IOM POLAND
INTEGRATION SNAPSHOT

July 31st, 2024

Changes in refugee employment, accommodation, and social integration over time

OVERVIEW

In March of 2023, IOM Poland launched its Integration Survey to assess the progress and needs relating to the economic and social integration of refugees from Ukraine in Poland.

The assessment aims to understand the employment, housing, finances, social connections, integration challenges, urgent needs, and vulnerabilities of refugees from Ukraine; as well as how these have changed over time. The survey includes a longitudinal component in which consenting participants are surveyed over the phone between 2 and 6 months following their initial survey. This report provides an analysis of how respondents' situations have changed over time, focusing on various aspects of social, labour and economic integration. Initial surveys were conducted throughout the spring and summer of 2023, and follow up surveys between the summer and winter of 2023-2024. A total of 160 respondents participated in the longitudinal component.

KEY FIGURES

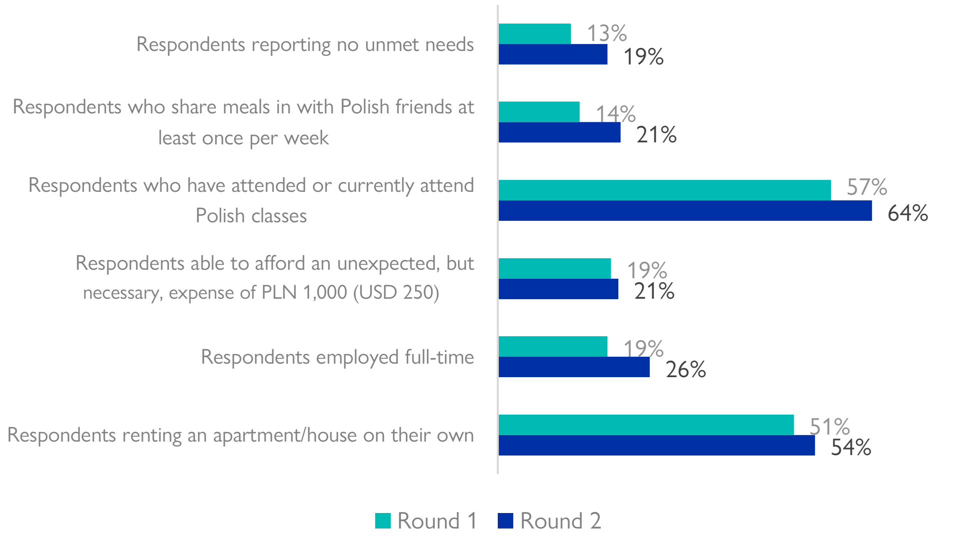
160 Total respondents

92% Female

68% With children

23% Staying in some form of collective accommodation

Summary of overall changes in indicators between Round 1 and Round 2



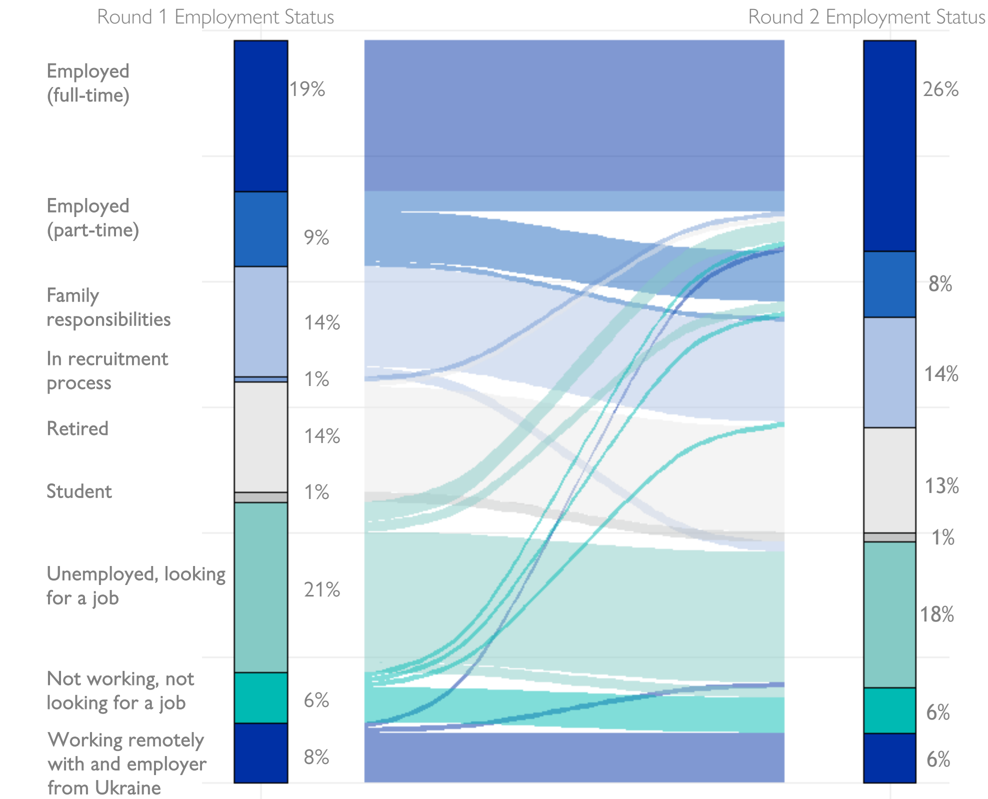
KEY FINDINGS

At the time of the first round of interviews, the largest percentage of respondents were unemployed and looking for a job (21%) while 19 per cent were employed full-time, and 9 per cent employed part-time. By the second round, 26 per cent of respondents were employed full-time. The largest portions of this increase came from those who were employed part-time in Round 1 and were employed full-time in Round 2 (4 respondents, or 27% of those formerly employed part-time), and those were unemployed but looking for a job in Round 1 and had found full-time employment at the time of Round 2 (4 respondents, or 12% of those formerly unemployed but looking for work.).

Despite a slight increase in accommodation costs and fluctuations in individual economic situations, the respondents have shown an upward trend in financial resilience and independence related to housing. Additionally, Polish language proficiency and social inclusion have improved between survey rounds, while the frequency of reported priority needs has decreased.

EMPLOYMENT

Employment status from Round 1 to Round 2*



*For this analysis, the "other" response category was excluded, hence percentages do not add up to 100%.

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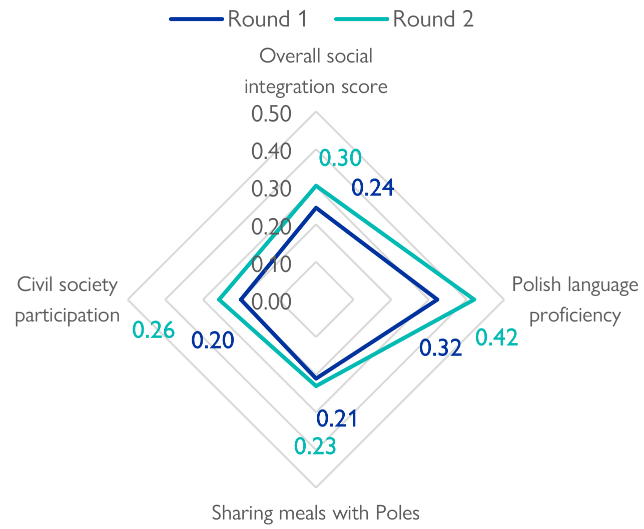
SOCIAL INTEGRATION INDICATORS CHANGE BETWEEN ROUNDS

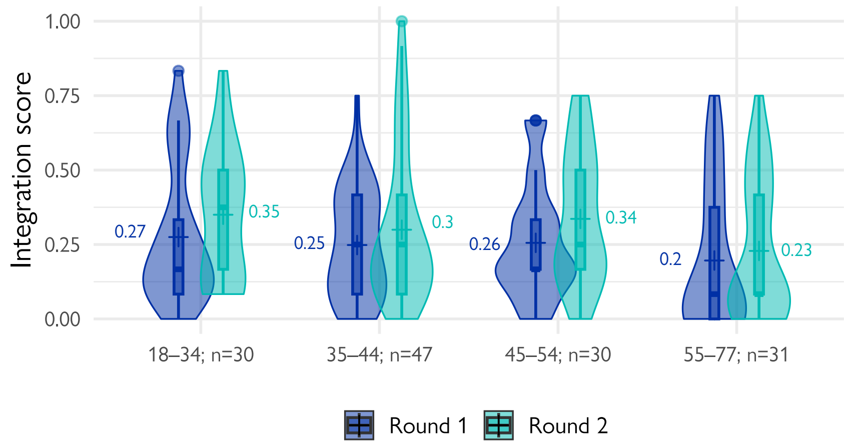
Respondents' social integration scores were calculated for each round based on three indicators: 1) self-reported Polish language ability, 2) frequency of sharing meals with Polish friends, and 3) participation in social, cultural, or political groups or associations in Poland. Both the individual indicator values and the total scores were scaled from 0 to 1, with 0 representing the least socially integrated and 1 representing the most. The average total score for all respondents in Round 1 was 0.24, which increased by 0.06 to 0.30 in Round 2. While each component indicator showed positive change between the rounds, the most significant improvement was in Polish language proficiency, with the average score rising from 0.32 to 0.42 between Rounds 1 and 2.

The largest increase in the total integration score occurred within the 45–54 age group, with an average increase of 0.08 points. The smallest average increase of 0.03 points, as well as the lowest overall averages in the integration score (0.20 in Round 1 and 0.23 in Round 2), were observed in the oldest age group (55–77). The greatest variability in integration scores was observed in Round 2 within the 35–44 age group.

Average social integration indicator score by survey round (n=138)

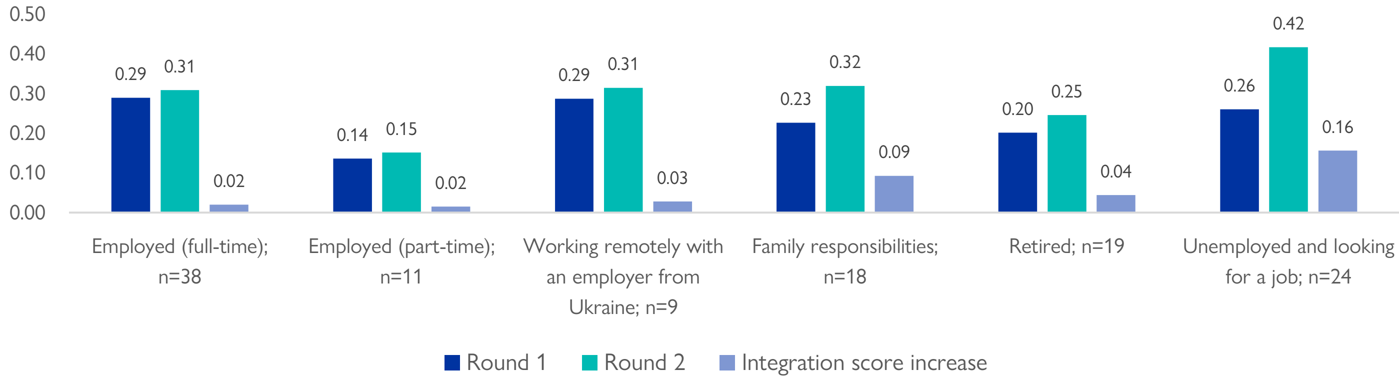


Integration score mean and distribution by age group



EMPLOYMENT AND LEVEL OF SOCIAL INTEGRATION

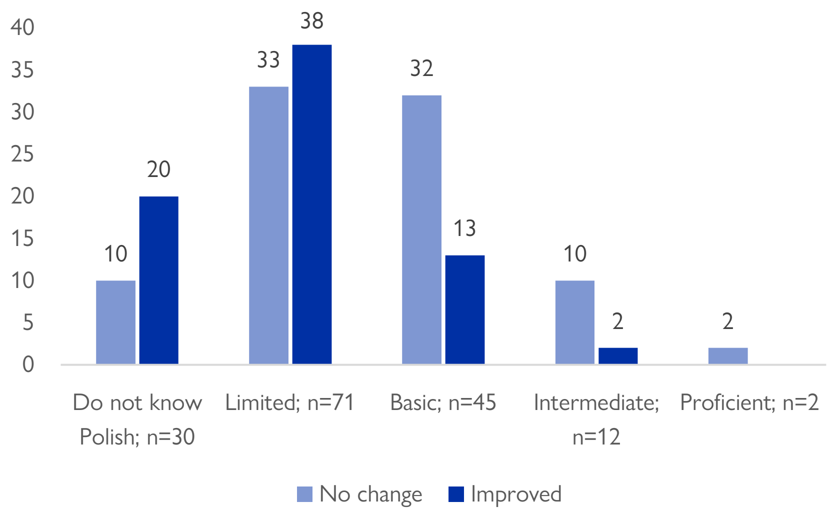
Average integration score by Round 2 employment status



While those employed demonstrated a similar, minor increase in the social integration score on average (0.01 to 0.02), those unemployed who were looking for work showed the sharpest increase, with their score rising by 0.16 between Round 1 and Round 2. Additionally, this group had the highest average score in Round 2, at 0.42. This finding supports the role of social networking in helping migrants access job opportunities, with higher integration indicators possibly resulting from increased social activity during the job search, or increased time available for language studies and social engagement. Those who were not employed in Round 1 but found some form of employment by Round 2 had an average increase in integration score of 0.08 (overall mean 0.06).

CHANGES IN POLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

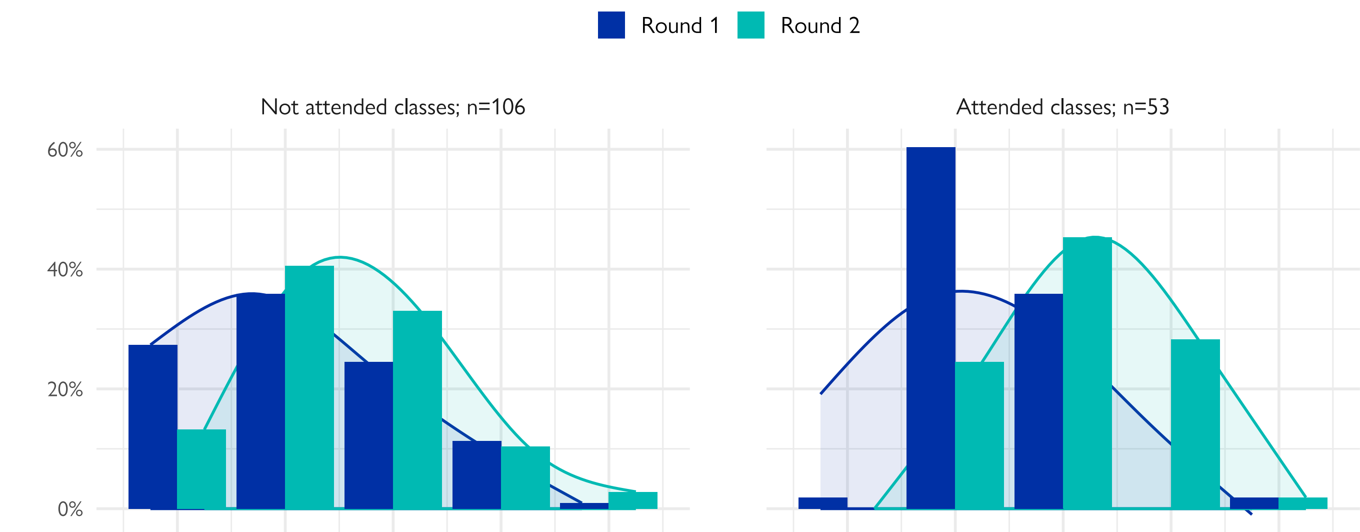
Polish language skill improvement by initial proficiency level (n=160)



The change in self-reported language proficiency levels could be seen most dramatically in respondents who initially reported limited or no Polish language knowledge. Within both groups, most respondents reported an improvement of their language skills between rounds. Of those who initially did not know Polish or had limited knowledge of the language, the majority showed improvement between Rounds 1 and 2.

LANGUAGE CLASSES ATTENDANCE AND POLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Dynamics of Polish language proficiency by participation in language classes reported in survey Round 1

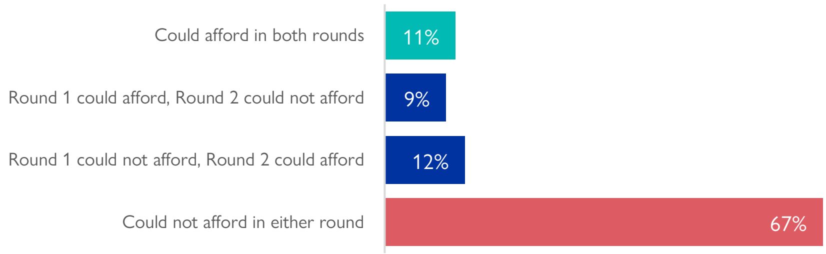


	Do not know Polish	Limited	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient	Do not know Polish	Limited	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient
Round 1	27%	36%	25%	11%	1%	2%	60%	36%	0%	2%
Round 2	13%	41%	33%	10%	3%	0%	25%	45%	28%	2%

Overall, 33 per cent of participants attended classes during Round 1 of data collection. Although improvement was observed in both groups, those who attended classes experienced more significant progress. In this group, 62 per cent improved their Polish language skills, compared to 37 per cent in the group that did not attend classes. By Round 2, 13 per cent of class attendees had reached intermediate or proficient levels, compared to 30 per cent in the other group, which accounted for 53 per cent of all intermediate or proficient speakers surveyed. A detailed breakdown of proficiency levels is shown in the graph.

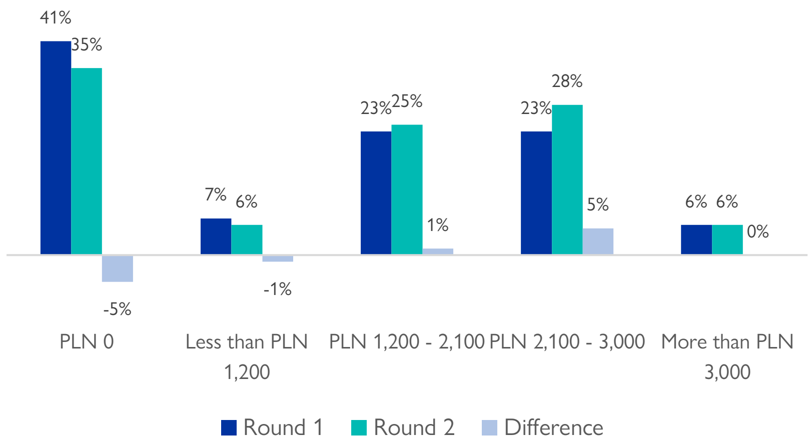
FINANCIAL RESILIENCE AND ACCOMMODATION COSTS

Percentage of respondents who could afford an unexpected, but necessary, expense of PLN 1,000 (USD 250) (n=138)*



*Those who did not answer the question in either round were excluded, resulting in the discrepancy between figures presented on pages 1 and 3. Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Monthly cost of accommodation by survey round (n=158)

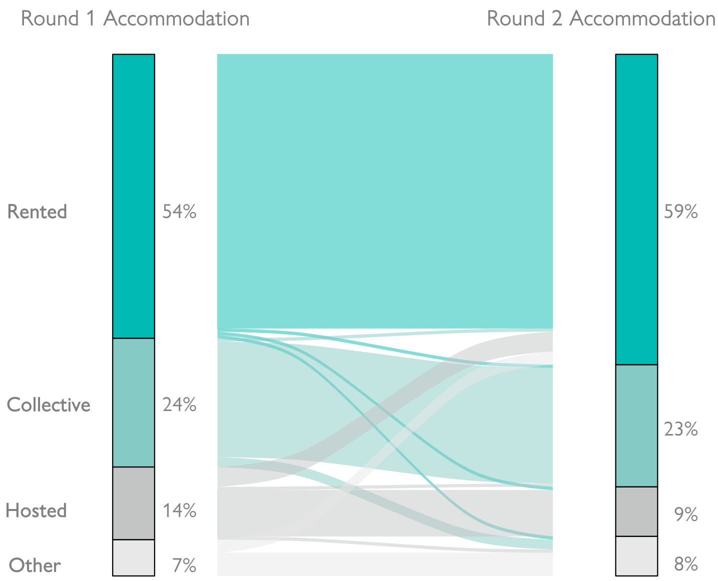


When analyzing financial resilience, there was a slight increase in the percentage of respondents able to cover a necessary expense of PLN 1,000 (USD 250), rising from 19 per cent in Round 1 to 21 per cent in Round 2. Notably, 12 per cent of respondents could not afford this expense in Round 1, but were able to do so in Round 2. However, 9 per cent of all respondents were able to cover the expense in Round 1 and not in Round 2. These results suggest that while there is a slight overall improvement in the financial resilience of refugees from Ukraine, individual circumstances remain subject to significant financial fluctuations and uncertainty.

Over the course of the two rounds of data collection, there was a small yet clear increase in the amount respondents paid for accommodation. In the first round, 52 per cent of respondents paid more than PLN 1,200 per month (PLN 40 or more per day) for accommodation. In the second round, this figure rose to 59 per cent. However, there was no increase in the number of participants who paid more than PLN 3,000 for their accommodation. Overall, 9 per cent of respondents experienced a rent increase in Round 2, primarily among those who did not have to pay before, while 4 per cent paid less.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation types change from Round 1 to Round 2*



Of those who responded to questions about their accommodation, 22 per cent (35 respondents) had changed their accommodation between the first and second rounds of data collection. Within this group, 26 per cent moved from one privately rented apartment to another, 17 per cent changed collective sites, and another 17 per cent transitioned from hosted accommodation to renting an apartment. Additionally, 11 per cent moved out of a collective site to either rented or different types of accommodation, and another 11 per cent switched from paying for a hotel room or another type of accommodation to renting an apartment. Overall, the proportion of those renting slightly increased.

*For this analysis, the respondents who declined to answer in either round of the survey were excluded, hence percentages do not add up to 100%.

PRIORITY NEEDS OF RESPONDENTS: ROUND 1 TO ROUND 2

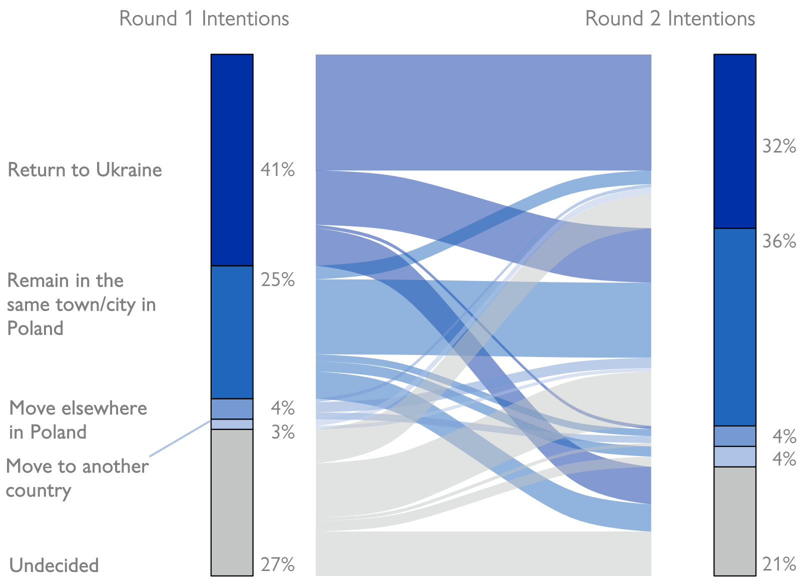
Overall, the percentage of respondents who declared no unmet immediate needs increased from 13 per cent in Round 1 to 19 per cent in Round 2. Consequently, the frequency of reporting most of the top 10 needs slightly decreased in Round 2. Although financial support remained the top unmet need, it experienced the largest decrease, dropping from 58 per cent to 36 per cent. While the frequency of reporting employment and access to healthcare as needs stayed roughly constant, the need for long-term accommodation decreased by 9 percentage points, from 24 per cent in Round 1 to 16 per cent in Round 2. The need for education for children was reported by nearly three times fewer respondents in Round 2, dropping from 11 per cent to 4 per cent. Similarly, the need for adult education decreased from 7 per cent in Round 1 to 3 per cent in Round 2.

The unmet needs reported by respondents per round of data collection (n=160)

*Due to rounding, the reported differences between Round 1 and Round 2 may not exactly match the individual figures reported for each round.

FUTURE INTENTIONS

Respondents who intend to remain in Poland permanently as compared to those who intend to return to Ukraine in the future*



Respondents' most frequently reported intention during Round 1 was to return to Ukraine, accounting for 41 per cent of respondents. However, in Round 2, this intention dropped to 32 per cent, with the most popular intention shifting to planning to stay within the same city or town in Poland, which increased from 25 per cent to 36 per cent. Overall, 56 per cent of respondents changed their future intentions between survey rounds, with most of these changes reflecting a decision to stay in Poland. These shifts in intentions over time illustrate that as the war in Ukraine continues and refugees become more integrated in Poland, they may increasingly envision their futures in Poland.

*For this analysis, the respondents who declined to answer in either round of the survey were excluded, hence percentages do not add up to 100%.

METHODOLOGY

This report provides an overview of the changes over time in accommodation situations, employment status, needs, and integration of refugees from Ukraine currently residing in Poland. The findings are based on initial rounds of the Integration and Social Inclusion Surveys conducted by IOM Poland between March 2023 and September 2023, and secondary follow-up surveys conducted between July 2023 and December of 2023 with respondents taking part in the longitudinal component of this data collection exercise. The average period of time between the first round and the follow up survey was 3.3 months. The survey included adults (18+) and targeted refugees who left Ukraine after February 24, 2022, citing the war as the reason for their displacement. Due to the very limited number of surveys conducted with Third-Country Nationals (<1%), this report reflects solely the findings from surveys conducted with Ukrainian nationals.

Respondents were selected through a simple random sample approach by enumerators in various locations across Poland, including collective sites, humanitarian distribution points, transit hubs, public spaces and IOM integration centers. Face-to-face surveys were conducted in Ukrainian, Russian, and Polish by trained IOM data collectors in six voivodeships across Poland. Follow-up surveys were conducted over the phone by data collectors with respondents who had consented to providing their contact information and taking part in the follow-up survey. Follow-up calls were made between 3 and 6 months following the initial face-to-face survey. Data collection and storage were facilitated through a secure mobile application. The sample is not representative of all refugees from Ukraine in Poland, and the results should be considered indicative.

IOM Poland's Integration and Social Inclusion Survey aims to capture data on employment situations, economic resilience, social cohesion, access to services, barriers to education, accommodation, and primary needs of Ukrainian refugees in Poland.

This survey was developed in coordination with IOM Poland's Labour Market and Social Inclusion unit based on the key integration components outlined in IOM's Toolkit on Facilitating Pathways to Inclusive and Cohesive Societies (Integration Toolkit), and with indicators largely derived from IOM/The Immigration Policy Lab's Migration Integration Index.

To access the report online or view other IOM Poland reports and dashboards please visit https://dtm.iom.int/poland.

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From the People of Japan

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