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ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN FINANCING PROGRAMMES IN TRANSCARPATHIA

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АНАЛІЗ ПРОГРАМ ФІНАНСУВАННЯ СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ ТА ГУМАНІТАРНОЇ СФЕРИ В ЗАКАРПАТТІ

The article analyses social and humanitarian financing programmes implemented in Zakarpattia Oblast of Ukraine during 2022—2025 within the context of martial law and increased humanitarian needs. The research aims to identify the scale, directions, and efficiency of social and humanitarian financial assistance provided to internally displaced persons, vulnerable groups, and local communities. The methodological framework integrates quantitative analysis of statistical and financial data with qualitative content analysis of programme reports and donor communications to ensure a systematic assessment of aid flows and impacts.

The findings reveal that a significant proportion of funding was channelled through international organisations, including UNHCR, IOM, UNICEF, and the Red Cross, as well as national programmes supported by the Ukrainian government and regional authorities. The support was primarily focused on emergency shelter, food security, healthcare access, psychosocial support, and integration of IDPs into host communities. Trends indicate an increasing shift towards sustainable forms of assistance, including livelihood programmes, educational support, and infrastructure rehabilitation.

Despite positive impacts, challenges persist, including fragmented data collection, limited coordination among stakeholders, and the need for improved accountability in resource allocation. The research underscores the necessity of enhancing cooperation between governmental bodies and international donors while prioritising community-based approaches to humanitarian aid delivery.

The theoretical significance of this study lies in its contribution to understanding financing patterns in humanitarian crises under war conditions. Practically, the results can guide policymakers, donor organisations, and practitioners in designing more efficient and transparent aid programmes aligned with the real needs of affected populations.

Future research should focus on evaluating the long-term socio-economic impacts of humanitarian funding on community resilience and identifying best practices for integrating emergency assistance with sustainable development goals.

У статті проведено аналіз соціальних та гуманітарних програм фінансування, реалізованих у Закарпатській області України протягом 2022—2025 рр. в умовах воєнного. Метою дослідження є виявлення масштабів, напрямів та ефективності соціальної та гуманітарної фінансової допомоги, що надається внутрішньо переміщеним особам, вразливим групам та місцевим громадам. Методологічну основу дослідження становить поєднання кількісного аналізу статистичних і фінансових даних із контент-аналізом звітів програм, що забезпечує системну оцінку потоків допомоги.

Результати дослідження засвідчили, що значна частина фінансування надходила через міжнародні організації, серед яких УВКБ ООН, МОМ, ЮНІСЕФ, Червоний Хрест, а також у межах національних програм, підтримуваних урядом України та регіональною владою. Допомога переважно була спрямована на забезпечення екстреного притулку, продовольчу безпеку, доступ до медичних послуг, психосоціальну підтримку та інтеграцію ВПО у громади, що їх приймають. Виявлено тенденцію до переходу від надзвичайної допомоги до сталих форм підтримки, зокрема програм забезпечення засобами до існування, освітньої підтримки та відновлення інфраструктури.

Попри позитивні результати, зберігаються виклики, серед яких фрагментарність збору даних, обмежена координація між учасниками процесу та необхідність підвищення прозорості та підзвітності у розподілі ресурсів. Дослідження акцентує на важливості посилення співпраці між органами влади та міжнародними донорами, а також пріоритизації громадоорієнтованих підходів у наданні гуманітарної допомоги.

Теоретична значущість дослідження полягає у його внеску в розуміння особливостей фінансування у гуманітарних кризах в умовах війни. Практично результати можуть бути використані для розробки ефективніших і прозоріших програм допомоги, що відповідають реальним потребам постраждалого населення, як органами державної влади, так і донорами та практиками гуманітарної сфери.

Подальші дослідження варто зосередити на оцінюванні довгострокових соціально-економічних наслідків гуманітарного фінансування для зміцнення стійкості громад, а також на виявленні найкращих практик інтеграції екстреної допомоги із цілями сталого розвитку.

Ключові слова: гуманітарна допомога, соціальні програми підтримки, внутрішньо переміщені особи, міжнародна допомога, Закарпаття.

Key words: humanitarian aid, social support programmes, internally displaced persons, international aid, Transcarpathia.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND ITS CONNECTION WITH IMPORTANT SCIENTIFIC OR PRACTICAL TASKS

In recent years, Ukraine has faced a humanitarian crisis that has led to massive internal displacement, destruction of critical infrastructure and deepening social vulnerability in the affected regions. In response, the mobilisation of humanitarian and social financing programmes has become a key instrument for stabilising communities and supporting internally displaced persons (IDPs). These programmes are not only immediate response tools but are also strategically important for building community resilience, fostering recovery processes, and preventing the deepening of poverty and inequality.

Despite the significant volumes of aid, there remains a lack of comprehensive scientific analysis of the effectiveness, structural specifics, and practical implementation mechanisms of social and humanitarian financing programmes in Ukraine, particularly in the regions of large-scale IDP concentration such as Zakarpattia. The need for a systematic evaluation of the alignment of such programmes with sustainable development goals, the principles of transparency, and effective coordination among stakeholders remains pressing.

In this context, the study of social and humanitarian financing programmes represents an

important scientific and practical task, as it enables the identification of systemic barriers and growth points in the design and implementation of assistance mechanisms, as well as the development of recommendations for improving the institutional capacity of communities to integrate humanitarian aid into local recovery strategies. This research is particularly relevant for informing evidence-based policy-making, enhancing the efficiency of donor interventions, and fostering the resilience of Ukrainian society under the conditions of prolonged crisis and post-war recovery.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The recent humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and the resulting large-scale internal displacement have stimulated an emerging body of research focusing on the socio-economic transformations in Ukrainian regions hosting significant numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and on local institutional responses to these challenges.. Chervak-Smerychko et al. analysed the dynamics of business relocation to Zakarpattia, providing a territorial and sectoral perspective on the integration of relocated enterprises into the host region's economy and labour markets [1]. This research underlines the importance of regional adaptation and institutional readiness in response to forced migration, which directly impacts local development trajectories.

In a related dimension, Hurchumelia examined the strengthening of local self-government capacity in the context of cross-border cooperation in Zakarpattia, highlighting the role of local governments and their associations in fostering international partnerships and facilitating the implementation of humanitarian and development projects [2]. This aligns with the need to analyse institutional mechanisms that enable effective governance and resource mobilisation under crisis conditions.

Hungarian scholars have contributed to the understanding of the social aspects of the IDP crisis. Molnar et al. explored the situation of Ukrainian IDPs in the border settlements of the Berehove district in 2022, offering insights into the immediate humanitarian challenges faced by displaced persons and the pressures on local communities [3]. Furthermore, Kovach investigated the decision-making processes of ethnic Hungarians in Zakarpattia regarding migration before and after the war, shedding light on the complexity of migration intentions and the interplay of socio-economic and security considerations in shaping local demographic patterns [4]. Dnistrianskyi et al. [5] analyze the correlations between administrative-territorial restructuring in Ukraine and the settlement patterns of ethnic minorities, highlighting the social and geographical impacts of these processes in Zakarpattia, Chernivtsi, and Odesa regions, and their implications for regional sustainable development and community integration.

These studies collectively underscore the multidimensional nature of the humanitarian and social challenges faced by the Zakarpattia region in the context of war-induced displacement. However, there remains a research gap concerning the systematic evaluation of social and humanitarian financing programmes in terms of their effectiveness, coordination, and alignment with local development and resilience strategies under the conditions of protracted crisis. Addressing this gap is essential for informing evidence-based policy-making and ensuring the sustainability and inclusiveness of aid interventions in Ukraine.

FORMULATION OF THE ARTICLE'S OBJECTIVES (SETTING THE TASK)

The objective of this article is to comprehensively analyse the structure, priorities, and effectiveness of social and humanitarian financing programmes implemented in Transcarpathia between 2022 and 2025, with a specific focus on supporting internally displaced persons, community resilience, and regional development under

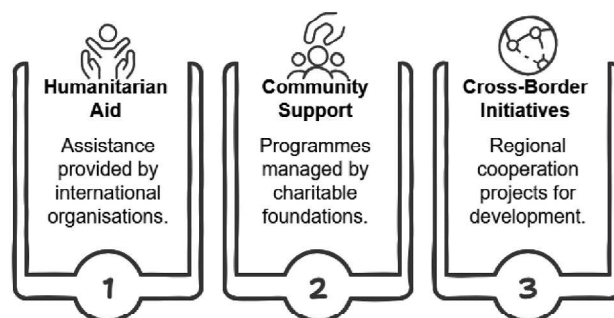


Figure 1. International Development Assistance Initiatives for Transcarpathia (Own editing)

crisis conditions. The study seeks to identify the key donors, programme characteristics, and the extent of financial and material support, while also assessing the role of these initiatives in alleviating social vulnerability and enhancing local capacities. In pursuit of this objective, the article sets the following research tasks: To systematise the main international and domestic financial support programmes targeting IDPs and vulnerable groups in Transcarpathia.

PRESENTATION OF THE MAIN RESEARCH MATERIAL

Between 2022 and 2025, Transcarpathia received significant support from international organisations, governments and foundations. The main areas of support included humanitarian assistance to Internally Displaced Persons (IDP), social projects to promote refugee integration, and community and business development and programmes. The main areas of international assistance are illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

Transcarpathia was one of the first regions where the International Organization for Migration (IOM) launched a multi-purpose financial assistance programme for IDPs [6]. As early as March 2022, through the local "Edelweiss" Charitable Foundation, coordinated by the State Military Administration (OVA), the IOM started to make payments to some 40,000 needy persons. The beneficiaries included: single mothers with children, large families, people with disabilities and the elderly. The programme was funded by the UN's Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF), the governments of the European Union, Germany and Canada, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The grant amount was paid in cash through branches of the Ukrainian Post (Ukrposhta) and amounted to 2220 hryvnias per person, per month, for several months.

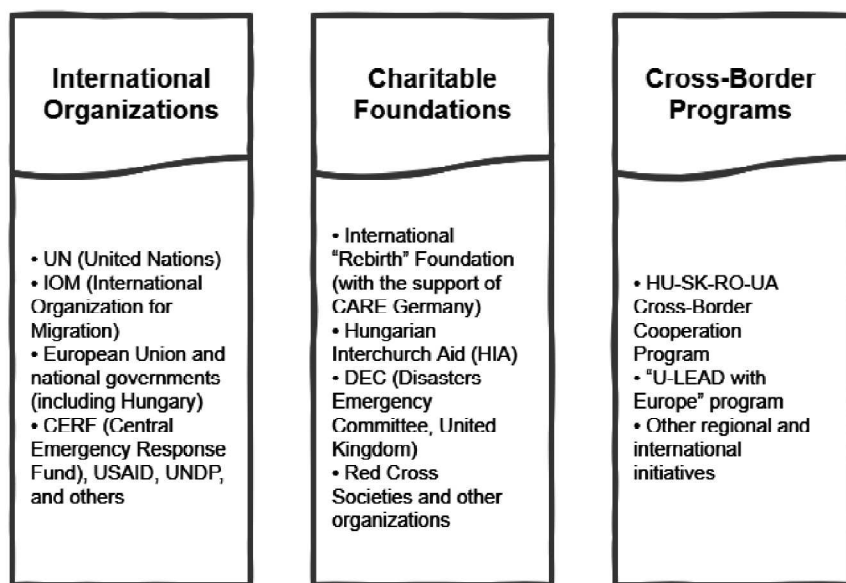


Figure 2. International Donors and Support Programmes in Transcarpathia (2022–2024) (Own editing)

By the end of 2022, IDPs registered in Transcarpathia had received over 1.8 billion hryvnias in state aid and \$100 million in assistance from foreign donors [7]. This amount includes direct financial assistance programmes of the UN/IOM, as well as other aid programmes such as the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and initiatives of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

International agencies of the UN and the European Union have invested in the establishment of centres for internally displaced persons in Transcarpathia. In May 2023, the "Common Platform for Action" integration centre was opened in Mukachevo, aiming at the inclusion of IDPs in the community life [8]. The project was implemented by the NGO "Mariupol Youth Alliance" (which has relocated to Transcarpathia) with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the European Union. UNDP provided \$90,000 for the renovation of the building and \$15,000 for staff training, while UNHCR provided an additional \$30,000 for equipment and furniture for the centre. The centre has become a venue for training, community events and meetings, promoting social cohesion between IDPs and local residents.

In January 2025, the first County Psychological Support Centre opened in Uzhhorod, providing psychological and legal support, especially for IDPs, families of fallen soldiers and veterans. The project was implemented by the County State Military Administration (OVA) and the "Edelweiss" Charitable Foundation. Funding for the centre was provided by UNDP and the EU, with a total budget

of \$72 000 [9]. Currently, there are more than 145,000 IDPs in the region, for whom the centre provides crucial social and mental health support.

Charities and NGOs have played a significant role in supporting the region. In 2022, the International Renaissance Foundation (with the support of CARE Germany) launched the Humanitarian Solidarity programme, which provided support opportunities in the western regions of Ukraine, including in Transcarpathia. The programme aimed to improve shelters for IDPs, including renovating and equipping buildings and preparing them for the winter period, as well as

ensuring refugees' access to healthcare and education [10]. As a result, many shelters in the region have received financial support to improve housing conditions for IDPs. For example, the "Selisky Shelter" project in the village of Selisky in Nizhny was one such initiative, where a local NGO working with international donors used grant funding to renovate a building to provide free shelter for 30 IDPs [11].

The Hungarian Ecumenical Aid (HIA) has set up its regional headquarters in Berehovo. HIA has supported more than 250 shelters and social institutions in Transcarpathia, providing them with food, hygiene products and equipment for disabled people. HIA also set up special centres for people with special needs, funded by the DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee, UK) [12]. With the support of the DEC fund, institutions for people with disabilities in communities in Transcarpathia have received funding. The Red Cross Transcarpathia County Organisation has also implemented a number of relief programmes, including the distribution of food parcels and vouchers, as well as psychosocial support, all funded by the International Federation of the Red Cross.

The total amount of international aid is difficult to calculate precisely, but can be measured in hundreds of millions of hryvnias. Direct financial assistance to IDPs alone exceeded 100 million dollars (about 3.7 billion hryvnias). In addition, humanitarian aid shipments — food, medicines, clothing — and services provided by foreign partners amounted to tens of millions of dollars. This support was critical for the region, which in 2023 received more than 220,000 IDPs, while by the end

Table 1. Main international and domestic social and humanitarian assistance programmes for IDPs in Transcarpathia (2022–2025)

Donor	Programme	Years	Funding amount	Terms and conditions/programme specificities
IOM (International Organisation for Migration)	Financial support for internally displaced persons	2022	2220 hryvnia per person per month	Internal refugees, especially mothers with children, large families, disabled, elderly
UN, EU, Governments of Germany and Canada, USAID	Financial support programme for IDPs	2022	Hryvnia 1.8 billion and USD 100 million	Internal refugees, including vulnerable groups
UNDP, UNHCR, EU	Integration Centre «Common Platform for Action»	2023	\$90 000 for renovation, \$15 000 for training, \$30 000 for equipment	IDPs, local residents
UNDP, EU	Psychological support for IDPs in Uzhhorod	2025	\$72 000	IDPs, families of fallen soldiers, veterans
State budget of Ukraine	Monthly payments for IDPs	2022 - ongoing	2000 hryvnia per adult, 3000 hryvnia per child per month	Registered IDPs
Ukraine's state budget and international donors	«Prikhistok» (Shelter) programme	2022-2024	USD 15 million in 2024	Compensation for homeowners who temporarily admitted IDPs for free
Government of Ukraine together with international partners	«Підтримка» (e-Support) One-off support	2022	6500 hryvnia / person	One-time support for those who lost their jobs due to the war
State budget of Ukraine	«Оселя» - Discounted housing loan program	2022 - currently i	3% or 7% discount mortgage loan	3% interest for teachers, doctors, soldiers; 7% for veterans, IDPs and other beneficiaries
International «Rebirth» Foundation (supported by CARE Germany)	«Humanitarian Solidarity» programme	2022	Not publicly available	Humanitarian aid, reconstruction of shelters, access to health and education
Hungarian Ecumenical Aid (HIA)	Support to social institutions and shelters	2022 - ongoing	Not publicly available	Support for more than 250 shelters in Transcarpathia, centres for people with disabilities
Red Cross Society of Transcarpathia	Assistance programmes (food packages, vouchers, psychosocial support)	2022-2024	Food, clothing, financial support	Food packages, support for disabled people, social assistance

Own editing based on [6], [7], [8], [18], [10], [12].

of 2024 the estimated number of IDPs would have fallen to around 120,000. International assistance has significantly eased the burden on local resources.

As a border region, Transcarpathia has benefited from EU development programmes. Infrastructure, education, health and cultural projects have been implemented in cooperation with neighbouring regions in Hungary, Slovakia and Romania. In recent years, about 20 cross-border projects have been implemented with the support of the EU with the participation of neighbouring countries. Of particular importance was the Cross-border Cooperation Programme HU-SK-RO-UA 2014–2020, which focused on the

development of cross-border infrastructure, environmental protection and tourism development. In parallel, the "State Programme for the Development of the Carpathian Region of Ukraine" (2020–2022), financed from the state budget and partly from international technical assistance, was also in operation in 2022. Although the implementation of the programme was limited due to the war conditions, some projects were funded, especially in mountainous areas (road network development, tourism, cultural heritage preservation). For example, in the framework of the EU sectoral support programme calls for proposals, the Transcarpathian Regional Development Agency submitted tourism infrastructure develop-

ment projects, the results of which were expected in 2023.

In 2024, 43 projects in Transcarpathia will receive EU funding totalling more than €24 million [13] under the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine and Poland-Ukraine Interreg programmes in the fields of health, environment and border development — for example, Transcarpathian hospitals will receive modern diagnostic and surgical equipment with EU support.

In addition, the U-LEAD with Europe programme (jointly funded by the EU and its Member State governments) continued to support communities in Transcarpathia. For example, in 2023, the Dubivska community implemented a local renewable energy project with U-LEAD support, receiving over 1.5 million hryvnias in a competitive grant competition. The project was won and implemented by the NGO "Ecosfera" [14]. Such initiatives help communities adapt to the challenges of war, promote energy sustainability, and optimise social services and other basic infrastructure.

International programmes have focused their resources on strengthening local infrastructure — both social (support centres, education and health facilities) and economic. Cross-border grants have enabled the development of border crossings, the upgrading of the road network leading to them, and the upgrading of hospitals and school equipment in border communities. The European Union and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have supported the digitisation of administrative services, including the opening of new Central Public Service Offices (ЦНАП — CNAP) in communities that have received a significant number of IDPs. In addition, through cooperation with European twin cities, Transcarpathian cities have received humanitarian relief supplies, including ambulances, fire trucks, community buses, generators and other equipment. For example, in early 2023, Saudi Arabia donated five ambulances to support emergency medical care in Transcarpathia through the Olena Zelenska Foundation. This contribution has significantly strengthened the region's healthcare infrastructure, especially in the face of an increased patient load caused by the influx of IDPs.

Table 1 contains the main funding programmes that were in place in the Zakarpattia region during 2022—2025.

This programme provides targeted financial support to the most vulnerable groups in society, promoting housing sustainability and social stability.

In parallel with international assistance, significant resources have been allocated to support Transcarpathia from Ukraine's state and local budgets.

The state covers monthly targeted financial support for IDPs, funded from the budget of the Ministry of Social Policy: 2,000 hryvnia for adults and 3,000 hryvnia for children and people with disabilities. Hundreds of thousands of IDPs in Transcarpathia have also received these benefits. According to official data, state payments for IDPs registered in Transcarpathia in 2022 reached 1.8 billion hryvnias. These payments continue to date, and from 1 September 2024 the state extended financial support for registered IDPs for another six months.

In contrast, the "Prikhistok" (Shelter) scheme, which provided compensation to homeowners who temporarily admitted IDPs free of charge, has now been discontinued. The "Prikhistok" programme had been in operation since 2022 and provided financial support to households that provided short-term shelter to IDPs. In 2023, compensation was funded by the Red Cross Society, while in 2024 the UNHCR took over the payments.

The government also introduced one-off financial support in cooperation with international partners. For example, under the "єПідтримка" (e-Subsidy) programme, IDPs received a one-off grant of 6,500 hryvnias in spring 2022, and subsidies for housing support for local municipalities were made available. The government has allocated 23.332 billion hryvnias to finance the programme. In Transcarpathia, the oblast authorities have been working to set up shelters with the support of international donors. According to the data of the OVA, 135 buildings have been renovated in the region to provide housing for IDPs, with a total of 5281 places carpathia [15]. Part of this work was financed by the State Regional Development Fund and state subsidies, while the remainder was provided by charities and international institutions. The grants have helped to create dozens of compact refugee settlements — dormitories, sanatoria, converted schools and other facilities — relieving the burden on schools and kindergartens that were used as shelters by large numbers of IDPs in the first months of the war.

In October 2022, the state mortgage loan programme "єОселя" (e-Oszelya) was launched, which allows for housing loans of up to 20 years' duration for Ukrainian citizens aged between 18 and 70 who do not own their own home, or if their dwelling does not exceed 52.5 m² + 21 m² for each additional family member, or if their dwelling is located in a combat zone or temporarily occupied territory.

The following persons are eligible for the mortgage at a reduced interest rate of 3%: employees of state and municipal health institutions, teachers and researchers in state and municipal educational and scientific institutions, contract soldiers, defenders of Ukraine and their family members. They can apply for a mortgage loan with a preferential interest rate of 7%: war veterans and their family members, persons who participated in hostilities, persons disabled as a result of war, and families of deceased defenders, internal refugees, other Ukrainian citizens who do not own their own home or if their residential property has an area of less than 52.5 m² + 21 m² for each additional family member.

International and state-funded social support programmes have played a pivotal role in sustaining the resilience of Transcarpathia between 2022 and 2025. These initiatives have provided critical assistance to internally displaced persons and vulnerable groups while strengthening the region's social infrastructure under prolonged crisis conditions.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH IN THIS AREA

The analysis of social and humanitarian financing programmes in Transcarpathia between 2022 and 2025 demonstrates the pivotal role of international and national support in enhancing the region's resilience and ensuring the functioning of critical social infrastructure. These programmes have contributed to the stabilisation of local communities, the integration of internally displaced persons, and the reduction of social vulnerability through targeted financial and material assistance. A gradual increase in donor activity and the alignment of support programmes with regional needs have enabled the development of more effective mechanisms for responding to humanitarian challenges.

However, Transcarpathia continues to face significant challenges, including the uneven distribution of aid, gaps in coordination among stakeholders, and the need to align social support initiatives with sustainable regional development goals. Addressing these challenges requires strengthening institutional capacities, expanding partnerships between state structures and international donors, and increasing the adaptability of support programmes to local contexts.

The integration of social financing programmes into the broader strategic vision of regional development and the transition towards sustainable, community-based approaches will be essential for maximising the long-term impacts of social and

humanitarian support. Further research should focus on assessing the effectiveness of existing support mechanisms at the municipal level, examining the socio-economic impacts on vulnerable groups, and exploring opportunities to integrate humanitarian aid within sustainable development and social cohesion frameworks in the region.

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