



**IOM**  
UN MIGRATION

GLOBAL DATA INSTITUTE  
DISPLACEMENT  
TRACKING MATRIX

# FLOW MONITORING SURVEYS WITH MIGRANTS TRAVELLING THROUGH KOSOVO<sup>1</sup>

3 JULY – 30 AUGUST 2023

 **IOM**  
UN MIGRATION

 **IOM**  
UN MIGRATION

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout the publication do not imply expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IOM concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

This publication was made possible through support provided the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway (Donor) and the Directorate General for Italian Citizens Abroad and Migration Policies of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (Donor). The opinions expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of donors.

---

#### Publisher

International Organization for Migration

IOM Kosovo\*

Lidhja e Pejës str. 177, 10000 Pristina, Kosovo\*

 +383 38 600 521

 <https://kosovo.iom.int/>

 [iompristina@iom.int](mailto:iompristina@iom.int)

---

This report was issued without formal editing by IOM.

This publication was issued without IOM Publication Unit (PUB) approval for adherence to IOM's brand and style standards.

This publication was issued without IOM Research Unit (RES) endorsement.

Release date: 21 March 2024

Cover photo: IOM staff in Kosovo\* ©IOM 2023

<sup>1</sup> References to Kosovo shall be understood in the context of United Nations Resolution 1244 (1999).

Required citation: International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2024). Flow Monitoring Surveys with Migrants Travelling through Kosovo\*. IOM, Pristina.



Some rights reserved. This work is made available under the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-No-Derivs 3.0 IGO License (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0 IGO).\*

For further specifications please see the Copyright and Terms of Use.

Permissions: Requests for commercial use or further rights and licensing should be submitted to [publications@iom.int](mailto:publications@iom.int).

\* <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/igo/legalcode>



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
<hr/>	
1 INTRODUCTION	5
<hr/>	
2 MIGRANTS TRAVELLING THROUGH KOSOVO*: BASELINE PROFILE	5
2.1 SAMPLE SIZE AND MAIN NATIONALITIES	5
2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS	6
2.3 EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT	6
2.4 REASONS FOR LEAVING THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	8
2.5 MODE OF TRAVEL	8
2.6 COST OF JOURNEY	9
2.7 PROBLEMS DURING THE JOURNEY	9
2.8 MAIN NEEDS	10
2.9 INTENDED DESTINATION	11
<hr/>	
3 VULNERABILITY TO VIOLENCE, EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE	12
<hr/>	
4 RETURN INTENTIONS	14
<hr/>	
5 METHODOLOGY	14
5.1 SAMPLING	14
5.2 THE QUESTIONNAIRE	15
5.3 LIMITATIONS	15



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of the second round of the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Flow Monitoring Surveys (FMS) collected in Kosovo\*<sup>2</sup> from 3 July to 30 August 2023. IOM interviewed a total of 51 individual respondents.<sup>3</sup> The first round of FMS was carried out in June and July 2022. FMS provides a snapshot of the profiles, experiences and needs of migrants residing in Kosovo\*. The survey asks questions on demographics, education and employment backgrounds, the circumstances of the migration journey and migration factors, as well as future intentions.

- Thirty-three of the respondents were single adult men between the ages of 18 and 29. Moroccans made up 28 of the 51 respondents, while Syrians were the second largest nationality with 9 respondents.
- All respondents except one had completed at least primary education and 44 of the respondents had been either employed or self-employed prior to leaving their countries of origin.
- Twenty-eight were travelling in a group of people, one respondent reported travelling with facilitators, while the rest was travelling alone.
- Thirteen respondents had been living in a country other than their own country of origin for at least a year prior to arriving in Kosovo\*.
- Half of the respondents entered Kosovo\* through North Macedonia, while the others entered through Albania, or through Serbia. One respondent entered by air from Türkiye.
- The two main routes travelled by respondents were the Türkiye-Greece-North Macedonia route and the Türkiye-Greece-Albania route.
- Italy and Germany were the main countries of intended destination, followed by France. Moroccan nationals were more likely to cite Italy as their intended destination, while most Syrians stated Germany as their intended destination.
- Thirty-seven respondents cited economic reasons as their primary motivation for leaving the country of origin, followed by fifteen who cited personal/targeted violence and twelve who cited war and conflict as the primary motive.<sup>4</sup>
- During their journeys, all but one respondent reported at least one problem, ranging from robbery, theft of documents, health-related issues, mental health problems as well as a lack of food and shelter.

### Twenty-four respondents experienced some form of violence on their journeys.

- The most frequently cited needs during their journeys related to needing accommodation for longer than 48 hours and food.<sup>5</sup>
- Twenty-two respondents spent less than 1,000 USD on their journeys, fifteen spent between 1,000 USD and 2,500 USD and the remaining fourteen spent more than 2,500 USD on their journeys. The journeys were largely financed with savings or by relatives in the countries of origin.
- The majority of the migrants interviewed did not intend to return to their countries of origin.

<sup>2</sup> \* References to Kosovo shall be understood in the context of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

<sup>3</sup> The term “respondents” refers to migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers as the reference population is made of persons traveling along mixed migration routes. These terms are used interchangeably throughout the report.

<sup>4</sup> Respondents could choose multiple options. The total therefore does not add up to 100 per cent.

<sup>5</sup> These are the main needs faced during their journeys, when migrants are in transit and not while they are hosted at TRCs where they have recourse to a shelter as well as a range of support services, including food, non-food items as well as mental health and psychosocial support.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

Since 2015, the Western Balkan (WB) region has emerged as a major crossroads for migrants and refugees<sup>6</sup> attempting to reach the European Union (EU). Prior to 2017, migrants travelled mainly through North Macedonia and Serbia. However, in 2017, the routes diversified with increasing flows also through Albania, Kosovo\*, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina route.

From 1 January to 31 October 2023, authorities in Kosovo\* have registered 545 migrants. The main entry points into Kosovo\* are Vermica village, on the border with Albania, as well as the Elez Han and Kacanik municipalities, on the border with North Macedonia. There are two main routes out of Kosovo\* that go through the northwest and northeast of the country, primarily through the Jarinje and Merdare crossing points towards Serbia.

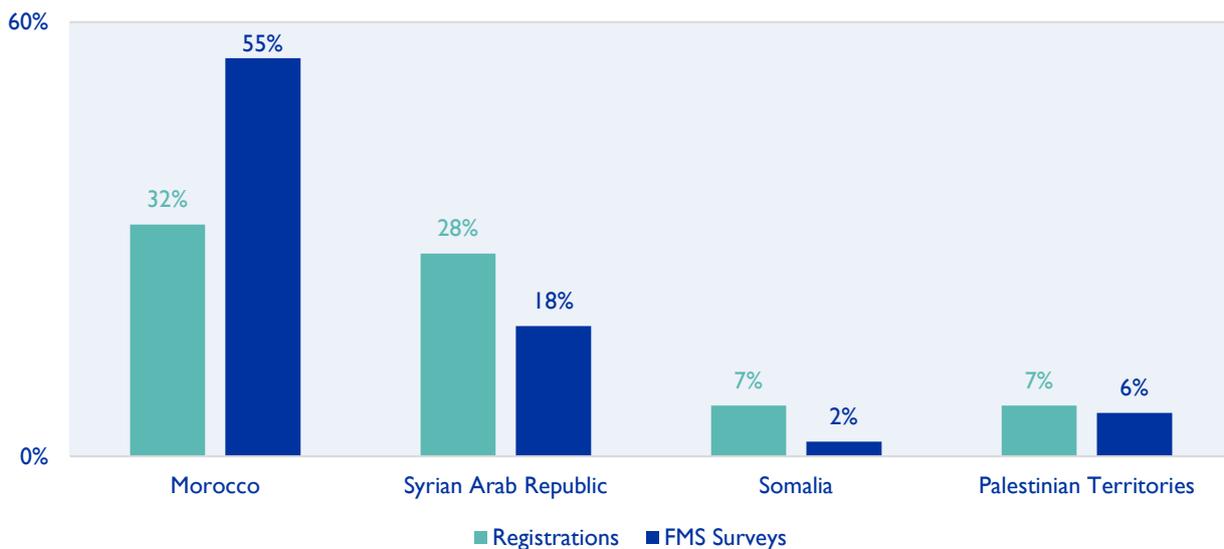
This report contains findings from the FMS conducted by IOM field staff between 3 July and 30 August 2023 in Vranidol and Magure. Field staff surveyed a total of 51 migrants (two respondents declared that they already participated in an earlier round of the same survey).

## 2 MIGRANTS TRAVELLING THROUGH KOSOVO\*: BASELINE PROFILE

### 2.1 SAMPLE SIZE AND MAIN NATIONALITIES

The two main declared nationalities of respondents were Morocco (28) and the Syrian Arab Republic (9), followed by Algeria (4), the Palestinian Territories (3), Egypt (2), Afghanistan, Mauritania, Somalia, South Africa and the Tunisia (1).

Figure 1: Share of respondents and of registrations' data by Kosovo\* authorities, top nationalities (%)



Source: Directorate for Migration and Foreigners, Kosovo Police / DTM Kosovo\* FMS 2023 (n=51)

<sup>6</sup> Mixed migration movements are those in which different categories of people are travelling together, generally in an irregular manner, using the same routes and means of transport, but for different reasons. People travelling as part of mixed movements have varying needs and profiles and may include asylum seekers, refugees, trafficked persons, unaccompanied/separated children, and migrants in an irregular situation.

## 2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

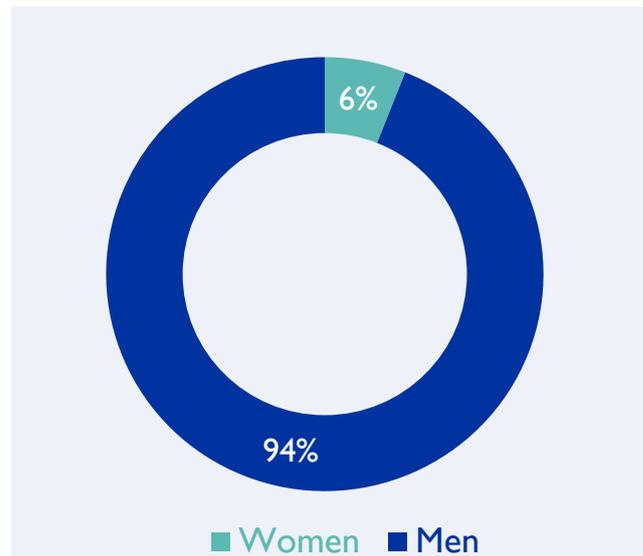
Forty-eight respondents were men, while the remaining three were female. The median age of respondents was 25, with the youngest person interviewed being 17 years old and the oldest 49 years old.<sup>7</sup> There was only one minor in the sample, a boy from Afghanistan.

Forty-two respondents were single, eight were married, and one respondent was divorced. Most respondents (43) had no children while 8 respondents had children. Of those who reported having children, five had children in the country of origin while three had children with them. None of the respondents reported having children in the destination country.<sup>8</sup>

The most spoken languages by the respondents were Arabic and Amazigh.

Eight respondents declared they had been previously displaced before leaving their country of origin. These respondents are from the Syrian Arab Republic (5), Morocco (2) and the Palestinian Territories (1).

Figure 2. Percentages of interviewed migrants disaggregated by sex



Source: DTM Kosovo\* FMS 2023, n=51

## 2.3 EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

### Education

Almost all respondents had completed some level of formal education. See Figure 3 below for a complete breakdown of education levels.

The most frequently reported fields of study were business, arts and humanities, engineering, health welfare, information, services and social sciences.

### Employment status before departure

Most respondents declared they were employed before leaving their country of origin (Fig. 4). Among respondents who declared they had been employed before leaving their country of origin, the most frequently reported

occupations were elementary occupations, skilled manual workers, craft and related trade workers, and plant machine operators.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Minors require the signed informed consent of the parent or legal guardian prior to being interviewed.

<sup>8</sup> Respondents can have more children; therefore, the percentage does not sum up to 100.

<sup>9</sup> The categories included in the questionnaire were: Arts and humanities; Social sciences, journalism and information; Business; Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics; Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary; Education; Engineering, manufacturing and construction; Generic programmes and qualifications; Health and welfare; ICT; and Services.

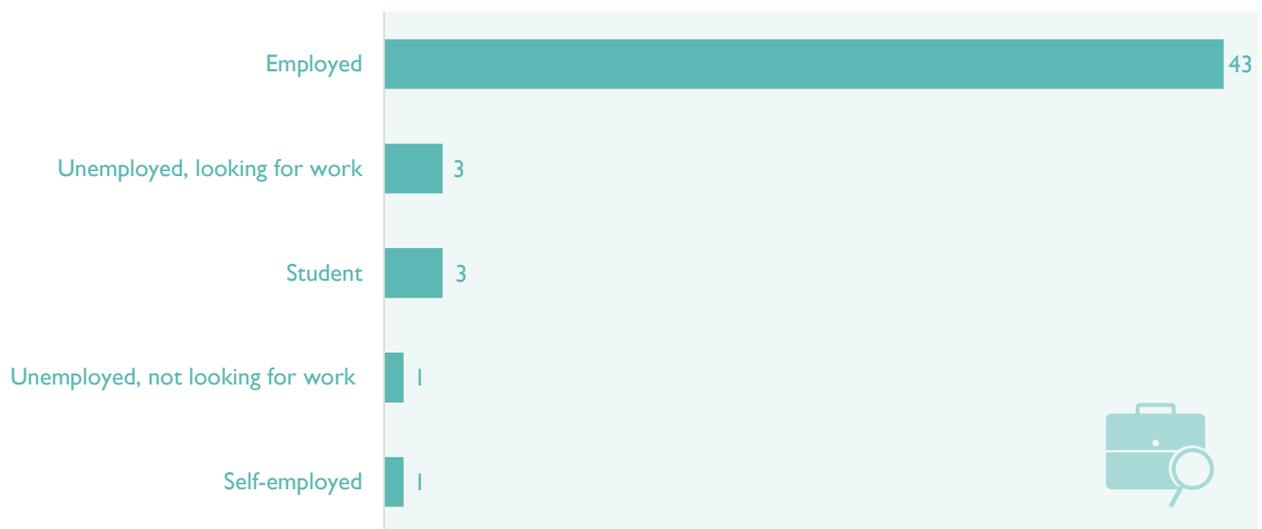
<sup>10</sup> The list of categories included in the questionnaire were: Armed forces; managers (e.g. directors, senior officials); professionals (e.g. doctors, nurses, teachers, accountants); technicians and associate professional (e.g. associate professionals of science, engineering, health, business and administration, legal); clerical support workers (e.g. general secretaries, customer service clerks); service and sales workers (e.g. personal services, sales workers, personal care, security services); skilled manual (agriculture, fishery, craft) (e.g. gardeners, farmers, fishers, gatherers); craft and related trade workers (e.g. metal workers, repairers, woodworkers, electronic installers); plant and machine operators, and assemblers (e.g. truck/ bus drivers, mining/ rubber machine operators); elementary occupations (e.g. cleaners, mining/ construction labourers, street vendors, refuse workers).

Figure 3. Highest level of educational attainment



Source: DTM Kosovo\* FMS 2023, n=51.

Figure 4. Employment status before departure

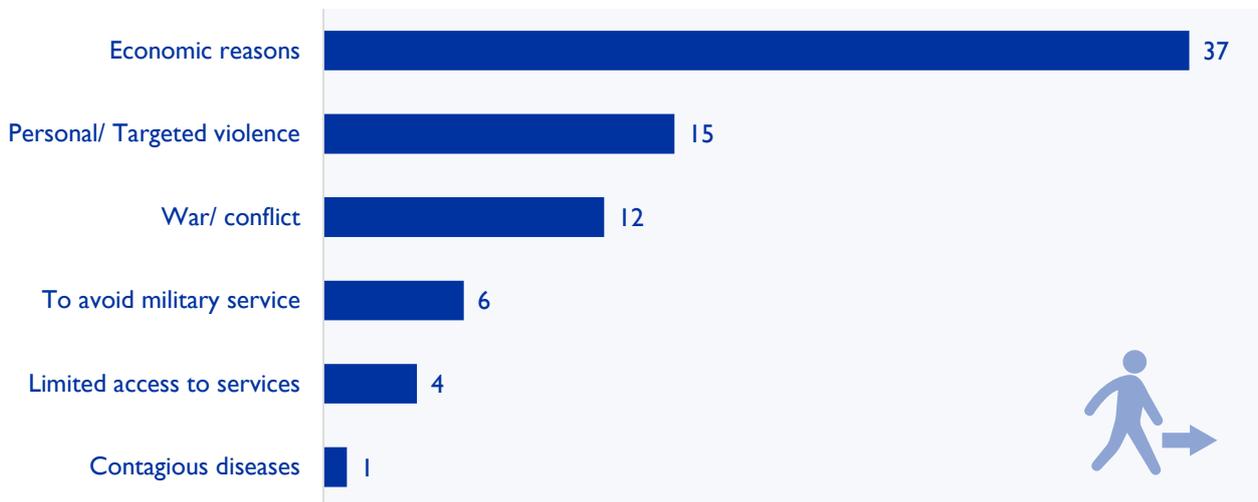


Source : DTM Kosovo\* FMS 2023, n=51.

## 2.4 REASONS FOR LEAVING THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Interviewees were asked to mention the two main reasons for leaving their countries of origin (See Figure 5).<sup>11</sup>

Figure 5. Main reasons for leaving the country of origin (multiple choices possible)



Source: DTM Kosovo\* FMS 2023, n=51

## 2.5 MODE OF TRAVEL

More than half (28) of the respondents stated they were travelling with a group of people, while the rest were travelling alone.<sup>12</sup> Of those who travelled in a group, 21

people were travelling with non-family members, while six travelled with relatives and one person stated that they travelled with facilitators.

Figure 6. Mode of travel of the respondents



Source: DTM Kosovo\* FMS 2023, n=51

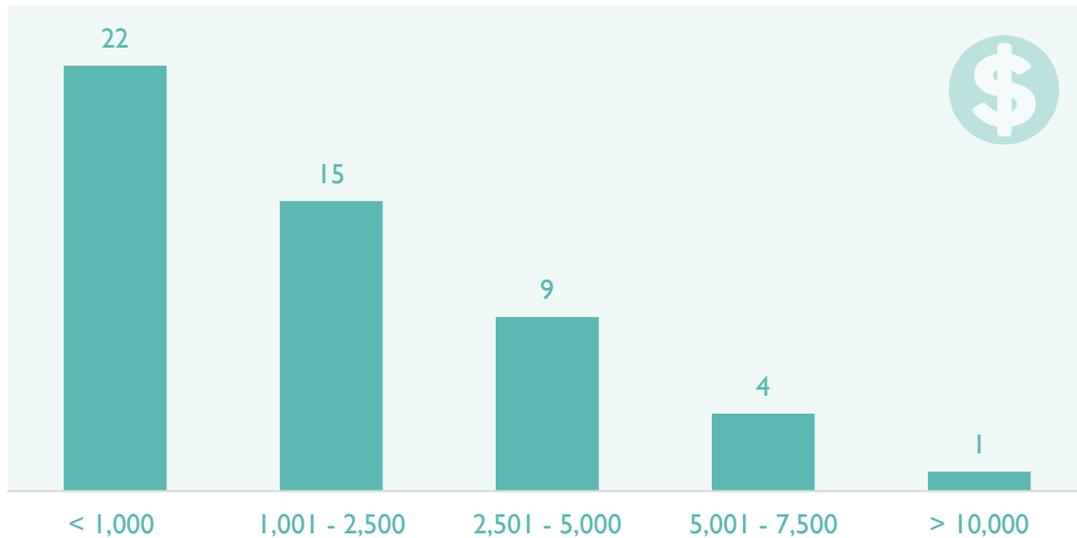
<sup>11</sup> The list of categories included in the questionnaire were: sudden onset natural disaster (e.g., flood, storm, landslide, earthquake); slow environmental change (e.g. livestock died due to drought, loss of agriculture due to drought/poor rainfall, sea level rise destroyed homes/assets, reduced fish stocks); war/conflict; personal/ targeted violence; limited access to services (basic education, health care, water, food, accommodation, transportation); economic reasons; education (higher levels) or training; marriage, family reunification or family formation; COVID-19 related reasons.

<sup>12</sup> The question "Who are you travelling with (with whom did the respondent start the journey)?" presented two options namely a. Alone, b. With a group. If b (with a group), a follow-up question followed "The group was made of, a. Non-family/non-relatives, b. Family/Relatives, c. Facilitators (agents/employer/smugglers)".

## 2.6 COST OF JOURNEY

Figure 7 provides a breakdown of the total cost of journeys of respondents from their country of origin until they arrived in Kosovo\*.

Figure 7. Cost of journey in USD from the country of origin to Kosovo\*



Source: DTM Kosovo\* FMS 2023, n=51

Thirty-eight respondents reported having raised the money for the journey with their own money, followed by 13 respondents who received financial help from relatives in their country of origin. Nine respondents raised money by working during the journey, and six received financial help from friends in the destination country or elsewhere abroad. Four respondents said they incurred a debt or took out a loan and another four said they received money from friends or relatives in the country of origin.

Two people received money from relatives abroad or elsewhere and one person sold their property.

Thirty-nine respondents paid per leg of the journey, while six paid in hawala instalments, five paid the full amount up front and one person paid in instalments. Thirty-eight respondents said they would have to repay at least part of the expenses of the journey, once they had arrived in their intended destination country.

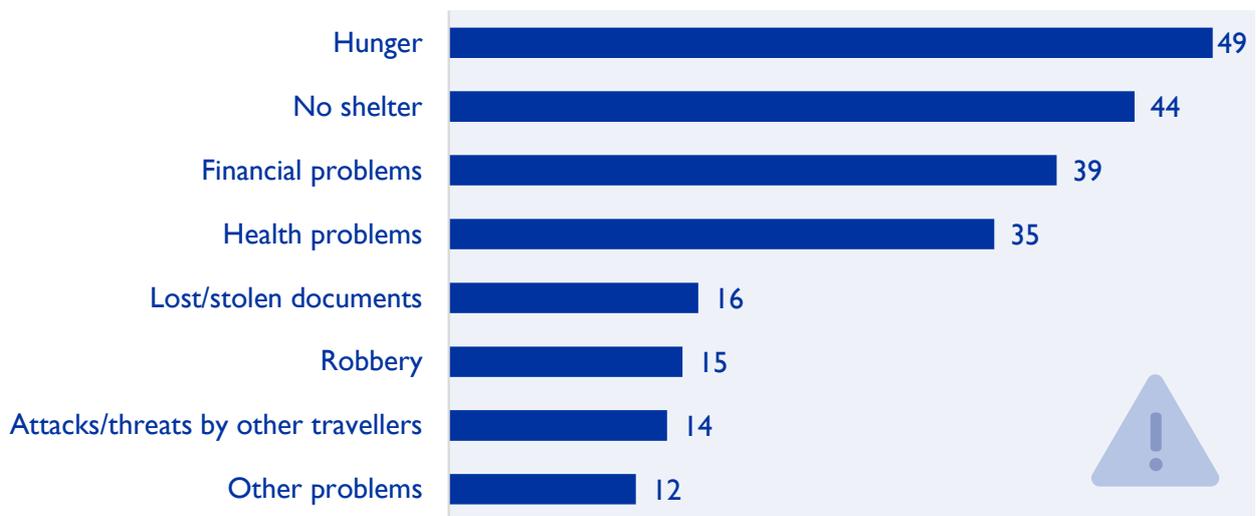
## 2.7 PROBLEMS DURING THE JOURNEY

The interviewees were asked about a list of specific incidents and problems they could have faced during the journey. Almost all (50) respondents declared they had faced at least one of the listed problems during their journey (Fig. 8).

Twenty-two respondents reported that they had been readmitted<sup>13</sup> at least once during their journey by the authorities of transit countries. This happened mainly in Bulgaria and Greece.

<sup>13</sup> The survey asks migrants questions about whether they have been readmitted from one country to another. Migrants may or may not know the difference between formal readmission procedures and push backs and may use or understand those terms interchangeably. Findings on readmission should therefore not be understood to definitively mean pushbacks.

Figure 8. Main problems reported during journey (multiple choices possible)



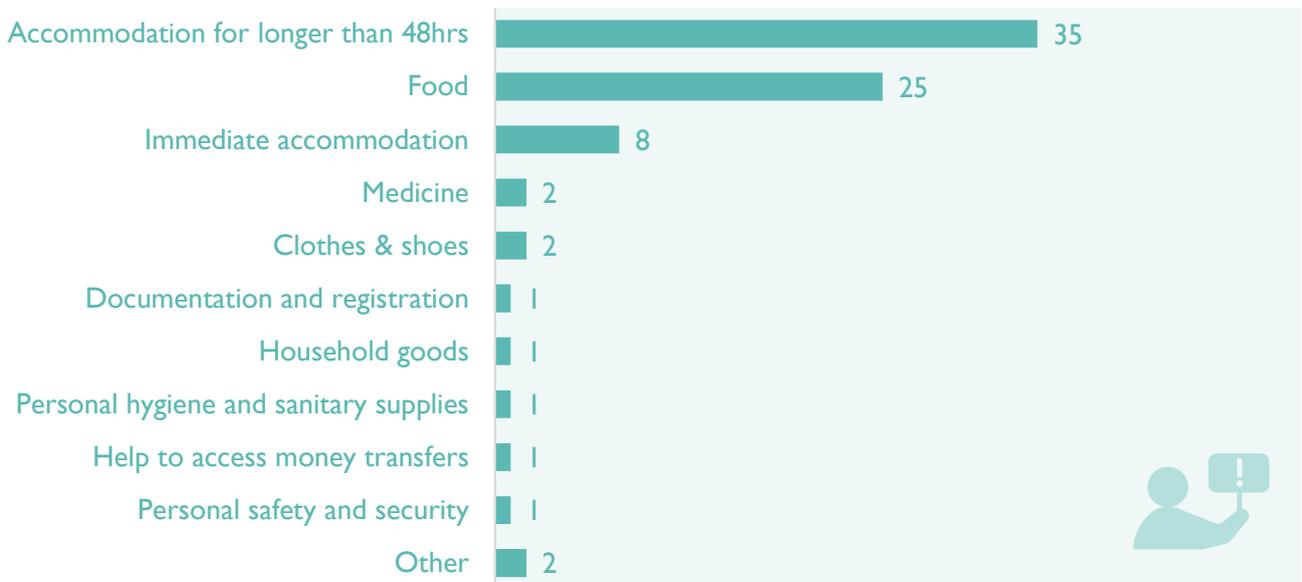
Source: DTM Kosovo\* FMS 2023, n=51

## 2.8 MAIN NEEDS

Respondents were asked what their main needs were at the time of the interview. The three most frequently cited needs were accommodation for a period longer

than 48 hours (35), food (25), and health services (18).<sup>14</sup> See Figure 9 for a complete breakdown of all the needs reported.

Figure 9. Main needs reported (multiple choices possible)



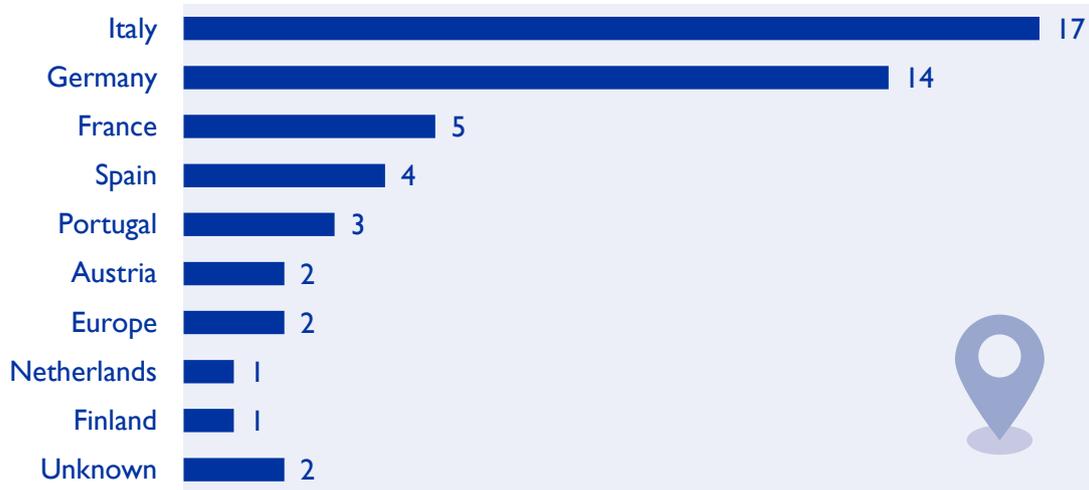
Source: DTM Kosovo\* FMS 2023, n=51

<sup>14</sup> The total does not add up to 100 as respondents were able to provide more than one answer.

## 2.9 INTENDED DESTINATION

The three most frequently cited countries of intended destination were Italy, Germany and France (Fig.10).

Figure 10. Intended countries of destination



Source: DTM Kosovo\* FMS 2023, n=51

As to why migrants specifically chose the country of destination, 24 stated that this was due to appealing socio-economic conditions, including the education and welfare system, social security and job opportunities. This was followed by 13 respondents who declared that it was because of ease of access to asylum procedures, four who said "other" reasons, including perceived ease of receiving regularized immigration status, and four who said it was because of safety. Finally, three respondents said it was because they had family in the country of destination and three respondents said it was because of the existence of a well-established network of co-nationals.

Nineteen respondents said they had family members in the country of intended destination, including five who had immediate family members. Four respondents stated that they had tried to join family members through formal procedures, such as family reunification.

Only two respondents said they had information about family reunification procedures in the country where their relatives lived. Thirteen respondents said they had information on asylum or how to obtain documents to stay legally in the intended country of destination.

### 3 VULNERABILITY TO VIOLENCE, EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

The questionnaire also included a module which gathers data on migrants' vulnerability and the forms of abuse, violence and exploitation they may have experienced or witnessed during the journey. More specifically, the survey includes questions that capture information about whether the respondents, during their journey had:

1. Worked or performed other activities without getting the expected payment
2. Been forced to perform work or other activities against your will
3. Been approached by someone offering a marriage (for you or close family member – child or sibling)
4. Been kept at a certain location against your will (by persons other than the authorities of the country)
5. Experienced any form of physical violence
6. Forced to travel/move
7. Thought they were lied to, tricked, manipulated, indebted, given false promises, or otherwise deceived in order to get them to travel/move
8. Travel documents with them or had access to them during the journey

These questions relate to an event, that might indicate exposure to human trafficking, exploitation and abuse practices, physical and sexual violence, experienced by the respondent. The experiences described in these questions do not aim to identify cases of human trafficking as defined by international and national legal instruments. If interviewers came across respondents who requested further support, they referred these cases to the relevant protection actor.

Twenty-four respondents declared they had experienced at least one of the indicators related to violence, abuse and exploitation. This involved working or performing activities without getting the expected payment, being forced to perform work or activities against their will and experiencing some form of physical violence. These reported experiences of violence and abuse took place in Greece, Türkiye, Serbia, Bulgaria and Albania.



#### UNPAID LABOUR

Ten respondents reported they had worked or performed other activities during their journey without receiving the expected payment. Of them, two persons mentioned it happened working in cargo loading, one person mention it happened working in the agriculture sector in Greece, one person in textile industry, one person in construction and one person in a small factory.



#### FORCED LABOUR

One person reported having been forced to perform work or other activities against their will. This happened in Türkiye in a cargo loading activity.



### OFFERS OF AN ARRANGED MARRIAGE

One person reported being approached by someone offering marriage, in Türkiye.



### KEPT AT A CERTAIN LOCATION AGAINST WILL

Eight respondents declared having been kept at a certain location against their will by persons other than official authorities. Five respondents were Moroccan and three were Syrian. Four of these incidents reportedly happened in Greece, three in Albania and one in Bulgaria.



### PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

Fourteen respondents had experienced some form of physical violence during their journeys. There were six incidents in Greece, five in Türkiye, two in Albania, and one in Serbia.



### FORCED TO TRAVE

One respondent reported having been forced to travel (or move), in Türkiye.



### LIED, TRICKED, OR OTHERWISE DECEIVED IN ORDER TO TRAVEL

Five respondents felt that they had been lied to, tricked, manipulated, indebted, given false promises, or otherwise deceived in order to get to travel or to move. This was reported to have happened in Türkiye, Albania, Greece and Serbia.



### CONTROL OF TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Twenty-five respondents reported that they had their documents stolen. Eighteen said they had lost their documents and three said they never had their documents. Five responded that they had access to their travel documents during the journey.

## 4 RETURN INTENTIONS

Forty-seven of the fifty-one respondents reported they had not considered returning to their country of origin during their journey. When asked why they had not considered it, they most frequently said it was because they were unwilling (33 respondents) or because of ongoing security issues in their country of origin (11 respondents).

Of the four people who had considered returning, three people said they were too tired to continue while the fourth said they it was because they did not have a job.

Two respondents stated they intended to stay in Kosovo\*.

## 5 METHODOLOGY

FMS in Kosovo\* were conducted as part of DTM activities in the Mediterranean that started in October 2015 and are being conducted within the framework of IOM's research on populations on the move, through the Mediterranean and WB Routes to Europe. The data collection involves direct interviews with migrants and collation of statistical data on arrivals and migrant presence in reception and outside from national authorities and IOM staff presence. Regular updates on arrivals are available on [DTM Europe Arrivals](#).

FMS in Kosovo\* were conducted by IOM field staff between 3 July and 30 August 2023 in the TRCs where IOM operates, including Magura Asylum Centre.

The survey is designed to profile third country (non-European) nationals who are moving to Europe by land and by sea through the WB route. Only migrants

aged 14 and above are approached and the questionnaire is proposed only to migrants and refugees who have arrived in the country of the survey no more than one year prior to the interview. IOM requires the written consent of the parents or legal guardians of potential survey respondents from 14 to 17 years of age.

The FMS questionnaire was available in e-format in Kobo (English, French and Arabic) and in paper forms translated into Arabic, English, Farsi, French, Pashto and Urdu. Respondents were approached in a simple random sample by IOM field staff working in the TRCs, with those who give their consent to be interviewed proceeding with the remaining questions. The interviews were anonymous and conducted one-on-one with respondents, in safe and isolated spaces. Migrants could decline to respond to individual questions or to interrupt the interview if they wished to do so.

### 5.1 SAMPLING

The sample frame consists of the total number of migrants in TRCs in Kosovo\* above the age of 14. IOM Kosovo\* used a non-random, convenience sample procedure.

The sampling frame attempted to reflect the general demographic profile of migrant present in reception centres of Kosovo\* in the covered period.

## 5.2 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

DTM's FMS baseline module captures data on the demographic profile of the respondents, their education and employment background, the circumstances of their migration journey and migration factors, their place of origin or their last country of habitual residence, and their future intentions with regards to the country of destination.

The second FMS module contains questions that refer to experience exploitation, violence and abuse that may amount to human trafficking. The module was developed

together with IOM's Protection Division's experts and gathers information on events and practices, experienced directly by the respondent or by his/her family member(s), or that are witnessed by the respondent during the journey.

The third module contains questions related to return intentions. As outreach activities on the existence and functioning of AVRR were run by IOM in the country, this module of the FMS asks respondents few questions on the intention to return to the country of origin.

## 5.3 LIMITATIONS

The data presented in this document are representative of the individuals surveyed in the covered locations and during the indicated timeframe. The data should not be generalized and should not represent a full picture of regional migration, but rather of mixed migratory flows in the specific locations monitored in Kosovo\* during the covered period.

It should also be noted that the low percentage of female respondents in in this sample is due to several factors including the fact that the majority of migrants in Kosovo\* are men, there are fewer female enumerators, women tend to be less willing to talk, and that they are more difficult to approach when travelling with male family members.

