Ieva Simonaitytė Klaipeda Public Library

Informational Needs of Ukrainian Citizens in Klaipeda

Prepared by:
chief librarian of the Department of Information resources
Tetiana Virovka

Klaipeda, 2023

Today's world is undergoing significant changes in the context of military conflicts, which are accompanied by mass migration of the population. As a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Ukrainian refugees were forced to leave for dozens of countries, from Europe and the United States to the UAE. According to the Lithuanian Department of Statistics, the country received more than 73,000 people from Ukraine during the ten months of the war. Information provision for displaced persons is of great importance for adaptation in society. As part of the implementation of the project of the Lithuanian Cultural Council, Ieva Simonaitytė Klaipeda Public Library, conducted a sociological research, "Information Needs of Ukrainian Citizens in Klaipėda".

The research aims to determine the information needs of displaced persons and the extent to which they are met by relevant services, and institutions, including libraries.

The object of the research is migrants from Ukraine (203 people).

The subject of the research - the degree of satisfaction of information needs.

Research objectives:

- To analyze the list of questions solved by the respondents;

- To find out respondents' opinions about the services provided by different institutions;

- to determine library services used by different categories of displaced persons;

- to study the image of libraries, to identify existing problems, to create the basis for making management decisions.

The research method was a questionnaire survey. The method of collecting information was a questionnaire survey of displaced people (appendix) using Google Forms. In January 2023, a survey was conducted on the Telegram channel and groups "Ukrainians in Lithuania," "Ukrainians in Klaipeda," "Volunteers in Klaipeda," and on the social network "Facebook."

The research showed that the initial task for displaced persons in Lithuania was legalization - applying for temporary residence permits for humanitarian reasons. Upon arrival to Klaipėda, to address the issues relating to their stay in Lithuania: 96.1% of the respondents applied to the Migration Department under the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Lithuania; 60.1% - to the social protection departments; 59% - to the Lithuanian Red Cross Centre for Refugees and Migrants, and 56% of the respondents - to educational and preschool institutions (university, elementary school, gymnasium, kindergarten). Displaced persons also applied for assistance to employment services, medical institutions, public and religious organizations, and libraries. The Department of Migration under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania was the most effective in resolving the legal issues of displaced persons.

Survey participants can be conditionally divided into three main groups: those who stay in Lithuania for up to half a year (17%), more than half a year (34%), and almost a year (46%). Let us consider what issues have been resolved and what could not be resolved in this or that period of time.

Of those who have been in Lithuania for up to half a year, 15% of respondents said that the issues to be solved were not a problem (renting accommodation, buying

seasonal clothing, etc.). Fewer respondents positively solved questions about choosing an educational institution, finding Lithuanian language courses, and starting a business. Every third respondent pointed out difficulties in renting inexpensive accommodation, including for a family with children or pets; difficulties in obtaining health insurance, registration of custody of an underage child; finding a job, including due to the lack of knowledge of the Lithuanian language. Among the unresolved issues are domestic (registration of compensation for public utilities) and medical (confirmation of disability group).

Compared to the previous category of persons staying in Lithuania for up to half a year, the percentage of respondents who think that the solution to their problems is successful has doubled (32%). Among those respondents who have been in Lithuania for more than half a year, the percentage of those who mentioned the need to look for a job and accommodation again has almost doubled, which can be explained by the seasonal nature of the previous place of work. There were practically no questions about finding a place for children's education and placement in preschool institutions.

For those who have been in Lithuania for almost a year, 14% of the respondents did not have any problems solving these issues, some of whom used the help of volunteers. Among the unresolved issues were medical care issues: consultation of children by specialists of the narrow profile, which was pointed out by 25% of the respondents. Difficulties in renting housing due to the refusal of housing owners to rent real estate to foreign citizens (Ukrainian refugees) were pointed out by 24% of the respondents. Another 12% of the displaced persons were looking for a job and noted that employees of the Employment Center guided them to look for a job on their own. The issues of registering children in kindergarten, school, and Lithuanian language courses are still considered by 4% of the respondents. Issues of social payments and compensation for rent remained unresolved for 2% of the respondents.

The doors of public libraries around the world, particularly in European countries, are open to Ukrainians. Libraries adhere to their mission to provide support and information for all. Lithuanian libraries have also joined this process, including the Eva Simonaitė Klaipėda Public Library, which hired colleagues from Ukraine, provided humanitarian aid (household items and clothes), popularized library services, created and updated services, and provided information sources in accordance with the information needs of the Ukrainians who arrived. The range of information models in which modern users are interested has become wider. A significant number of sources are used, and the library is just one of them. A conscious need for information required to solve educational, socio-cultural, or practical problems is an information need. In the search for information, 48.7% of the respondents turned to libraries. While traveling to tourist places in Lithuania, Ukrainians visited libraries of some localities: Kretinga, Palanga, Juodkrante, Kalote, Nida, etc. In Klaipeda, 40% of respondents visited the Ieva Simonaitytė Klaipėda Public Library, and 5% visited the I. Kant Klaipėda Public Library. Among them are respondents who visited libraries for children, and others who used the services of the city's branch libraries. Part of the respondents visited the libraries of the city as part of the events held by the Center for Refugees and Migrants of the

Lithuanian Red Cross Society.

There are many reasons why respondents seek information in libraries: a place of residence, profession, educational and cultural level, etc. One of the tasks of the study was to determine the reason why respondents did not use the services of libraries. Of the 50.3% of those who did not visit libraries, 43% were working respondents. Let us consider the reasons why surveyed Ukrainians did not visit the library: not have free time (27%); respondents know nothing about the city libraries (18%); considerable distance from home to the library (8%); do not feel the need to read (7%); not satisfied with the library fund (1%); read electronic books (1%). When asked if friends or acquaintances used the services of libraries, 45.8% of respondents answered positively. The lack of close communication among other respondents is evidenced by the following: 41.8% of respondents said that they did not know if their acquaintances had contacted libraries for books. 12.4% of the respondents are sure that their acquaintances did not apply to the library.

The activities of libraries aim to meet users' information and socio-cultural needs by providing various forms of library and information services. Part of the respondents know what services they could use in the libraries of the city, as stated by 46.4% of respondents and 53.6% - do not know.

The survey results are interesting in that respondents' awareness about the services provided by libraries for surveyed citizens of Ukraine is almost consistent with the study of Ieva Simonaitytė Klaipeda Public Library's "Satisfaction of library users with the services provided" (2022). Thus, 18.3% of Ukrainian citizens in Klaipeda say that they do not know anything about libraries and information services, while among surveyed users of the Ieva Simonaitytė Klaipeda Public Library, 25.9%. The difference in the percentage ratio is obvious but not significant. This percentage of "uninformed" users is obviously acceptable.

The needs for information and reading were satisfied by 56,2%, partially - 35,9%, and not satisfied - 7,9%. The search of the necessary information is continued by 75.8% of respondents. The most effective search was done by 20.3% of respondents: these are working women with higher education aged 31-40 years old.

Among the number of services used by respondents, the most popular services are working in the Wi-Fi zone and on the computer (36%), getting books in Ukrainian (32%), searching for information (21.6%), and assistance in learning (19.6%). This study showed that 78.9% of the respondents wished to attend classes to study the Lithuanian language at the educational center of the library.

Libraries hold events aimed at different categories of users to meet their socio-cultural and informational needs. Non-working respondents (housewives, women on maternity leave, unemployed, pensioners) preferred leisure time activities: 37.2% of respondents attended music evenings and master classes. Creating a learning environment in libraries and their activities as providers of educational services in local communities contribute to the transformation of libraries into subjects of innovative educational activities in non-formal education: 13.1% of respondents attended club meetings. It should be noted that respondents repeatedly indirectly participated in other activities that took place in the library. For example, had the

opportunity to see exhibitions in the library lobby (thematic exhibitions, book festivals, etc.).

Respondents to the survey "Satisfaction of library users with the services provided" (2022) "note the lack of information about events. At the same time, it should be noted that the respondents - citizens of Ukraine, also drew attention to the lack of timely announcements of the events. It should also be further analyzed what the respondents mean by the range of information services libraries provide.

The study also explored respondents' attitudes toward reading. For most respondents, reading is a source of new knowledge (57%), and every second respondent sees reading as an opportunity to get away from everyday problems and find peace of mind (48%). 37.3% of respondents choose reading as the best activity in their free time. Analyzing this data, we can assert that the majority of respondents read books and perceive reading as one of the important means of self-improvement. And to provide this process, we need libraries, but at the same time, it should be noted that the services of public libraries are used much more often than those of educational institutions.

The library should consider the ratio of young people, middle-aged and elderly people, men and women among its visitors, etc. This contributes to the rational organization of library space, and design, determining the topics of events and the category of their participants. The majority of modern users of many social institutions are women: 94.8% of women and 5.2% of men participated in the survey. The greatest age percentage was among women 31-40 years old (46.4%), then 41-50 years old (23.5%), 21-30 years old (17.1%). The number of respondents under 20 years of age was 6%, 51-60 years - 5%, and over 60 years - 2%.

The criterion of education is one of the most important to differentiate users, which determines the level and content of their requests. Among respondents have a scientific degree 2.6%, higher and incomplete higher education - 68%, specialized secondary education - 17.6%, secondary education - 7.2% and incomplete secondary education - 4.6%.

55.6% of the respondents are employed, while 44.4% are unemployed. Among the unemployed categories of displaced persons: 19.6% are looking for work; 9.2% are women on maternity leave; 5.3% are students; 3.3% are pensioners; 3.2% are students; 0.6% of respondents have a disability group; 58.8% did not specify a reason for not working.

Looking through the book funds, the respondents note that the city libraries (and it is quite understandable) do not have enough books in the Ukrainian language: fiction (35.3% of respondents), Lithuanian language studies (20.3%), literature on psychology (18.3%), historical (10.5%). It should be noted that 72.5% of the respondents are ready to give books in the Ukrainian language to Eva Simonaitė Klaipeda public library.

Libraries in Klaipeda created modern information spaces and formed relevant services for visitors, who can use free Internet access, including Wi-Fi; get PC skills, use public electronic services, participate in public events, etc. The results of the study showed the impression of migrants from visiting the library. Comfortable conditions for service and communication were noted by 58.7% of respondents;

quality of organization of mass events - 41.3%; assessed the modern architecture and design - 40.7%; availability of modern technical equipment - 38%. 32.7% of respondents defined the library as a place where you can find the necessary information from different fields of knowledge. Only 30% of respondents believe that libraries adequately promote information services.

The library should take into account the real ratio of young people, middle-aged and elderly people, men and women among its visitors, etc. This contributes to the rational organization of library space, design, determines the topics of events and the category of participants. The majority of modern users of many social institutions are women: 94.8% of women and 5.2% of men participated in the survey. The greatest age percentage was among women 31-40 years old (46.4%), then 41-50 years old (23.5%), 21-30 years old (17.1%). The number of respondents under 20 years of age was 6%, 51-60 years - 5%, and over 60 years - 2%.

The criterion of education is one of the most important to differentiate users, which determines the level and content of their requests. Among respondents have a scientific degree 2.6%, higher and incomplete higher education - 68%, specialized secondary education - 17.6%, secondary education - 7.2% and incomplete secondary education - 4.6%.

55.6% of the respondents are employed, while 44.4% are unemployed. Among the unemployed categories of displaced persons: 19.6% are looking for work; 9.2% are women on maternity leave; 5.3% are students; 3.3% are pensioners; 3.2% are students; 0.6% of respondents have a disability group; 58.8% did not specify a reason for not working.

Conclusions

In Lithuania, citizens of Ukraine solved legal, housing, and financial problems. Legalization (obtaining a temporary residence permit) allowed refugees to find jobs, receive medical and humanitarian aid and cash allowances, and made it easier for children to enroll in school and kindergarten. Local self-government structures provided citizens of Ukraine with social support and a one-time allowance. The study confirmed that legal and financial issues have been successfully resolved, but the search for housing continues. When legal, housing and financial problems have been solved, refugees have started to look for employment: every second person is now employed. The problems of Ukrainians staying in Lithuania are most fully reflected in the social groups.

The study found that respondents were not sufficiently aware of the information services provided by libraries. It can be assumed that the reason for that is the lack of an optimal format for presenting information about the services. Libraries of the city provide free services for citizens of Ukraine: library cards are issued, recreation areas are organized, free Wi-Fi zone, laptops and study areas are offered, books in Ukrainian and English and books for learning German, film friend (broadcasting movies and TV series, some also in Ukrainian or Russian), PressReader (reading international newspapers online) and short films for children. Displaced persons have access to printed publications, audiobooks, and educational and cultural

materials. Work is underway to complete and promote the collection in the Ukrainian language.

Libraries have:
- books, periodicals (in Lithuanian, English and other languages);
- Computers with public access to the Internet;
- electronic services;
- Printing, copying, and scanning services;
- board and interactive games, music recordings, and films.

There are family and youth leisure clubs, exhibitions and educational events for children and adults, etc.

Libraries hold meetings aimed at cultural integration and events to promote reading and emotional support for citizens, with a special focus on children. Respondents have varying degrees of information culture, and varying abilities to recognize the need for information, and identify, retrieve, evaluate, and effectively use information. Respondents did not make full use of electronic services provided through information and communication technologies. Thus, the Lithuanian Integrated Library Information System (LIBIS), which contains more than 3 million bibliographic records, is available to users.

Materials of the survey of residents of different regions of Ukraine living in the city of Klaipeda testify to the fact that the city libraries are important and necessary institutions of the socio-cultural sphere, which have an adequate material and technical base, meet the information needs of the population and have a strategy for further successful development.

Recommendations

1. Provide professional development of librarians:
- develop librarians' creativity and initiative through participation in project activities, development and implementation of library initiatives for the community;
- master electronic services and improve the skills of providing electronic services to the public.

2. Promote the development of image activities:
- inform the community about the library's services, particularly through media and social media;
-announce sociocultural events through the media and social media, as well as during events, informing what will be held that week or that day at the library;
-provide for the promotion of the technical equipment of the library;
- update library information areas, develop and distribute promotional and information materials.

3. Improve customer-centeredness in service:
- conduct sociological surveys of community residents to examine satisfaction with library services and adjust them;

- study the composition and needs of the community to identify new library services needed and to improve the services provided;
- develop and implement library services to meet the needs of certain categories of users;
- develop a memo about library information services and provide it when users are re-registered.

4. Improve technical support:
- use multimedia services to create online resources;
- use online services to provide remote service to users.

Questionnaire

Dear citizens of Ukraine! Eva Simonaitė Klaipėda Public Library (25 Herkaus Manto Street, Klaipėda) is conducting a survey of information needs of Ukrainian citizens in Klaipėda. This survey is part of a project which is supported by the Lithuanian Cultural Council.

We ask you to answer a series of short questions. Your answers and suggestions will help improve the awareness of displaced persons about the services provided by city institutions. We also ask you to respond anonymously and express your personal feelings about library services.

1.   When did you come to Klaipeda?
☐ up to half a year;
☐ more than half a year;
☐ almost a year.
☐ your option _____

2.   What institutions did you visit immediately upon arrival to solve the issues related to your stay in Lithuania:
☐ Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania;
☐ Center for refugees and migrants of the Lithuanian Red Cross Society;
☐ social protection department;
☐ employment service;
☐ medical institutions;
☐ public organizations;
☐ religious organizations;
☐ educational institutions (university, elementary school, pro-gymnasium, gymnasium, kindergarten);
☐ library;
☐ other.

3. Which of the following institutions most effectively assisted you in solving social and domestic issues (select 3 from the list below)
☐ Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania;
☐ Center for refugees and migrants of the Lithuanian Red Cross Society;
☐ Department of Social Protection;
☐ employment service;
☐ medical institutions;
☐ public organizations;

☐ religious organizations;
☐ educational institutions (university, elementary school, pro-gymnasium, gymnasium, kindergarten);
☐ library;
☐ other.

4. Choose 1-2 of the suggested options for the first priority solution upon arrival in Lithuania:
☐ processing of humanitarian aid;
☐ submission of documents for temporary stay;
☐ finding accommodation;
☐ medical services;
☐ finding a job;
☐ getting information about educational and pre-school institutions;
☐ getting information about volunteer organizations;
☐ other (specify) _____

5. Do you continue to search for information that is important to you?
_____
_____

6. What were the most difficult questions to solve or failed to solve?
_____
_____

7. . Have you visited the city's libraries?
☐ Yes
☐ No

8. If yes, which library did you visit (give the name or reference point of the library location)?
_____
_____

9 If you don't use a library, why not?
☐ I don't know anything about libraries in the city;
☐ considerable distance from where I live to the library;
☐ I am not satisfied with the library collection;
☐ no free time;
☐ no need to read;
☐ other (what is it?)
_____

10. Have your information and reading needs been met?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Partly

11 Have your friends or acquaintances contacted libraries?
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I don't know

12. Do you know of any services you could use in the city's libraries?
☐ Yes
☐ No

13. What library services have you already used?
☐ getting books in Ukrainian
☐ help in learning;
☐ searching for information;
☐ work on the computer;
☐ Wi-Fi zone;
☐ other (specify)_____

14. Would you like to take Lithuanian language classes at the library's Education Center?
☐ Yes
☐ No

15. Name the library events you have attended:
☐ club meeting;
☐ book festival;
☐ book presentations;
☐ exhibition presentations;
☐ musical evenings;
☐ workshops;
☐ other (specify)_____

16. How do you view the role of reading in your life?
☐ one of the important means of self-improvement and development;
☐ an appropriate way to spend your free time;
☐ a source of new knowledge;
☐ an opportunity to gain additional life experience;
☐ an opportunity to get away from everyday problems and find peace of mind;
☐ other (specify)_____

17. In your opinion, what kind of books in Ukrainian are missing in our library?
☐ children's;
☐ fiction;
☐ psychological;
☐ historical;
☐ on the study of the Lithuanian language;
☐ other (specify)_____

18. Would you be willing, on occasion, to donate 1-2 books in Ukrainian to the Eva Simonaitė Public Library in Klaipėda?
☐ Yes;
☐ No;
☐ Don't know

19. Do you think that the libraries of the city of Klaipeda:
☐ have modern architecture and design;
☐ have comfortable conditions for service and communication;
☐ have modern technical equipment;
☐ properly promote information services;
☐ hold important public events;
☐ is a place where you can find the information you need from different fields of knowledge;
☐ other (specify)_____

Please provide some information about yourself:

Gender:
☐ Male
☐ Female.

Age:
☐ under 20;
☐ 21-30 years old;
☐ 31-40 years old;
☐ 41-50 years old;
☐ 51-60 years old;
☐ over 60 years old

Education:
☐ incomplete high school;
☐ secondary;
☐ special secondary;
☐ incomplete higher education;
☐ higher education;
☐ advanced degree

Occupation:
☐ working
☐ not working*
(If not working, check one of the options below)

☐ on maternity leave;
☐ unemployed, looking for work;
☐ retired;
☐ student;
☐ student;
☐ disability group;
☐ other (specify your option) _____

Thank you for participating in this survey!