

PROJECT NEWSLETTER

STRENGTHENING THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN UKRAINE

Issue №3 (January – March 2017)

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DEAR COLLEAGUES,

Welcome to the third issue of the Newsletter of the Council of Europe Project “Strengthening the Human Rights Protection of Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine”.

In this issue we would like to draw your attention to fundamental and major events that have been successfully implemented by the Project within the first quarter of 2017. We hope you find the following information useful and you enjoy reading it.

I am delighted to congratulate the grant award winners within the Call for grants “Human rights, integration and empowerment of IDPs in Ukraine: Affecting change at the regional and local level”, since today the Project’s core priority is to support initiatives aimed at the facilitating of successful integration and empowerment of IDPs at regional and local level in Ukraine.

Following the results of the Call, the following 11 NGOs have been supported by the Project: Charitable foundation “Slavic heart”, Human Rights Center “League of women voters”, NGO “Ukrainian Association of freelancers”, NGO “Strong community”, Luhansk regional organization “Public Service of Legal Aid”, Charitable organisation

“Positive women”, NGO “Youth alternative”, Luhansk Regional Women’s Legal Defense Public Organisation “Chaika”, Charitable Foundation “Dopomoga Dnipra”, All-Ukrainian charitable foundation “Horyeniye” and NGO “Dnipro Regional Union “Power of the Future”. The selected projects will be implemented in Luhansk, Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk and Kyiv regions during March-September 2017.

We are looking forward to the multiple challenges ahead to be overcome and the objectives to be accomplished. Nothing so far would have been achieved without the close and dedicated collaboration of our partners and anything that will be achieved this year will be because of this spirit of cooperation. We feel confident that our partnership will further lead us towards positive changes in Ukraine.

Sincerely yours,
Ganna Khrystova

STAGE OF THE PROJECT JANUARY – MARCH 2017

What has been achieved



A Steering Committee meeting of the «Strengthening the Human Rights Protection of Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine» Project was held on 13 February 2017. The Project is implemented under the framework of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine 2015-2017.

The Project is aimed at advancing the legislation on IDPs, supporting better implementation of the rights of IDPs, raising awareness about the rights and needs of IDPs, and promoting their integration in the host communities.

The joint discussion and planning of the Project activities allowed the Steering Committee to approve a Project work plan to be implemented in 2017.

The Project stakeholders and national partners gave a positive feedback on the Project activities and emphasised its efficiency and result-oriented approach.

Among 50 participants of the Steering Committee meeting, there were members of the Parliament of Ukraine,

representatives of the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons of Ukraine, Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, Coordination Centre for Free Legal Aid, State Migration Service of Ukraine, Anti-Terrorist Centre at the Security Service of Ukraine, the Representative on IDPs of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, the Government Commissioner of the European Court of Human Rights, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, representatives of Donetsk, Luhansk, Dnipropetrovsk and Kyiv Regional State Administrations (Project focus regions), leading civil society organisations, and the Project team.

Within the Specific Objective 1, whose aim is to contribute to the advancement of the legislative and regulatory framework for human rights protection of IDPs in Ukraine, in line with European and international standards, the following activities have been undertaken:



In February - March (2 February and 2 March) two meetings in cooperation with the subgroup on confirmation of civil status and agreements, recognition of legal facts were organised. The meetings are regularly organised in the Council of Europe Office in Kyiv with the Project support.

Due to the constructive dialogue and participation of the Notary Chamber of Ukraine led by its President, heads of relevant offices of the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine representatives of the National Academy of the Prosecutor's Office of Ukraine, Coordination Centre for Free Legal Aid, Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories, NGOs, and the Council of Europe Project team, of the development of the proposals regarding inheritance procedures and other notarial actions of the property on the uncontrolled

territories of Ukraine have been facilitated.

The relevant draft law is currently under internal authorisation procedure of the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and it should be sent for approval to the central executive authorities concerned in the near future.



A Round table «Housing and Social and Economic Rights Protection as the Most Acute Problem of IDPs in Regions» was held in Dnipropetrovsk region on 10 March 2017.

The purpose of the round table was to get the representatives of the Dnipropetrovsk region acquainted with the activities of the Working Group on improving national legislation on the protection of the human rights of IDPs (hereinafter - the Working Group). The round table served as a space to receive expert opinions from participants regarding protection of human rights of IDPs and improvement of capacities of the organisations working with IDPs. During the round table, two particular issues were discussed: Protection of social and economic rights of IDPs (social protection and benefits, social services, access to healthcare,

employment, etc.) and housing, restitution, compensation for property loss (IDPs housing provision procedure, compensation of lost housing, etc.).

All recommendations developed, as a result of the round table, will be forwarded to the members of relevant subgroups of the Working Group. The participants expressed their hope that the representatives of the regional authorities would be further involved in such expert meetings of the Working Group.



The Social Protection Department of the Luhansk Military and Civil Administration and the Council of Europe Project co-organised a Round table «Improving protection of the rights of IDPs at the Legislative Level» on 24 March 2017.

The Round Table was focused on the expert opinions of participants on the protection of the rights of IDPs of the Luhansk region who require special attention.

During the round table the Working Group on improving national legislation on the protection of the human rights of IDPs (hereinafter - Working Group) was introduced to participants. The Working Group was

created by the order of the Minister of Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons of Ukraine from 12 October 2016 and operates with the technical support of the Council of Europe Project.

The Round Table was focused on the subjects related to the two following thematic subgroups of the Working Group: «Protection of social and economic rights of IDPs» and «Housing, Restitution, Compensation for property loss».

The event was attended by the Head and the specialists of the sector of the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs of Ukraine in the Luhansk region, representatives of the Luhansk regional military and civil administration, international and national civil society organizations, UNHCR and specialists of departments of social protection of Luhansk region.

Within the Specific Objective 2, in order to enhance the capacity of relevant authorities and to effectively protect the rights of IDPs, including through better coordination and improved access to remedies for IDPs, the Council of Europe Project has undertaken the following activities:



A Study visit for representatives of the Working Group on improving national legislation on the human rights protection of IDPs in Ukraine

and other Project partners was organised in Strasbourg on 12-13 January 2017.

The Study Visit provided with a view to productive dialogue and practical discussions on both sides, with all concerned expressing keen interest in advancing further cooperation and partnership.

Ukraine is currently in the process of developing further legislation in the area of internal displacement. The Study Visit enabled the delegation to explore closely Council of Europe Standards in the field and modalities for further alignment of Ukrainian legislation with international obligations.



The methodology on monitoring the human rights of IDPs was launched in a test mode.

On 17th March, 2017 the long-term consultants of the CoE Project «Strengthening the human rights protection of internally displaced persons in Ukraine» from Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Luhansk regions together with the regional representatives and coordinators of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, took part in the meeting in order to discuss methodology on monitoring the human rights of internally displaced persons in Ukraine (hereinafter - Methodology).

This Methodology was developed by the group of selected experts jointly created by the Council of Europe Project «Strengthening the Human Rights Protection of Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine», the UNDP Project «Strengthening Capacities of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights Office» and the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights Office and other relevant key civil society organisations.

The methods and instruments of the monitoring of the IDPs rights are based

on particular indicators that have been developed in accordance with the Ukrainian legislation and which correlate with the Council of Europe standards. Such indicators provide a comprehensive toolkit to implement systemic assessment in respect of the rights of IDPs. This is essential as the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights plays a specific role in human rights protection of IDPs through parliamentary supervision over the observance of constitutional rights and freedoms of all citizens of Ukraine and within its jurisdiction.

Currently the monitoring methodology will be approbated in different regions of Ukraine. Based on its approbation results it will be finalized and shared widely with the representatives of civil society organisations and all other relevant institutions.

Within the Specific Objective 3 in order to raise awareness among law and policy-makers, IDPs, host communities, their experience and access to rights, the Council of Europe Project has undertaken the following activities:



On 13-14 March 2017 Valeria Lutkovska, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, participated in the Study visit in the Donetsk region organised within the Council of Europe Project «Strengthening the Human Rights Protection of Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine».

A similar Study visit was organised on 28-31 March 2017 in the Luhansk region.

Together with the Ombudsperson, the Ombudsperson Representative on the Rights of IDPs, Zhanna Lukyanenko and Mykhailo Chaplyha, responsible for Public Relations, and other respective deputies of Donetsk and Luhansk State Administrations, took part in the Study visit.

The participants of the Study visit had an opportunity to speak with the Ombudsperson in person, ask questions and receive answers to the problematic issues they encountered in the enjoyment of their rights, and obtain explanations/advice on what to do in the current challenging situation in the Eastern Ukraine.



Representatives of the Free Legal Aid Bureaus for IDPs started to conduct counselling and consultative visits to remote areas and to collective centres of IDPs in Luhansk and Donetsk regions.

Such visits and consultations for IDPs will be conducted by Free Legal Aid Bureaus within the period of March – July 2017 in Luhansk and Donetsk regions. The consultations are supported by the Council of Europe Project «Strengthening the Human Rights Protection of Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine» in cooperation with the Coordination Centre for Free Legal Aid.

Within the Specific Objective 4 in order to promote the development of an integration policy for IDPs and support community-based IDP empowerment, with a view to providing durable solutions, the Council of Europe Project has undertaken the following activities:



A grant award meeting within the Call for grants for NGOs «Human rights, integration and empowerment of IDPs in Ukraine: Affecting change at the regional and local levels» was held in Kyiv on 6th March 2017.

The purpose of this Call was to fund projects that enhance the successful integration and empowerment of internally displaced persons at the regional and local level in Ukraine, strengthen constructive approaches and know-how to this effect, and raise awareness of how to address different aspects of internal displacement within host communities aimed at durable solutions for IDPs. The deadline for receiving the application was 29 January 2017. Overall, 93 NGOs expressed their interest by sending their respective project proposals.

After evaluation of the applications, the following 11 NGOs will be further supported within the Project:

- «Slavic heart» Charitable Foundation
- «League of Women-voters» Human Rights Center
- «Ukrainian association of freelancers» NGO
- «Strong community» NGO

- «Public Service of Legal Aid» Luhansk regional organisation
- «Positive Women» Charitable Foundation
- «Youth Alternative» NGO
- «Chaika» Luhansk regional women's legal organisation
- «Dopomoha Dnipra» Charitable Foundation
- «Horyniye» All-Ukrainian Charitable Foundation
- «Power of future» NGO.

The projects will be implemented in Luhansk, Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk and Kyiv regions during March – September 2017.



An integration event «Age is not a sentence» for elderly displaced persons was successfully held in Kramatorsk, Donetsk region on 17 March 2017.

The event was held with the support of the Council of Europe Project, Donetsk Military and Civil Administration, Kramatorsk City Council and in cooperation with the volunteers' action team.

The purpose of the event was to promote the development of positive

relations between elderly displaced persons and the host community and to increase the ability of elderly displaced persons to foster their level of psychological resilience.

The participants had an opportunity to attend the following training modules: «Healthy lifestyle, cultural and educational activities for elderly people. Why do we need living actively?» and «Getting acquainted and establishing communication as the way of integration and development of positive relations in host community» conducted by professional psychologists- trainers.

The volunteers' action team supported by the Project conducted three psychological workshops: «Composition» (making of Easter papier-mâché bouquets), «Needlework» (making of Florentine sachets) and «Art of making up of forms» (making of Origami).



A regional Forum «Integration of IDPs and community development: best practices» was organised in cooperation with the Luhansk Regional State Administration on 31 March 2017 in Severodonetsk, Luhansk region.

The purpose of the Forum was to

create a collaborative space for communication, experience exchange and networking for representatives of public and civil society institutions who are implementing actions and projects promoting integration of IDPs into host communities in Luhansk region. The Forum brought together up to 100 participants representing departments of regional administration, educational and cultural institutions, centres of social services, international organizations, UN agencies and national and local NGOs.

The programme foresaw a space for experience exchange, discussion regarding participants' contribution to the implementation of the "Regional program on support and adaptation of IDPs in Luhansk region for 2017-2018" (with participation of Ms Eleanora Polishchuk, Head of the Department of Social Protection of Luhansk region). A separate session was dedicated to the feedback from partners on possible support of integration activities by international organizations represented in the region.

Thus, 25 organizations presented their practices in three different fields: integration through implementation of cultural and educational activities; integration by providing social services; integration through initiatives on employment and capacity building of IDPs. The participants have likewise elaborated suggestions of the activities in the framework of the "Regional program on support and adaptation of IDPs in Luhansk region for 2017-2018".

RESOURCES

The Project has collected and published on the webpage a range of materials that facilitate access to the Council of Europe standards for professionals working in Ukraine, in particular:

- Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly and Committee of Ministers resolutions and recommendations on internal displacement, available now in English and Ukrainian;
- selected cases of the European Court of Human Rights, relevant to rights of IDPs, translated into Ukrainian (available as well in English).

The Project supplied judges, lawyers, civil society advocacy specialists with materials they now widely use in activities on strengthening the human rights protection of internally displaced persons in Ukraine. The Project will continue to work towards ensuring a regular information flow to all Project partners and stakeholders.

FURTHER ACTION:

We plan to inform you about the status of the Project and latest actions on a regular basis. Therefore, we would like to present to you:

- Our third quarterly information bulletin
- Project webpage

<http://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/idps>

We welcome your proposals and ideas which will be a valuable and useful assistance in our cooperation.

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