

## LATVIA

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



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Country Report & Data Analysis

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## KEY FINDINGS

- **Top oblasts of origin:** Khersonska (29%), Donetsk (17%), Zaporizka (15%), Luhanska (7%), Dnipropetrovska (5%), Kharkivska (5%).
- **Intentions to move:** Latvia is a transit country for many refugees from Ukraine. The majority of respondents planned to move to another country (72%). The top 3 indicated countries were Poland, Russian Federation and Germany. Others intended to move to a different location in Ukraine (22%) or return to their place of origin in Ukraine (1%).

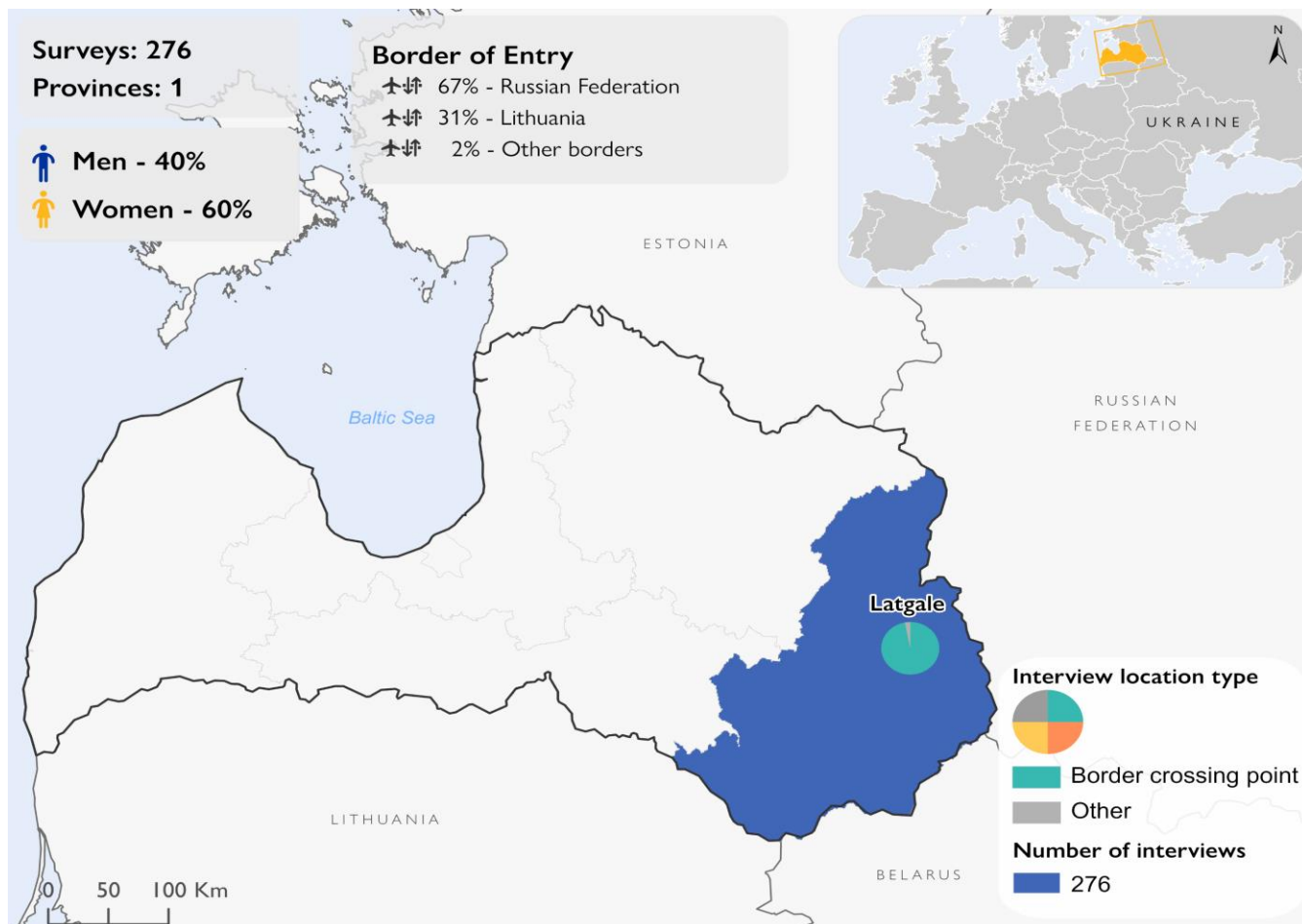
**Employment status:** Unemployed and looking for a job (50%), retired (31%), employed (8%), unemployed and not looking for a job (5%), parental leave (2%).

**Top needs:\*** General information (84%), food products (22%), personal safety (3%), medicine (3%), health services (2%), long-term accommodation (2%).

**Top areas of assistance received:\*** food products (73%), financial support (60%), housing (35%), personal hygiene and sanitary supplies (20%), transportation (13%).

\* more than one answer possible

Map I: Latvia, 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 on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

## I. Socio-Demographic profile

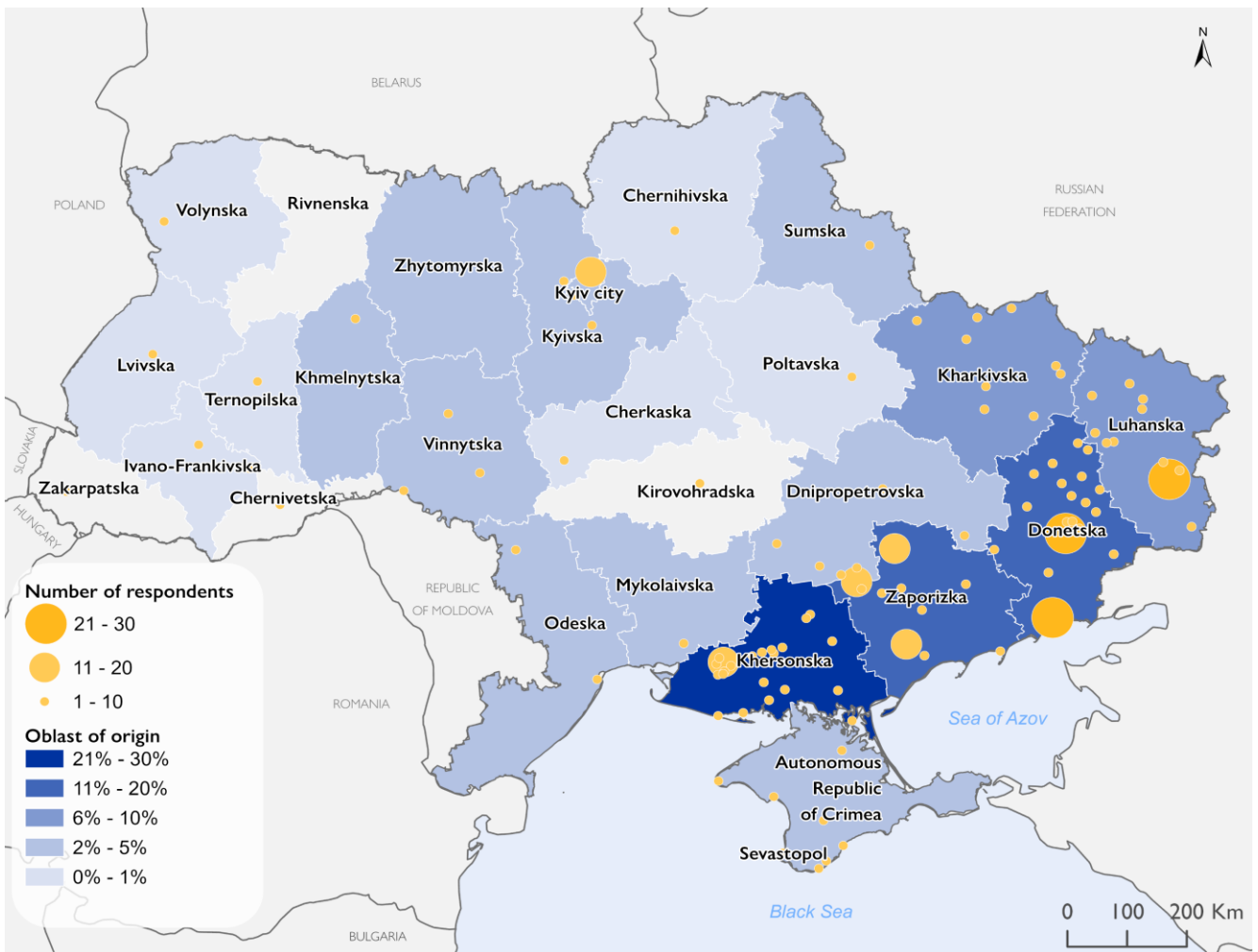
### Oblast (region) of origin

Survey respondents originated from almost all regions of Ukraine, with a particular concentration in the eastern and southern parts of the country.

Most respondents (61%) were from or previously resided in one of three regions before leaving Ukraine: Khersonska (29%), Donetsk (17%), Zaporizka (15%). The remaining respondents

(39%) resided in 18 other regions throughout Ukraine. These included Luhanska (7%); Dnipropetrovska and Kharkivska (5% each); the city of Kyiv and Vinnytska (3%); Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Khmelnytska, Sumska, Zhytomyrska (2% each); and Cherkaska, Chernihivska, Kyivska, Lvivska, Mykolaivska, Odeska, Poltavska, Sevastopol (1% each).

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



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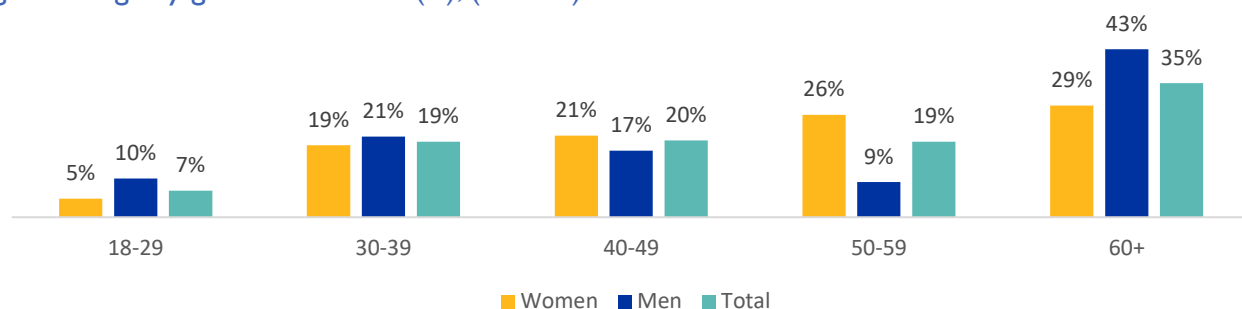
## Gender and age

Sixty per cent of sampled respondents were women, while 40 per cent were men. Over one-third of respondents were 60 years old or older (35%), while 20 per cent were between 40 and 49 years old, and 19 per cent were between 50 and 59 years old.

The average age for men in the sample

(51 years old) was slightly higher than the average age of women (50-years-old). Among women, the most represented age group was 60 year olds and above (29%), followed by 50 - 59 years old (26%). The most represented age groups among men were 60 year old or above (43%), followed by 30 - 39 year olds (21%).

Figure 1: Age by gender and total (%), (N=278)

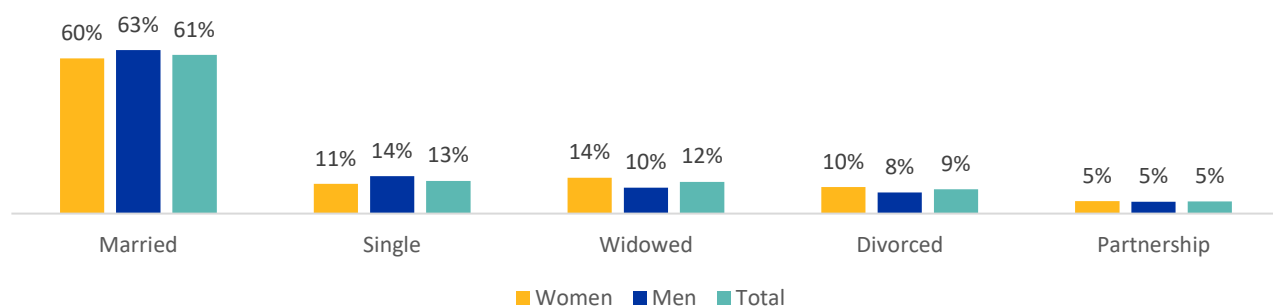


## Marital status

Over half of the respondents were married (61%), while another thirteen per cent were single. Others were widowed or divorced (12% and 9%, respectively). The remaining five per cent were in a relationship. Men were more likely to

report being single than women (14% versus 11%), while women were more likely to report being widowed (14% versus 10%). Additionally, a higher percentage of women reported being divorced compared to men (10% versus 8%).

Figure 2: Marital status (%), (N=278)

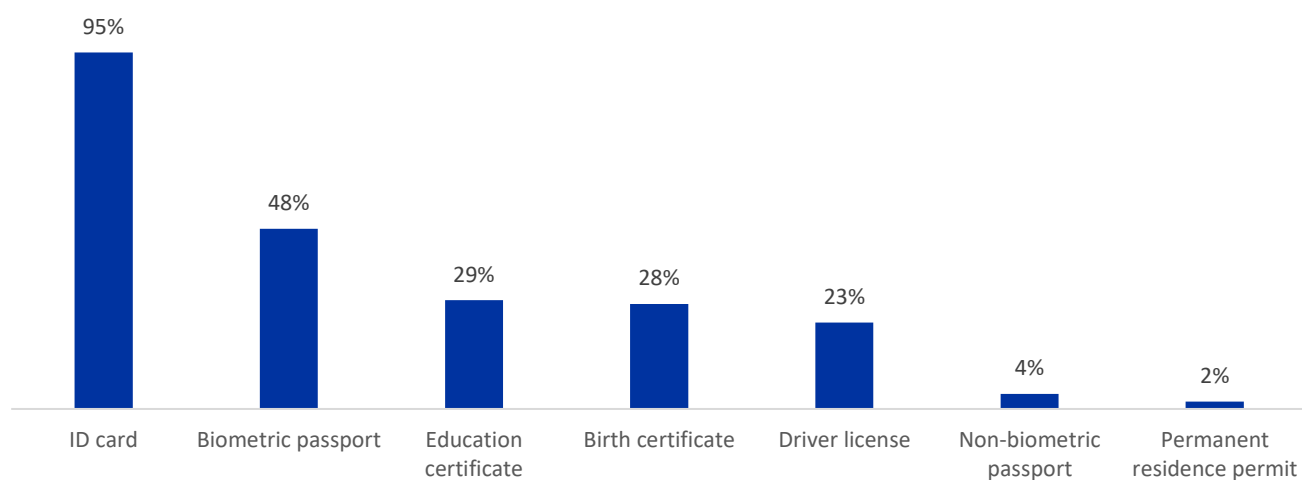


## Documents possessed at the time of interview

The majority of respondents reported travelling with multiple documents. Ninety-five per cent of respondents travelled with their ID card, 48 per cent with their biometric passport, and 29 per cent with an education certificate. Other

commonly carried documents included birth certificates (28%), driver's licenses (23%), non-biometric passports (4%), and a permanent residence permit (2%).

Figure 3: Documents in respondents’ possession at the time of interview (%), (N=278) (multiple answers possible)



### Average time since initial displacement

To calculate the approximate duration of displacement, Table I lists the amount of time passed since the respondent’s initial date of displacement from Ukraine to the date of interview.

The majority of respondents (83%) were initially displaced during the months of July, August, and September in 2023, more than a year after the war started. Additionally, four per cent were displaced between January and June in 2023. It is worth noting that surveys were conducted at

border crossing points and in cities, which might have influenced these findings. Eleven per cent of respondents were initially displaced in 2022. Among them, six per cent were displaced between January and June 2022. Among them, six per cent were initially displaced between January and June 2022, indicating they had been displaced for 15-20 months. In addition, five per cent of respondents were initially displaced between July - December 2022, meaning they have been displaced for 9-14 months in total.

Table I: Approximate time spent in displacement (%), (N=278)

Date of initial displacement	Length of displacement	(%) of respondents
Before 2022	2 years or more	2%
Jan-Mar 2022	18-20 months	4%
Apr-Jun 2022	15-17 months	2%
Jul-Sept 2022	12-14 months	3%
Oct-Dec 2022	9-11 months	2%
Jan-Mar 2023	6-8 months	1%
Apr-Jun 2023	3-5 months	3%
Jul-Sept 2023	<1-2 months	83%

## 2. Intentions

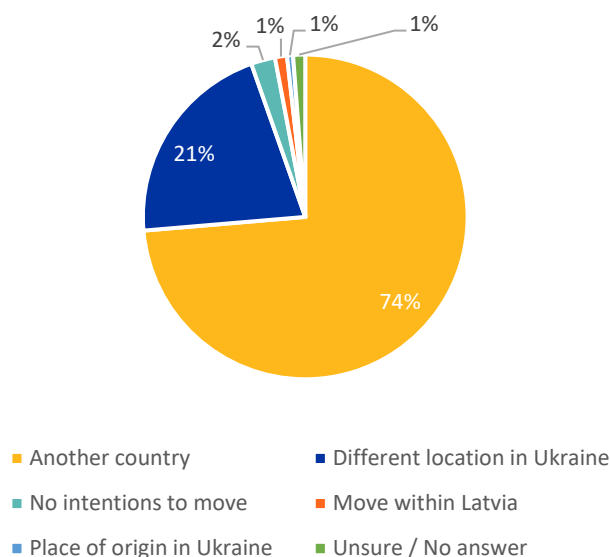
### Intention to move elsewhere or stay in current location

Most respondents did not intend to remain in Latvia and considered it as a transit country in their journey to another destination or before their return to Ukraine.

Seventy-two per cent of respondents intended to move to another country. Almost a quarter intended to return either to a different location in Ukraine (22%) or to their place of origin in Ukraine (1%). Two per cent stated that they have no intention to move, while another two per cent intended to move to a different location within Latvia. The remaining one per cent were uncertain about their plans.

Women were more likely to report intending to move to another country than men (74% versus 69%). In addition, more men intended to move to a different location within Ukraine compared to women (23% versus 21%).

Figure 4: Respondents' intentions to move (%), (N=278)



Forty-nine per cent of respondents intend to return to Ukraine when it is safe to do so, while 26 per cent intended to return regardless of the situation in the country. Twenty-one per cent

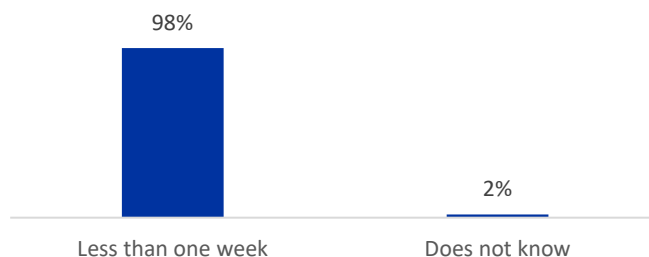
remain unsure about their plans, while the remaining four per cent do not intend to return at all.

### Intended length of stay

Respondents who intended to either relocate within Latvia, return to their place of origin in Ukraine, or move to another destination (N=269) were asked how long they expect to stay in their current location. Ninety-eight per

cent of respondents intended to stay in their current location for less than a week before moving. The remaining two per cent remained uncertain about the duration of their stay.

Figure 5: Intended length of stay (%), (N=269) (multiple answers possible)

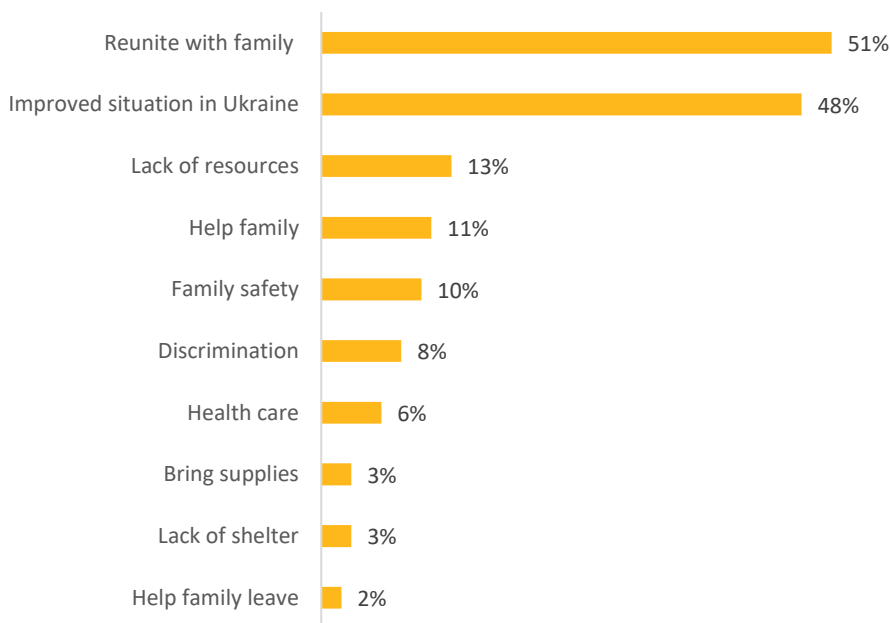


### Intended oblast of destination in Ukraine and reasons to go back

Of the respondents who intended to return to Ukraine (N=63), three per cent planned to return to the same oblast of origin, while 97 per cent intended to go a different region in Ukraine. Forty-three per cent of respondents aimed to return to the city of Kiyv, followed by the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (10%), Donetska, Odeska, Luhanska, Dnipropetrovska, Khersonska, Luhanska, and Zakarpatska (5% each), Khmelnytska, Lvivska, and Poltavska (3% each), and Kharkivska, Kyivska, Mykolaivska, Vinnytska, and Volynska (2% each). Of those intending to go back to Ukraine, 51 per cent cited reuniting with family members as the

purpose of their return, while 48 per cent of respondents cited an improved situation in Ukraine. Fifty-six per cent of respondents cited other reasons, including a lack of resources (13%), assisting family members (11%), concerns about family safety (10%), experiences of discrimination (8%), need for healthcare (6%), difficulties finding shelter or acquiring supplies (3%), or supporting family members in leaving Ukraine (2%). The remaining five per cent of respondents indicated other reasons, such as having property they intended to sell or needing to organize the inheritance.

Figure 6: Reasons for choosing Ukraine as intended destination, total (%), (N=63) (multiple answers possible)



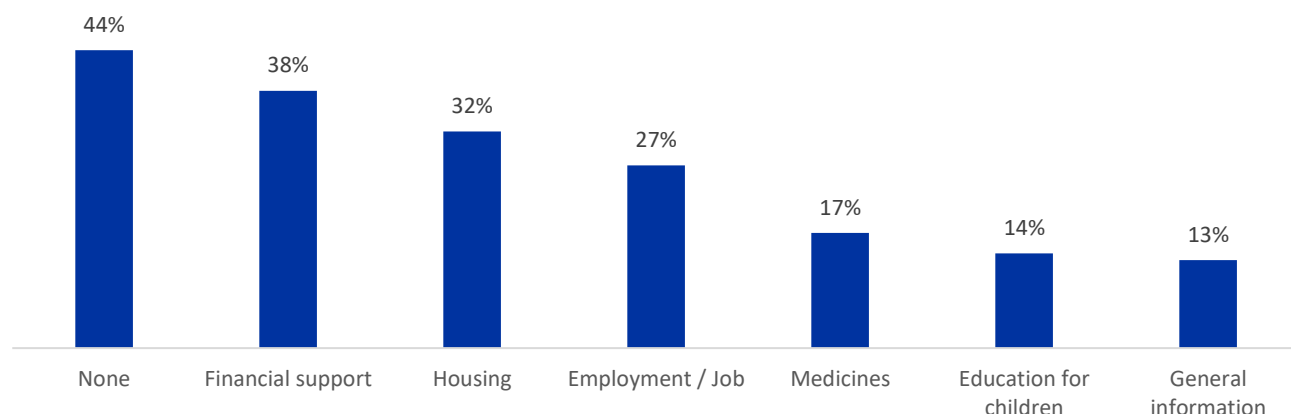
### Immediate needs upon return

Among the respondents who intended to return to Ukraine (N=63), 70 per cent indicated that their top needs would be financial support and housing (38% and 32% respectively). Other needs

included job placement (27%), medical support (17%), education for children (14%), and general information (13%). Forty-four per cent reported having no specific needs upon their return.



Figure 7: Main needs upon return (%), (N=63) (multiple answers possible)



### Intended country of destination

Among those who intended to go to another country (N=200), the top two intended destinations were Poland and the Russian Federation (each cited by 34% of respondents). Fourteen per cent intended to move to Germany. Other respondents intended to relocate to

Lithuania, Czechia, and Denmark (3% each). Less common destinations included the Netherlands (2%), as well as Croatia, Estonia, the Faroe Islands, Hungary, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Sweden, and Switzerland (1% each).

### Reasons for selecting intended destination

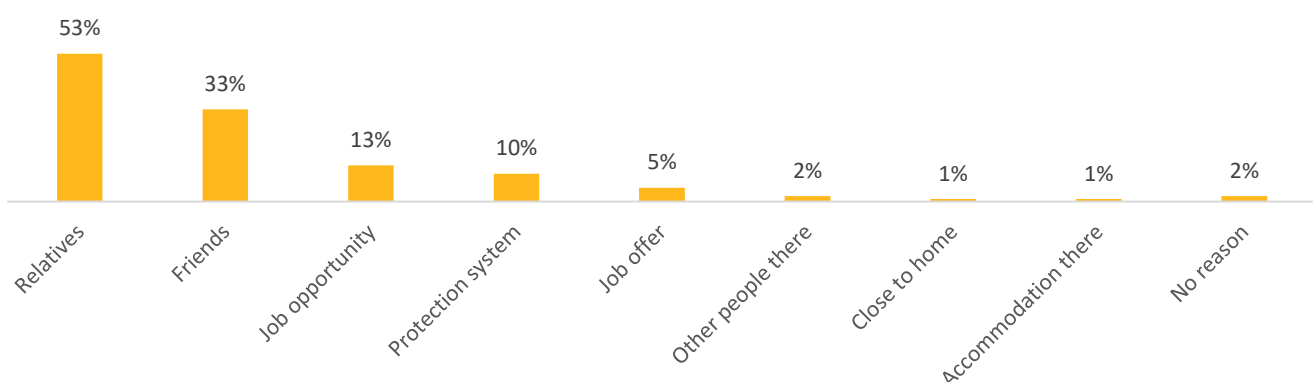
The survey asked respondents who planned to relocate either within Latvia (N=6) or to another country (N=200) to indicate the reasons for selecting their intended destination.

Fifty-three per cent cited the presence of relatives in the destination country as a significant factor in their decision. Additionally, 33 per cent cited having friends in the area, while thirteen per cent intended to move due to job opportunities.

Ten per cent of respondents mentioned social welfare protection systems as a factor influencing their decision, with an additional five per cent said they had received a job offer.

A few respondents cited the availability of accommodation (3 respondents) and the desire to be close to home (2 respondents). The remaining seven respondents did not provide a specific reason for their intention to relocate.

Figure 8: Reasons for Intending to Move (%), (N=206) (multiple answers possible)



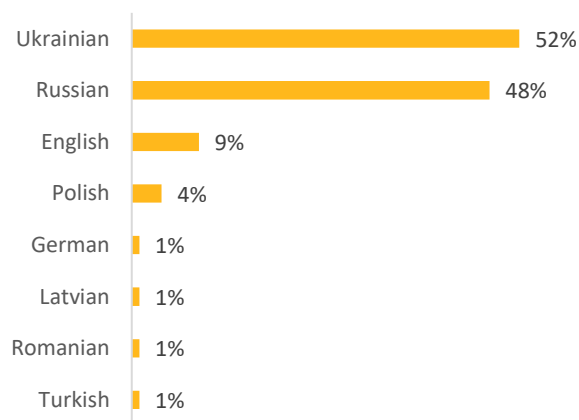
### 3. Education and employment: profile and prospects

#### Main language

Fifty-three per cent of respondents speak Russian as their main language at home, while 47% cited Ukrainian as their main language (47%).

When asked about additional languages they speak, 58 per cent of respondents mentioned Ukrainian, while 42 per cent mentioned Russian. Thirteen per cent spoke English and five per cent spoke Polish language. Other mentioned languages included German (2%), as well as French and Czech (1% each).

Figure 9: Other spoken languages (%), (N=277) (multiple answers possible)

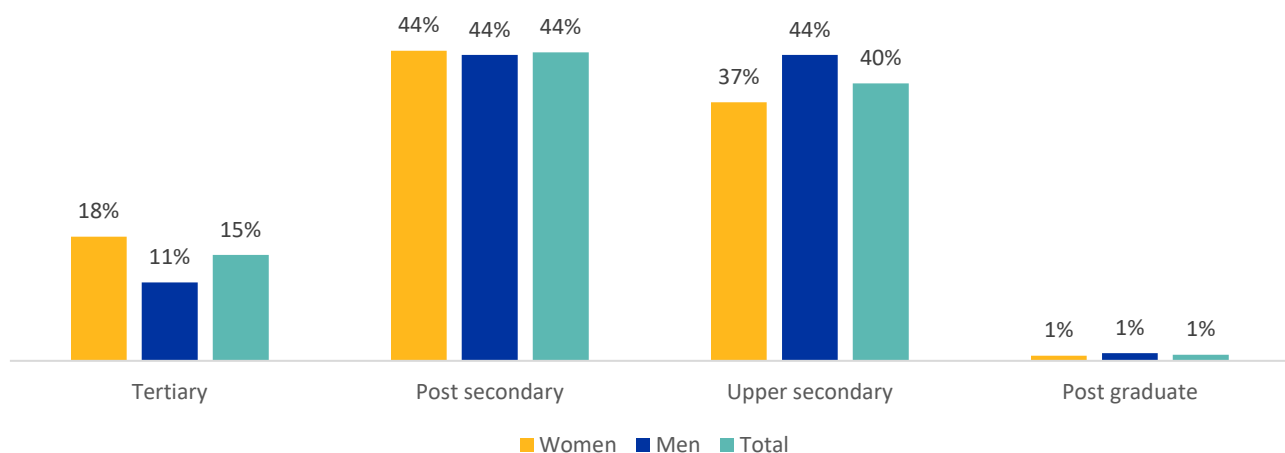


#### Education level

Forty-four per cent of respondents had completed a post-secondary, non-tertiary education, while 40 per cent had completed an upper secondary level of education. Additionally, 15 per cent had tertiary education, while one per cent had post graduate education. Women were

as likely as men to have attained post-secondary education as their highest level of education (44% of respondents). Men were slightly more likely than women to have achieved an upper secondary/vocational education as their highest level of education (44% versus 40%).

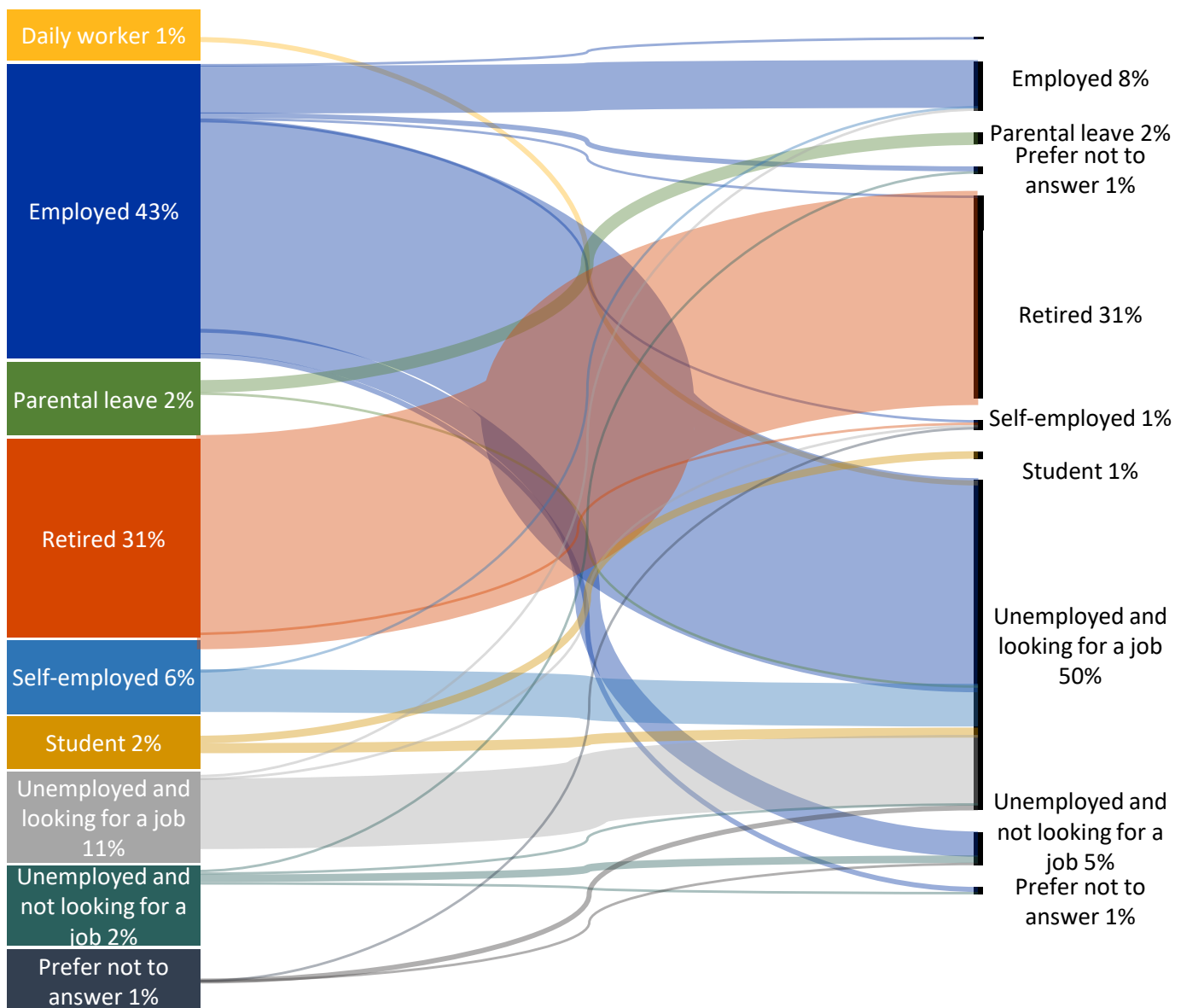
Figure 10: Education level, by gender and total (%), (N=224)



### Employment status before leaving Ukraine versus in Latvia

Before leaving Ukraine, 43 per cent of respondents were employed, 31 per cent were retired, and eleven per cent were unemployed and currently looking for a job. Additionally, six per cent were self-employed, three per cent were pursuing their studies, two per cent were on parental leave, and another two per cent were unemployed, but not looking for a job. The employment rates of respondents were drastically different in Latvia. Fifty per cent of respondents reported being unemployed and looking for a job in Latvia, while the share of employed and self-employed respondents decreased to eight per cent and one per cent, respectively. The share of those declaring to be unemployed and looking for a job increased from eleven per cent before leaving Ukraine to 50 per cent while in Latvia.

Figure 11: Employment status before leaving Ukraine and current employment status in Latvia (%)



### Reasons for not seeking a job

Five per cent of the respondents reported being unemployed, but not actively seeking work. This number increased compared to the period before the respondents left Ukraine, rising from two per cent to five per cent. Respondents who decided to remain unemployed in Latvia (N=14) cited

their plans to leave the country (9 respondents) as a reason for not seeking employment. Two respondents did not see the need to work, while one respondent indicated that they could not work due to medical conditions.

### Sector of employment in Latvia

Among 26 respondents who provided answers about their current employment sector, the most common fields were human health and social work (15%). Other fields included manufacturing,

transporting and storage (12% each), and to a lesser extent, agriculture, construction, education, real estate, public administration, and defense (1% each).

## 4. Registration and Inclusion Services

Out of 278 respondents, nine per cent had already registered for temporary protection or applied for some form of protection or refugee status with the national authorities in Latvia. Among those who had not applied or registered (91%), 50 per cent said they were planning to

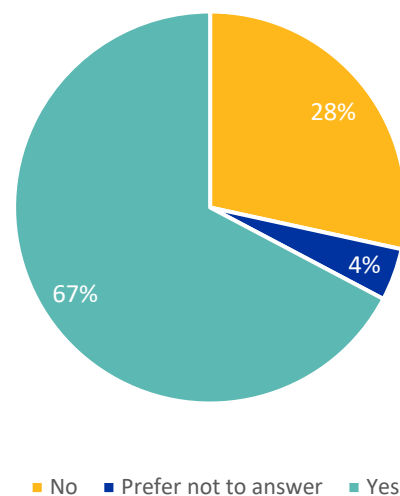
leave Latvia soon, while 46 per cent were planning to register. Three per cent claimed to be ineligible for temporary protection status, while the remaining one per cent cited other reasons for not registering.

### Ability to cover expenses

Sixty-seven per cent of respondents reported that their average income was sufficient to cover their monthly expenses in Latvia. Twenty-eight per cent reported not having sufficient income to cover their expenses, while four per cent preferred not to answer.

Among respondents who answered the question about how they cover daily expenses (N=6), four respondents mentioned income from work., One respondent relied on their own savings, and four respondents mentioned support from authorities and the government.

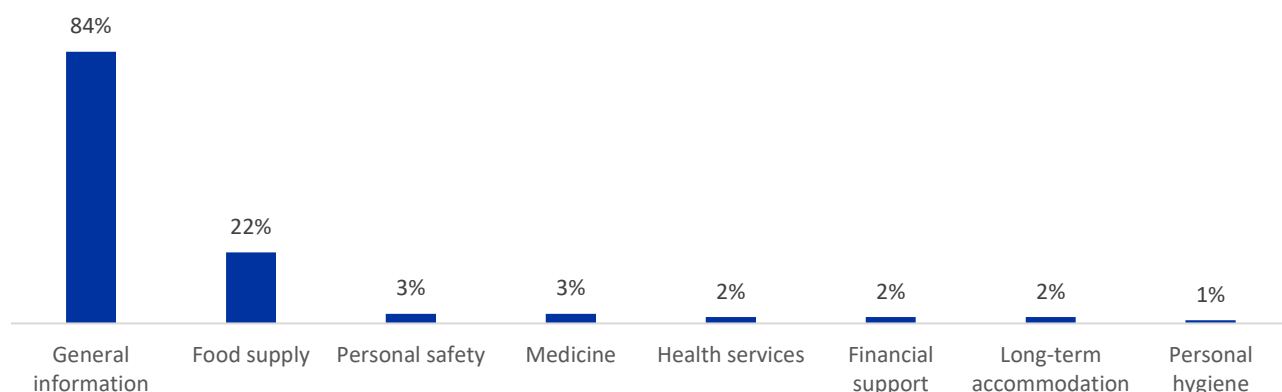
Figure 12: Ability to cover expenses (%), (N=278) (multiple answers possible)



## 5. Immediate Needs and Assistance Received

The top 2 needs expressed by respondents were general information (84%) and food products (22%). Other reported needs included personal safety (3%), medicine (3%), health services (2%), financial support (2%), long-term accommodation (2%), and personal hygiene and safety (1%).

Figure 13: Top 8 priority needs (%), (N=278) (multiple answers possible)

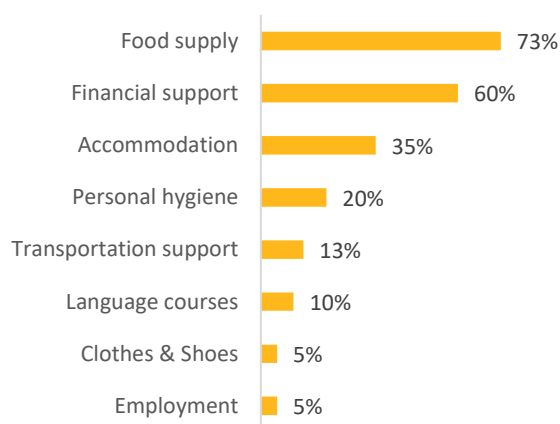


### Assistance

Eighty-five per cent of respondents reported not having received support or humanitarian assistance, while 14 per cent indicated that they received support before the interview. One per cent preferred not to answer.

Among those who had received support (N=40), the main types of assistance reported were food (73%), financial support (60%), housing (35%), and personal hygiene or sanitary supplies (20%). Other mentioned forms of assistance were transportation (13%), language courses (10%), clothes and shoes (5%), and employment assistance (5%).

Figure 14: Received assistance (%), (N=40) (multiple answers possible)



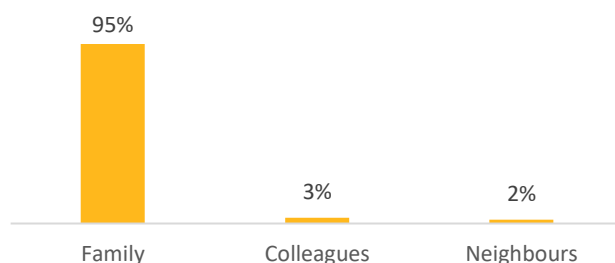
### Areas in which information is needed to get more assistance

Among those who were uncertain about where to seek assistance (N=23), the most frequently mentioned areas that respondents need information on included: financial support, documentation assistance, long-term accommodation, general information, food products, employment, health services, and clothing and shoes.

## 6. Group Composition

Fifty-five per cent of respondents reported travelling alone, while 45 per cent reported travelling in a group. Among those travelling in groups (N=126), 95 per cent were accompanied by immediate family or household members, three per cent were travelling with colleagues, and the remaining two per cent were travelling with friends or neighbours. The average group size was three persons (including the respondent).

Figure 15: Travel group (%), (N=126) (multiple answers possible)

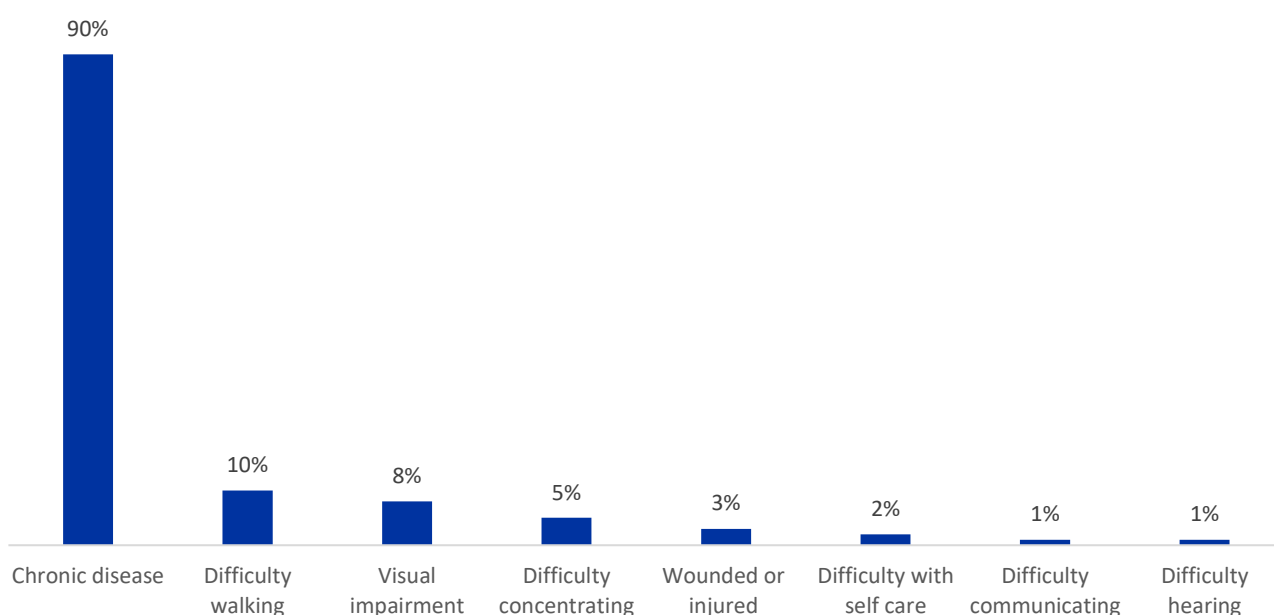


### Travelling with persons with health conditions and disabilities

Thirty-one per cent of respondents indicated that their group included persons with serious health conditions or specific needs, while 69 per cent reported not traveling with anyone that had a serious health condition. Ninety per cent of those travelling in a group were travelling with at least one person with chronic disease or a

serious medical condition. Among these respondents, ten per cent were travelling with a person who had difficulty walking or climbing steps. Other mentioned health conditions included visual impairments (8%), difficulties with concentration (5%), wounded or injured people (3%), difficulty with self-care (2%), hearing (1%).

Figure 16: Persons with serious health conditions in travel group (%), (N=87) (multiple answers possible)



## 8. Methodology

### Background

This report is based on a survey of displacement patterns, needs and intentions conducted by IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) in the 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. This report is based on data collected between July and September 2023.

Trained enumerators conducted in-person surveys 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 on DTM standards, the use of Kobo application, IOM's approach to migrant protection and assistance, data collection ethics and information and referral mechanisms.

Respondents were selected randomly by enumerators at selected entry, exit, transit points and accommodation centres. Respondents included persons traveling by car, bus, foot, and train. 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. All enumerators reviewed the data for systematic issues with responses and did not identify any errors. This report only considered fully complete surveys in

the analysis.

### Country-level implementation and limitations

DTM has been active in Latvia since July 2022. The data for this report was collected between 2 July and 21 September 2023. Overall, 278 valid surveys were collected by a team of 2 enumerators (1 female and 1 male), covering 5 different provinces.

Seventy-seven per cent of surveys were collected in Karsavas, 19 per cent in Zilupes, two per cent in Kraslavas, one per cent in Ludzas, and less than one per cent in Rezeknes region.

Surveys were conducted in Russian and Ukrainian languages. The survey respondents were chosen at random from locations within five transit and reception locations that receive high volumes of individuals entering Latvia, with either public or private transport. While enumerators tried to ensure that respondents represented diverse profiles, the operational reality of fieldwork posed various challenges. Not all survey locations are equally accessible to enumerators. Depending on the survey site, individuals may not be able to comfortably spend 10-20 minutes responding to the questionnaire. While the results are not representative, the data shows strong internal consistency with each country and at the regional level.

## 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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