



Kherson: direct speech

A report on a sociological
online survey

This research was conducted by the Charitable organization “Community Foundation of Kherson “Zakhyst” as a part of it's project implemented under the USAID/ENGAGE activity, which is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by Pact. The contents of this research are the sole responsibility of Pact and it's implementing partners and do not necessary reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government

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May

2024

Research background

Methodology: an online survey using an interactive structured questionnaire, in which relevant link was sent to potential respondents from the database (online research panel of Kherson city community). The sample is based on demographic indicators as of January 1, 2022. Given the indicators, the research margin of error does not exceed 5%, with a probability of 0.95. The sample includes Kherson residents both currently residing within the community, and those who left Kherson after February 24, 2022, to other oblasts of Ukraine or abroad. Currently, there is no official data on Kherson residents' migration, so it is not possible to assess the given respondent sample representativity. However, there are reasons to believe that the ratio of respondents still residing within the community presented is greater than the de facto one, which may affect the research results.

Research objective: Kherson residents' self-assessing their language practices and attitudes to language policy at the state, local, and media levels.

Sample size: 403 respondents.

Field stage period: April 1 – 18, 2024.

Research client: Charitable organization «Community Foundation of Kherson «Zakhyst».

Research prepared by:

- Oleh Sinaiuk (New Image Marketing Group LLP, Director),
- Mykola Homaniuk (Kherson regional branch of the Sociological Association of Ukraine, Chairman),
- Ihor Danylenko (New Image Marketing Group LLP, Analyst).

The research group carries on activities on increasing and improving the online panel of Kherson city community to align it with the general population indicators and invites all Kherson residents to join the panel. This can be done at: <https://lemur.ua/sign-up>



In general, the full-scale Russia's invasion had pretty much an impact on the **linguistic sphere** of the residents of Kherson city community. Kherson has become more **Ukrainianized** not only in a declarative manner but also in real-life behavior. Despite certain differences when assessing language policy and behavior by the subgroup of Kherson residents living in the city and the subgroup residing outside it, they do not split the community on such an important issue.

After the full-scale invasion, the number of residents of Kherson city community who use only **Ukrainian** in their communication has almost doubled, depending on their social network. This is especially true of using the Ukrainian language when **communicating with friends** (increased by **4.1 times**). The said is not mere declarations: for **72%** of respondents, the Ukrainian language is the phone interface language. The majority (**54%**) use the Ukrainian language in public places more often.

That said, a significant number of Kherson residents remain **bilingual**. Nowadays, **45%** communicate with their relatives and **43%** – with friends in Ukrainian and Russian languages, still, bilinguals prefer the Ukrainian language for work and in public places.

As it turned out, Kherson residents became quite demanding about the linguistic behavior of **officials** and **service providers**. They insist that officials and service providers communicate exclusively in Ukrainian at work, while for informal communication, half of the respondents deem it acceptable to use the language of the counterpart. Moreover, in Kherson itself, using the language of the counterpart is more tolerated unlike the same among respondents who left the city.

The majority of respondents expressed their commitment to the general internationalization of both Ukrainian and Kherson **mass media**. **67%** of respondents wished Kherson mass media had a version in a foreign language. **75%** voted for the English version. Another **47%** of supporters of multilingual versions believe a Crimean Tatar version to be appropriate, and **30%** – a Russian version.

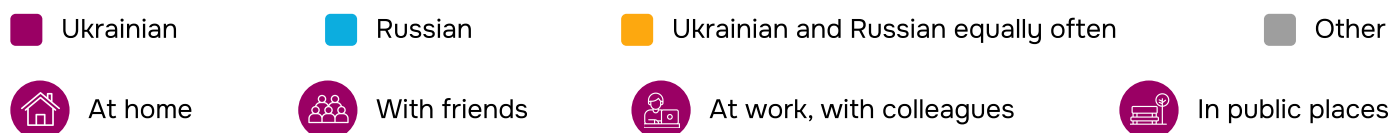
As for the potential of **learning the languages** of national minorities and indigenous peoples of Ukraine, three-quarters of respondents believe it should be mandatory or possible both at the national and Kherson levels. Almost half of the respondents have no specific preferences, but such languages as Crimean Tatar and Polish have the most supporters, again both at the national and Kherson levels – a third of all respondents, in fact.

The majority of respondents (**65%**) believe that writing the word “Russia” with a lowercase letter in all cases is yet another response to Russian armed aggression. For another **22%**, the decision to use it with a uppercase letter depends on the situation.

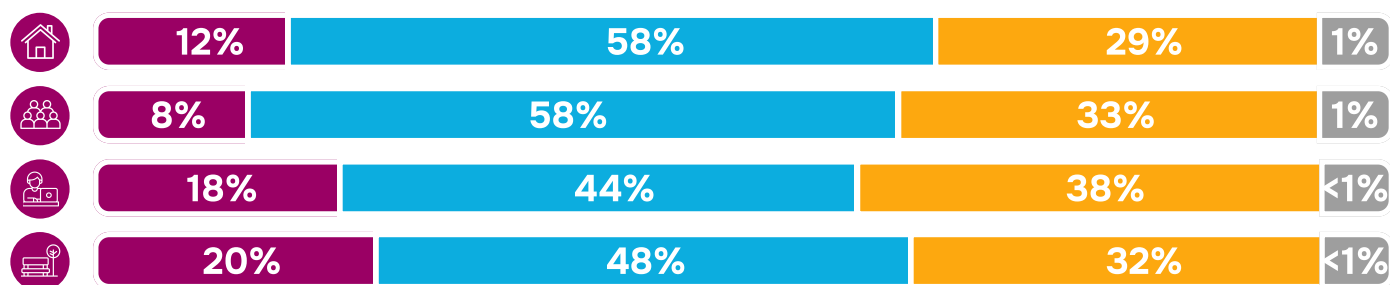
Answer breakdown

The language Kherson residents used for communication before the full-scale invasion (N=403), %

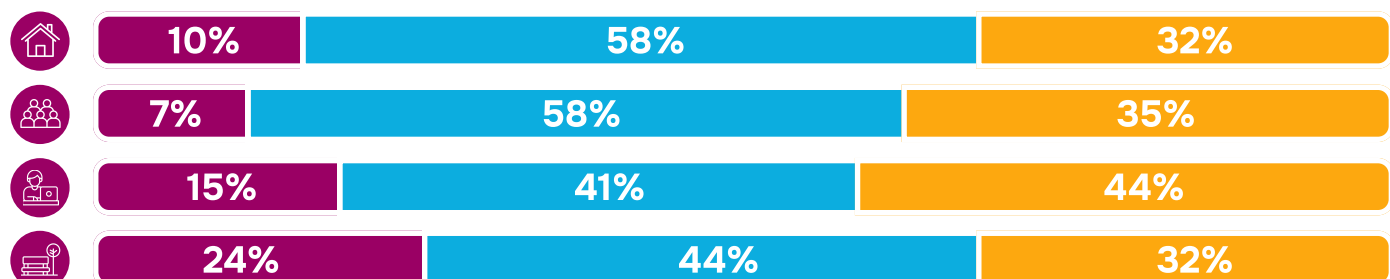
Q.: What language did you usually use for communication before the full-scale invasion?



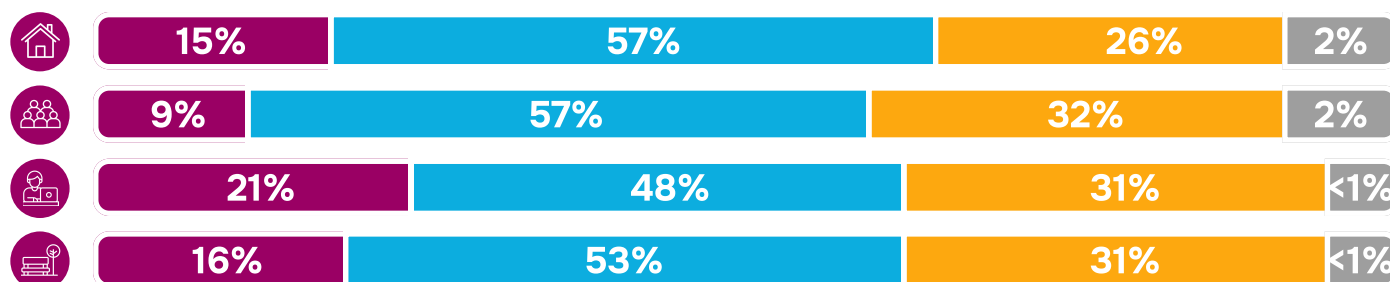
All respondents



Residing in Kherson

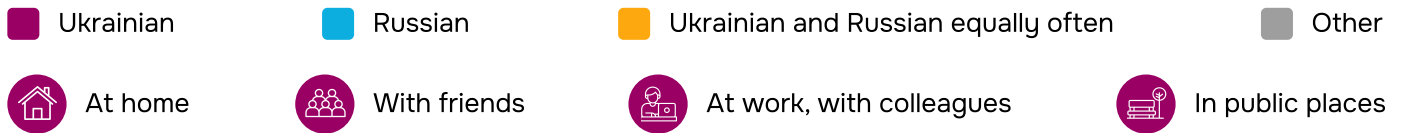


Not residing in Kherson

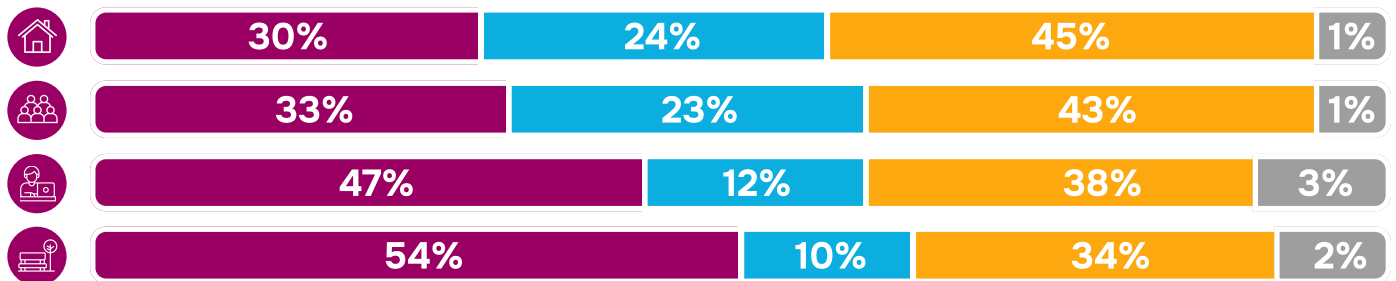


The language Kherson residents used for communication after the full-scale invasion (N=403), %

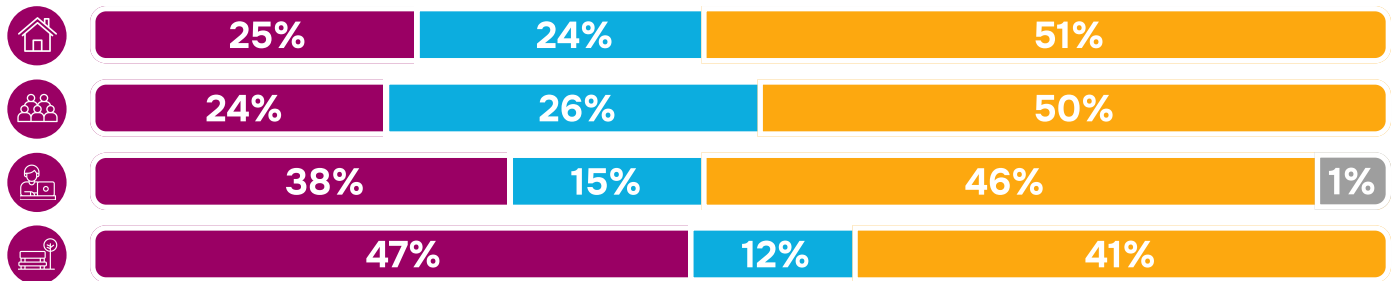
Q.: What language do you usually use for communication nowadays?



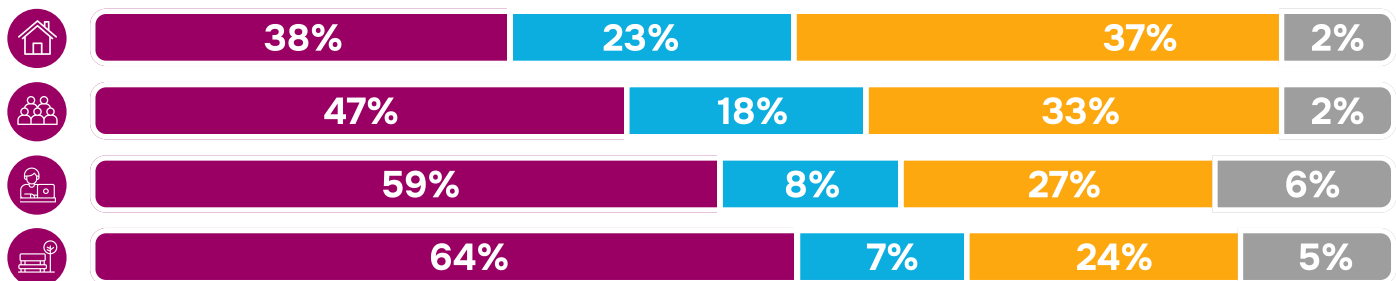
All respondents



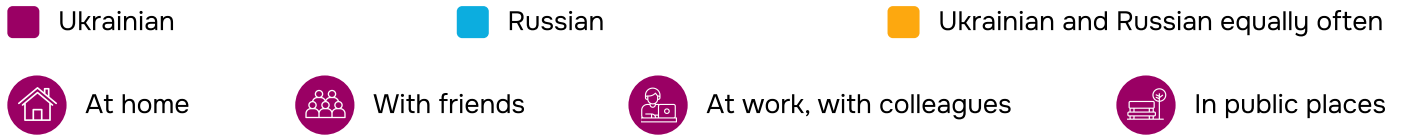
Residing in Kherson



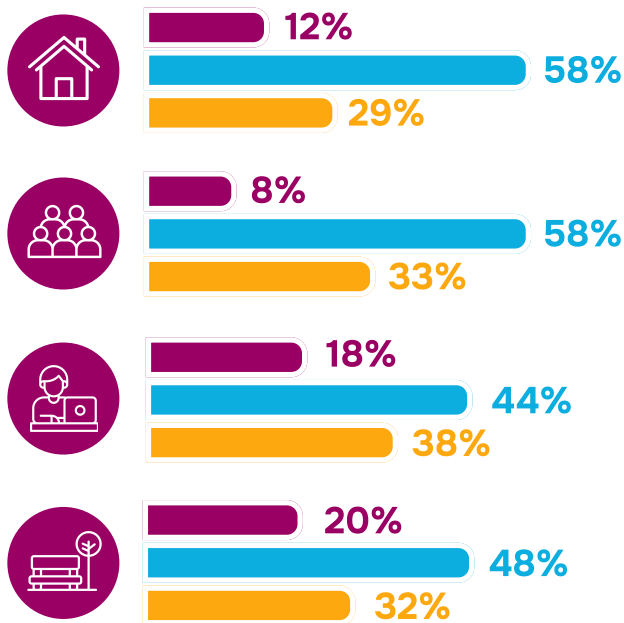
Not residing in Kherson



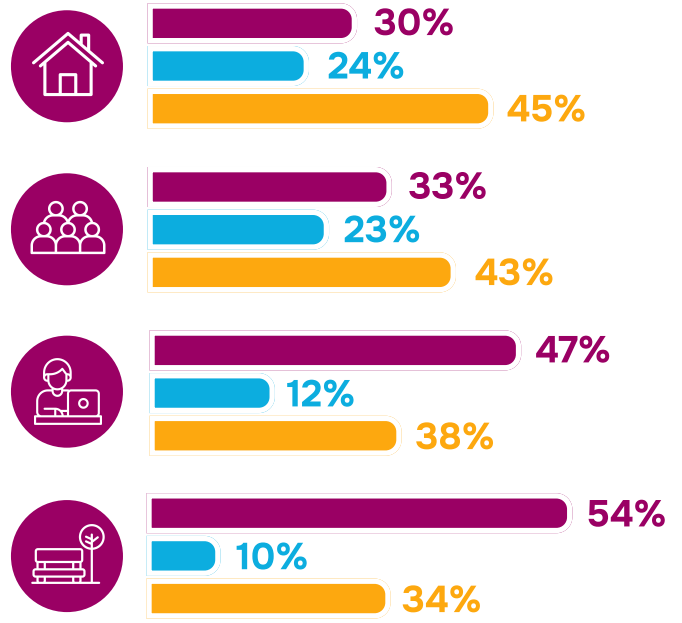
Comparison of language practices of Kherson residents before 24.02.22 and nowadays (N=403), %



Before 24.02.2022



Nowadays



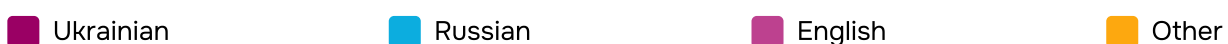
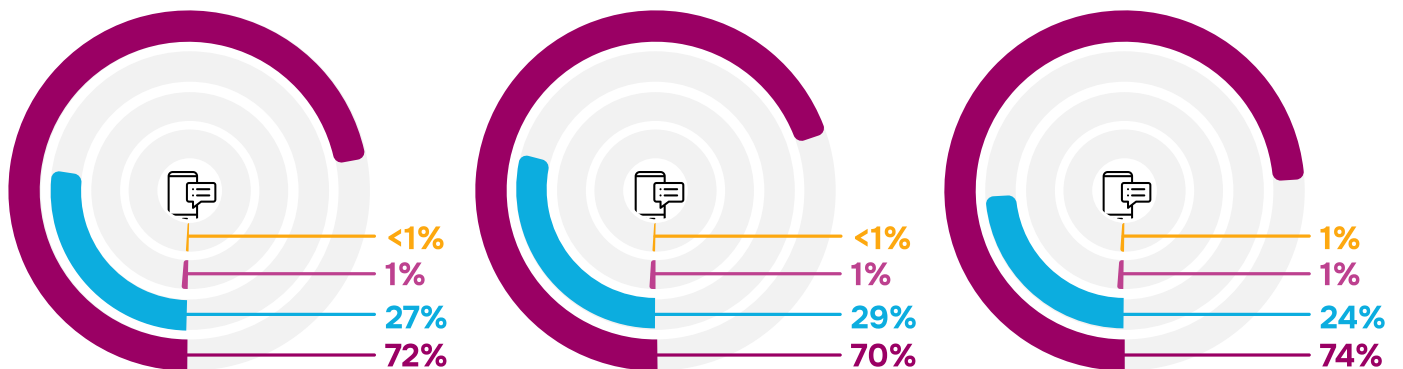
Phone interface language (N=403), %

Q.: What is the language of your phone settings?

All respondents

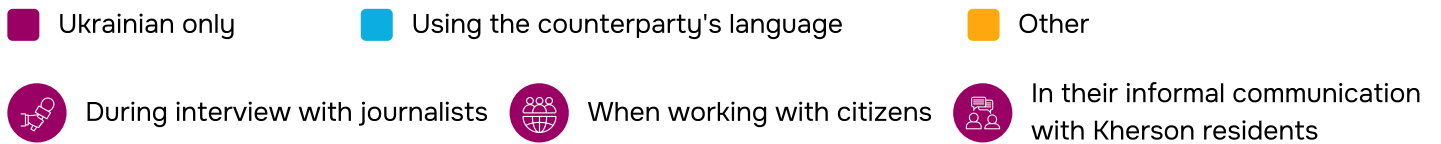
Residing in Kherson

Not residing in Kherson

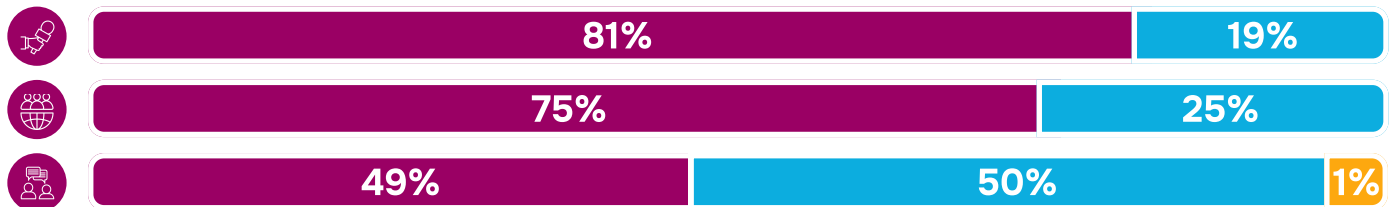


Attitude towards language behavior of officials of local self-government authorities in Kherson (N=403), %

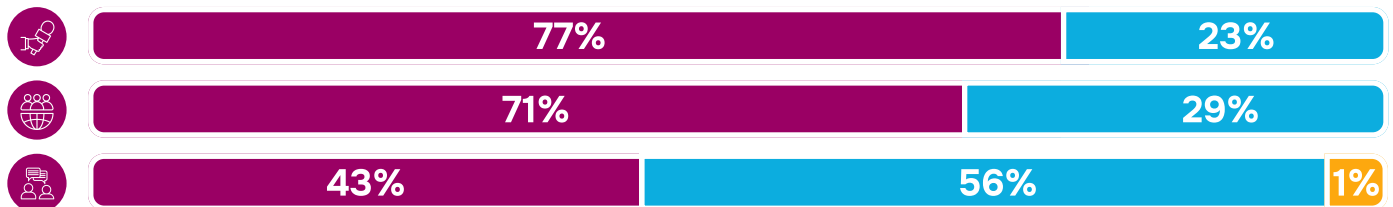
Q.: In your opinion, what language should officials and employees of local self-government authorities in Kherson use for communication?



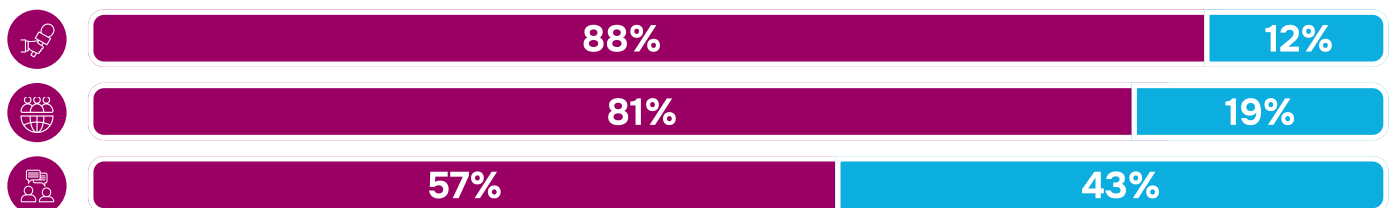
All respondents



Residing in Kherson

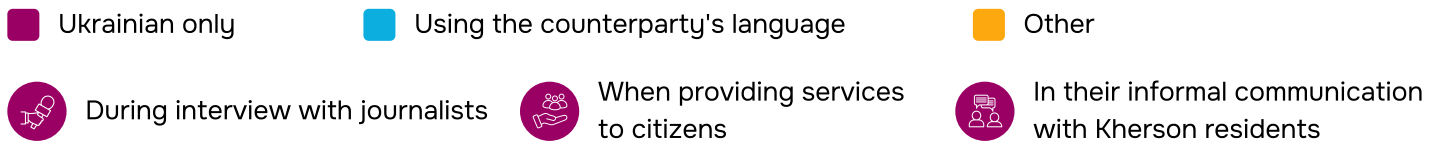


Not residing in Kherson

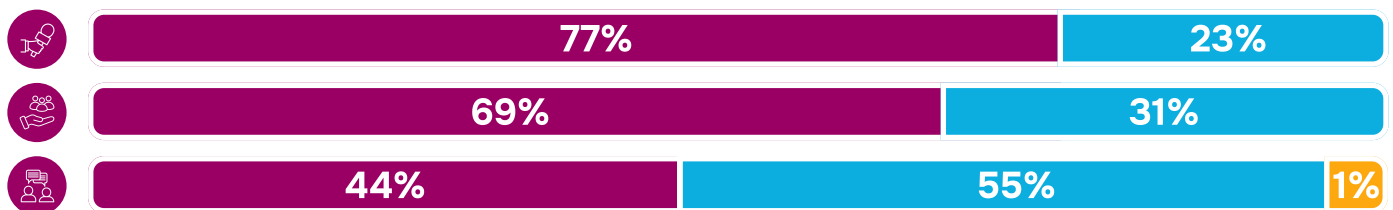


Attitude towards language behavior of service providers in Kherson (N=403), %

Q.: In your opinion, what language should employees of the service sector (stores, banks, hairdressers, etc.) use for communication in Kherson?



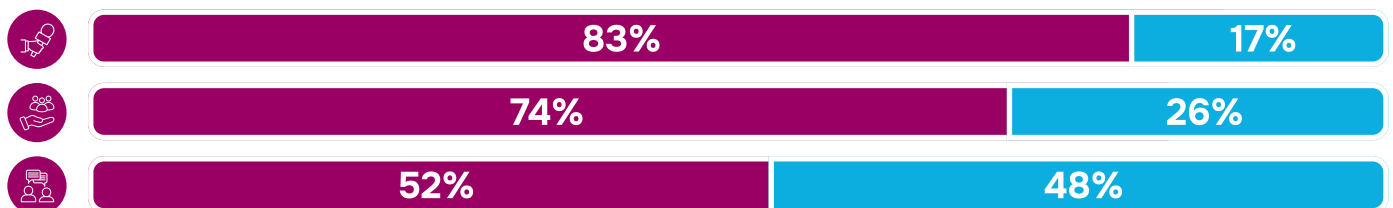
All respondents



Residing in Kherson

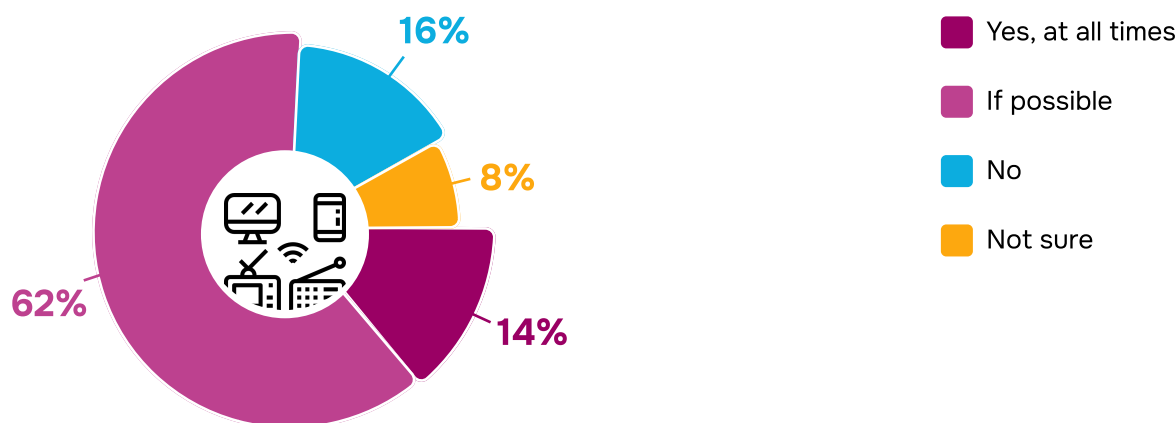


Not residing in Kherson



Attitude towards the language policy of the Ukrainian mass media (N=403), %

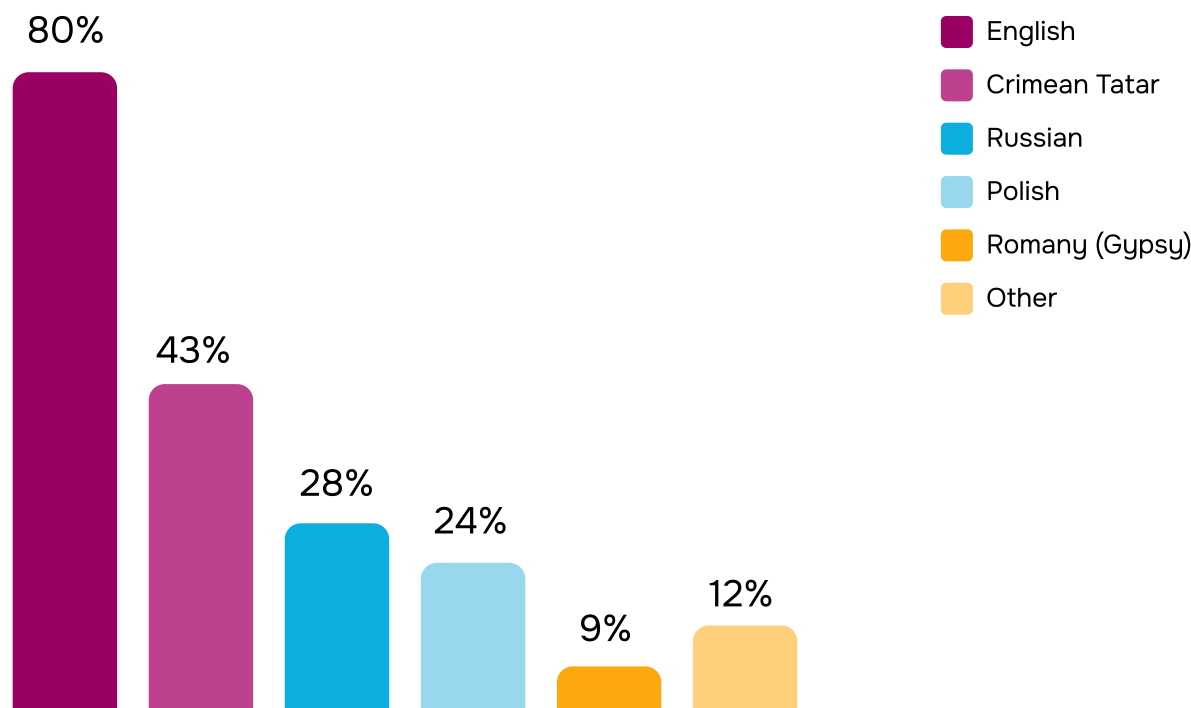
Q.: In your opinion, should Ukrainian mass media add news and other materials in foreign languages or languages of ethnic groups of Ukraine?



Detailed breakdown among those who believe that Ukrainian mass media should add news and other materials in foreign languages or languages of ethnic groups of Ukraine at all times or if possible (N=308), %

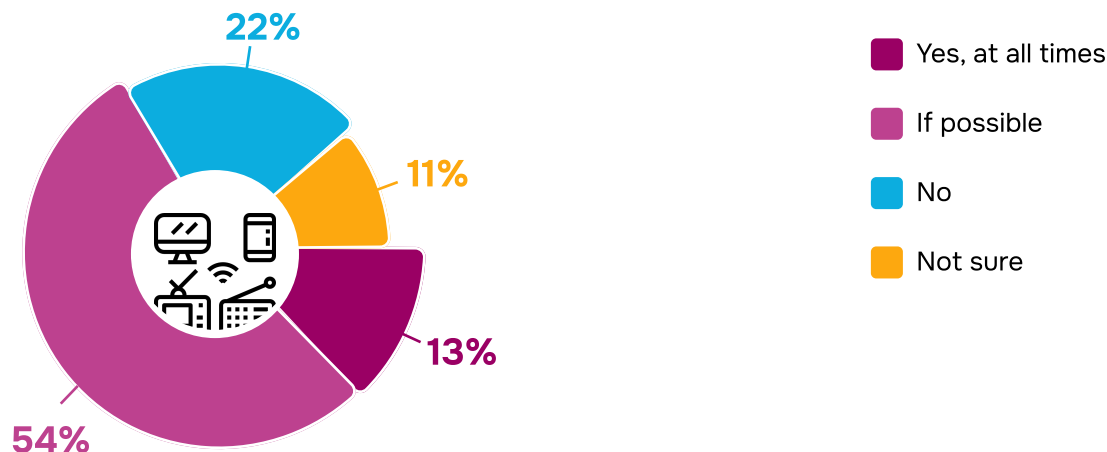
Q.: Which exactly?

Multiple answer



Attitude towards the language policy of the Kherson mass media (N=403), %

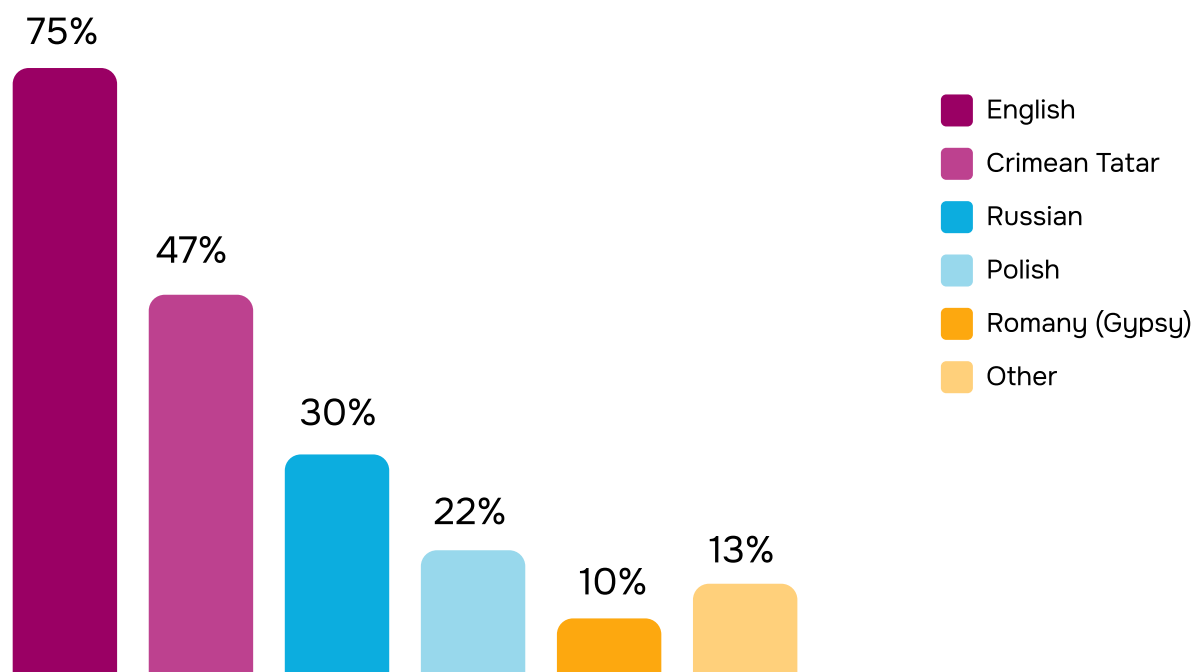
Q.: In your opinion, should Kherson mass media add news and other materials in foreign languages or languages of ethnic groups of Kherson oblast?



Detailed breakdown among those who believe that Kherson mass media should add news and other materials in foreign languages or languages of ethnic groups of Ukraine at all times or if possible (N=269), %

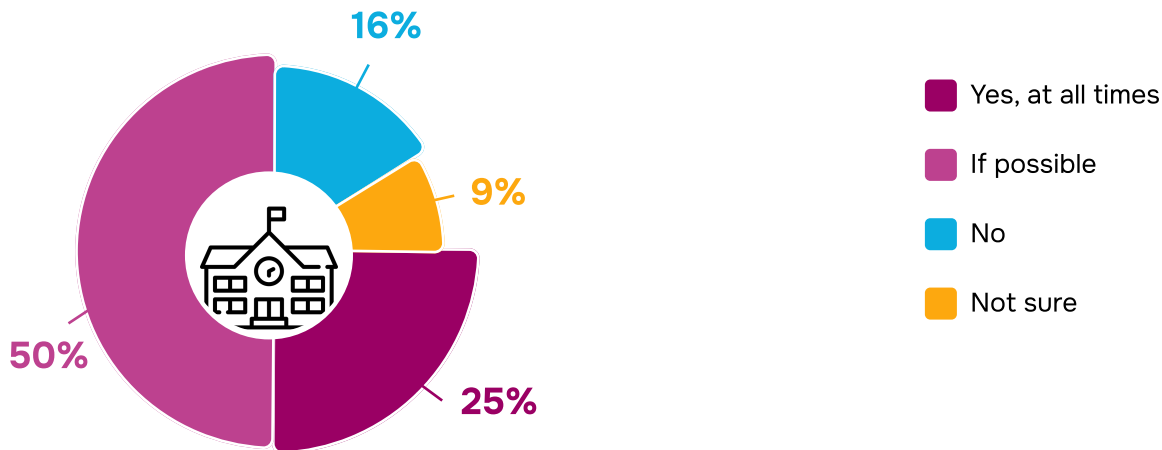
Q.: Which exactly?

Multiple answer



Attitude to learning languages of national minorities and indigenous peoples of Ukraine at Ukrainian schools (N=403), %

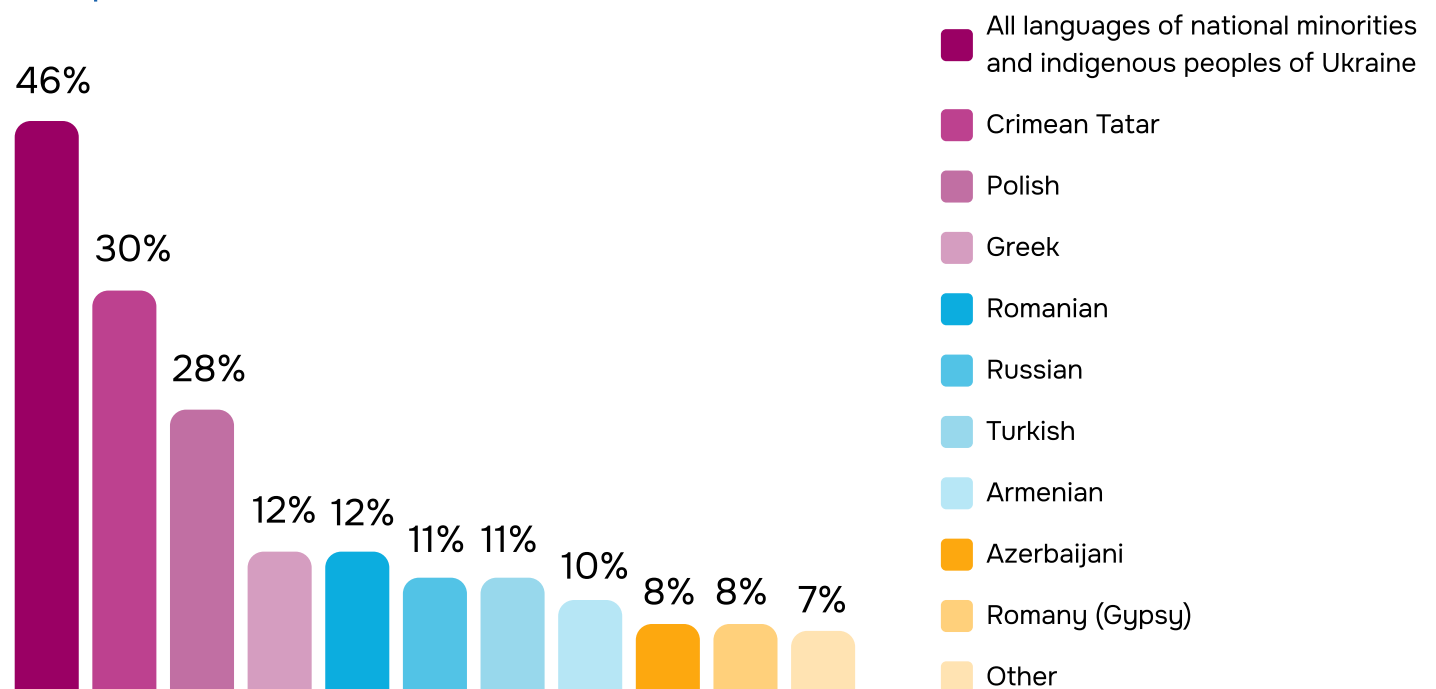
Q.: Is it necessary to provide facilities at Ukrainian schools to study languages of national minorities and indigenous peoples of Ukraine?



Languages of national minorities and indigenous peoples of Ukraine that should be studied at Ukrainian schools (N=309), %

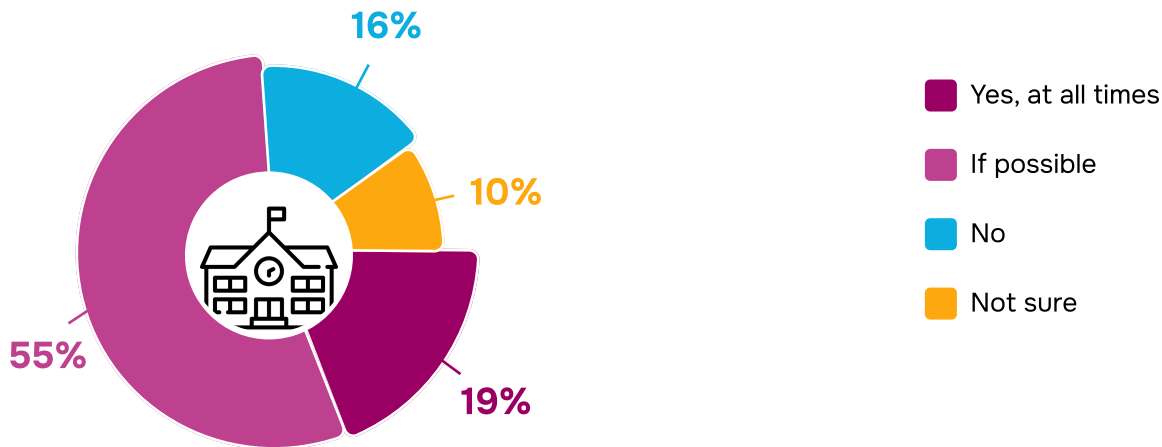
Q.: Which exactly?

Multiple answer



Attitude to learning languages of national minorities and indigenous peoples of Ukraine at Kherson schools (N=403), %

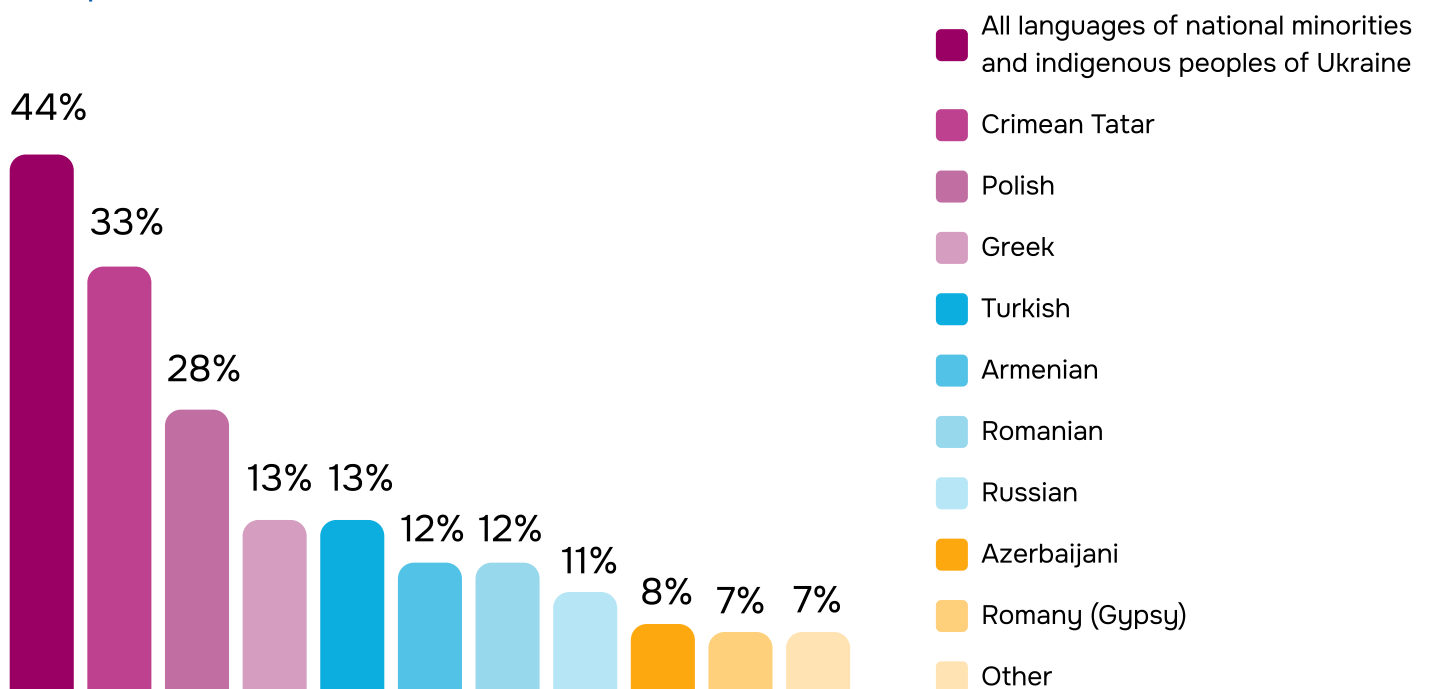
Q.: Is it necessary to provide facilities at Kherson schools to study languages of national minorities and indigenous peoples of Ukraine?



Languages of national minorities and indigenous peoples of Ukraine that should be studied at Kherson schools (N=296), %

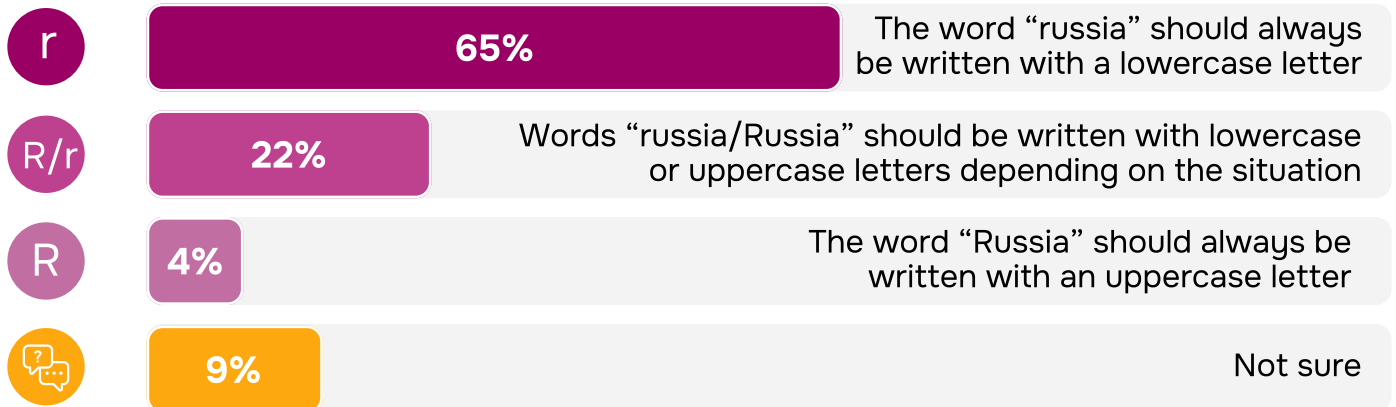
Q.: Which exactly?

Multiple answer



Evaluation of using “russia/Russia” (N=403), %

Q.: After the full-scale aggression, mass media and social networks started to use the word “russia/Russia” with a lowercase letter. Which of the following statements best describes your opinion thereon?



Respondents' profile

Gender, %



♀ Female ♂ Male

Age, %



18-29 30-44 45-59 60+

Residing before 24.02.2022, %



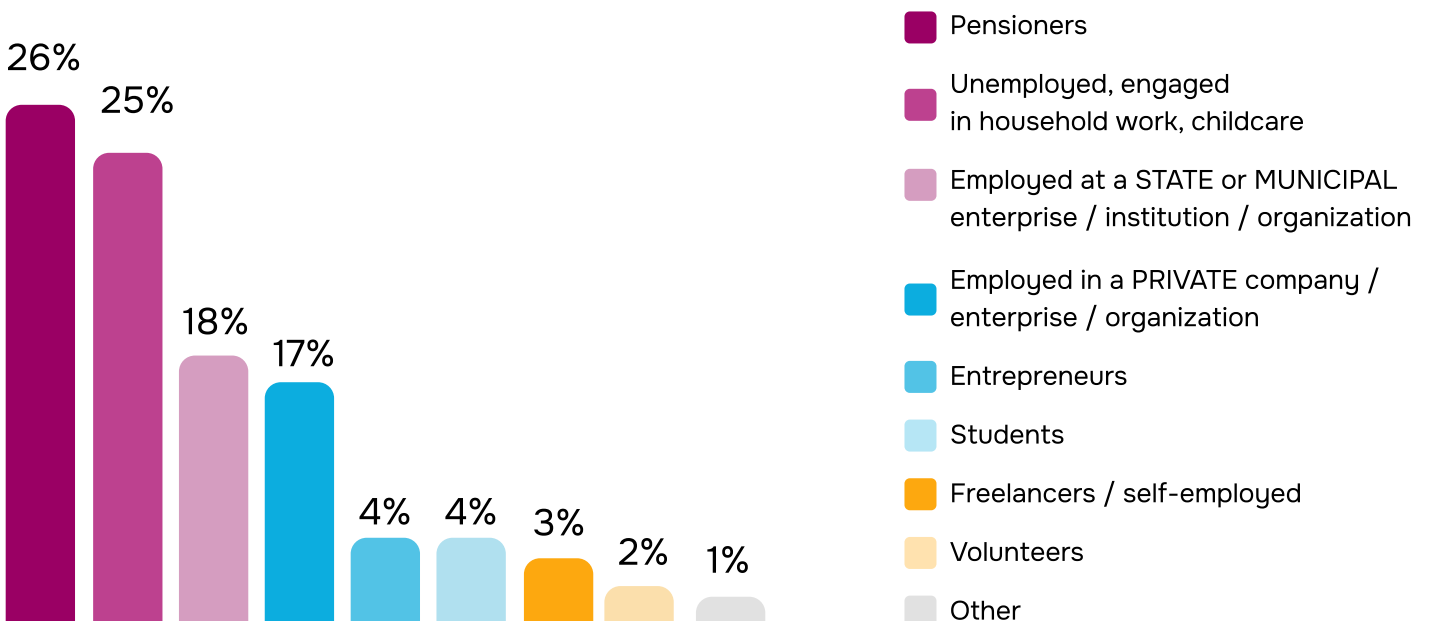
City of Kherson Other settlements of the Kherson city community

Currently residing, %

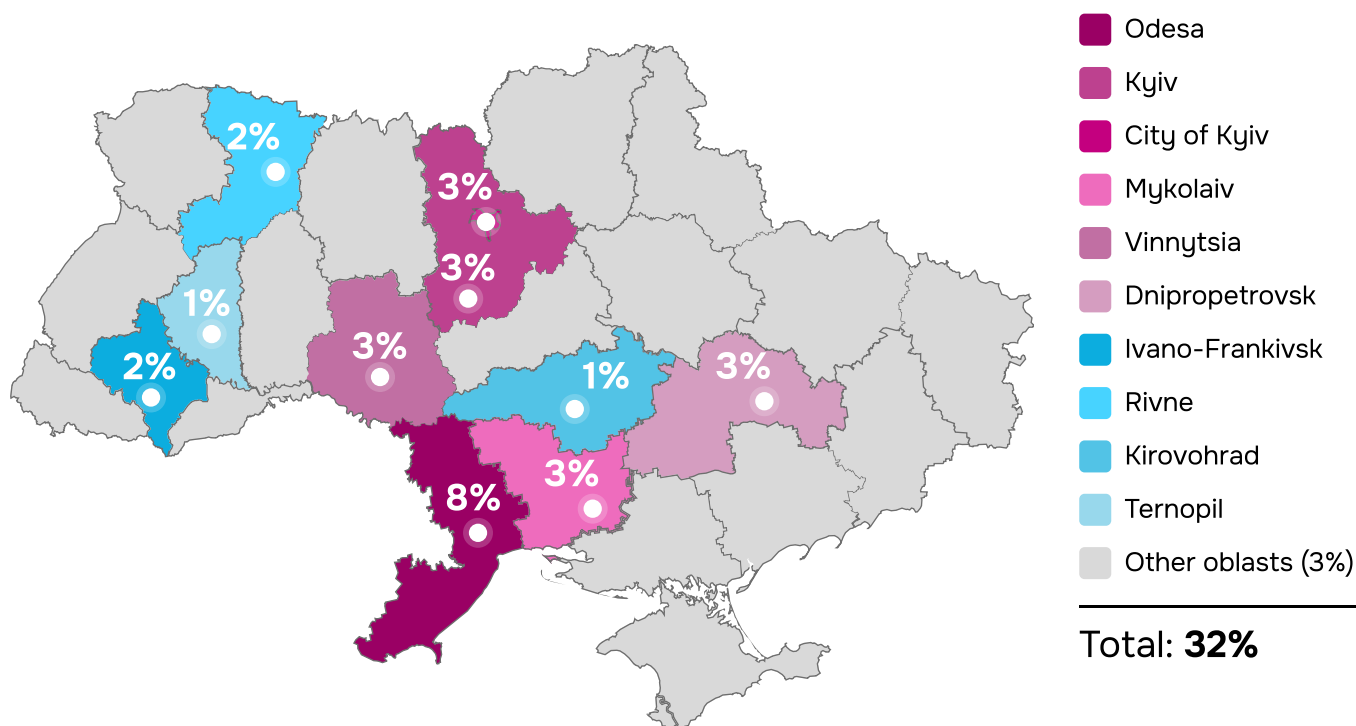


In Kherson In another oblast of Ukraine Abroad

Current type of employment, %



IDPs in other regions of Ukraine, %



IDPs abroad, %

