

SLOVAKIA

Crossing Back Surveys with Ukrainian Nationals



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Country Report & Data Analysis

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Publisher

International Organization for Migration
Regional Office for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern
Europe and Central Asia
Dampfschiffstrasse 4/10-11, 1030 Vienna, Austria
+43 1 581 22 22

Website: <https://rovienna.iom.int/>

Contact: [ROViennaDataResearch-
Newsletter@iom.int](mailto:ROViennaDataResearch-Newsletter@iom.int)

International Organization for Migration
Country Office Slovakia

Grösslingová 35
811 09 Bratislava I
Slovak Republic

+421 2 5263 0093

Website: <https://iom.sk>

Contact: bratislavainfo@iom.int

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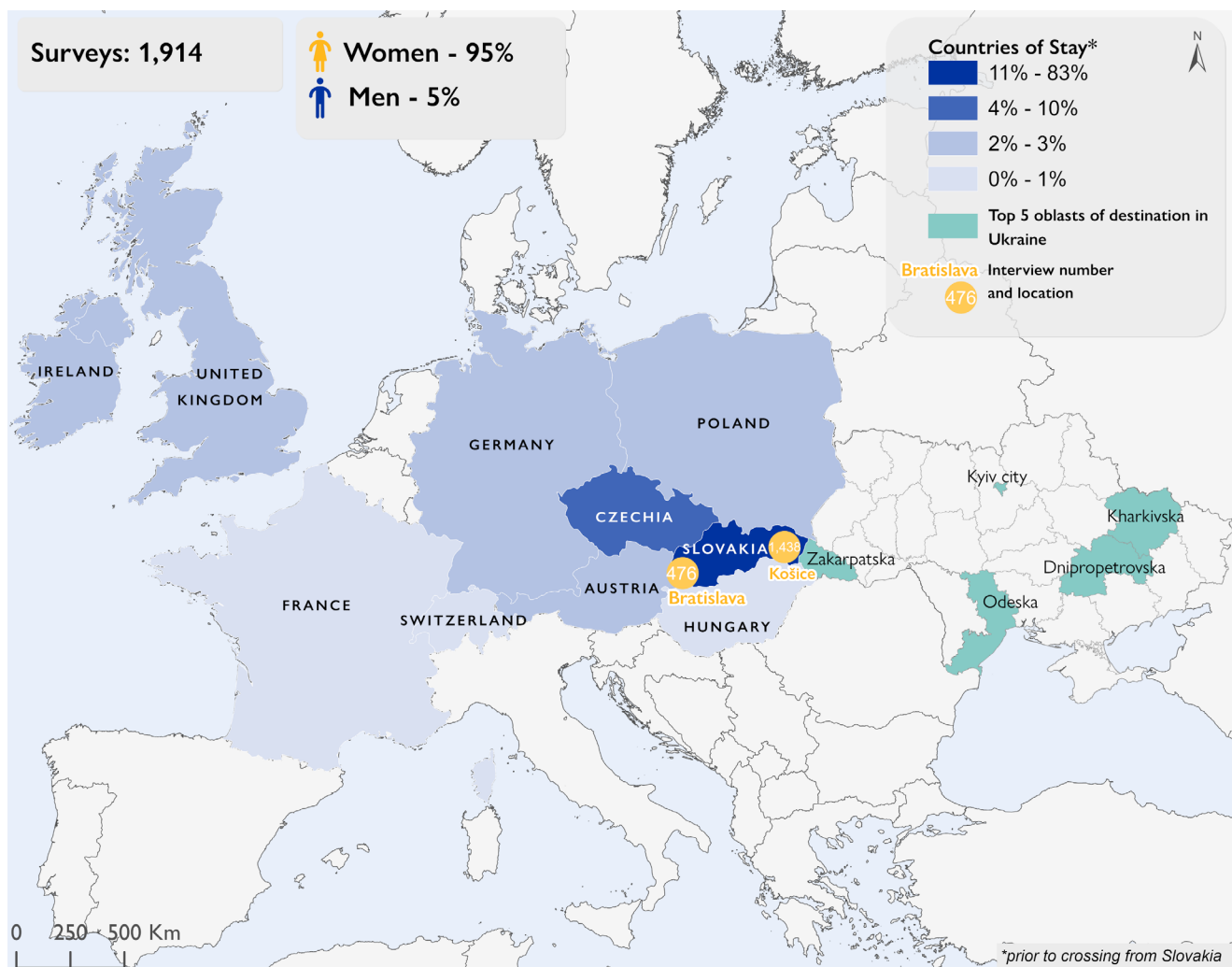
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KEY FINDINGS

- **Top countries of stay abroad:** Slovakia (72%), Czechia (5%), United Kingdom (2%), Ireland (2%), Austria (1%), Germany (1%) and Poland (1%).
- **Intended destination:** 81% to the same oblast of origin, 18% to a different oblast in Ukraine: Zakarpatska (75%), Lvivska (7%), Kyiv city (6%).
- **Intentions upon crossing back:** 56% going for a short visit, 40% plan to stay in Ukraine.
- **Transport to cross back to Ukraine:** bus (74%), train (25%), car/minibus (1%).
- **Top needs upon crossing back:** health services (53%), financial support (22%), employment (15%), medicines (14%), general information (13%), language courses (11%). (*more than one answer was possible*).
- **Groups travelling with children:** 68% of groups travelled with children aged less than 18 years.
- **Travel mode:** 61% alone and 39% in group.
- **Experiences of discrimination:** 12% experienced discrimination throughout their journey.

Map I: Slovakia, surveys deployed, countries of stay & oblasts of destination in Ukraine



This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown, and the designations used in this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM. The map shows only countries where more than one per cent of respondents stayed during displacement.

TRENDS AND CHANGES IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2023

Among the respondents interviewed in the first quarter of 2023 (Q1 January – March) and in the second quarter (Q2 April – June), more than half planned to return to Ukraine only for a short period of time (59% in Q1 and 56% in Q2).

Moreover, a smaller proportion of the respondents were returning to stay in Ukraine, with a slightly rising trend observed in the results between both

The reasons respondents named for crossing back to Ukraine from Slovakia for a short period of time remained relatively unchanged from one quarter to the other. Meeting family, accessing health care or obtaining new documents were the top three reasons for a short-term visit to Ukraine in both quarters.

However, changes can be observed in the reasons for returning to Ukraine for long-term. While improved situation in the place of origin or reuniting with family were the top two reasons in the first quarter of 2023, the proportion of respondents choosing these reasons in Q2 was much lower.

While in Q1 only five per cent of respondents were interviewed crossing back to Ukraine because they were shopping abroad prior to returning, in Q2 this was the most commonly mentioned reason (27%).

periods (36% in Q1 and 40% in Q2).

Most of the respondents were returning to the same oblast they were originally displaced from (77% in Q1 and 81% in Q2). The destination oblasts of those returning to a different place than their oblast of origin remained relatively similar in both quarters, with the vast majority returning to Zakarpatska oblast in both quarters (79% in Q1 and 75% in Q2).

Figure 1: Reasons for long-term stay in Q1 and Q2 (%). (more than one answer was possible)

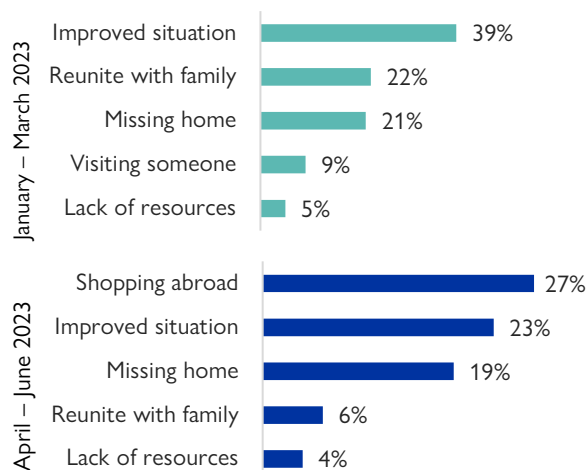
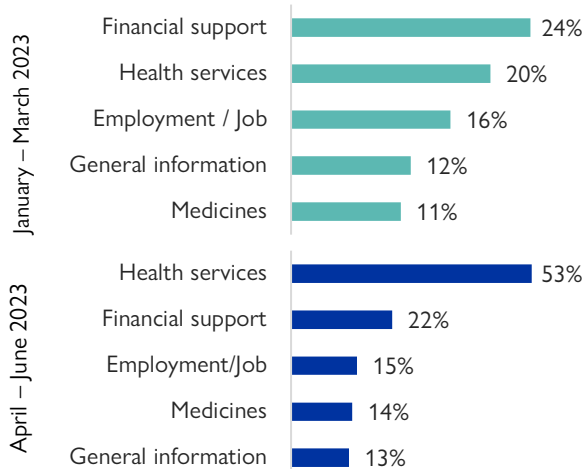


Figure 2: Top needs upon crossing back in Q1 and Q2 (%). (more than one answer was possible)



Significant differences between the responses of interviewees in the two quarters of 2023 can also be observed in the immediate needs of the respondents upon crossing back to Ukraine.

While in Q1 the most pressing need was financial support (24%), in Q2 it was health services with more than half of the respondents stressing this need (53%). The need for medicines also rose from 11 per cent in Q1 to 14 per cent in Q2. The need for employment support (16% in Q1, 15% in Q2) and for general information (12% in Q1, 13% in Q2) kept a stable position within the top 5 needs of respondents crossing back to Ukraine.

1. Socio-Demographic Profile

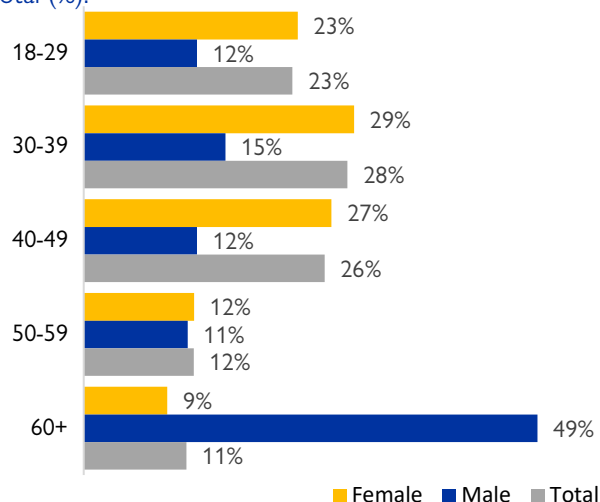
Age and Gender

Out of the 1,903 respondents interviewed prior to crossing back from Slovakia to Ukraine, 95 per cent were women and five per cent were men.

The average age of the total sample was 40 years, however, data disaggregated by gender showed higher average age of male respondents (51 years) as opposed to their female counterparts (40 years). Most female respondents were aged between 30 and 39 years (29%), while most males were in the 60 plus age group.

Half of the respondents (51%) were aged between 18 and 39 years and only 11 per cent of the respondents were in the group of 60 years or older.

Figure 3: Age distribution of respondents, by gender and total (%).



Marital Status

Out of the total sample of the respondents, more than half (58%) stated they were married at the time of the interview. A quarter (25%) of the total sample were single interviewees and ten per cent of the respondents indicated that they were widowed. Another five per cent were divorced and two per cent lived in a partnership or a union at the time of the interview.

The disaggregation by gender did not show any major discrepancies between men and women, however, slightly more female respondents were single and fewer married as opposed to the male respondents.

Compared with the report from the first quarter of this year, the socio-demographic profile did not change.

Figure 4: Marital status, female (%)

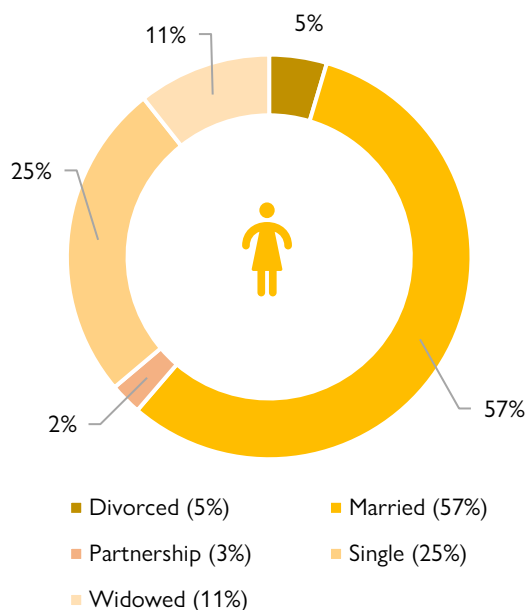
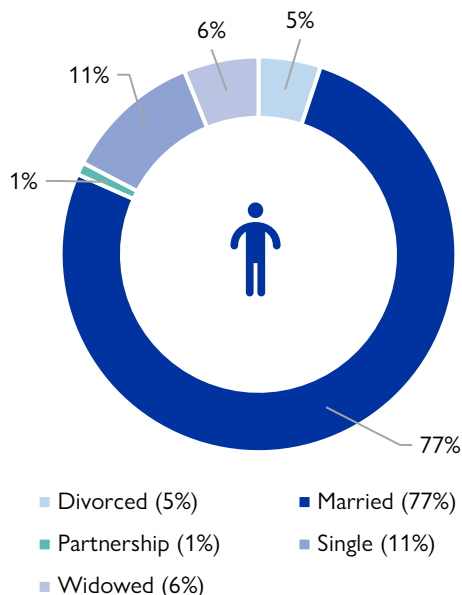


Figure 5: Marital status, male (%)



2. Time Outside Ukraine

Countries of stay while abroad

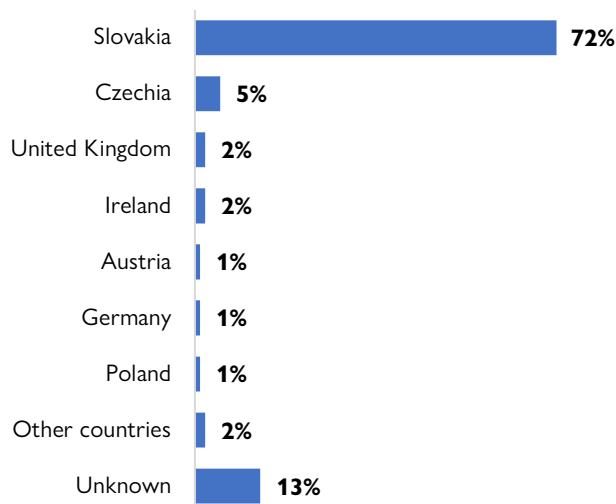
The majority of the respondents predominantly stayed in Slovakia while displaced. These represent 72 per cent of the respondents.

The next most named countries were Czechia with five per cent of respondents spending the majority of time there, followed by the United Kingdom (2%), Ireland (2%), Austria (1%), Germany (1%) and Poland (1%).

The remaining minority of respondents (2%) stayed in 21 other countries across various continents before eventually returning to Ukraine from Slovakia.

Thirteen per cent of the respondents did not provide information about the country of their stay.

Figure 6: Countries of stay (%) (N=1,652)



Average time since initial displacement

From the entire group of participants, the majority experienced displacement at the onset of the conflict, specifically during the period from January to June 2022. These represent 40 per cent of the total sample and have spent between 12 to 14 months in displacement on average. An additional 12 per cent of the respondents were displaced in the second half of 2022 and their average time spent outside their home

country was between six to nine months at the time of the interview.

A relatively large proportion of the interviewed respondents left their homes and got displaced only in the second quarter of 2023. These respondents, initially displaced between April and June 2023, accounted for 32 per cent of the sample and have been in displacement for around one month.

Table 1: Average time spent in displacement (%)

Date of initial displacement	Average time spent in displacement	% of respondents
Before 2022	Over 3 years	12%
Jan – Mar 2022	14 months	26%
Apr – Jun 2022	12 months	14%
Jul – Sep 2022	9 months	7%
Oct – Dec 2022	6 months	5%
Jan – March 2023	2 months	4%
April 2023	One month	12%
May 2023	One month	13%
June 2023	Less than one month	7%

Number of exits/entries from and to Ukraine

Based on the data collected from the respondents, it can be observed that individuals returning from Slovakia to Ukraine frequently engaged in pendular movements across the border.

The vast majority of the respondents (98%) have crossed the border back to Ukraine at least once since the outbreak of the conflict in February 2022.

Forty-seven per cent of the interviewees reported crossing back to Ukraine more than twice since their initial displacement, while an additional 27 per cent crossed the border two times at the time of assessment. Twenty-four per cent mentioned crossing back to Ukraine only once before the

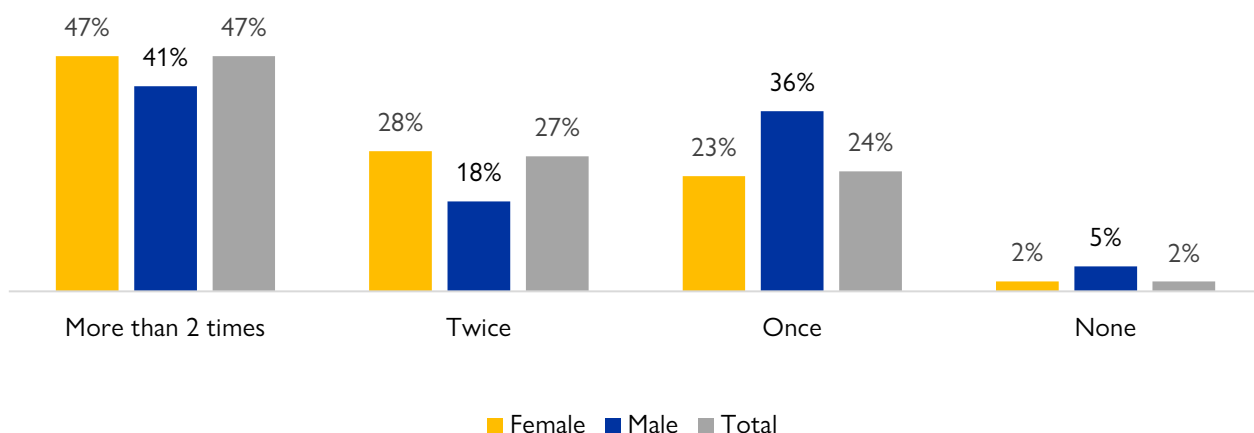
interview.

Merely two per cent of the respondents had not returned to Ukraine since their initial displacement until the time of the interview.

Looking at this number disaggregated by gender, a slightly bigger proportion of men tend to refrain from crossing back to Ukraine as often (5% of male respondents) as their female counterparts (2% of female respondents).

The respondents frequently mentioned that they went to Ukraine for medical assistance, to visit family members, or to travel in Europe before returning back.

Figure 7: Number of entries / exits between 24 February 2022 and the moment of the interview, by gender and total (%)

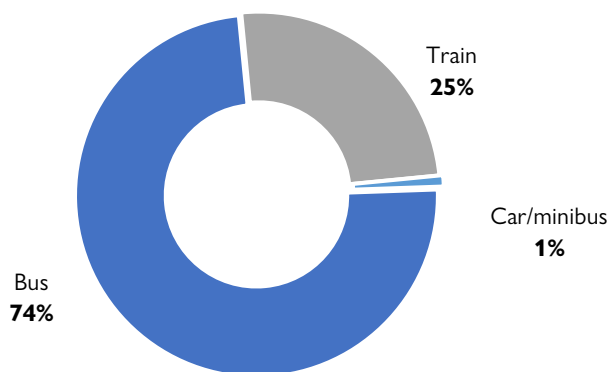


Transport

The majority of the respondents, accounting for 74 per cent of the total, reported traveling back to Ukraine by bus. Another 25 per cent mentioned that they used the train as their mode of transportation. Only a minor percentage (1%) opted for other types of transport, such as minibuses or cars.

This data aligns with the survey collection locations, which were exclusively at the two bus stations with direct routes to Ukraine and a train station.

Figure 8: Means of transport to cross back to Ukraine (%)



3. Oblast (region) of Origin and Destination

Origin or habitual residence

Three quarters of the respondents (75%) stated that their region of origin or of habitual residence was one of the following eight regions in Ukraine. These were Zakarpatska oblast (34%), Kyiv city (12%),

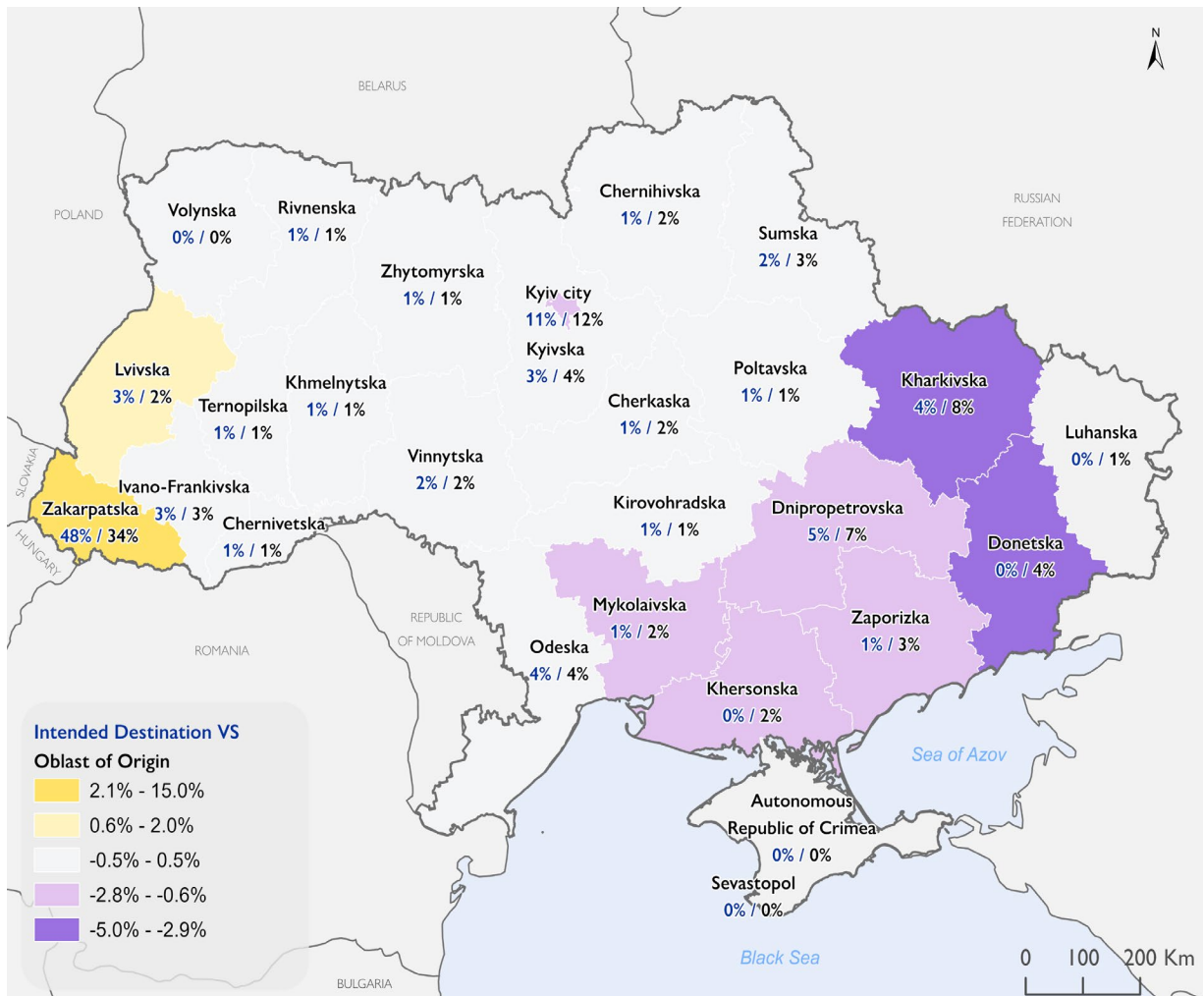
Kharkivska (8%), Dnipropetrovska (7%), Donetska (4%), Zaporizka (3%), Odeska (4%) and Kyivska (4%) oblast. The remaining 25 per cent of respondents came from the other 18 regions in Ukraine.

Intended destination

Eighty-one per cent of all the respondents planned to return to the same oblast they originated from, while 18 percent were opting for a different oblast within Ukraine. A mere one percent of respondents remained undecided about their region of destination.

Among those respondents who had chosen different oblasts to their place of origin (N=355), the majority (75%) intended to return to Zakarpatska oblast. Seven per cent planned to return to Lvivska oblast, and six per cent were heading to Kyiv city.

Map 2: Oblast of origin before leaving Ukraine vs destination upon crossing back (%)



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4. Intentions and Reasons to Cross Back to Ukraine

Long-term stay

More than half of the respondents who were crossing back to Ukraine from Slovakia claimed they were going for a short-term visit (56%). Forty per cent, on the other hand, intended to stay in Ukraine long-term upon their return. Four per cent of the total sample was undecided about the length of their stay at the time of the interview.

Respondents who were planning to stay in Ukraine (40%) were asked about their reasons for returning. Twenty-three per cent of the respondents (N=763) stated that the situation had improved in their place of origin. Twenty-seven per cent of respondents were doing shopping abroad and 19 per cent decided to stay in Ukraine because they were missing their home.

Among other reasons cited by respondents for crossing back were lack of employment (4%) lack of resources (4%), reuniting with family (6%), helping family (3%) and working in essential services in Ukraine (3%). Multiple responses were possible in this question.

Short-term visit

Fifty-six per cent of respondents were crossing from Slovakia back to Ukraine only for a short visit. The majority of these 1,058 respondents were returning to meet with their family or relatives (73%). The second most named reason for crossing the border to Ukraine was access to health care, as stated by 31 per cent of these respondents. Interviewees also

Figure 9: Intended length of stay upon return (%)



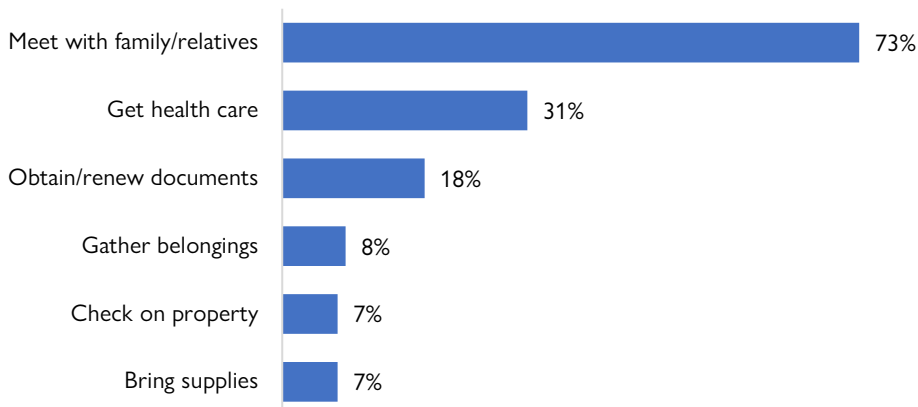
Table 2: Top reasons for long-term stay in Ukraine (%) (N=763). (more than one answer was possible)

Listed reasons	Total (%)
Shopping abroad	27%
Improved situation in place of origin	23%
Missing home	19%
Reunite with family	6%
Lack of resources	4%
Lack of job opportunities	4%
Helping family	3%
Essential service	3%

mentioned returning briefly to Ukraine to obtain or renew their personal documents (18%), gather their belongings (8%), bring supplies to other people (7%) or check on their property (7%).

Multiple responses were possible in this question.

Figure 10: Top reasons for short-term visit in Ukraine (%) (N=1,058). (more than one answer was possible)



5. Needs, Assistance Received, and Challenges

Immediate needs upon crossing back

In the survey, the majority of respondents (53%) indicated that health services were their most urgent need at the time of the interview. Other notable needs mentioned were financial support (22%), help in finding employment (15%), obtaining medicines (14%), and seeking general information or access to language courses (13% and 11% respectively). Additionally, nine per cent of respondents expressed a need for assistance in finding long-term accommodation upon returning to Ukraine.

To a lesser degree, some respondents mentioned a need for legal assistance (8%), school enrolment (5%), support with adult education (4%), or help with documentation (3%).

More than half of the respondents (53%) stated they had no immediate needs upon crossing back to Ukraine from Slovakia.

Figure 11: Top needs upon crossing back (%). (more than one answer was possible)

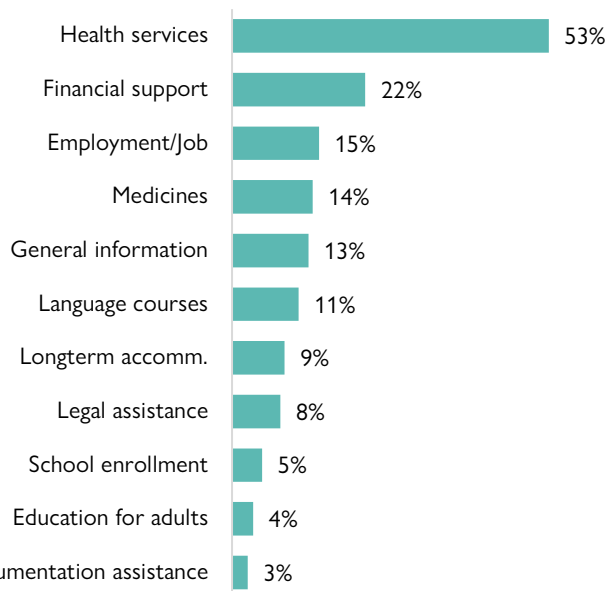


Table 3: Assistance received in total (%) (N=709). (more than one answer was possible)

Listed reasons	Total (%)
Food	74%
Financial support	66%
Personal hygiene items	61%
Accommodation	50%
Clothes	36%
Transport	9%
Vouchers	6%
Toys	4%
Psychological counseling	1%

Experiences of discrimination

While 88 per cent of the respondents have not encountered any discrimination while in displacement, 12 per cent of respondents reported the opposite. Gender disparity was also evident, with women being twice as likely to experience some kind of discrimination than men (12% of female respondents as opposed to 6% of male respondents).

Assistance received in Slovakia

Of all the respondents interviewed, a significant majority (63%) revealed that they had not received any form of humanitarian assistance in Slovakia. Conversely, 709 respondents (37%) reported receiving some kind of aid.

Regarding the type of assistance received during their journey, most interviewees mentioned receiving food (74%), financial support (66%), and hygiene items (61%). Accommodation support (50%) and clothes (36%) were also frequently mentioned forms of humanitarian assistance the respondents were provided with. On the other hand, a mere one per cent of those who received help in Slovakia reported receiving psychological support.

Specific situations mentioned included instances of bias related to language and nationality when interacting with neighbours, persons providing services or employed in educational settings, and encountering negative attitudes and hostility from the general public. Some participants also named facing discrimination at their workplaces in Slovakia or having children who experienced bullying at schools.

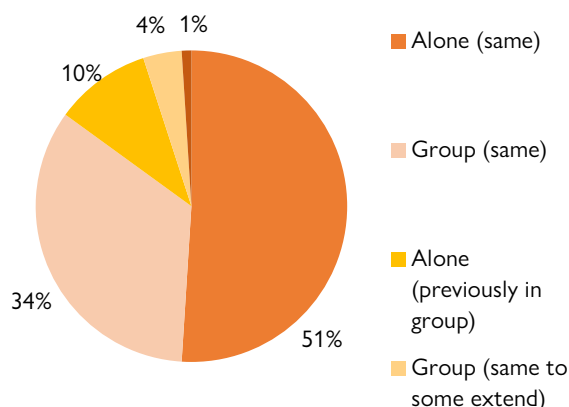
7. Group Composition

Travel mode

Fifty-one per cent of the total respondents were crossing back to Ukraine alone. They were also alone when they left Ukraine. Another ten per cent were returning alone, yet they were in a group when they first left Ukraine. As for the groups, 39 per cent of all respondents travelled back to Ukraine in group, out of them four per cent were returning with only some persons of their original travel group.

In terms of gender differences, women were slightly more likely to travel by themselves than their male counterparts (61% of female respondents as opposed to 56% of male respondents).

Figure 12: Travel mode (%)



Group composition

Out of those travelling in a group (N=739), 87 per cent were travelling with their family members, while 11 per cent were returning to Ukraine with friends and six per cent with their other relatives. Two per cent of the respondents reported they were travelling with colleagues from work.

As for the size of travelling groups, almost 32 per cent of the travelling groups were composed of two persons and twenty-six per cent of the groups consisted of three to six members. Children under 18 years of age were travelling with 68 per cent of the respondents who travelled in groups.

Figure 13: Share of groups travelling with or without children (N=739) (%)

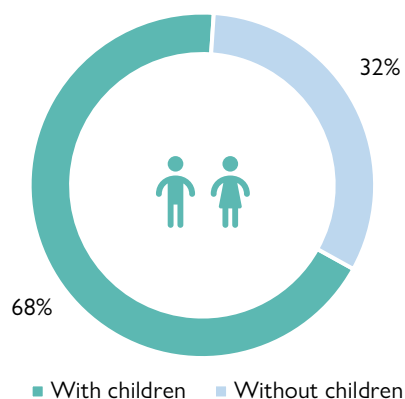


Figure 14: Traveling groups total (%) (N=739) (more than one answer was possible)

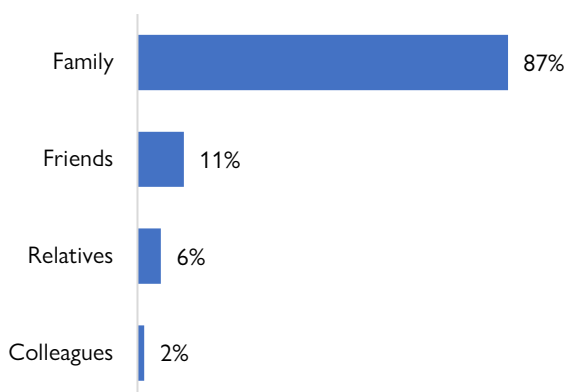


Table 4: Age disaggregation of persons in groups and those travelling alone, by gender and total (N=2,973) (%). (more than one answer was possible)

Age group	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (%)
Infants (<4)	3%	14%	5%
Children (5-17)	12%	52%	18%
Adults (18-59)	77%	17%	67%
Elderly (60+)	9%	17%	10%

8. Methodology

Background

Since 24 February 2022, refugees from Ukraine and Third Country Nationals (TCNs) have been fleeing to neighboring countries as a result of the war. As of July 2023, up to six million refugees from Ukraine were recorded across Europe. At the same time, more than 20 million border crossings of Ukrainian and Third-Country refugees and migrants were reported from Ukraine into the neighbouring countries since February 2022.

IOM has deployed its Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) tool in mid-April 2022 to collect individual surveys in neighbouring countries with persons crossing into Ukraine, with the aim to improve the understanding of main profiles, displacement patterns, intentions and needs of those moving into Ukraine.

This report is based on surveys collected in Slovakia between 10 April and 30 June 2023 in Bratislava and Kosice at the transit points (train stations and bus stations) with persons going directly to Ukraine.

Methodological framework

IOM's 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.

This survey is part of IOM's DTM activities to monitor the profiles, displacement patterns and most immediate needs of the Ukrainian refugees and TCNs crossing back to Ukraine since 24 February 2022.

In Slovakia, surveys were conducted in Ukrainian or Russian language by IOM's DTM trained teams of enumerators on a mobile application.

The interviews are anonymous and carried out one-on-one with respondents, provided they consent to be interviewed after a brief introduction. Enumerators trained on ethics of data collection, information provision and protection principles, approached people crossing back to Ukraine, to verify their willingness to conduct the survey, which was only addressed to adults (18+).

The survey form was designed by IOM to capture the main displacement patterns for refugees crossing back to Ukraine following the outbreak of the war. It analyses the demographic profiles of respondents and of the group they are travelling with, if any; it asks about intentions relatively to the permanence in Ukraine; and it gathers information regarding a set of main needs at the moment of the interview.

Various settings were identified to conduct surveys, to maximize the number of interviews, and reach out to different profiles of individuals.

While in border crossing/transit points, such as train stations, the flow of people was higher and interviewees were randomly surveyed (having the same likelihood compared to others to be selected), in other settings, such as information centers, respondents were intentionally identified.

Among the limitations encountered during data collection were the reduced time to carry out surveys at transit points and sometimes the same respondents appearing in various days of collection.

A mixed sampling strategy guided the data collection exercise to address the aforementioned shortcomings and cover different viewpoints.

Consequently, this analysis does not proportionally represent the whole population and results cannot be deemed representative of a full picture of mobility towards Ukraine from Slovakia.

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.

