LATVIA

LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES FROM UKRAINE

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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KEY FINDINGS IN 2023

DEMOGRAPHICS

155 Ukrainian respondents
(working-age stayers)

63% **37%**

LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION

75% active population

25% inactive population

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

53% employed

47% unemployed
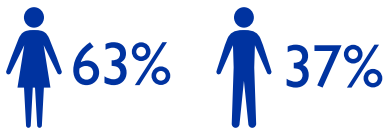
SOURCES OF DAILY EXPENSES

- Support from authorities (70%)
- Income (64%)
- Support from family (38%)
- Savings (25%)
- Support from NGO (21%)
- Borrowed money (2%)

INCOME

36% Sufficient to cover daily expenses

52% Insufficient to cover daily expenses

12% Prefer not to answer

DESIRED OCCUPATION

24% services and sales

21% crafts and related trades

JOB MATCHING

77% satisfied with their job

74% satisfied with their job

PRIORITY NEEDS

58% Employment

38% **20%**
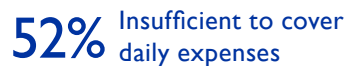
Multiple answers possible

CHALLENGES

32% Employment

20% **12%**

Multiple answers possible

Overview: number of surveys and locations of data collection in Latvia in 2023

Surveys: 1,155
Provinces: 2

Men - 37%
Women - 63%

Border of Entry

71% - Russian Federation
22% - Lithuania
7% - Other borders

ESTONIA

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

UKRAINE

Baltic Sea

Riga

Latgale

Interview location type

Border crossing point
Bus station
Collective centre
Other

Number of interviews
1,064
91

LITHUANIA

BELARUS

0   50   100 Km
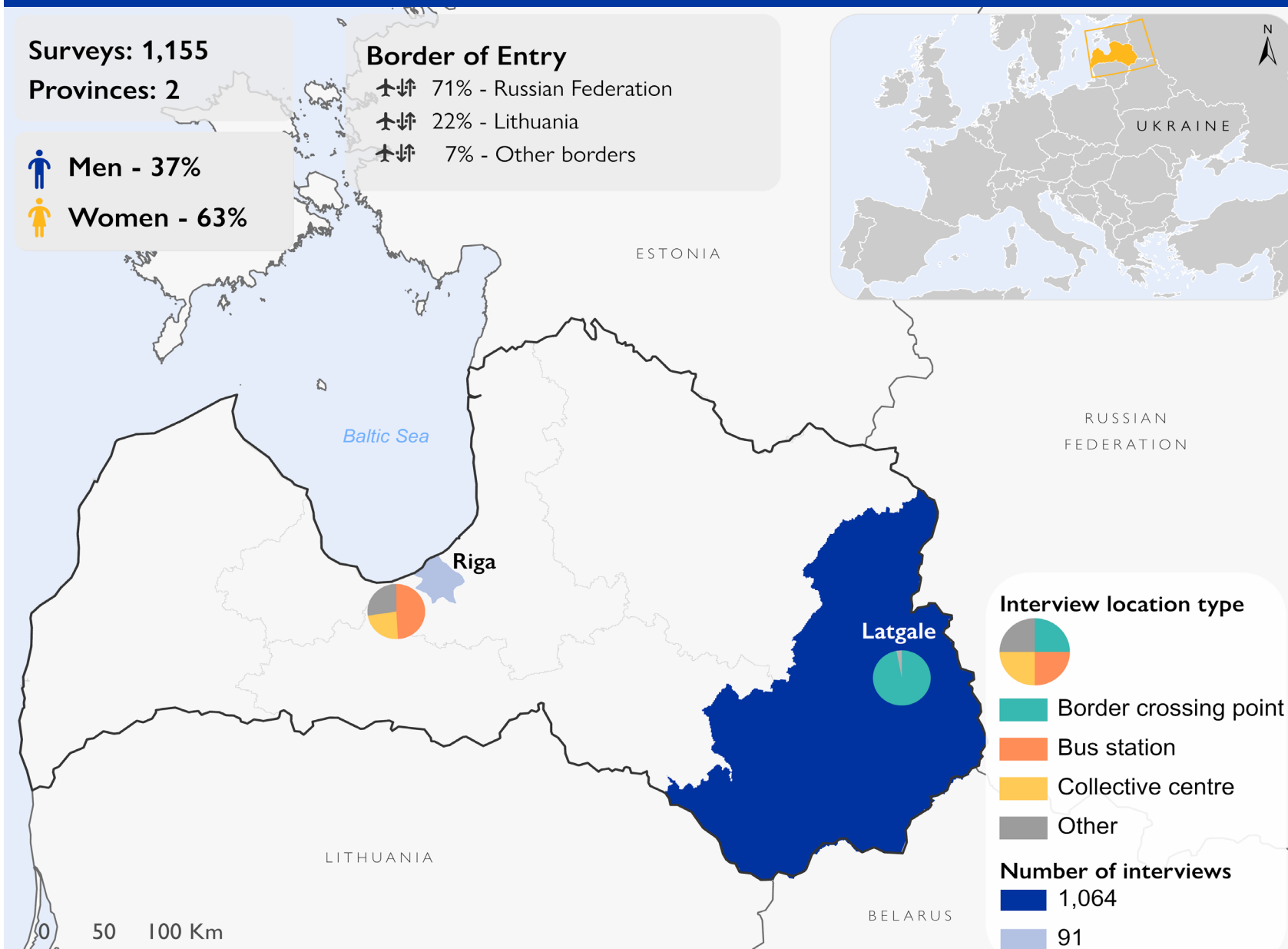
This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown, and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION

From January to December 2023, DTM gathered information on the Needs, Intentions, and Integration Challenges faced by Ukrainian refugees in Latvia, conducting interviews with a total of 1,155 individuals throughout the year. This report explores the employment profiles and prospects of the adult respondents, with a special focus on those who have either expressed an intention to stay or have already established themselves in the country (N=171). These individuals, referred to as 'stayers' in this study, are actively investing their human and social resources to fully integrate into the host community. The report further narrows its analysis to a subset of 155 respondents who are within the working age bracket (18-64 years old), offering insights into their involvement in the labour market and detailing their experiences, needs, and intentions concerning employment in Latvia for the duration of their displacement. The low number of stayers can be explained by the fact that the majority of surveys were conducted at border crossing points (BCPs) and bus stations where most of the individuals were in transit.

GENDER AND AGE

Among the working-age stayers (N=155), 63 per cent were women, while the remaining 37 per cent were men. The most represented age group among both men and women were 30 to 39 year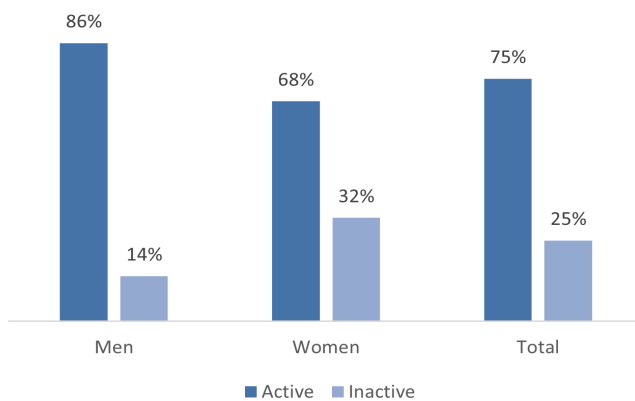-olds (39% and 34% respectively). Among female respondents, the other two prominent groups were 40 to 49 year-olds (27%) and 18 to 29 year-olds (19%). Among male respondents, the 50-59 and the 18-29 age groups were the second and third most represented categories (25% and 16% respectively).

Figure 1. Respondents by age and gender (%) N=155

TRENDS AFTER DISPLACEMENT

Working-age stayers in Latvia participate in the local labour market slightly more when compared to their participation in Ukraine prior to displacement.

During interviews, three quarters of respondents (N=135) were actively involved in the workforce (86% of men and 68% of women), whereas 25 per cent of working-age individuals remained inactive (14% of men and 32% of women).

Figure 3. Active and inactive population after displacement by gender (%) N=135
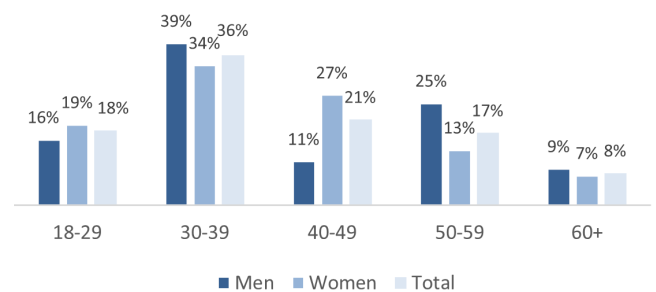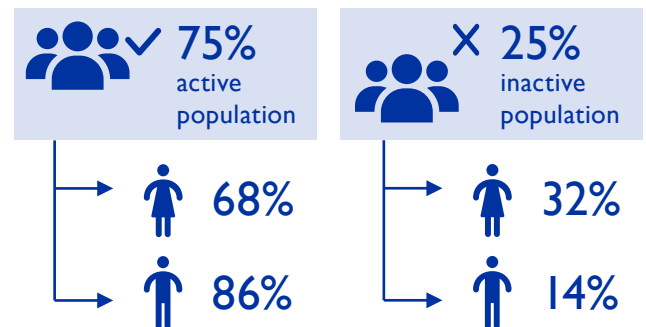

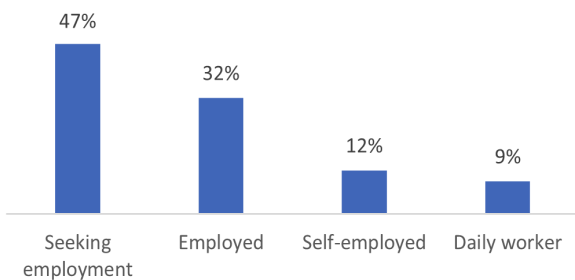Figure 2. Active and inactive population after displacement by gender (%) N=135

The EduNowa Foundation is assisting Tatiana in launching her doll-making business in Poland © IOM 2023.

The highest proportion of active respondents was observed in the 30-39 age group (89%), followed by the 40-49 age group (81%). Meanwhile, the 60+ age group and the 18-29 age group had the highest proportion of inactive individuals (75% and 38% respectively).
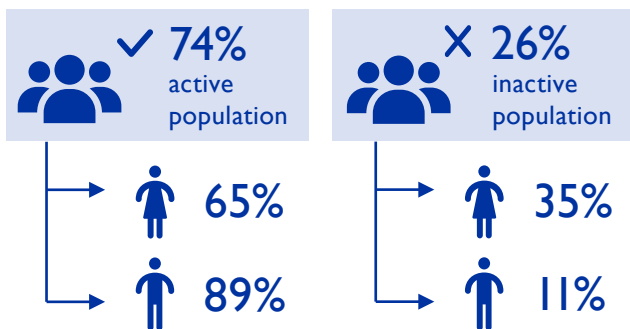
Among the active population (N=101), 53 per cent were in employment (32% employed, 12% self-employed, and 9% daily workers), whereas the remaining 47 per cent were unemployed and looking for a job. Additionally, women had a slightly higher share in employment compared to men (55% versus 49%).

Figure 4. Employment status within active population after displacement (%) N=101

Figure 5. Active and inactive population after displacement by age (%) N=135
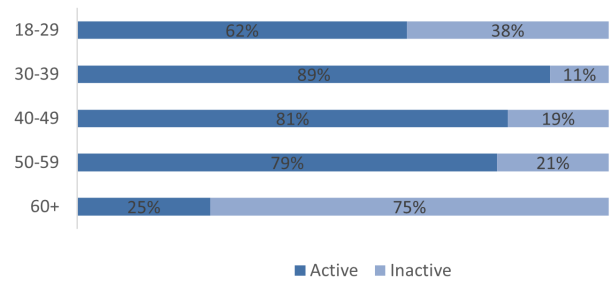
Figure 6. Employment status within active population after displacement by gender (%) N=101

TRENDS BEFORE DISPLACEMENT

Prior to leaving Ukraine, 74 per cent of respondents in the working-age group (N=148) were actively participating in the labour market, which is only one per cent lower than the rate of participation among respondents in Latvia. The other 26 per cent were not actively involved in the labour market. In addition, similarly to the situation after the displacement,
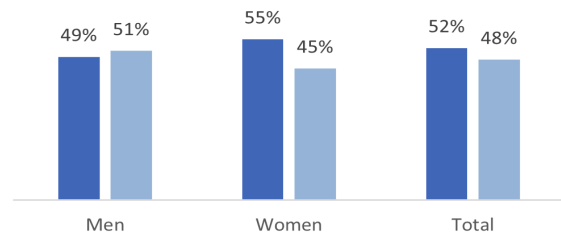
there was a gender gap in labour market involvement before the respondents left Ukraine, as 89 per cent of men versus 65 per cent of women were active. However, the share of involvement after the displacement indicates that the gap has narrowed by six per cent.

Figure 7. Employment status within active population after displacement by gender (%) N=101

Ninety-three per cent of those surveyed within the active group were employed (77% as regular employees and 16% as self-employed), while seven per cent were actively seeking employment despite being unemployed.

In the inactive group, reasons for not participating in the labour force included parental leave (26%), retirement (36%), student status (15%), and individuals not actively seeking employment (23%). Before displacement, the likelihood of employment was

slightly higher among women than among men (93% versus 92%). Moreover, within the inactive group, only women specified parental leave as their reason for inactivity (30%).

The respondents who were unemployed and not seeking employment before leaving Ukraine were also all women (29%), whereas the share of students and retired individuals was higher among men (33% versus 12% and 67% versus 30% respectively).

ACTIVE POPULATION

Only 36 per cent of working-age stayers reported that their average income was sufficient to cover their monthly expenses in Latvia. Meanwhile, over one half (52%) reported not having sufficient income to cover their expenses. Twelve per cent preferred not to answer.

While 70 per cent of respondents specified relying on the support from authorities for covering their daily expenses, income from employment emerged as the second most prevalent source for meeting financial needs, with 64% of respondents depending on it. Other prominent sources included support from family (38%), savings (25%), and support from NGOs (21%).

Figure 8: Sources for covering daily expenses (%), N=56 (multiple answers possible)

EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

Working-age stayers were asked in which occupation they would like to work in Latvia (N=125). Twenty-four per cent of women (N=78) aspired to work in services and sales roles (e.g., cooks, hairdressers, housekeepers). Meanwhile, 19 per cent preferred to be employed as professionals (e.g., teachers, doctors, lawyers). Another 13 per cent of women named clerical work as their desired occupation, while elementary occupation (5%) as well as managerial (4%), technician (3%), and skilled agricultural (1%) jobs were less commonly mentioned. Twenty-six per cent of respondents specified that their desired occupation was not among the listed options, whereas four per cent were already employed and one per cent preferred not to answer. Conversely, 38 per cent of men (N=47) expressed their desire to work in crafts and related trades (e.g., metal or wood workers, repairers, electricians). Twenty-one per cent aspired to work in professional roles, while less commonly mentioned occupations included machine operators (6%), managers (4%), clerical, skilled agricultural as well services and sales workers, technicians, and elementary occupations (2% each). Thirteen per cent did not have their desired occupation listed, whereas four per cent were already employed and two per cent preferred not to answer.

EMPLOYMENT AND PRIORITY NEEDS

Among working-age stayers (N=106), the need for employment ranked as a top priority, with 58 per cent citing it. Notably, women were almost twice as likely to mention employment among their needs compared to men (38% versus 20%). Other priority needs included financial support (69%), general information (65%), and food supply (56%). Some respondents also expressed a need for clothing, footwear and medicine (34% each), assistance with documentation (32%), health services (30%), legal assistance (25%), and long-term accommodation (25%).
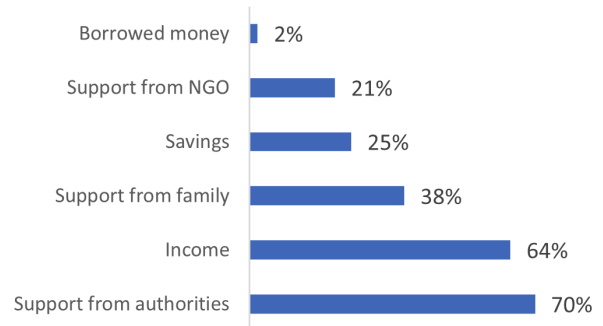
EMPLOYMENT AND INCLUSION CHALLENGES

When asked about top three inclusion challenges encountered in Latvia, respondents (N=56) mentioned lack of employment (32%), with women citing it almost twice as often as men (20% versus 12%). In addition, the lack of information on employment also emerged as one of the major challenges (14%). Other top inclusion challenges comprised financial issues (34%), language (30%), racism (20%), and housing (20%).

INACTIVE POPULATION

The inactive population consists of individuals neither employed nor actively seeking employment. Among working-age stayers, 25 per cent belonged to the inactive population (N=34). This percentage included people on parental leave (18%), retirees (44%), students (15%), and those who are unemployed without actively looking for a job (23%). Notably, 22 per cent of women were on maternity leave, while none of the men were on paternity leave. Similarly, only women were unemployed and not seeking employment (30%). Male respondents were more likely to be in retirement (86%) compared to women (33%). The proportion of individuals with the student status was similar among both women and men (15% and 14%, respectively).

METHODOLOGY

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.

Since April 2022, IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix has been regularly surveying individuals who are residing in the eleven countries included in the Regional Refugee Response Plan for Ukraine. The aim of the survey is to improve the understanding of their profiles, displacement patterns, intentions and needs. The survey is deployed in 6 countries neighbouring Ukraine – Belarus, Hungary, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, and Slovakia, and other 5 countries in Europe, particularly impacted by the arrivals of refugees from Ukraine, including Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Face-to-face surveys were conducted by four trained enumerators, with adult refugees from Ukraine (18+ years-old). Surveys were collected at selected locations (border crossing points, bus stations, collective centres, humanitarian aid distribution points, transit centres and IOM premises) in nine regions of Latvia. The survey is anonymous and voluntary, administered after obtaining consent from the respondent. Respondents can stop the survey at any time. In Latvia, the questionnaire is available in English, Ukrainian and Russian, and the preferred language is determined by the interviewee. Only fully completed surveys are considered for analysis.

Prior to the start of the survey, all enumerators were trained by IOM on DTM standards, the use of Kobo application, IOM approach to migrants' protection and assistance, the ethics of data collection and the provision of information and referral mechanism in place.

About the Survey

Aim

To improve the understanding of the profiles of Ukrainian nationals residing or transiting through Latvia, including their displacement patterns, intentions and needs.

Location and execution

Face-to-face surveys were conducted by four trained enumerators stationed at selected locations in nine regions of Latvia. Surveys are conducted in English, Ukrainian and Russian with the help of a mobile application.

Target population

The report focuses on the labour market integration of working-age (18-64 years-old) Ukrainian refugees who have already settled or intend to settle in Latvia.

Regional data collection and analysis

The survey is deployed in 11 countries: 6 neighboring countries (Belarus, Hungary, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia), and 5 other countries (Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) impacted by the arrival of refugees from Ukraine.

LIMITATIONS

The sampling framework was not based on verified figures of refugees from Ukraine entering through all land border points or staying in the various regions where the surveys are conducted, due to the lack of baseline information.

The geographic spread of enumerators deployed captures all nine regions of Latvia. However, the majority of the locations encompassed border crossing points (BCPs) and bus stations where most of the individuals were in transit and not intending either to stay in Latvia or move within the country. Therefore, while the general sample consists of 1155 surveys, only 155 surveys were identified as working-age stayers — the target group of this report. Whilst the overall results cannot be deemed as representative, the internal consistency of data

collection in each country and at the regional level suggests that the current sampling framework produces findings of practical value.

While every attempt was made to capture all types of locations, the operational reality of fieldwork was confronted with different levels of accessibility of BCPs and other transit and stay locations, including the different availability of possible target individuals to comfortably spend 10-20 minutes responding to the questionnaire depending on a mix of personal conditions. Other factors more related to the conditions at a specific location and period, such as organizational changes in the entry and transit areas from national authorities, or weather conditions, also play a role.

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 destinations and prospects of permanence abroad or return; 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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