

UKRAINE RETURNS REPORT

GENERAL POPULATION SURVEY

ROUND 15
DECEMBER 2023



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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been collecting data on internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, and the non-displaced population through a nationwide representative General Population Survey (GPS). The purpose of the assessment is to provide an in-depth, granular understanding of displacement figures and mobility trends, as well as to gather fundamental data on the profiles, needs and intentions of returnees in support of humanitarian efforts to find mechanisms to secure durable reintegration of returnees. The GPS, implemented on a quarterly basis, also provides key analysis of trends over time. To this end, the GPS conducts oblast-level, randomized interviews with a representative sample of each population group. This report covers Round 15 of the GPS, conducted in December 2023.

KEY FINDINGS



There are an estimated 4,455,000 returnees in Ukraine. The number of returnees has remained stable since the previous round.



Nearly half of all returnees (47%) returned from displacement in another oblast in Ukraine. A quarter (26%) of all returnees stated that they had spent at least 14 days abroad since February 2022 because of the full-scale war.



The main oblasts of return are Kyiv City (where 23% of returnees reside) and Kyivska Oblast (17%). In these two oblasts, 74 per cent and 78 per cent of respondents, respectively, returned a year or more ago.



Four per cent of returnees (eqv. 180,000 individuals) were considering re-displacement. Notably, 6 per cent of returnees living in East Macro-Region were thinking of re-displacement.



Among returnees who were displaced multiple times, the primary reasons for returning to their place of habitual residence were related to the improved security situation (69%), to be closer to family and friends (68%), followed by perceived opportunity to find suitable employment in the place of return (51%).



Half (49%) of Ukrainians who were surveyed crossing back into Ukraine were coming to Ukraine for a short visit.



The most prevalent needs of returnees are cash & financial assistance (52%), psychological counselling (28%), power banks (21%) and construction material (19%).

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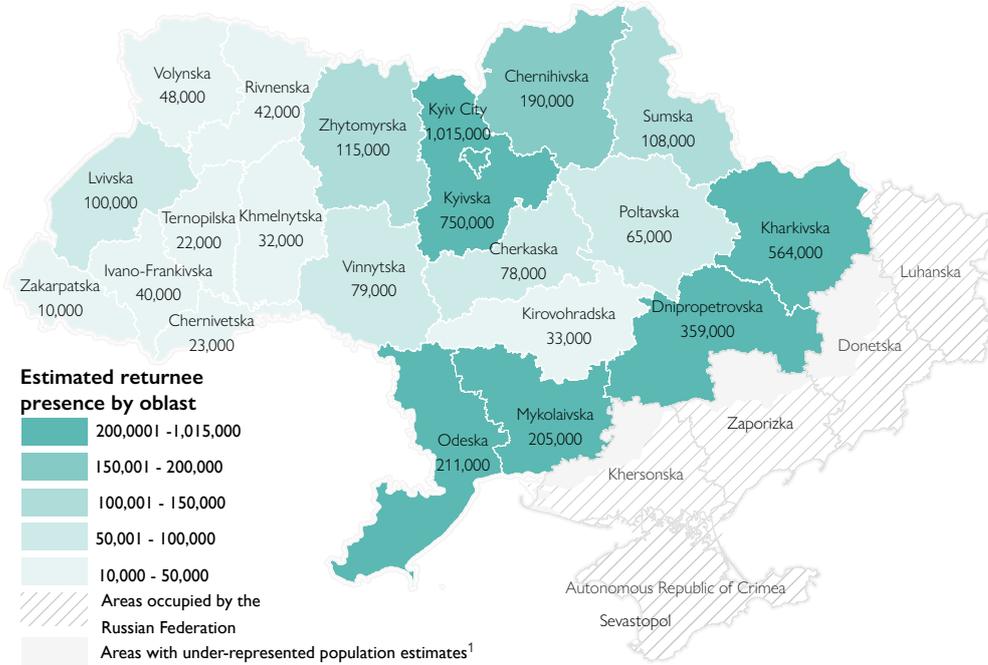
IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues;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

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SECTION 1: POPULATION FIGURES AND MOBILITY TRENDS

I.1 OVERVIEW AND CHANGE OVER TIME

Map 1: Estimated returnee presence, by oblast of return



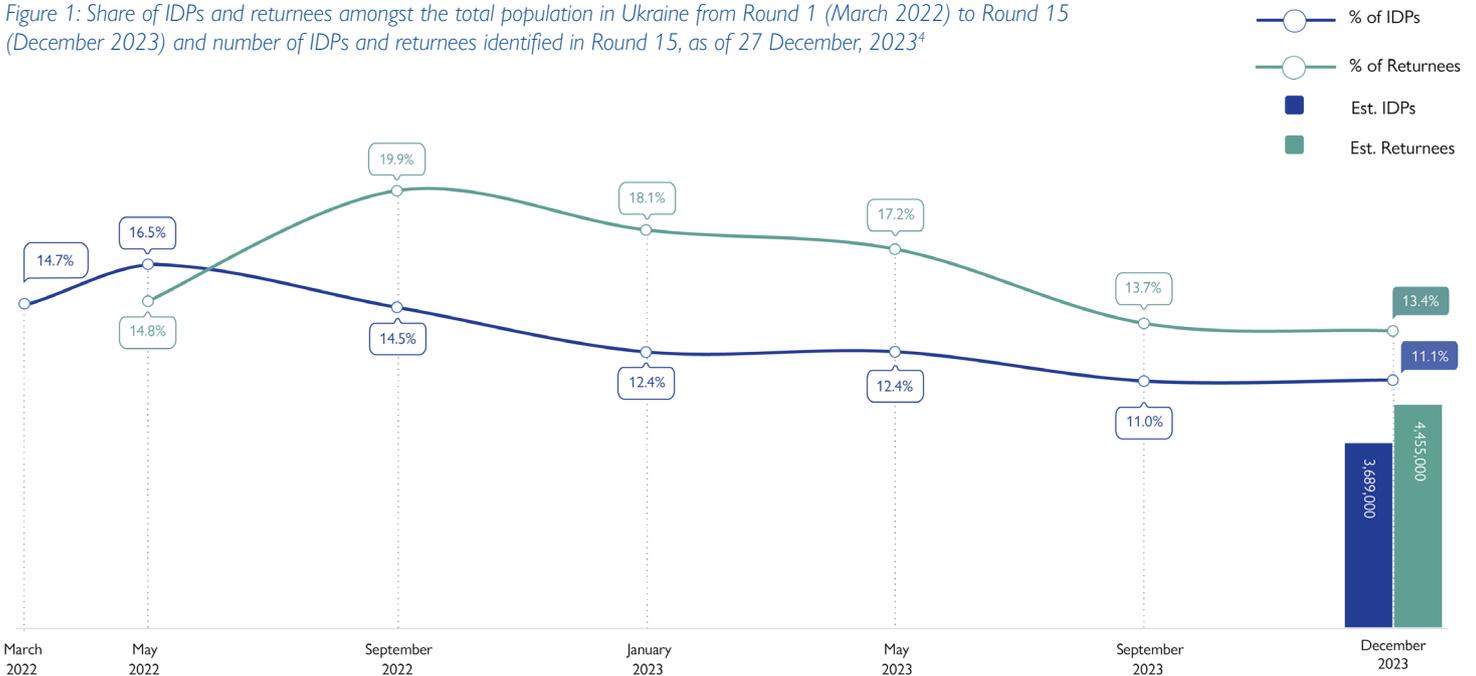
3,689,000
EST. TOTAL DE FACTO IDPS

Internally Displaced People (IDPs) are individuals who have been forced to flee or to leave their homes due to the full-scale invasion in February 2022, regardless of registration status.²

4,455,000
EST. TOTAL RETURNEES

Returnees are individuals who have returned to their habitual residence after a period of displacement of minimum two weeks since February 2022.³

Figure 1: Share of IDPs and returnees amongst the total population in Ukraine from Round 1 (March 2022) to Round 15 (December 2023) and number of IDPs and returnees identified in Round 15, as of 27 December, 2023⁴



¹Estimates in Donetsk, Zaporizka, Luhanska, and Khersonska Oblasts are not represented due to their likely under-representation as a result of coverage being limited to government-controlled areas and to the limited number of respondents reached in occupied areas.

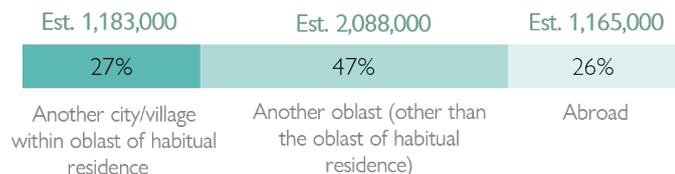
²A complete definition of IDPs, as understood in the context of the General Population Survey, can be found in the Methodological Note on page 11.

³A complete definition of returnees, as understood in the context of the General Population Survey, can be found in the Methodological Note on page 11.

⁴The UNFPA Population Baseline, on the basis of which IDP and returnee population figures are extrapolated, underwent several changes between March 2022 and June 2023, impacting the comparability of population estimates over time. Trends unaffected by the extrapolation are shown by the line chart and expressed in % of the total population in Ukraine. Percentages have been rounded for visualization purposes. The observed reduction might not reflect actual trends in population numbers, and is possibly a result of multifactorial circumstances, including: the movement of returnee populations abroad; increased survey coverage to previously occupied areas; as well as changes in total population baseline, changes in phone network coverage and connectivity, and seasonal and other factors generating large movements of populations, which ultimately affects populations groups ratios.

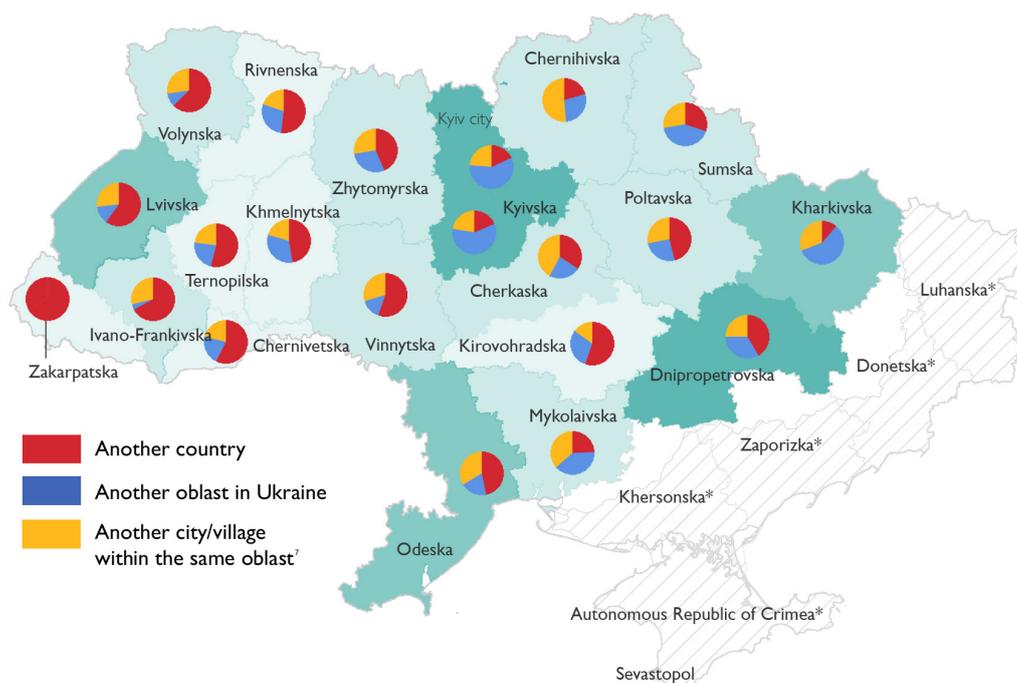
I.2 PLACE OF LAST DISPLACEMENT PRIOR TO RETURN

Figure 2: Location type in place of last displacement (% of returnees)⁵



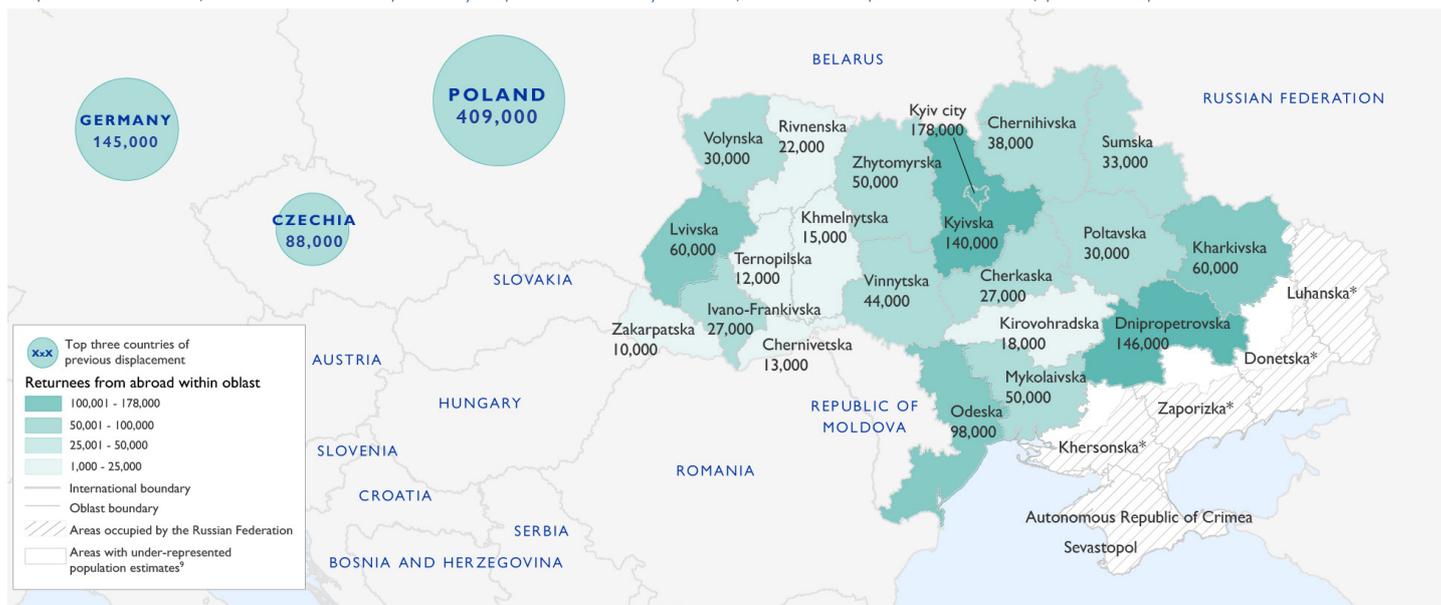
For nearly half of all returnees (47%), the place of last displacement was located in another oblast within Ukraine. A quarter of returnees (27%) had last been displaced within their oblast of origin. A further 26 per cent reported having returned from abroad, 87 per cent of which returned from a European Union country.

Map 2: Displacement location of returnees, by oblast (% of returnees)⁶



Proportions of returnees from abroad – people who most recently displaced abroad and have since returned to their place of habitual residence – were higher in western oblasts. Returns from within the same oblast (latest displacement location) were more prevalent in northern, southern and central oblasts, notably, Chernihivska (51%), Cherkaska (43%), Mykolaivska (37%), and Odeska (33%). Oblasts. The prevalence of intra-oblast displacement in these regions reflects a set of complex factors, including displacement to safer towns and cities within the same oblast, lack of financial means hindering displacement to more distant places, the wish to be closer to friends and family, and concerns over the safety of assets and property. Returns from another oblast in Ukraine were greatest in Kyiv City and Kyivska Oblast, where the majority of returns (73% and 78%, respectively) occurred a year or more prior to the assessment.

Map 3: Est. number of returnees who were previously displaced abroad, by oblast of return, and top three countries of previous displacement⁸



Approximately a third (30%) of all returnees stated that they had spent at least 14 days abroad since February 2022 because of the full-scale war. Returnees from abroad had primarily been displaced in Poland (35%), followed by Germany (12%), Czechia (8%), Italy (5%) and Bulgaria (4%).

Among returnees who reported returning spontaneously from abroad to their place of habitual residence, the majority (90%) were female. The main needs reported by returnees from abroad included: financial support, mentioned by 49 per cent of respondents, followed by power banks and generators (20%), solid fuel for heating (12%), and reconstruction material for shelters (16%).

⁵0.4% (estimated 19,000 individuals) did not provide the answer to the question.

⁶The estimates for Vinnytska, Volynska, Zakarpatska, Ivano-Frankivska, Kirovohradska, Poltava, Rivnenska, Ternopilka, Khmelnytska, Cherkaska, and Chernivetska oblasts do not achieve a minimum criterion of representatives at a 95 per cent confidence level and within 12.2 per cent margin of error and presented for illustrative purposes only.

⁷Estimates in Donetsk, Zaporizka, Luhanska, and Khersonska Oblasts are not represented due to their likely under-representation as a result of coverage being limited to government-controlled areas and to the limited number of respondents reached in occupied areas.

⁸Ibid.

I.3 MULTIPLE DISPLACEMENTS

PREVALENCE OF MULTIPLE DISPLACEMENTS



of returnees were displaced more than once, with 6 per cent of returnees displaced three or more times due to the war since the full-scale invasion.

One-quarter of returnees were displaced multiple times during their time in displacement prior return (25%), including 19 per cent who were displaced two times (19%), and 6 per cent who experienced displacement three times or more.



Amongst returnees who were displaced multiple times, Lvivska Oblast was most frequently mentioned as the last oblast of displacement before return (11%), followed by Ivano-Frankivska (8%), and Zakarpatska (7%) Oblasts.

Amongst returnees who were displaced abroad in 2023, 83 per cent stayed in one location, while 17 per cent relocated between settlements two or more times during their stay abroad. Most returnees displaced abroad and were displaced more than once last lived in Poland (36%).



57%

of returnees displaced multiple times prior to their return reported having spent at least two weeks abroad in 2023 due to the war since the full-scale invasion.

REASONS FOR RETURN

Returnees who were displaced multiple times reportedly returned to their place of habitual residence primarily as a result of improved security conditions in their place of origin (reported by 69% of respondents) and to be closer to family and friends (68%). Economic and livelihood reasons — perceived opportunity to find better livelihood opportunities in the place of return (51%) and inability to earn an income in the place of last displacement (37%) — were also significant return factors.

Figure 3a: Reasons why returnees returned to their habitual place of residence (% of returnees)¹⁰

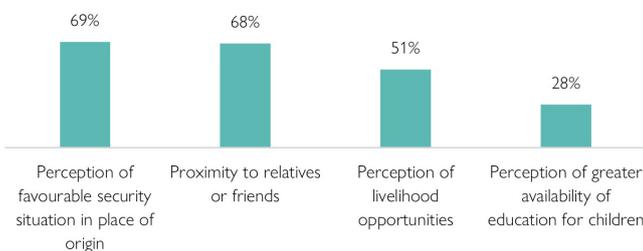
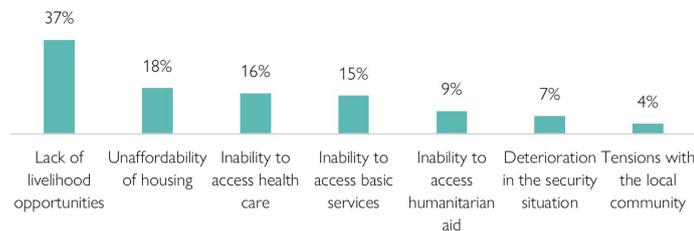


Figure 3b: Reasons why returns left their displacement location (% of returnees)¹¹



^{10,11,12}Multiple-choice question.

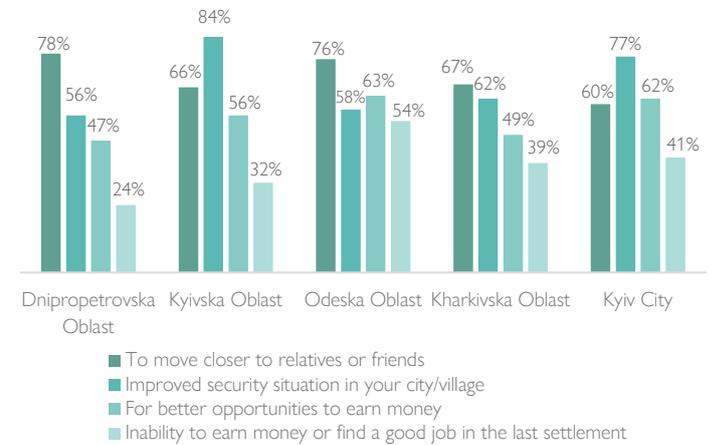
Pull factors – such as perceived improved security or perceived economic opportunities in the place of origin - were reported to be more significant drivers of return than push factors – such as lack of affordable housing or limited employment opportunities, which were generally mentioned by lower shares of returnees as factors of return. Differences in reasons for return between male and female respondents were also noted. For example, greater shares of women indicated having returned due to a perception of better or more stable access to children’s education in the place of origin (29%, as opposed to 24% of male respondents) or to be closer to loved ones (72%, as opposed to 60% of male respondents).



60%

of male returnees who were displaced multiple times reported having returned to their place of habitual residence because of perceived livelihood or employment opportunities (compared to 46% of female returnees)

Figure 4: Main reasons for return from displacement in the five main oblasts of return¹²



Among the five oblasts in which the largest numbers of returnees resided, larger proportions of returns to Kyiv City (77%) and Kyivska Oblast (84%) were motivated by improved security conditions in the return location, while larger shares of returnees in Dnipropetrovska Oblast returned to be closer to loved ones (78%). In these five oblasts, the lack of livelihood opportunities in the last place of displacement was a less significant reason for return, compared to other driving factors (e.g., 24% in Dnipropetrovska Oblast, compared to 56% due to improved security conditions).

MULTIPLE DISPLACEMENT PROFILES

Returnees aged 35-59 were more likely to have experienced multiple displacements (52% were displaced two times or more). In contrast, only 13 per cent of returnees aged 60 and older experienced multiple displacements before returning to habitual place of residence.



36%

of returnees who originated from Donetsk Oblast reported they had been displaced two times or more.



40%

of returnees displaced multiple times and living in big cities returned from small and medium-sized towns.

I.4 TIME IN DISPLACEMENT, TIME SINCE RETURN, AND MOBILITY INTENTIONS

Table 1: Top 5 oblasts of return

Oblast	Share of returnees	Est. returnees
Kyiv City	23%	1,015,000
Kyivska Oblast	17%	750,000
Kharkivska Oblast	13%	564,000
Dnipropetrovska Oblast	8%	359,000
Odeska Oblast	5%	211,000
Other oblasts	34%	1,556,000

Table 2: Top 5 oblasts of last displacement prior to return¹⁴

Oblast	Share of returnees	Est. returnees
Lvivska Oblast	9%	288,000
Kyiv City	8%	276,000
Kyivska Oblast	7%	217,000
Vinnyska Oblast	6%	180,000
Kharkivska Oblast	6%	187,000
Other oblasts	64%	2,123,000

RETURN INTENTIONS



Est. 783,000 IDPs nation-wide are currently considering return to habitual residence

Among IDPs who considered leaving their current location (25% of IDPs, est. 914,000 people), the vast majority were thinking of returning to their area of origin (86%, est. 783,000 people). Of those considering return, 4 per cent were considering return within one month of the interview, although it is worth noting that 66 per cent did not have a timeframe for return in mind.¹³

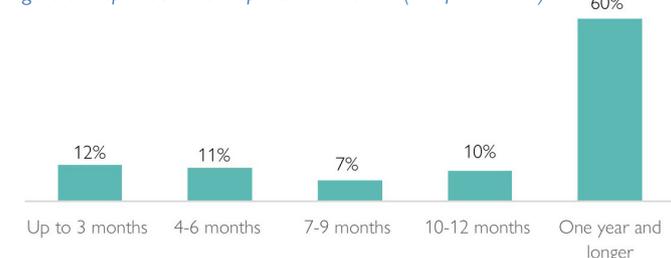
TIME IN DISPLACEMENT

142 average number of days in displacement before return (as of December 2023)

Returnees spent an average of just over four and a half months in displacement. Forty-three per cent of returnees reported having been displaced for three months or longer. When comparing the top five oblasts of last displacement, returnees whose latest place of displacement was located in Kharkivska, Dnipropetrovska, and Odeska Oblasts had, on average, been displaced the longest (190, 175 and 173 days respectively) prior to return. The shortest average displacement duration in the last place of displacement was identified in Kyivska Oblast (89 days)- this reflects the large return movements of individuals displaced from the capital Kyiv and its surrounding region shortly following their forced displacement in the early stages of the February 2022 full-scale invasion. Returnees whose last place of displacement had been abroad reported, on average, having been displaced longer (174 days) than individuals who were displaced within Ukraine prior to return (130 days).

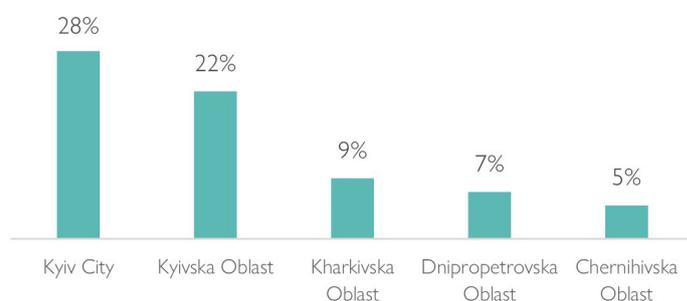
TIME SINCE RETURN

Figure 5: Reported time elapsed since return (% of returnees)



Nearly two-thirds of returnees (60%) returned a year or more before the interview. Notably, half (50%) of respondents who returned more than a year before the assessment resided in Kyiv City (28%) or Kyivska Oblast (22%). This reflects the large return movements of individuals displaced from the capital Kyiv and its surrounding region shortly following their forced displacement in the early stages of the February 2022 full-scale invasion. A further 11 per cent of returnees returned to their place of habitual residence in the three months leading to the assessment date- close to half of which similarly returned to either Kyiv City (18%), Kharkivska Oblast (16%) or Kyivska Oblast (6%).

Figure 6: Top 5 oblasts of longer-term return (% of returnees who have returned to their place of habitual residence for at least a year)¹⁵



RE-DISPLACEMENT INTENTIONS

The vast majority of returnees (91%) intended to stay in their current location in the immediate future, while 4 per cent were considering leaving their homes again. The share of returnees considering re-displacement has progressively decreased, from a high of 15 per cent identified in R3 (April 2022). A further 5 per cent, equivalent to 334,000 returnees, would consider leaving if the situation changed.

Figure 7: Share of returnees considering relocation from Round 3 (April 2022) to Round 15 (December 2023)



¹³The information provided reflects the mobility intentions of IDPs and does not represent actual movements of IDPs. IOM does not verify whether IDP respondents effectively undertake their intended movements following the projected timeline shared during the interview.

¹⁴Returnees whose last place of displacement was in Ukraine.

¹⁵Returnees who returned to their place of habitual residence a year or more ago in other oblasts make up 29 per cent.

I.5 CROSSING BACK FROM ABROAD

ORIGINS AND DESTINATIONS

Table 3: Top 7 oblasts of origin and intended oblast of destination among Ukrainians displaced abroad and returning to Ukraine during Q4, 2023

Oblast of origin	Share of respondents	Oblast of destination	Share of respondents
Kyiv City	17%	Kyiv City	20%
Odeska	14%	Odeska	15%
Dnipropetrovska	14%	Dnipropetrovska	14%
Zaporizka	11%	Zaporizka	10%
Kharkivska	6%	Kharkivska	6%
Lvivska	4%	Lvivska	5%
Vinnitska	4%	Vinnitska	4%
Other	30%	Other	26%

The proportion of respondents crossing back from each oblast in Ukraine varied widely among the respondents in neighbouring countries. Overall, more than half (56%) of respondents resided in just four oblasts prior to being displaced from Ukraine: Kyiv City (17%), Odeska (14%), Dnipropetrovska (14%), and Zaporizka (11%) Oblasts. Nearly all respondents (90%) expressed their intention to return to their oblast of origin upon re-entry to Ukraine, with no significant changes during 2023. Among those planning to travel to another oblast, reasons included concerns about security in their place of origin, having their family displaced to another area, knowledge of damage or destruction to their homes, or knowledge that their homes are occupied.

INTENTIONS

Figure 9: Intended length of visit when crossing back during Q4 2023



Almost half of those surveyed crossing back (49%) were going to Ukraine for a short visit (one month or less), while 31 per cent expressed their intention to stay (more than a month), and 20 per cent remained uncertain about their plans. The share of prospective returnees decreased from 38 per cent in Q1, while the share of short-term visitors remained stable during the entire year. The share of the undecided doubled from Q1 to Q4 2023. Among respondents, men were more likely to indicate their intention to stay (44%) compared to women (30%). As in previous periods, the main reason of travel to Ukraine during Q4 2023, whether for short visits or returns, was to meet family. This reason was cited by 72 per cent of short-term visitors and 10 per cent of those planning to return. Additionally, 32 per cent of short-term visitors intended to attend medical appointments in Ukraine and 19 per cent were getting or renewing identity documents (biometric passports, diplomas, or driving licenses).

NEEDS

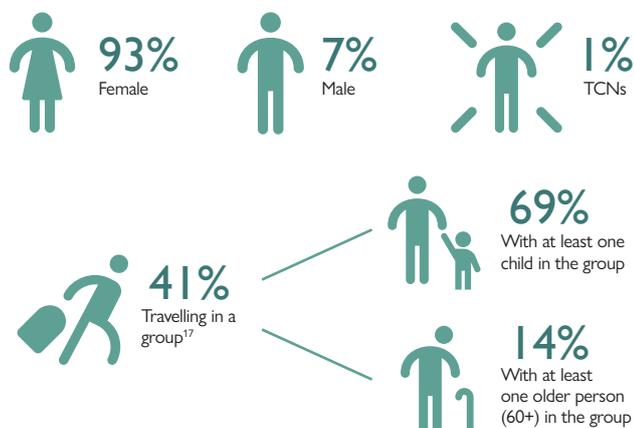
The four most reported immediate needs among individuals crossing back into Ukraine in Q4 of 2023 were personal safety & security (35%), financial support (29%), health services (25%), and general information (10%).

Additionally, in Q4 of 2023, 14 per cent reported experiencing instances of unfair treatment or discrimination while living abroad, an increasing trend since the beginning of the year (5% in Q1, 9% in Q2 and 10% in Q3).

Since March 2022, IOM DTM has conducted surveys with persons crossing back to Ukraine from neighbouring countries to improve the understanding of their profiles, displacement patterns, intentions and needs.¹⁶ In 2023, 27,168 adults were surveyed in border areas and transit places of Hungary, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, and Slovakia: about 96 per cent of interviewees were Ukrainians, and 4 per cent were Third-Country Nationals (TCNs). Additionally, 485 surveys were collected at border crossing points between Ukraine and the Russian Federation with Ukrainians who intended to transit through and reach occupied areas in Ukraine. This section focuses on Ukrainians surveyed during Quarter 4 of 2023 in neighbouring countries (5,978), with results weighted by the number of border crossings into Ukraine from each country in the same period.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND GROUP COMPOSITION

Figure 8: Group composition of migrants crossing back to Ukraine – Q4 2023



As in previous periods, the vast majority of respondents crossing back to Ukraine were female (93%). Women were generally younger than men. Almost three quarters (72%) of women were below 50 years old while 59 per cent of men were older than 60. An increasing and prevailing proportion of them was travelling alone (52% in Q1, 59% in Q4, 2023). Most (51%) primarily resided in the country where the survey was conducted while being outside of Ukraine, but the share of those crossing back after having spent time in another country increased from 31 per cent in Q1 to 49 per cent in Q4. The other countries where respondents spent the most time on average were Germany (24%), Czechia (15%), Austria and United Kingdom (7% each), Bulgaria (6%), Spain and Italy (5% each). The average duration of stay abroad is also increasing from 7 months among Ukrainians crossing back in Q1, 2023, to 13 months in Q4.

In Q4, TCNs were only 1 per cent of the sample. The top 5 nationalities among them were: Russian Federation (47%), the Republic of Moldova (14%), Türkiye (9%), Israel and Bulgaria (5% each).

¹⁶For more information on the work of the DTM in Ukraine's neighbouring countries, as well as for further analysis, please visit [Ukraine Crisis Response](#).
¹⁷A group is made up of two or more individuals.

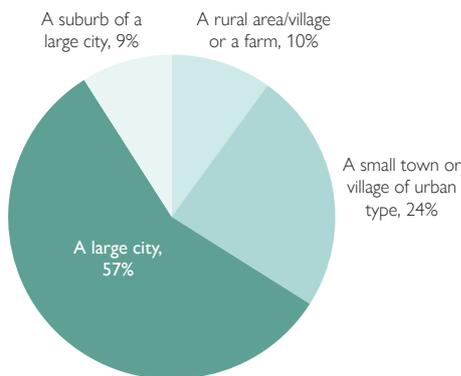
1.6 DEMOGRAPHICS, CHARACTERISTICS AND SETTLEMENT TYPE

Demographics provide us with insight into returnee profiles, household composition and how these characteristics may potentially be linked to possible vulnerabilities or exposure to unique risks. As such they are key to effective, targeted humanitarian response. To this end, IOM's General Population Survey includes indicators – developed in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) – which allows for the precise estimated demographic breakdown of the returnee population.

SETTLEMENT TYPE

The majority of returnees resided in large cities (54%), or in the suburbs of large cities (9%). Eleven per cent of returnees returned to rural areas or rural villages (11%).

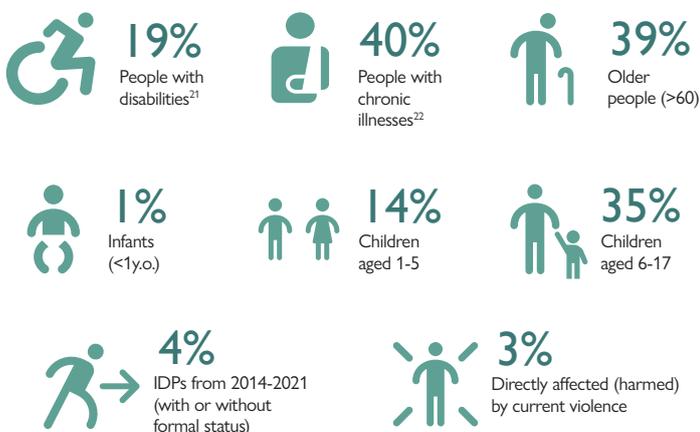
Figure 10: Percentage of returnee respondents by type of settlement (% of returnees)¹⁸



HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

This section presents the share of returnees who reported that at least one of their current household members¹⁹ possessed one of the following characteristics; these traits may contribute to household vulnerability, given: 1. a presumed cost related to the characteristic; 2. a presumed need to access assistance; and 3. potential limitations in getting to or accessing assistance. These characteristics are not mutually exclusive, and individuals may live with one or multiple of the following characteristics. (Read as: "35% of returnee respondents indicate that at least one family member currently with them is a child between ages of 6 and 17"):

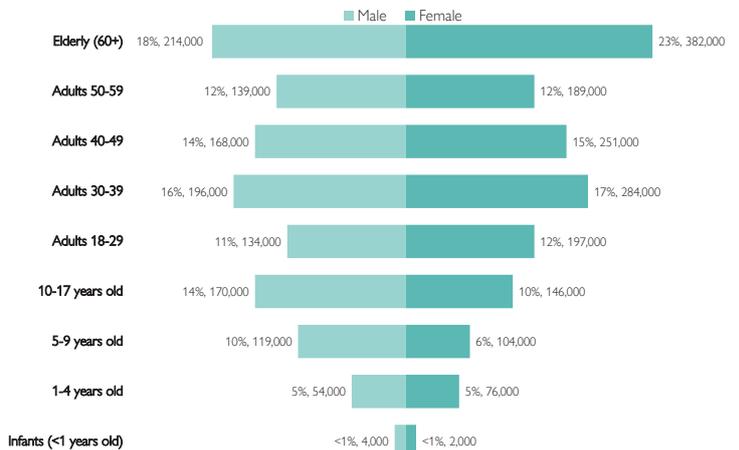
Figure 11: Percentage of returnee households reporting household members with specific characteristic²⁰



DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE



Figure 12: Max. estimate of returnees by sex and age group²³



More than a half of returnees (58%) were female, a share similar to that of the displaced population (59%). Fifty-five per cent (55%) of returnees were aged 18-59, while 21 per cent were older people (aged 60 or older). There were approximately 539,000 school-aged children (5-17 years old) in households where all members were returnees.

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Returnee households reported having three household members on average.²⁴ However, 27 per cent of returnee households had four or more members. The majority of returnee families had one child (60%) with a further 34 per cent reporting two children.

Figure 13: Returnee household size

2.67 average returnee household size²⁵ as of December 2023
1.50 average number of children per returnee household²⁶ as of December 2023

Figure 14a: Number of household members in returnee households²⁷



Figure 14b: Number of children in returnee households (households consisting exclusively of returnees with children)²⁸



¹⁸Households consisting exclusively of returnees

¹⁹The description of the characteristics and demographic profile of returnees household members is based solely on the data for those household members.

²⁰Households consisting exclusively of returnees

^{21, 22}To identify disabilities and chronic illnesses in returnee households, respondents were asked whether one or more members in their households lived with disabilities or chronic illness. Definitions of disabilities and chronic illnesses were derived from categories defined in the World Health Organization's International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (WHO-ICF).

²³The description of the characteristics and demographic profile of returnee household members is based solely on the data for those household members who do not live in their place of habitual residence due to the war.

^{24, 25, 26}Households consisting exclusively of returnees (63%).

²⁷Households consisting exclusively of returnees The estimated total number of returnees in households consisting exclusively of returnees is 2,829,000.

²⁸The estimated total number of children in returnee households is 675,000.

SECTION 2: PRIORITY NEEDS AND COPING STRATEGIES

2.1 OVERVIEW

Figure 15: Most pressing needs, by respondent profile (% of respondents)

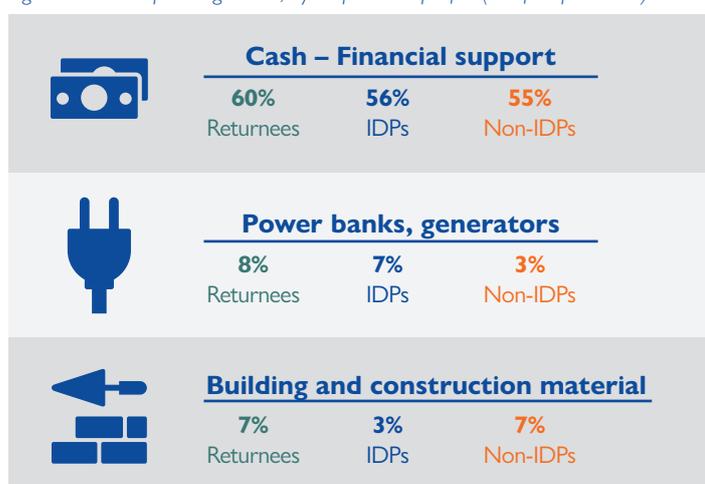


Table 4: Needs reported, by respondent profile (% of respondents)²⁹

	IDPs	Returnees	Non-displaced
Cash - financial support	73%	52%	59%
Psychological counselling	22%	28%	19%
Power banks, generators	41%	21%	19%
Repair materials	22%	19%	27%
Medicines and health services	32%	13%	26%
Heating appliances	26%	13%	13%
Solid fuel for heating	21%	13%	20%
Food	27%	9%	16%
Clothes, blankets, and other NFIs	30%	8%	11%
Hygiene items	29%	8%	10%
Accommodation	22%	7%	4%
Access to money	10%	6%	8%

2.2 RETURNEE NEEDS BY PROFILE AND LOCATION

OBLAST-LEVEL

The prevalence of returnees facing a lack of basic goods in the five oblasts hosting the largest numbers of returnees differed between oblasts. Across all needs, returnees residing in Kyiv City systematically reported lower needs, while returnees in Odeska Oblast reported the highest needs. In particular, 21 per cent of returnees present in Odeska Oblast reported needing generators or power banks, while 17 per cent reported a lack of solid fuel for heating, 16 per cent heating appliances and 15 per cent medicine and health services. In addition, returnees in Dnipropetrovska Oblast reported relatively fewer needs with respect to construction materials (17%), clothes and NFIs (2%), and food (5%). Nevertheless,

returnees across all oblasts faced similar needs. The largest shares of respondents noted lacking cash and financial support, with the greatest needs recorded in Donetska Oblast (64%). Notably, many of returnees' primary needs across all oblasts related to power and heating, including power banks (e.g., 47% in Donetska Oblast), solid fuel for heating (e.g., 30% in Donetska Oblast) and heating appliances (e.g., 28% in Donetska Oblast). Returnees in Donetska and Mykolaivska Oblasts reported the highest needs across all sectors, with the exception of psychosocial support, which was reported most prominently by returnees in Kyiv City (35%), Kyivska (29%) and Dnipropetrovska (27%) Oblasts.

Table 5: Main needs of returnees in the top five returnee-hosting oblasts (% of returnees)³⁰

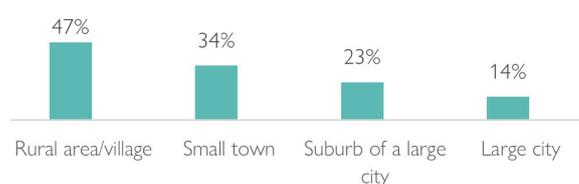
Oblast/Need	Cash/ Financ. Support	Generators/ Power Banks	Repair/ Constr. Material	Solid Fuel for Heating	Heating Appliances	Medicine/ Health Serv.	Food	Clothes/ NFIs	Hygiene Items	Access to Money	Accommodation
Odeska	54%	21%	16%	17%	16%	14%	13%	11%	9%	3%	8%
Kharkivska	56%	20%	22%	11%	11%	12%	9%	8%	8%	6%	4%
Dnipropetrovska	47%	20%	17%	12%	15%	11%	5%	2%	5%	4%	4%
Kyivska	51%	22%	23%	10%	14%	10%	7%	8%	5%	7%	8%
Kyiv City	41%	12%	7%	4%	5%	9%	5%	2%	3%	4%	6%

NEEDS BY SETTLEMENT TYPE



Greater shares of returnees in rural areas reported high needs across all sectors, compared to returnees in urban areas.

Figure 16: Share of returnees reporting 3 or more needs, for each settlement type (% of returnees)³¹



²⁹Multiple-choice question.

³⁰Multiple-choice question. The table structure is organized to rank the oblasts by shares of returnees who reported needs across the largest number of basic items.

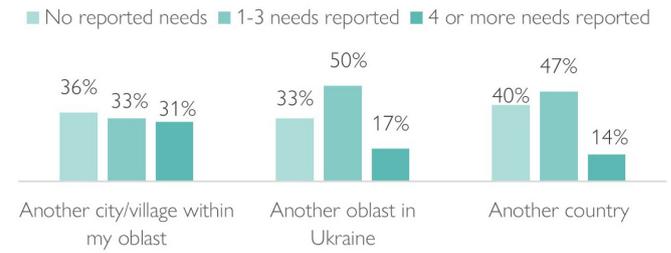
³¹Multiple-choice question.

MULTIPLE DISPLACEMENTS



Higher shares of returnees displaced multiple times within Ukraine prior to return reported four or more basic needs (31%) compared to those who returned from abroad (14%).

Figure 17: Number of needs reported by returnees who were displaced more than once prior to return, by location last place of displacement (% of returnees)



SEX DISAGGREGATION



26 per cent of female returnees reported three or more needs compared to 19 per cent of male returnees.³²



of female returnees were in need of medicine and health services, compared to 8 per cent of male respondents.

DISABILITIES



51 per cent of households with members living with disabilities or chronic illnesses³³ reported at least three needs, compared to 41 per cent of households without members living with disabilities or chronic illnesses.



of households with members living with disabilities or chronic illnesses lacked medicine, compared to 7 per cent of households without a member living with disabilities or chronic illnesses.

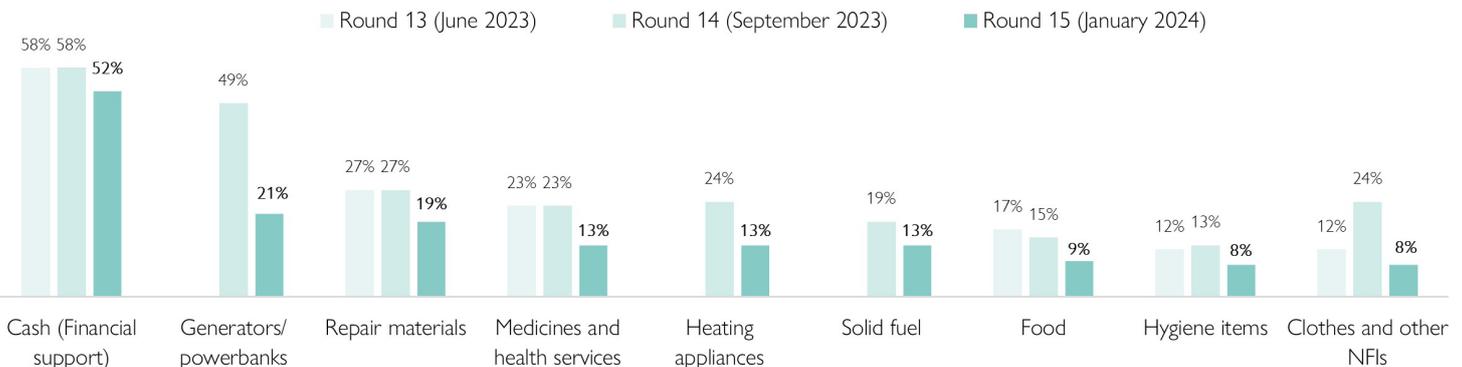
2.3 CHANGE IN NEEDS OVER TIME

Between June and December 2023, the main items which returnees reported needing remained the same, with cash & financial assistance, generators & power banks and building material being the main items which returnees reported lacking throughout the period. Nevertheless, in the six months preceding the data collection, and in contrast to IDPs, the share of returnees reporting needs for basic items witnessed statistically significant declines, across all items. In particular, the need for power banks & generators, clothes, and heating appliances reported by returnees dropped by 28 percentage points, 18 percentage points and 11 percentage points, respectively. These decreases can be attributed to changes in concerns amongst returnee households over that period, with higher needs reported in September 2023

in anticipation of the winter season. Noticeably, when compared to June 2023, 10 percentage points fewer returnees reported the need for medication (from 23% to 13%), while 6 percentage points fewer returnees needed hygiene items (from 12% to 8%).

The changes in needs over time observed at the national level were also recorded in the top five returnee hosting oblasts. The share of returnees reporting a lack of repair materials in Dnipropetrovska Oblast, for instance, fell by 19 percentage points between June and December 2023. At the same time, 12 per cent of returnees in Kharkivska Oblast reported a lack in medicine in December 2023, an 18 percentage point decrease from June 2023 (30%).

Figure 18: Share of returnees reporting a lack of basic goods, from Round 13 (June 2023) to Round 15 (December 2023)³⁴



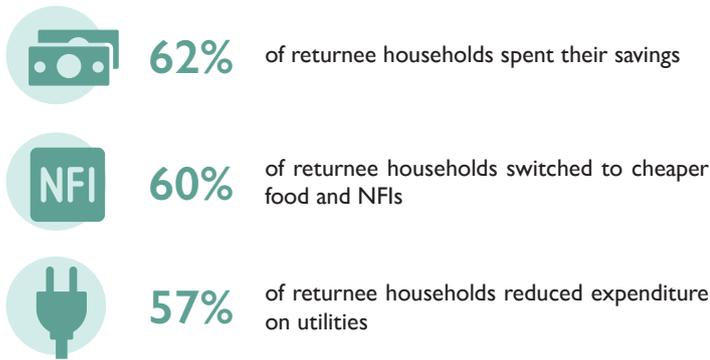
³²Multiple-choice question.

³³To identify disabilities and chronic illnesses in IDP households, respondents were asked whether one or more members in their households lived with a disability or chronic illness. Definitions of disabilities and chronic illnesses were derived from categories defined in the World Health Organization's International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (WHO-ICF).

³⁴Multiple-choice question.

2.4 COPING STRATEGIES

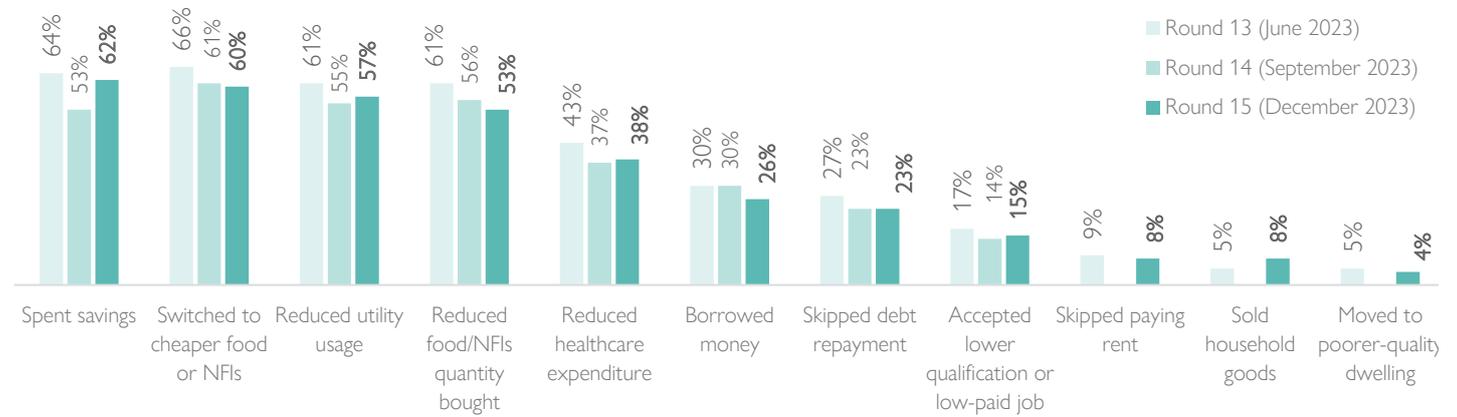
Figure 19: Top three coping strategies reported by returnees (% of returnees)



Returnee households had to resort to a number of coping mechanisms upon return, including spending their savings (mentioned by 62% of returnee respondents) switching to cheaper food and NFLs (mentioned by 60% of respondents), alongside reducing utility expenditure (57%). Noticeably, for most coping mechanisms, the share of returnees who reported having resorted to these coping strategies witnessed slight decreases from June to December 2023, but nevertheless remained high, pointing to continued challenges faced by returnees in their communities of return.

Moreover, when compared to IDP respondents, returnees were less likely to report having had to reduce the quantity of food and essential NFLs (53% of returnees, compared to 63% of IDPs), reduce healthcare expenditures (38%, compared to 47%). Meanwhile, higher shares of returnees resorted to spending savings (62%), stop taking their medication (44%) and selling household goods (8%). Women were more likely to report resorting to coping strategies relating to daily household expenditure and consumption, when compared to male returnees.

Figure 20: Primary coping strategies of returnees from Round 13 (June 2023) to Round 15 (September 2023) (% of returnees)³⁵



Picture 1: A returnee shows the damage incurred to his house as a result of the war to an IOM staff member (© IOM 2023)



³⁵Multiple-choice question.

ANNEX: ESTIMATED POPULATION BY DISPLACEMENT STATUS

Oblast	Estimated <i>de facto</i> IDPs present	Estimated returnee pop. present
Cherkaska	110,000	78,000
Chernihivska	57,000	190,000
Chernivetska	53,000	23,000
Dnipropetrovska	474,000	359,000
Ivano-Frankivska	93,000	40,000
Kharkivska	451,000	564,000
Khmelnyska	98,000	32,000
Kirovohradka	82,000	33,000
Kyiv	364,000	1,015,000
Kyivska	326,000	750,000
Lvivska	173,000	100,000
Mykolaivska	141,000	205,000
Odeska	188,000	211,000
Poltavska	171,000	65,000
Rivnenska	27,000	42,000
Sumska	116,000	108,000
Ternopilka	58,000	22,000
Vinnytska	128,000	79,000
Volynska	47,000	48,000
Zakarpatska	67,000	10,000
Zhytomyrska	75,000	115,000
<i>Donetska³⁶</i>	<i>92,000</i>	<i>137,000</i>
<i>Zaporizka³⁷</i>	<i>226,000</i>	<i>121,000</i>
<i>Luhanska³⁸</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
<i>Khersonska³⁹</i>	<i>55,000</i>	<i>98,000</i>
Residence location unknown (in Ukraine)	17,000	10,000
Total population	3,689,000	4,455,000

³⁶Estimates in this oblast (blue text) are likely under-represented due to coverage being limited to government-controlled areas, as well as the limited number of respondents reached through the random digit dial.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

A BRIEF NOTE ON THE METHODOLOGY

Unless noted otherwise, data cited in this report were compiled from Round 15 of the General Population Survey, dated as of 27 December 2023. The data presented in this report was commissioned by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and collected by 50 enumerators employed by Multicultural Insights through screener phone-based interviews with 20,000 randomly selected respondents and follow-up interviews with 1,517 IDPs, 1,541 returnees, and 2,002 residents, using the computer-assisted telephone interview (CATI) method, and a random digit dial (RDD) approach, with an overall sample error of 0.69% [CL95%]. Round 15 of data collection was completed between 27 November and 27 December 2023. The survey included all of Ukraine, excluding the Crimean Peninsula and occupied areas of Donetska, Luhanska, Khersonska, and Zaporizka Oblasts. All interviews were anonymous, and respondents were asked for consent before starting the interview. IDP and returnee population figures at the national and oblast levels are derived from the July 2023 total population baseline for Ukraine (excluding the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol) defined in the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)'s Common Operational Datasets on Population Statistics (COD-PS). All numbers are rounded for ease of use. Estimated figures have been rounded to the nearest 1,000. All numbers are rounded for ease of use. Additional analysis is available upon request to dtmukraine@iom.int

In this report, Internally Displaced People (IDPs) are defined as individuals who have

been forced to flee or to leave their homes or who are staying outside their habitual residence in Ukraine due to the full-scale invasion in February 2022, regardless of whether they hold registered IDP status. The terms "return" and "returnee" are used without prejudice to status and refer to all people who have returned to their habitual residence after a period of displacement of minimum two weeks since February 2022, whether from abroad or from internal displacement within Ukraine. This definition excludes individuals who have come back to Ukraine from abroad but who have not returned to their places of habitual residence in the country. Full definitions of population groups may be found in the [Methodological Note](#).

Limitations: Those currently residing outside the territory of Ukraine were not interviewed, following active exclusion. Population estimates assume that minors (those under 18 years old) are accompanied by their adult parents or guardians. The sample frame is limited to adults that use mobile phones, in areas where phone networks were fully functional for the entire period of the survey. People residing in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (ARC) or the occupied areas of Donetska and Luhanska Oblasts were not included in the survey. Estimates in Donetska, Zaporizka, Luhanska, and Khersonska Oblasts are likely under-represented as a result of coverage being limited to government-controlled areas and to the limited number of respondents reached in occupied areas. For further details on the methodology and sampling design, please refer to the full [Methodological Note](#).

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