



NATIONAL SURVEY ON THE PERCEPTION AND AWARENESS OF SOCIAL POLICY IN UKRAINE

Analytical report

March 2024



The publication presents the results of an all-Ukrainian sociological survey conducted to determine citizens' attitudes towards social policy and the social protection system in Ukraine, including households with children. The publication contains information on the level of needs, satisfaction, and convenience of receiving social services to which citizens are entitled, the readiness and incentives of citizens to adopt children, attitudes towards the existing pension system, and the current system of support for veterans.

This study will contribute to the further development of a solid analytical basis for social policy-making and reform activities of the Ministry of Social Policy.

The full presentation of the study is available at the QR code link.

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The opinions, conclusions, or recommendations are those of the authors and compilers of this publication and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNICEF Ukraine and the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

KEY FINDINGS	4
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	7
INTRODUCTION	9
RESPONDENTS' PROFILE.....	11
GENERAL PERCEPTION OF THE SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM IN UKRAINE	13
PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL PAYMENTS AND BENEFITS BY THE POPULATION	17
SOCIAL SERVICES: AWARENESS, COVERAGE, BARRIERS	20
PERCEPTION OF STATE SOCIAL POLICY BY FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN.....	26
ADOPTION OF CHILDREN: AWARENESS, READINESS, NEEDS	30
SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR VETERANS	35
ASSESSMENT OF THE UKRAINIAN PENSION SYSTEM.....	38
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	42

KEY FINDINGS



General perception of the social protection system by all respondents

- When assessing the effectiveness of the current social support system, only **22%** of respondents said it was effective, while **48%** of respondents considered it ineffective. Respondents who receive social benefits do not have a more positive attitude towards the social support system than those who do not.
- **57%** of respondents believe that it is difficult to get support from the state, while **39%** agree that the state is doing its best to provide people with social support.
- The main priorities for social support are education support (**37%**) and housing assistance (**35%**), preferred over financial aid programs (**29%**) and social services (**21%**). Recipients of social benefits are somewhat more likely to favor financial assistance (**34%**) compared to nonrecipients (**29%**).
- Respondents see the main areas of improvement in the social support system as increasing financial assistance to those in need, in particular, raising pensions (**18%** and **17%**), but the emphasis on financial assistance over services can be explained by the general lack of awareness of the latter.
- **13%** of respondents perceive improved access to childcare services as a possible improvement in social support.



Social benefits

- In the last 12 months, **26%** of respondents applied for social benefits, while **42%** received payments. Pensions account for the largest share of (**25%**).
- **22%** of respondents who applied for social benefits indicated that they had received them in the last year, and the same percentage of respondents among those who did not apply for them also received them.
- 4% of respondents who applied for payments but did not receive them. The main reasons for this mentioned non-compliance with the criteria for receiving or pending applications. **1/3** did not know the reason for this.
- In general, recipients of social benefits tend to consider them insufficient to meet their needs: only **13%** reported a high level of satisfaction. The average satisfaction score for all recipients is **4.08** points on a scale from 1 to 10.
- Nevertheless, social benefits play an extremely important role for a significant number of their recipients: for **34%** of social benefit recipients (**15%** of all respondents), they are the main resource for their livelihood (76% to 100% of total income). The vast majority of these people are over 60 years old (**58%** of them rely almost entirely on social benefits).



Social services

- Almost one in five respondents claimed that they had applied for social services in the past year, and those who had not (**82%**) mostly did not need to.
- The high rate of applying for/receiving social services is explained by the fact that **the vast majority of people do not understand what "social services" are - they are confused with payments or benefits. Therefore, the true level of application/receipt is much lower**: only **3%** of respondents were able to define social services that correspond to the services listed in the Classification of Social Services¹, and among their "recipients" only **11%** named a specific service that corresponds to the Classification.
- In this regard, the main problem in the context of social services is low awareness of them, which indicates the need for better communication.
 - Only **20%** consider themselves aware of social services available in the hromada (**5%** are fully aware).
 - Lack of information about available services and how to obtain them is the main reason why people do not apply for social services (after "lack of need").
 - Lack of information about social services is the main obstacle to accessing them.
 - The main areas that need improvement by a wide margin are better information about them (**19%**) and recipients selection criteria (**15%**).



Adoption of children

- Only **3%** of respondents are considering adopting a child, another **26%** are ready to consider it in the future, and half have never thought about adoption and do not plan to do so. The number of those who have considered this possibility but changed their minds is **17%**.
- The main barriers faced by people who want to adopt a child were most often mentioned by respondents:
 - *A complicated bureaucratic process (44%), more often mentioned by those who considered adoption but changed their minds (56%).*
 - *Lack of financial resources (34%).*
 - *Insufficient information about the adoption process and possible state support (22%).*
- Among the incentives that would facilitate the adoption of children in Ukraine, respondents most often mentioned financial assistance to adoptive families (**41%**). Simplification of the adoption/ foster care procedure was mentioned by **36%** of respondents, and one-third mentioned information campaigns to promote adoption. Expanding the number of adoptive parents, including single parents, was mentioned by **28%**.

¹ Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (2020). On approval of the Classifier of Social Services. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0643-20#Text>

- Providing counseling and support services for adoptive parents and children is also important (**23%**). Tax breaks or discounts for adoptive parents were mentioned by **20%**, and educational resources to prepare people for adoption by **19%**.



Support for veterans

- **46% of** veterans/veterans and **56%** of family members/households of veterans consider the system of support for veterans to be ineffective. 2 out of 10 veterans or their family/household members called it effective in meeting the needs of veterans - **28%** among veterans themselves and **19%** among their household/family members.
- Among the needs of veterans, the most common are *support in physical rehabilitation and medical services* (**48%** of veterans and **42%** of their household/family members indicated this need). This form of support was received most often (**26%** according to veterans themselves, **23%** according to family/household members).
- The second is the need for psychological rehabilitation - **27%** of veterans and **22%** of their household/family members.
- The most needed additional forms of support for veterans are free psychological services (**31% of** veterans and **45%** of their family/household members) and free medical treatment (**37%** and **33%** respectively).
- One-third of the surveyed veterans faced barriers to accessing social support.



Evaluation of the pension system

- **79% of** respondents said the pension system in Ukraine is unfair. Among the most common reasons are the low level of payments to meet basic needs (**69%**) and the large gap in pensions for different people (**52%**). Only one in five pensioners believe their pension is fair.
- **45%** of pensioners do not fully or partially understand how pensions are calculated.
- In addition to increasing the size of pensions (**25%**), respondents most often mentioned improving the link between pensions and contributions (**11%**) and introducing a mandatory funded level of the pension system (**7%**).
- Respondents aged 18-54 were asked a direct question about its introduction - **61%** expressed support for this idea, compared to **70%** in the 18-29 group.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine

- **Social services:**
 - It is recommended to raise awareness of the available services, which is the main barrier to their receipt, through information campaigns in digital and traditional media. Emphasis should be placed on providing information in plain language about services and the right to receive them through all available communication channels. Given that respondents most often prefer official sources of information, such as social media pages (53%) or websites (31%) of government agencies or communities, these channels should be used for more effective outreach.
 - It is advisable to create a post-service satisfaction monitoring mechanism to collect feedback from recipients, using various methods that take into account the preferences and level of digital literacy of people. Given that 18% of all recipients of social services were dissatisfied, it is important to pay attention to the reasons they gave: insufficient amount of assistance (39%), inadequate assistance to meet needs (10%), and difficulties in obtaining assistance due to bureaucracy (7%). Encouraging feedback from service recipients can help to continuously improve these processes.
- **Social benefits:** It is recommended to simplify the application process by using digital tools to speed up processing and reduce queues, especially in places where such measures have not yet been implemented. This may be especially important given that among respondents who have applied for social benefits and have not received them, 24% are still waiting for their applications to be processed.
- **Adoption:**
 - It is recommended to simplify the adoption process by making it less bureaucratic and more understandable with clear instructions and support mechanisms for potential adopters. Given that 36% of respondents consider simplification of the adoption or foster care procedure to be an important step to encourage adoption, and 23% note the need for counseling and support services for adoptive parents and children, the implementation of these measures could have a positive impact on the adoption process.
 - It is advisable to conduct communication campaigns to change the public perception of adoption, given that 30% of respondents indicated the need for such measures.
- **Pension system:** It is recommended to raise awareness of how pensions are calculated, especially in the context of the link between official wages and future pension amounts. This is an important factor, given that 58% of respondents expect to receive a pension in old age, but half of them did not mention contributions as a factor affecting their pension amount. The link between official wages and future pensions should be better communicated to citizens.

For donors

- **Social services:**
 - It is recommended to support the efforts of the Ministry of Social Policy to disseminate information about social services through existing channels.
 - Introduce targeted programs to finance social services in communities that do not have sufficient resources to operate them, with a focus on supporting children from vulnerable groups, people with disabilities, and veterans.
 - Support the development of programs to implement monitoring and evaluation tools that reflect the level of interest of vulnerable groups in specific social services.
- **Social benefits:**
 - To analyze the extent to which the benefits provided to families with children meet their practical needs. In case of a mismatch between payments and needs, identify the necessary measures to revise the amount of these payments or cancel them in cases where their further existence is inappropriate.
 - Reduce the dependence of people of retirement age on social benefits by developing new support instruments or scaling up existing ones (such as social services) that will replace the need for expenditures, such as care or legal protection.
 - It is recommended to raise awareness of families with 3+ children about the possibility of receiving payments for large families, as currently, only 31% of them receive these payments.
 - Since only 20% of the surveyed single mothers/fathers receive benefits for this category, it is advisable to consider initiating a separate study with the Ministry of Social Policy to find out why these people do not apply for benefits.
- **Adoption:**
 - In order to raise awareness of the importance of adoption, consideration should be given to expanding cooperation with local authorities and opinion leaders, focusing on breaking down stereotypes about adoption, in particular, the adoption of children with disabilities.
 - Awareness of the support available to adoptive parents should be promoted.

INTRODUCTION

As a result of Russia's full-scale invasion on February 24, 2022, Ukraine has faced unprecedented challenges, particularly affecting the most vulnerable. Among those hardest hit are children, who are particularly affected by the ongoing war. Despite these challenges, Ukraine's national social protection system has demonstrated resilience, adapting quickly to the humanitarian and economic crises. This adaptation has been crucial in mitigating the impact of the war on the population, especially those in dire need of support.

According to a World Bank survey, the social protection system in Ukraine continues to cover a significant portion of the population: as of April 2023, 26% of respondents received social benefits from the state, and for the poorest 40%, they accounted for 70% of their total income².

The Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine makes efforts by administering various budget programs aimed at supporting families with children and various vulnerable groups: low-income families, persons with disabilities, IDPs, orphans and children deprived of parental care, victims of domestic or gender-based violence, etc.

Spending on social assistance to the population has increased significantly since 2021. While in 2021, UAH 111.3 billion was allocated for social assistance, the plan for 2024 envisaged UAH 183 billion³. In particular, there was a significant increase in expenditures related to the support of children belonging to vulnerable categories of the population - orphans, deprived of parental care, raised in large families, etc. According to UNICEF, UAH 27.6 billion (+3% compared to 2023) was allocated for social protection of children for more than 1.6 million recipients⁴.

These programs are vital for many people, as they provide financial support in difficult times. However, the question of the effectiveness of this social policy and its relevance to the needs of the population remains.

That is why at the request of the Ministry of Social Policy and with the financial support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Kyiv School of Economics in partnership with the sociological company InfoSapience in 2024 conducted the first wave of the all-Ukrainian sociological survey designed to measure the perception of citizens, including those from households with children, of the state social policy of Ukraine. In addition, the survey was intended to determine the level of satisfaction with social services and identify problems faced by citizens in receiving them. The survey covers both recipients of various types of state social support and services and those who do not receive them, which allowed us to collect a wide range of opinions. The survey is aimed at providing a detailed understanding of public opinion on the accessibility and impact of social programs, as well as the effectiveness of communication tools used by the Ministry of Social Policy.

The research methodology was developed by the Kyiv School of Economics with the participation of the Ministry of Social Policy and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The fieldwork was conducted by InfoSapiens. This report presents the results of the first round of the survey, which was conducted in January-February 2024. The second wave of the survey is planned for the end of 2024.

² World Bank. Listening to Ukraine: Access to social services and income support. (2023). <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/7c94f7225817d3ab7da9359be76a055f-0080012023/original/Resilience-two-pager-final.pdf>

³ Ministry of Finance of Ukraine. https://mof.gov.ua/uk/expenditures_on_social_assistance

⁴ UNICEF (2023). Ukraine's state budget 2024. UNICEF. <https://www.unicef.org/ukraine/en/reports/ukraine-budget-2024-analysis>.

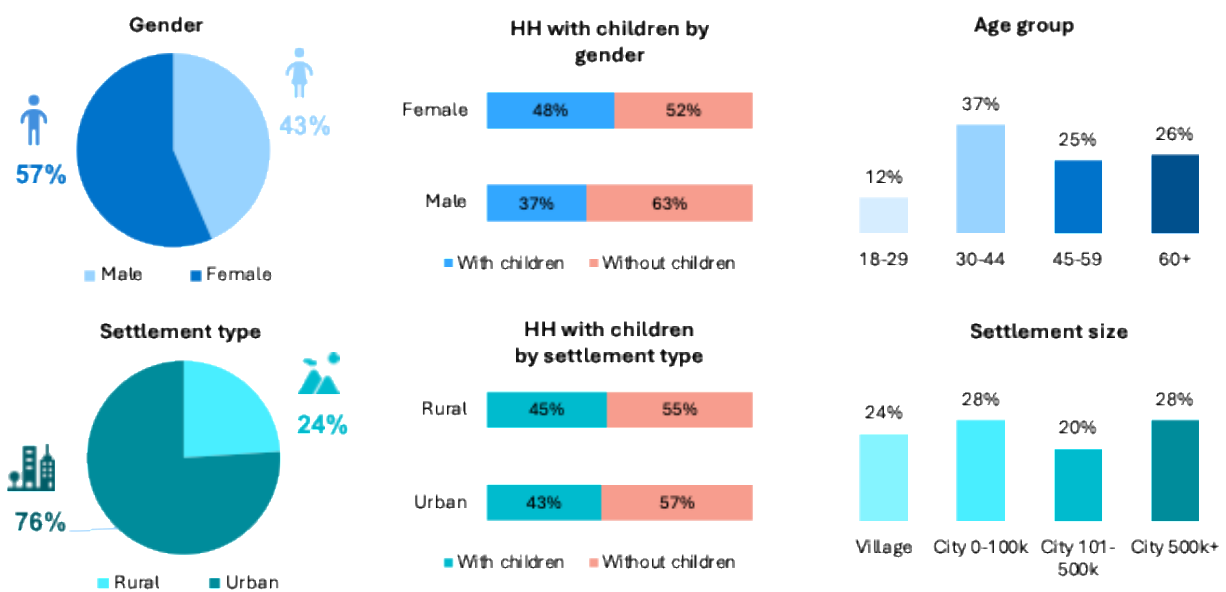
The results of the research are expected to provide important information to improve the development and implementation of social policy. By identifying gaps in service provision and understanding the needs of different categories of people, the initiative aims to ensure that the social protection program meets the diverse needs of the population, including the most vulnerable groups. These efforts are aligned with the broader goal of increasing the resilience and effectiveness of Ukraine's social protection system so that it can withstand current and future challenges.

RESPONDENTS' PROFILE

Respondents aged 18-29 accounted for 12% of the total sample, respondents aged 30-44 - 37%, and people aged 45-59 and over 60 accounted for 25% and 26% of respondents, respectively. The breakdown by type of settlement is as follows: villages - 24%, cities with a population of up to 100 thousand - 28%, cities with a population of 101-500 thousand - 20%, and cities with a population of over 500 thousand - 28%. Distribution by region: Kyiv - 11%, North - 17%, West - 20%, Center - 28%, South - 15%, and East - 10%.

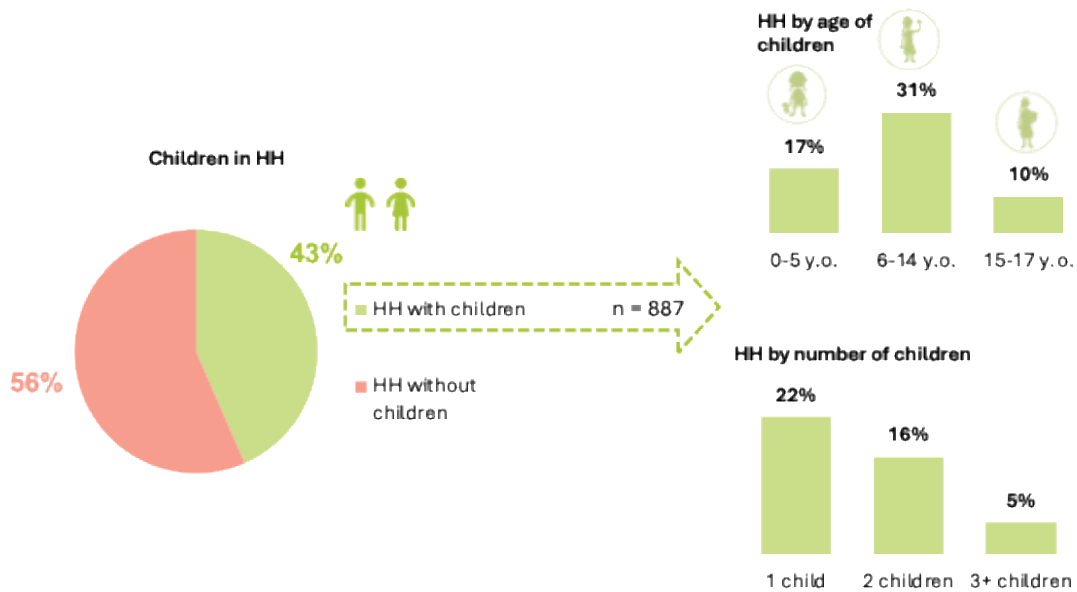
Almost every fifth respondent lives alone. For 29% of respondents, the household consists of 2 people, 21% of respondents - of 3 people, 16% - of 4 people, 16% - of 5 people and more (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. Distribution of respondents by key demographic characteristics



Among the respondents, 43% of households have children, most of the households with children (22%) have only one child in their household. 16% have 2 children, and only 5% have 3 or more children. 17% of households have children under 5 years old, 31% have children aged 6-14, and 10% have children aged 15-17. The share of households with persons aged 18-24 is 17%.

Figure 2. Households by presence of children



A quarter of households have people with disabilities, 22% have people in need of long-term treatment or palliative care, and 4% of respondents live in households with children with disabilities⁵. In 4 out of 10 households, there are unemployed people, including 44% of households with children with at least one unemployed person. One-third of households have internally displaced persons (IDPs). The housing of one in five respondents was damaged or destroyed as a result of the hostilities. Almost 14% of households have veterans (if we consider the categories of veteran/participant and family member of a veteran/participant of the ATO/JFO/ full-scale Russian invasion). Almost one in ten (7%) is a single father or mother.

Figure 3. Breakdown of respondents by category



⁵ Hereafter, "HH" will be used as an abbreviation for "household".

GENERAL PERCEPTION OF THE SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM IN UKRAINE

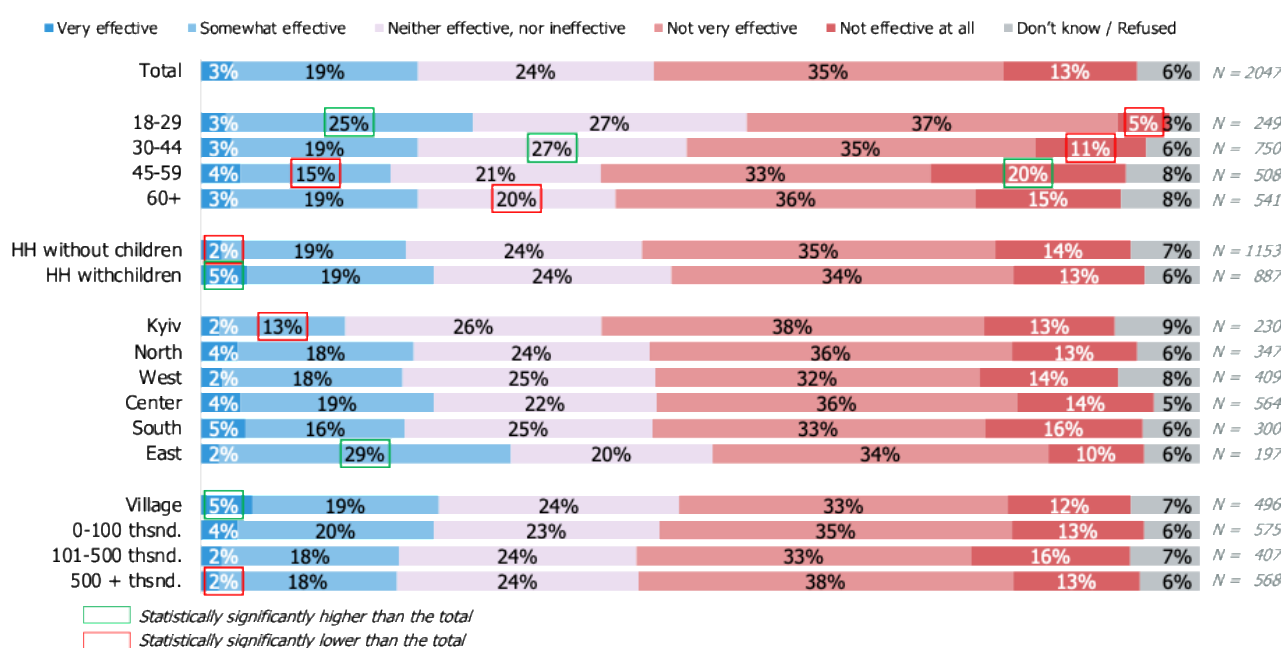
When assessing the effectiveness of the system and social support in Ukraine in meeting the needs of citizens, 22% of respondents said it was effective, almost half (48%) said it was ineffective, and a quarter of respondents (24%) gave a neutral assessment.

At the same time, respondents aged 18-29 (25% - rather effective), from the East (29% - rather effective), rural residents and those with children (5% each - very effective) more often reported effectiveness, ineffectiveness in turn - respondents aged 45-59 (20% - completely ineffective).

Patients in need of long-term treatment/palliative care had the most negative assessment of the existing social support system - only 13% agreed that it was effective, and 55% said it was ineffective.

It is noteworthy that recipients and nonrecipients of social benefits answered this question almost identically.

Figure 4. Effectiveness of meeting people's needs by the social support system



In the survey, respondents were asked to rate their agreement or disagreement with various statements about social support. Most respondents agreed that *municipalities should provide more social services for vulnerable members and families living in hromada than they currently do* (78% overall). The fact that it *is difficult to get support from the state* is agreed by 57%. This is 14% more than in a CEDOS survey conducted using a similar methodology in October 2022⁶.

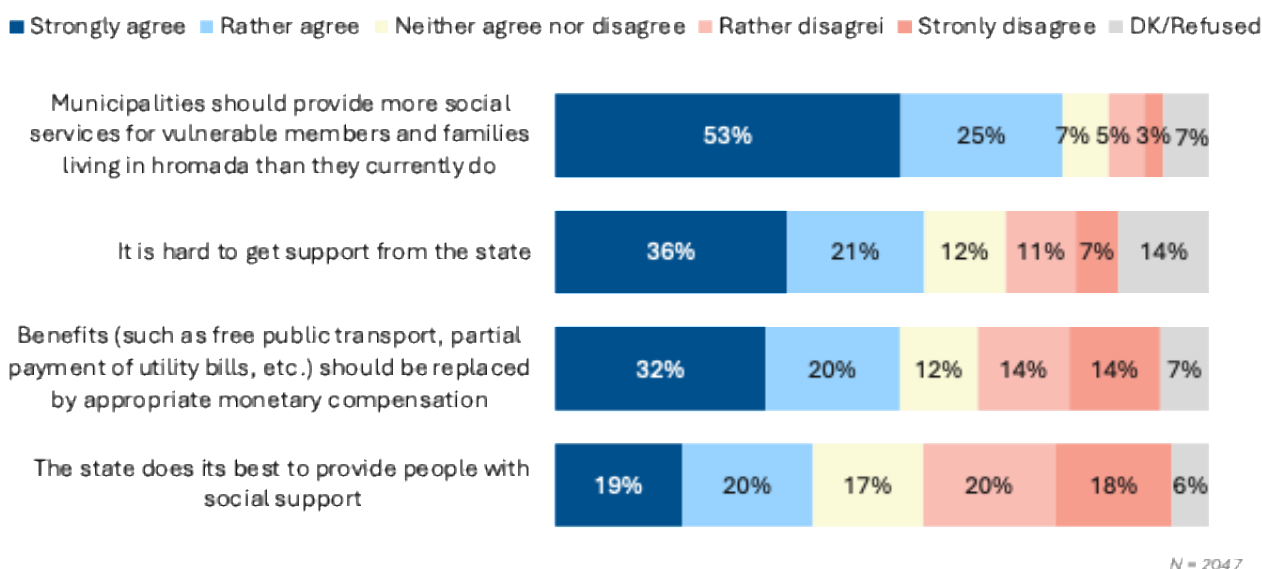
⁶ CEDOS (2022). Employment, social protection, housing: public attitudes towards and need for state programs of socio-economic support. <https://cedos.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/doslidzhennia-zainiatist-sotszakhyt-zhytlo-pages-web-new.pdf>.

More than half (52%) agreed that *benefits should be replaced with appropriate monetary compensation*. Support for the replacement of benefits with money increases with age - 42% among 18-29 year-olds and 57% among 60+.

Opinions were divided on the fact that *the state does its best to provide people with social support*: 40% agreed, 38% disagreed, 17% partially agreed, and 17% partially disagreed. Recipients of social benefits were somewhat more likely to agree with this statement compared to nonrecipients (42% vs. 37%). It was more positively assessed by older people - 50% of respondents aged 60+ agree with this statement compared to 35-37% in other age groups.

Respondents from households without children (42%) were much more likely to agree that *the state does its best to provide people with social support* than those with children (36%). Also, people in rural areas (47%) were more likely to agree with this statement compared to urban areas (37%). At the same time, in Kyiv the percentage of those who disagreed (26%) is significantly lower than in any other region.

Figure 5. Respondents' assessment of statements about social policy



Among the priority areas of social support for the population, respondents primarily mentioned education (37%), more frequently it stated respondents with children mentioned (45%), residents of cities with a population of 101-500 thousand people (46%), and respondents aged 30-44 (44%). The next most important area is assistance with housing (35%). This was more often mentioned by residents of Kyiv (49%), large cities with a population of 101-500 thousand (40%) and over 500 thousand (44%), respondents aged 18-29 and 30-44 (45% and 44% respectively), and those with children (39%).

One in three respondents indicated that state assistance in job placement, training, support for families and children, and physical and psychological rehabilitation should be prioritized. **Financial aid programs were mentioned as a priority by 29% of respondents, while social services were mentioned by only 21%.** The low level of preference for social services is at least partially explained by a lack of awareness (see next section).

In rural areas, financial aid (34%) was prioritized relatively more than in other types of settlements. Financial aid was also relatively more often chosen by respondents who had received social payments in the last 12

months (34%). This trend may indicate that there is a greater need for direct financial support in rural areas and among recipients of social benefits, possibly due to economic hardship or limited awareness of other forms of social assistance.

Among the possible improvements to the social support system in Ukraine, respondents most often suggested the following:

- Higher monetary benefits for those in need - 18% (more often mentioned by respondents aged 18-29 - 26%).
- Higher pension amounts - 17% (people aged 60 and older mentioned it more often - 29%).

13% also cited better access to affordable childcare services as an improvement over the current system. The latter was more often mentioned by households with children in general (19%), as well as by households with children aged 0-5 (25%) and households with two or more children (21%). Accordingly, for large families and those with young children, access to childcare services needs to be expanded and awareness of existing services needs to be increased.

Figure 6. Priority areas of social support

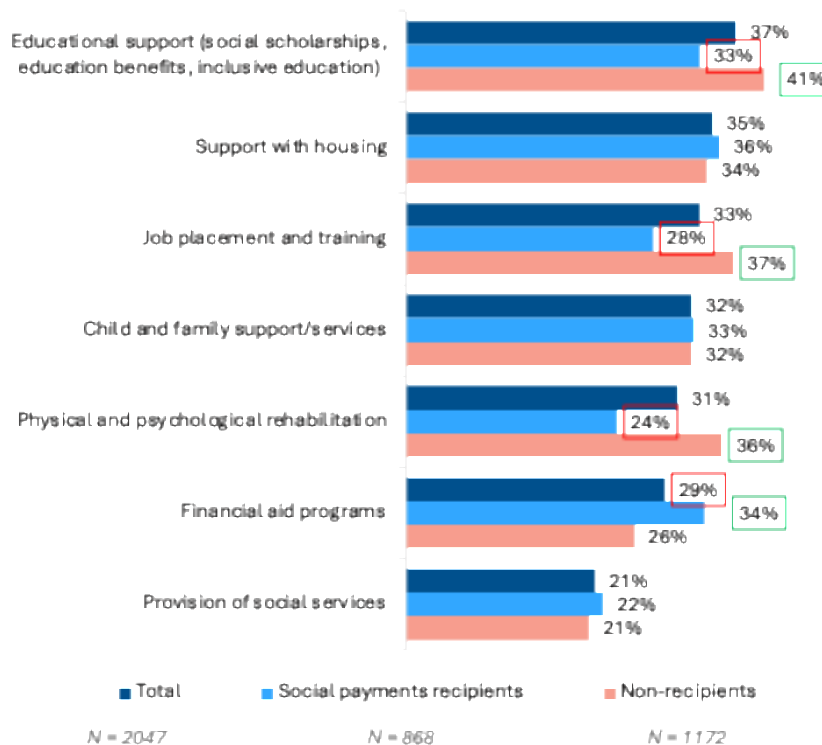
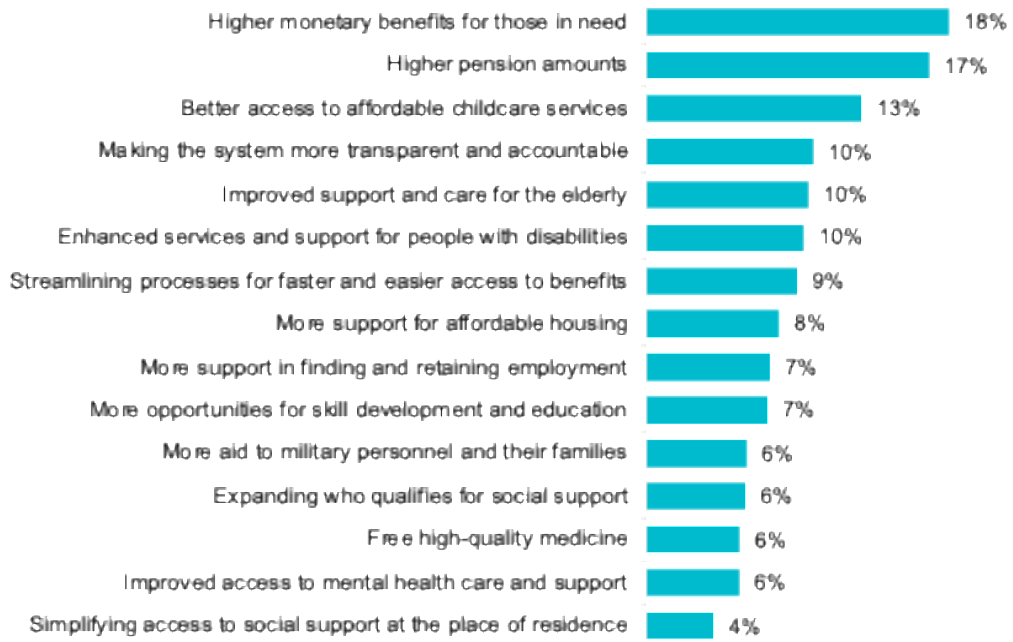


Figure 7. Areas for improving social support in Ukraine, according to respondents



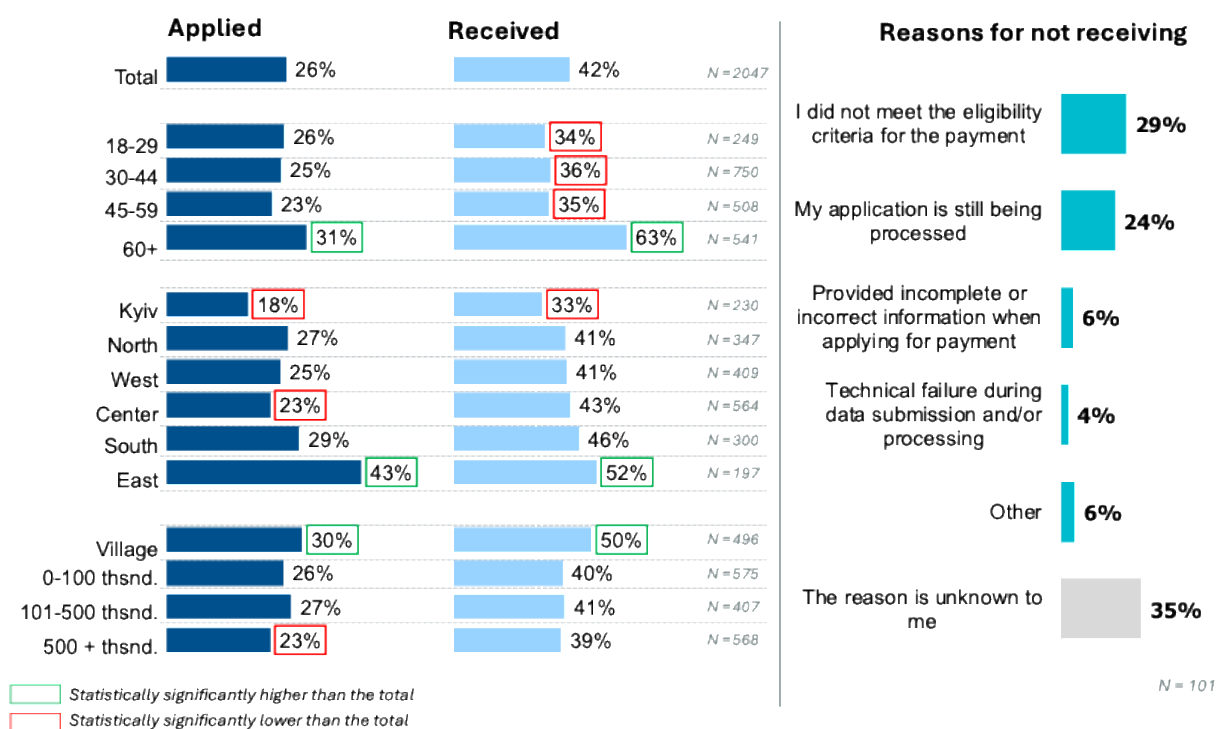
PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL PAYMENTS AND BENEFITS BY THE POPULATION

Over the past year, one in four respondents applied for social benefits from the state, and 42% of respondents received at least one type of social benefit. People over 60 years old were more likely to apply for social benefits (31%) and receive them (63%). In terms of regions, a larger share of people from the East (43% - applied, 52% - received). Rural residents were more likely to apply for and receive social benefits (30% and 50% respectively).

Overall, 62% of recipients of social payments and benefits are women, 40% are over 60 years old (mainly due to pensions). 43% of recipients are households with children, 33% of households have people with disabilities, and 6% have children with disabilities.

Among those who applied for social benefits but did not receive them (5% of all respondents), one third did not meet the criteria for receiving payments, one in four respondents said that their application was still being considered, and more than one third of respondents (35%) did not know why they did not receive the payments they had applied for. Overall, more than half of the respondents (52%) have not applied for or received any social benefits.

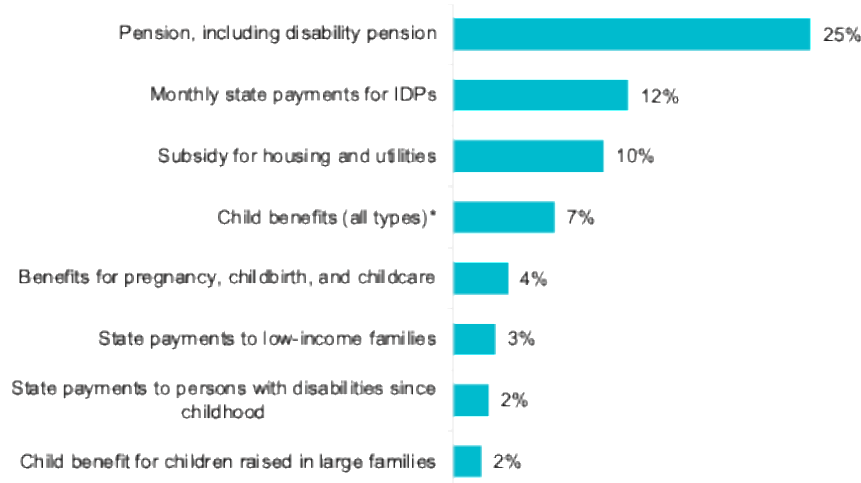
Figure 8. Breakdown of respondents by the status of applying for/receiving social benefits and reasons for not receiving them



Among the social benefits received by the respondents, a quarter are pensions, of which 63% are old-age pensions and 30% are disability pensions. The next position is occupied by state payments for IDPs (12%). Every tenth respondent received a subsidy for housing and utility payments. At least one **child benefit was received by 7% of respondents.**

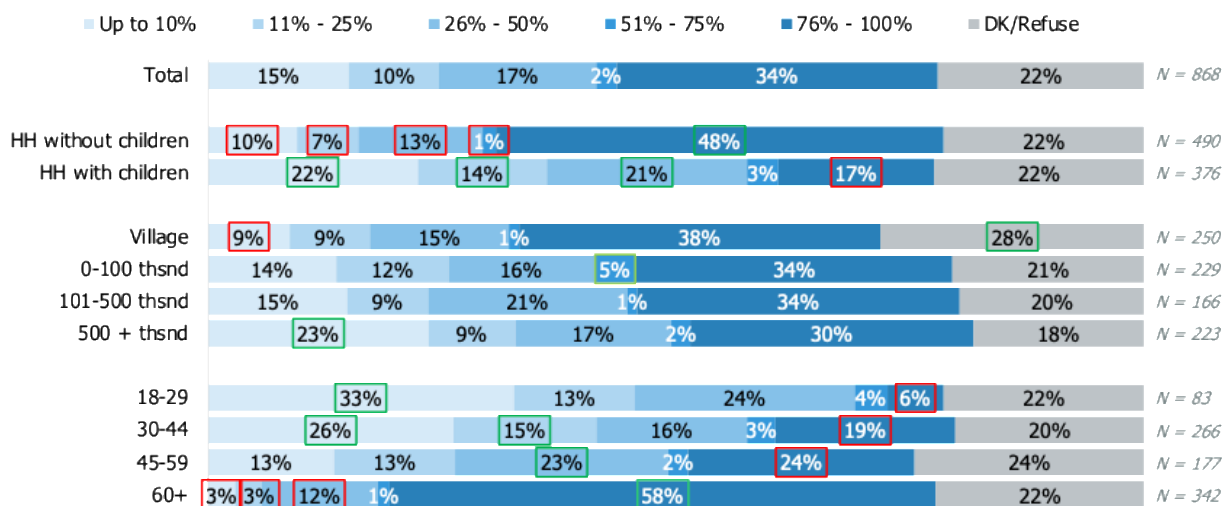
More than a third of recipients of social payments indicated that these payments accounted for more than 75% of their monthly income, with this share of total monthly income being more likely to be reported by people over 60 (58%). The majority of respondents receiving social payments said that these funds do not meet their needs in general. 55% of recipients of social payments and allowances reported a low level of coverage of needs (1-4 on a 10-point scale), with an average score of 4.08 p.p., indicating a relatively low level of perceived satisfaction with social payments.

Figure 9. Breakdown of respondents by type of social benefits received



*Benefits for pregnancy, childbirth, childcare for children under three years of age and adoption assistance; child benefit for children raised in large families; child benefit for single mothers; child benefit for children under guardianship or custody

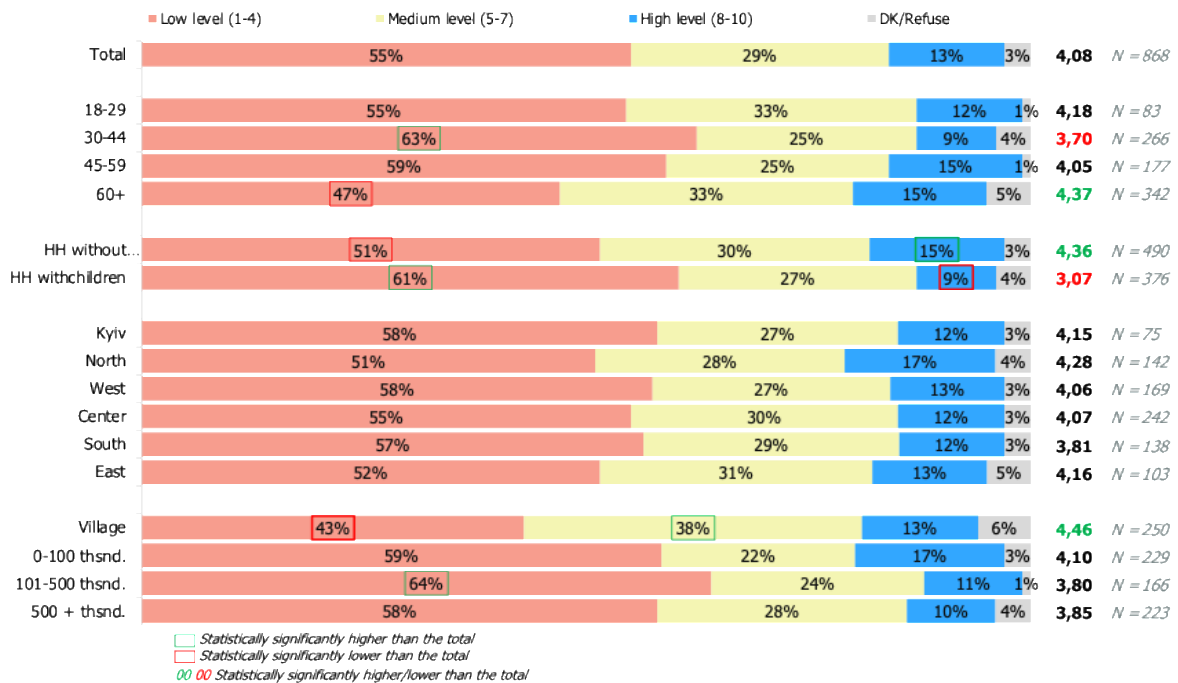
Figure 10. Share of social payments in recipients' monthly income



Note. This question asked about the satisfaction of needs in general without disaggregation into specific needs (e.g., food, healthcare, housing, etc.). Therefore, it cannot serve as a measure of actual need satisfaction, as different groups differ significantly in their set of needs, but it is useful for comparing groups with each other in terms of how they assess the importance of social benefits they receive.

Among the recipients, those with children (61%) had a lower level of need coverage than those without (51%). Rural residents were less likely to rate the level of need coverage as low (43% chose 1-4) than urban respondents (60%). Despite their higher dependence on benefits, pensioners demonstrated higher satisfaction with assistance than recipients of other types of assistance.

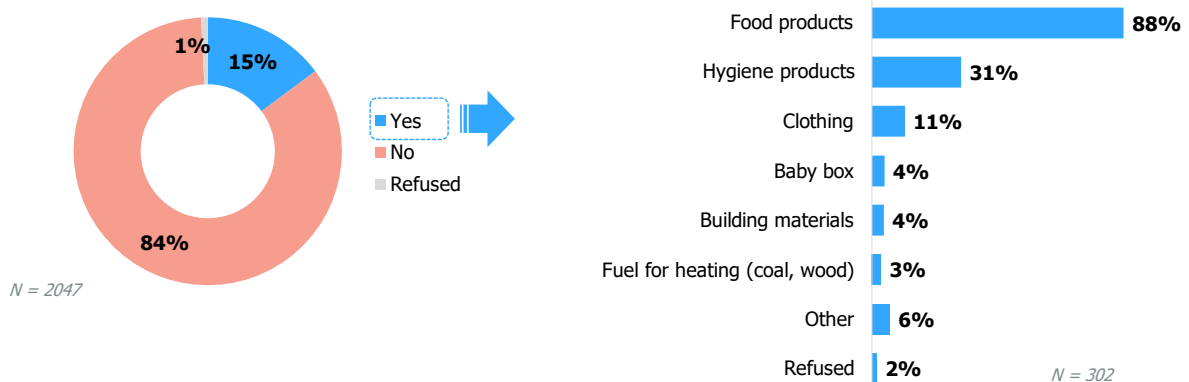
Figure 11. Level of satisfaction with financial assistance from the state



Assistance from the state in the form of goods

Respondents were also asked about their experience of receiving assistance from the state not only in the form of payments but also in the form of goods. The latter was reported by 15% of respondents. Among them, a larger share compared to the overall figure is people over 60 (23%) and residents of the Eastern and Southern regions (37% and 21% respectively). However, it is likely that some respondents confused this type of assistance with humanitarian aid.

Figure 12. Share of recipients and types of assistance from the state in the form of goods



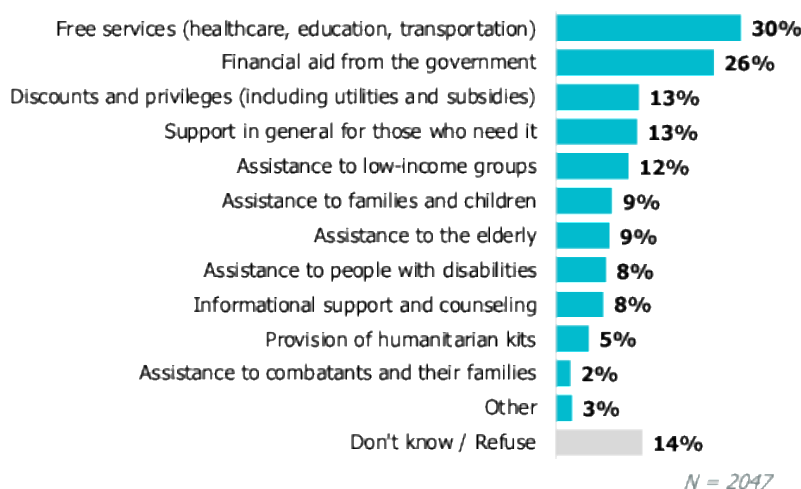
SOCIAL SERVICES: AWARENESS, COVERAGE, BARRIERS

The analysis of the results obtained on social services shows that **most respondents do not understand what social services are, are not informed about them, and consider the lack of information to be the main barrier to receiving them.**

First, respondents do not quite correctly interpret the concept of "social services". Mostly, one third of respondents understand this concept to mean free services in general, for example, in the medical, educational, or other spheres. Every fourth respondent believes that social services are material assistance from the state. Discounts and privileges (13%), assistance to different social groups - those who need it in general (13%), low-income (12%), etc. were also mentioned. **Only 3% of respondents described social services in a way that corresponded to the Classification of Social Services⁷.**

Younger respondents (18-29 and 30-44) were more likely to name various free services such as education, healthcare, or transportation as social services (38% and 34% respectively, compared to 20% among 60+).

Figure 13. The content of the concept of "social services" according to respondents



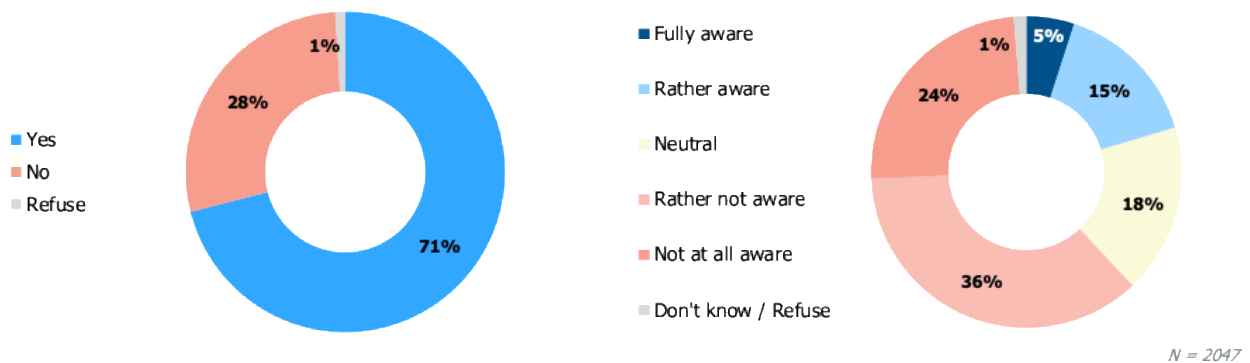
Overall, seven out of ten respondents know about hromada social workers. The largest share of those who are aware of is made up of people from the Northern (78%), Western (78%), and Central (74%) regions, residents of cities with a population of less than 100 thousand people (80%), and people with children (75%). The lowest level of awareness is among people over 60 years old (66%).

Only one in five respondents is aware of social services provided in their hromada. In particular, a relatively higher share of is shown by residents of the central region (18% - rather aware), residents of cities with a population of 101-500 thousand (19% - rather aware) and those with children (6% - fully aware).

⁷ Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (2020). On approval of the Classifier of Social Services. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0643-20#Text>

The low level of awareness is also evidenced by the fact that more than half of the respondents (60%) do not know or know little about social services in their hromada. A higher proportion of those who are completely unaware of are respondents aged 60+ (28%) and residents of the southern region (29%). IDPs, in turn, are more aware of social services available in the hromada than permanent residents (27%).

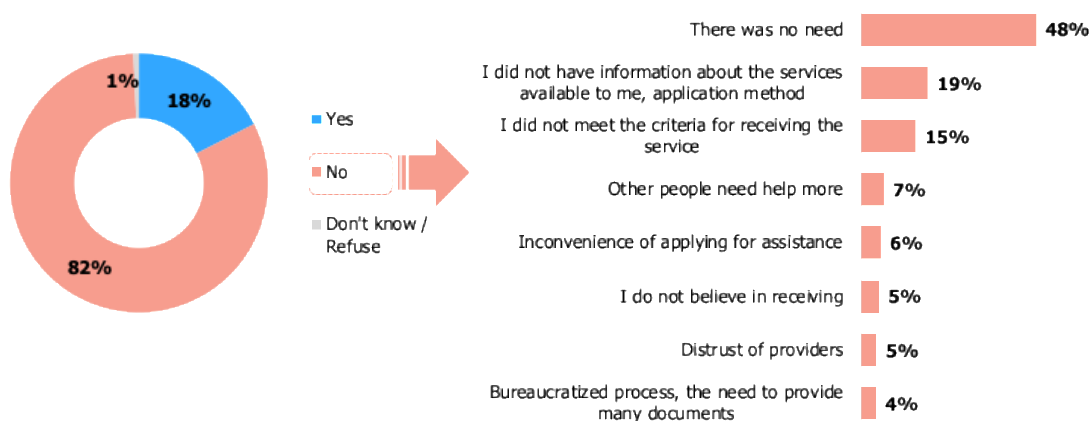
Figure 14. Awareness of social workers in the hromada (left) and available social services (right)



Among the possible reasons for the lack of awareness is that almost half of them did not need it (48%). One in five (19%) did not have information about available services or how to apply. 15% of respondents did not meet the criteria for receiving social services.

Among those who did apply (18%), residents of the East (27%) and respondents with children (22%) were relatively more likely to do so. 11% of people aged 60+ said they did not seek services because they were uncomfortable asking for help. People with children aged 0-5 years and 2 and more children more often mentioned the lack of information and the way of applying for services (25%).

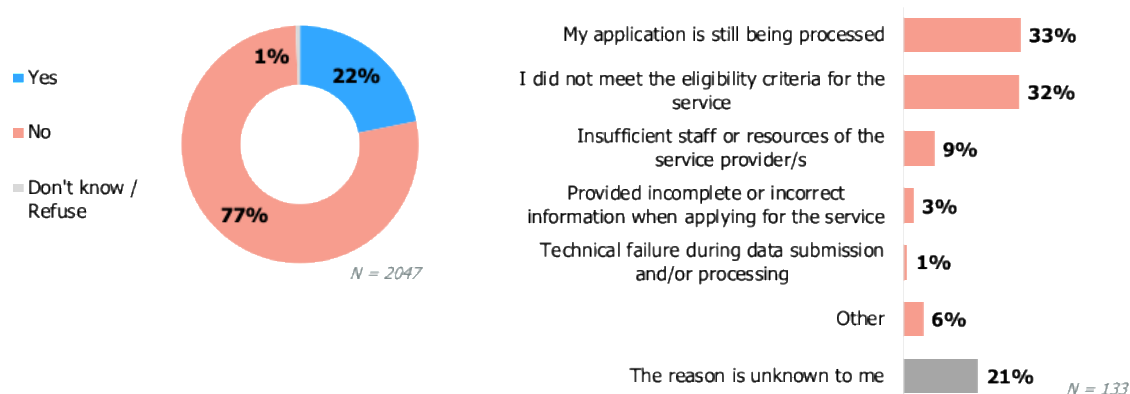
Figure 15. Share of those who applied for social services and reasons for not applying



22% reported receiving social services in the last 12 months. A higher proportion of them are respondents over 60 years old (26%), residents of the eastern region (31%), and those with children (24%).

Among those who applied but did not receive social services (7%), one third indicated that their application was still being processed, and one third did not meet the criteria for registration. One in five of those who applied did not know the reason for not receiving services.

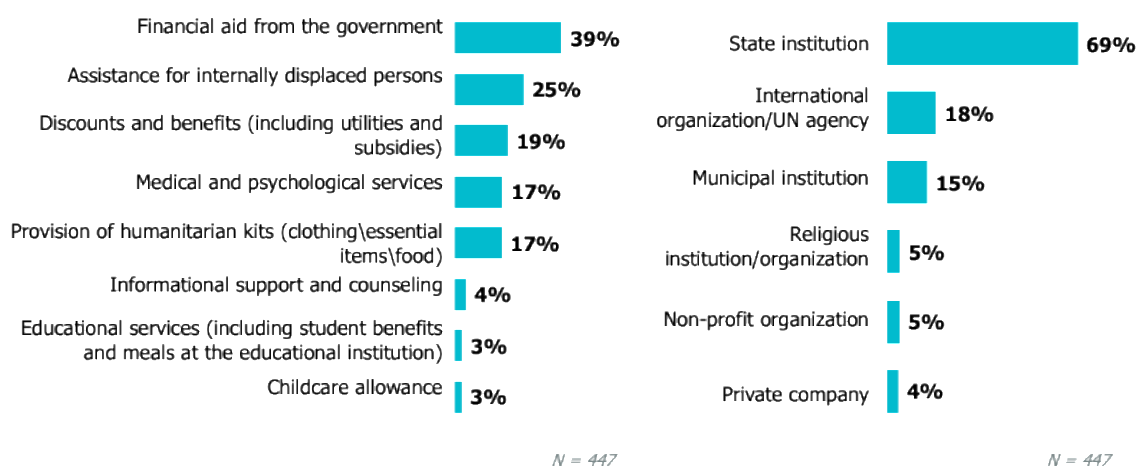
Figure 16. Share of recipients of social services and reasons for not receiving them



But the actual number of recipients of social assistance is likely to be much smaller. Looking at what kind of social services the respondents received, we can see that 39% of respondents understood social services as material assistance, 19% - discounts and benefits (even though the definition of social services was given before this question). **Only 11% of those who reported receiving services (2% of all respondents) named a service that corresponded to the Classification of Social Services.**

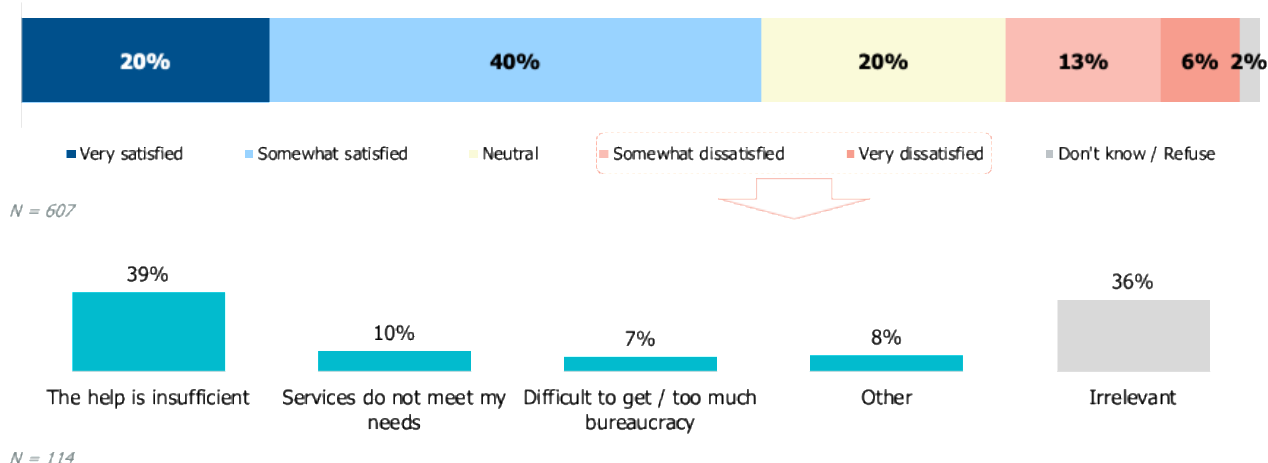
Among the providers, state institutions were the most common (69%).

Figure 17: Types of "social services" received by respondents and their providers



Two-thirds of respondents (60%) are satisfied with the services they receive. Respondents from households with people with disabilities are less satisfied (49% vs. 66% among those without). The same applies to those who received social payments (55% vs. 71% among nonrecipients). Among dissatisfied respondents, the most frequent reason was insufficient assistance (39%). 10% said that services did not meet their needs.

Figure 18. Satisfaction with social services and reasons for dissatisfaction

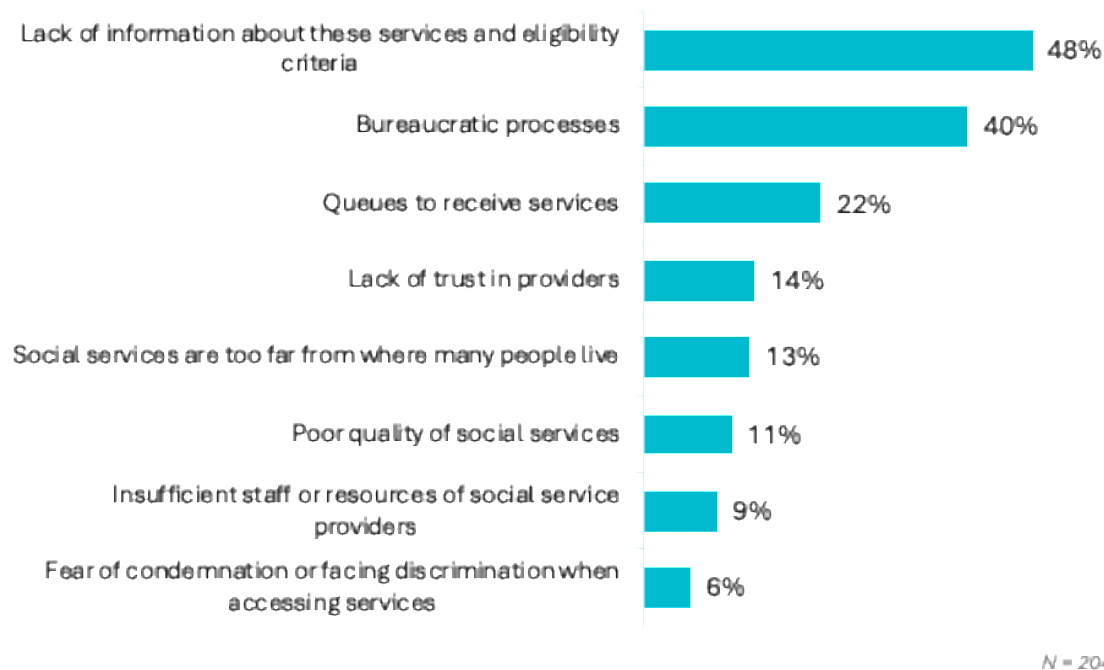


The above situation with the incorrect definition of social services indicates a significant lack of awareness of them among the population. Its reasons are primarily the lack of information about services and the criteria for applying for them, which was mentioned as a barrier by 48% of respondents. The *lack of information about services and application criteria* is mostly mentioned by respondents aged 30-44 (52%), residents of Kyiv (55%) and cities with a population of over 500 thousand people (53%), and those with children (51%).

Bureaucratic processes were also mentioned (40%), with a higher share of being among respondents aged 18-29 (46%) and 30-44 (44%), as well as residents of Kyiv (54%) and large cities: 101-500 thousand (47%) and over 500 thousand (50%). Queues for services were reported by 22% of respondents, mostly among respondents aged 18-29 (35%) and 30-44 (25%), residents of Kyiv (28%) and the East (29%), cities with population of 101-500 thousand (29%) and over 500 thousand (28%), and people with children (24%). However, in rural areas, only 27% mentioned bureaucracy (compared to 40% overall) as an obstacle, and only 11% mentioned queues (22% overall).

Accordingly, improving information (mainly in rural areas) and optimizing bureaucratic processes (for younger respondents and residents of large cities) are the main areas for increasing satisfaction with social services.

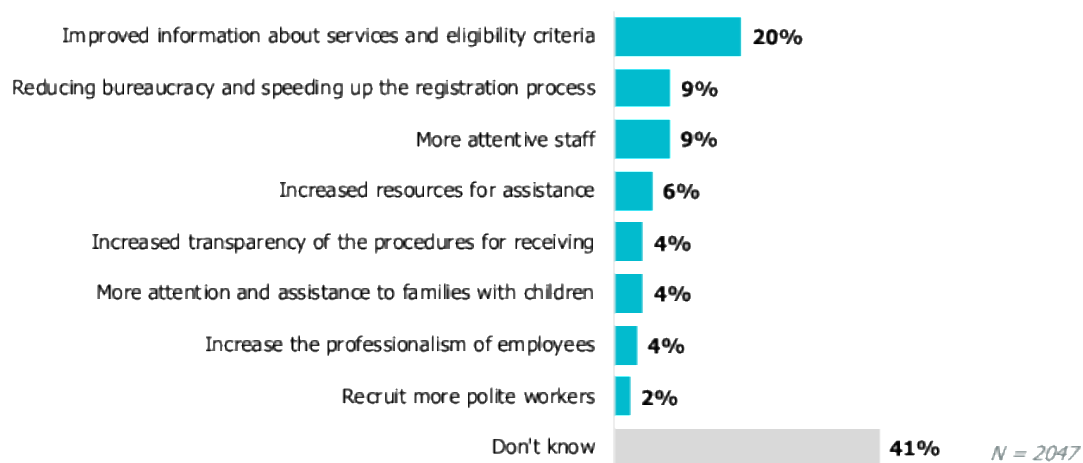
Figure 19. Barriers to receiving social services according to respondents



In terms of improving the provision of social services, the most frequently mentioned **improvement was the improvement of information about services and criteria for receiving them**, as noted by every fifth respondent. In particular, this was more often mentioned by respondents aged 30-44 (25%) and 45-59 (23%), residents of Kyiv (28%), cities with a population of over 500 thousand (26%), and people with children (22%).

Almost every tenth respondent mentioned reducing bureaucracy and speeding up the registration process (mainly Kyiv residents (15%), residents of cities with a population of 101-500 thousand (11%), over 500 thousand (12%), and respondents aged 18-29 (17%)), as well as increasing attention from staff. The high proportion of respondents who did not know what to recommend (41%) also indirectly indicates low awareness of social services.

Figure 20. What changes would you recommend to improve the provision of social services in your community?

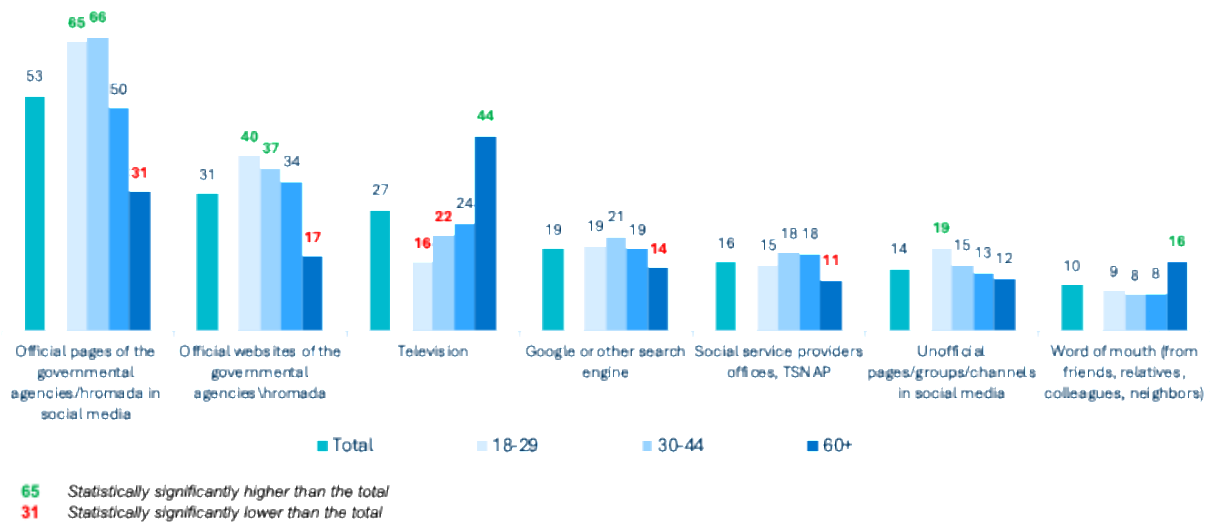


Sources of information on social support

In the context of improving the situation with public awareness, it is important to understand people's preferences regarding the channels for receiving information on social protection. Every second respondent says that it is most convenient for them to learn information from the official pages of government agencies (community) in social networks and messengers (Facebook, Viber, Telegram). One third indicated the official websites of government agencies (hromadas). The last position in the top 3 most convenient information channels is occupied by television (27%). Official social media pages and websites were more often mentioned by respondents aged 18-29 (65% and 40% respectively), 30-44 (66% and 37% respectively), and television by those over 60 (44%).

In addition, every fifth respondent mentioned a general search on the Internet, every sixth - TSNAPs, and every seventh - unofficial pages, groups, channels on social networks and messengers (Facebook, Viber, Telegram).

Figure 21. Preferred sources of information on social services and social protection



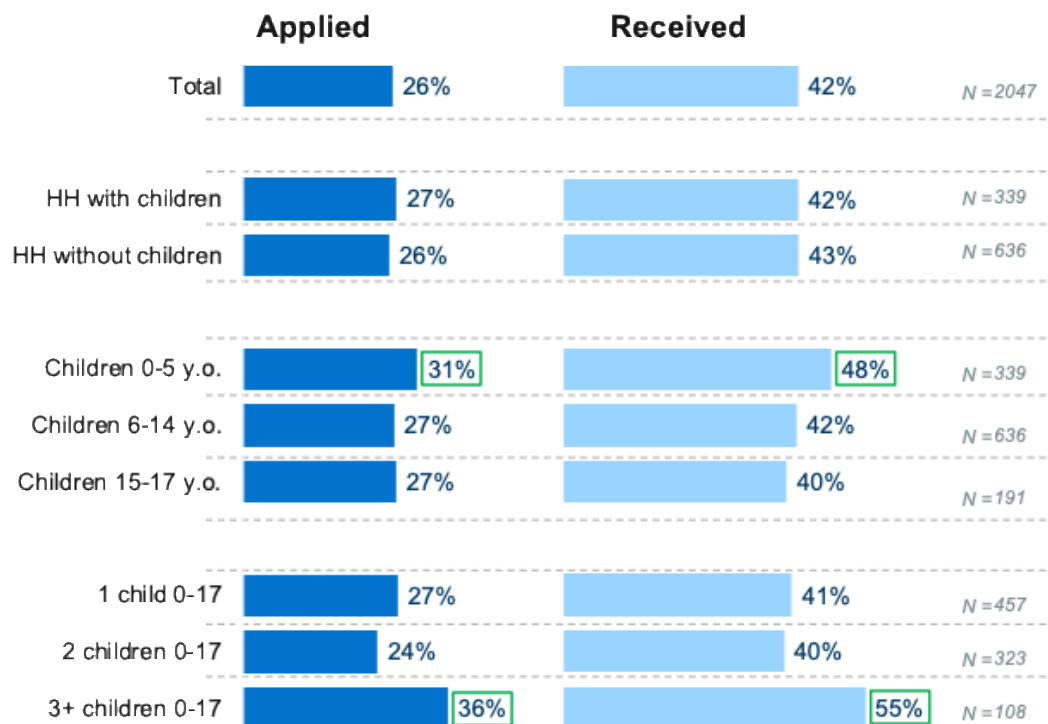
PERCEPTION OF STATE SOCIAL POLICY BY FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

43% of respondents live in a household with at least one child aged 0-17. Excluding respondents aged 60 and older, most of whom receive pensions, among people aged 18-59, those living in households with children receive significantly more payments - 41% vs. 27% of those without children. They also applied for payments more often - 27% vs. 20% of respondents from households with children.

Regarding applications for social benefits in terms of having children of different ages and the number of children in the family, respondents with children under 5 years old (31%) and those with three or more children (36%) applied for them more often. The same categories of respondents were more likely to receive social benefits than in general: almost half of respondents with children under 5 (48%) and more than half (55%) of households with three or more children indicated that they had received social benefits from the state.

17% of respondents with children received at least one type of payment for children⁸, 14% received payments for IDPs, 13% received subsidies for housing and communal services.

Figure 22. Share of respondents who received social benefits in the last 12 months



 Statistically significantly higher than the total
 Statistically significantly lower than the total

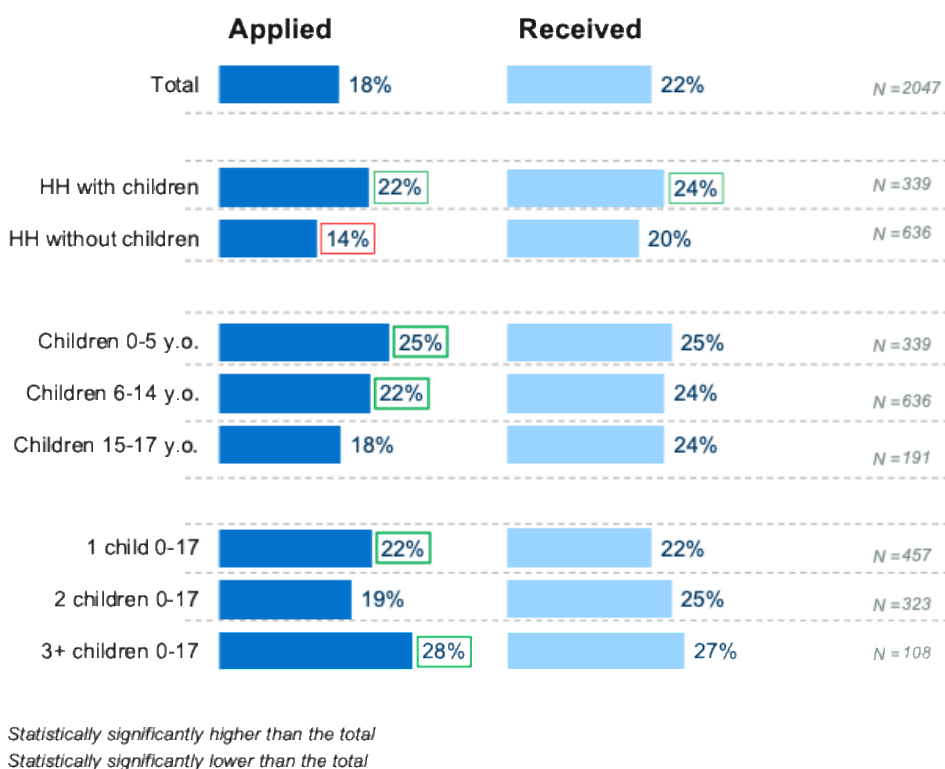
⁸ Maternity allowance, childcare allowance until the child reaches the age of three, and adoption allowance; allowance for children raised in large families; allowance for children of single mothers; allowance for children under guardianship or custody

23% of respondents in households with children said that they had received social services in the last 12 months, which is 4% more than respondents without children. The former were also more likely to say that they had applied for services - 21% vs. 14%.

However, as noted earlier, the vast majority of respondents understood "services" to mean benefits or payments. **And this applies equally to respondents from households with and without children** - there is no difference between these two groups in terms of understanding the essence of social services or in terms of receiving services that would meet the Classification of Social Services.

However, if we consider declarative answers about applying for and receiving services, people with children under 5 years old (25% received and applied) and children aged 6-14 years old (24% received and 22% applied) spoke about it more often. Taking into account the number of children, respondents with one child (22%) or families with 3 or more children (28%) applied more often.

Figure 23. Proportion of respondents who received social services in the last 12 months (all respondents and by different types of households with children)



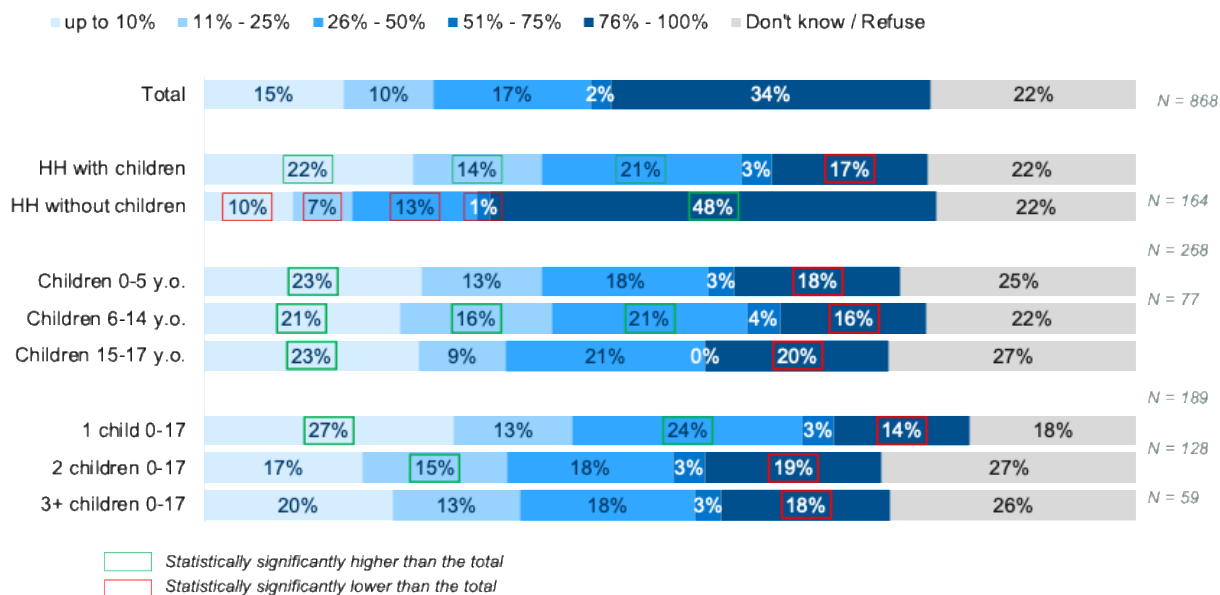
Among those who received cash payments, households with children are much less dependent on social benefits - only 17% of them account for 76% to 100% of their monthly income in cash payments. At the same time, for respondents without children, this share is 48%.

Different households by age and number of children do not differ significantly in this indicator.

Along with a smaller share of social payments in income, respondents in households with children are less likely to say that payments cover their needs - on average, they rated the level of coverage at 3.07 p.p. on a 10-point scale. Among households without children, this figure is 4.36 percentage points.

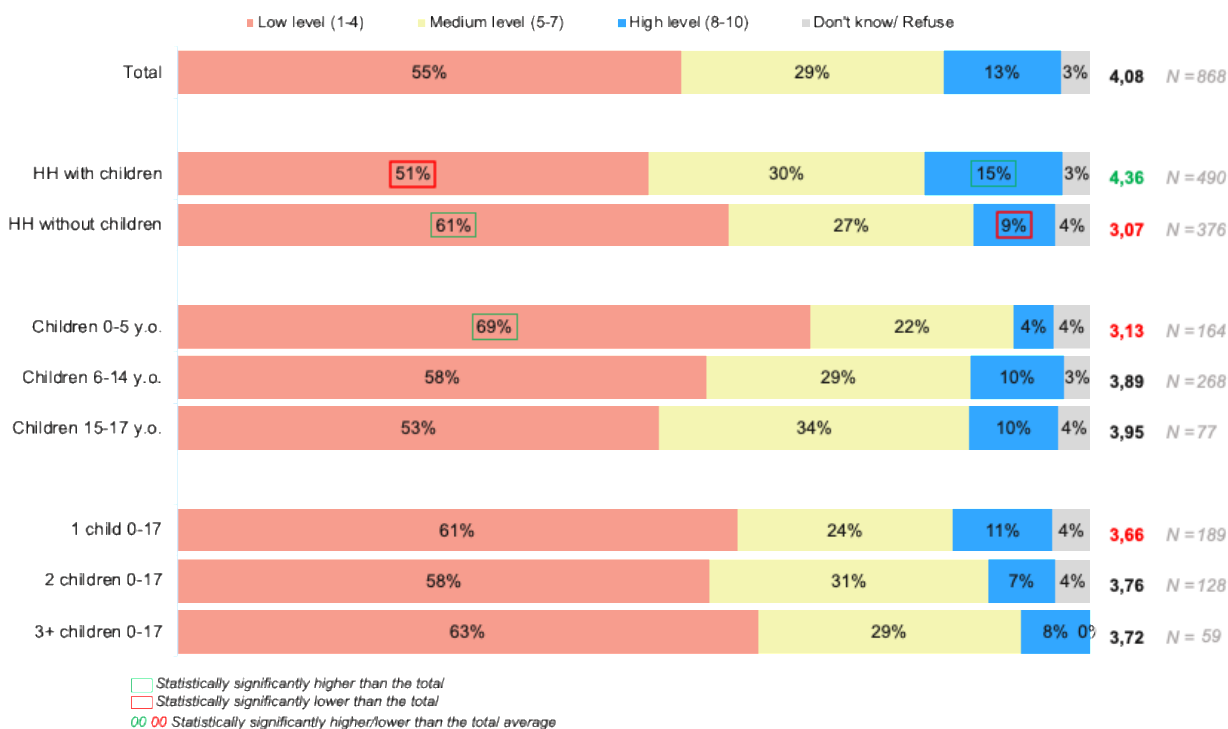
Households with children under 5 years old (3.13 percentage points of the average) and those with one child (3.66 percentage points of the average) have the lowest rates of meeting their needs with cash assistance from the state.

Figure 24. Share of monthly household income accounted for by cash transfers from the state on average over the last 12 months*



* Among those who received cash payments

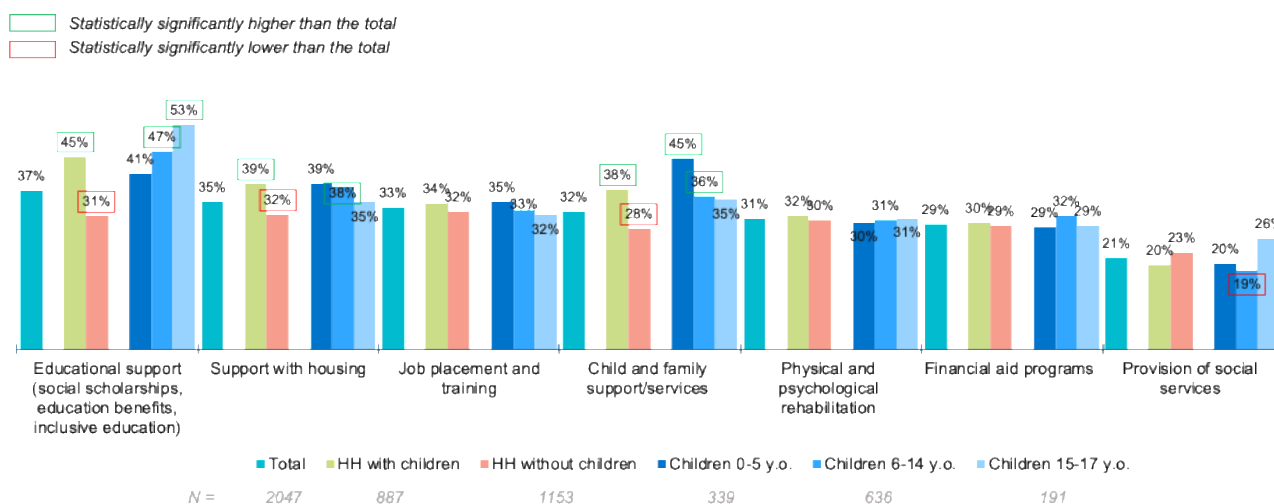
Figure 25. Level of satisfaction of needs with financial assistance from the state *



* Among those who received cash payments

Respondents with school-age children, namely 6-14 years old (47%) and 15-17 years old (53%), as well as those with one child in the family (43%) and two children (50%), more often consider support for education to be a priority for the state. Respondents with children aged 6-14 (38%) and one child (39%) more often than in general mentioned assistance with housing. Employment and retraining were more often mentioned by respondents with one child (38%) and less often by those with three or more children (24%). Support and services for children and families were more often mentioned by respondents with children under 14 and families with more than 2 children. Cash assistance programs were more often considered a priority area for support by respondents with 3 or more children (38%).

Figure 26. Priority elements of social support

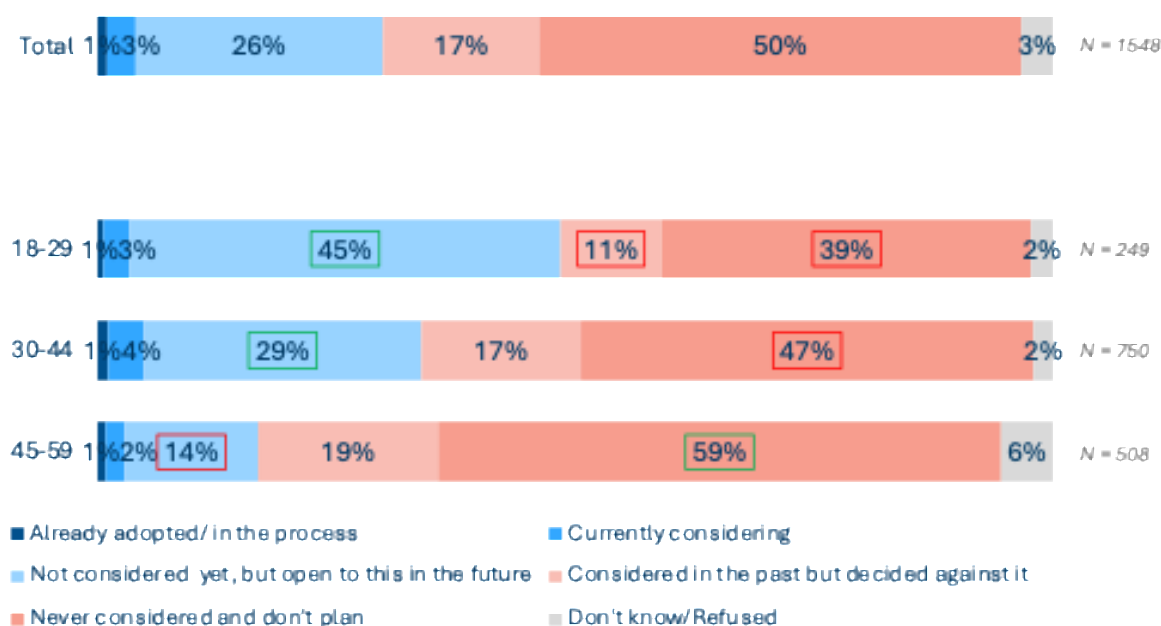


Among the improvements they would like to see in the social support system in Ukraine, respondents with children more often than in general mentioned more opportunities for skills development and education (7% overall, 10% with children aged 6-14 and 12% with children aged 15-17, as well as 10% with 2 children and 13% with 3+ children in the family) and better access to childcare services (13% overall, 25% with children under 5, 17% with children 6-14 and 19% with children 15-17, as well as 16% with 1 child, 21% with 2 children and 22% with 3+ children in the family).

ADOPTION OF CHILDREN: AWARENESS, READINESS, NEEDS

Half of the respondents have never thought about adopting a child and do not plan to do so, mostly people aged 45-59 (59%) and over 60 (71%). A quarter of respondents have not yet thought about adopting a child, but are ready to consider such a possibility, with a higher proportion of such respondents being aged 18-29 (45%) and 30-44 (29%). In general, almost one in five respondents (17%) have considered adopting a child in the past, but decided not to do so; among such people, there are more people with children aged 15-17 (23%). Only 3% are considering adoption, and 1% of respondents have already adopted a child or are in the process of adoption.

Figure 27. Attitudes and intentions to adopt among people aged 18-59



Half of the respondents who do not plan to adopt or have changed their minds indicated that the reason for their decision was the presence of biological children. Among them, respondents who already have children were more likely to plan to adopt but changed their minds (59%), and those who considered this possibility but changed their minds less often (23%).

Almost every fifth respondent (18%) indicated the lack of financial means for adoption, with a higher number of such respondents among those who had considered adoption but changed their minds (23%) and a lower number among respondents who had never thought about adoption (17%). Another 12% of respondents mentioned their age as a reason, with more of them being 45-59 years old (22%) and over 60 years old (46%).

Among those who are thinking about adopting a child now or in the future, one in five would consider adopting a child with a disability, most often among respondents aged 18-29 (27%) and those with adults with disabilities in their households (30%). A quarter of respondents would not consider such an option, and more than half (53%) have not thought about such a possibility - probably some of them also do not consider such a possibility, but did not want to give a negative answer.

Emphasis should be placed on overcoming stereotypes and raising awareness of the specifics of caring for children with disabilities, which can reduce barriers for those who have not considered this option due to lack of information or fear of difficulties.

Figure 28. Reasons for refusing to adopt among respondents who considered and did not consider this possibility

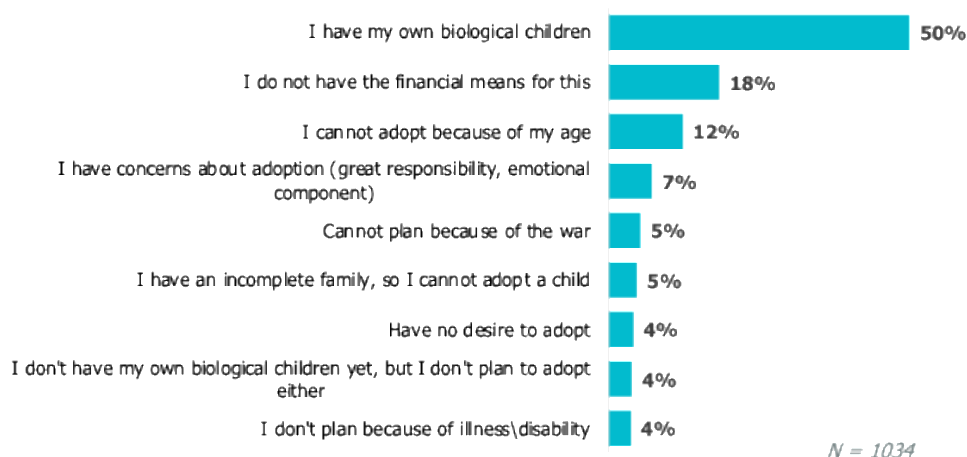
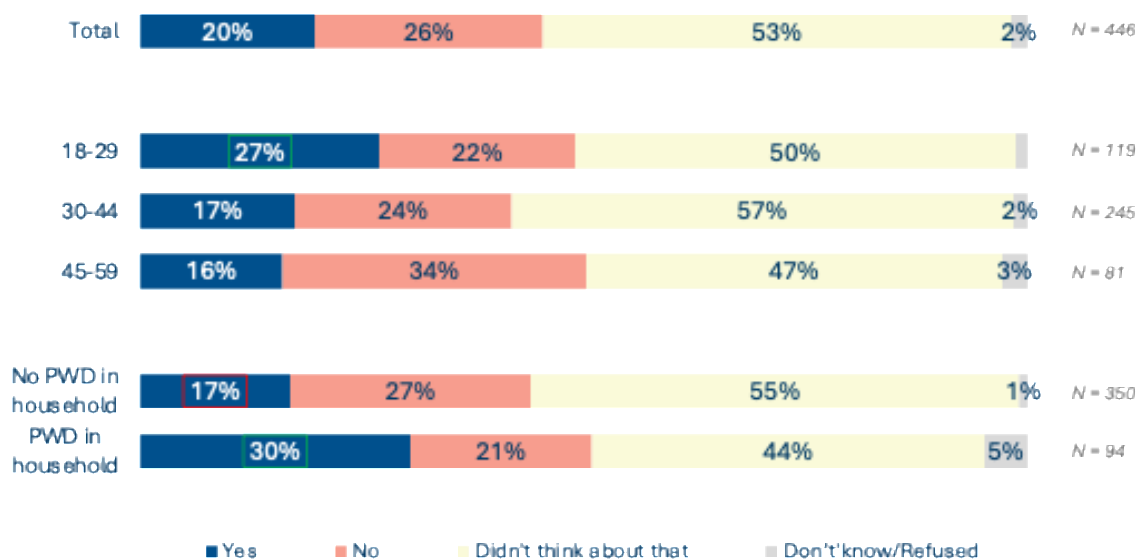


Figure 29. Possibility of considering adoption of a child with a disability among those who are considering adoption or have not thought about it, but are open to it in the future

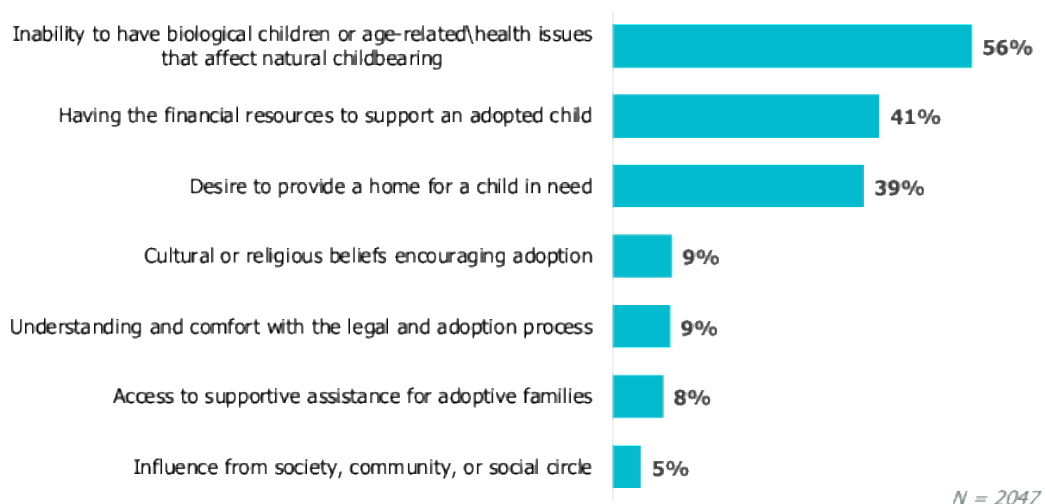


Among respondents who are currently considering adoption, one-third said they would benefit from medical and psychological support during and after the adoption process. Another third indicated financial support, and 13% - legal assistance. It should be noted that the results of the answers to this question are indicative due to the small number of respondents.

More than half of the respondents (56%) believe that a person's decision to adopt a child is influenced by the inability to have biological children or other reasons that prevent natural childbearing, with those who have not thought about adoption but are open to it in the future (64%) saying this more often.

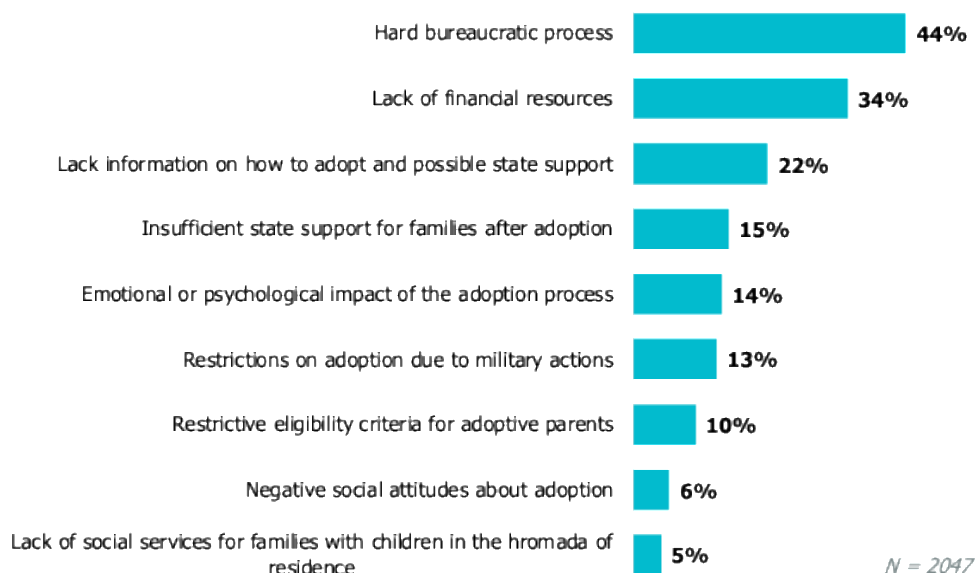
4 out of 10 indicate the financial ability to support an adopted child. The third factor in the top 3 was "the desire to provide a home for a child in need" (39%), with respondents who had considered adoption but changed their minds (50%) and those who had not considered it but were ready to consider it in the future (49%).

Figure 30. Factors that influence the decision to adopt a child



According to respondents, the three main barriers faced by potential adopters are: *hard bureaucratic process* (44%), which was more often mentioned by those who considered adoption but changed their minds (56%); *lack of financial resources* (34%); and *lack of information about the adoption process and insufficient state support* (22%), with a higher share among those who have not considered adoption but are open to it in the future (28%).

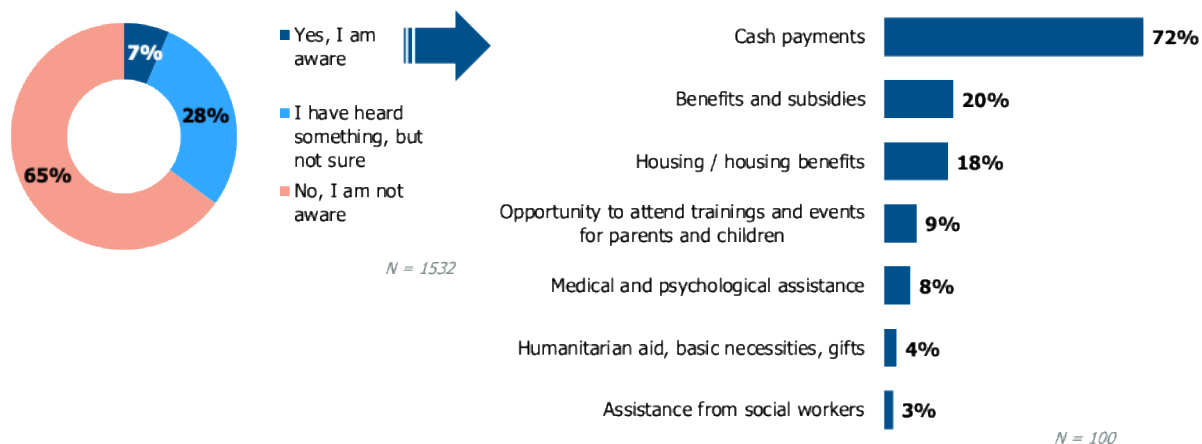
Figure 31: The main barriers that respondents believe people who want to adopt a child may face



Among the respondents who have not yet dealt with the adoption process, only 7% are aware of state support or incentives provided to adoptive parents. The most frequently mentioned types of such support were monetary payments (72%). 20% mentioned benefits and subsidies, and 18% are

aware of housing and housing benefits. No type of support was mentioned by 15% of respondents, while in the previous question they mentioned awareness.

Figure 32. Awareness of state support for adoptive parents in general and by type of support

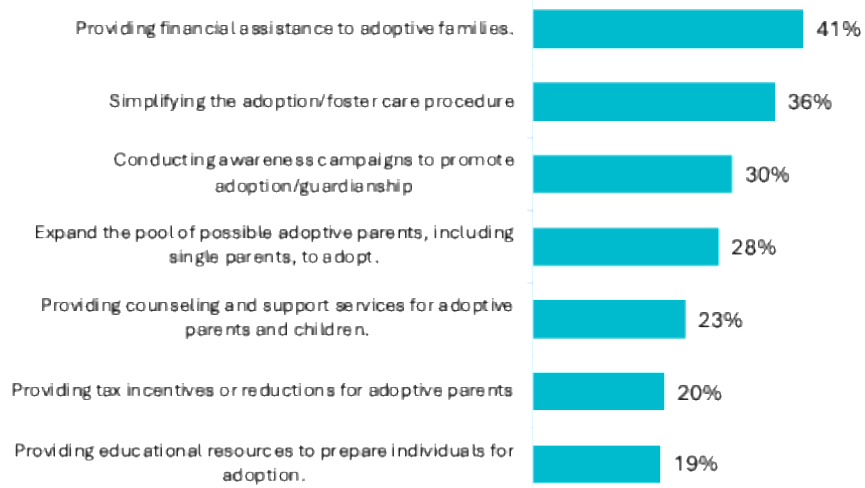


As for the ways to encourage and facilitate the adoption of children in Ukraine, financial assistance to adoptive families was most often mentioned (41%). Simplification of the adoption/guardianship procedure was mentioned by 36% of respondents (in particular, more of those who have not thought about adoption but are ready in the future - 42% and less of those who have not thought about it and do not intend to in the future - 34%). One-third mentioned information campaigns to popularize adoption (in particular, more of those who have not thought about adoption but are ready in the future - 38%). It is also worth noting that the above measures were more often mentioned by respondents aged 18-44 and people with children.

Expansion of the circle of adopters, including single parents, was mentioned by 28% of respondents, with higher shares among respondents aged 18-29 (42%) and 30-44 (33%), people with children under 5 (33%) and children aged 15-17 (34%), as well as IDPs (35%) and single parents (46%). Respondents who have considered adoption but changed their minds (39%) and those who have not yet thought about it but are open to it in the future (38%) also mentioned it more often than the overall average.

Counseling and support services for adoptive parents and children were mentioned by 23%, and among them, respondents aged 30-44 were more likely to mention this (25%). Tax breaks or discounts for adoptive parents were mentioned by 20%, educational resources to prepare people for adoption - by 19% (and among them, respondents aged 18-29 and 30-44 (25% and 24% respectively) and those with children (22%) more often think so.

Figure 33. Recommendations to promote/facilitate adoption of children in Ukraine



N = 2047

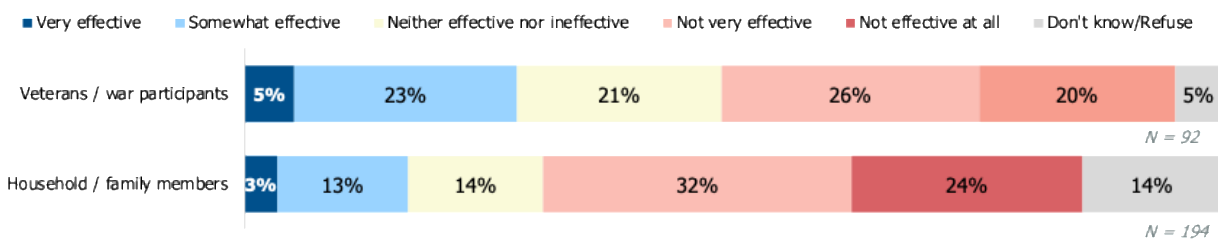
SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR VETERANS

The next set of questions concerned veterans and participants of the ATO/JFO/full-scale war with Russia. Veterans or members of households with veterans and their families were interviewed directly.

Note. Given the limited accessibility of the vast majority of veterans/combatants, we are likely to have covered only a certain rather specific part of this category. In addition, the subsample of veterans consists of only 92 respondents. Therefore, the data are indicative and presented without regard to the significance of differences.

46% of veterans/veteran participants and 56% of their family members/households consider the social support system to be ineffective in meeting the needs of veterans, while 28% and 16% consider it effective, respectively.

Figure 34. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the social support system to meet the needs of veterans

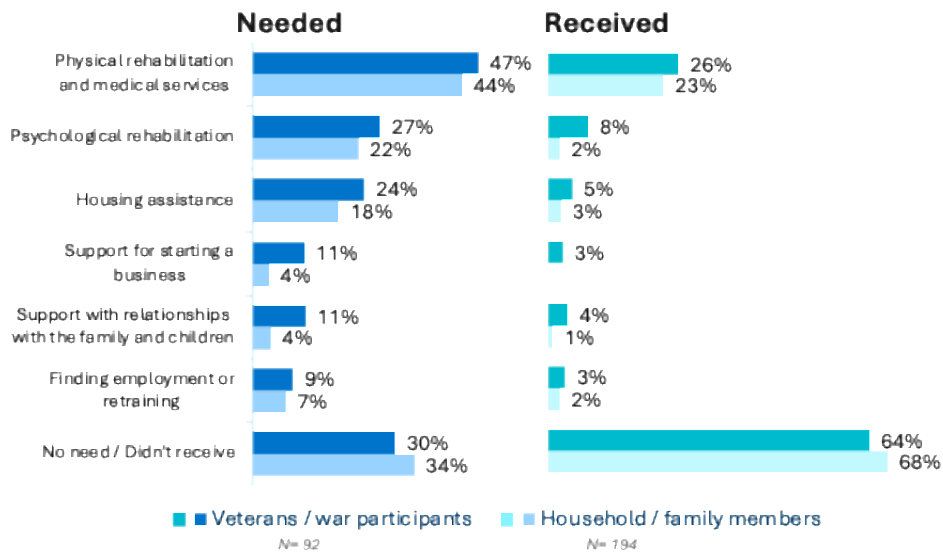


Almost half (47%) of veterans/veteran participants need physical rehabilitation and medical services (44% according to household/family members), every fourth needs psychological rehabilitation (27% and 22% respectively), and every fifth needs housing assistance (24% and 18%). 11% of veterans mentioned support in starting a business and restoring relationships with family and children, while only 4% of household/family members mentioned this. One third said they did not need any support.

Only 26% of veterans underwent physical rehabilitation and received medical services (23% according to their HH/family members), 8% received psychological rehabilitation services (2% according to HH/family members). Other forms of state support were provided to 5% or less of veterans. **64% of veterans and 68% of their household/family members said they had not received any of the above services.**

Among those who received physical rehabilitation (n = 69), 57% expressed satisfaction with it, and 18% said they were dissatisfied.

Figure 35. Need for/receipt of various types of state support for veterans



For veterans in need of housing assistance (n=57), the most desirable option is a waiting list for housing - 25 respondents mentioned this. The second most preferred option is a preferential housing loan (12 respondents).

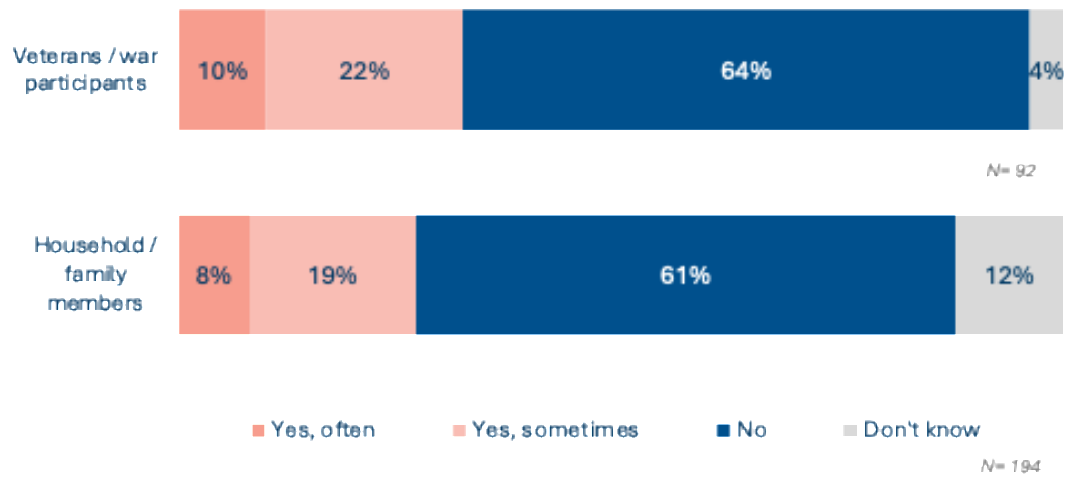
Free psychological services were most often mentioned as necessary additional support from the state, in particular, among veterans - 31%, and among their family members - 45%. More than a third mentioned *free medical treatment services* (37% of veterans, 33% of their family members), and almost a quarter mentioned *financial assistance from the state* (18% of veterans, 25% of their family members).

Figure 36. Types of additional support most needed by veterans



32% of veterans/veteran participants and 27% of family members/households with veterans reported barriers to accessing social services. Veterans who encountered barriers (n=30) most often mentioned complicated and bureaucratic application processes (13 respondents) and slow processing (7 respondents).

Figure 37. Veterans' assessment of the frequency of obstacles to accessing social support



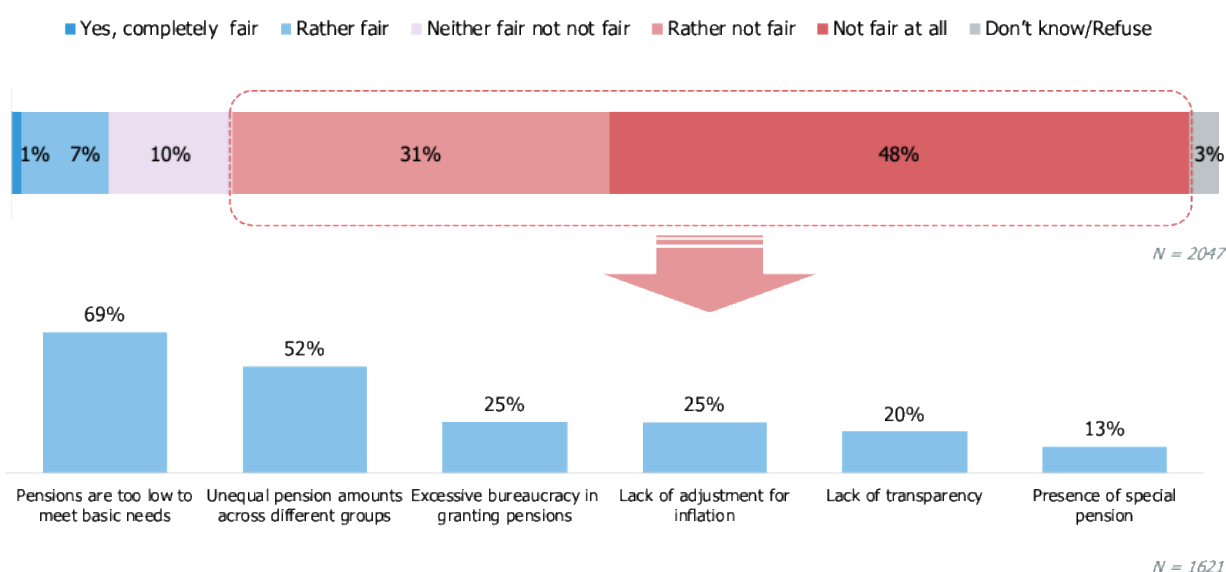
ASSESSMENT OF THE UKRAINIAN PENSION SYSTEM

The next set of questions concerned people's assessment of the Ukrainian pension system, its fairness in the opinion of respondents, understanding of the mechanism of calculating pension payments and other aspects

8 out of 10 respondents consider the pension system in Ukraine to be unfair, most often citing the following reason: low pensions that do not allow them to meet basic needs (69%). It is noteworthy that among them, respondents aged 18-29 (85%) and 30-44 (76%) most often mentioned this reason, while respondents aged 60+ mentioned it less often (53%) compared to the general population. Also, residents of cities with a population of 101-500 thousand people were more likely to mention this (74%).

More than half of the respondents mentioned the large gap in the amount of pensions for different people as a reason for injustice, more often mentioned by respondents aged 45-59 (57%) and over 60 (60%). Excessive bureaucracy in granting pensions was mentioned by 25% each (more often by residents of the East - 32%) and insufficient inflation adjustment (more often by residents of Kyiv - 33% and residents of cities with more than 500 thousand inhabitants - 30%).

Figure 38. Fairness of the pension system



The assessment of the pension system also shows that the majority of pensioners (64%) consider their pensions to be unfair. Only 20% consider it fair. However, it is important to note that almost half of the surveyed old-age pensioners do not know how their pension was calculated (45%).

Figure 39. Assessment of the fairness of one's own pension (regardless of the type of pension)

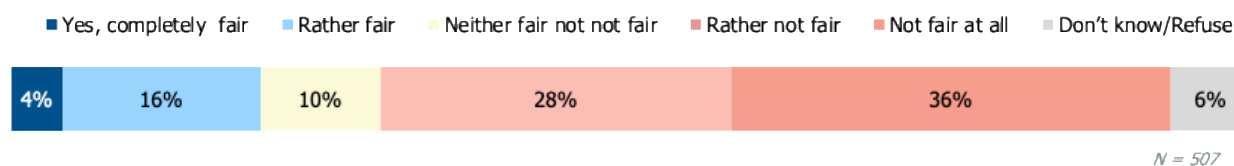
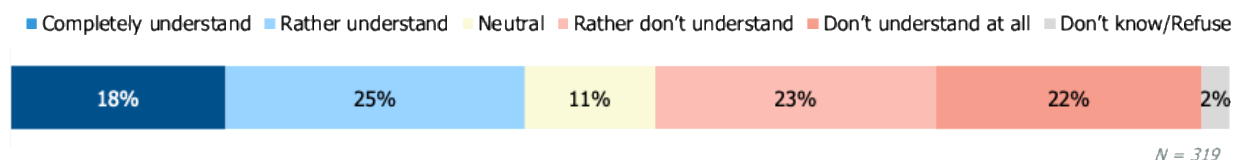
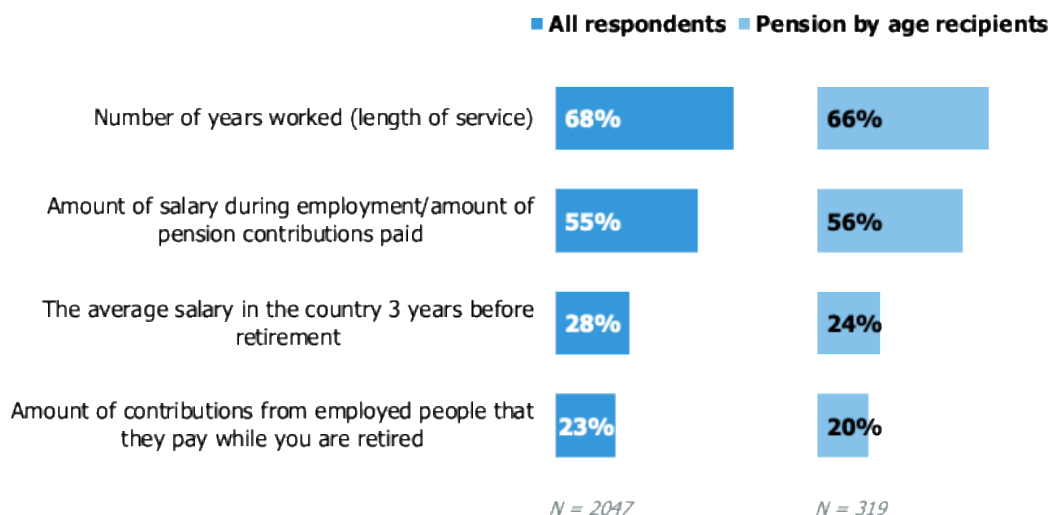


Figure 40. Respondents' understanding of the calculation of their own retirement pension



The majority of respondents (68%) believe that the amount of a pension depends on the length of service, while 55% also chose the amount of salary during work/amount of pension contributions paid as a factor. However, only one-third believes that the average salary in the country 3 years before retirement affects the amount of the pension.

Figure 41. Respondents' awareness of factors affecting the amount of pension



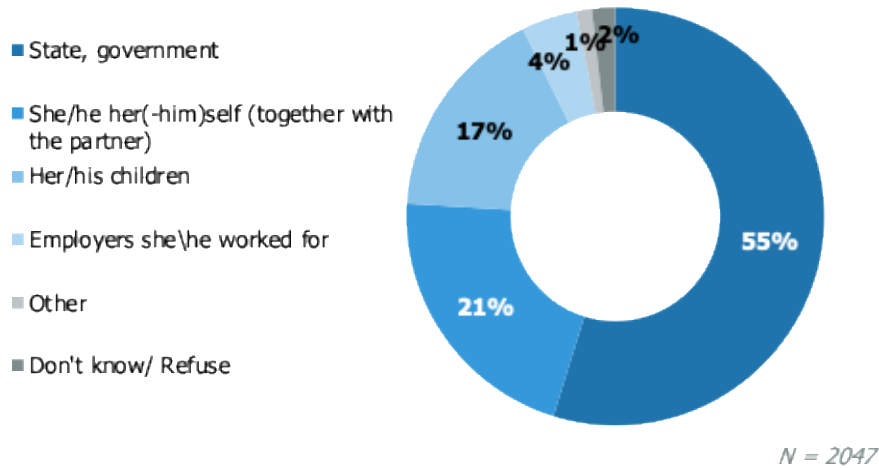
Speaking about providing for a person in old age and finding out who should bear this responsibility, respondents were asked the following question: "In your opinion, who should primarily provide financial support for a person's life in old age?" Compared to the data of 2021^{9,10}, the overall picture has changed somewhat: the share of those who place responsibility on the state has decreased (55% in 2024 vs. 69% in 2021) and the share of those who consider old age care to be the responsibility of children has increased (21% in 2024 vs. 5% in 2021). In 2021, 19% said that it was

⁹ The results of the public opinion poll conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology on February 6-8, 2021, by telephone interview. The sample is representative of the adult population of Ukraine aged 18 and older. The statistical error of the sample for the entire population (with a probability of 0.95 and taking into account the design effect of 1.1) does not exceed 2.4% for indicators close to 50% (1.5% for indicators close to 10%). Data link: <https://cost.ua/results-pension-poll>

¹⁰ Compared to 2021, the structure of Ukraine's population has changed significantly, so this data should be taken as a trend, not as real indicators of changes in people's perceptions between 2021 and 2024

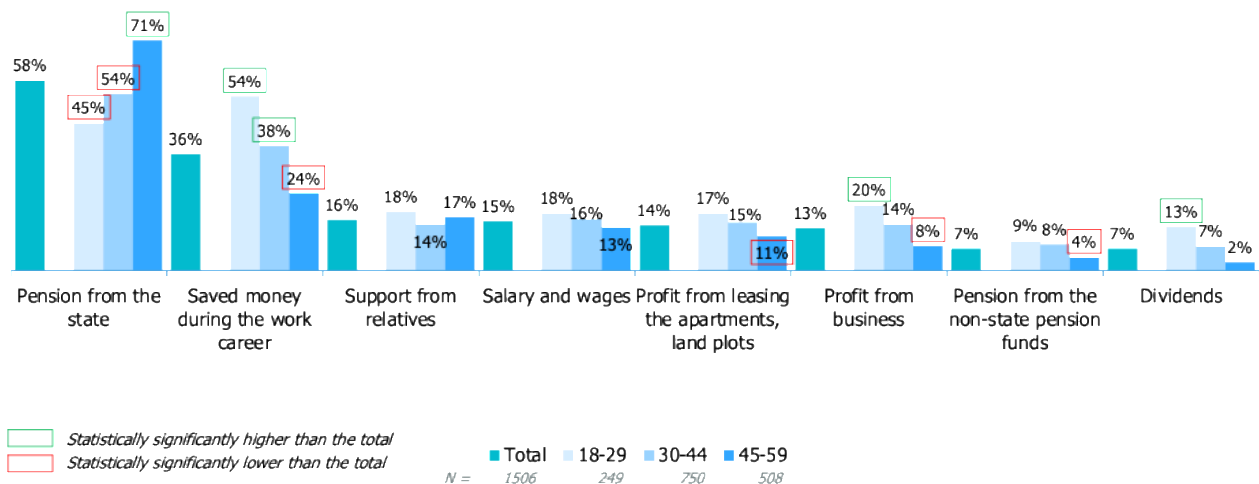
the responsibility of a person (together with their spouse) to provide for their old age, and now it is 17%.

Figure 42. Those responsible for providing for a person in old age



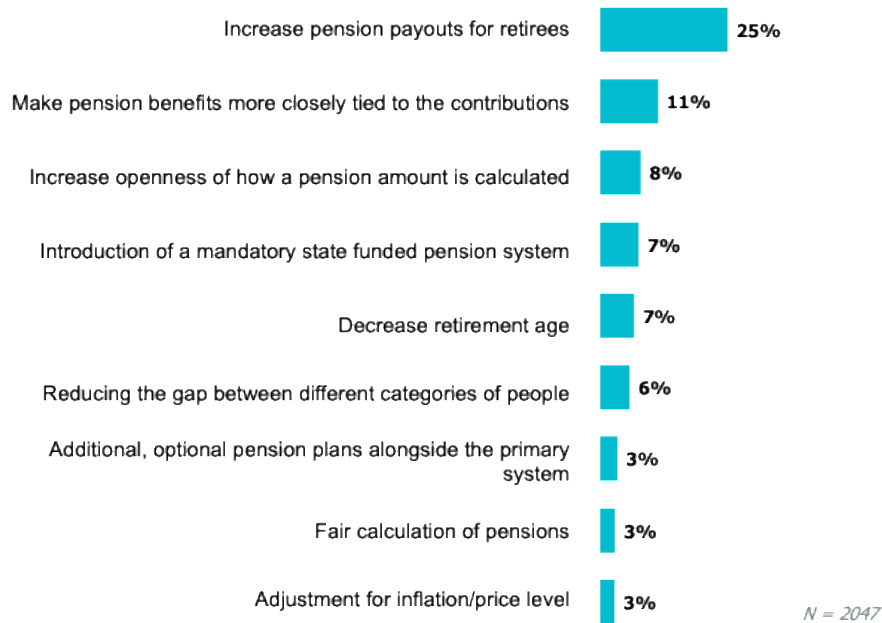
In addition, respondents were asked what resources they plan to live on in their old age. More than half of the respondents (58%) plan to live on pension payments from the state in their old age, which is consistent with the answer about those responsible for providing for their lives. 36% of respondents rely on savings accumulated during their working career. However, respondents aged 45-59 (71%) are more likely to rely on pensions, while respondents aged 18-29 (54%) and 30-44 (38%) are more likely to rely on savings. Every sixth respondent relies on the support of relatives, and 15% on their salary. Investment income, such as renting apartments and land, was mentioned less often as a potential resource (14%).

Figure 43. Sources of funds for retirement



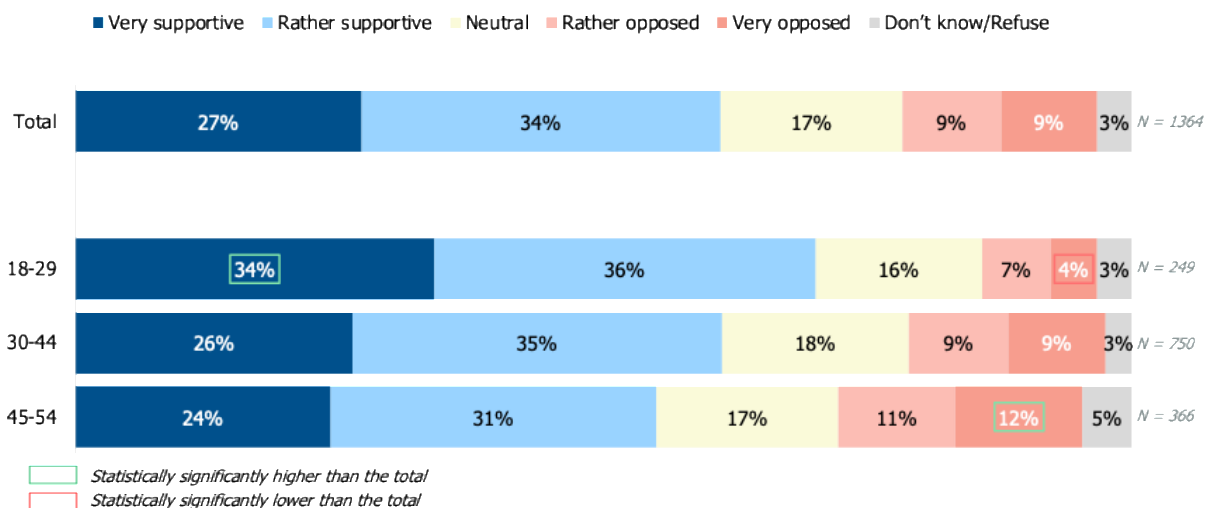
In order to improve the pension system in Ukraine, a quarter of respondents suggest increasing pension benefits. It was also suggested that pension payments should be more closely linked to the amount and duration of contributions (11%), that the calculation of pensions should be more open and clear (8%), that the retirement age should be lowered (7%), etc. And one-third do not know how the pension system in Ukraine could be improved.

Figure 44. Suggestions for improving the pension system in Ukraine



7% of respondents mentioned the introduction of a mandatory funded pension system. However, respondents aged 18-54 were also asked separately about their support for the introduction of such a system. In general, the mandatory funded system, as defined below, is perceived positively - 61% of respondents aged 18-54 support its introduction, and 18% do not support it. In particular, respondents aged 18-29 are more supportive (70%), while people aged 45-54 are more negative (23%), although support still dominates among them. However, these results need to be further contextualized with an assessment of different possible options for the system.

Figure 45. Attitudes toward the introduction of a mandatory state funded pension system (respondents aged 18-54)



Definitions before the question: A funded pension system is a system in which all officially employed individuals would have personal savings accounts into which a certain portion of their salary and unified social contribution (money that employers pay to fund current pensions) would be transferred each month. This is in contrast to the current solidarity system in Ukraine, where contributions from current workers are used to pay pensions to current pensioners.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study is to assess the perception of awareness, knowledge of, accessibility of, and satisfaction with social support and social protection of the state and to identify the needs for social services.

The main objectives of the study:

Set:

- how people (beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of social support and protection) perceive the state's social policy;
- how different groups of the population, including families with children and vulnerable groups, see the priorities of state social support;
- What is the level of awareness of social services, their availability, and use among different demographic groups, including families with children;
- how people feel about adoption and what proportion of Ukrainians are open to it.
- How people perceive the system of social support for veterans and its effectiveness
- how people feel about the existing pension system, and awareness of the factors that affect the amount of pension

Survey method: computerized telephone interviews CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) using random generation of mobile numbers (Random Digit Dialing, RDD).

To test the instrument and ensure that all questions were clear to respondents, 20 test interviews were conducted.

Sample and geography of the study: 2047 respondents aged 18 and older, including recipients and nonrecipients of social services and benefits, including families with children, were interviewed. The sample was designed to reflect the perceptions of both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the current state of the social protection system in Ukraine, the provision of benefits and social services, and other aspects of social protection.

In particular, the sample can be divided into the following categories: people with/without children in the household, unemployed, IDPs, people with disabilities (official status), single parents, veterans/participants of the ATO/JFO/ full-scale Russian invasion, family members of a veteran/participant of the ATO/JFO/ full-scale Russian invasion, legal representatives of a person with a disability, people whose housing was damaged or destroyed as a result of hostilities, patients in need of long-term treatment, palliative care.

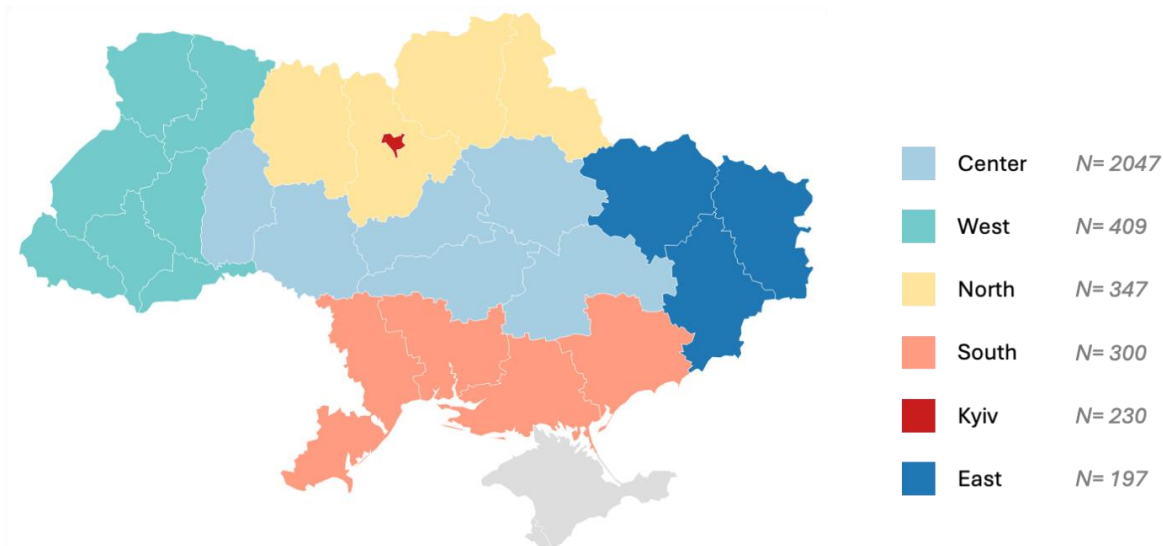
The survey covered the whole of Ukraine, except for the occupied territories. For comparison at the regional level, 6 macro-regions were used, as shown in Figure 46.

Weighting: data are weighted based on the number of SIM cards ($1/n$, where n = number of SIM cards) and by gender, including data from completed interviews and those respondents who refused to continue participating in the study.

The theoretical sampling error does not exceed 2.5%.

To correctly calculate the share of respondents' answers to the questionnaire among the total number of calls made, we used the **Cooperation Rate**. According to this calculation, only completed and partial interviews were taken into account, as well as refusals, interrupted interviews and those that did not pass the control. 10% of the interviews were subjected to a high frequency check script. Calls with the following statuses: short/long rings, out of area, delayed, and answering machine were not taken into account when calculating the response rate. Therefore, according to the calculations, the response rate is **6.8%**.

Figure 46. Grouping of oblasts by region



The period of the study: January 8-19, 2024.

Limitations of the study:

- Lack of reliable data on the general population - the population of Ukraine aged 18 and older. Even before Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022, the State Statistical Service's data provided only an estimate of the population and did not take into account population movements without changing the official place of registration. Since February 24, 2022, the situation has deteriorated significantly due to the occupation of part of the territories, millions of refugees abroad and IDPs inside Ukraine, and hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians joining the Defense Forces. Because of this, minimal weighting was done based on the number of SIM cards people use and refusals by gender to ensure that the sample is close to national representativeness.
- While there were no massive power outages during the survey period, as there were in the same period in 2023, a certain proportion of Ukrainians living in the frontline regions may have been missed due to interruptions in telephone service.
- For the section on veterans/veterans of war: the vast majority of war veterans are currently in the ranks of the Ukrainian Defense Forces with intermittent mobile connections, so we have most likely reached a specific part of this audience. Therefore, the data in the relevant section is presented with a note that it cannot be considered representative, but only as evidence of certain trends.