



# The situation and prospects for higher education in Kherson

A report on a sociological online survey in March 2024

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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April

2024

# Research Background

**Methodology:** an online survey using an interactive structured questionnaire, which relevant link was sent to potential respondents from the database (online research panel of the Kherson 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:** assessment of the situation and development prospects for higher education in Kherson.

**Sample size:** 400 respondents.

**Field stage period:** March 20 – April 1, 2024.

**Research client:** Zakhyst Kherson Community Foundation.

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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>



# Key Outputs

**Higher education** for almost all Kherson residents (**97%**) is a crucial prerequisite for the future successful development of the city. However, only half of them are aware of the way the Kherson higher education institutions operate given the current conditions. **9%** even believe that these are closed during the war.

**The idea of optimization** (reducing the number) of higher education institutions is not popular among Kherson residents. It is supported by only **13%** of respondents. Although the share of those considering that the higher educational system in Kherson should remain just as it was before the war, decreased from **59%** to **49%** in the period from October 2023 to April 2024.

For the future reconstruction of Kherson and the oblast, **construction (82%) and agricultural (74%) qualifications** should become **priorities** for Kherson universities. Thus, the respondents could assess the areas in the oblast that suffered the most damage from the invaders. Therefore, technical and agricultural higher education institutions require additional support, according to a quarter of the respondents.

Higher education remains highly demanded among the population. Half of the respondents (**51%**) know people who plan to study at a higher education institution. **33%** of the latter are also considering Kherson universities.

Kherson State University tops the list of universities that are seen as potential places of study. **11%** are thinking about education abroad.

37% of respondents believe that **applicants from Kherson oblast should have preferences** when applying to higher education institutions, but only if they choose Kherson universities. Kherson residents also believe that the children of veterans (30%) and the veterans themselves (29%) should have preferences. This could be free education (77%) and admission to higher education institutions under a simplified procedure (54%). However, an important condition here is the obligation to work within a specialty obtained.

Payment is the most important condition to people. The most important thing for **47%** is to study at **a state-funded place**, and for another **41%** – an affordable amount paid for education **on a contractual basis**.

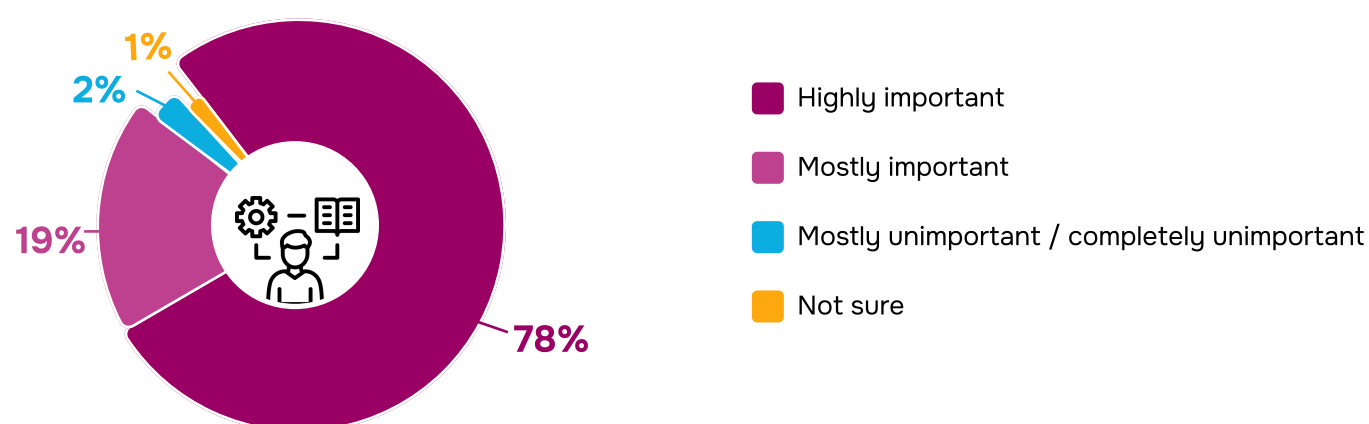
The top three advantages of Kherson higher education institutions are **the location** (54%), **the high quality of education** (36%), and **the availability of distance learning** (28%). The Kherson residents here have somehow inert thinking as all Kherson higher education institutions currently operate in remote mode, but only a quarter of the respondents are aware of this.

The most popular Kherson rector was **Oleksandr Spivakovsky**, the rector of Kherson State University, as 31% of all respondents heard of him. In this rating, he is followed by **Yuriy Kyrylov** (7%), the rector of Kherson State Agrarian and Economic University, and **Yuriy Bardachov** (5%), the former rector of Kherson National Technical University.

## SECTION 1. GENERAL AWARENESS

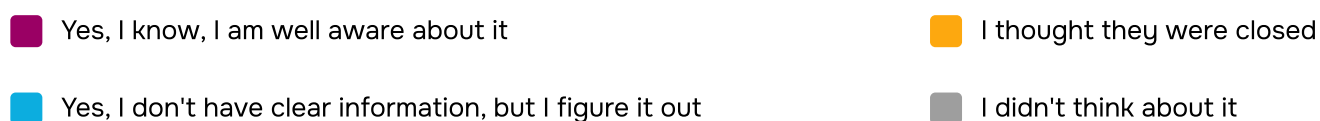
**The importance of services in the field of higher education in the community (N=400), %**

**Q.:** In your opinion, is supporting and developing the system of services provision in the field of higher education important for the future of the Kherson city community?



**Awareness of the work mode of higher education institutions in Kherson during the war (N=400), %**

**Q.:** Do you know that Kherson higher education institutions continued their work during the war?



### Residing in Kherson



### Not residing in Kherson



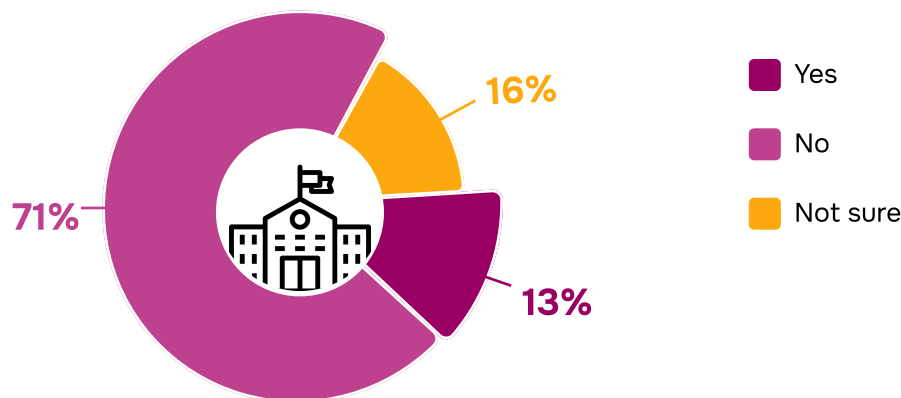
### All respondents



## SECTION 2. HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION OPTIMIZATION

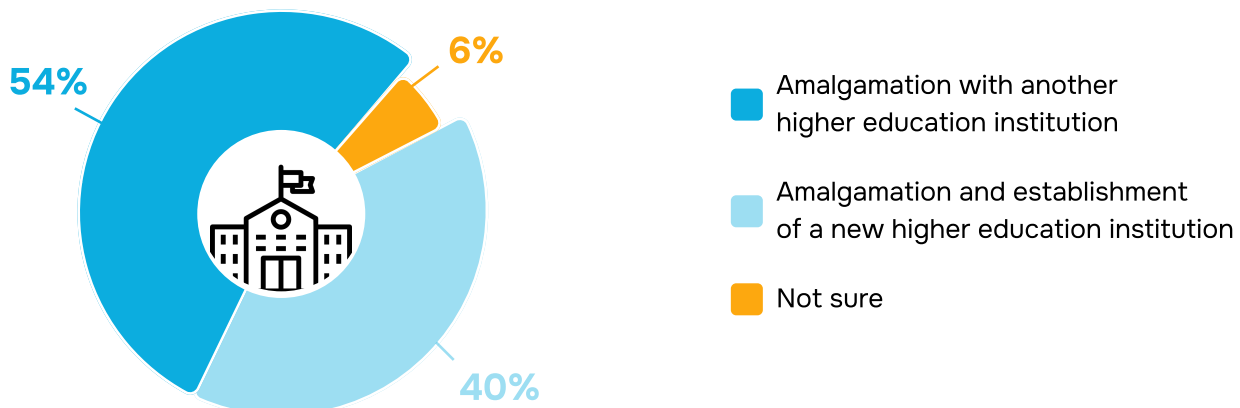
### Attitude to the optimization of the number of higher education institutions in Kherson (N=400), %

Q.: In your opinion, should the number of higher education institutions in Kherson be reduced?



### Optimization concepts (N = 53 (those who support the idea of reducing the number of higher education institutions in Kherson)), %

Q.: In your opinion, what is the best way to reduce the number of higher education institutions in Kherson?



## Dynamics of various optimization options (N = 400), %

**Q.:** In your opinion, what should be the optimal system of Kherson higher education institutions?

- Keep a pre-war system (all state and private higher education institutions)
- There should be 4 state universities left (Kherson State University, Kherson State Agrarian and Economic University, Kherson National Technical University, and Kherson State Maritime Academy)
- To join Kherson State University, Kherson State Agrarian and Economic University, and Kherson National Technical University, while Kherson State Maritime Academy should be kept as an independent institution
- All higher education institutions should be joined into one university
- Other options
- Not sure

### October 2023



### April 2024



KhSU – Kherson State University



KhDAEU – Kherson State Agrarian and Economic University



KhNTU – Kherson National Technical University



KhDMA – Kherson State Maritime Academy

### SECTION 3. HIGHER EDUCATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

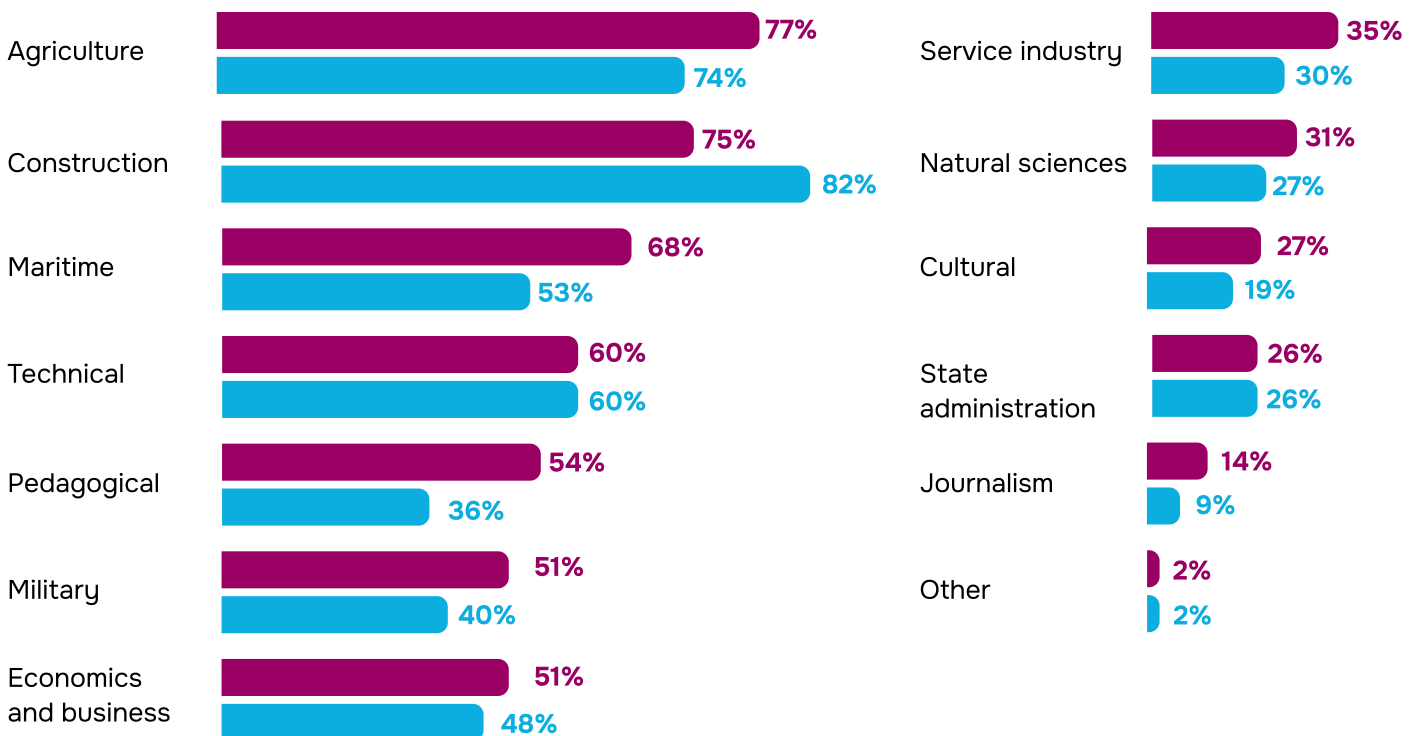
#### Common public priorities of higher education areas and public priorities of higher education areas given the reconstruction of Kherson and Kherson oblast – comparison (N=400) %

**Q.:** In your opinion, which fields of study should become a priority for Kherson higher education institutions in the future?

Multiple choice

**Q.:** In your opinion, which fields of study should become a priority for Kherson higher education institutions given the reconstruction of Kherson and Kherson oblast?

Multiple choice



■ Priority fields of study for Kherson higher education institutions in the future

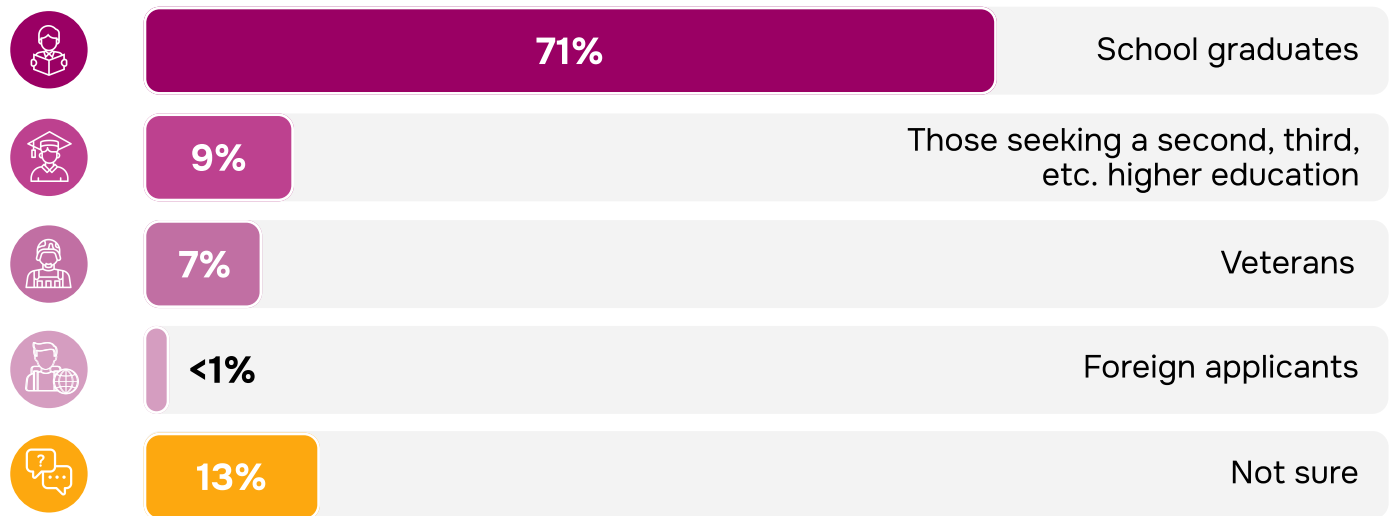
■ Priority fields of study for Kherson higher education institutions in the future given the reconstruction of Kherson and Kherson oblast



## SECTION 4. APPLICANTS AND ADMISSION TO HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

### Priority categories of applicants (N=400), %

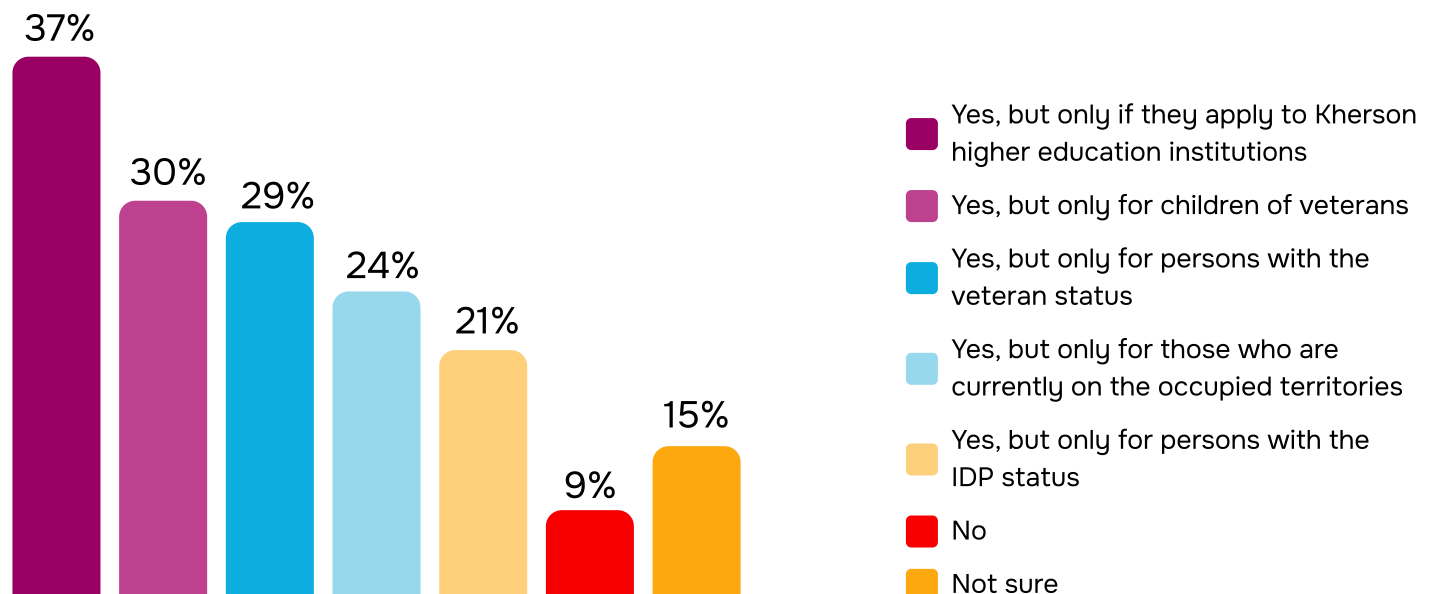
Q.: In your opinion, which applicants should be of priority to Kherson higher education institutions?



### Preferences for applicants from the Kherson oblast (N=400), %

Q.: Should applicants from Kherson oblast have preferences when applying to higher education institutions?

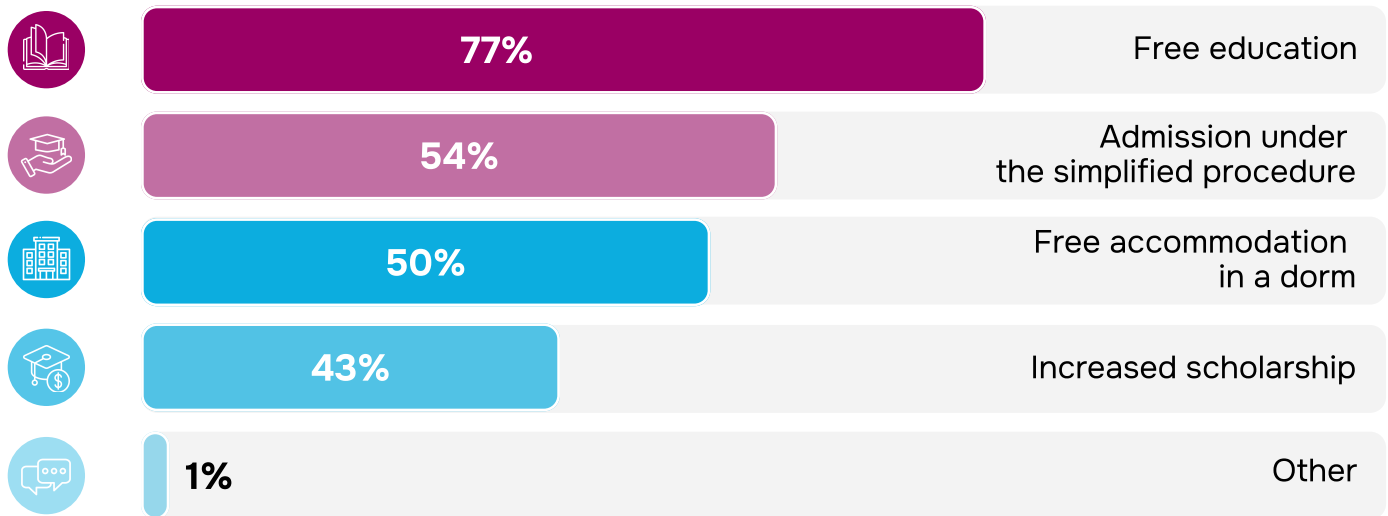
Multiple choice



**Types of preferences for applicants from Kherson oblast (N = 305 (those who support the idea that applicants from Kherson oblast should have preferences when applying to higher education institutions)), %**

Q.: What preferences exactly?

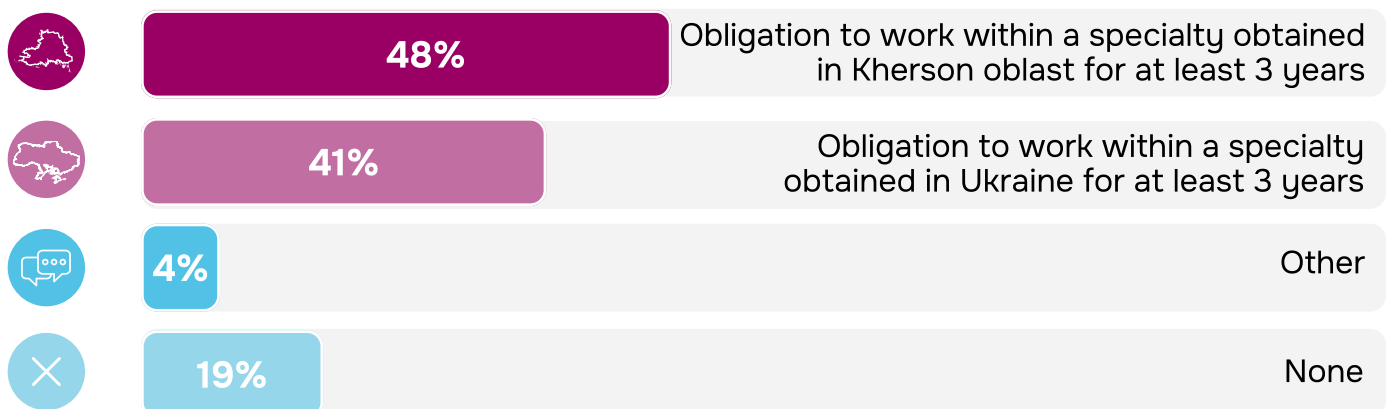
Multiple choice



**Liability of privileged persons (N = 305 (those who support the idea that applicants from Kherson oblast should have preferences when applying to higher education institutions)), %**

Q.: What should be the conditions and liabilities for those who have privileges?

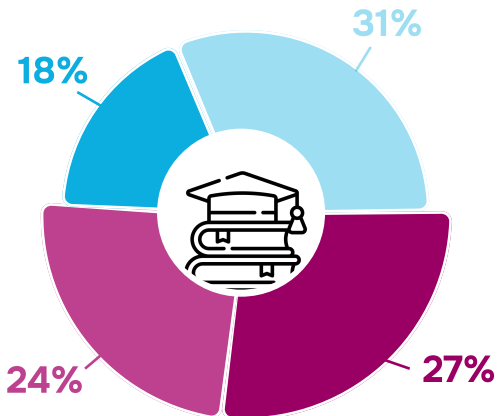
Multiple choice



### Intentions to obtain higher education (N=400), %

Q.: Does anyone in your family intend to apply to a higher education institution in the future?

#### All respondents



#### Residing in Kherson



#### Not residing in Kherson



■ Yes   
 ■ Mostly yes   
 ■ Mostly no   
 ■ No

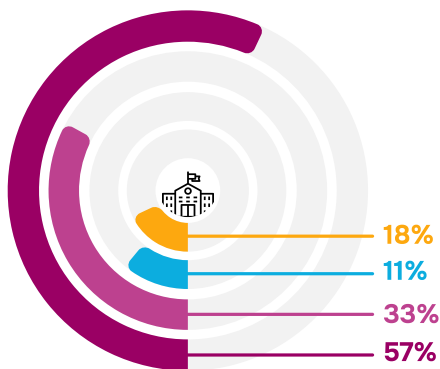
### Selecting a higher education institution 1

(N = 206 (respondents with future applicants in their families)), %

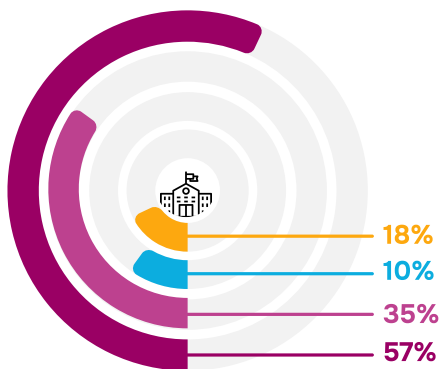
Q.: What higher education institution are you considering for admission?

Multiple choice

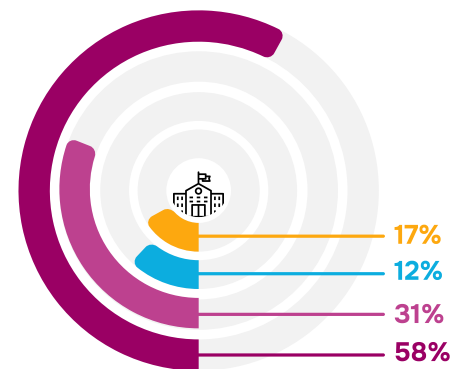
#### All respondents



#### Residing in Kherson



#### Not residing in Kherson



■ Ukrainian   
 ■ Kherson higher education institution   
 ■ Foreign   
 ■ Haven't thought about it yet

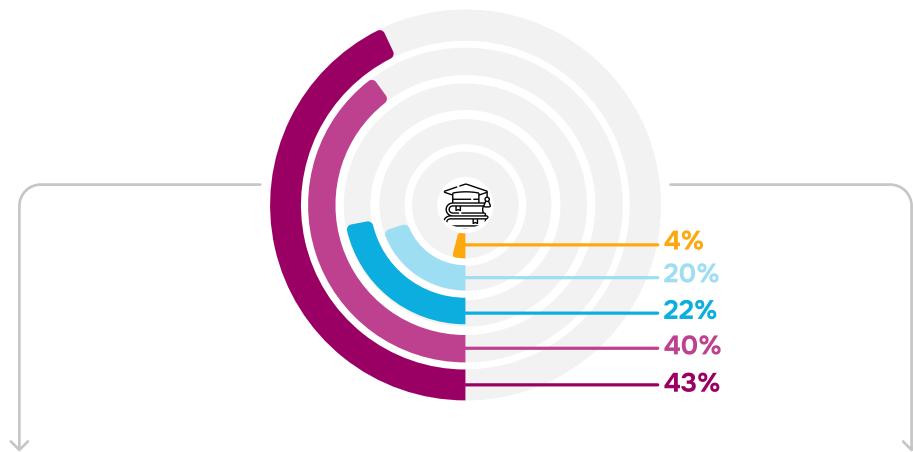
## Selecting a higher education institution 2

(N = 69 (respondents with future Kherson applicants in their families)), %

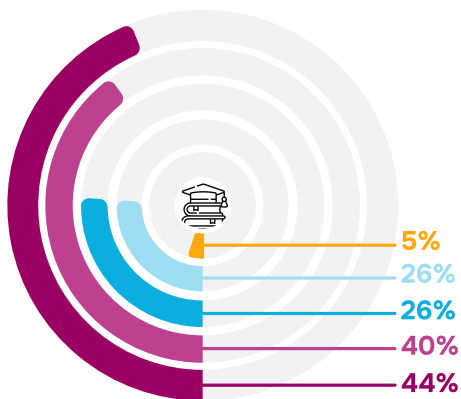
Q.: Which one exactly?

Multiple choice

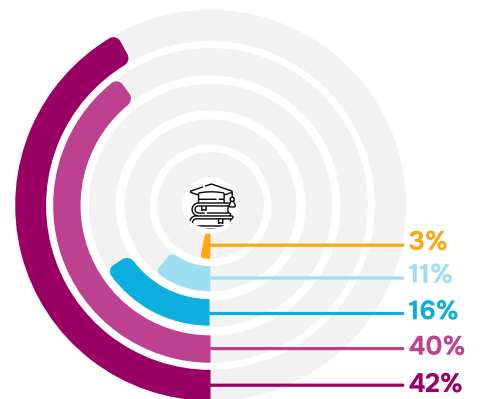
### All respondents



### Residing in Kherson



### Not residing in Kherson



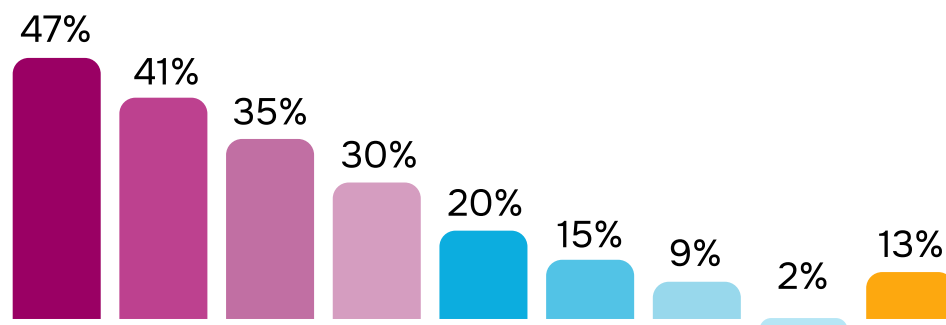
- KhSU – Kherson State University
- KhNTU – Kherson National Technical University
- KhDMA – Kherson State Maritime Academy
- KhDAEU – Kherson State Agrarian and Economic University
- Don't know yet / haven't selected yet

## Factors influencing the choice of a higher education institution, %

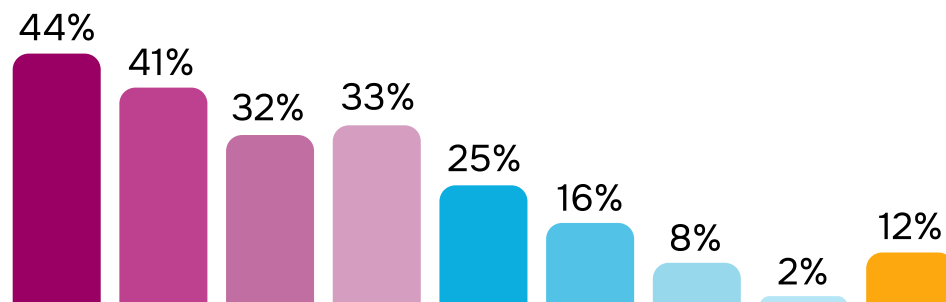
Q.: What do you consider when making a decision on a higher education institution to to be applied to by you or your family member?

### Multiple choice

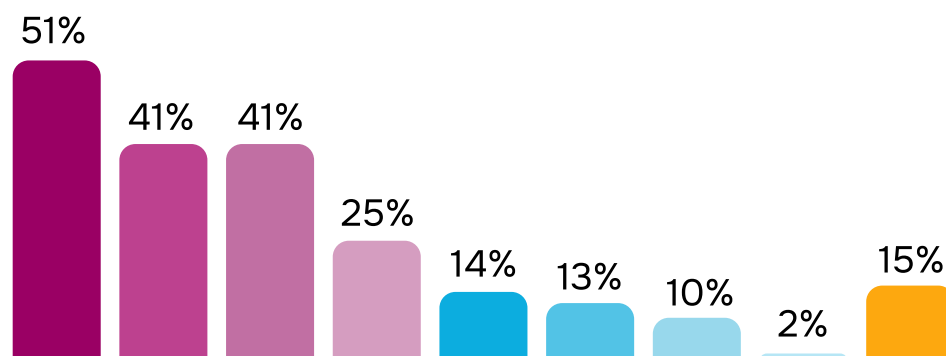
#### All respondents



#### Residing in Kherson



#### Not residing in Kherson



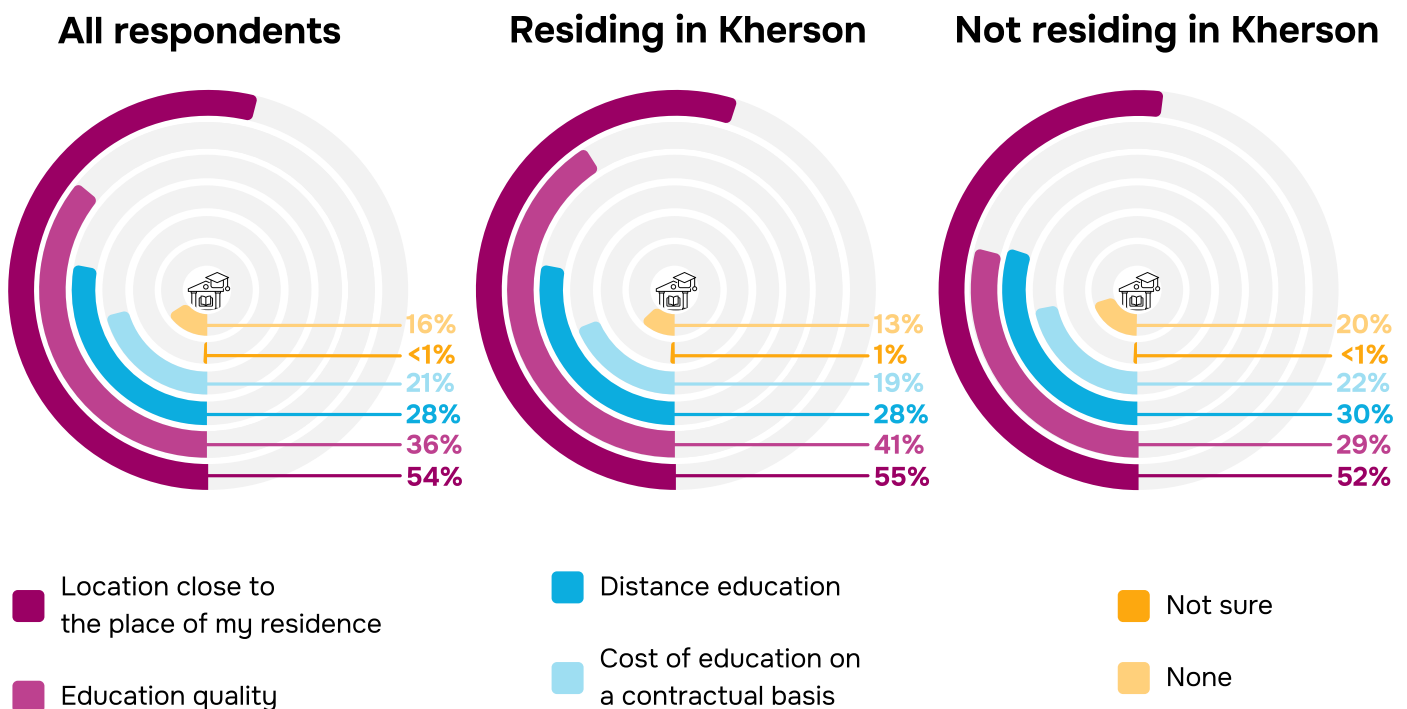
- The availability / number of state-funded places
- Impressions from meetings with higher education institution lecturers
- Proposals of the Employment Center
- The cost of education on a contractual basis
- Reviews in social networks
- Advertisement
- Friends' recommendations
- Website of a higher education institution
- Other

## SECTION 5. IMAGE OF KHERSON HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

### Advantages of Kherson higher education institutions

**Q.:** In your opinion, what are the advantages of Kherson higher education institutions?

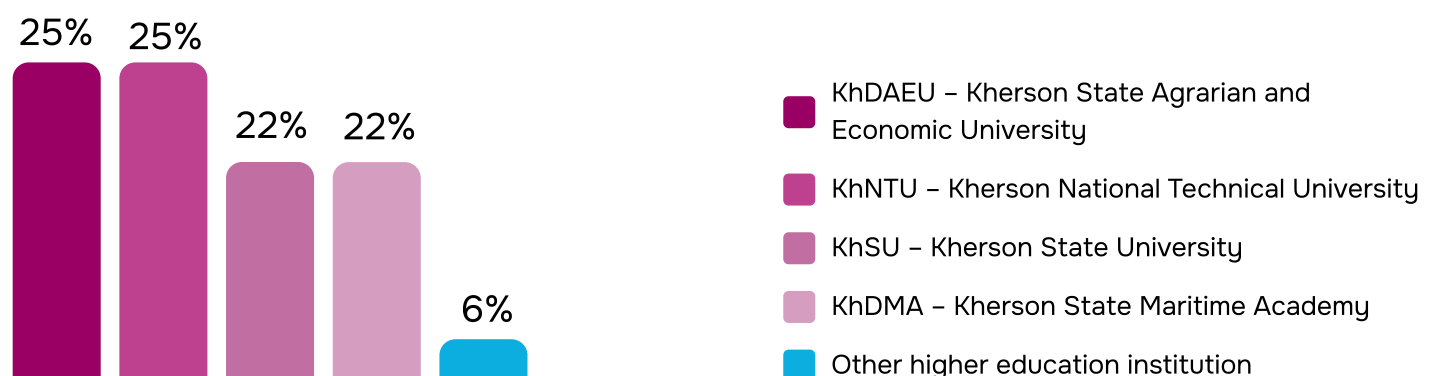
Multiple choice



### The importance of support to Kherson higher education institutions

**Q.:** Which Kherson higher education institution is the most important for the Kherson city community thus requiring support and development?

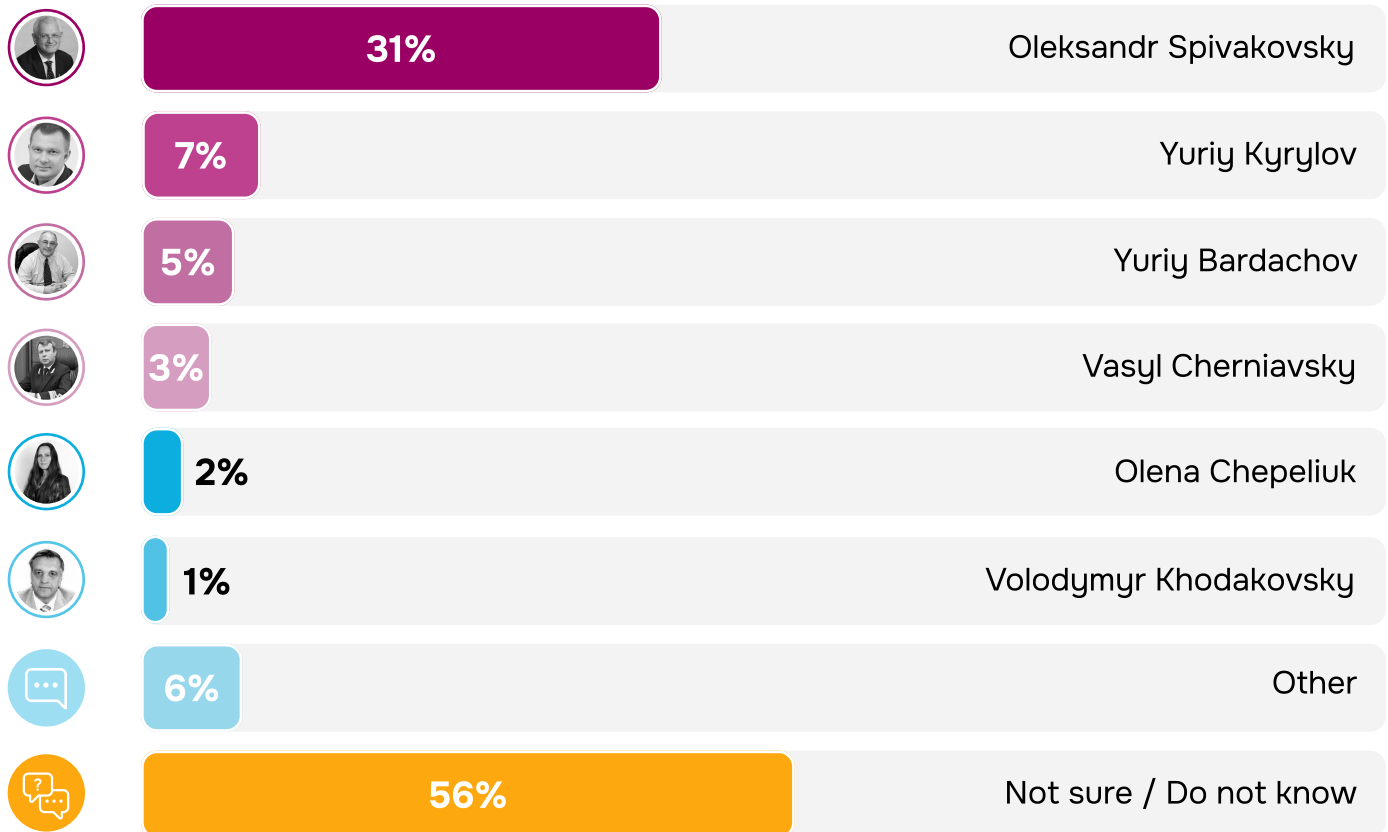
Multiple choice



## The popularity of Kherson higher education institutions' rectors

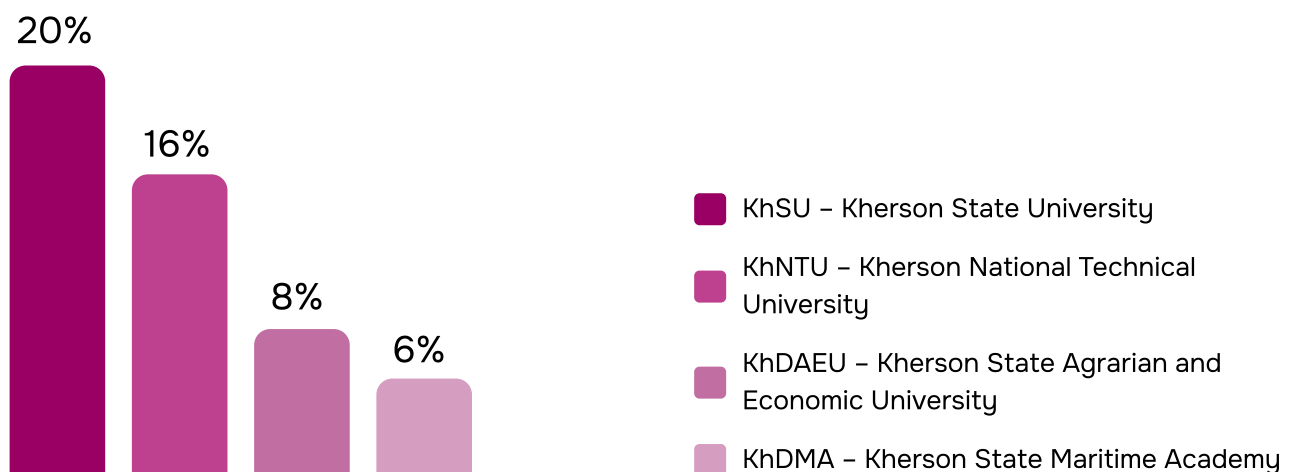
Q.: Whom of Kherson higher education institutions' rectors do you know?

Open question



## Relation to Kherson higher education institutions

Q.: If you graduated from one of Kherson higher education institutions, which one it was?



# Respondents' profile

## Gender, %



♀ Female    ♂ Male

## Age, %



18-29    30-44    45-59    60+

## Residing before 24.02.2022, %



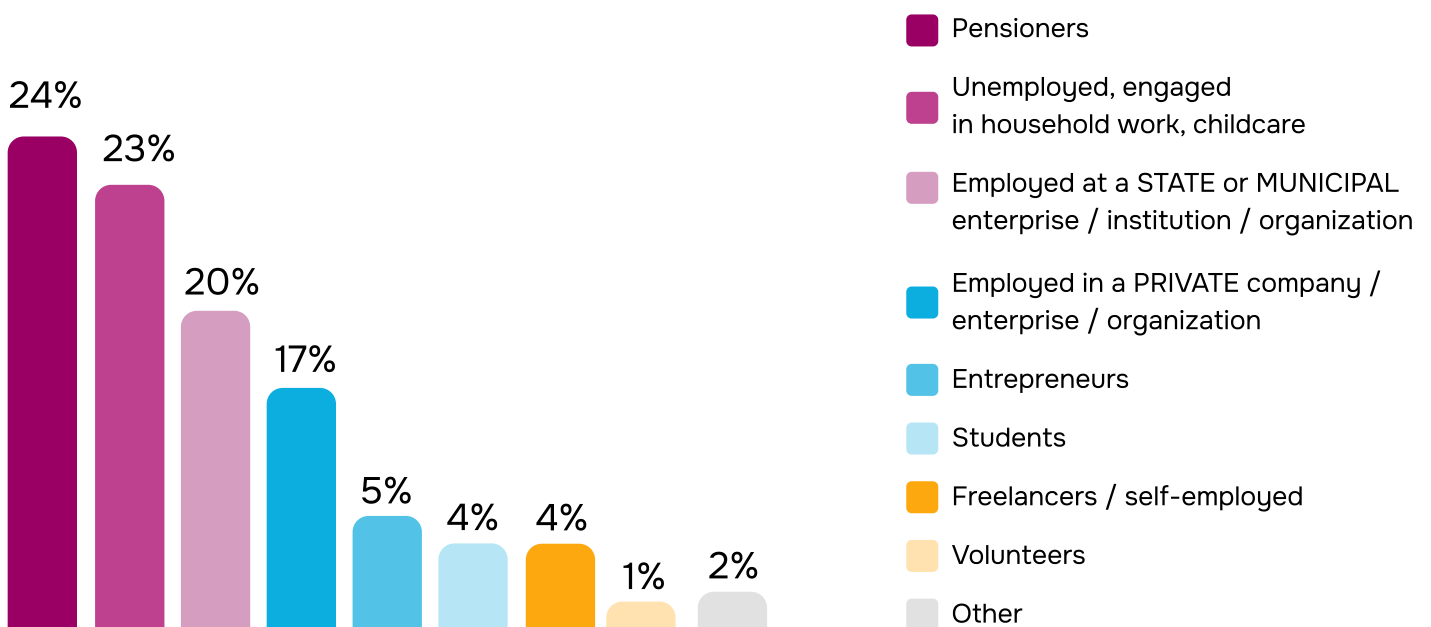
City of Kherson    Other settlements of the Kherson city community

## Currently residing, %



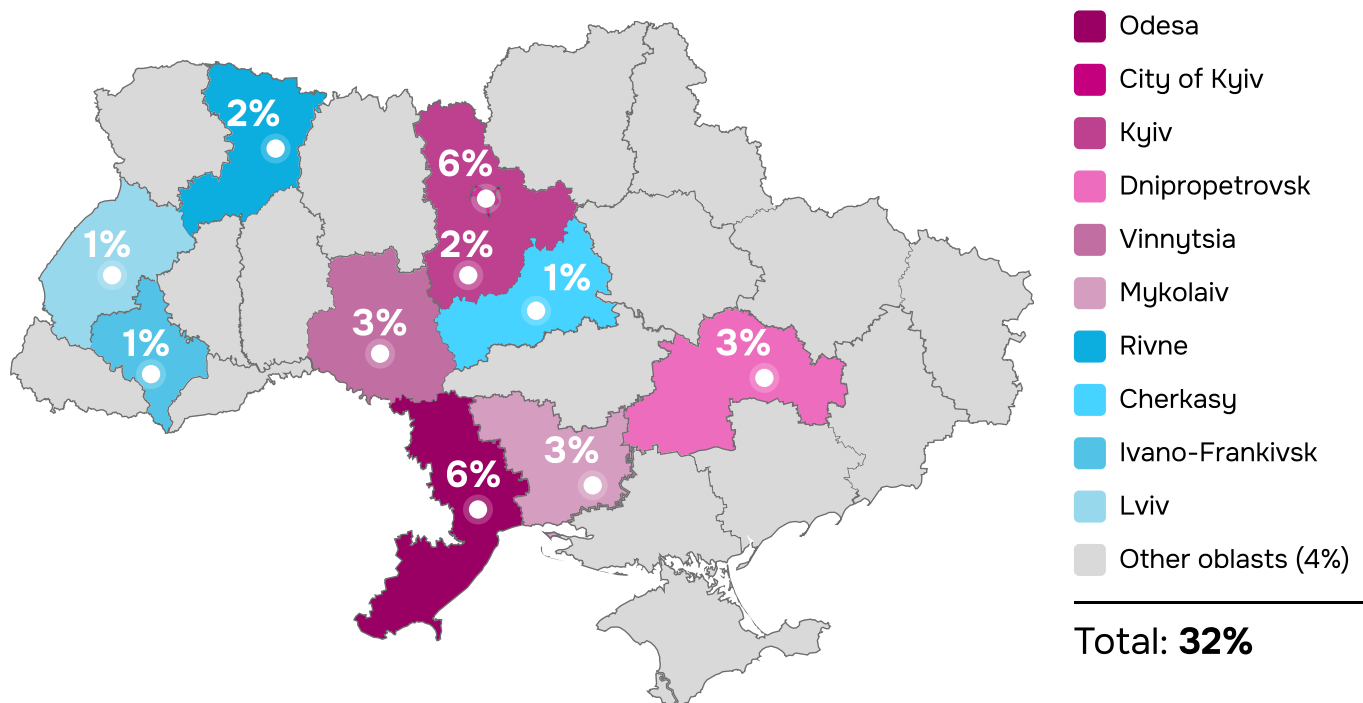
In Kherson    In another oblast of Ukraine    Abroad

## Current type of employment, %





### IDPs in other regions of Ukraine, %



### IDPs abroad, %

