

# THE EXPERIENCE OF PSYCHOSOCIAL ONLINE COUNSELLING PROJECT IN UKRAINE ON IPSO-CARE PLATFORM

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**Rotary international**



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Value-based counseling (VBC) is a short-term psychodynamic intervention with a salutogenic approach that aims to improve clients' sense of coherence and self-efficacy in the course of a non-directive but carefully structured conversation. Randomized Controlled Trial of Effectiveness of Value Based Counselling, a Short-term Psychosocial Intervention for Refugees and Immigrants in Germany examines the effectiveness of VBC on the reduction of clinical symptoms, including depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, perceived stress, generalized anxiety disorder and somatic symptoms, and the improvement of daily functionality, resilience and perspective taking in an ongoing trial that involves 100 refugees and immigrants from various origin who are currently living in Germany. The study emphasizes the importance of culture-sensitive evidence-based interventions with a psychosocial perspective for survivors of war and violence, and encourages further research into the feasibility and effectiveness of Value-Based Counselling (VBC) in different settings. The assessment of the first 53 participants indicated a significantly greater reduction of all clinical symptoms and daily functionality impairment and a significant improvement of resilience and perspective taking among the participants who received counseling (n=26), compared to those on the waiting-list (n=27). Three-month follow-up assessments of participants in the counselling group showed that these improvements were long-lasting.

Since October 2017 the project of Psychosocial Care for IDPs and the war affected population in Ukraine has been in place (short name "Let's talk"). The aim of the project is to provide professional, accessible, free for the users and fully anonymous psychosocial online care. The online counseling may be used by any person, but the target audience includes the people who in any way have been affected by the armed conflict: veterans, their families, internally displaced people etc. The counselors are professional psychologists who were trained within the scope of the project. Sessions may be held in Russian or Ukrainian, according to the user's choice. The project has been supported by the German non-for-profit public organization IPSO under the joint initiative of the Head of IPSO Inge Missmahl and Ukrainian specialists in psychosocial care, and funded by the grant from the Rotary International.

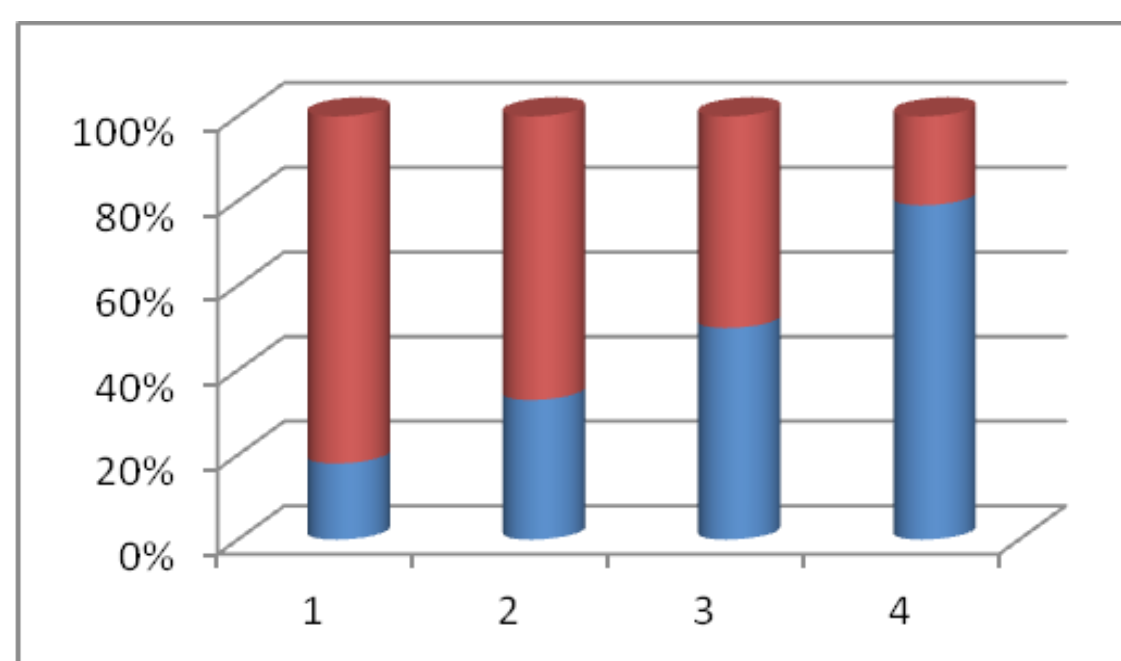
The key and most frequent issues mentioned by the clients are loneliness, the loss of the sense of life, fear, uncertainty, anxiety, difficulties in family relations, in particular, with children, job insecurity, addictions, psychosomatic disorders and some others.

At the early stages of the operations no-show cases were a significant problem: a client would register, select a counselor, appoint the date and time of the session, but would not show up afterwards. It is to be noted that information on the opportunity to get psychosocial online care is essentially communicated via social media; therefore, to decrease the number and further prevent no-show cases, a step-by-step registration and counselling procedure was developed. It enabled to gradually reduce the number of addresses resulting in no actual online sessions with a counsellor from 81.8% in October, 66.7% in November, 50% in December 2017 to 20.8% in January 2018. From February 2018 till February 2019 the number of no-show cases was approximately 15%.

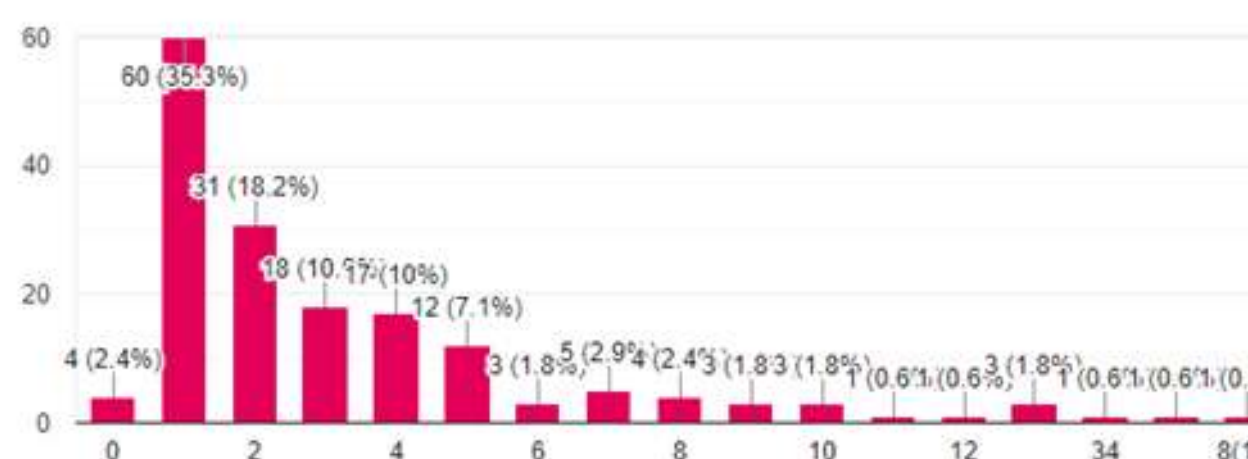
The highest number of addresses (35.3%) required one consultation for completion only, while 45.36% needed from 2 to 5 sessions. According to consultants' reports, 86.3% of the cases are assessed as being completed successfully.

Thus, the implementation of the Value-based counseling (VBC) under the Short-Term Psychosocial Intervention for IDP's in Ukraine implemented as a charitable humanitarian project has been successful and it is advisable to conduct a Randomized Controlled Trial of the Effectiveness of Value-Based Counseling in Ukraine.

## "No-show" cases vs "Success" cases



## Number of sessions



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