, children under guardianship or guardianship, as well as children who study full-time or dual education in institutions of general secondary, professional (vocational-technical), professional pre-higher, or higher education (in particular, in the period between the completion of studies in one of the specified educational institutions and entering another institution or in the period between the completion of studies at one educational and qualification level and the continuation of studies at another level, provided that such period does not exceed four months) until reaching the age of 23 and do not have their own families. As such, for the purpose of this analysis, not all household members in an eligible household are necessarily considered eligible, as they may be beyond this definition of a family. Instead, and as highlighted in the table, in eligible households, the following household members are considered eligible: All children up to the age of 17, individuals aged 18 to 22 whose employment status in the seven days prior to data collection was reported as 'Student, not working' or 'Student and in paid work', and up to two additional adults (persons aged >17) who are assumed to represent parents / legal guardians. This may overestimate eligibility where the two additional adults are not both parents / legal guardians.

| CRITERIA   | DEFINITION   | LIMITATIONS  |
|--|--|--|
| <p><b>[Unemployment (HH)]</b> Families in which, as of the application date, an unemployed employable person was registered at the employment center as unemployed or as looking for work, but has not yet found employment, <b>AND</b> the family has children studying at schools/universities (full-time); <b>OR</b></p>  | <p>All children up to the age of 17, individuals aged 18 to 22 whose employment status in the seven days prior to data collection was reported as 'Student, not working' or 'Student and in paid work', and up to two additional adults (persons aged &gt;17) in IDP households with at least one individual whose employment status in the seven days prior to data collection was reported as 'Unemployed and actively looking for a job in the last 30 days', <b>AND</b> that had at least one child aged 5 to 18 enrolled in and regularly attending formal school (in-person, remote, or mixed modality) <b>OR</b> at least one individual aged 18 to 22 whose employment status in the seven days prior to data collection was reported as 'Student, not working' or 'Student and in paid work', <b>AND</b> the total amount of income in the 30 days prior to data collection reported by the household of which did not exceed UAH 9,444 per household member.</p> | <p>The MSNA only assessed school enrolment for individuals up to the age of 18. Therefore, reported employment status, including 'Student, not working' or 'Student and in paid work' is taken as a proxy for school attendance among individuals aged 18 to 22. The cut-off age of 22 is applied in line with the definition of eligible family members given in the footnote below.</p>  |
| <p><b>[Care for people living with disabilities or chronic illness/ elderly (HH)]</b> Families in which one of the family members takes care of a person with a disability of group I, <b>OR</b> a child with a disability under the age of 18, <b>OR</b> a person with a disability of groups I or II due to mental health issues; <b>OR</b> a person who reached 80 years old <b>OR</b> a seriously ill child; <b>OR</b></p> | <p>All children up to the age of 17, individuals aged 18 to 22 whose employment status in the seven days prior to data collection was reported as 'Student, not working' or 'Student and in paid work', and up to two additional adults (persons aged &gt;17) in IDP households with at least one individual whose employment status in the seven days prior to data collection was reported as 'Doing housework, looking after children or other persons (unpaid)', <b>AND</b> that had at least one person with disability <b>OR</b> at least one person aged 80 and above, <b>AND</b> the total amount of income in the 30 days prior to data collection reported by the household of which did not exceed UAH 9,444 per household member.</p>  | <p>Disability was only assessed for individuals aged 5 and above, and using the <a href="#">Washington Group Short Set on Functioning</a>. The identification of disability may therefore not correspond to disability of groups I or II as per the criterion. Moreover, children with disability under the age of 5 will be missed by this analysis, as will seriously ill children. <b>The result therefore only constitutes a proxy estimate of eligibility under this criterion.</b></p> |
| <p><b>[New employment (HH)]</b> Families in which employable persons found employment, registered as individual entrepreneurs and started working / received assistance to gain economic independence / a micro-grant for the establishment or development of their own business / received a voucher for education, etc., <b>AND</b> the family includes children aged up to 14 years.</p>                                    | <p>All children up to the age of 17, individuals aged 18 to 22 whose employment status in the seven days prior to data collection was reported as 'Student, not working' or 'Student and in paid work', and up to two additional adults (persons aged &gt;17) in IDP households with at least one individual whose employment status in the seven days prior to data collection was reported as 'In paid work: Permanent job with annual/monthly/weekly wage', 'In paid work: Temporary job with weekly/daily/monthly wage', 'In paid work: Daily labour', 'Self-employed/owns business' <b>AND</b> that had at least one child under 14, <b>AND</b> the total amount of income in the 30 days prior to data collection reported by the household of which did not exceed UAH 9,444 per household member.</p>  | <p>Employment and self-employment are captured. Anyone who is receiving assistance towards their self-employment but might still have reported as unemployed at the time of data collection is not captured. This may result in a <b>slight underestimation</b> of the number of eligible individuals under this criterion.</p>  |
| <p><b>Additionally, extension of allowance for 6 months based on new application for the following IDPs:</b></p>   |  |  |
| <p>Minor children who arrived unaccompanied by their parents</p>   | <p>Not included</p>  | <p>The number of eligible individuals will be underestimated.</p>  |
| <p>Pregnant women (starting from the 30th week of pregnancy)</p>   | <p>Not included</p>  | <p>The number of eligible individuals will be underestimated.</p>  |

| CRITERIA  | DEFINITION  | LIMITATIONS  |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>[Suffering chronic illness / disabled]</b> Persons who are not employable, but do not have the right to a pension payment and / or receive state social assistance (except persons with disability of groups I or II) if family income does not exceed UAH 9,444 per person</p> | <p>Any IDP whose employment status in the seven days prior to data collection was reported as 'Suffering chronic illness or disabled (can't work)', <b>AND</b> the total amount of income in the 30 days prior to data collection reported by the household of which did not exceed UAH 9,444 per household member.</p> | <p>The MSNA captured the following employment categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In paid work: Permanent job with annual/monthly/weekly wage</li> <li>• In paid work: Temporary job with weekly/daily/monthly wage</li> <li>• In paid work: Daily labour</li> <li>• Unofficially employed / informal work</li> <li>• Student, not working</li> <li>• Student and in paid work</li> <li>• Self-employed/owns business</li> <li>• Unemployed and actively looking for a job in the last 30 days</li> <li>• Unemployed, wanting a job but not actively looking for it</li> <li>• Suffering chronic illness or disabled (can't work)</li> <li>• Retired (not working)</li> <li>• Retired (but still working to receive additional income, or just prefer working)</li> <li>• Doing housework, looking after children or other persons (unpaid)</li> <li>• Don't know</li> <li>• Other (specify)</li> </ul> <p>Out of all response options above, 'Suffering chronic illness or disabled (can't work)' was assumed to come closest to not being 'employable [and not having] the right to a pension payment and / or [receiving] state social assistance'. It is unknown, however, whether or not these individuals had access to state social assistance the time of data collection. This may lead to a <b>slight overestimation</b> of the number of eligible individuals. Overall, given only partial definitional alignment, <b>the result should only be considered a proxy estimate of eligibility under this criterion.</b></p> |





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