

SURVEYS WITH UKRAINIAN NATIONALS AND THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS CROSSING TO UKRAINE

Data collected from 06 Sep to 04 Oct 2022

Since 24 February 2022, people have been fleeing from Ukraine to the neighbouring countries as a result of the war in Ukraine. As of 04 October 2022, 645,561 refugees from Ukraine and Third Country Nationals (TCNs) were registered at border crossing points (BCPs) while entering from Ukraine into the Republic of Moldova. At the same time, movements of persons crossing back to Ukraine have also been reported. According to national authorities, 170,931 Ukrainian nationals and TCNs, who have entered into the Republic of Moldova after 24 February 2022, have since exited back to Ukraine (Source: General Inspectorate for Border Police).

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has conducted displacement and intention surveys with adults (18 years and above) crossing back to Ukraine, through CBS Axa Research, since April 2022. Data is collected at two main border crossing points (BCPs) with Ukraine – Palanca and Otaci. This report presents the main findings based on data collected between 06 September and 04 October 2022.

Individuals crossing into Ukraine are not necessarily returnees (many are making short visits) and conclusions on definitive trends cannot be drawn. The sample is not representative of all persons crossing to Ukraine, and results should only be considered as indicative.

768
Survey Respondents

 **386**
In Palanca BCP

 **382**
In Otaci BCP

KEY FINDINGS

- **97%** Ukrainian nationals, **1%** Moldovan nationals, **2%** TCNs
- **79%** women and **21%** men
- Women respondents are younger than men respondents
- **59%** have been staying in the Republic of Moldova; **53%** of those in the capital Chisinau
- **31%** have been staying in other European countries (Bulgaria, Germany, Romania mainly)
- **68%** crossing to Ukraine alone, **32%** in a group
- **79%** of those travelling alone are women
- **45%** travelling to Ukraine for a short visit; of whom **47%** want to reunite with family
- **42%** intend to remain in Ukraine; of whom **39%** want to reunite with family
- **89%** intend to stay in the habitual place of residence
- **69%** were crossing to Ukraine via cars, **14%** by foot and the remaining **17%** by buses and minibuses
- **42%** reported Odesa oblast as region of origin
- Priority needs: **37%** financial assistance, **15%** healthcare services, **9%** food and **8%** employment opportunities

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

A total of 768 individuals were interviewed, 678 respondents between 06 and 30 September and 90 respondents between 02 and 04 October 2022. All survey participants indicated that they were going to Ukraine and cited the war in Ukraine as the main reason for displacement from the country. Most of the respondents travelling to Ukraine were Ukrainian nationals (97%) and the remaining (3%) were citizens of other countries, mainly from the Republic of Moldova (37%) and Azerbaijan (26%), followed by citizens from Uzbekistan and Russian Federation (7% each) and Bulgaria, China, Georgia, Greece, India and Israel (less than 4% each).

Figure 1: Distribution of respondents by nationality (%)

97%	1%	2%
Ukrainian nationals	Moldovan nationals	Third-country nationals

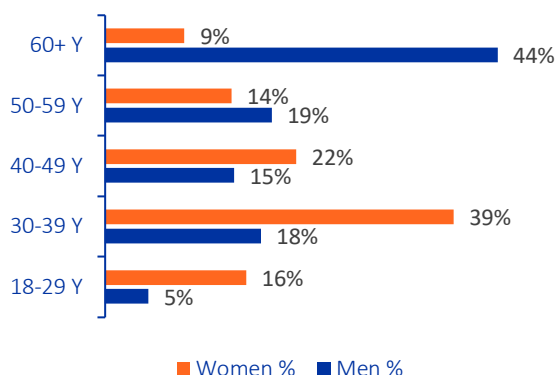
Figure 2: Distribution of all respondents, by sex (%)

 79%	 21%
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Most respondents, or 79 per cent, were women, while men represented 21 per cent of the sample. The share of women was higher among Ukrainian nationals (80%) and lower among respondents of other nationalities (44%). The average age of respondents was 43 years old.

The breakdown of interviewed respondents by age cohorts reveals that women respondents, on average, are younger than men respondents. More than one third of women, or 39 per cent, were aged 30-39 years, compared to 18 per cent of men from the same age group. A plurality of men, 44 per cent, were above 60 years old, while only 9 per cent of women comprised the same age group.

Figure 3: Age distribution of all respondents, by gender (%)



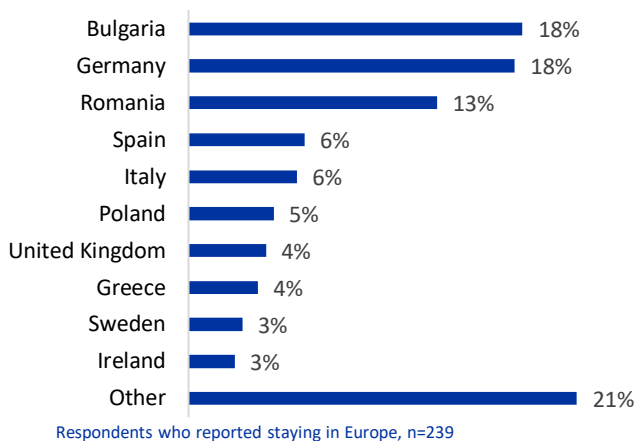
Out of the total 768 respondents, 59 per cent have been staying in the Republic of Moldova after leaving Ukraine, 31 per cent were staying in other European countries, and the remaining 10 per cent have been staying elsewhere.

Figure 4: Main countries of staying since fleeing Ukraine (%)



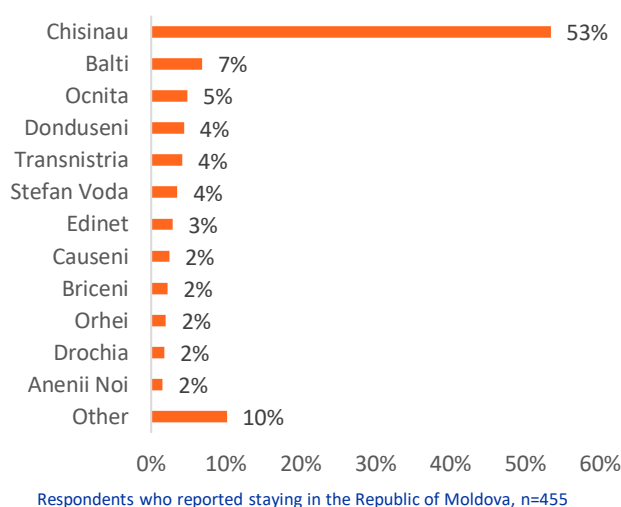
Among those who have been staying in Europe, higher shares reported staying in Bulgaria and Germany (18% each), followed by Romania (13%), Spain (6%), Italy (6%) and Poland (5%), with smaller shares reporting to have stayed in 26 other countries in Europe. The majority of those who have been staying outside of Europe and the Republic of Moldova were living in Türkiye (53%), Israel (18%), Azerbaijan (9%) and other countries.

Figure 5: Main countries of stay in Europe since fleeing Ukraine (%)



More than half of those who have been staying in the Republic of Moldova were residing in Chisinau (53%), followed by the districts of Balti (7%), Ocnita (5%), Donduseni (4%), Transnistria region and Stefan Voda (4% each) and others (23%).

Figure 6: Main areas of residence in the Republic of Moldova since fleeing Ukraine (%)



TRAVEL CHARACTERISTICS

Around 68 per cent of those surveyed were going to Ukraine alone, and the remaining 32 per cent were travelling in a group, with the same or different group of people than those they exited Ukraine with.

Figure 7: Distribution of respondents by travel mode (%)





Out of those going back to Ukraine alone, 51 per cent were alone when they left Ukraine and 49 per cent were with a group at the timing of fleeing Ukraine.



In the case of respondents travelling in a group, 82 per cent were crossing with the same group of people they left Ukraine with, 17 per cent with some of the same group members they left with and 1 per cent with a different group.

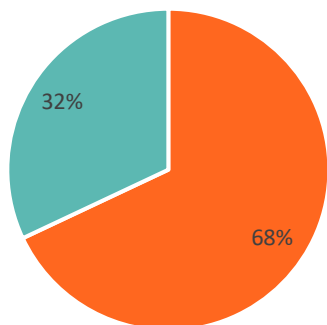
Among the 32 per cent travelling in a group, around 83 per cent were going to Ukraine with immediate family members, 13 per cent were travelling with relatives and 6 per cent were travelling with friends and neighbors.

Among those travelling with a group, 63 per cent were travelling with at least one child below 18 years of age. About 28 per cent of respondents reported that they were travelling with at least one older person (60 years and above) and 14 per cent were travelling with a person with a serious health condition.



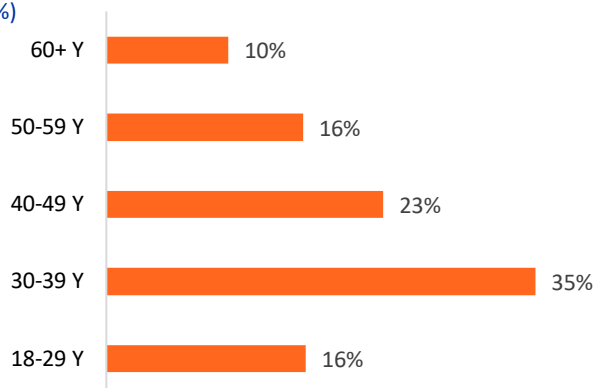
Women were the majority among those travelling to Ukraine alone (79%), many of them aged 30-39 years (35%). However, about 16 percent of women travelling alone were young women aged 18-29 years and another 10 percent were older women aged 60 and above.

Figure 8: Distribution of women travelling alone and, in a group, (%)



■ Women travelling alone ■ Women travelling in a group

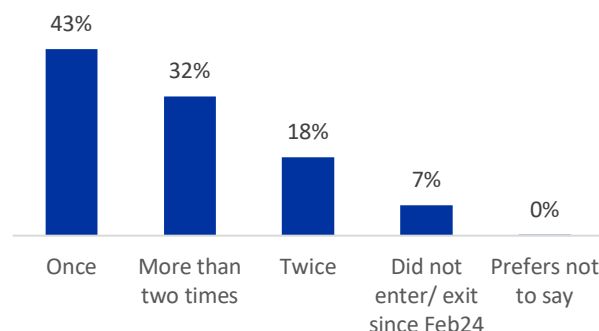
Figure 9: Age distribution of women respondents travelling alone (%)



Women respondents who reported travelling alone, n=411

Around 43 per cent of respondents were crossing the border between Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova only once since the beginning of the war, while 18 per cent crossed it twice, 32 per cent travelled back more than twice, 7 per cent did not cross it since 24 February 2022 and less than 1% preferred not to answer to this question.

Figure 10: Number of crossings at Moldovan/ Ukrainian border (%)



INTENTIONS

When asked about their intentions, 45 per cent reported that they were travelling for a short visit, 42 per cent reported that they intend to stay in Ukraine, around 13 per cent were unsure of their intentions and 1 per cent preferred not to answer. The share of respondents who intend to travel to Ukraine for a short visit is higher for those who were residing in the Republic of Moldova (72%) than those who were travelling from Europe and other countries (28%).

Figure 11: Reported intended duration of stay of respondents, by nationality (%)

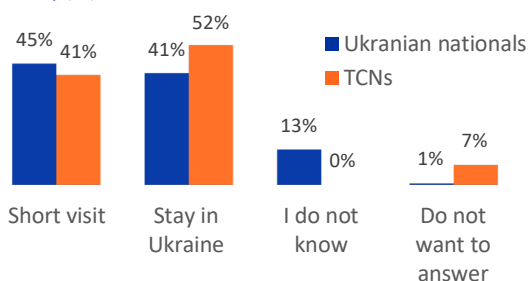
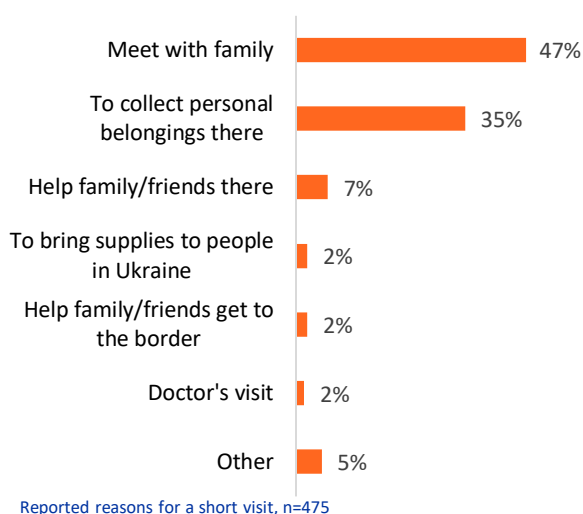


Figure 12: Distribution of respondents by intended duration to stay by main country of residence outside of Ukraine (Europe, Moldova, other), and gender (%)



Among those who intended to do a short visit to Ukraine, 47 per cent reported that they wanted to meet with family members in Ukraine and 35 per cent were travelling to collect personal belongings that were left in the country. Around seven per cent wanted to help family members or friends in Ukraine. Other reasons expressed by respondents were the intend to bring some supplies to people in Ukraine (2%), to help someone else reach the border (2%) and the need to attend medical appointments (2%), and the like.

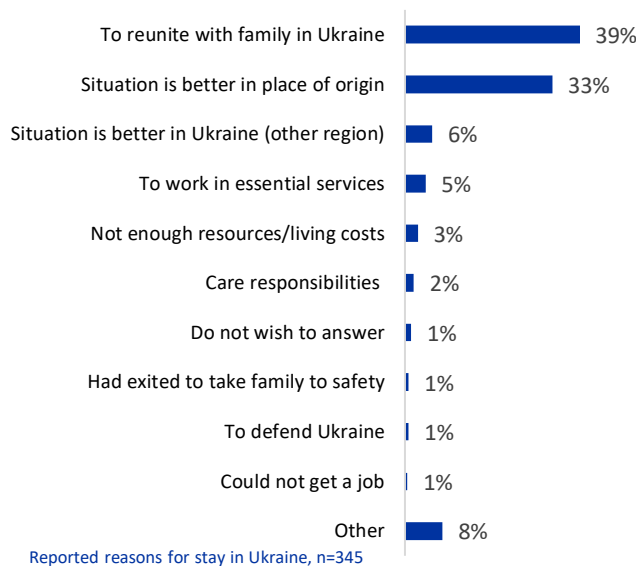
Figure 13: Reported reasons among respondents intending to do a short visit to Ukraine (% , more than one option possible)



Of those intending to do a short visit, the majority planned to spend a few days in Ukraine (44%), while 39 per cent intended to stay for about one week, 16 per cent for about one month and the remaining 1 per cent did not specify.

Among those who reported their intention to remain in Ukraine, around 39 per cent reported that they want to reunite with family members, 33 per cent perceived that the situation was improving in their place of origin and other 6 per cent considered that situation is better in Ukraine. About five per cent reported to be working in essential services, three per cent reported the lack of resources and two per cent declared to have care responsibilities as one of the main reasons.

Figure 14: Reported reasons among respondents intending to stay in Ukraine (% , more than one option possible)



Among the women respondents, 48 per cent intended to stay for a short period of time and 38 per cent had an intention to remain in Ukraine, 17 per cent were unsure of their intended duration of stay and the remaining 1 per cent did not want to answer.

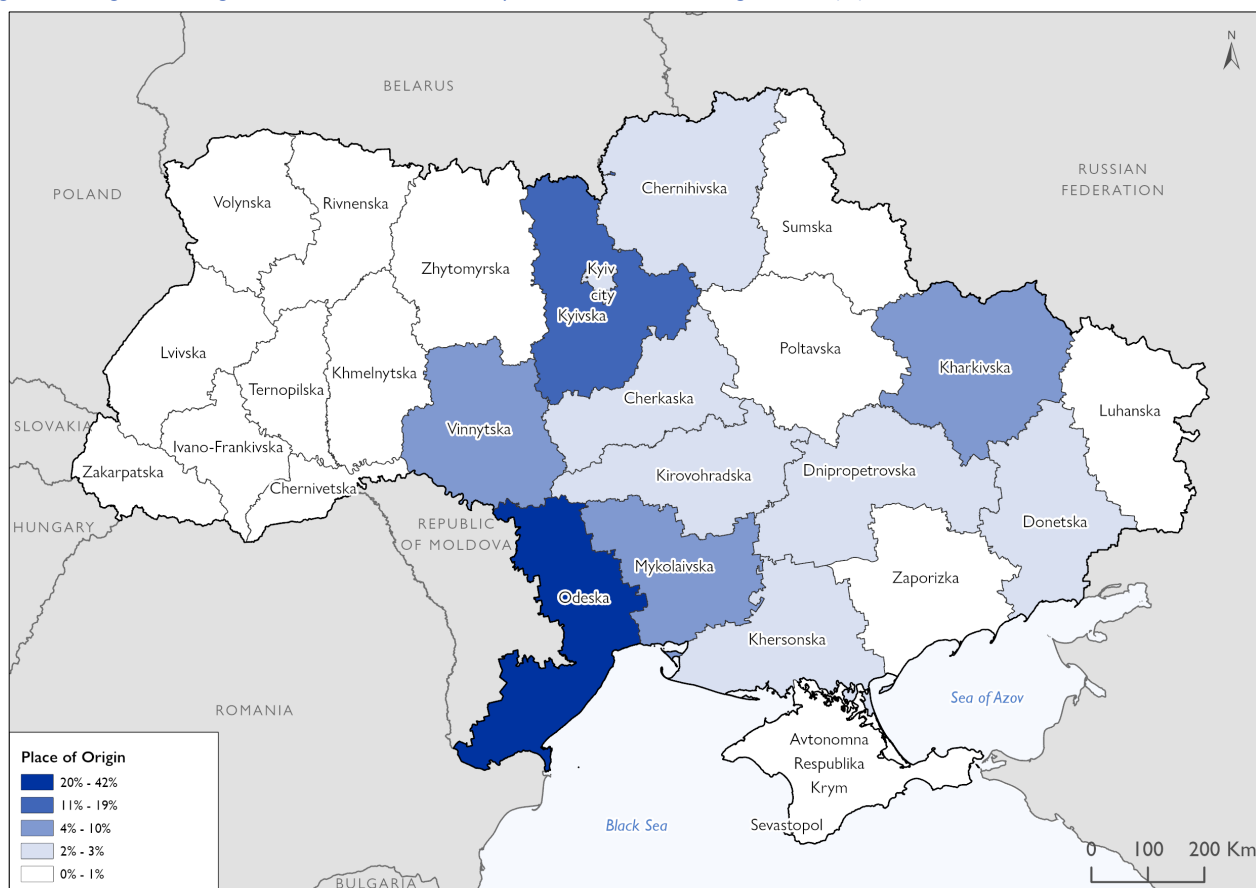
Most refugees from Ukraine and TCNs interviewed reported that they intended to stay in their homes or their usual place of residence in Ukraine (82%), while eight per cent were planning to be hosted by relatives and another five per cent to stay with friends. Around four per cent planned to stay in hotels or other private accommodations. Around one per cent reported to stay at organized reception center and the remaining one per cent reported not knowing or other.

Out of the total 768 survey respondents, 69 per cent were going back to Ukraine by car and 14 per cent by foot, while 11 per cent in buses and another 6 per cent in minibuses. The main means of transportation varied between the two BCPs where interviews were collected. In Otaci BCP, in the northern part of the Republic of Moldova, most respondents (58%) were travelling by car, followed by foot (21%), bus (19%) and minibus (2%). In the south of the country, in Palanca BCP, most respondents (79%) were travelling by car, followed by minibus (10%), by foot (7%) and bus (4%).

REGIONS OF ORIGIN AND DESTINATION IN UKRAINE

The Odeska region was reported by 42 per cent of respondents as the region of usual residence before leaving Ukraine, followed by the Kyivska region (19%), the Vinnytska region (10%), the Mykolayivska region (7%), Kharkivska region (4%) and others (18%). The vast majority of respondents (89%) reported that they intend to go back to the same region, ten per cent reported their intention to go to another region while one per cent didn't know. Among the respondents going to another region, the most reported region was Odeska (41%), followed by Vinnytska (27%), Kyivska region (16%), city of Kyiv (5%) and others.

Figure 15: Regions of origin/ habitual residence of respondents, before leaving Ukraine (%)



This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown, and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

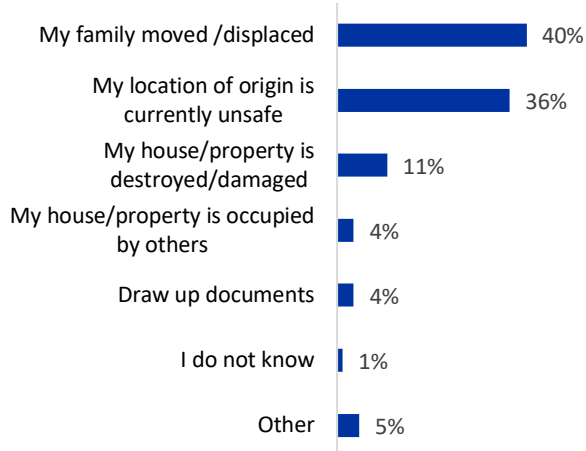
Figure 16: Distribution of respondents by intended destination (%)



Among the reasons not to go back to their place of origin, 40 per cent of respondents mentioned that their family had moved or was displaced to another part of the country.

Others reported that they perceived their place of origin was currently unsafe (36%), or that their house was destroyed (11%), or that their property is occupied (4%), and some respondents reported other reasons, for example the need to obtain documents and passports.

Figure 17: Main reasons travelling to a different oblast than the one of origin/ habitual residence (%)



MAIN NEEDS AT EXIT POINTS

The survey asked about the two main needs at exit border crossing points. Most respondents (70%) reported having no specific needs whilst crossing the border. However, among those who expressed specific needs, 37 per cent reported the need for financial support, 15 per cent for health care services and medicine, 9 per cent for food, 8 per cent for employment opportunities as the most reported needs at the time the interviews were conducted.

Women reported more frequently the need for financial support, medicines and health services, food, employment opportunities and hygiene items, while men reported to a higher extent the need for financial support and medicines and health services among the most pressing immediate needs.

Around five per cent of all respondents reported that they and/or their family members experienced unfair or unequal treatment based on nationality, ethnicity, or gender since they left their usual place of residence in Ukraine. Less than one per cent did not know or preferred not to answer, while the majority did not report any such experience.

Figure 18: Main needs reported at the exit crossing points (%)

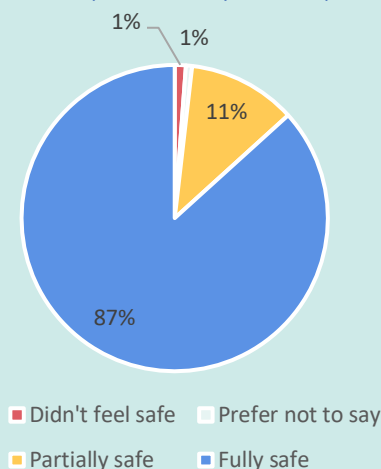


INSIGHTS FROM THE IMMIGRATION AND BORDER MANAGEMENT (IBM) UNIT

In this round, the questionnaire was revised to collect additional information regarding border management and report on the experience of refugees with authorities in the Republic of Moldova. The process was coordinated by DTM unit together with Immigration and Border Management (IBM) unit. A total of 768 individuals were interviewed about their perception of safety in the Republic of Moldova and the performance of border authorities.

Most of those surveyed declared they felt safe in Moldova. Out of a total of 768 respondents, 87 per cent felt fully safe, 11 per cent partially safe and only 1 per cent did not feel safe. The other one per cent preferred not to answer this question. Around 97 per cent declared they did not need to request police support during their stay in Moldova and only 3 per cent of respondents needed a form of assistance.

Figure 19: Perception of safety in the Republic of Moldova (%)



Most of those surveyed provided positive feedback regarding the performance of border authorities. From the total of 768 respondents, about 31 per cent rated the work and performance of Border Police as excellent, 63 per cent rated it as good, while only 4 per cent rated the performance as average and 1 per cent as bad. The remaining one per cent preferred not to answer. In relation to the Customs Service, around 29 per cent rated the performance as excellent, 65 per cent as good, 4 per cent perceived its performance average and 1 per cent as bad, the remaining 2 per cent preferred not to answer. As for the Bureau of Migration and Asylum, out of 768 respondents about 17 per cent rated their performance as excellent, 46 per cent as good, 5 per cent as average, less than 1 per cent bad and the remaining 33 per cent preferred not to answer.

Also, most individuals declared that they found the information received from customs authorities useful when crossing the border and entering the territory of Moldova. Around 32 per cent found it very good, 62 per cent rather good, 3 per cent rather bad and only 2 per cent very bad, the remaining one per cent preferred not to answer.

METHODOLOGY

The International Organization for Migration’s (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) is a system to track and monitor displacement and population mobility. It is designed to regularly and systematically capture, process and disseminate information to provide a better understanding of the movements and evolving needs of displaced populations, whether on site or en route.

These surveys are part of IOM’s DTM activities to monitor the displacement patterns, movement flows and intentions, regions of origin and most immediate needs of refugees from Ukraine and third country nationals (TCNs) who fled from Ukraine into neighbouring countries and other European countries since 24 February 2022 and are crossing back into Ukraine.

The survey is based on DTM’s tools to captures the demographic profiles for refugees of any nationality who fled Ukraine, and of the group they are travelling with, if any; it asks about intentions relative to their stay and destination; it gathers information regarding a set of main needs that the respondents expressed as more pressing at the moment of the interview.

Data are collected at selected border crossing points, at entry, exit and transit locations, between the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. Face-to-face interviews were conducted in Russian, Romanian and English, by trained enumerators of IOM’s implementing partner, CBS Axa Research, using a mobile application.

The interviews are anonymous and conducted one-on-one with respondents, provided they consent to be interviewed after a brief introduction. Only adults (18+) were approached, in a simple random sample, and those interviewed in the survey were only those populations who were crossing back to Ukraine from the Republic of Moldova since April 2022.

The data presented in this document are representative of the individuals surveyed in the covered locations and during the indicated timeframe. In September 2022, the questionnaire was improved and revised to include more questions regarding border management and experience of refugees with authorities in Republic of Moldova which was coordinated by the DTM unit together with the Immigration and Border Management (IBM) unit. The data should not be generalized to represent the whole displaced population outside Ukraine.

