

# **RESEARCHING INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT**

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## **What Works for IDPs? Mapping Good Practices on Internal Displacement Management in Europe and Central Asia Region**

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## **Abstract**

The aim of this paper is twofold. The first objective is to outline the widely agreed approaches to good practices on internal displacement that exist in current law and policy in Europe and Central Asia region. The second one is to map good practices on internal displacement that emerged from policies and experiences implemented across the region. I outline sixty good practices that tackle both conflict and disaster displacement by covering themes of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) data and consultations, access to documentation, housing and property, employment, livelihoods and social protection, education and culture, voting, state institutions dedicated to IDPs' issues, relocation and resettlement, and local integration. The practices originate from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine, Turkey, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russian Federation, and the European Union (EU). I conclude that good practices outlined in this paper indicate that a strong political will of the state, its close cooperation with the international organisations and donors, solutions based on consultations with IDP groups and host communities supported by the participation of local civil society and IDP organisations are crucial for success.

## **Keywords**

IDPs, Europe, Central Asia, good practices, conflict, disaster

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## 1. Regional contextualization

The aim of this paper is to give an overview of good practices<sup>1</sup> that emerged from tackling the challenges of internal displacement over the last twenty years in Europe and Central Asia. I will indicate some initiatives that emerged and were implemented by various actors, including states, international organisations, and civil society groups. I look at the responses that took place after displacement, while acknowledging that prevention and good practices in support of IDPs during displacement are equally important. Recognising the key and primary role of the state in addressing the issues of internal displacement, I think it is useful to look beyond the exclusive state-led responses and see also how civil society, private sector, and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) themselves address internal displacement.

By the end of 2020, Europe and Central Asia<sup>2</sup> (Figure 1) were home to 3.3 million IDPs accounting for 6% of global total IDP population (IDMC, 2021: 68). Out of these, 3.2 million were displaced because of conflict and violence, whereas 76,000 due to disasters. Turkey (1.1 million), Azerbaijan (735,000) and Ukraine (730,000)<sup>3</sup> host the highest number of IDPs in the region due to conflicts (IDMC, 2021). In recent years, we see a growing number of disaster displacements. Between 2010 and 2020, 1.4 million new displacements were recorded from 610 reported disasters, predominantly floods, earthquakes, and wildfires.<sup>4</sup> In the years to come we are likely to see a growing number of conflicts over natural resources and thus displacements. For example, the armed clashes on Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan border in April 2021 were caused by the disputes over scarce resources of water and arable land.<sup>5</sup> Wildfires and flash floods that Europe, Turkey, and Russia experienced in 2021 as well as decades of slow-onset droughts in Central Asia demonstrated that governments and communities need to be prepared for displacement both in the context of sudden as well as slower-onset disasters (Aycock et al., 2021).<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The full database listing all of these sixty good practices is accessible from this link: [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1mu3bdYN0PL\\_CIk15tkc7qh3VYGKPRlvqDM-X5douShk/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1mu3bdYN0PL_CIk15tkc7qh3VYGKPRlvqDM-X5douShk/edit?usp=sharing)

<sup>2</sup> The World Bank includes 53 countries and territories in Europe and Central Asia with a total population of 920 million people. Available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/region/europe-and-central-asia>; 47 of them (except Belarus and five Central Asian countries) are part of the Council of Europe with the European Court of Human Rights jurisdiction: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/about-us/our-member-states>.

<sup>3</sup> It is important to note that the number of IDPs officially registered by the Ukrainian Ministry of Social Policy is twice as high counting 1.47 million people as of September 2021. Data available at <https://www.msp.gov.ua/timeline/Vnutrishno-peremishcheni-osobi.html>. The discrepancy between the numbers provided by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) and the Ukrainian officials is explained by the differences in calculations. IDMC counts only those persons who moved from the Russian-occupied territories of Crimea and Donbas and are currently residing in the Ukrainian government-controlled territory. Ukrainian official statistics instead also includes those Ukrainian citizens, who officially registered as IDPs in the government-controlled areas to access their social payments and pensions but returned to reside in the non-government-controlled home regions.

<sup>4</sup> See the interactive map and infographic on regional conflict and disaster displacement on the IDMC website. Available at <https://www.internal-displacement.org/database/displacement-data>

<sup>5</sup> The investigation of the incident is available at <https://www.bellingcat.com/resources/case-studies/2021/08/02/is-climate-change-heating-up-central-asias-border-disputes-clues-from-satellite-imagery/>

<sup>6</sup> The studies on environmental migration in Tajikistan indicated already ten years ago that resettlement is a necessary measure to allow the displaced people the access to arable land and water, yet the relocation efforts were slow so far (IOM, 2012). The maps of the areas affected by disasters in Europe and Central Asia are accessible from the European Emergency Response Coordination Centre. Available at: <https://erccportal.jrc.ec.europa.eu/ECHO-Products/Maps/Daily-maps#/maps?pageIndex=1&pageSize=10&cc=EU>.

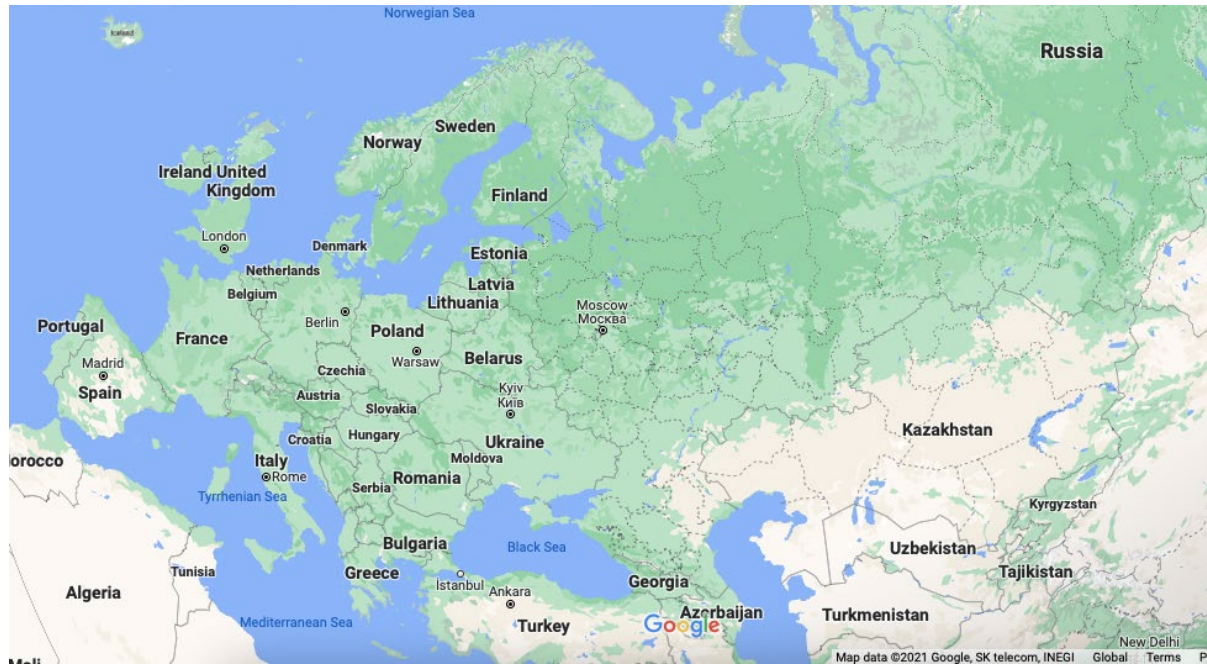


Figure 1. Europe and Central Asia. Source: Google Maps

Internal displacement in Europe received substantial academic attention in the 1990s and early 2000s when Europe experienced major displacements caused by the conflicts in post-Yugoslavia (Couldrey & Herson, 2015; UNHCR, 2017) and in the countries of the Southern Caucasus (Cohen, 2003; Waal & Twickel, 2020). The ensuing research was built upon existing studies on forced displacement within Europe after World War II (Gatrell, 2019), and afterwards on experiences from displacement in Cyprus<sup>7</sup> (Zetter, 1991), Turkey (Aydin & Emrence, 2015), and Russia (Human Rights Watch, 1999; Nichols, 2000). Together, these cases have served as a basis for a range of legal documents to safeguard the rights of the displaced in the Council of Europe countries – one of the key regional bodies that was regularly addressing the issues of internal displacement in Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) area (Abousamra et al., 2004; Bagshaw, 2000; Cardona-Fox, 2020a; Cohen, 2003; Ferris et al., 2011; IDMC, 2009; Mooney & Jarrah, 2005; Munyama, 2018; Paraskeva, 2017).

Recently, more attention has also been channelled to human mobility in the context of disasters and climate change that affect Europe and Central Asia (Desai et al., 2021; Kraler et al., 2020; WBG, 2021b). Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) estimates that displacement in the region can reach up to 838,000 displacements per year from floods and 261,000 from

<sup>7</sup> Considering the time that passed from the forced displacement in Cyprus (1960s-1974), it provides insightful examples of cooperation between the previously hostile communities, joint initiatives and good examples of peace and reconciliation. See for instance Home for Cooperation initiative <https://www.home4cooperation.info> situated in the border zone between the two communities; Bi-communal Peace Initiative - United Cyprus <https://www.facebook.com/bicommunalpeacecyprus>; or Unite Cyprus Now Community [https://www.unitecyprusnow.org/?fbclid=IwAR3csu2Q7fLvojBoJ7adu5XMZL63CVMXRiaPtlop\\_MYX9Og9qofHNSaimyY](https://www.unitecyprusnow.org/?fbclid=IwAR3csu2Q7fLvojBoJ7adu5XMZL63CVMXRiaPtlop_MYX9Og9qofHNSaimyY)

earthquakes.<sup>8</sup> According to recent World Bank report, in five Central Asian countries alone between 1.7 and 2.4 million people might be driven to become internal migrants in the context of climate change within the next thirty years (WBG, 2021: 69). This evidence suggests that internal displacement will constitute a major issue for the region.

## 2. Existing frameworks and guidance on tackling internal displacement

Within Europe and Central Asia region (see Figure 2), Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine. Georgia, and Azerbaijan have developed both laws and policies for the protection of IDPs. Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan passed the laws for the protection of IDPs, and Serbia, Montenegro and Armenia introduced specific policies that also target IDPs.<sup>9</sup> Among these policies only Armenia and Turkey have regulations that specifically address disaster-related displacement<sup>10</sup>.

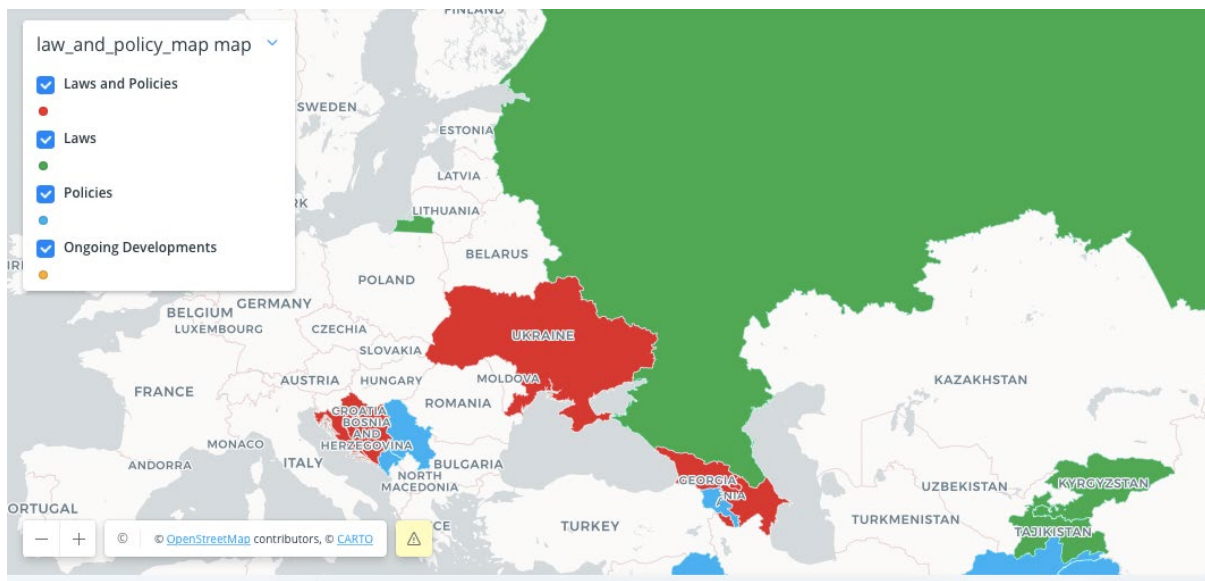


Figure 2. Map of IDP Legislation in Europe and Central Asia. Source: Global Protection Cluster, <https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/global-database-on-idp-laws-and-policies/>

Among the existing sources of good practices on tackling internal displacement in Europe and Central Asia, it is important to note a range of recommendations and resolutions from the Council of Europe and European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) case law<sup>11</sup> and a number of international guidelines and handbooks (Beyani, 2014; Davis, 2021; Ferris et al., 2011; Global

<sup>8</sup> See the Displacement Risk Model available at <https://www.internal-displacement.org/database/global-displacement-risk-model>. Please note that the wildfires that constituted around 9% of total disaster displacements in Europe and Central Asia in the last twelve years (139,000 out of 1.5 million) are not exactly predicable, but very probable to cause displacements in the coming years.

<sup>9</sup> The database of policies is available from the Protection Cluster website. See <https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/global-database-on-idp-laws-and-policies/>

<sup>10</sup> It is worth noting that this database does not contain the Ukrainian legislation that targets people displaced by the Chernobyl nuclear disaster (1986), who were forced to resettle from the contaminated areas. For the overview of protection to the displaced victims of Chernobyl see (IOM, 1997; Petryna, 2013).

<sup>11</sup> See the selection of Council of Europe standards and ECHR case laws relevant to rights of IDPs at <https://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/idps2#%2238403717%22:4>



Protection Cluster, 2007; IDMC & The Brookings Institution, 2013; Kälén, 2008; Mooney, 2016; Obokata, 2021; OCHA, 2004; OSCE & UNHCR, 2014; The Brookings Institution, 2005, 2008, 2014; WBG, 2019). In addition, IDMC has issued a range of reports addressing challenges faced by various groups of IDPs<sup>12</sup>, while Global Protection Cluster provides an extensive toolbox of guidelines and handbooks covering various issues and topics related to internal displacement<sup>13</sup>. Furthermore, the GP 2.0 multi-stakeholder initiative – aimed to advance the implementation of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement through research and policy – provides expert analysis of internal displacement policies and practices.<sup>14</sup> Joint IDP Profiling Service<sup>15</sup> and Joint Data Centre on Forced Displacement<sup>16</sup> work with governments and experts on improving data and evidence-based solutions to forced displacement. Norwegian Refugee Council<sup>17</sup>, Danish Refugee Council<sup>18</sup>, International Committee of Red Cross and Red Crescent<sup>19</sup> and World Bank<sup>20</sup> provide information on specific displacement-related activities they do in particular countries. The Platform on Disaster Displacement<sup>21</sup> does not provide any specific information on displacement in countries of Europe and Central Asia but is a good reference point for commonly agreed principles in approaching this type of displacement.

The International Organization for Migration published its own good practices guide on addressing displacement issues (IOM, 2016), that contains examples from Europe and Central Asia region, in particular about the benefit of cooperation with the civil society, support for all affected communities, paying particular attention to the rights of minorities. IOM also provides a broader perspective on migration in the targeted region with its two reports on regional strategy 2020-2024: first on European Economic Area and the UK, second on South-Eastern, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (IOM, 2018, 2020b). For instance, the second report indicates Central Asia's exposure to climate change and implications for human mobility. IOM reports also locate internal displacement within broader trends of labour migration, displacement at the nexus of conflict and climate change, patterns of return migration and impact of COVID-19 on migrants in Europe and Central-Asia<sup>22</sup> (IOM, 2020a, 2021c, 2021e, 2021a, 2021b).

<sup>12</sup> See their publications <https://www.internal-displacement.org/publications>

<sup>13</sup> See their library: <https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/tools-and-guidance/>

<sup>14</sup> See their resources: <https://www.gp2point0.org/gp20-and-gp2-0-documents-and-publications/>

<sup>15</sup> See their resources: <https://www.jips.org/tools-and-guidance/>

<sup>16</sup> See their resources: <https://www.jointdatacenter.org/resources/>

<sup>17</sup> See reports on their work in Ukraine: <https://www.nrc.no/countries/europe/ukraine/>

<sup>18</sup> See reports on their work in Europe: <https://drc.ngo/our-work/where-we-work/europe/>. DRC has also published '10 Good Practices' on response to displacement based on their work with refugees (DRC, 2019). Some of their practices are equally relevant for situation of internal displacement, for instance, start-up funding, involving the displaced persons in decision-making, and cash assistance to mobile population,

<sup>19</sup> See reports on their work on internal displacement: <https://www.icrc.org/en/war-and-law/protected-persons/internally-displaced-persons>

<sup>20</sup> See recent reports on World Bank's work on internal displacement (Cishwanath et al., 2020; Tanner et al., 2021; WBG, 2017, 2019, 2021a) and its projects in Europe and Central Asia database:

[https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/projects-list?os=0&countryshortname\\_exact=Tajikistan^Uzbekistan^Ukraine^Yugoslavia%2C%20former^Russian%20Federation^North%20Macedonia^Moldova^Kyrgyz%20Republic^Kazakhstan^Georgia^Croatia^Bosnia%20and%20Herzegovina^Azerbaijan^Armenia](https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/projects-list?os=0&countryshortname_exact=Tajikistan^Uzbekistan^Ukraine^Yugoslavia%2C%20former^Russian%20Federation^North%20Macedonia^Moldova^Kyrgyz%20Republic^Kazakhstan^Georgia^Croatia^Bosnia%20and%20Herzegovina^Azerbaijan^Armenia)

<sup>21</sup> See their resources: <https://disasterdisplacement.org/resources>

<sup>22</sup> In particular, IOM reports on the effectiveness of cash-based interventions for the IDPs in Georgia and Ukraine during the COVID-19 pandemic (IOM, 2020a).

A review of academic literature and debates on internal displacement is furthermore detailed in the Refugee Survey Quarterly Special Issue on Internal Displacement<sup>23</sup>, the Internal Displacement Research Programme (IDRP) working paper series<sup>24</sup>, and Researching Internal Displacement website.<sup>25</sup> All of the above is now brought together and enhanced by the Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement (2021b, 2021a) that emphasized that finding and implementing meaningful, safe and dignified solutions for IDPs is crucial. Internal displacement should be prioritized, owned, and addressed by the states, who must be held accountable to tackle internal displacement and the related challenges, such as the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change. The rights and agency of IDPs as citizens and residents of their countries can enhance the design and implementation of good practices and durable solutions because IDPs and their host communities know what kind of solutions would work best in their setting.

### **3. Existing compilations of 'good practices' on internal displacement**

There are two sources of good practices on responses to internal displacement containing examples from Europe and Central Asia that are worth distinguishing. The first one is the Guide to Good Practices by the Council of Europe Member States (Mooney & Moroz, 2017) which contains examples organized by themes. This resource covers a wide range of topics such as prohibition of displacement, IDP data, documentation, freedom of movement, housing, livelihoods and social protection, education, voting, property, access to justice and legal assistance, state institutions involvement, and practices on consulting IDPs. The examples of good practices are based on policies from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Serbia, the Russian Federation, Turkey, and Ukraine.

It is important to note that definitions of 'good practices' may differ. For instance, UNHCR developed a set of criteria for 'good practices' in implementing solutions for refugees (UNHCR, 2021), that might be helpful in determining what works for the displaced people in general. Mooney and Moroz (2017: 14) instead advise us to think about 'good practices' as a 'useful, although not necessarily imperfect or ideal measure' that might be partial or implemented successfully only in certain context and timeframe. However, through desk research they select examples of how particular challenges arising in internal displacement were addressed and 'proved valuable in real-time in a real-life situation' (Mooney & Moroz, 2017: 16). These good practices were evaluated by Mooney and Moroz according to how well they correspond with the Council of Europe's recommendations and resolutions on internal displacement.

The second useful source is GP20 Compilation of National Practices (Chapuisat, 2020). Only three examples (all from Ukraine) originate from Europe and Central Asia region. This compilation discusses the challenges of methodology in selecting and analysing 'good

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<sup>23</sup> See the launching webinar and access the special issue: <https://www.un.org/internal-displacement-panel/content/launch-rsq-special-issue-why-do-we-need-new-research-internal-displacement>

<sup>24</sup> IDRP is hosted at the Refugee Law Initiative (SOAS, University of London). It aims to promote cross- and interdisciplinary research on internal displacement and connect research, policy, and practice. You can access the IDRP working papers here: <https://rli.sas.ac.uk/resources/working-paper-series/internal-displacement-research-programme-working-papers>

<sup>25</sup> Researching Internal Displacement website hosts a range of resources on internal displacement, such as working papers, blog posts, training courses and relevant events: <https://researchinginternaldisplacement.org>

practices’<sup>26</sup>, it summarises positive steps taken by selected countries and gives recommendations to stakeholders based on collected evidence. Both the Council of Europe’s Guide to Good Practices and the GP20 Compilation focus on good practices in state policies in response to internal displacement. This exploratory paper and database<sup>27</sup> of good practices on internal displacement management aim to contribute to expanding this focus further by showing some of the collaborative initiatives between different, predominantly local stakeholders and IDPs.

#### 4. What is a ‘good practice’?

The database presented in this paper is based on desk research in open sources conducted in 2020 as part of the author’s internship with the IDMC on looking for best practices in responding to urban displacement. The current database is modified and expanded in 2021 with the generous support of the IDRP Summer Fellowship on Internal Displacement.

What is ‘good’ in a ‘good practices’? First of all, these practices should be based on three universal values of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: human rights-based approach, leave no one behind principle (including eradication of poverty, ending discrimination and exclusion, and reducing the inequalities and vulnerabilities), gender equality and women’s empowerment (UNSDG Human Rights Working Group, 2021). To operationalize these values, four approaches are recommended by the UN: alignment with international norms and standards; equality and non-discrimination; active and meaningful participation; robust accountability mechanisms (UNSDG Human Rights Working Group, 2016).

‘Good practices’ are usually guided by these values and implemented using these four approaches. However, the practices should also be context-specific (sensitive to location and target groups) and effective (realistic to implement with available resources). The participation of targeted groups (IDPs) and accountability of stakeholders towards IDPs, host communities, governments and international human rights obligations should be evaluated in terms not only what works, but also 1) whether it works for this particular situation/group<sup>28</sup>/timeframe; 2)

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<sup>26</sup> The selection criteria in the GP20 Compilation are as follows: ‘good practices’ should be:

1) ‘Implemented by national or sub-national government authorities or in support of a government priority on internal displacement; 2) Led to an improvement in the situation of IDPs or the prevention or response environment; 3) Sought progress in at least two of the four GP20 thematic priorities (law and policy, IDP participation, protracted displacement/durable solutions and data); 4) Included at least two partners from different constituencies (e.g., government, NGO, UN, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)/International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), humanitarian, development, human rights, peacebuilding, IDPs) working together to design and/or implement the practice, project or initiative; 5) Sufficient documentation and/or key informants to interview to adequately report on the experience and extract lessons learned; 6) Sufficient passage of time to generate lessons learned about the country example and its impact on the response environment and/or the situation of IDPs.’ (Chapuisat, 2020: 26-27)

<sup>27</sup> The full database that contains detailed information and description about each practice, their timeframes, actors involved, main objectives, results, challenges, transferability, and links for further information can be accessed from the following link:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1mu3bdYN0PL\\_Clk15tkc7qh3VYGKPRlvqDM-X5douShk/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1mu3bdYN0PL_Clk15tkc7qh3VYGKPRlvqDM-X5douShk/edit?usp=sharing)

<sup>28</sup> It is important to remember that IDPs are not a homogenous group. Some IDPs will need more support and assistance as well as targeted solutions and practices, e.g. women, children, LGBTQ+, people with disabilities, and the elderly. Debates about how to best address their needs are currently on-going. See, for instance, GP 2.0 Concept note with a list of useful resources: <https://www.gp2point0.org/gp2-0-fall-event-20-september-2021/>.



whether it works effectively (measuring impact); and 3) whether it works efficiently (optimal resources/outcomes).

For example, Ukrainian subsidised housing program for IDPs implies ('affordable housing' in the database) that the state budget allocates yearly funding to support IDPs' mortgage loans. It is a 'good practice' in principle, but in practice it has so far limited impact because of budget shortages and restrictive selection criteria regarding the choice of applicants and desired property. Ukrainian IDPs are predominantly elderly or economically inactive people (IOM, 2021d) who cannot afford initial investment payments. As a result, only younger, financially stable, and officially employed IDPs can afford to participate in the program, whereas the vulnerable groups of IDPs remain in precarious temporary accommodations.

Mooney (2003) argues that interpretation of good practices might differ depending on the criteria for determining when displacement ends. There are three standpoints on this issue. The first standpoint on the termination of displacement is cause-based, prioritising responses that help to solve or eliminate the initial cause of displacement. The second standpoint is solutions-based (return, resettlement, local integration), therefore, good practices should enable the achievement of durable solutions for the displaced.<sup>29</sup> Finally, the third standpoint addresses the needs of IDPs. From this perspective, displacement ends when IDPs are no longer negatively affected by its consequences and achieve equal stand with their non-displaced co-citizens. All three standpoints are complementary and interdependent. Good practices are multidimensional as they can include actors and actions on various levels and combinations.

Having in mind that the state holds the primary responsibility for the protection of IDPs, who should be seen as 'citizens with displacement-specific needs' rather than as 'the displaced persons with protection and assistance needs' (Chapuisat, 2020: 10), good practices should reinforce state's responsibility and accountability for the protection of IDPs. On the other hand, considering the value of self-reliance (Huang et al., 2019; UNHCR, 2005), resilience (Aymerich, 2020; Najafizadeh, 2013) and increasing interest towards social cohesion<sup>30</sup> (Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS), 2019) and whole-of-society approach to displacement<sup>31</sup>, state and IDPs are not the only actors that play a crucial role in designing and implementing 'good practices'. Other non-state local actors play an important role as well.

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<sup>29</sup> The approach that prioritizes the focus on durable solutions (return, resettlement or local integration) (The Brookings Institution, 2010) is well-established in policy-making addressing internal displacement. Hence, an extensive range of materials is available for relevant stakeholders to draw from in joint design and development of durable solutions (Global Protection Cluster, 2016) and in their practical implementation (Blay & Crozet, 2017). The latter source contains only one example from the Europe-Central Asia region, namely from Georgia.

<sup>30</sup> The 'social cohesion' is defined as 'the nature and set of relationships between individuals and groups in a particular environment (horizontal social cohesion) and between those individuals and groups and the institutions that govern them in a particular environment (vertical social cohesion). Strong, positive, integrated relationships and inclusive identities are perceived as indicative of high social cohesion, whereas weak, negative or fragmented relationships and exclusive identities are taken to mean low social cohesion. Social cohesion is therefore a multi-faceted, scalar concept' (World Vision, 2015). For empirical work on social cohesion involving IDPs see the work of the Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development in Cyprus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, Moldova, and Armenia. Available at <https://www.seedsofpeace.eu/where-we-work/europe/>

<sup>31</sup> Involvement of a wide range of non-state actors (NGOs, think tanks, academia, local networks) into response to internal displacement that can be more horizontally-coordinated and inclusive rather than vertically-led. See more at: <http://www.cxb-cso-ngo.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/19-Aug-World-Humanitarian-Day.pdf>

Whether any best practice could become operational also depends on sufficient and flexible funding. World Bank – one of the biggest funders of IDP-focused projects<sup>32</sup> – promotes its vision of solutions to internal displacement and gives recommendations on implementing its developmental approach to internal displacement. For instance, among solutions, the World Bank Group (WBG) emphasizes clear restoration of IDPs’ rights, ensuring their freedom of movement, their right to work and reducing ‘limbo’ situations to increase planning horizon for IDPs and other stakeholders (WBG, 2017). With regard to recommendations, the WBG proposes to intensify evidence-based policy design and implementation; improve the evaluation of the developmental impact on displaced populations (including different groups) and host communities, and engage private sector to promote self-reliance and resilience of IDPs and host communities (WBG, 2019). From this funder’s development perspective, the focus is not so much on achieving durable solutions, but on ‘helping IDPs reach a ‘level playing field’ with the non-displaced and paving the way for better development opportunities for the displaced and non-displaced’ with strong involvement of host communities and local authorities (WBG, 2021a: 7). Forced displacement affects all aspects of national and regional developments, therefore a development-based approach to solutions might help to find comprehensive working solutions (Cantor & Cardona-Fox, 2021).

## 5. Overview of the database of sixty good practices

The database<sup>33</sup> of sixty good practices on internal displacement from Europe and Central Asia provides information on the type of displacement event, timeframe of the displacement, estimated number of IDPs, country of displacement, timeframe, and the description of practice. It presents the main results, challenges, and transferability of practices, indicates actors involved in implementing the practice and provides additional links for further information. As the summary of good practices indicate (Table 1), each practice is assigned to one of the following categories: IDP data and consultations, access to documentation, housing and property, employment, livelihoods and social protection, education and culture, voting, state institutions dedicated to IDPs’ issues, relocation and resettlement, and local integration. The practices originate from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine, Turkey, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russian Federation, and the EU. Majority of practices tackle conflict displacement consequences, whereas examples from Armenia, Russia and the EU provide examples of disaster displacement prevention and solutions.

The topics of livelihoods and social protection, housing and property, and local integration contains the biggest number of practices and suggest that socio-economic wellbeing and social cohesion within the host communities are prioritised in current good practices on internal displacement. Other topics, such as education and culture or state institutions dedicated to IDPs’ issues are also playing considerable role as good examples of different roles and responsibilities

<sup>32</sup> 12 out of 85 WBG IDP-focused lending projects between 2000 and 2020 were implemented in Europe and Central Asia (Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kosovo, Serbia, and Montenegro). The rationale for funding IDP-focused projects is covered in WBG (2021a) report, especially see Figure 5 on p 48. For more detailed view on current and past implemented projects see the World Bank’s database:

<https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/projects-list?os=0>

<sup>33</sup> The database can be accessed and downloaded from the link below:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1mu3bdYN0PL\\_CIk15tkc7qh3VYGKPRlvqDM-X5douShk/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1mu3bdYN0PL_CIk15tkc7qh3VYGKPRlvqDM-X5douShk/edit?usp=sharing)

played by various actors involved in addressing challenges of internal displacement. Whereas the state sets the general broad legal framework that aims to protect the rights of IDPs, local NGOs and IDPs themselves are often actively involved in daily educational and cultural activities that ‘translate’ state strategies and policies into concrete and tangible actions.

The database of good practices also maps different combinations of international, national and local actors involved, thus highlighting that holistic and comprehensive approach is necessary. At the same time, these practices underscore that contextually specific and tailored solutions will only work if local communities, civil society and first and foremost IDPs themselves are consulted and involved (Elie, 2021).

The issue of IDP data is becoming more important with the growing understanding that there is no ‘one size fits all’ solution to internal displacement (Cardona-Fox, 2020b). Countries of Europe and Central Asia region vary significantly in the range of parameters that influence the root causes, the progression of displacement, protection of IDPs and future solutions for internal displacement. IDP data, collected with the support of international, national and local actors, provides a steppingstone for working solutions. At the same time, the collected data is a basis for comparative studies on internal displacement and good practices on tackling this issue as well as a tool for monitoring the implementation of solutions and involvement of IDPs.

I encourage the reader to look closely into the database to explore specific practices that one might find relevant and interesting depending on topic and country. Table 1 only summarises the practices, so for further information please consult the database itself.

Table 1. Summary of good practices in responding to internal displacement. See more at [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1mu3bdYN0PL\\_CIk15tkc7qh3VYGKPRlvqDM-X5douShk/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1mu3bdYN0PL_CIk15tkc7qh3VYGKPRlvqDM-X5douShk/edit?usp=sharing)

Area of good practice	Examples
IDP data and consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data-driven policy making (Amnesty International Report) - Georgia</li> <li>• Area Based Assessment and Response Planning - Ukraine</li> <li>• Evidence-based policy making after IDP consultations – Turkey</li> <li>• Survey on intention to return – Azerbaijan</li> <li>• Data-driven approach to durable solutions: IDP profiling - Ukraine</li> </ul>
Access to documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital state services to IDPs through 'State in smartphone' program – Ukraine</li> <li>• Mobile ‘Centers for Provision of Administrative Services’ - Ukraine</li> </ul>

Housing and property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available housing ‘Доступне житло’ - Ukraine</li> <li>• Regional Housing Programme (RHP) – Bosnia and Herzegovina</li> <li>• Armenian earthquake recovery zone programme - Armenia</li> <li>• Durable Housing Solutions for IDPs - Georgia</li> <li>• SHSE - Social housing in supportive environments - Serbia</li> <li>• Housing purchase certificates, Armenian earthquake zone programme - Armenia</li> <li>• MY HOUSE program and Collective centre renovation and transfer of ownership – Georgia</li> <li>• Social housing principles and implementation – Bosnia and Herzegovina</li> <li>• A complex of residential buildings for refugees and IDPs – Azerbaijan</li> <li>• ‘Всем миром’ (Altogether) and Cheriomkhovo ‘Rostekh’ housing project – Russian Federation</li> </ul>
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment and Entrepreneurship in eastern Ukraine - Ukraine</li> <li>• Free People Employment Centre (Центр зайнятості вільних людей) – Ukraine</li> <li>• Social Entrepreneurship for Better Dialogue and Stronger Economy – Bosnia and Herzegovina</li> </ul>
Livelihoods and social protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection of the IDPs' rights - Ukraine</li> <li>• Rapid Response to the Social and Economic Issues of Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine - Ukraine</li> <li>• State Programme for the Improvement of Living Standards and Generation of Employment for Refugees and IDPs - Azerbaijan</li> <li>• IDP living standards and livelihood project - Azerbaijan</li> <li>• Internally Displaced Persons Economic Development Support Project - Azerbaijan</li> <li>• Ukraine Early Recovery Programme – Ukraine</li> <li>• Humanitarian and socio-economic support of IDPs and victims of armed conflict on the east of Ukraine – Ukraine</li> <li>• Humanitarian Post of Ukraine – Ukraine</li> <li>• Charitable foundation 'Svoi' and volunteer centre ‘Frolivska 9/11’ for IDPs – Ukraine</li> <li>• Station ‘Kharkiv’ initiative – Ukraine</li> <li>• Save the Children work with children IDPs/refugees – Azerbaijan</li> <li>• EU Civil Protection Mechanism – European Union, EEA countries, Turkey, North Macedonia, Serbia, Albania, Montenegro, Croatia, Ukraine</li> <li>• Covid-19-related simplification of state regulations for IDPs – Ukraine</li> </ul>

Education and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Krymska rodyna. Qırım ailesi - Ukraine</li> <li>• Theatre of Displaced People - Ukraine</li> <li>• Adult Education Centre ‘Центр освіти дорослих’ previously known as IDP_HUB (2015-2017) - Ukraine</li> <li>• Community Technology Access (CTA) - Georgia</li> <li>• Urbanization through Literacy – Turkey</li> <li>• Platform for Cultural Initiatives ‘Izolyatsia’ - Ukraine</li> <li>• Donbas Living Library – Ukraine</li> <li>• Relocating Displaced Universities – Ukraine</li> </ul>
Voting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voting rights for IDPs – Ukraine</li> </ul>
State institutions dedicated to IDPs’ issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategy of Integration of Internally Displaced Persons and Implementation of Long-Term Solutions to Internal Displacement until 2020 – Ukraine</li> <li>• Georgian National Authorities Improving Lives of IDPs (2007 State Strategy on IDPs – Georgia</li> <li>• National Strategy for Improvement of the Status of Roma in the Republic of Serbia – Serbia</li> </ul>
Relocation and resettlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated Strategy Document – Turkey</li> </ul>
Local integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidation of efforts for the long-term strategic programs for IDPs - Ukraine</li> <li>• ‘Fit your life into a valise’/ ‘Вмістити життя у валізу’ - Ukraine</li> <li>• Vostok-SOS - Ukraine</li> <li>• Comprehensive Stabilization Support to IDPs and the affected population - Georgia</li> <li>• Inclusive Cities: Enhancing the Positive Impact of Urban Migration - Turkey</li> <li>• Sister-Brother-Sibling (Abla-Ağabey-Kardeş) - Turkey</li> <li>• Sister Families Project - Turkey</li> <li>• Support to the solution of economic and social integration problems in Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara and Bursa as major in-migrant destinations - Turkey</li> <li>• Strengthening Ukrainian communities hosting internally displaced people – Ukraine</li> <li>• Kosovo authorities providing security – Kosovo</li> <li>• Integrated Urban Development in Ukraine II – Ukraine</li> <li>• Online groups for IDPs – Ukraine</li> <li>• Kyiv inhabitant ID card – Ukraine</li> <li>• YouTube TV channel for IDPs and App for IDPs - Ukraine</li> </ul>

## 6. Conclusions

It is not surprising that the sixty good practices presented for the reader’s consideration in this overview are concurrent with recommendations of the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel



on Internal Displacement Report (2021b). Answering the title question of this paper ‘what works for the IDPs’ we can tentatively draw several conclusions.

First, the strong political will, involvement and accountability of the state is crucial; states with special national programs and institutions dedicated to IDP-specific issues have a wider range of practices, implemented by a variety of state and non-state actors. States where IDPs play a political role have stronger protection mechanism and better tailored solutions.

Second, the involvement of host communities and the adoption of whole-of-society approach in support of IDPs and displacement-related challenges enables good practices that prevent marginalization and discrimination of IDPs in their new locations. IDPs and their representatives should be present and actively engaged in all stages and levels of decision-making and implementation processes.

Third, private sector can and should be involved, including through the support for IDP entrepreneurship and employment, that increase the positive image and self-reliance of the displaced who, in turn, contribute to the local economies. Incentives for employment of IDPs have also beneficial role in decreasing the financial pressure on state and local social services.

Fourth, good practices emerge and can be implemented in close cooperation, including financial, between the national government and international organisations, such as the UN institutions, the Global Protection Cluster, the World Bank, the IOM, the NRC and DRC and consultations with the experts from the IDMC, academia and fellow policymakers and practitioners from other displacement-affected countries in gathering IDP data, monitoring IDP integration, and building tailor-made solutions for a variety of IDP groups.

Fifth, sharing and testing of good practices and operational solutions among a variety of stakeholders who work on issues of internal displacement should be also forward oriented and aiming at preventing displacement in the first instance. For instance, in Central Asia displacement in the context of disasters and climate change can be, for the most part, anticipated and planned for, especially if regional and transborder measures are taken soon.

In general, examples of legal frameworks and practices on tackling internal displacement from countries of Europe and Central Asia provide a valuable source of recent working mechanisms for protecting and supporting the displaced and their host communities.

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