

# **Accommodation for Displaced People from Ukraine in the Netherlands:**

Challenges, Barriers, and Solutions

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**FRAME 1: GLOSSARY**

**Forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine:** Refers to Ukrainian nationals, their third-country spouses, or long-term residents of Ukraine with temporary protection in the Netherlands under Directive 2001/55/EC or its extensions.

**Accommodation:** Encompasses all types of lodging, including shelters, rented rooms, rented houses, and various municipality-provided semi-long-term accommodations.

**Housing:** Specifically refers to long-term options that are often rooms, apartments, or houses rented by forcibly displaced persons themselves, excluding shelter options.

**GOO/Municipal Shelter (Gemeentelijke Opvang Oekraïners):** A practical guide for municipalities to organise and implement municipal shelter for Ukrainians.

**POO/Host Families (Particulier Opvang Oekraïners):** Private reception facilities for forcibly displaced persons, excluding municipal facilities or the homes of forcibly displaced persons or their family members.

**VNG (Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten):** The Association of Dutch Municipalities, an umbrella organisation that supports municipalities in implementing policy, offers information on current developments, answers member questions through the Information Center, and provides advice.

**VR (VeiligheidsRegio):** A "Safety Region," a public body responsible for fire services, disaster relief, crisis management, and medical assistance in the Netherlands. The country has 25 security regions, part of the national crisis structure.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

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On March 4, 2022, the EU activated the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD), marking a significant milestone in safeguarding those fleeing the conflict in Ukraine. This regulation established minimum standards for temporary protection, covering essential needs such as welfare, medical care, education, and shelter. Although forcibly displaced persons are entitled to accommodation, the exact type of accommodation is not specified in the TPD, leaving that decision to individual Member States of the EU.

However, due to the urgent need to accommodate the substantial influx of forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine, EU member states have encountered challenges in providing suitable housing solutions. As a result of the limited housing possibilities for forcibly displaced persons in the Netherlands, the Dutch government chose to activate existing crisis regulations to ensure accommodation for all forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine. This approach decentralised the process, placing the primary responsibility for reception with local authorities (municipalities). This decision was made to prevent overburdening the Central Organizations for the Reception of Asylum-Seekers (COA), which is responsible for providing reception to refugees and asylum-seekers in the Netherlands. The crisis approach streamlined decision-making at the municipal level, enabling the development of innovative solutions in the absence of standardised guidelines. Yet, contrary to expectations and in light of the prolonged ongoing conflict, municipalities are now expected to prepare long-term housing solutions, which poses a significant challenge, considering the temporary nature of the current TPD framework.

This study examines the national and local-level development of reception policies, with a focus on semi-long-term housing, while assessing the obstacles faced by forcibly displaced individuals seeking housing independently in the general housing market or private accommodations.

We employed a mixed-methods approach, conducting in-depth narrative interviews with local policymakers and community members, analysing quantitative data, and performing open-source data analysis on housing needs within local and regional online platforms. This comprehensive approach not only assists us in understanding the barriers to housing but also the policy solutions that have shaped these barriers and the experiences of forcibly displaced persons.

## 1.1 METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted from March to June 2023, with a focus on housing policies in Dutch municipalities and the experiences of forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine in relation to accommodation and access to the general housing market.

Offering a three-folded perspective encompassing national policies, municipal responsibilities, and the firsthand experiences of forcibly displaced persons, our research is divided into the following sections:

1. National policy developments and their implications for accommodating forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine.
2. Innovative initiatives, and local variations in the reception of forcibly displaced individuals.
3. The barriers that forcibly displaced individuals encounter when trying to access accommodation (shelter) and housing on the private housing market.

**Research Design**<sup>1</sup>: We adopted a mixed-methods design

**Qualitative data collection:**

**In-Depth Interviews:** We conducted in-depth narrative interviews with local authorities from 20 municipalities, two safety regions, and national actors.<sup>2</sup>

**Community Member Interviews:** We conducted qualitative interviews with 10 active community leaders in Deventer, the Hague, Eindhoven, and Kampen.

**Quantitative Data Collection:**

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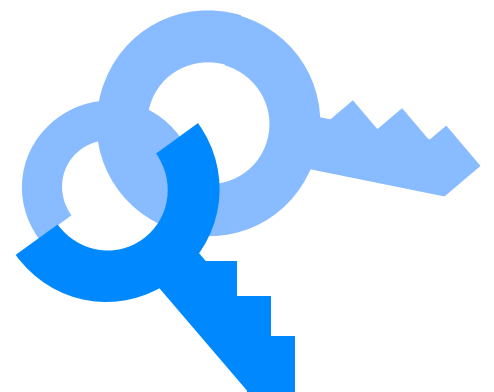
<sup>1</sup>For more information on data collection and analysis, please refer to the 'Data Collection Process' section in Annex 1.

<sup>2</sup>Remained anonymous.

**Quantitative Survey:** A survey with 25 questions was distributed to forcibly displaced individuals through regional telegram channels and community representatives. We collected 335 responses.

**Open Source Data Analysis:** We analysed more than 11,000 messages related to housing from forcibly displaced persons. We also collected and analysed available housing offers in various Telegram channels using natural language processing models.



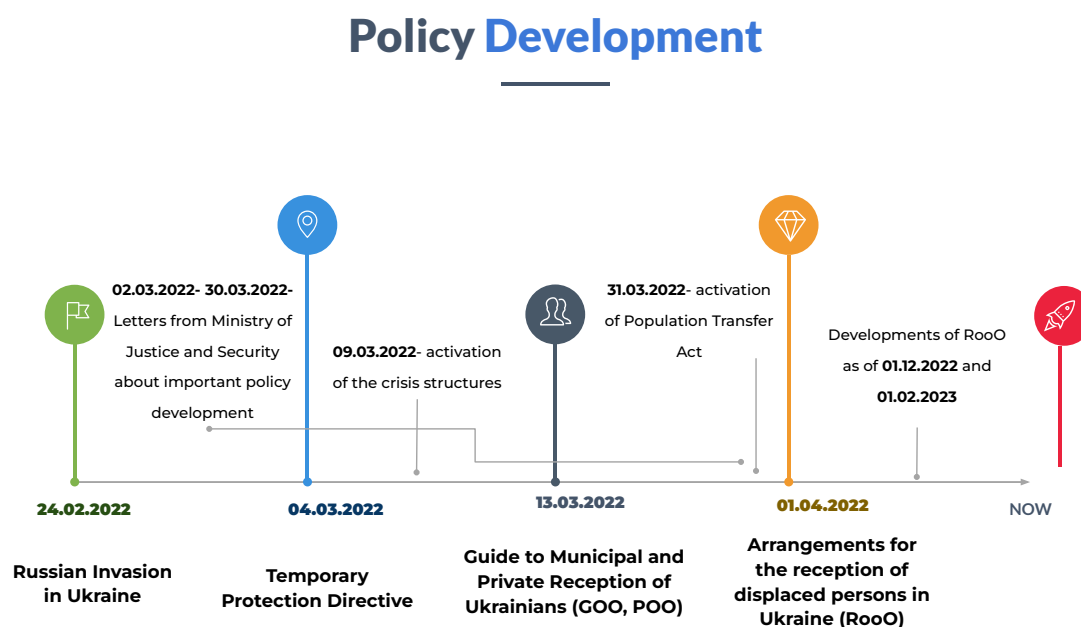


# Housing Policies

**Policy Overview:** In this chapter we will look at the the policy structures on the EU, national and local contexts, concerning the reception of forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine.

## 2.1 EVOLUTION OF POLICY: TIMELINE AND KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Dutch policy regarding forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine is decentralised, with guidelines provided by the national government in accordance with the EU Temporary Protection Directive. The policy evolution is marked by key highlights:



The pivotal decision for receiving forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine is the activation of the EU Temporary Protection Directive by the EU Council<sup>3</sup>. This Directive mandates provisions such as decent shelter, medical care, and education, while the specific type of accommodation is at the discretion of each EU Member State.

Temporary protection is initially set for one year but can be extended by automatic six-month increments for a maximum of three years. The protection concludes when the Council determines that the conditions in the home country allow for the safe and sustainable return of forcibly displaced persons.

<sup>3</sup>Government of the Netherlands, Parliamentary Papers 32 317 and 36 045, no. 750.

In the Netherlands, following the activation of the TPD, the Regulation for the reception of forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine, known as RooO<sup>4</sup> in Dutch, took effect on April 1, 2022. This regulation addresses scenarios involving a high influx of forcibly displaced persons, allowing for (emergency) shelter outside the existing structures for asylum seekers and refugees. Throughout the first six months after the start of the full-scale conflict, additional provisions and policy decisions were communicated through letters from the State Secretary.

To implement this policy, mayors of municipalities and safety region chairpersons were tasked by the central Dutch government to provide the necessary shelter for forcibly displaced individuals. Mayors were legally obligated to ensure reception, including housing, care, and registration. Although the policy-making process was decentralised, the National Government has introduced the Guidelines to Municipal Reception of Ukrainians (GOO)<sup>5</sup> on March 13, 2022, providing municipalities with support in setting up and managing reception locations. The GOO emphasises principles such as the universal accessibility to municipal reception, full financial reimbursement for municipalities, and the freedom to regulate access to shelter. For example, municipalities are eligible for financial compensation of €83 per person per month for clothing and personal expenses related to those staying in government-run reception facilities.

Each Safety Region received the assignment to provide a number of reception places, which increased over the course of the years. Municipalities employed various approaches to manage shelter facilities: outsourcing to private housing companies (e.g., Tilburg, Venlo, Doetinchem), to local social work organisations (e.g. Amsterdam, Eindhoven, Zaandam), to organisations specialised in addressing homelessness, or handling reception within the municipality itself (e.g., Deventer, Beuningen, Bronckhorst, Nuenen, Son en Breugel, Geldrop, Kampen). In parallel, municipalities also permit forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine to reside in privately run shelter accommodation, specifically with host families.

It is important to note that forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine under the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) lack entitlement to social housing. However, they theoretically have access to the private housing market or can reside in private housing with host families, following Dutch law.

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<sup>4</sup>Regeling opvang ontheemden Oekraïne (RooO) contains the rules that have been established on the basis of Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Population Transfer Act (from Dutch: Wet verplaatsing bevolking).

<sup>5</sup>In Dutch, Gemeentelijke Opvang Oekrainers.

## 2.2 PRIVATE SHELTERS/LIVING WITH HOST FAMILIES

The willingness of Dutch people to offer shelter for forcibly displaced individuals in their homes has been an unprecedented example of hospitality and commitment. In Amsterdam alone, more than 1000 families were willing to host forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine. However, at the outset of the full-scale conflict, the process of hosting forcibly displaced persons in private homes was not regulated by municipalities or the national government. In response to that, on May 13, 2022, the national government, in collaboration with the Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG) and RefugeeHomeNL, published a guide (POO)<sup>6</sup> for Dutch individuals (host families) interested in hosting refugees from Ukraine. This guide includes various provisions, outlines registration procedures, and regulates private reception. Nevertheless, the program took a few months to get started, with the website launching in May 2022. According to the guidelines (POO), private shelters encompass the following options:<sup>7</sup>

- Staying in a room with a host family
- Residing in a holiday home or house where the host family does not live
- Occupying housing provided by a company or institution, which is not financed by the municipality

Even though the RooO clearly mandates the local government to take the responsibility for forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine in the Netherlands, it is frequently misunderstood by municipalities that they are also responsible for forcibly displaced persons staying in privately run shelters. Consequently, the municipalities limit their responsibility in terms of social support only to those who reside in municipal shelters.<sup>8</sup>

Moreover, some municipalities<sup>9</sup> have interpreted "private shelter" (or housing) more broadly, encompassing all housing options outside municipal reception facilities. This means that individuals living in privately rented accommodations or staying with close family members (which is not defined as PO) are considered by municipalities as falling under the PO category.

<sup>6</sup>In Dutch, Particuliere opvang Oekraïens.

<sup>7</sup>In this report, Opora researchers however did not follow this definition. Thus when referring to POs we refer to all forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine who do not reside in municipal shelters.

<sup>8</sup>Nonetheless, all forcibly displaced persons are obliged to receive financial compensation and they do receive it.

<sup>9</sup>Municipalities in this sample, at least 4 out of 20.

Facilitating private shelter proved to be effective during a limited amount of time and in particular at the beginning of the emergency, however it requires strict regulations and significant attention from national and local authorities.



## **Research Findings Part 1:**

Municipalities' Experiences  
in Accommodating Displaced People  
from Ukraine

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### 3.1 LOCAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE CRISIS STRUCTURE FOR ACCOMMODATING FORCIBLY DISPLACED PERSONS FROM UKRAINE

This chapter delves into the evolution of policies, the rationales behind specific decisions made during the crisis<sup>10</sup>, and the subsequent implications of these decisions on the reception of forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine. The activation of crisis regulations had a direct impact on the management in reception facilities and the subsequent policies. These policies not only provided guidance to municipal workers but also had an impact on the well-being of the forcibly displaced persons.

In addition to the national decision to adopt the safety regions' structure, some municipalities also activated their own crisis policies. Based on the interview analysis with 20 local policy-makers, it was found that more than half of the municipal officials had no previous experience in responding to large-scale displacement or working with newcomers, especially concerning the need for shelter, supplies, food, and registration procedures. Yet, we do acknowledge that although municipal workers lacked specific knowledge about forcefully forcibly displaced persons, they were skilled in crisis management.

While a decentralised approach made the management and subsequent decisions very subjective and individual, it also allowed for innovative and unconventional approaches to the organisation of reception. In Deventer, although the municipality lacked significant experience in welcoming newcomers, they organised the municipal shelter by involving local organisations, individuals, and the diaspora community. They took a hands-on approach and were among the first to hire forcibly displaced persons themselves as staff members at the municipal shelter. The latter was outlined by the municipality, as a positive element improving the reception, while mitigating possible tensions between the residents. The municipality representative from Deventer explained that *“a lot of Ukrainians wanted to help, so we hired them. It made it easier for everyone and it meant we did not need the Red Cross anymore.”*

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<sup>10</sup>In the eyes of officials, the mass influx of forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine represented a “new” crisis. Around March 2022, most municipalities had only just closed their Covid crisis management structures. Consequently, to react quickly and efficiently, some municipalities decided to reopen these structures; which were usually related to operations of the local GGD GHOR Nederland (hereinafter GGD).

This was made possible by the fact that, at the operational level, responsibilities were primarily held by municipalities. The direct engagement of mayors and responsible aldermen substantially expedited the decision-making and reporting processes. For example, certain municipalities repurposed old COVID management structures, including the use of former vaccination centres, for emergency reception, in the Hague, for instance. However, even though the facilities and operations were available, the COVID staff previously hired by the local GGD GHOR Nederland (Public Health Service, hereinafter GGD) were not adequately equipped to work with individuals fleeing an armed conflict. This situation demanded distinct skill sets and abilities not covered by their previous roles.

*At the outset of the full-scale invasion, the Safety Region of South Brabant assigned several back-office GGD workers to oversee the transfer of forcibly displaced persons to emergency shelters. These workers held a position known as "makelaars" or real estate managers in Dutch, as it was considered to best describe their role. Yet, they had not received any training on working with vulnerable populations and frequently found themselves "overwhelmed and lacking support". As the influx of forcibly displaced persons reduced after a year, their responsibilities shifted towards developing procedures for addressing problematic situations at the shelter locations.*

As was indicated earlier, municipalities chose different ways to approach reception: through third parties such as social workers' organisations, by themselves, or with housing companies' employees.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, municipalities in our sample, although fully responsible for the reception, were not always directly involved in the situation on the ground. As a result, long-term procedures established by municipalities for the everyday management of reception facilities were primarily shaped by the crisis-experienced staff, who were not originally trained for such roles.

An example of the differences between how municipalities approached long-term shelter procedures within their municipal shelters is the decision whether to employ security personnel. This decision reflects the municipality's readiness to transition from "crisis shelter" to long-term co-living of forcibly displaced persons within the community.

For instance, the role of security personnel in GOs illustrates a notable difference. *In Almere, shelter residents raised concerns about the authority granted to security guards, who were allowed to enter rooms.*

On the contrary, Beuningen took a different approach. *The municipality decided to*

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<sup>11</sup>See Appendix C.



*discontinue subcontracting security personnel, opting to treat forcibly displaced persons as integral members of the city. They abolished security services, instead establishing a community support system where residents could contact the police if necessary. Furthermore, Beuningen allocated funds towards promoting integration by focusing on language skills. They channelled funds, which were saved by opting for less costly options such as allowing people to cook for themselves instead of arranging catered food, to provide Dutch language courses through ROC Academy.*

The findings of this study highlight that having an experienced workforce within municipalities was a significant advantage in facilitating reception facilities. For instance, in Utrecht, a team was assembled through the voluntary participation of municipal employees to provide services for forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine. These employees had prior experience working with forcibly displaced individuals, indicating their high motivation and, consequently, contributing to more effective crisis management in hindsight.

Moreover, the **size, geography, or resources** did not play a significant role in determining the success of the reception facilities.

In summary, the provision of limited policy and guidance afforded local authorities with the flexibility to create and establish reception facilities. While this approach had the positive outcome of expediting decision-making processes according to our respondents, it is important to question their use as long-term procedures. This was primarily due to the fact that the management structures remained largely unchanged over time, which had a significant impact on the situation on the ground. This influence was particularly notable in the development of house rules, the management of relocations, and the overall satisfaction with the reception facilities.

### **3.2 PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL CHARITIES AND DIASPORA IN THE ORGANISATION OF RECEPTION OF FORCIBLY DISPLACED PERSONS FROM UKRAINE**

While municipalities in our sample primarily focused on finding housing and lacked experience in managing a mass influx, local charities, communities, and diaspora often played a pivotal role in improving reception and responding to urgent needs and providing expertise which the municipal staff was lacking. Although the role was important, it was not immediately visible to municipalities. As community workers from Eindhoven have noted, it took them time to build a trusting relationship with the municipality, but it works

	HELP PROVIDED BY THE LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY	EXPERIENCES OF MUNICIPALITIES WORKING WITH THE LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY
<b>BRONCKHORST &amp; DOETINCHEM - A LOCAL CHARITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provided effective and safe solutions for POs placements for 3 months.</li> <li>Had previous experience, and was capable of applying TakeCareBnb procedures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bronckhorst representatives had a positive experience as the local initiative gave them time to find their own solution.</li> <li>Doetinchem expressed their disappointment since the organisation could only assist them for 3 months, after which they decided to discontinue the cooperation with POs.</li> </ul>
<b>KAMPEN - A LOCAL PROTESTANT CHURCH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organised transportation from Ukraine/border to municipality.</li> <li>Arranged housing for more than 70 people in private accommodation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After months of negotiation, the municipality now shares the governmental subsidy with the church.</li> <li>Consequently, the church can now provide Dutch classes, bikes, and other necessities their guests might need.</li> </ul>
<b>VALKENSWAARD - A LOCAL REFUGEE ORGANISATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manages the municipal location.</li> <li>Maintains track of the people in POs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organisation assisted the municipality in finding a shelter to host people and provided support.</li> </ul>
<b>DEVENTER - GRASSROOT MOVEMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grassroot movement of volunteers and donors which arranged all furniture donations for the GO.</li> <li>Organised the first shelter in Deventer for 120 people after 3 weeks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Municipality could organise the shelter without assistance from bigger NGOs because of the support of the local volunteers.</li> </ul>

**FIGURE 1:** Four examples of successful involvement of Dutch local civil society.

well at the moment of the data collection. Figure 2 provides an overview and detailed description of the best practices of local community's participation.

Furthermore, we observed a positive trend of involving forcibly displaced persons in location management.

However, their involvement is not without challenges. Although these individuals play important roles as community leaders, translators, or managers, they are not necessarily trained mediators, and they often reside on the locations themselves. This situation creates a need for improved support structures and mechanisms for addressing issues and complaints.

For example, in Almere, the municipality hired forcibly displaced persons as location managers, tasking them with managing complaints. In other cases, individuals from the diaspora and forcibly displaced Ukrainians were employed as translators or community representatives. These individuals serve as intermediaries between the municipality and forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine, particularly in the absence of a formal reporting

system.

While this approach of involving the target group in location management is positive, there is room for improvement in providing proper training and support for those in these roles. It is important to ensure that their involvement complements existing mechanisms for addressing issues and concerns effectively.

### **3.3 MUNICIPAL RECEPTION SOLUTIONS FOR FORCIBLY DISPLACED PERSONS FROM UKRAINE**

The management structure described above served as the foundation for decisions regarding the selected locations during the crisis and also played a crucial role in determining more long-term and sustainable solutions. To begin with, in this chapter, the first crisis reactions are outlined. To gain a deeper understanding of the most effective reception facility options, it is essential to explore the available facilities in each municipality, as depicted in Figure 3. This figure illustrates the variety of reception facility types and their availability.

#### **3.3.1 THE INVOLVEMENT OF HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES**

At the outset of the crisis, municipalities had to respond swiftly and efficiently to the influx of people, particularly in larger cities which are connected to other EU Member States. This is how the hospitality industry at the end of the COVID-19 period appeared to be the most quick and suitable solution. This option initially served as a beneficial short-term solution and crisis response, accommodating the large and rapid influx of forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine, who arrived in significant numbers at the start of the conflict. Hotels provided support and bought municipalities time to refurbish various buildings identified for the reception of forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine, such as in The Hague, Nijmegen, and Venlo.

##### **Case Study: Sustainable Participation by a Local Hospitality Business**

The Bronckhorst municipality maintained a partnership with a local hotel business, which could accommodate up to 30 guests. In March 2023, the hotel business contacted the municipality and began hosting forcibly displaced Ukrainians, providing them with private rooms, bathrooms, and the ability to cook, thus ensuring their privacy. More than a year later, the municipal representative of Bronckhorst reported that the hotel owners had taken on the role of location managers, providing extensive support for Ukrainian forcibly displaced individuals. The hotel owners were committed to this new approach and decided to continue offering these services, even if forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine no longer required reception at their hotel, marking a significant shift in their business model.

Municipalities interviewed during the period of February - July 2023.	Restored municipality owned buildings.	Private hotels/ships	Old/empty office buildings/Local businesses	Private Houses (as GOs)	Chalets/Flex-Housing <span style="color: blue;">●</span> from 2022 <span style="color: orange;">●</span> investment was mentioned
AMSTERDAM					
BEUNINGEN					
BRONCKHORST					
DEVENTER					
DOETINCHEM					
EINDHOVEN					
THE HAGUE					
KAMPEN					
NUENEN					
NIJMEGEN					
GELDROP MIERLO					
TILBURG					
SON EN BREUGEL					
UTRECHT					
VENLO					
VALKENSWAARD					
ZAANDAM					

FIGURE 2: General municipal reception options (from February 2022 to July 2023).

### 3.3.2 THE UTILISATION OF OFFICES AND INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS

There was a clear and prevalent tendency to accommodate forcibly displaced persons in vacant industrial/office buildings. The majority of municipalities did not own vacant buildings, therefore, they used the assistance of local property owners or housing companies (this occurred in Tilburg, Eindhoven, Deventer and The Hague, Utrecht). Municipalities who did own buildings could organise reception facilities in a more sustainable way, especially since the decision making processes concerning the possibility of utilisa-

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Significant hosting capacities.	Privacy is not guaranteed; for instance, in Amsterdam, some hostels could accommodate up to 11 people in one room (at the time of the interview - June 2023 - some of the displaced people from Ukraine were still living in such facilities).
Mutually beneficial, as it supports the local economy.	Relatively high costs for accommodating displaced individuals in hotels.
Offered very comfortable hosting situations, including 4-star hotels (excluding hostels and cruise ships).	Created a significant disparity in treatment compared to less luxurious facilities for displaced individuals from Ukraine.
Allowed for quick, efficient and organised shelter provision in the first months of the crisis.	Displaced individuals from Ukraine living in catered accommodations found it challenging to transition to less inclusive options.

**FIGURE 3:** Advantages and disadvantages of hotels for hosting forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine.

tion was shortened (due to the employment of crisis regulations). Bigger municipalities benefitted from having networks of housing associations (Eindhoven, Nijmegen, Doetinchem). As this depended on the network of the municipal representatives themselves, the VRs also played a role in getting such lists for smaller municipalities. In some instances, businesses who owned vacant properties reached out directly to municipalities, streamlining the process (in the Zuid-Brabant Safety region).

Although not all municipalities in our research have managed (yet) to relocate all those living in such facilities, all interviewees recognised the disadvantages of such reception facilities, especially when it comes to the question of privacy, possibility for people to cook for themselves.

### 3.3.3 ENGAGEMENT OF PRIVATE (SMALL SCALE) PROPERTY OWNERS

Occasionally small-scale Dutch property owners became host families (POs) or offered their properties as temporary housing solutions for municipalities. These accommodations ranged in size and type, from private vacation homes and smaller second houses to guest houses. However, it's important to note that most of these initiatives were short-lived because the property owners eventually needed their properties for business purposes.

For instance, in the municipality of Neunen, a group of local volunteers united to as-

sist the municipality in finding properties to host 40-50 forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine. Similarly, in Venlo, private housing options were offered for temporary use, allowing ten people to live there for free for over six months. These initiatives were characterised by the charitable acts of private property owners, although they typically remained temporary in nature.

### **3.3.4 MOST EFFECTIVE RECEPTION FACILITIES: LONG-TERM OPTIONS**

In our interviews with municipal representatives, we inquired about their preparations and efforts to establish semi-long-term reception solutions. The responses varied, with municipalities providing different reasons and justifications for their long-term planning. Some mentioned the absence of national policies as a limiting factor, while others emphasised their awareness of the need for long-term solutions. A few municipalities had already begun their own semi-long-term or long-term projects. It is important to note that this section is not solely based on interviews with municipalities; we also include insights from community activists who shared their views on the long-term policies of selected local governments.

After some time in the crisis, it became evident that most of the temporary governmental shelters (GOs) were not suitable for long-term reception, signalling the need for more permanent solutions in municipalities. The short term contracts and the lack of perspective in the decision-making process have put municipalities in a continuous state of “crisis”. All municipality workers did mention that uncertainty and constant search for housing options which are often limited by short-term contracts became exhausting. As the policy-maker from Eindhoven outlined: *“to be honest, we are still in crisis”*.

In many GOs, forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine were forced to share a room with family members and strangers. Municipal representatives and location managers from all interviewed municipalities reported issues arising from the lack of privacy, leading to conflicts among residents, problems with alcohol addiction, and mental health issues (as observed in Deventer, Venlo, Nijmegen).

Notably, decisions made by municipalities to opt for long-term reception solutions were influenced by various circumstances. For instance, representatives from Beuningen mentioned that their decision to choose semi-permanent accommodation was driven by the lack of suitable municipal or vacant office buildings for hosting forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine. However, the municipality did own land where chalets could be placed, and building companies were engaged to prepare the area for chalet placement.

VENLO	NIJMEGEN	TILBURG	BEUNINGEN	BRONCKHORST
Flex-houses will be available at the end 2023 and suitable for 10-15 years.	At the time of the interview, Nijmegen was arranging semi-permanent locations to host up to 300 people in containers where families can live independently.	At the time of the interview, the municipality was preparing a plan for temporary houses to present to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.	In May 2022, chalets were bought and placed on municipality-owned land and suitable for 5 years.	Seven chalets and caravans were made available by the Municipal Council in April 2022. A year later, an additional 22 chalets were made available.

**FIGURE 4:** Examples of semi-long-term options opted by municipalities in the Netherlands.

In most of the cases the municipalities in our sample were preparing for more long term options after contracts with previous accommodation facilities were over. Yet, the long-term housing options did not always entail the increase of privacy in the accommodation - this was relative and differed from one municipality to another. The need to think long term was also motivated by the understanding that many of these forcibly displaced individuals may wish to remain in the Netherlands after the conflict in Ukraine ends.

The municipality of the Hague conducted research showing that a substantial portion of forcibly displaced individuals (around 70% of respondents) expressed a desire to stay in the Netherlands. Similarly, Tilburg municipality representative estimated that *“between 50 and 80% of Ukrainians in the city might want to stay and they will need to live somewhere”*. They shared nonetheless that constructing permanent housing can take up to 7 years due to complex procedures, which presents a challenge. While specific percentages regarding the intentions of forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine to stay or leave cannot be confirmed, municipal workers have raised these numbers during interviews as part of discussions about long-term planning. This suggests that all municipalities in our sample are actively seeking answers on how to prepare for various potential scenarios, including accommodating those who wish to remain in the Netherlands. Furthermore, the representatives from Venlo, Nijmegen, and Beuningen suggested that after the conflict in Ukraine ends, flex-housing can be repurposed for other migrant groups, students, or is easily deconstructable.

For instance, in Utrecht, a working group is dedicated to developing policies that can effectively serve multiple groups. To do this, they are visiting various reception facilities across the Netherlands, learning from both successful and less successful experiences to



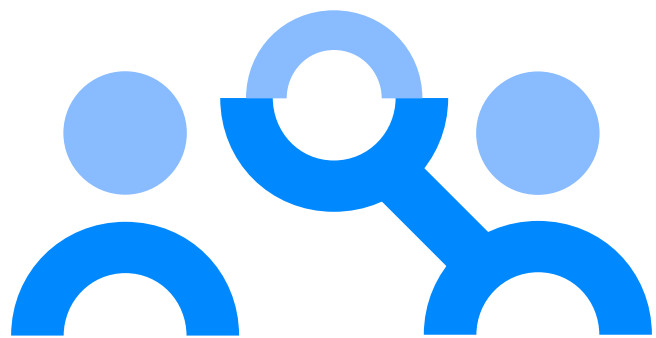
avoid repeating mistakes and ensure the best possible policies. In summary, municipalities have come to realise that addressing the housing issue necessitates their proactive efforts and foresight.

### **3.4 GENERAL CONCLUSION**

Assessing the various factors that have aided municipalities in organising reception for forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine sheds light on the current state of housing for these individuals. Initially, municipalities received support and cooperation from local businesses and landowners who demonstrated a willingness to help. The rapid establishment of reception facilities was a response to the urgent situation. However, these facilities, while addressing the immediate need, often lacked long-term sustainability.

The involvement of local civil society and the presence of an experienced workforce played pivotal roles in achieving sustainable and effective reception facilities, even though this contribution was not consistently acknowledged by some municipalities. Having an experienced workforce proved advantageous, ensuring efficiency in the multifaceted task of managing housing facilities. On the other hand, an abrupt and sometimes untrained involvement of forcibly displaced Ukrainians or unskilled staff, coupled with a lack of expertise in formulating long term policies and procedures can create great challenges in securing safe and effective reception facilities.

The need for long-term solutions became evident as the situation evolved, prompted by signals from both forcibly displaced individuals and municipal representatives. While some municipalities await further guidance from the central government, others have taken the initiative to establish semi-long-term housing options, believing this approach benefits everyone involved. Despite the absence of clear guidance from the central government, the municipalities have begun funding projects aimed at constructing semi-long-term housing for forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine, often in conjunction with housing for asylum-seekers and refugees. This proactive stance reflects a collective effort to address the housing challenges effectively.



## **Research Findings Part 2:**

Experiences of Displaced People  
from Ukraine with Accommodation,  
Housing and Analysis of Housing trends

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To understand the experiences and views of forcibly displaced persons on their accommodation situations, we conducted a quantitative analysis focusing on the following issues:

- The experiences of forcibly displaced persons with the current housing arrangements
- The institutional and personal obstacles linked to various accommodation types and independent housing
- forcibly displaced persons' views regarding their position in the housing market and the prospects of renting private accommodations
- Potential socio-cultural barriers impacting housing choices

In our analysis, we monitored different parameters influencing respondents' ability to obtain semi-long-term accommodation. Such parameters included family composition, children, region, language, employment, and current housing situation. Based on the information from 335 respondents, our survey shows that most of the respondents reside in the provinces of North Holland, South Holland and Gelderland.

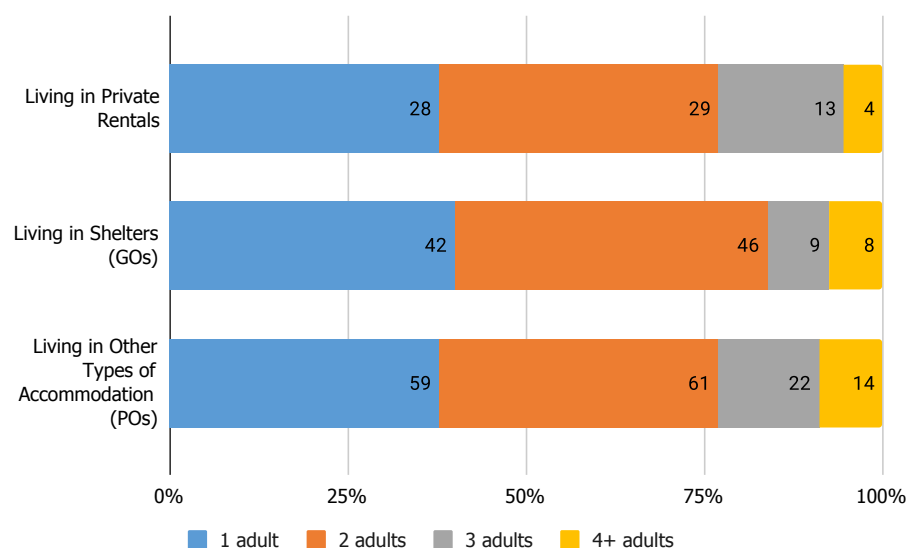
In our sample, 74 respondents (22%) live in privately rented accommodations, 105 respondents (31%) live in shelters provided by municipalities (GOs), while the remaining 156 respondents (47%) reported staying either with friends, family or host families (POs). The most common household composition consists of two or more adults (61% out of 335 respondents).

Our data showed no significant differences in household composition between people renting, staying in shelters, or living with host families (as seen in the graph above). However in smaller cities, we see that there are considerably less families living in rented accommodation, probably given there are less options to rent. Thus in villages families rely mostly on GOs or other options (like POs) for their accommodation.

Prior research identified individuals who have secured a short-term stay of less than 6 months as one of the most vulnerable groups.<sup>12</sup> In our sample, 81 out of 338 respondents (23.96%) had secured a stay of six months or less. Of this group, 25% were residing in rental accommodations, 24.08% in governmental shelters, and 21.93% in other

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<sup>12</sup>Shaidrova M. and Ngo M. 2023. forcibly displaced Persons in Private Housing in Amsterdam, OPORA.



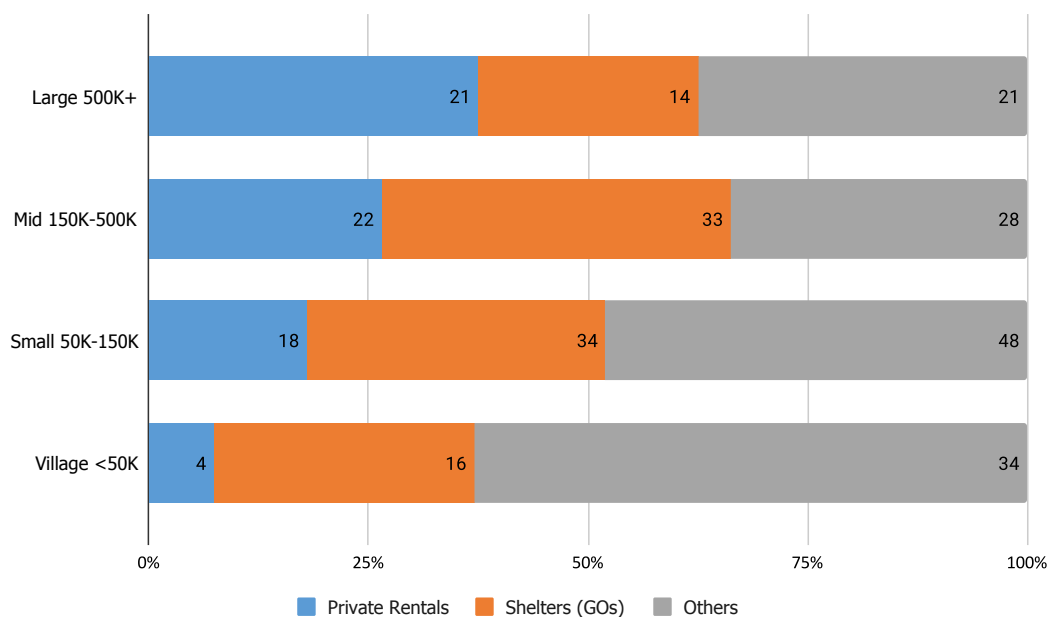
**FIGURE 5:** Amount of adults within households. N: 335. Rental N: 74, Shelters N: 105, Others N: 156.

types of private accommodation. These figures suggest a need for either new housing arrangements or an extension of rental contracts within the 6 months following the data collection period. Considering the long-term solutions implemented in certain municipalities, some of these residents may have the opportunity to secure more permanent semi-flexible housing. However, as mentioned earlier, individuals in private houses and those renting their own accommodation are not given high priority by local authorities. Nevertheless, renting private accommodation remains the most secure option in terms of the duration of stay.

## 4.1 WAYS THAT PEOPLE APPROACH THE SEARCH FOR PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION

Housing websites clearly dominate as the go-to resource (43% out of 335 respondents), while a significant percentage (22%) reported using chat groups and friends, indicating the importance of social networks and word-of-mouth communication in search of privately rented accommodation.

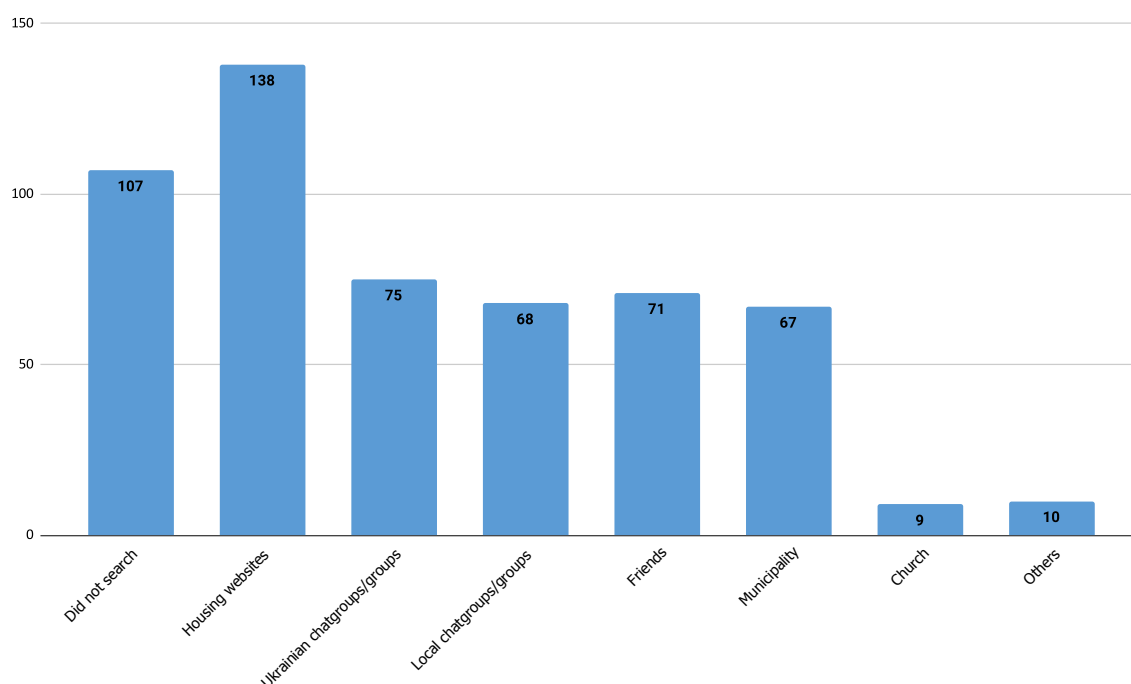
Nonetheless, informal chats and “Renting” Telegram chats play a significant role in the search for independent accommodation, primarily for privately rented. Most forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine who use Telegram rely on this social network to find houses, apartments, or rooms (but not shelters). We collected data on both the supply



**FIGURE 6:** Accommodation facilities depending on the size of the city. N: 293.

and demand for housing. The supply data included Telegram messages referencing real estate offers on websites, covering the period from August 2022 to March 2023.

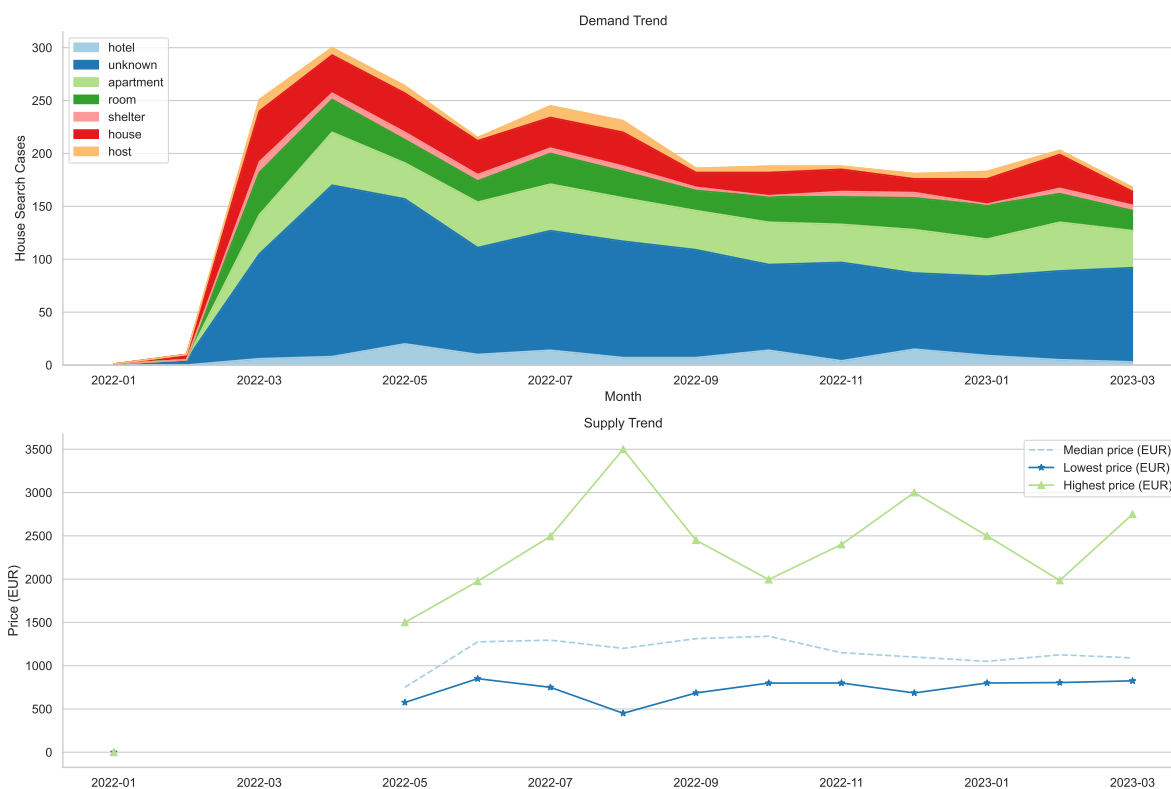
We hypothesise that information about shelters becomes available to people once they reach the registration centres of municipalities. To better understand this trend, we have classified Telegram housing messages based on the types of accommodations sought and have compared this information with historical rental prices. As more forcibly displaced individuals arrive, we also observe an increase in rental prices, which makes accommodations less affordable for those seeking housing.



**FIGURE 7:** Tools used to research for accommodation. N: 322.

Telegram chats are often used when searching for independent accommodation (renting). Most forcibly displaced Ukrainians who are using Telegram for housing use it to find houses, apartments, or rooms (not shelters). We hypothesise that information about shelters is available to people once they reach registration centres of municipalities. To understand the trend, we have classified Telegram housing messages based on accommodation types and overlapped this information with historical prices. With the arrival of more forcibly displaced people, we also observe an increase in rental price, which makes accommodations less affordable for the seeker.

Our analysis shows that the majority of house searches in Telegram groups are for households of 1 to 2 people. This means that larger families do not tend to look for housing in the informal housing market (online chats). In the following section on housing barriers we will explore issues that forcibly displaced from Ukraine face while searching for independent accommodation (renting) through websites and brokers - in the general Dutch housing market.



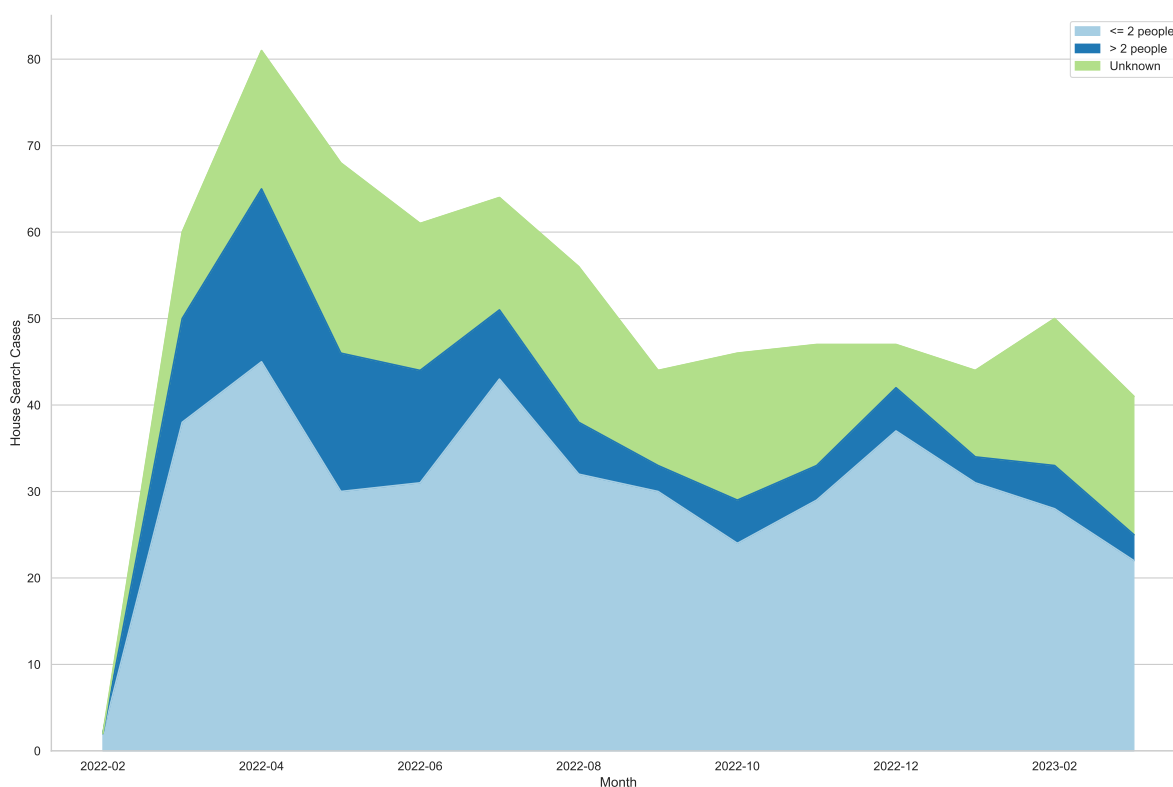
**FIGURE 8:** Trend of the offer and of the demand for accommodation within the different regions, with regards to the price of different accommodation types - from Jan 2022 to March 2023.

Among the most pressing needs concerning housing and accommodation, respondents listed:

- Ability to cook food (60.6% out of 335 respondents)
- Close to work (41.19%) or/and school (28.36%)
- Ability to live in a big city (27.16%)

One significant outcome from our survey results is the presence of a mismatch between the available housing options and the preferences of individuals. To explore the nature of this mismatch, we focused on individuals' housing size and location preferences, the effectiveness of informal networks in locating housing, and the disconnection between desired housing and affordability.

The *demand* data was collected from Telegram chats involving forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine and spans from January 2022 to March 2023. Although our data does not encompass a comprehensive nationwide analysis of the Dutch housing market, it serves as a proxy for analysing housing market dynamics.



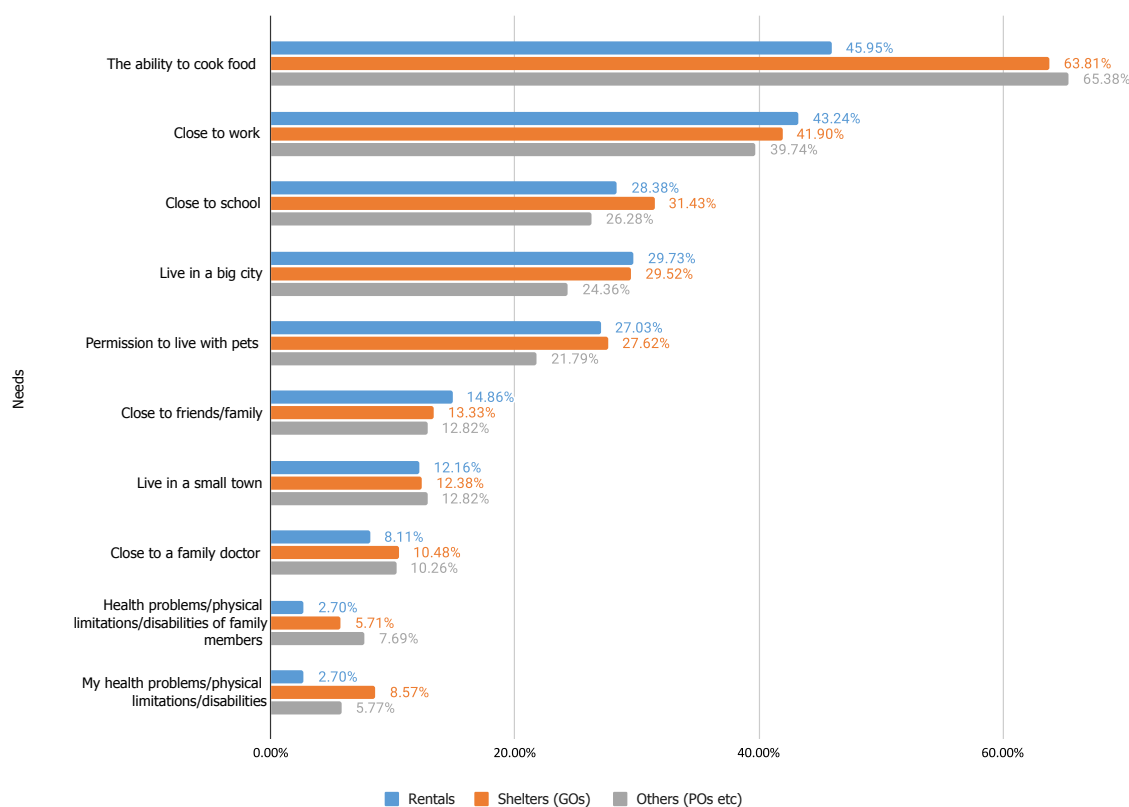
**FIGURE 9:** Trend of forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine searching for private types of housing (rented accommodation or POs) depending on the number of persons per household - from Telegram channels from Jan 2022 to March 2023.

Our trend analysis reveals that the most sought-after and preferred accommodations are in the provinces of Noord-Holland, Zuid-Holland, and Utrecht.

When considering the move to the Netherlands, there is often a preference for larger cities in the Randstad regions, primarily driven by expectations related to job opportunities and housing availability. While the Randstad regions indeed have a larger number of accommodations, they also experience higher demand. For the period from February 2022 to February 2023, house searches in Noord-Holland and Zuid-Holland remained consistently high, with peak search activity observed in May and July 2022, as well as in February 2023.

In contrast, the housing situation in the Zuid-Holland region is relatively less difficult for forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine due to increased accommodation availability. It is suspected that these peak housing searches are associated with periods when forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine began searching for improved housing after securing employment. However, it's possible that as they discovered the low likelihood of finding independent housing, the number of housing requests may have declined.





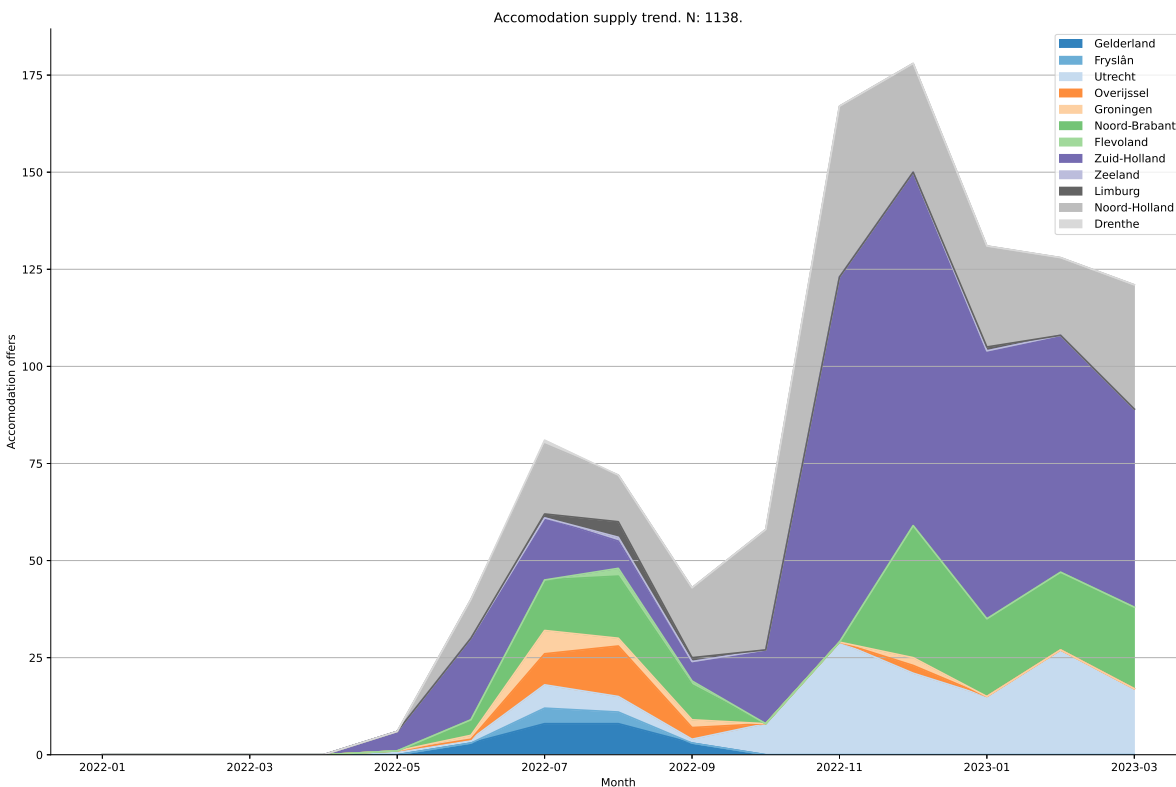
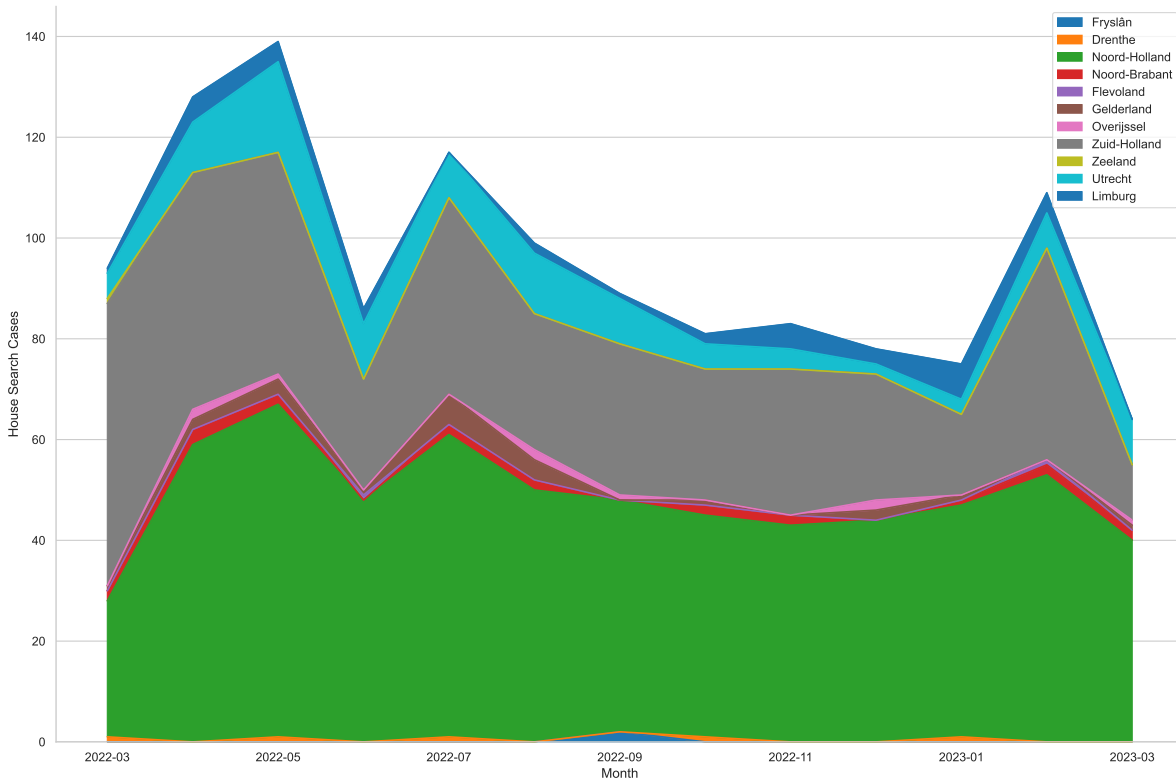
**FIGURE 10:** Criterias considered when choosing the most suited accommodation facility. N:335. Rental N: 74, Shelter N: 105, Others N: 156.

## 4.2 CONSIDERING THE DESIRE TO MOVE FROM THE CURRENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE

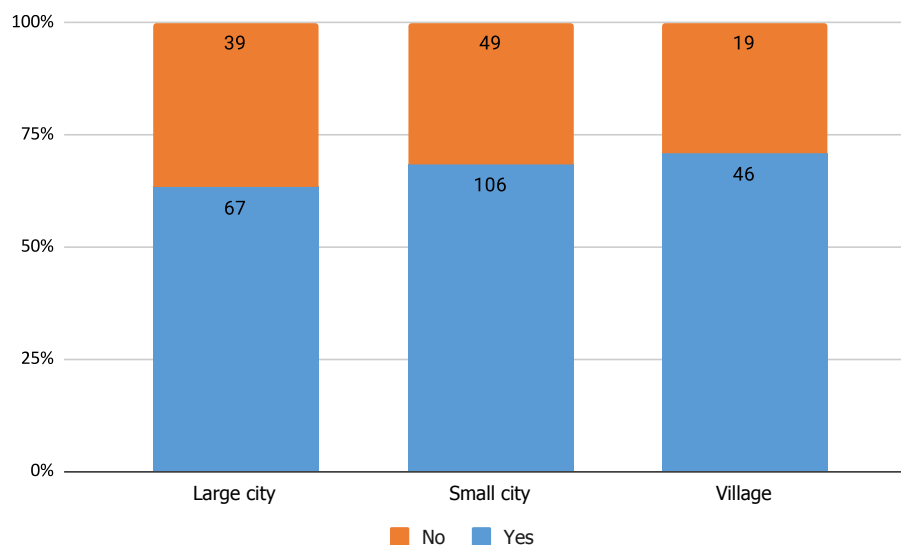
In general, respondents have moved at least once since arriving in the Netherlands, with only 36% out of 335 reporting that they have never moved. These findings align with data collected in December 2022 from the Basic Needs Assessment report issued by the OPORA Foundation for the Dutch Red Cross, which also addressed housing mobility practices.<sup>13</sup> During the period from March to December 2022, most respondents (out of 625) moved once. When respondents were asked to provide more details about the reasons for changing their accommodation, they cited the following causes:

- The duration of their housing arrangement came to an end, or the shelter (GO) was closed or changed
- The desire for more privacy, independence, and the ability to cook

<sup>13</sup>Basic Needs Assessment issued by the OPORA Foundation for the Netherlands Red Cross, Dec. 2022.



**FIGURE 11:** Trend of the supply (bottom) vs the demand (top) for accommodation, per region in the Netherlands, from Telegram channels used by forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine from March 2022 to March 2023.



**FIGURE 12:** Desire to move out of current accommodation facility. N: 335.

Analysing the distribution of municipalities where people expressed the desire to move, it becomes evident that, regardless of the size of the municipality, most respondents would like to change their current housing situation, with 224 out of 335 respondents indicating a desire to move out.

### 4.3 CONSIDERING THE SATISFACTION LEVELS

People in privately rented accommodation express the highest level of satisfaction, with 58% of 74 respondents reporting that they do not wish to move out. Following this, 28% of the 156 respondents currently living with host families and 21% of the 105 respondents residing in governmental shelters did not express a desire to move out.

The conversion of non-residential buildings into shelters has resulted in uneven and limited access to facilities (cooking, sanitation). While the need for privacy is acknowledged, municipalities still consider their situation a "crisis," providing emergency reception to meet allocated reception places. This approach has led to diminishing privacy levels as municipalities attempt to meet quotas while awaiting the introduction of national policy.

As a result, most forcibly displaced persons seek relocation due to the lack of privacy, personal bathrooms, and cooking facilities. Even in shelters where kitchens are available, they are not always accessible, leading to frustration. The qualitative answers in the questionnaire confirmed the quantitative trends:

*“Every fridge in the kitchen is for 16-20 people, and I can only use the kitchen for 1 hour and 20 minutes per day on a weekly schedule. If my assigned time is when I am at work, it’s my problem, and I can’t cook for the entire week.”*

Another respondent explained their particularly difficult situation, highlighting the challenges faced by families:

*“My child has had neurological problems since birth and cannot be carried in my arms. Here you have to go from the 4th floor to the first floor to bathe him, cook, wash clothes, and take the older child to school.”*

One of the most recurring desires is independence, reflecting the research on forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine in host families in Rotterdam<sup>14</sup>:

*“We are very grateful for our host family, but we do not want to abuse their hospitality. We understand that a Dutch family should have their own life, and we do not want to interfere with it.”*

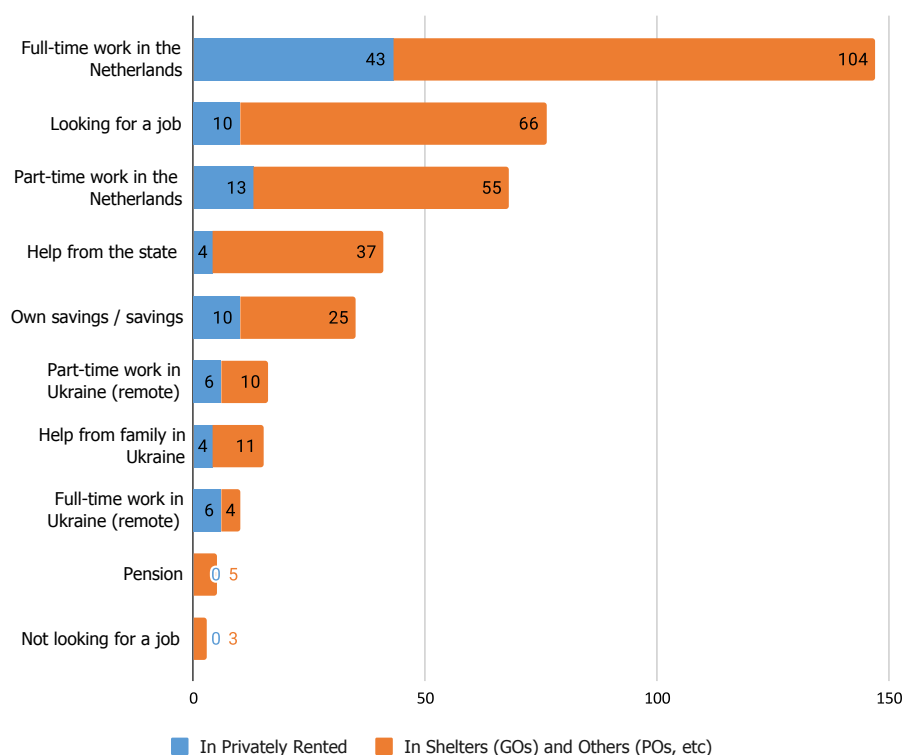
#### **4.4 CONSIDERING THE INFLUENCE OF EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME**

Most respondents (63% out of 335) had some form of employment, either part-time or full-time, or shared a household with an employed family member. However, having full-time employment does not automatically grant the possibility of renting accommodation privately. This is mainly due to the high rental prices and low income. Consequently, out of the 212 respondents employed in the Netherlands, 159 (75%) are still living in shelters or with host families, which are non-rental accommodations.

While a significantly smaller percentage of people reported other sources of income, such as assistance from the state, financial support from family members in Ukraine, and pensions, employment in the Netherlands remains the most important source of income for households to sustain themselves. Only 35 respondents (10% out of 335) declared that they have some savings, and 16 respondents (5% out of 335) work remotely for employers in Ukraine.

Despite the challenges, there is still a strong interest for employment, with a significant number of respondents (23% out of 335) actively looking for a job.

<sup>14</sup>Particuliere opvang Oekraïense ontheemden in Rotterdam, July 2023.



**FIGURE 13:** Source of income of respondents renting privately in comparison to those in GOs or others (POs, etc.) N: 335. Respondents can select multiple options.

## 4.5 HOUSING BARRIERS: PRIORITISATION

In our analysis, we have identified a set of key barriers that forcibly displaced persons encounter in their search for accommodation. These barriers were categorised based on their frequency and perceived importance by respondents:

### 4.5.1 AFFORDABILITY

The most common barrier faced by persons seeking independent housing is their limited income's inability to cover the high rental costs. Many respondents reported that their earnings were insufficient to meet the financial requirements set by landlords or rental agencies. This financial constraint is a significant hindrance to securing private accommodation.

#### **4.5.2 INABILITY TO PROVIDE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

Another challenge frequently encountered by respondents, particularly Ukrainians, is the inability to meet specific document requirements. These documents include references from previous landlords, salary slips or financial reports for the last three months, and labour contracts other than zero-hour contracts. Even if individuals have sufficient income, the unavailability of these documents creates substantial obstacles in the housing application process.

#### **4.5.3 PERCEIVED DISTRUST TOWARDS UKRAINIANS**

Some respondents (7% out of 285) reported encountering "distrust" due to their uncertain status as forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine in the Netherlands. Landlords exhibit reluctance to provide long-term housing to individuals without a definitive legal status. Some landlords hold the assumption that municipalities should take care of Ukrainians, further complicating their search for housing.

#### **4.5.4 PET RESTRICTIONS**

While a smaller percentage of respondents (15% out of 133) reported owning one or more pets, some of them (13) faced difficulties finding accommodation that allows pets. Some landlords impose restrictions on keeping pets in their rental properties, limiting the options available to individuals who own or wish to have pets.

### **4.6 CONCLUSION**

Forcibly displaced Ukrainians aspire to secure better housing options while maintaining their existing jobs and ensuring their children's continued education. The commitment to preserving stability emphasises the significance of rootedness in their pursuit of privacy and independence. Our analysis indicates that the general housing pool, particularly privately rented houses or apartments, is difficult to secure for many forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine, irrespective of their employment or income levels. This underscores the challenges they face in attaining affordable and suitable housing in the Netherlands.

# Recommendations

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

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### **Develop a Long-term Strategy for Forcibly Displaced Persons from Ukraine**

The national government needs to develop a long-term strategy for forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine, in relation to their legal status, long-term housing opportunities, and inclusion and participation into Dutch society. forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine need clarity regarding their legal status and the (possible) procedure after March 2025. A clear long-term strategy and support from the national government is also essential to allow municipalities to transition from emergency reception into semi-long term housing opportunities.

### **Develop a National Policy to Strengthen Support to Forcibly Displaced Persons from Ukraine Residing in Private Shelters**

The National government should emphasise the municipalities' responsibility towards forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine residing in private shelters and/or independent housings and ensure a harmonised approach by all municipalities.

### **Mitigate Barriers to Accessing the Private Housing Market**

Renting a house or a flat independently, by forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine, is challenging for varying reasons. The temporary status can lead to distrust from landlords and rental agencies. In addition, persons are not able to meet administrative requirements such as written recommendations from previous landlords and proof of permanent employment contracts. For example, authorities could encourage landlords to accept other forms of documentation to meet rental obligations.



## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MUNICIPALITIES

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**Ensure that Persons Staying in (Semi) Long-term Housing are Entitled to Housing Rights** forcibly displaced individuals from Ukraine currently lack access to social housing and can only choose between reception facilities or renting on the general/private housing market. Some municipalities have introduced semi-long-term temporary accommodation, such as providing shelter in flexible housing units. However, as these solutions are still considered shelter, they are not sustainable in the long term because shelters do not grant forcibly displaced individuals any housing rights and makes them vulnerable for arbitrary evictions.

### **Explore Assistance from Local Civil Society Organisations in the Assistance of Support to Forcibly Displaced Persons from Ukraine**

In order to safeguard the quality of the services provided to forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine, we advise municipalities to reach out to existing organisations, or civil society initiatives. To provide shelter options, to help with management of such shelters or to support the access to services, local civil society organisations can be the key to providing the best type of support.

### **Improve Guidance, Training and Support to Forcibly Displaced Persons when Employed in Government run Shelters**

Employing forcibly displaced persons in government run shelters has turned out positive in multiple municipalities, as they are good representatives of their own community, and can be viable persons of trust. However, measures should be implemented to ensure impartiality and confidentiality, for example only employing persons in GOs where they do not reside. Furthermore, cultural sensitivity and confidentiality training should be provided to better equip employees with tools and knowledge.

### **Increase Information Provision about Access to the Private Housing Market and Housing Rights to Forcibly Displaced Persons**

Many individuals are seeking independent rental options but often lack awareness of the limits and possibilities in the Dutch housing market. Informal networks and community-based initiatives (including online platforms and social networks) can be used to make such information and available housing easily accessible.

**Ensuring a Safety Net when Independent Rented Accommodation Ends**

In the event that independently rented accommodation can no longer be retained, the municipality in which the forcibly displaced person is registered, should ensure access to a government run shelter.

# Appendices

## A ANNEX 1: DATA COLLECTION PROCESSES

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### A.1 IN-DEPTH NARRATIVE INTERVIEWS WITH LOCAL (MUNICIPAL/REGIONAL) AUTHORITIES

To recruit participating parties we addressed regional meetings organised by the Netherlands Instituut Publieke Veiligheid (hereinafter, NIPV) (among all Security regions' coordinators) and, consequently, our respondents reached out to us if they were willing to participate. We made an active use of our own network in the regions and consequently used snowball sampling.

We attempted to account for the sizes of municipalities (including in the sample both small, medium, and large municipalities). In the beginning of the research we have also conducted some background interviews with national actors: VNG, Red Cross and NIPV to understand the general picture and make the right sampling for the local actors.

Although we did not include the interviews with the national actors in our data analysis, they had an impact on our policy analysis and further data collection process.

All interviews were analysed using predefined codes (stemming from the interview guide) combined with open coding. Additionally, we utilised some principles of narrative analysis to recollect the decision-making process of local policy-makers.

### A.2 IN-DEPTH QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS WITH ACTIVE COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Initially, we recruited the community members through the regional volunteering platform organised by the OPORA Foundation which united active members of local communities (via WhatsApp and regional live meetings). The platform emerged at the beginning of the Russian invasion and served as an information-sharing support network helping OPORA researchers to process and address the signals on the ground. This platform is not an organisational structure and the community members are not a structural part of the OPORA Foundation. The first round of interviews were conducted with a few

members of the platform, but later we added other recruitment strategies: through municipalities, personal networks, and online communities. Among the people interviewed, we identified:

- *'Professionals'* - those who lended their professional skills and network to quickly support the creation of the extra housing options, as per inquiry from a municipality;
- Ukrainians who have been living in the area for quite some time, know the local ways of doing things and can share that knowledge, and also help with translations; thus, becoming a valuable bridge between their 'country of origin' and 'new homeland' // 'culture of origin' and 'adopted culture';
- Forcibly displaced persons themselves have been a prominent group of activists; they would fill the gap of a coordinator on the ground when knowing some English and willing to help to navigate both newcomers and municipalities receiving them;
- Church organisations - this is another representation of humanitarian support locally.

Except for the latter point on the list above, the majority of people were/are doing this as a personal initiative, not representing any organisation. They would either be in contact with their local municipality directly and get paid for their services (as in case with translators and interpreters, and a local company transforming offices into temporary housing), or being directly in contact with the forcibly displaced persons- checking on how they were settling, what problems they would have without representing an organisation or being reimbursed.

All interviews were analysed using predefined codes (according to the interview guide) and open coding.

### **A.3 QUANTITATIVE SURVEY DISTRIBUTED AMONG DISPLACED PERSONS (THROUGH REGIONAL TELEGRAM CHANNELS AND LOCAL COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES)**

We conducted a survey on the housing experiences of forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine to understand:

- Their experiences of the existing housing arrangements
- The institutional and personal barriers associated with different types of accommodation (including shelters) and independent housing (on the general market)
- Their own considerations and thoughts about their position on the housing market, and possibilities to rent their own private accommodation
- Potential socio-cultural barriers

The questionnaire consisted of 15 questions: both open and closed. The survey was distributed in regional Ukrainian Telegram chats, national Ukrainian Telegram chats, through the municipal workers, location managers and the personal networks of the researchers.<sup>15</sup>

In survey data analysis we begin with unpacking the background of our respondents, focusing on household composition, accommodation characteristics, accommodation and housing search, employment and income.

The qualitative answers of the survey were analysed using predefined codes (based on the questions), the analysis was performed manually.

## **A.4 OPEN SOURCE DATA ANALYSIS OF REGIONAL AND NATIONAL TELEGRAM CHATS**

To complement data coming from the survey as well as from the interviews, we have performed an automatic analysis of around 200,000 Telegram messages coming from various Ukrainian Telegram channels at city and country level. We first identified the national Telegram channels (also used to recruit participants for the survey).<sup>16</sup> Then, we used open sources to identify regional Telegram channels created for or by the Ukrainian community (not all of them were created for forcibly displaced persons), but they served as information sharing platforms in the regions.<sup>17</sup> We have also asked the regional network of OPORA to recommend us to local chats that were actively used. We have analysed both archival and actual chat messages - meaning we have seen the evolution of the housing search process throughout time.

<sup>15</sup>The list of Group Chats where the Survey was posted can be shared upon request.

<sup>16</sup>The list of these national Telegram channels, for the open source data analyses can be shared upon request.

<sup>17</sup>The list of more local Telegram channels, for the open source data analyses can be shared upon request.

To determine messages where forcibly displaced persons were searching for houses, first, we collected messages with predetermined keywords in Ukrainian and Russian. Next, we filtered messages which were processed using machine translation and passed to a machine learning classifier to reduce the number of false positives caused by the previous stage.

For our purpose, we have collected and trained different natural language processing models which predict various attributes of the housing search conditioned on English text, such as the number of people, location, amount of rooms, and animals.

Furthermore, to analyse the supply of the housing market, we have collected available housing offers in various Telegram channels. Since May 2022. This information can help us to understand better supply-demand dynamics over time, as well as the mismatch of expectation between available options versus forcibly displaced persons who are seeking accommodations. In total, we have collected for this purpose more than 1000 housing offers across the Netherlands.

## **B ANNEX 2: SURVEY DISTRIBUTED TO DISPLACED PERSONS FROM UKRAINE**

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### **General Information / Context:**

1. Statistical information
  - Your age: 15-24; 25-34; 35-44; 45-54; 55-64; 65+
  - Male or Female
2. Where do you currently live, in which region/municipality of the Netherlands?
3. From which city/region of Ukraine do you come from?
4. What foreign languages do you speak at an intermediate level?
  - English
  - Dutch
  - Other (please specify)
  - In the process of learning?
5. Are you currently working in the Netherlands?
  - Yes, full-time
  - Yes, part-time
  - No, but I am looking for a job
  - No, and I don't intend to
6. Do you have any children? How many and what age? If yes - do they go to school here? Do they continue to study? Ukrainian language?
7. Do you have any pets that you brought to the IP? If yes, what kind and how many?

### **Your housing history in the NL:**

8. Where do you live (please select all that apply)?
  - With a host family
  - In accommodation provided by the local community

- In a shelter
- In housing provided by the municipality (not shelter)
- In rented accommodation (at your own expense)
- With friends or relatives
- in a separate room with private bathroom
- in a separate room with a shared bathroom
- with the possibility to cook on your own
- Other

9. How long can you stay in your current accommodation?

- 3 months without a contract
- 3 months with a contract
- 6 months without a contract
- 6 months with a contract
- 1 year without a contract
- 1 year with a contract
- Indefinitely (without a contract)
- Indefinitely (with contract)

10. How many times have you had to move since you have lived in the Netherlands?

- Never moved
- 1 time in the same region
- 1 time to another region
- 2 times in the same region
- 2 times to other regions
- More than twice in the same region
- More than twice to different regions

11. Do you want to move from your current place of residence? (Yes/No)

- Yes - why do you want to move?
- No - why do you not want to move?

12. How are you looking for accommodation?



- Not looking
- Ukrainian chat rooms/groups
- Local chat rooms/groups
- Friends/colleagues
- Housing websites
- Municipality
- Church

**Your housing needs:**

13. Do you have any special needs related to housing (please select all that apply)?

- Permission to live with pets
- My own needs/ disabilities (please tell us more)
- Needs of children/other family members (please tell us more)
- Other option (please explain)

14. Do you want to continue living in the region where you are now?

- If yes, why?
- If no, why not?

15. Do you have a social circle where you live?

- Yes, with my host family
- Yes, with neighbours/locals
- Yes, with other Ukrainians
- No (please describe the situation)

16. What would be your ideal accommodation / living conditions here in the NL?

## **C ANNEX 3: CHOICES MADE BY MUNICIPAL CRISIS TEAMS CONCERNING THE MANAGEMENT OF ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES**

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1. Outsourcing to private housing companies and to social working organisations which divided the management between both (welzijnsorganisaties, e.g., in Tilburg, Venlo, Doetingham, etc.);
2. Outsourcing management to the organisations working with homeless people both locally (HVO Querido) and nationally (The Salvation Army) (e.g. Amsterdam, Eindhoven, Zaandam), or organisations working with refugees (Valkenswaard, Nijmegen);
3. Organising the management in the municipality itself (e.g., Deventer, Beuningen, Bronckhorst, Nuenen, Son en Breugel, Geldrop, Kampen).