

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Crossing Back Surveys with Ukrainian Nationals



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Country Report & Data Analysis

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Cover photo: An enumerator speaks with a refugee from Ukraine in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova. © IOM 2023

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KEY FINDINGS

- **Top 3 countries of stay abroad:** Romania (21%), Türkiye (11%), Germany (9%).
- **Top oblasts of origin:** Odeska oblast (43%), Kyiv city and Kyivska (18%), Mykolaivska oblast (13%).
- **Intended destinations:** going to same oblast of origin (91%), to a different oblast (8%) - mainly to Vinnytska, Odeska & Kyiv city.
- **Transport to Ukraine:** car (57%), bus (31%), foot (10%).
- **Intentions upon crossing back:** long-term stay (58%), short-term visit (38%).
- **Top needs upon crossing back:*** financial support (20%), medicines and health services (6%), food products (9%), employment (8%). Other specified needs (12%) while 28% had no immediate needs.
- **Top areas of assistance received:*** food products and meals (27%), financial support (26%), NFI/hygiene items (22%), vouchers (2%), accommodation (8%).

* More than one answer possible

Map 1: Republic of Moldova, surveys deployed, countries of stay and oblasts of destination in Ukraine



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1. Socio-Demographic Profile

Gender and age

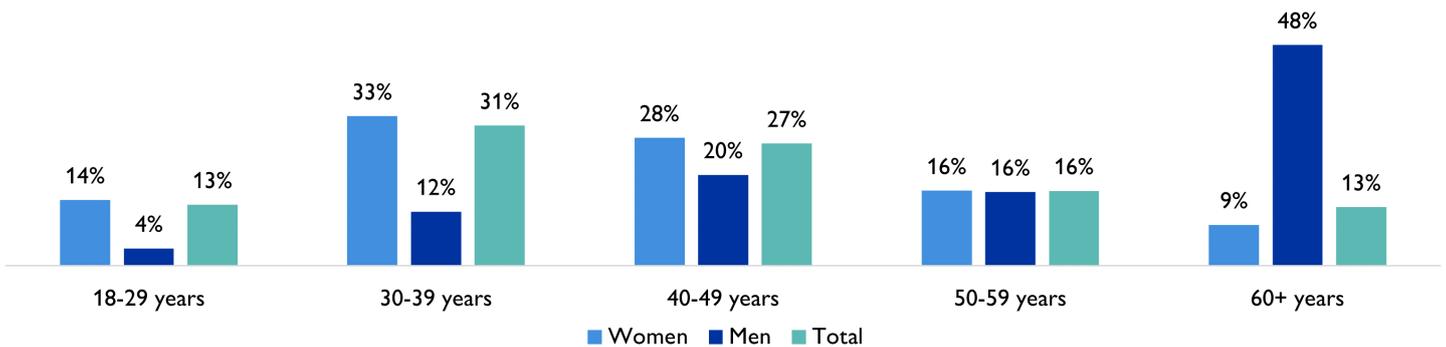
Out of the 2,135 respondents interviewed prior to crossing back into Ukraine, ten per cent were men, and 90 per cent were women. The average age for the total sample was 43 years.

Disaggregating the data by gender reveals that on average, men were older than their female counterparts (54 years on average for men, versus 42 years for women). The largest proportion of respondents were aged between 30 and 39 years old (31%). The largest

age group for women was those aged between 30 and 39 years (33%), while for men it was those over 60 years old (48%), followed by those in the range between 40 and 49 years (20%), and between 50 to 59 years (16%).

Twenty-eight per cent of women were in the age group between 40 to 49 years, followed by the group between 50 to 59 years (16%), while only nine per cent of women were in the age group 60 years old and above.

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

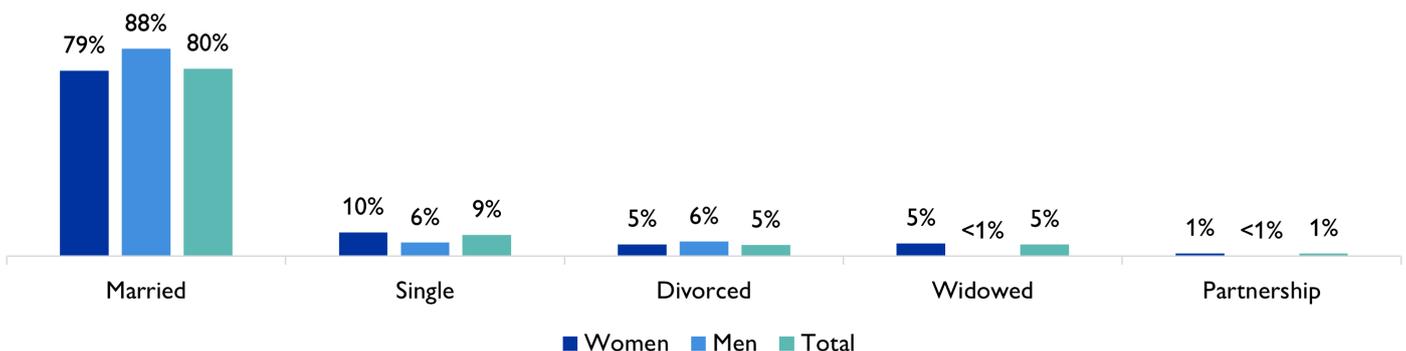


Marital status

Regarding the marital status of all the respondents, (2,135 individuals), the majority of them (80%) were married. Among those who indicated that they were not married, ten per cent were single, five per cent were divorced and another five per cent were widowed. The remaining one per cent were in a partnership.

There were more married men than women (88% versus 79%). Single women were more numerous than men in the sample (10% versus 6%) yet similar proportions of men and women were divorced (6% and 5%). The same was observed for men and women, who were widowed or in a partnership (5% and 1% versus less than 1%).

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

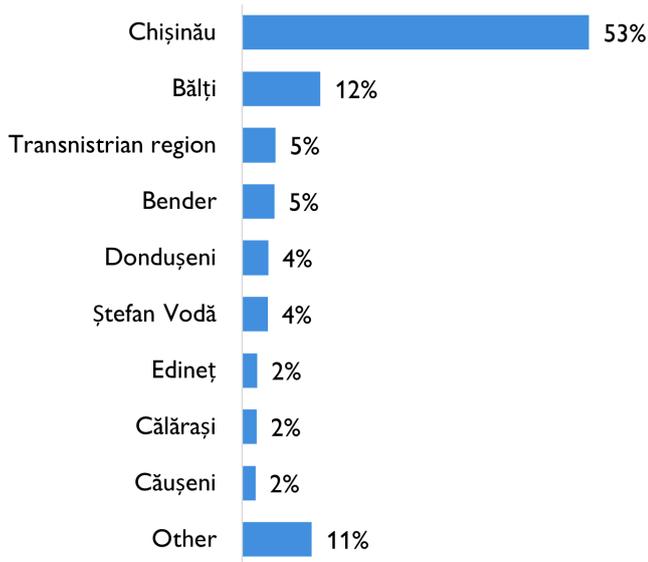


2. Time Outside of Ukraine

Countries of stay while abroad

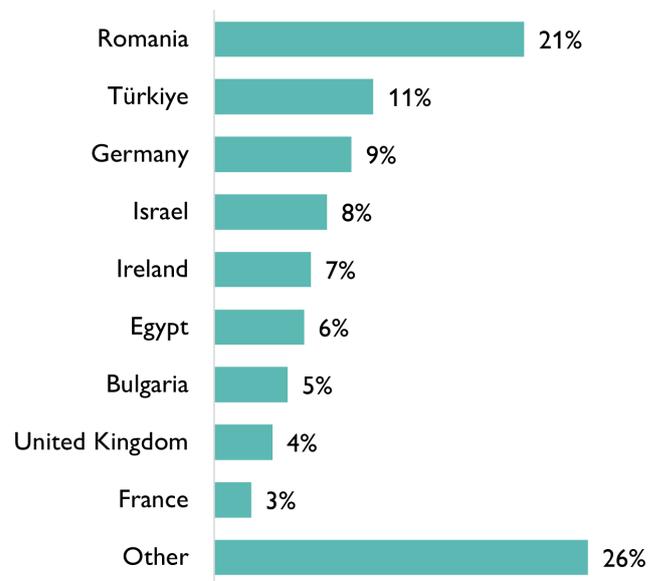
People returning to Ukraine through the Republic of Moldova were coming from a total of 50 different countries, predominantly in Europe. Fifty per cent of respondents had been residing in the Republic of Moldova. Among those returning from abroad, 21 per cent were in Romania, 53 per cent came from other European countries, and the remaining had been residing outside of Europe (26%). Half of those who had been staying in the Republic of Moldova were residing in Chisinau (53%).

Figure 3: Main areas of residence in the Republic of Moldova since fleeing Ukraine, (%) (N=1,068)



Smaller shares of respondents reported staying in Balti (12%), the Transnistrian region and Bender (5% each), Donduseni and Stefan Voda (4% each), and other places in the Republic of Moldova (22%). Among those who had been staying in Europe, higher shares were coming from Romania (21%) and Türkiye (11%), Germany (9%), Ireland (7%), as well as Bulgaria (5% each), and the United Kingdom (4%). Eight per cent came from Israel, and six per cent from Egypt.

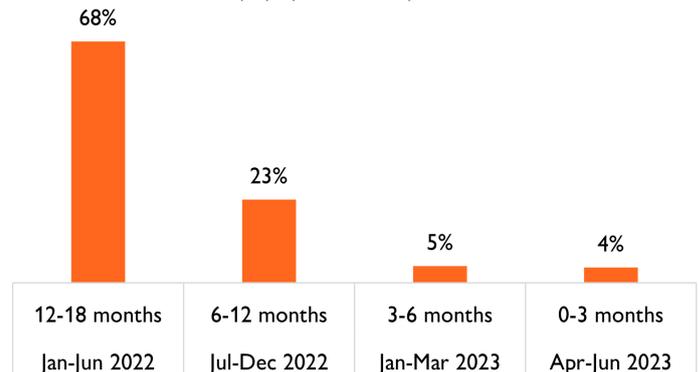
Figure 4: Countries of stay, (%) (N=1,068)



Average time since initial displacement

The average time spent outside of Ukraine can be assessed by looking at the difference between the initial date of displacement of the surveyed Ukrainian nationals and the date of the interview. Out of the 2,135 respondents most were displaced between January and June 2022 (68%). This means that by the time the interviews were conducted (April - June 2023), they had spent about one year outside Ukraine. Twenty-three per cent were displaced between July and December 2022 while five per cent were in between January and March of 2023. The remaining four per cent were in displacement less than three months.

Figure 5: Approximate time in displacement until the date of interview, (%) (N=2,135)

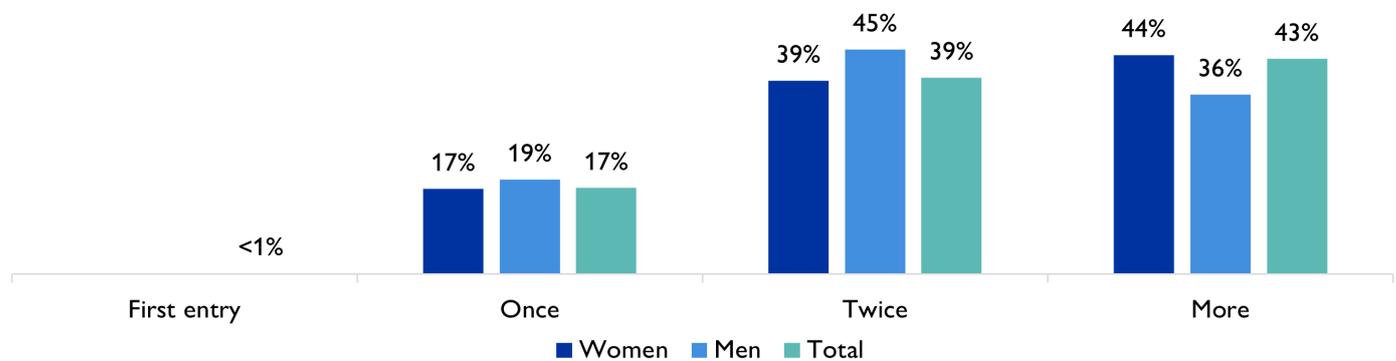


Number of exits/entries

Out of the total number of interviewees (N=2,135), 43 per cent had entered/exited Ukraine more than twice since 24 February 2022. Thirty-nine per cent had entered/exited twice, while 17 per cent had done so once. Less than one per cent of respondents had not re-entered Ukraine since the date of initial displacement. Disaggregating the data by gender reveals that more male respondents than female respondents entered

and exited Ukraine twice (44% versus 39%). Moreover, more men than women had entered/exited Ukraine at least once at the time of assessment (19% versus 17%). On the contrary, more women than men had entered/exited Ukraine more than twice at the time the assessment was conducted (44% for women, and 36% for men).

Figure 6: Number of entries/exits between 24 February 2022 and 30 June 2023, by gender and total, (%)



Transport

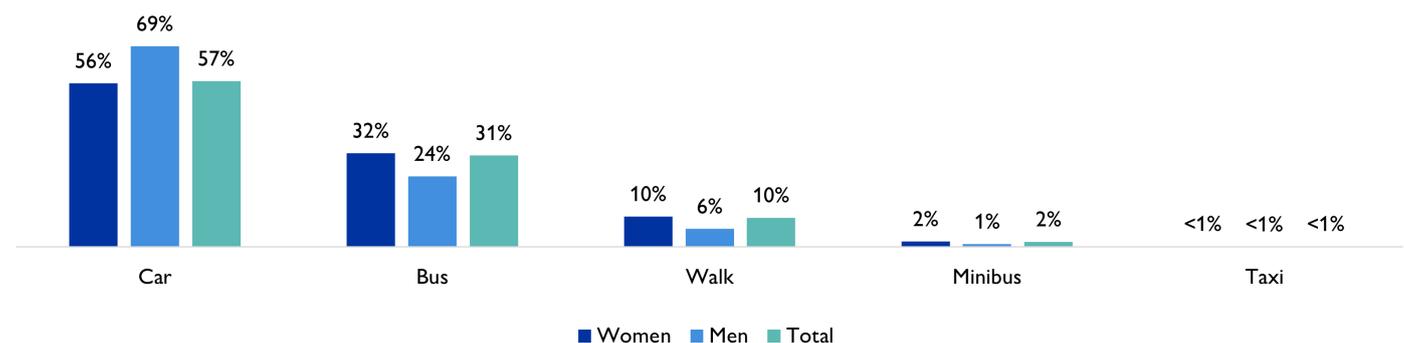
Over half of respondents were travelling to Ukraine by car (57%). This was followed by 31 per cent of respondents who were going back by bus, and ten per cent going on foot. The remaining two per cent were going by minibus or by taxi.

Most men travellers were crossing back by car (69% versus 56% among women), while more women were crossing back by bus (32% versus 24%) or on foot (10% versus 6%).

Figure 7: Main modes of transportation, (%) (N=2,093)



Figure 8: Transport means, by gender and total, (%) (N=2,135)



3. Oblasts (regions) of Origin and Destination

Origin or habitual residence

The majority of respondents came from five oblasts in Ukraine, these were Odeska (43%), the City of Kyiv (18%), Mykolaivska (10%), Vinnytska (7%), and Kiyvska (7%).

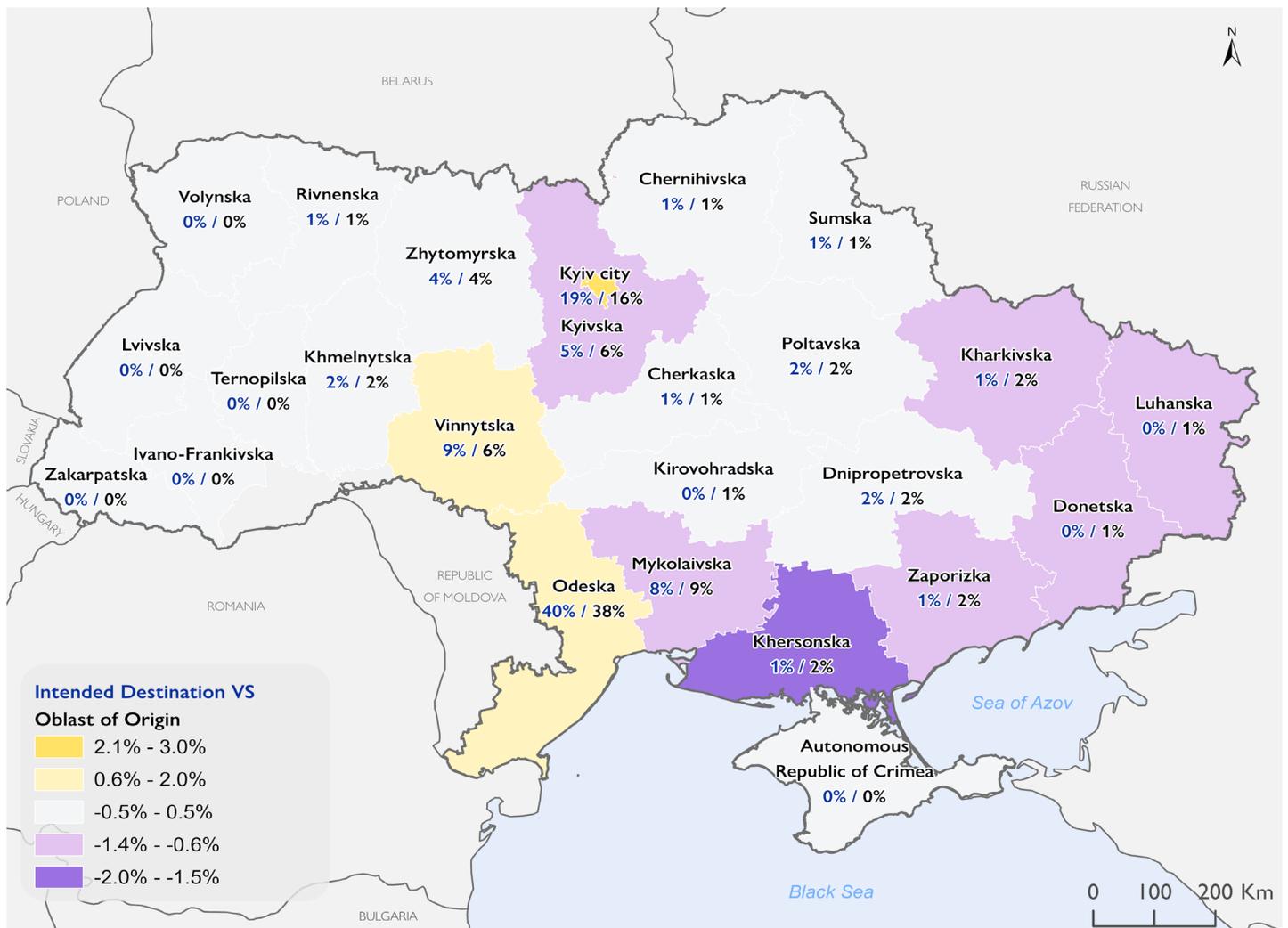
The remaining respondents originate from a small number of oblasts, mostly around the City of Kyiv as well as in the eastern and southern parts of Ukraine, which are the areas mostly affected by the war (since the war in Ukraine has been most intense in the eastern and southern regions).

Intended destination

Out of the total number of interviewees, 91 per cent were planning to return to the same oblast of origin while another 168 individuals aimed to reach a different one.

Among those returning to a different oblast, 71 people were planning to go to Kyiv city, 48 people to Vinnytska and 41 were planning to go to Odeska. Smaller numbers reported intending to go to Zhytomyrska, Mohyliv-Podilska, Biliaivska, Dyviziiska, and Ivano-Frankivska oblasts.

Map 2: Intended oblast of destination versus oblast of origin in Ukraine, (%)



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4. Intentions and Reasons to Cross Back to Ukraine

Fifty-eight per cent of respondents were traveling to Ukraine for a short visit, while 38 per cent intended to stay. Around four per cent were unsure how long they would stay, and less than one per cent preferred not to answer.

Most respondents who intended to stay in Ukraine had been residing in other countries (45%), compared to those who were residing in the Republic of Moldova (30%). In addition, more men (43%) were intending to stay in Ukraine than women (37%) in the sample.

Figure 9: Duration of stay, by gender and total, (%)

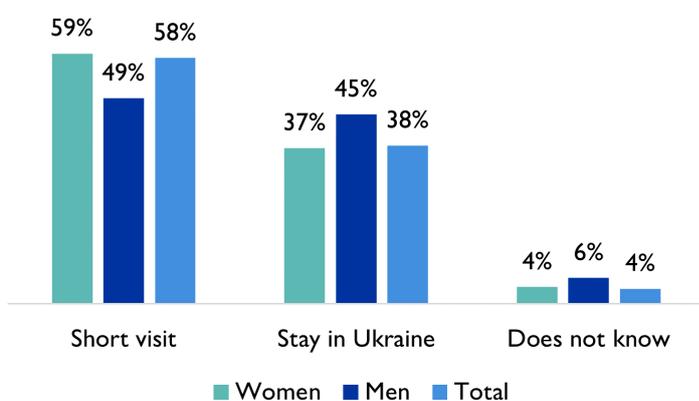
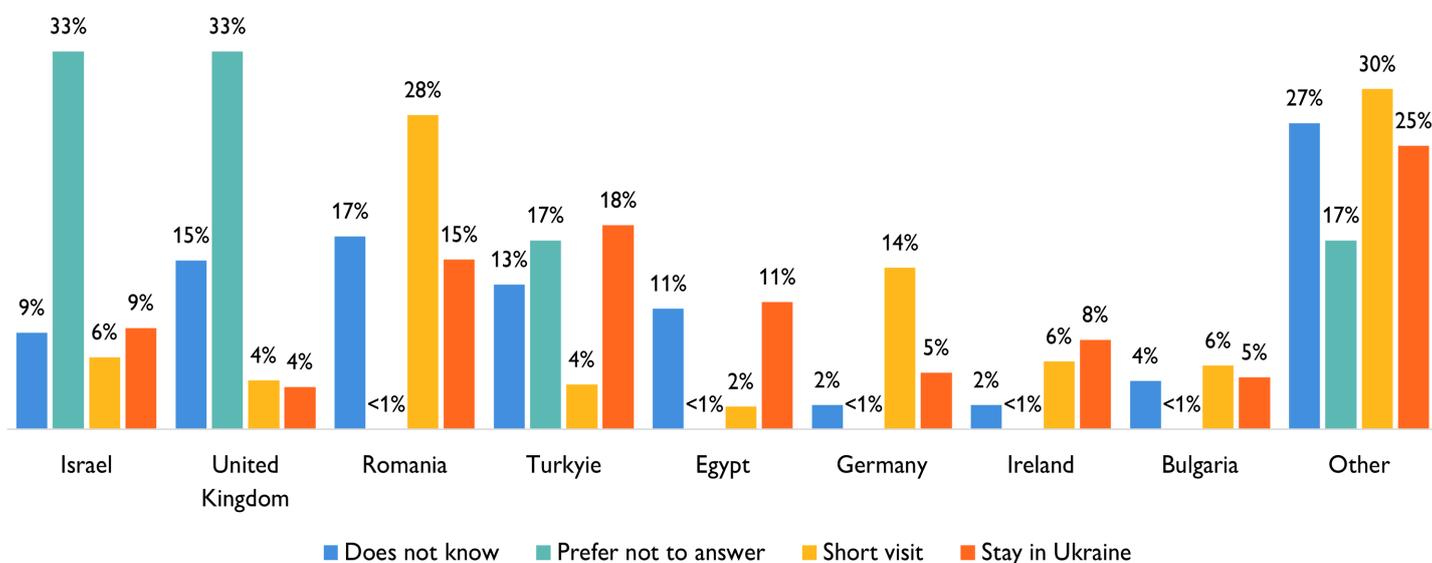


Figure 10: Distribution of respondents by intended duration of stay in Ukraine, by country of residence outside of Ukraine, (%)



Long-term stay

Thirty-eight per cent of the interviewees intended to stay in Ukraine upon return. Out of this number of respondents (803 individuals), 46 per cent indicated that they were returning and staying in Ukraine in order to reunite with family. Twenty-seven per cent were returning because they missed home and nine per cent because they lacked resources in their current location. Other key reasons for returning were that they worked in essential services in Ukraine (5%), the situation in their place of origin had improved (4%), because they have care responsibilities (2%), to take family members

to safety (1%), and to defend Ukraine (1%).

The majority of women (48%) were returning to Ukraine to re-unite with family compared to 36 per cent of men. Similar shares of respondents were returning because they missed home (27% of women and 25% of men). While nearly equal percentages of female and male respondents were returning because they work in essential services in Ukraine (5% women and 6% men). Lastly, five per cent of men were returning to defend Ukraine.

Table 1: Main reasons for staying in Ukraine for a long term period, by gender and total, (%) (N=803)

(more than one answer possible)

Reasons for long term return	Women	Men	Total
To reunite with family	48%	36%	46%
I miss my home	27%	25%	27%
I had not enough resources	9%	14%	9%
Work in essential services	5%	6%	5%
Improved security situation	4%	7%	4%
Help other family members	3%	0%	2%
To take family to safety	1%	3%	1%
To defend Ukraine	1%	5%	1%
Improved security situation	1%	1%	1%
Other	1%	3%	4%

Short-term visit

Fifty-eight per cent of the refugees from Ukraine interviewed were planning to stay in Ukraine for a short visit only.

Out of this sample (1,247 individuals), 35 per cent stated that their main reason to go to Ukraine for a limited duration was to meet with family. Another 20 per cent were returning to collect documents, while 14 per cent were returning to check their properties.

Other people were going back to check their belongings

and for health care issues (12% each), to help family (5%) and bringing supplies (1%).

Both women and men were predominantly going back to Ukraine to meet family (35% versus 32%). Similar trends are observed for those going back to collect belongings (20% for women versus 18% for men).

On the other hand, slightly more men were going back to check properties and for health reasons than women (16% versus 13% and 14% versus 12% respectively).

Table 2: Main reasons for staying in Ukraine for a short-term period, by gender and total, (%) (N=1,247)

(more than one answer possible)

Reasons for short-term return	Women	Men	Total
Meet Family	35%	32%	35%
Obtain/renew documents	20%	18%	20%
Check properties	13%	16%	14%
Collect belongings	13%	11%	12%
Health care	12%	14%	12%
Help family	5%	4%	5%
Bring supplies	1%	2%	1%
Other	1%	3%	1%

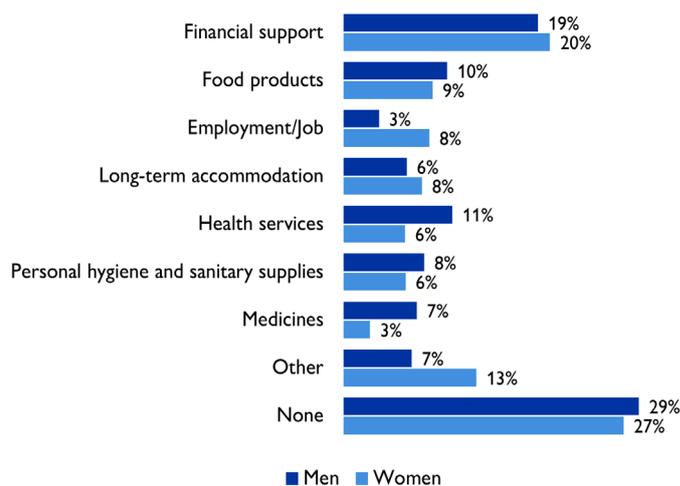
5. Needs, Assistance Received, and Challenges

Immediate needs upon crossing back

The most immediate need upon return at the time of interview was financial support for 20 per cent of respondents. This was followed by support with food products (9%), support with employment information (8%), accommodation services (8%), as well as health services and personal hygiene items (6% each). Twelve per cent of respondents had various other unspecified needs.

Additionally, three per cent of respondents needed assistance with medicines. Twenty-eight per cent of respondents indicated that they had no immediate needs upon crossing. Men and women had similar needs across the board.

Figure 11: Needs upon crossing back, (%) (more than one answer possible)



Assistance received in the Republic of Moldova

Out of 1,019 respondents who answered to this question, all had received assistance in one form or another.

Twenty-seven per cent received food support, 29 per cent financial support, and 47 per cent NFIs and hygiene items. Among the NFIs received by respondents were clothes/shoes (4%), vouchers (9%), transportation support (2%), accommodation (8%), toys and psychological counselling (1% each). One person preferred not to answer this question.

Both men and women received financial support (28% and 26%), food supply (29% and 26%), NFI/hygiene items (43% and 48%), clothes and shoes (4% each) as main forms of assistance received in the Republic of Moldova.

Table 3: Main areas of assistance received, by gender and total, (%) (more than one answer possible)

Assistance received	Women	Men	Total
Food products/meals	26%	29%	27%
Financial support	25%	28%	26%
Personal hygiene and sanitary supplies	22%	24%	22%
Vouchers	9%	7%	9%
Accommodation	8%	7%	8%
Clothes shoes	4%	3%	4%
Free transportation	2%	2%	2%
Psychological counselling	1%	0%	1%
Toys	1%	0%	1%

Experiences of discrimination

One per cent of respondents reported having experienced discrimination in the country of displacement (12 respondents), while 99 per cent had no such experiences. Five people did not know or

preferred not to answer the question on discrimination. All of the respondents who reported some kind of discrimination were women. Similarly, all of those who preferred not to answer were also women.

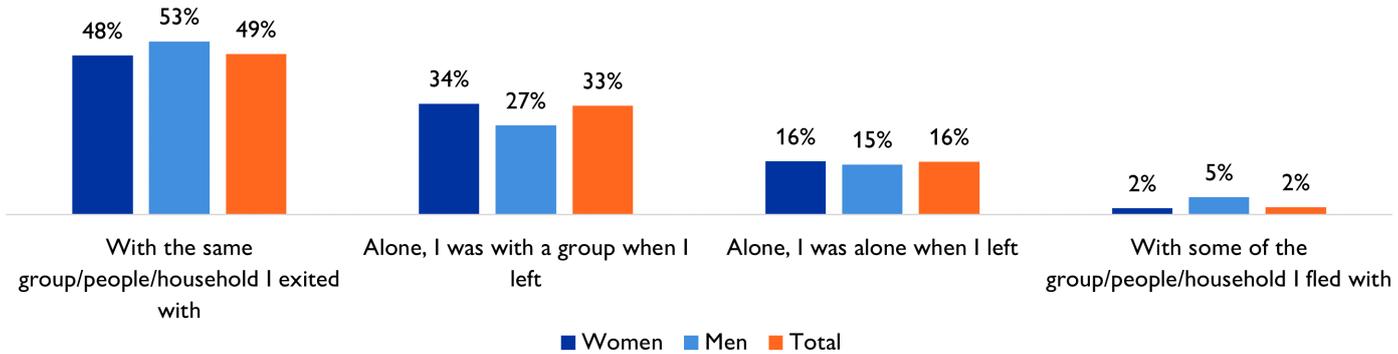
6. Group Composition

Travel mode

Out of the 2,135 respondents, 49 per cent were crossing back to Ukraine in the same group they had previously left with. Sixteen per cent were travelling alone (same as when they exited Ukraine). Another 33 per cent were travelling alone but had departed with a group when leaving Ukraine. The remaining two per cent were either crossing back with a different group, or

with some of the group members they had previously left with. None of the respondents were travelling with a different group. More men were travelling within the same group they left Ukraine with (53%) compared to women (48%). On the contrary, more women were travelling alone to Ukraine from the Republic of Moldova (34% versus 27%).

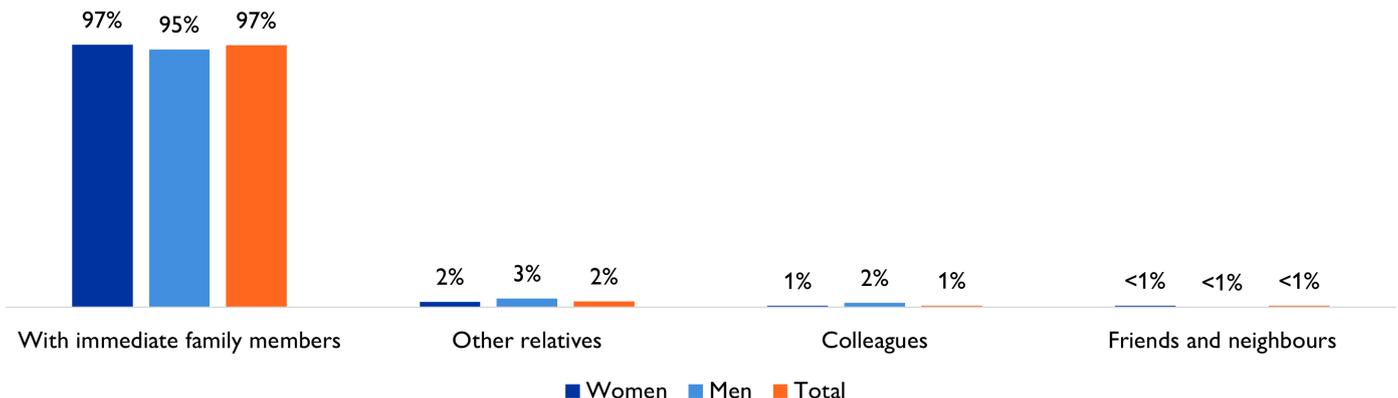
Figure 12: Travelling mode, by gender and total, (%) (more than one answer possible)



Out of those travelling in a group (N=1,092), 97 per cent were travelling with family, two per cent with relatives, one per cent with friends, and another one per cent with colleagues or other people. Moreover, 29 per cent were travelling with at least one elderly person

and 63 per cent were travelling with at least one child. Out of 686 of respondents who were travelling with at least one child, 19 per cent were travelling with a child between 0-4 years old and 81 per cent with a child between 5-17 years old.

Figure 13: Travelling groups, by gender and total, (%) (N=1,092) (more than one answer possible)



7. Methodology

Background

Since 24 February 2022, refugees from Ukraine and Third Country Nationals (TCNs) have been fleeing to neighbouring countries as a result of the war. As of May 2023, more than eight million refugees from Ukraine were recorded across Europe. At the same time, almost 13 million of border crossings of 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) tools since 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 the Republic of Moldova between 01 April 2023 and 30 June 2023 in two border crossing points, Otaci and Palanca. To improve the quality of the questionnaire, continuous reviews of the questionnaire and additional questions must be implemented in each iteration of the data collection in the Republic of Moldova as and when necessary.

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 the Republic of Moldova, surveys were conducted in Ukrainian, Russian, and English 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 maximise the number of interviews, and reach out to different profiles of individuals.

Among the limitations encountered during data collection were the reduced time to carry out surveys at border crossing points and the presence of only four enumerators at the moment of the interviews.

To address the aforesaid shortcomings, and cover different viewpoints, a mixed sampling strategy guided the data collection exercise.

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 the Republic of Moldova.

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>
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