

ROMANIA
UKRAINIAN NATIONALS
CROSSING BACK TO
UKRAINE

APRIL-JUNE 2024



IOM
UN MIGRATION

GLOBAL DATA INSTITUTE
DISPLACEMENT
TRACKING MATRIX

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 report 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 the support provided by the U.S Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM).

PUBLISHER

International Organization for Migration
Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia
Dampfschiffstrasse 4/10-11, 1030 Vienna, Austria
+43 1 581 22 22
Website: eca.iom.int
Contact: ROViennaDataResearch@iom.int

International Organization for Migration
Country Office Romania
Viitorului nr. 11, 020603
Bucharest, Romania
+40 21 210 3050
Website: <https://romania.iom.int>
Contact: iombucharest@iom.int

This report was issued without formal editing by IOM.

Cover photo: Transit camp for Ukrainian refugees in Romania. © IOM 2022

Citation: International Organization for Migration (IOM), August 2024. "DTM Romania: Ukrainian Nationals Crossing Back to Ukraine". April-June 2024. IOM, Romania.

For more information on terms and conditions of DTM reports and information products, please refer to: <https://dtm.iom.int/terms-and-conditions>

Release date: October 2024

© IOM 2024

Some rights reserved. This work is made available under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 IGO License (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0 IGO).*

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

This publication should not be used, published, or redistributed for purposes primarily intended for or directed towards commercial advantage or monetary compensation, with the exception of educational purposes, e.g. to be included in textbooks.

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

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW	6
----------	---

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE	6
---------------------------	---

TIME OUTSIDE OF UKRAINE	7
-------------------------	---

CROSSING BACK TO UKRAINE	8
--------------------------	---

NEEDS, ASSISTANCE, AND CHALLENGES	10
-----------------------------------	----

CONCLUSION	11
------------	----

METHODOLOGY	12
-------------	----

KEY FINDINGS

Demographics



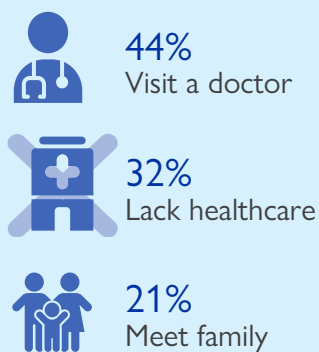
Intentions



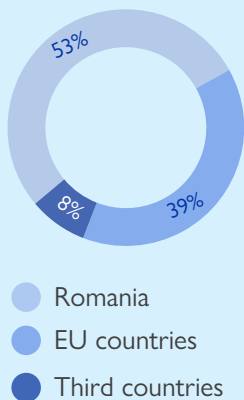
Top 3 needs*



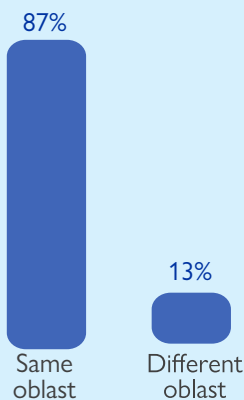
Top reasons for crossing back*



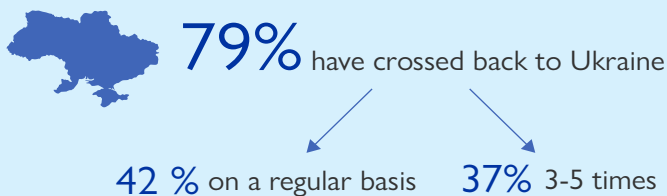
Top countries of stay



Destination



Entries & Exits



Oblasts of origin

70% come from:



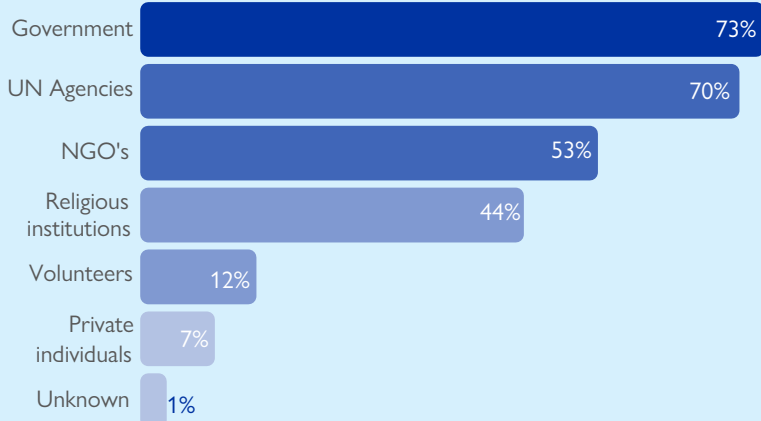
30% other oblasts

Oblasts of destination



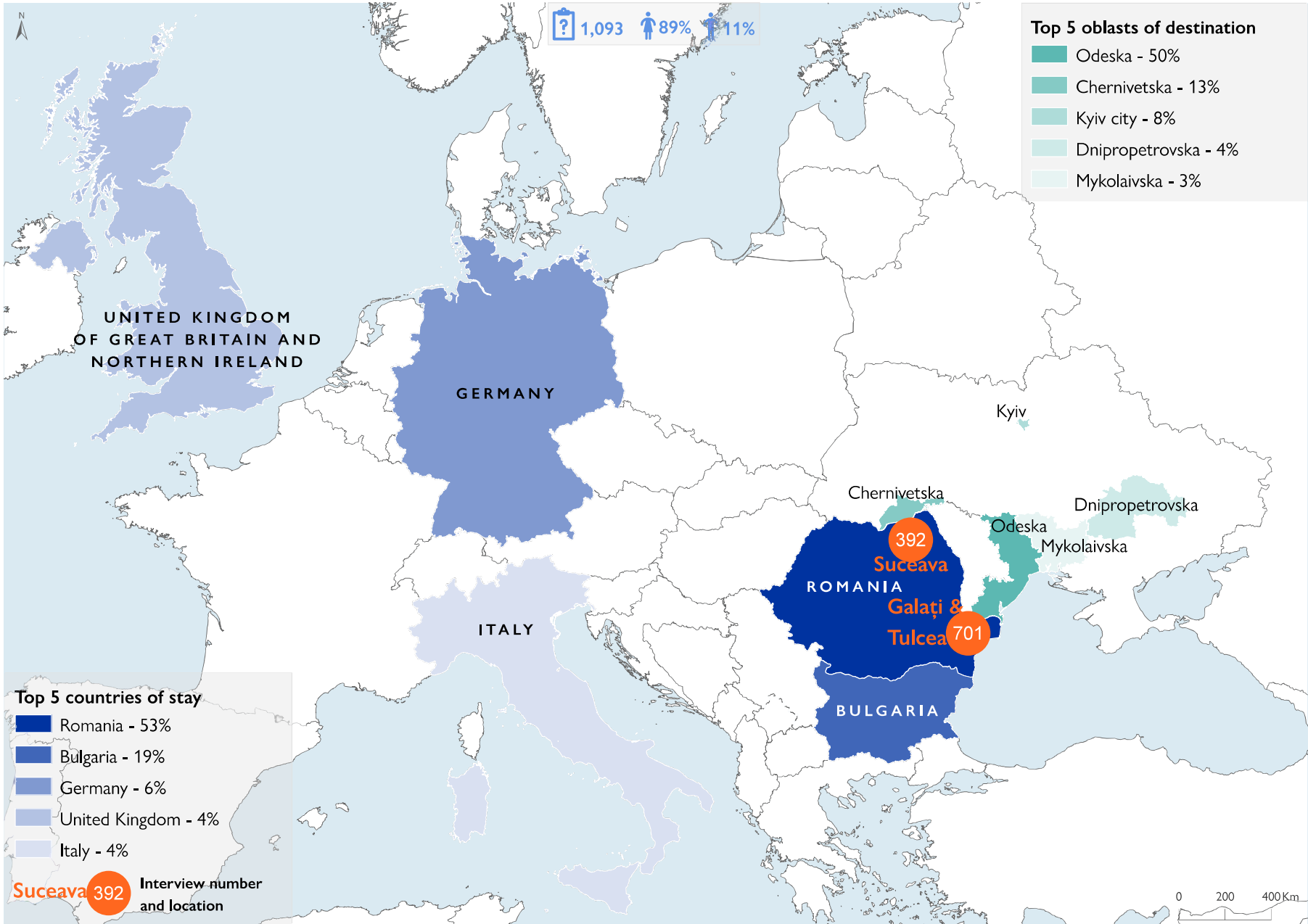
Assistance*

Two thirds of the respondents received aid:



*Multiple answers possible

MAP: Top oblasts of intended destination vs. oblast of origin, April-June 2024



This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM

OVERVIEW

IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) collected data on **Ukrainian nationals and TCNs (who had resided in Ukraine before 24 February 2022) who were crossing back** to Ukraine from or through Romania, either temporarily or permanently. The survey focuses on the return intentions, duration of displacement, destinations, assistance, and experiences of discrimination of respondents. A total of 1,098 surveys were collected

between April and June 2024. Among these, less than one per cent (n=5) were completed by TCNs, while the vast majority, comprising over 99 per cent (n=1,093), were completed by Ukrainian nationals. The analysis presented in this report is based on the responses provided by Ukrainian nationals. Results may not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding or multi-select questions.

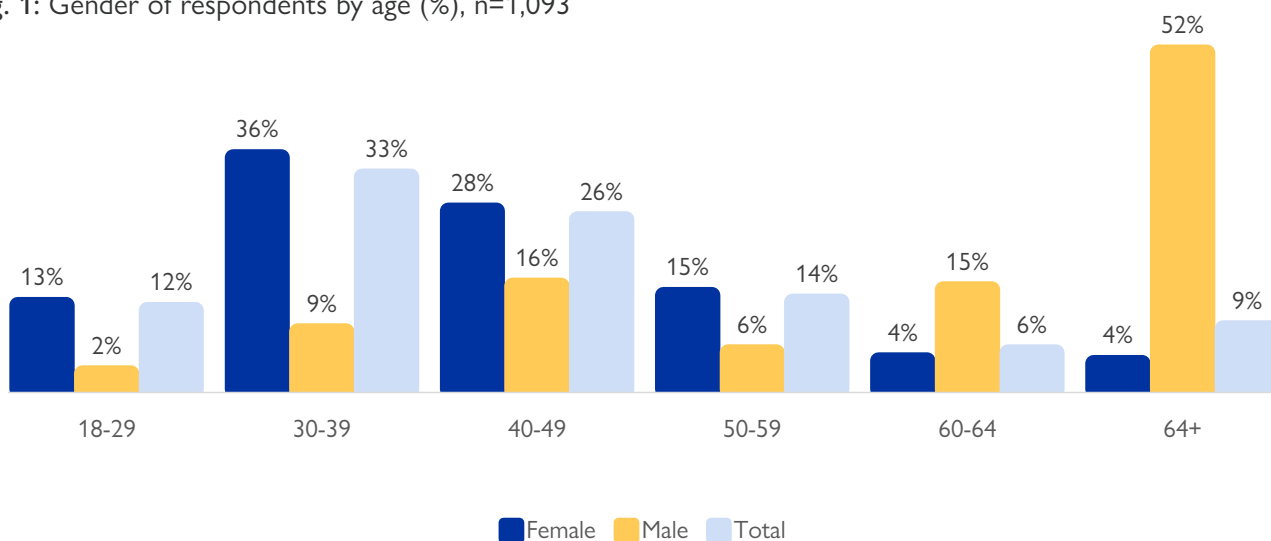
SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

GENDER AND AGE

Among surveyed Ukrainian nationals, 89 per cent were women, while 11 per cent were men. The average age of surveyed Ukrainian nationals was 44 years old. The average age of surveyed men (60 years-old) was

significantly higher than the average age of surveyed women (42 years-old). Ninety-one per cent of respondents were of working age, between 18 and 64 years old.

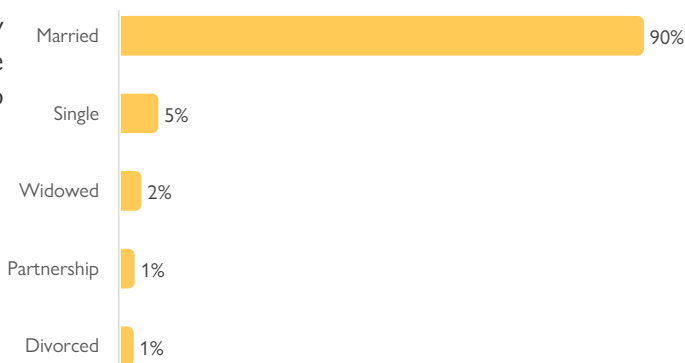
Fig. 1: Gender of respondents by age (%), n=1,093



MARITAL STATUS

Ninety per cent of persons interviewed stated that they were married. The remaining 10 per cent included those who were single (5%), widowed (2%), in a partnership (1%), and divorced (1%).

Fig. 2: Marital status (%), n=1,093



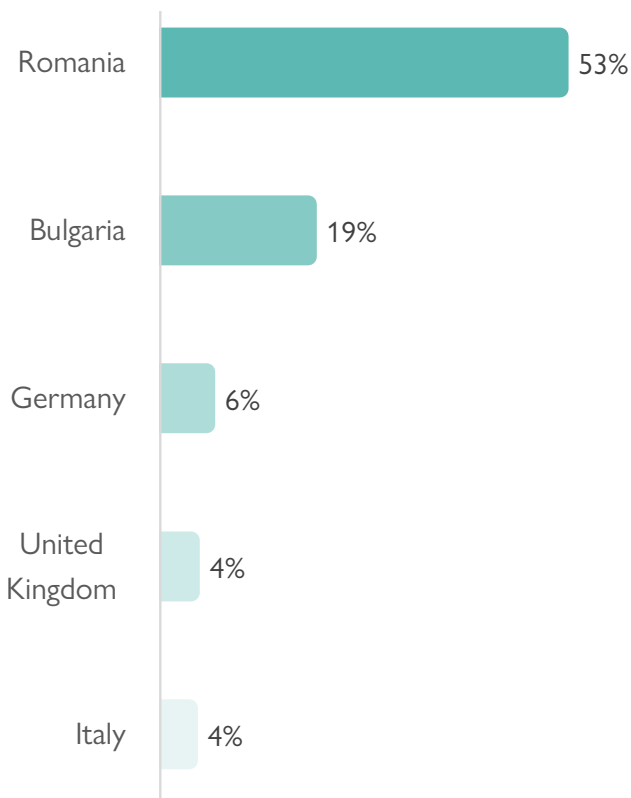
TIME OUTSIDE OF UKRAINE

COUNTRIES OF STAY

Fifty-three per cent of the surveyed Ukrainian civilians had been staying in Romania. Other Ukrainian nationals had been living in Bulgaria (19%), Germany (6%), Italy (4%), and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (4%).

A small share of the surveyed persons had stayed in Türkiye (3%), Belgium (2%), France (2%), Czechia (1%), Spain (1%), or Greece (1%). The remaining four per cent had been living in 13 various other countries before crossing back to Ukraine through Romania.

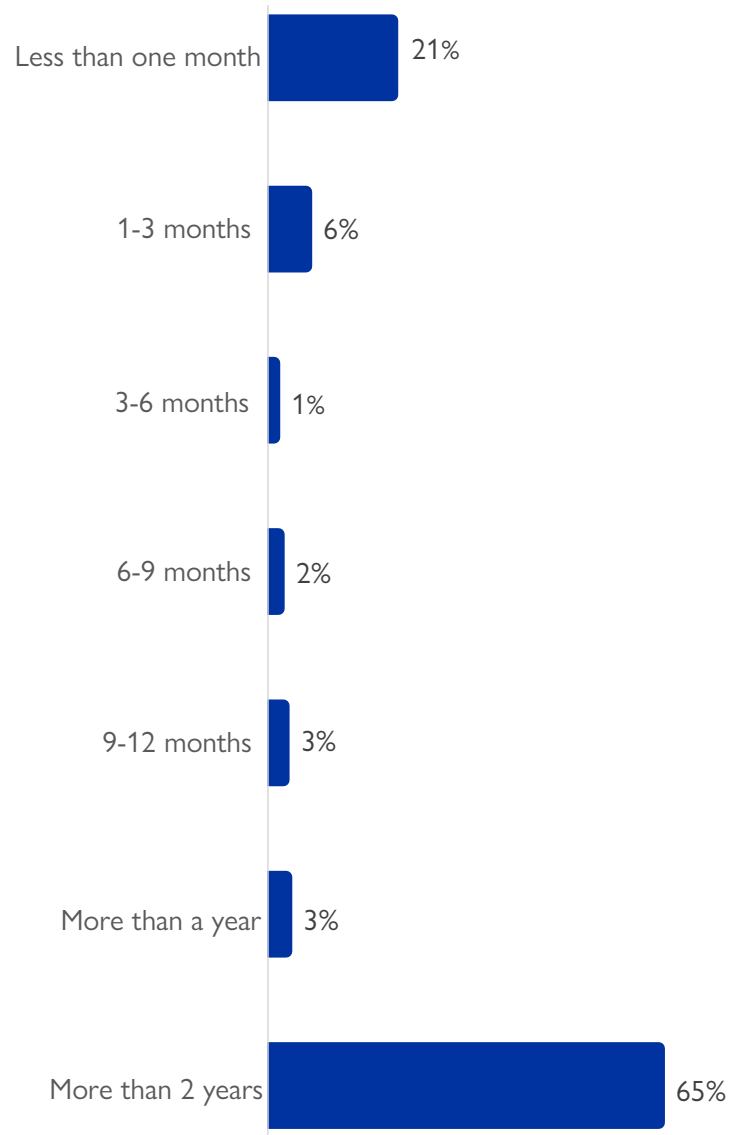
Fig. 3: Top 5 countries of residence before crossing back (%), n=1,093



AVERAGE TIME SINCE INITIAL DISPLACEMENT

Most respondents were displaced more than two years prior to being surveyed (65%), around the start of the war. Out of all Ukrainian nationals surveyed, an important share (28%) had been displaced at the beginning of 2024, having spent less than half a year in displacement.

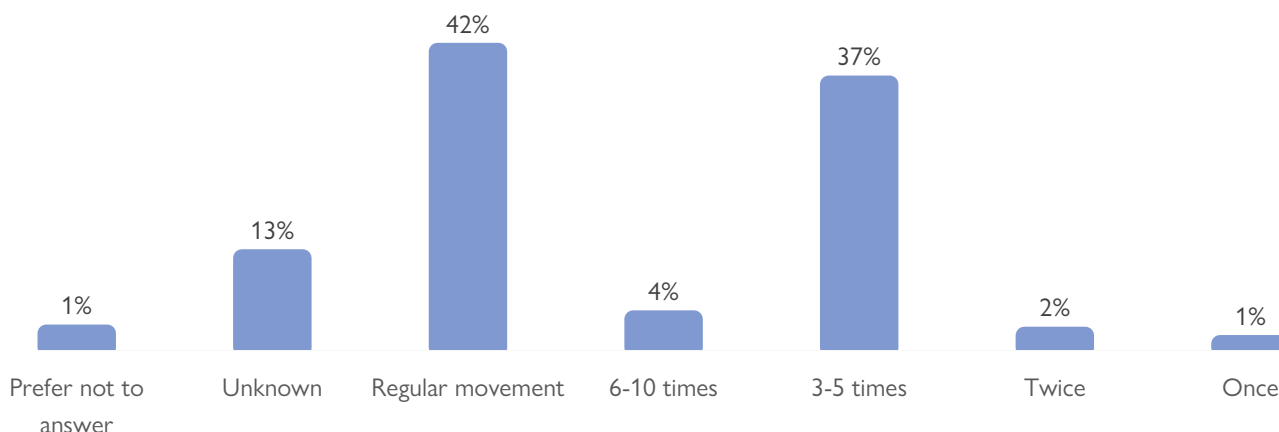
Fig. 4: Time in displacement (%), n=1,093



EXITS & ENTRIES

Given Romania's shared border with Ukraine, many Ukrainian nationals cross back on a regular basis. Most respondents report having crossed the Ukrainian border either on a regular basis (42%) or between 3 and 5 times (37%) since their initial displacement. Notably, one per cent of respondents reported having entered/exited Ukraine only once since February 2022.

Fig. 5: Number of entries and exits into Ukraine (%), n=1,091



Overall, the data shows that most respondents crossed back to Ukraine at least once, which is made possible by the legal framework and permits granted to Ukrainians which allows for multiple entries and exits into the Schengen zone.¹ Furthermore, EU temporary protection status provided to Ukrainian refugees offers the most

freedom of movement, followed by the visa free program.² Temporary protection directives allow EU countries to provide immediate protection to displaced individuals from non-EU countries who are unable to return to their country of origin.

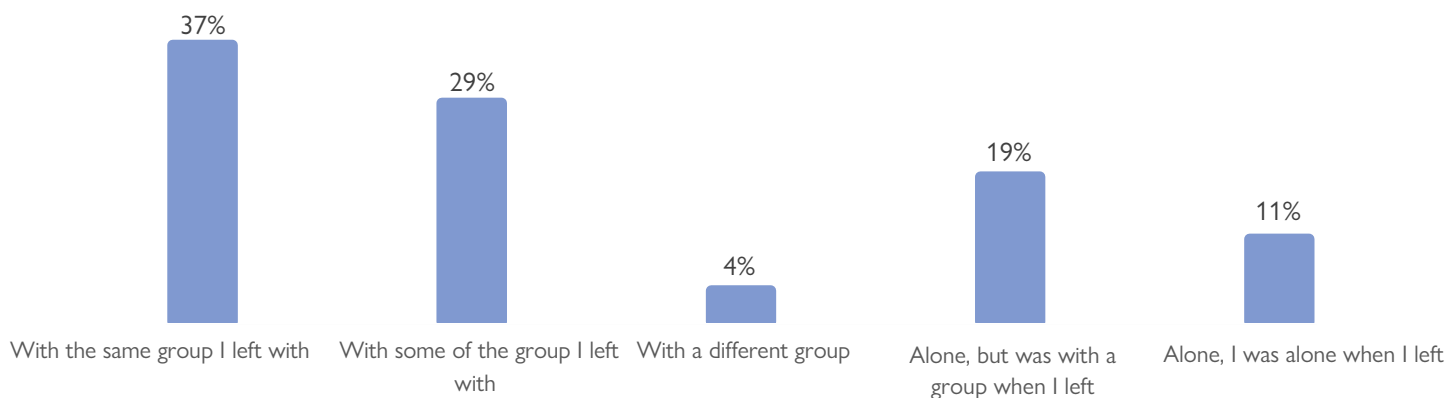
CROSSING BACK TO UKRAINE

GROUP COMPOSITION

Seventy per cent of the persons surveyed stated that they were traveling back to Ukraine in a group, while 30 per cent were alone. Thirty-seven per cent reported crossing back with the same group with which they had originally entered Romania. Another twenty-nine per cent mentioned that they were crossing back to Ukraine with part of the group they came with initially, while only

four per cent had returned with a different group. As for those that have returned alone to Ukraine, 19 per cent crossed back alone, even though they left Ukraine with a group, while 11 per cent were crossing back to Ukraine alone, same as they came to Romania.

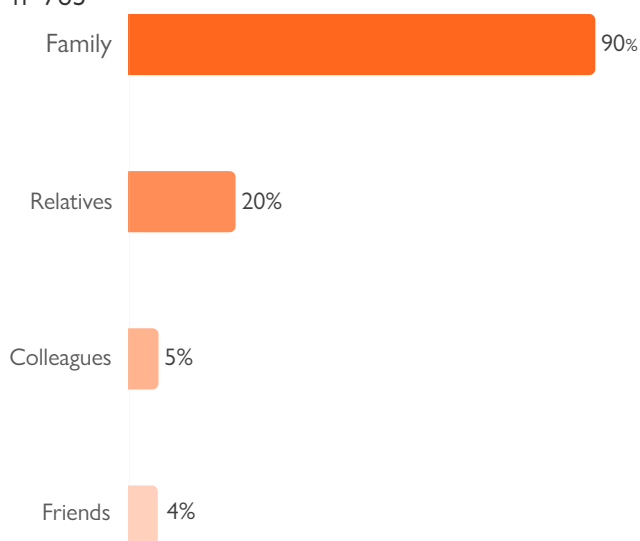
Fig. 6: Group composition upon crossing into Ukraine (%), n=1,093



1. European Commission, "Schengen Area", https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/schengen-borders-and-visa/schengen-area_en , Accessed 23 July 2024
 2. European Commission, "Temporary protection", https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/common-european-asylum-system/temporary-protection_en , Accessed 23 July 2024

Out of the persons that reported traveling in a group (n=763), 90 per cent were travelling with immediate family members. Respondents also report traveling with other relatives (20%), work colleagues (55%) and friends (4%). Out of those that were accompanied, 34 per cent were with infants between 0 and 4 years old and 53 per cent were with children or youth aged between 5 and 17 years old. Thirty-five per cent travelled with older persons.

Fig. 7: Group members upon crossing into Ukraine (%), n=763



Multiple answers possible

OBLAST (REGION) OF ORIGIN AND DESTINATION

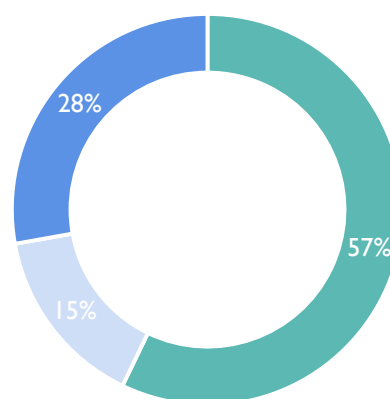
Seventy-seven per cent of the surveyed Ukrainian civilians came from five oblasts in Ukraine: Odeska (47%), Chernivetska (11%), city of Kyiv (8%), Mykolaivska (6%) and Khersonska (5%). The remaining 23 per cent came from 18 other oblasts.

The majority of respondents (87%) intended to reach their oblast of origin. Thirteen per cent intended to cross back to a different oblast. The top intended destinations were: Odeska (50%), Chernivetska, (13%) the city of Kyiv (8%), Dnipropetrovska (4%) and Mykolaivska (3%).

INTENDED DURATION OF STAY

Fifty-seven per cent of the respondents have mentioned crossing back for a short period of time, less than 30 days, while 15 per cent mentioned returning to Ukraine for a long to infinite period of time (prospective returnees). A notable share of 28 per cent was still unsure of their intended length of stay in Ukraine.

Fig. 8: Travel intentions (%), n=1,092

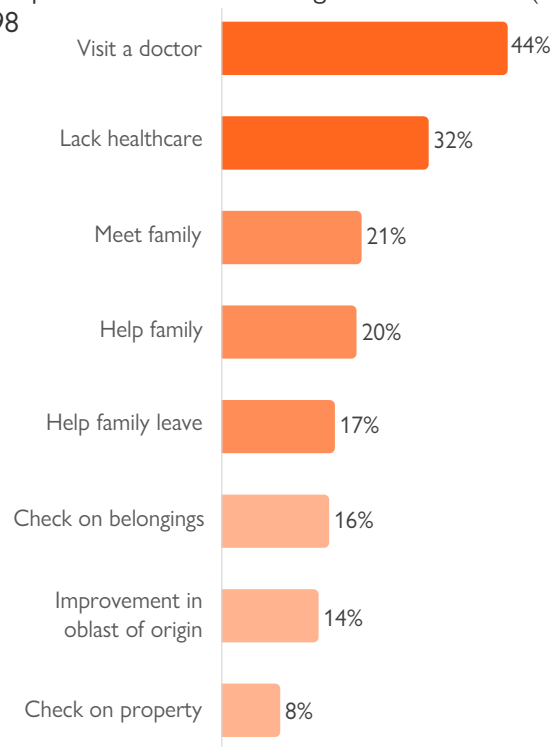


■ Short visit ■ Prospective returnees ■ Unknown

REASONS FOR CROSSING BACK

The main reasons for crossing back to Ukraine, for both short-term visitors and prospective returnees, were due to the need to visit a doctor (44%), lack of healthcare services in host country (32%), and crossing back to Ukraine for or after visiting family members (21%). The next most cited reason for visiting was to provide support for family members, reported by 20 per cent of respondents. The need to cross back to Ukraine for healthcare reasons translates in the lack of healthcare access of the Ukrainian population in the country of residence.

Fig. 9: Top 10 reasons for crossing back to Ukraine (%), n=1,098



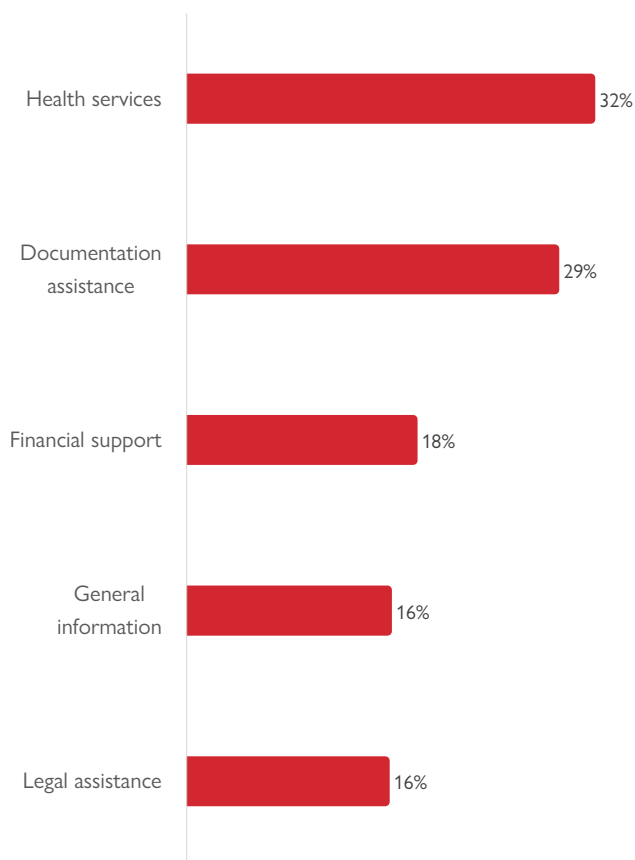
Multiple answers possible

NEEDS, ASSISTANCE, AND CHALLENGES

NEEDS UPON ARRIVAL

The most commonly cited needs upon arrival at respondents' destination were the need for healthcare services (32%) and documentation assistance (29%), followed by the need for financial support (18%). Other reported needs were for general information (16%), legal assistance (16%), personal safety (15%) and sanitary products (6%). Forty-four per cent reported having no unmet needs. The larger portion of Ukrainians which reported a need for healthcare services and documentation support, combined with the relatively smaller portion reporting a need for financial support could indicate that Ukrainian nationals crossing back perceive needs related to long-term stays as top priorities.

Fig. 10: Top 10 needs upon arrival at destination (%), n=1,093



Multiple answers possible

When asked about their perceived ease of access to basic services upon arrival, 64 per cent of respondents (n=612) considered services easy or very easy to access.³ When asked about the ease of accessing food, 75 per cent of respondents (n=605) perceived food to be easily or very easily accessible. Sixty-four per cent found it easy or very easy to cover their basic expenses upon arrival at their intended destination. For the respondents in need of official documents (n=599), 69 per cent found the task of retrieving, renewing or replacing official documents to be easy or very easy. Among respondents looking for accommodation (n=602), 62 per cent found this task easy or very easy.

Among respondents asked if they planned to reunite with family members in Ukraine (n=608), over three in four individuals (78%) indicated they would not be reunited, while 22 per cent stated they would reunite with their family members.



Ukrainian refugees in a train station in Romania. © 2022

3. It should be noted, the scale ranged from 0 to 10, where 0 = not easy at all, and 10 = very easy.

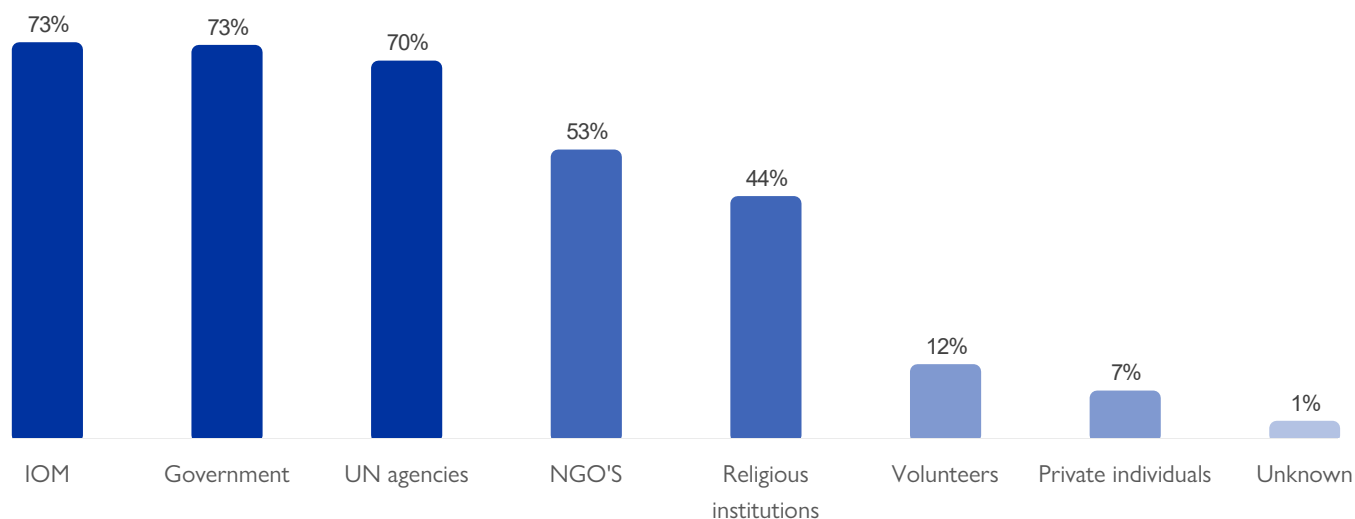
ASSISTANCE RECEIVED

Sixty-eight per cent of the surveyed individuals reported having received some form of assistance. The institutions that provided assistance were reported as follows: 73 per cent of respondents received help from the IOM and local governments each, 70 per cent were assisted

by other UN agencies, 53 per cent by NGOs, and 44 per cent by religious organizations.

Other assistance providers were volunteers (12%) and private individuals (7%). One per cent did not know.

Fig. 11: Main sources of assistance (%), n=747



CONCLUSION

In summary, Ukrainian nationals returning from Romania primarily do so for short-term visits. Their main reasons include obtaining necessary documents, addressing healthcare needs, or meeting with family members. Notably, no respondents reported having experienced discrimination while in Romania.

This report highlights the challenges and needs faced by Ukrainians while crossing to Ukraine via the Romanian

border. The top reported needs of respondents upon their arrival to Ukraine were health services, documentation assistance, and financial support. The majority of Ukrainians surveyed had received assistance in Romania, with a significant portion of that assistance having been provided by the government of Romania as well as UN agencies.



Authorities and emergency services on standby, ready to provide immediate assistance to all those crossing the Republic of Moldova's Sculeni border crossing point with Romania. © IOM 2023

METHODOLOGY

Since 24 February 2022, Ukrainian and Third Country Nationals (TCNs) have been fleeing to neighbouring countries due to the war in Ukraine. More than 25 million Ukrainians have crossed outside of Ukraine to other countries (Statista), while over 4 million have been reported at the borders of neighbouring countries since February 2022. Around seven million people from Ukraine were recorded across Europe as of February 2023 (UNHCR). Since mid-April 2022, IOM has deployed its Displacement Tracking Matrix

(DTM) tools to conduct surveys with persons crossing into Ukraine from neighbouring countries. The surveys aim to understand of the main profiles, displacement patterns, intentions and needs of those crossing back into Ukraine.

This report is based on surveys carried out in Romania in between April and June of 2024, representing a cumulation of all the data collected during this time span.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

Aim

IOM designed the survey to capture the main displacement patterns of refugees crossing back into Ukraine following the initial outbreak of war. The survey collects information on the demographic profiles, intentions, and current needs of Ukrainian nationals.

Target population

Ukrainians who are crossing back to Ukraine from neighbouring countries.

Location

Surveys were conducted in various locations, including Siret, Isaccea, Iasi county and Galati county. Enumerators surveyed respondents at transit points (such as train and bus stations), the Info and Community Centre (run by IOM and UNHCR), collective accommodations, and an aid distribution event.

Execution

In Romania, IOM DTM enumerators conducted surveys in Ukrainian, Russian, Romanian, and English. Trained enumerators carried out face-to-face surveys and registered survey data on a mobile application. All surveys were anonymous. Enumerators provided a brief introduction and obtained full consent. The survey only included adults (18+ years-old).

LIMITATIONS

The sampling framework could not be based on verified figures of refugees from Ukraine exiting towards Ukraine through all land border points where the survey took place. The survey was carried out in diverse settings in order to maximize the number of respondents and obtain diverse profiles of respondents. Enumerators selected respondents randomly at border crossing and transit points. However, enumerators hand-selected respondents that were willing to take part in the survey in other settings, such as collective accommodation centres. The survey data and analysis are therefore not

representative of populations moving from Romania into Ukraine.

Other limitations in the data collection process include time constraints at the transit centres, as well as the limited number of enumerators deployed at certain sites, with the number of enumerators fluctuating throughout the year.

Whilst the overall sample cannot be deemed as representative, the consistency of data collection in each country and at the regional level suggests that the current sampling framework produces findings of practical value.

IOM REGIONAL OFFICE EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

 eca.iom.int

 ROViennaDataResearch@iom.int

Dampfschiffstrasse
4/10-11, 1030
Vienna, Austria

  
[@iomrovienna](https://www.instagram.com/iomrovienna)

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 of 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 in the country of displacement; 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 refugees from Ukraine.

For more information, please consult:

<https://dtm.iom.int/responses/ukraine-response>

