

# LATVIA

## Surveys with Refugees from Ukraine: Needs, Intentions, and Integration Challenges



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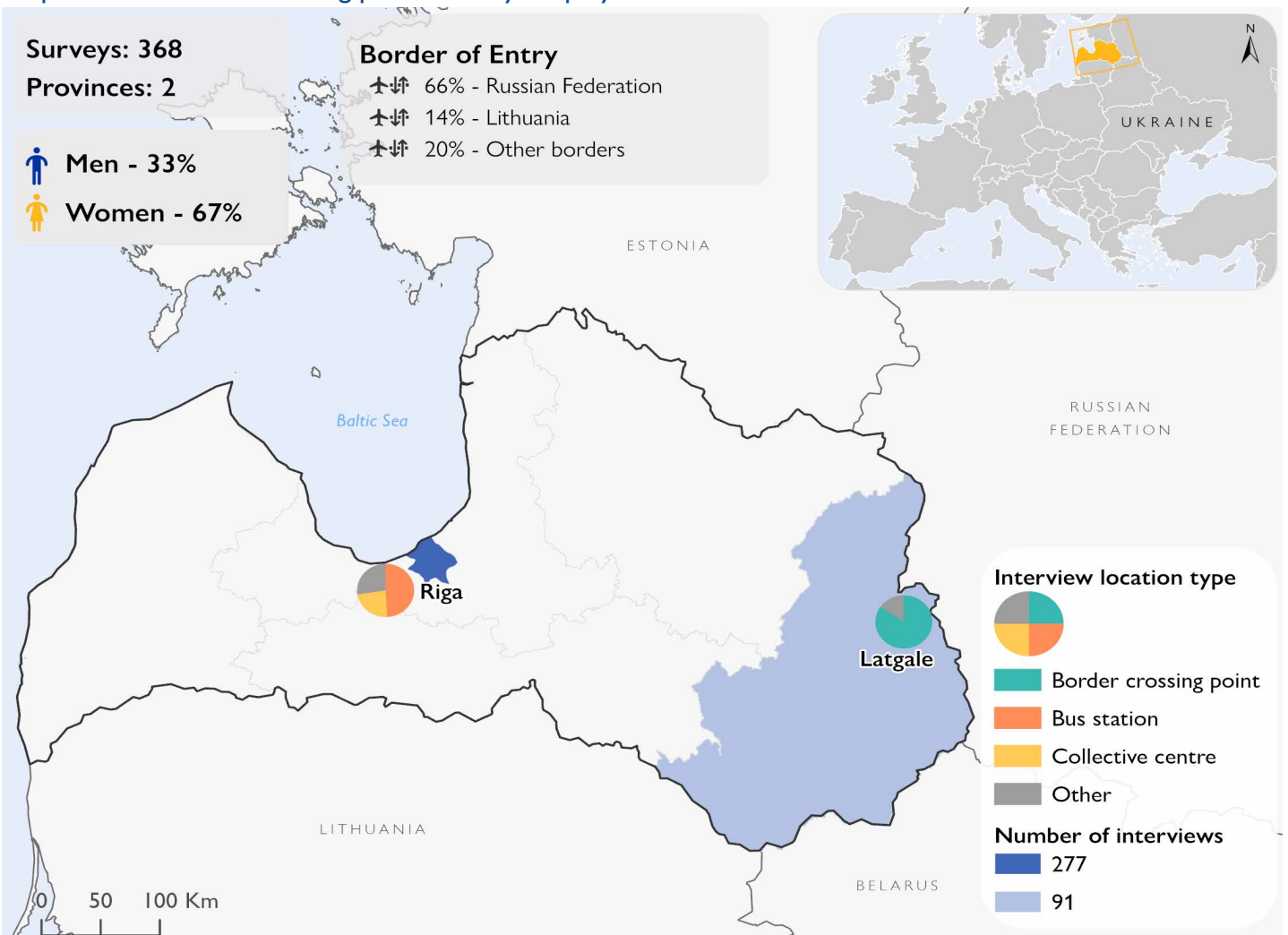
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## KEY FINDINGS

- **Top oblasts of origin:** Kharkivska (19%), Luhanska (17%), Donetsk (17%), Zaporizka (10%), Khersonska (9%).
- **Intentions to move:** 36% have no intentions to move, 35% want to move to a different country (Top 3 destinations were: Germany, Poland, and Finland), 9% would like to get back to their region of origin in Ukraine, 7% want to move to another location in Ukraine, 1% expressed a wish to move within Latvia.
- **Employment status:** employed (17%), unemployed and looking for a job (17%), unemployed and not looking for a job (17%), retired (19%), self-employed (8%), student (5%), daily worker (4%), on a maternity/paternity leave (3%).
- **Top needs upon return:\*** housing (41%), cash support (40%), employment (35%), information (21%), transportation (15%), medical needs (10%), trainings (5%).
- **Top areas of assistance received:\*** food products (90%), transportation (60%), personal hygiene and sanitary supplies (48%), clothes and shoes (34%), long-term accommodation (30%), financial support (22%), toys (13%).
- **Top inclusion challenges:\*** financial issues (36%), language barrier (32%), employment (28%), racism (21%), housing (19%), information (15%), documentation (13%), recognition of disabilities (13%).

\* more than one answer possible

Map 1: Latvia, border crossing points, surveys deployed & locations



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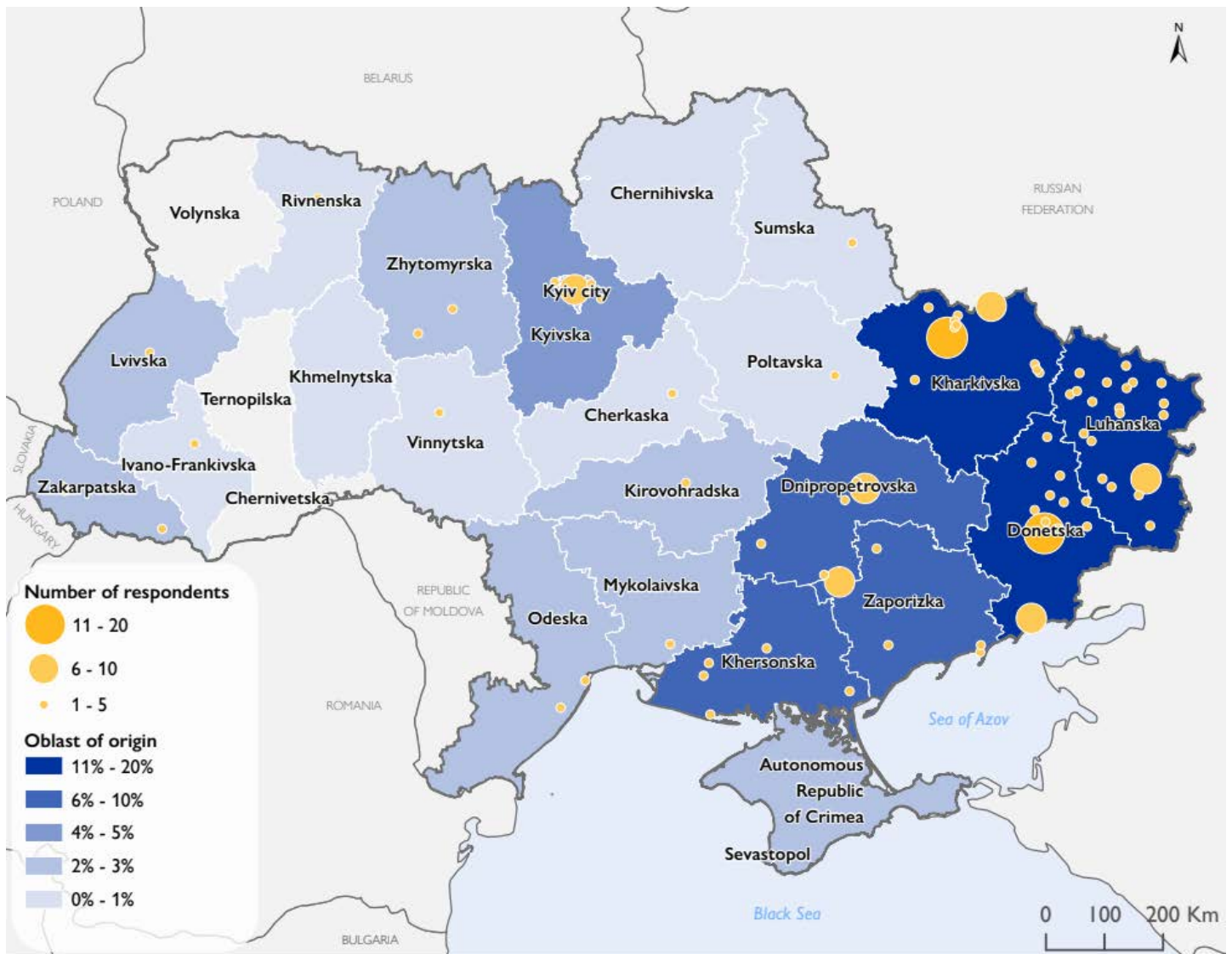
## I. Socio-Demographic Profile

### Oblast (region) of origin

The majority came from the eastern parts of the country, with the highest share of respondents coming from Kharkivska (19%), Luhanska (17%), Donetskka (17%), Zaporizka (10%), Khersonska (9%). The remaining respondents (28%) lived in other 17 regions throughout Ukraine.

These included Dnipropetrovska (7%), Kyivska (5%), Zhytomyrska, Odeska and the city of Kyiv (2% each), Vinnytska, Zakarpatska, Kirovohradska, Lvivska, Mykolaivska, Rivnenska, Sumska, Khmelnytska, Cherkaska, Chernihivska and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (1% each).

Map 2: Oblast of origin before leaving Ukraine (%)



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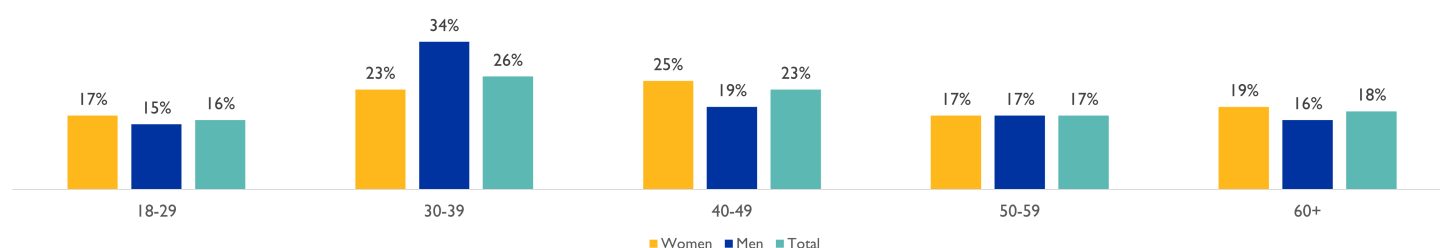
## Gender and age

Sixty-seven per cent of the respondents were women, while men were 33 per cent. Over one fourth of respondents were between 30 and 39 years of age (26%), followed by those between 40 and 49 (23%), 60 years and above (18%).

When looking at data disaggregated by gender, the average age for women (44) in the sample was slightly

higher than the men's (43). The largest age group for women was of those between 40 and 49 years old (25%), followed by those aged between 30 and 39 (23%). Among men, the largest groups were aged between 30 and 39 years (34%) and between 40 and 49 (19%).

Figure 1: Age, by gender and total (%)

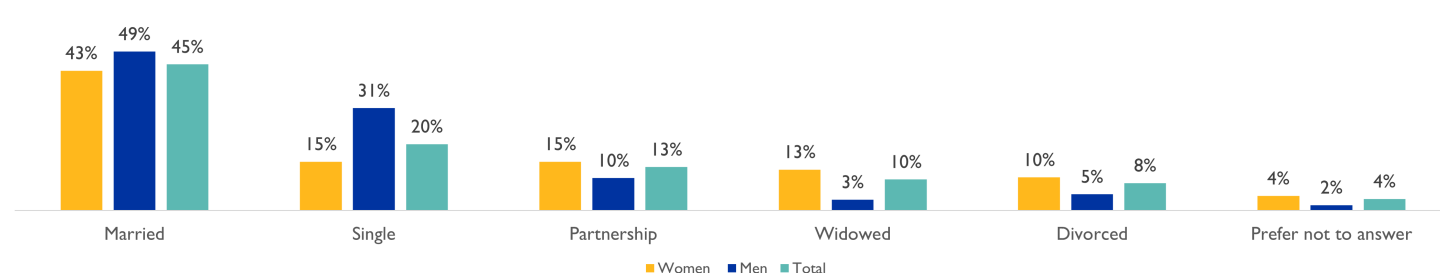


## Marital status

A total of 45 per cent of the respondents were married, while another 20 per cent were single. Others were in a partnership or widowed (13% and 10% respectively). The remaining respondents were either divorced (8%) or preferred not to answer (4%).

The share of married persons was slightly higher among men than among women (49% versus 43%), while women were more likely to be widowed than men in the sample (13% versus 3%). Women were twice as likely than men to be divorced (10% versus 5%).

Figure 2: Marital status, by gender and total (%)

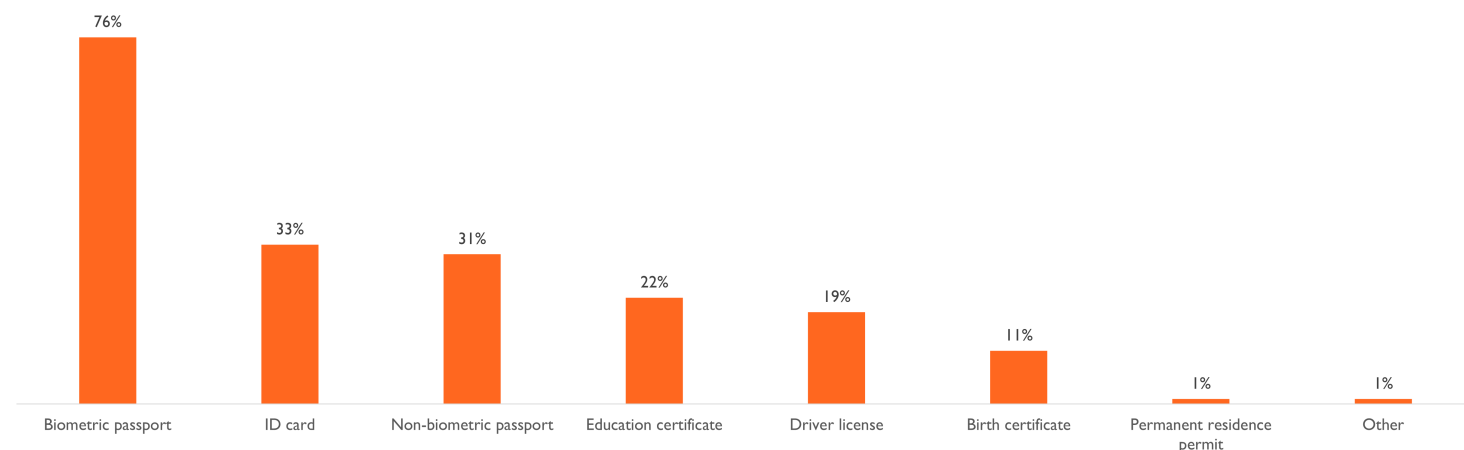


## Documents possessed at the time of interview

The majority of the respondents travelled with more than one document. That being said, most respondents (76%) travelled with their biometric passport, 33 per cent were in possession of their ID card, 31 per cent had non-biometric passport.

Another 22 per cent travelled with their education certificate, 19 per cent had a driver license, eleven per cent travelled with their birth certificate. The remaining two per cent declared having a permanent residence permit and other non-specified documents (1% each).

Figure 3: Documents in possession of respondents at the time of interview (%)  
(more than one answer possible)



### Average time spent outside Ukraine since initial displacement

The approximate duration of displacement can be assessed looking at the difference between respondents' initial date of displacement from Ukraine, and the date of interview. Most respondents were displaced in the early months of 2023, about a year after the war started. For instance, over half of the respondents (55%) were initially displaced in January, February, and March of 2023. It is worth noticing that interviews took place not only in cities, but also in border crossing points which may affect these outcomes.

The remaining 45 per cent of respondents were initially displaced in 2022. Among them, 12 per cent were displaced in March and April 2022, giving them from 9 to 12 months since their initial date of displacement and the date of assessment. Between May and December 2022, the rate of displacement varied between 1 to 5 per cent, therefore, respondents spent 1-10 months in displacement at the time of assessment.

Table 1: Approximate time spent in displacement until date of interview (%)

Date since initial displacement	Approximate time spent until date of interview	% Of respondents
Before 2022	1-6 years	1%
22-Jan	12-14 months	0%
22-Feb	11-13 months	1%
22-Mar	10-12 months	7%
22-Apr	9-11 months	5%
22-May	8-10 months	5%
22-Jun	7-9 months	4%
22-Jul	6-8 months	2%
22-Aug	5-7 months	4%
22-Sep	4-6 months	4%
22-Oct	3-5 months	3%
22-Nov	2-4 months	4%
22-Dec	1-3 months	5%
23-Jan	<1-2 months	21%
23-Feb	<1-1 month	13%
23-Mar	<1 month	21%

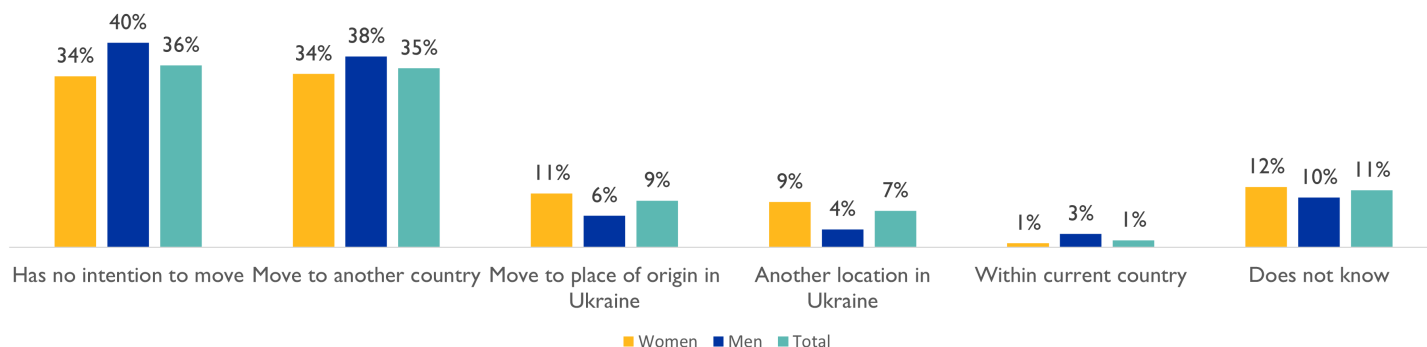
## 2. Intentions

### Intention to move elsewhere or stay in current location

Thirty-seven per cent of respondents interviewed declared their intention to remain in Latvia either in their current location (36%) or a different location in Latvia (1%). An additional 35 per cent stated their desire to move to a different country, while 16 per cent had plans to return to their place of origin in Ukraine or relocate to another location within Ukraine (9% and 7%

respectively). The remaining respondents were unsure about their future plans (11%). When looking at the data disaggregated by gender, men were slightly more likely to consider relocating to another country than women (38% versus 34%). In contrast, the probability of women moving to their place of origin in Ukraine was higher than that of men (11% versus 6%).

Figure 4: Respondents' intention to move from current location, by gender and total (%)

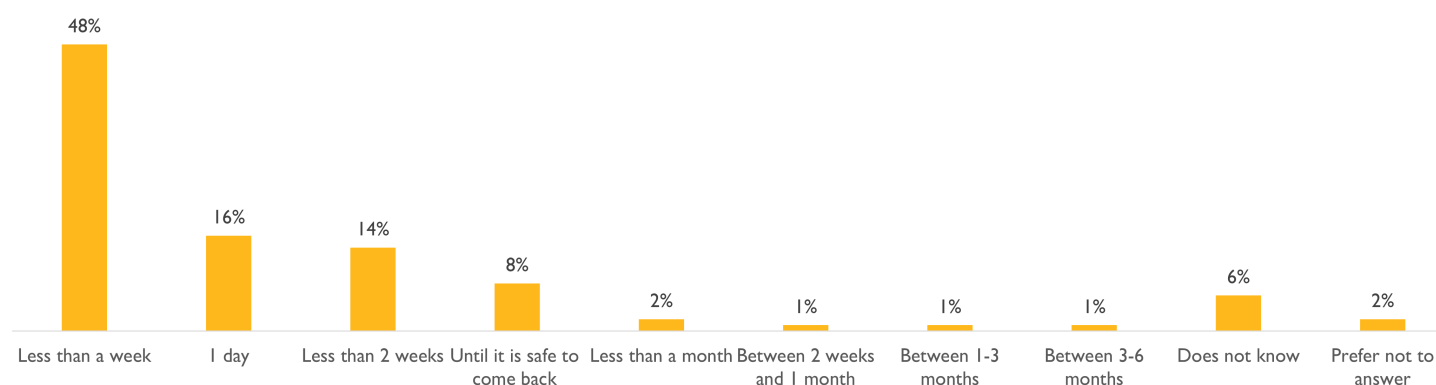


### Intended length of stay in current location

Out of those intending to move within Latvia, Ukraine or elsewhere (N=231), forty-eight per cent planned to stay less than a week in the location where they were interviewed before moving onwards. About 16 per cent of respondents intended to stay for one day, another 14 per cent planned to stay less than two weeks, eight per cent mentioned they would stay until it

is safe to return. Lastly, two per cent intended to stay for less than a month, three per cent between two weeks and one month, between one and three months, or between three and six months (1% each). The remaining eight per cent either did not know or preferred not to answer (6% and 2% respectively).

Figure 5: Intended length of stay in current location before moving elsewhere (%)



## Intended oblast of destination in Ukraine and reasons to go back

Out of those set on returning to Ukraine (N=57), 56 per cent planned to go back to the same oblast of origin, while the remaining 44 per cent (25 respondents) wanted to reach a different region in Ukraine.

Specifically, eight of these respondents mentioned various oblasts, including Rivnenska, Kharkivska, Khersonska, and Khmelnytska (with 2 respondents each). Seven respondents named Vinnytska, Zhytomyrska, Zakarpatska, Zaporizka, Luhanska, Odeska, and the city of Kyiv (with 1 respondent each).

Additionally, six respondents mentioned Donetsk and Lvivska (with 3 respondents each), while the remaining four respondents specified their intention to return to the city of Kyiv.

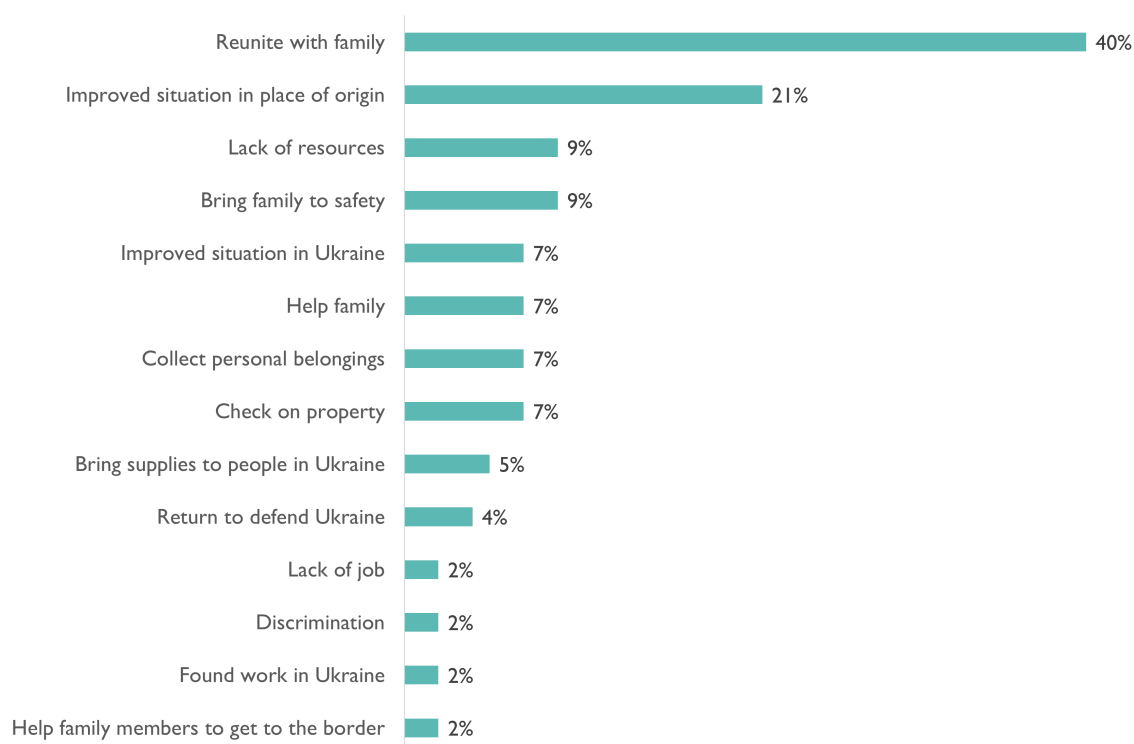
Out of those intending to go back to Ukraine, either to the same oblast of origin (N=32), or to an alternative oblast (N=25), 40 per cent indicated that

they intended to reunite with their family. An additional 21 per cent of respondents planned to return due to the improved situation in their place of origin, 18 per wanted to return due to resource difficulties and the need to ensure their family's safety (9% each).

Meanwhile, 28 per cent of respondents had other various reasons: motivations included improved situation in Ukraine, the desire to help family, collecting personal belongings, and checking on their property (7% each).

Five per cent of respondents intended to bring supplies to people in Ukraine, four per cent expressed their intention to return to defend Ukraine and the remaining reasons for returning to Ukraine included a lack of job opportunities, experiences of discrimination, finding work in Ukraine, and the desire to assist family members in reaching the border (2% each).

Figure 6: Reasons for choosing Ukraine as intended destination, total, N=57 (%) (more than one answer possible)



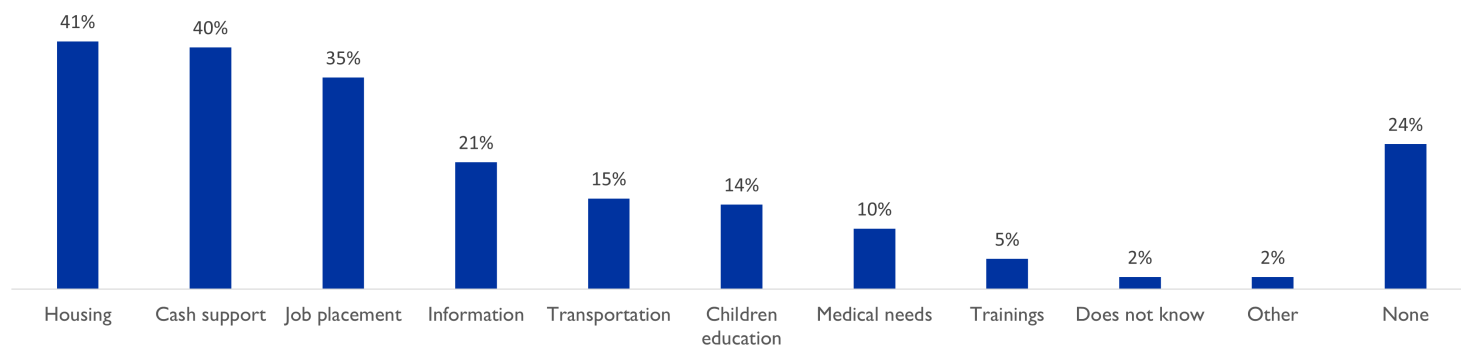


### Immediate needs upon return

Out of those intending to go back to Ukraine (N=57), 81 per cent of respondents indicated that their top needs upon crossing back would be housing and cash support (41% and 40% respectively). This was followed by job placement (35%), information (21%),

transportation (15%), medical needs (10%) and trainings (5%). Twenty-four per cent reported having no specific needs upon their return and the remaining two per cent were unsure of the type of support they would need.

Figure 7: Main needs upon return, N=57 (%) (more than one answer possible)



### Intended country of destination

Among those individuals who expressed their intention to relocate to another country as their final destination (N=122), eighteen per cent were planning to go to Germany, 15 per cent to Poland, eight per cent

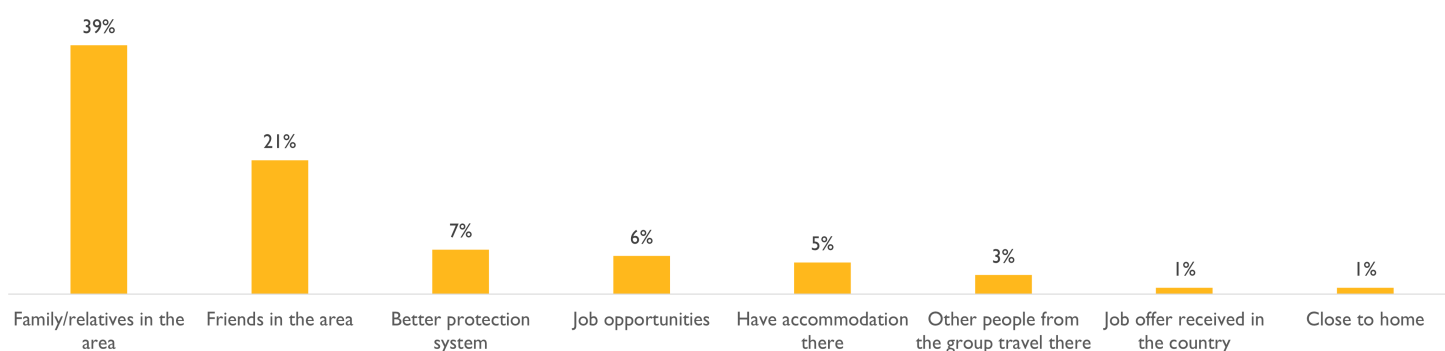
to Finland and seven per cent to Russia. This was followed by Czechia (7%), Canada and Norway (3% each), Estonia and Lithuania (2%), Hungary, Ireland, France, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Sweden.

### Reasons for selecting elsewhere in Latvia or other countries as destination

Among those who intended to relocate either within Latvia (N=5) or to another country (N=122), 39 per cent selected their destination based on the presence of family in the area, while another 21 per cent considered the presence of friends as a significant factor in their decision. Additionally, seven per cent were influenced by the better

protection system, six per cent were motivated by job opportunities, five per cent chose their destination due to the accommodation availability, three per cent mentioned that other individuals from their group were also relocating to the same destination. The remaining two per cent either received a job offer in the destination country or were influenced by the proximity to their home (1% each).

Figure 8: Reasons for choosing elsewhere in Latvia or another country as intended destination, N=127 (%) (more than one answer possible)



### 3. Education and Employment: Profile and Prospects

#### Main spoken language

Fifty-four per cent of the respondents use Russian language as their main language spoken at home. Ukrainian language was chosen as a primary language by 46 per cent of respondents. Another primary language mentioned by respondents was Roma language (one respondent).

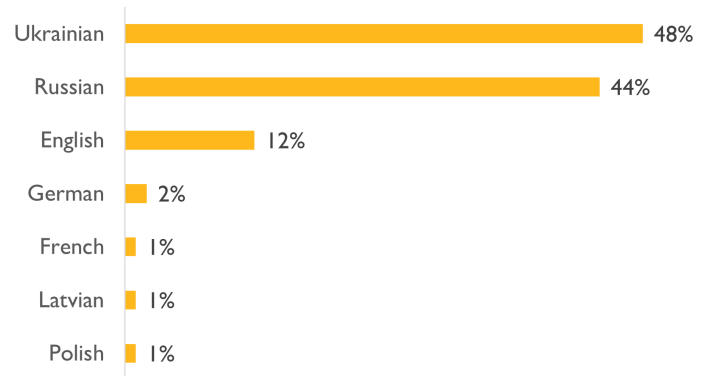
Figure 9: Main spoken language (%)  
(more than one answer possible)



#### Other spoken language(s)

When asked about other languages spoken, 48 per cent of all respondents mentioned Ukrainian and 44 per cent mentioned Russian language. This was followed by English (12%), German (2%), French, Latvian and Polish (1% each).

Figure 10: Other spoken languages (%)  
(more than one answer possible)

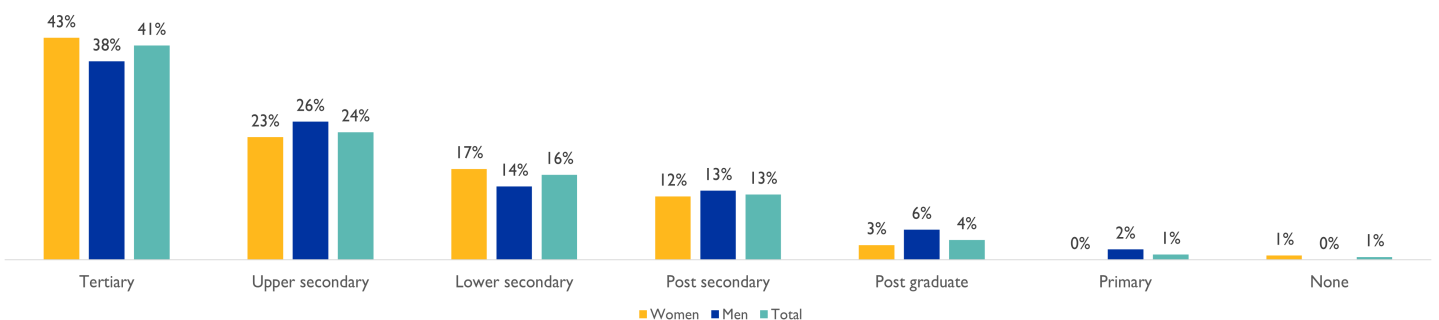


#### Education level

Out of all the respondents interviewed in this survey, 41 per cent had completed tertiary education. Forty per cent had an upper secondary/vocational or lower secondary level of education (24% and 16% respectively). 13 per cent claimed to have a post-secondary non-tertiary level of education, five per cent had either post graduate or primary level of education (4% and 1% respectively). The

remaining one per cent reported having no formal education. Female respondents were more likely than their male counterparts to have reached tertiary education as their highest education level (43% versus 38%), while male respondents were slightly more likely than female respondents to have reached an upper secondary/vocational as their highest education level (26% versus 23%).

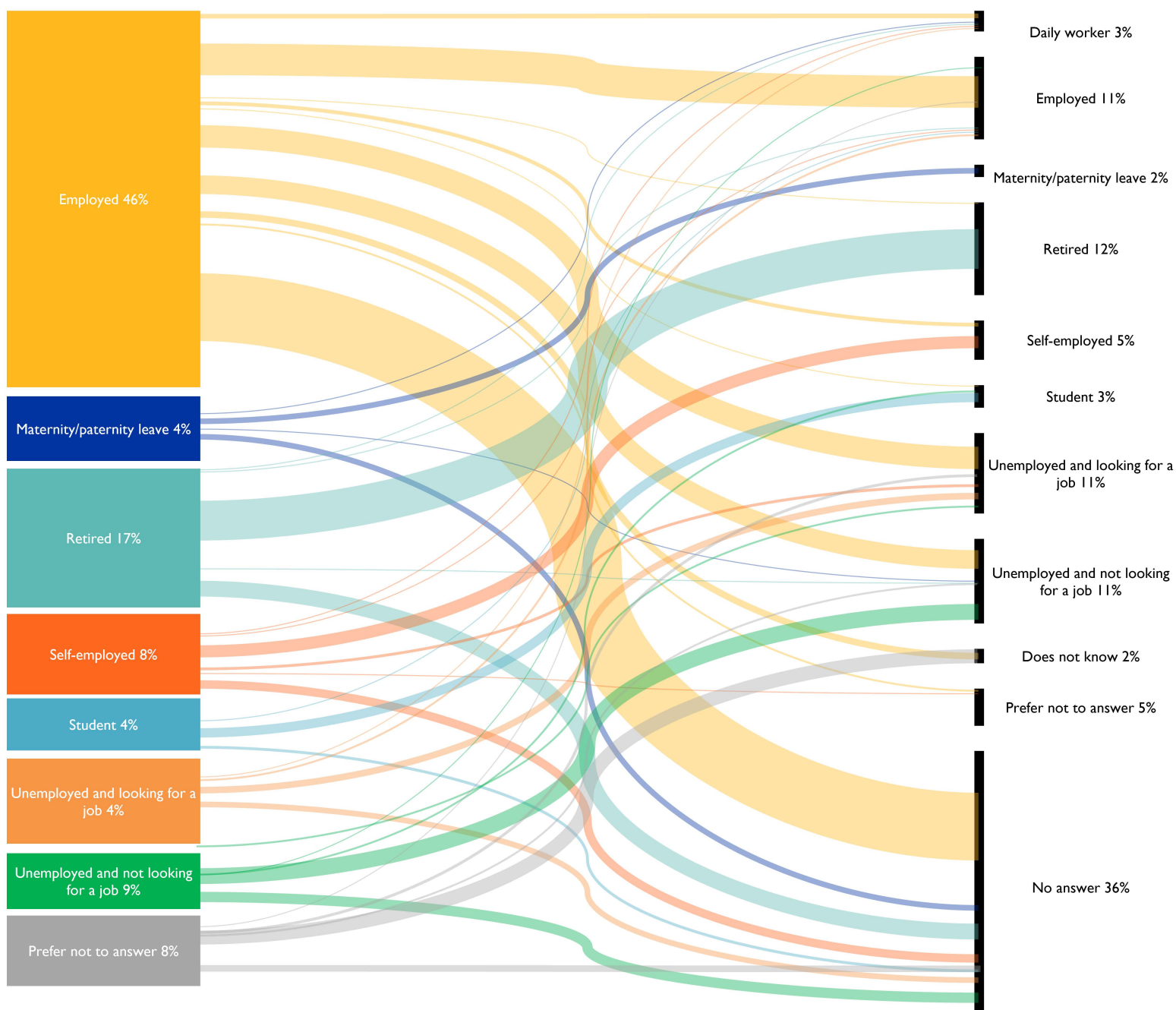
Figure 11: Education level, by gender and total (%)



## Employment status before leaving Ukraine versus current status

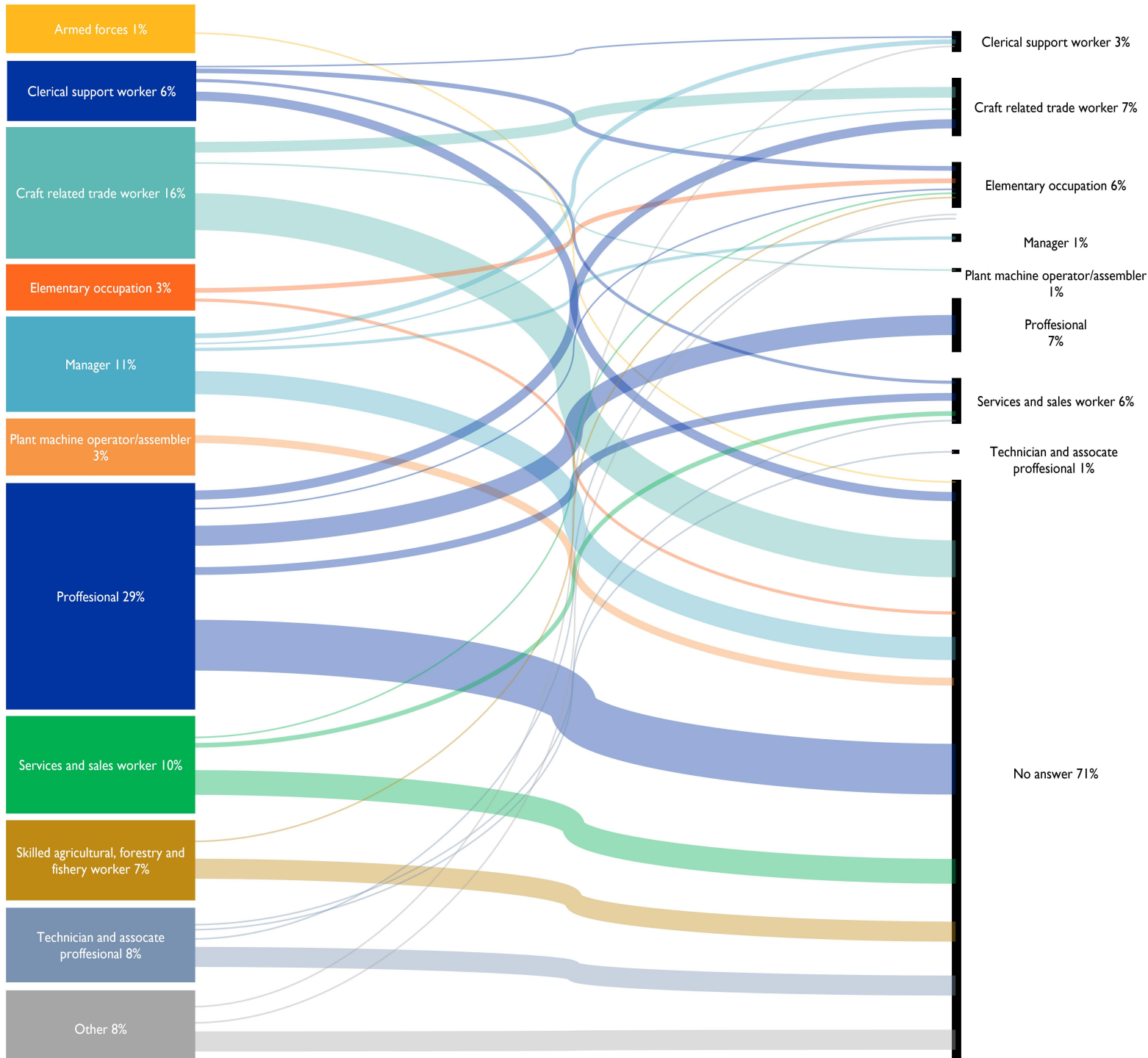
Almost a half of all respondents (46%) were employed before leaving Ukraine, 17 per cent were retired, eight per cent were self-employed. Additionally, nine per cent were unemployed and not looking for a job, four per cent were unemployed and looking for a job, eight per cent were either on maternity/paternity leave or were pursuing their studies (4% each). However, these numbers were noticeably different when asked about their current employment in Latvia. Seventeen per cent declared being unemployed and looking for a job, whereas the share of employed decreased from 46 per cent before the journey to 17 per cent while in Latvia. In addition, the share of those declaring to be unemployed and looking for a job increased from four per cent to 17 per cent.

Figure 12: Employment status before leaving Ukraine and current employment status (%)



Among those currently in employment (employed, self-employed or daily workers), 23 per cent were employed in services and sales positions, 22 per cent were working in elementary occupations (e.g. cleaners, hotel maids), 20 per cent employed in craft and related trade work, 19 per cent classified as professional workers (e.g. teachers), seven per cent were clerical support workers, six per cent worked either as managers or plant machine operators/assemblers (3% each), one per cent were technician and associate professionals. The remaining sample were employed in various other sectors, such as finance, entertainment, recreation, and other areas of employment.

Figure 13: Occupation before leaving Ukraine and current (%)



## 4. Registration and Inclusion Services

### Protection applications

Out of the total of 368 respondents interviewed, 52 per cent declared not having registered for asylum or temporary protection, while 48 per cent applied for asylum or temporary protection with national authorities of Latvia. The percentage of men who have not applied for temporary protection status is higher than that of women (56% versus 51%).

Among those who answered “No” (N=193), 71 per cent were planning to leave Latvia soon, 25 per cent declared wanting to register in the future, one per cent reported not knowing how to apply for either temporary protection or asylum. The remaining three per cent had other non-specified reasons for not pursuing registration.

### Access to finances

Out of 214 respondents who provided an answer, 77 per cent had been able to withdraw cash from ATM or make payments using their own debit/credit card, while 21 per cent had not. The remaining one per cent preferred not to answer.

Figure 16: Has opened a personal bank account in Latvia (%)



Figure 17: Reason for not opening a personal bank account in Latvia (%)

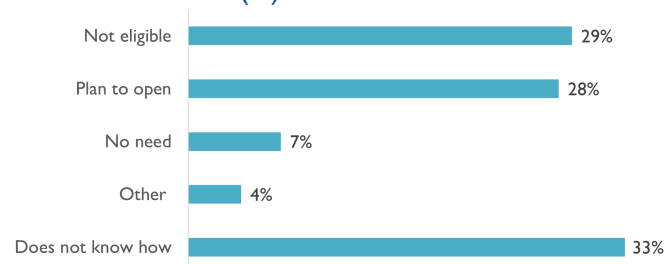


Figure 14: Reasons for not applying for any protection/refugee status (%)

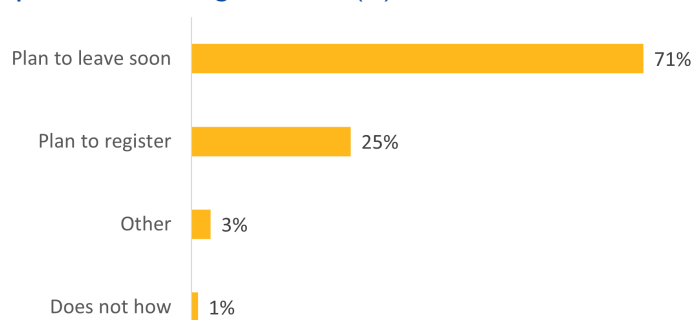
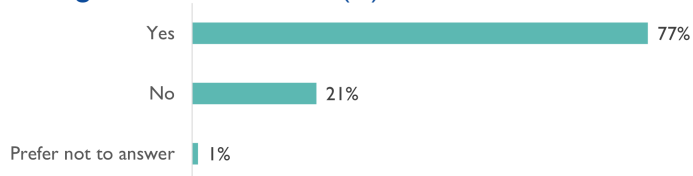


Figure 15: Ability to withdraw money with a foreign debit/credit card (%)



More than half (51%) of respondents had a personal bank account in Latvia at the time of the interview, while 49 per cent did not.

Out of those who indicated that they had not opened a personal bank account in Latvia, 29 per cent claimed to be ineligible, 35 per cent were either planning to open it or did not see the need of it (28% and 7% respectively). Another 33 per cent reported not knowing how to open an account and the remaining four per cent had other reasons for not having opened a personal bank account in Latvia.

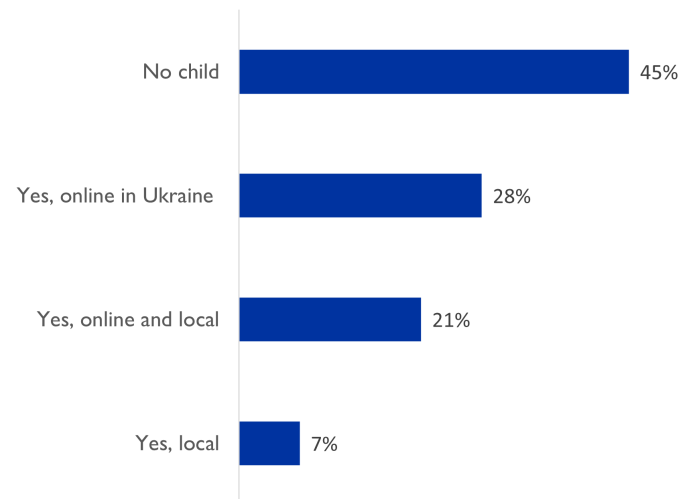


### Access to education

Out of the respondents who have already settled in the country, 29 specified whether they had enrolled their children in local or Ukrainian schools. 28 per cent indicated that they were able to enroll their children in online education in Ukraine.

Additionally, 21 per cent reported that their children were enrolled and attending both online and local schools. Furthermore, seven per cent indicated that they had successfully enrolled their children in local schools.

Figure 18: Has enrolled children in an education facility, N=29 (%)



### Consular services

Fifty-five per cent of respondents indicated that they knew how to contact a consular representative, while forty-five per cent did not.

Out of those (N=53), 53 per cent indicated that they had not reached out for consular support at the time of the assessment, while another 40 per cent had. The remaining eight per cent preferred not to answer.

Figure 19: Knows how to contact a consular representative?

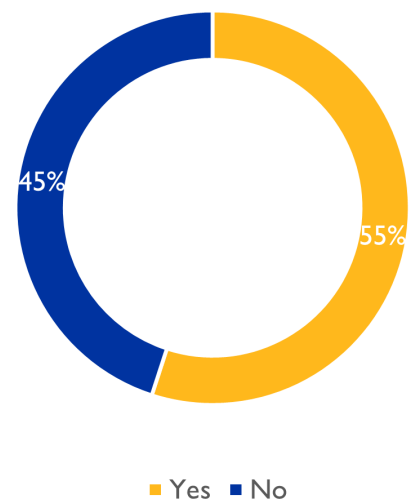
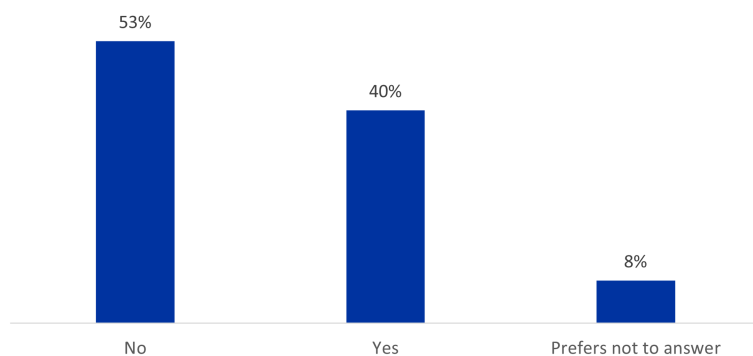


Figure 20: Has reached out for consular support in Latvia, N=53 (%)



## 5. Immediate Needs and Assistance Received

### Immediate needs at the moment

The three primary needs expressed by the respondents were food products (46%), general information (38%), and financial support (34%).

This was followed by the need of assistance with language courses (27%), clothes and shoes (17%), health services (16%). Other needs mentioned by the respondents included support with medicines (15%), documentation and registration (13%), communication with others in Ukraine or elsewhere (13%), and securing long-term accommodation (12%).

### Assistance received in Latvia

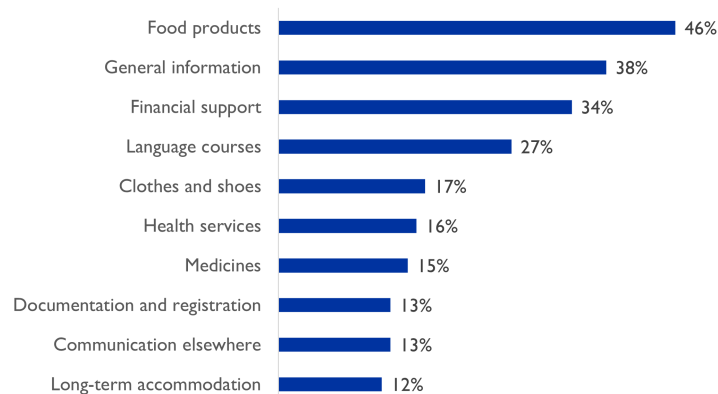
Most (79%) all refugees in the sample reported to have received some kind of support or humanitarian assistance, while 21 per cent did not receive any support before the interview. The most commonly received form of assistance, mentioned by 90 per cent of those who received support, was help with food

### Areas in which information is needed to get more assistance

Fourteen per cent of respondents indicated that they did not know where to find assistance at the time of the interview. Out of those, 60 per cent expressed their need for additional information on accessing healthcare services. Additionally, 57 per cent indicated financial support as other area where more information was needed to find support.

Other relevant areas where more information was needed were support on return (47%), employment and education/training for adults (30% each),

Figure 21: Needs at the moment (%)  
(more than one answer possible)

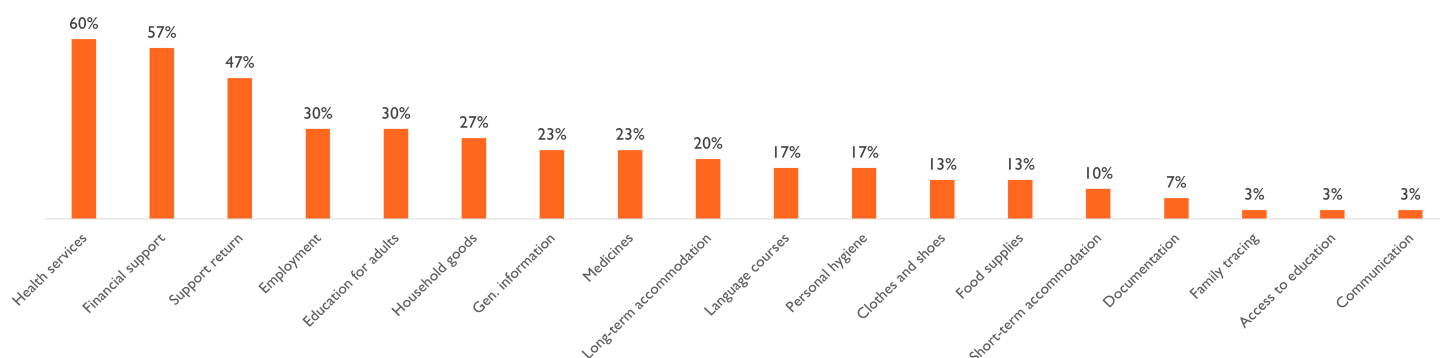


products. This was followed by free transportation (60%), personal hygiene and sanitary supplies (48%), clothes and shoes (34%), long-term accommodation (30%). A smaller percentage of respondents received financial support (22%), toys (13%), psychological counselling (9%), vouchers (9%), employment (3%) and language courses (2%).

household goods (27%), general information and medicines (23%), long-term accommodation (20%).

Furthermore, others expressed a need for information on language courses and personal hygiene (17% each), clothes/shoes and food supplies (13%), short-term accommodation (10%), documentation (7%), family tracing, school enrolment for children and communication with others in Ukraine or elsewhere (3% each).

Figure 22: Areas where more information for assistance is needed, N=30 (%) (more than one answer possible)



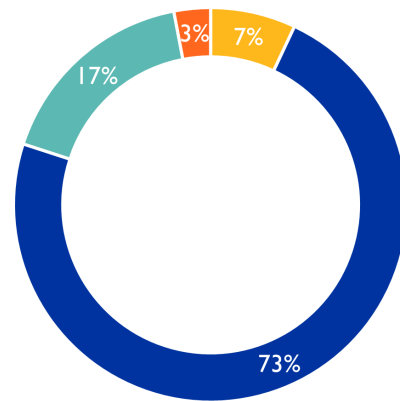
## 6. Challenges in the Country of Displacement

### Experiences of discrimination

About 7 per cent of respondents indicated having experienced some sort of discrimination in their country of displacement. In contrast, 73 per cent indicated having no such experience.

The remaining twenty per cent did not know or preferred not to answer (17% and 3% respectively). When looking at the data disaggregated by gender, male respondents were slightly more likely to have experienced discrimination than their female counterparts (7% versus 6%).

Figure 23: Reported experiences of discrimination (%)



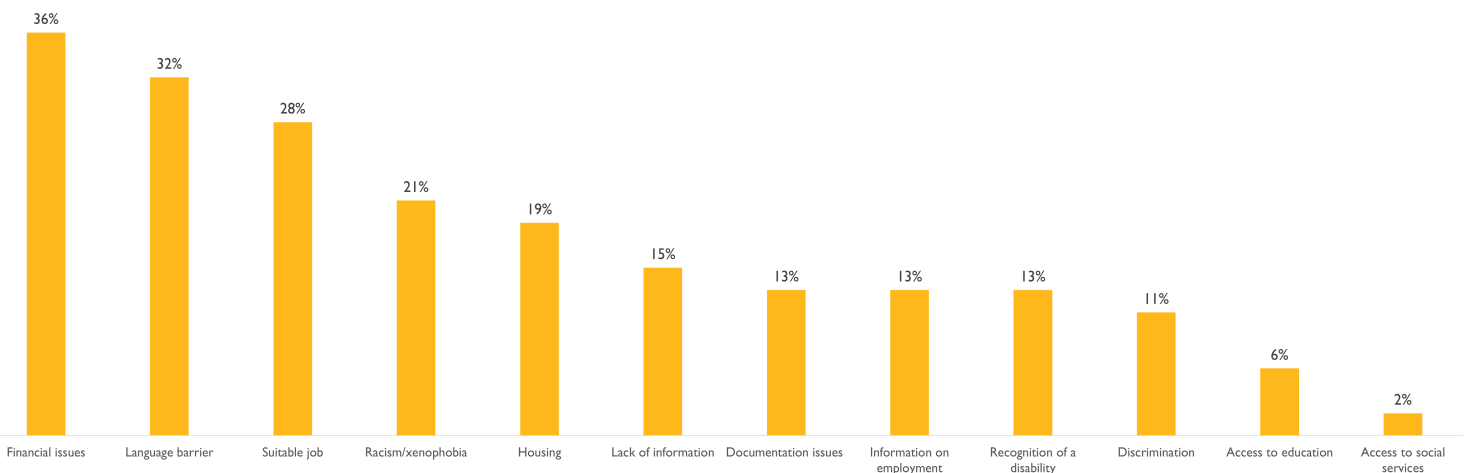
■ Yes ■ No ■ Does not know ■ Prefer not to answer

### Inclusion challenges

When asked about the challenges they had encountered in Latvia, respondents indicated financial issues (36%), language barrier (32%) and employment opportunities (28%) as the most prevalent difficulties. Other notable difficulties included facing racism (21%), securing long-term housing (19%), lack of information (15%). Other issues mentioned included

dealing with documentation problems, obtaining information about employment opportunities, recognition of disabilities (13% each), and facing discrimination (11%). A smaller percentage of respondents mentioned challenges related to finding a school and preschool for children (6%), as well as accessing social services/administration (2%).

Figure 24: Top 12 inclusion challenges, N=53 (%) (more than one answer possible)



## 7. Current Group Composition

### Travel mode

Sixty-six per cent of the sample declared to be travelling in a group, in comparison with the other 34 per cent who were travelling alone. Female respondents were less likely to be travelling alone in comparison to their male counterparts (31% versus 39%).

Out of the 66 per cent travelling in a group, 88 per cent were travelling with immediate family/household members, 19 per cent with friends/ neighbours, 15 per cent with other relatives, and two per cent with colleagues. Overall, the average group size including the respondent was about three persons.

Table 2: Travel mode by gender and total

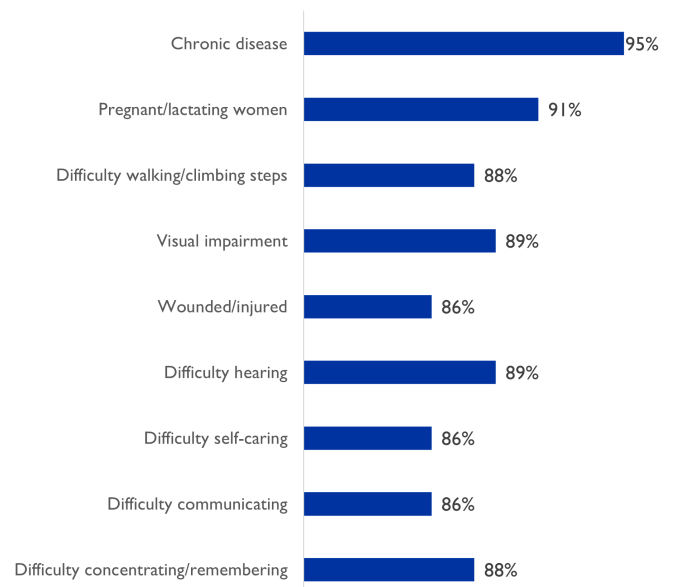
Travelling in a group/alone	Women	Men	Total
Alone	77	47	124
With immediate family/household members	149	66	215
Relatives	23	14	37
Friends and neighbours	34	13	47
Colleagues	2	3	5

### Travelling with persons with health conditions and disabilities

A considerable fraction of respondents (17%, N=64) indicated that them or at least one person of the group they were travelling with had a serious health conditions or specific needs, while 77 per cent did not. The remaining 6 per cent either did not know or preferred not to answer (6% and 1% respectively).

More specifically, ninety-five per cent were travelling with at least one person with a chronic disease or a serious medical condition. This was followed by pregnant and lactating women (91%), travelling with a person with visual impairment and having difficulties hearing even with a hearing aid (89% each), having difficulty walking/climbing steps and difficulty concentrating/remembering (88 % each), wounded/injured persons, difficulty self-caring, difficulty communicating, difficulty self-caring (86% each).

Figure 25: Respondents travelling with at least one person with a serious health conditions, N=64 (%) (more than one answer possible)



## 8. Methodology

This report is based on a survey of displacement patterns, needs and intentions conducted by IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) in the 11 countries included in the Regional Response Plan for Ukraine in 2023: 6 countries neighbouring Ukraine – Belarus, Hungary, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania and Slovakia – and other 5 countries particularly impacted by the arrivals of refugees from Ukraine since the start of the war in February 2022 – Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The analysis presented in this report is based on data collected between January and March 2023 through a network of more than 150 enumerators, with various timelines and specific survey tools - depending on the country context. Nevertheless, the sampling approach, main definitions and features of the survey tool make country-level datasets comparable.

Face-to-face surveys were conducted by trained enumerators with adult refugees from Ukraine and other TCNs (18 years of age and above). Prior to the start of the survey, all enumerators were trained by IOM on DTM standards, the use of Kobo application, IOM approach to migrants' protection and assistance, the ethics of data collection and the provision of information and referral mechanisms in place.

Respondents were approached in a simple random sample by enumerators at selected entry, exit, transit points and accommodation centres. In border crossing point areas, both persons entering/exiting by car, by bus, by foot and by train were interviewed.

The survey was anonymous and voluntary. Surveys were administered only if consent from the respondent was given. The respondent could stop the survey at any time.

The questionnaire was available in Ukrainian, Russian, English language. The preferred language was determined by the interviewee. All responses were checked for any systematic issues by enumerator and this process did not identify any problems. Only fully completed surveys were taken in account for this report.

### Country-level implementation and limitations

The sampling framework was not based on verified figures of refugees from Ukraine and TCNs entering through the various BCPs or staying in the various regions (counties, districts, rayons) across each of the country where surveys were conducted. This is due to the limited availability of comparable baseline information across countries. The geographic spread of enumerators deployed and locations targeted captures most of the key arrival, transit and destination points. Whilst results cannot be deemed representative, the internal consistency within the data within each country and at the regional level suggests that the findings of the current sampling framework have practical value.

The survey respondents were chosen at random from locations within four primary transit and reception locations that receive high volumes of individuals entering Latvia either via public or private transport. Whilst every attempt was made to capture all types of arrivals, the operational reality of fieldwork was confronted with different levels of accessibility of transit and stay locations and the different availability of possible target individuals to comfortably spend 10-20 minutes responding to the questionnaire depending on a mix of personal conditions.

In Latvia, DTM was activated in July 2022. The data for this report was collected between 3 January and 29 March 2023. Overall, 368 valid surveys were collected by a team of 4 enumerators (2 female and 2 male) deployed in 2 different provinces.

Fifty-six per cent of surveys were collected in Riga, 42 per cent in Ludzas, and one per cent in Rezeknes region. Enumerators were approaching respondents in border crossing points, collective centers, open spaces, humanitarian aid distribution centers. The interviews have been conducted in Russian and Ukrainian languages.



## DTM

Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) is a system to track and monitor displacement and population mobility. The survey form was designed to capture the main displacement patterns – origin country and region – for refugees of any nationality fleeing from Ukraine because of the war. It captures the demographic profiles of respondents and of the group they are travelling with, if any; it asks about intentions relative to the intended final destination and prospects of permanence in the country of the survey/first reception; it gathers information regarding a set of main needs that the respondents expressed as more pressing at the moment of the interview.

Since the onset of the war in Ukraine, several IOM's DTM tools were deployed in countries neighbouring Ukraine and in other countries particularly impacted by the new arrivals of migrants and refugees from Ukraine.

For more information, please consult: <https://dtm.iom.int/responses/ukraine-response>

DTM is part of IOM's Global Data Institute.

