

SLOVAKIA

ACCESS TO HOUSING FOR REFUGEES FROM UKRAINE

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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This publication was made possible through the support provided by the U.S Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) and the Government of Japan.

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

International Organization for Migration
Country Office Slovakia
Grösslingová 35
811 09, Bratislava
Slovak Republic
+421 2 5263 0093
Website: <https://iom.sk>
Contact: bratislavainfo@iom.int

This report was issued without formal editing by IOM.

Cover photo: Mother and daughter from Ukraine spending time together outside of their temporary residence in Slovakia, provided by IOM and Airbnb.org. © IOM 2023

Citation: International Organization for Migration (IOM), April 2024. *DTM Slovakia: Access to housing for refugees from Ukraine*. 2023 Annual Report. IOM, Slovakia.

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Release date: 5 April 2024

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Under the EU Temporary Protection Directive (the Directive), beneficiaries of temporary protection (TP) in EU member states are entitled to a suitable accommodation or housing or, as an alternative, to receive the necessary support or means to obtain housing, if necessary.

In response to the high influx of refugees following the onset of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, the Government of the Slovak Republic has been providing accommodation support in line with the Directive of April 2022, with an expected termination in June 2024. The support has included the following modalities:

- Financial scheme of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic designed to reimburse the expenses incurred by owners of private apartments and collective centres open for interim (non-commercial) accommodation purposes;
- Financial scheme of the Ministry of Transport of the Slovak Republic dedicated to commercial collective sites, including pensions and hotels;
- Order of the Crises Management for Rescue Works (finalised in December 2023) – provision of support to crisis and short-term accommodation facilities (high-school dormitories and various makeshift shelters) operated by the state or municipalities;

In addition to the modalities listed above, the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic has been providing accommodation to vulnerable persons using their own asylum facilities across different regions. The largest Humanitarian Centre in the country was extended to meet the accommodation-related needs of the most vulnerable, with a capacity to accommodate up to 1,000 persons.

Facilities operated by other ministries or various governmental institutions, originally used for recreational purposes, also provided non-cost accommodation for refugees from Ukraine to meet their arising needs. Another type of housing support consisted of programmes provided by international or non-governmental organizations, including the AirBnB programme run by IOM; IFRC's individual housing programme; or IOM's collective accommodation centre Strojár in Košice, and others.

For the purposes of this report, all of the above-mentioned types of accommodations are considered and will be referred to as "subsidised accommodation". Furthermore, "collective housing" in this report refers to all accommodation sites where at least two households or eight individuals with TP status are provided with accommodation, regardless of the original purpose of these facilities (hotel, pension, touristic or student dormitory, etc.).

KEY FINDINGS IN 2023

DEMOGRAPHICS



2,600

Ukrainian respondents



78%



22%

HOUSEHOLDS



16%
at least one infant
(0-4 years old)



45%
at least one child
(5-17 years old)



31%
at least one elderly person
(60+ years old)

More than one answer possible

SUPPORT REQUIRED



14%
in need of support
with accommodation



18%
in need of support
with household goods

More than one answer possible

ACCOMMODATION



67%
individual housing



33%
collective housing

CHANGING ACCOMMODATION

50%
have changed accommodation
at least once while in Slovakia



FINDING ACCOMMODATION

40% individually

36% help of friends/family

15% non-governmental organizations

7% government/municipality

Remaining share through job (1%) or other channels (1%)

CHALLENGES



Overcrowdedness (42%)



Stress (15%)



Lack of privacy (10%)

More than one answer possible

EXPENSES

77%
covered by state subsidies or
other coverage programmes

23%
cover expenses related to housing

ASSISTANCE

71%
have received
accommodation support



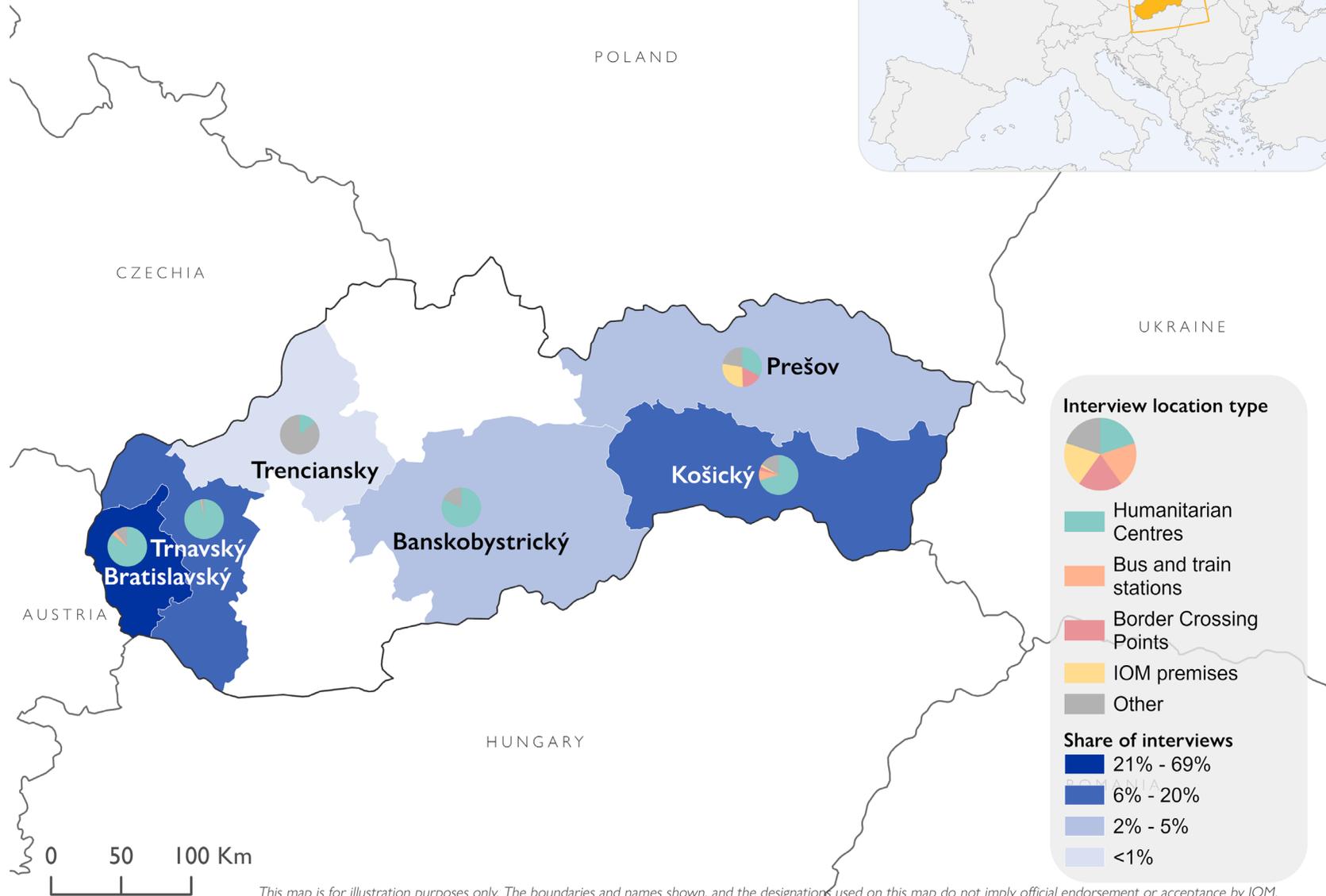
Ranking as the 3rd most frequently
received form of assistance

More than one answer possible

OVERVIEW: NUMBER OF SURVEYS AND LOCATIONS OF DATA COLLECTION IN SLOVAKIA IN 2023

Surveys: 2,600
Provinces: 6

Men - 22%
Women - 78%



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.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

DTM collected data on the Needs, Intentions, and Integration Challenges of Ukrainian refugees in Slovakia, interviewing a total of 2,600 refugees between January and December 2023.

This report elaborates on the profile of Ukrainian refugees in terms of their housing conditions, highlighting trends related to their needs and intentions related to accommodation and

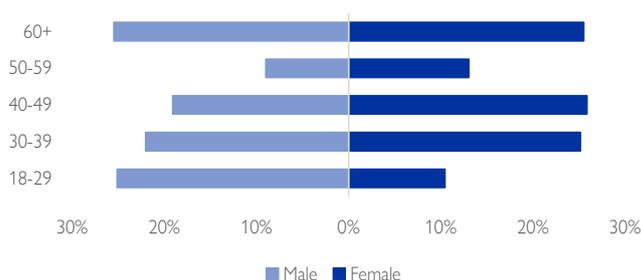
available housing options, along with the key challenges they may encounter while in Slovakia.

Most surveys were carried out in Bratislava (69%) and Košice (20%), with the remaining 11 per cent conducted across four other towns in Slovakia: Trnava (6%), Prešov (3%), Banská Bystrica (2%), and Trenčín (<1%).

AGE AND GENDER

Of the total number of respondents surveyed (n=2,600), women account for 78 per cent, while men represent 22 per cent of the sample. The majority of women fall within the 40-49 age group (26%) and the 60+ age group (26%). Conversely, most men are above 60 years old (25%) or fall within the 18-29 age group (25%).

Figure 1. Respondents by age and gender (%) n=2,600

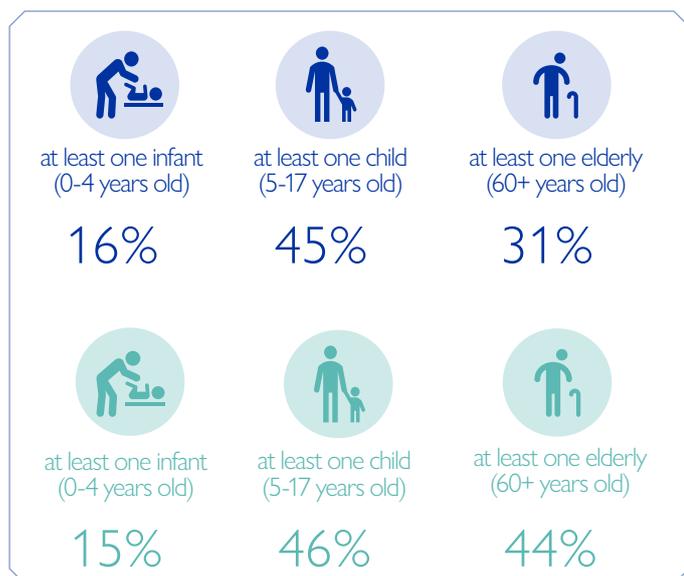


HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Among all respondents (n=2,600), 16 per cent stays with at least one infant aged 0-4 years old, and nearly half of the households live with at least one child aged 5-17 years old (45%). In addition, 31 per cent of the households live with at least one elderly person above the age of 60. The average household size among respondents in 2023 is two individuals per household.



Figure 2. Household composition of all respondents (%) n=2,600; and composition of households with specific needs (%) n=1,371 (below)



Ukrainian couple originally from Kyiv residing in Slovakia
© IOM 2023

ACCOMMODATION TYPES

More than two-thirds of the respondents (67%) live in individual housing, while 33 per cent stay in collective housing options. For the purpose of this study, individual housing refers to apartments

or parts of houses provided by locals or friends, and collective housing refers to hotels, hostels and dormitories, where at least two households or eight individuals stay.



INDIVIDUAL HOUSING

Among the different types of individual housing options, the majority stay in apartments (72%),¹ followed by those staying in apartments rented on the open market or from friends or family, that they pay themselves (28%). The remaining less than 1 per cent own their own apartments or houses. Women were found to be more likely to stay in subsidised apartments (78%) compared to men (50%). Conversely, men were found to stay in rented apartments more frequently (48%) than their female counterparts (22%). Among age groups, the 30-39 age group stays in individual housing options the most frequently (73%), while the 50-59 age group lives in this type of accommodation the least frequently (61%).

COLLECTIVE HOUSING

On the other hand, among those staying in collective housing options, most stay in hotels (61%) or in collective shelters (38%).² The remaining 1 per cent of respondents in this category stay in dormitories and hostels covered by state subsidies (<1%)² or in an accommodation provided by their employers (<1%). Among women and men, no major discrepancies have been recorded. Staying in a hotel is reported by 60 per cent of women and 66 per cent of men, while staying in a collective shelter is mentioned by 39 per cent of women and 32 per cent of men. Among age groups, the 30-39 age group stays in collective accommodation options the least frequently (27%), while the 50-59 age group relies on this type of housing the most (39%).

Figure 3. Individual housing types (%) n=1,716

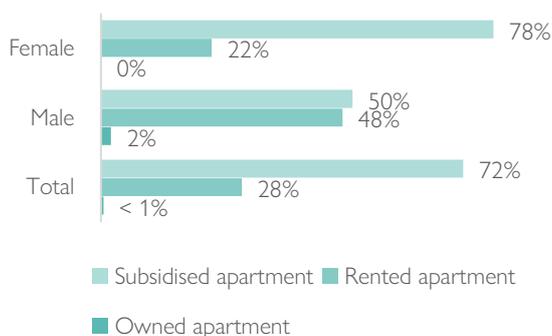
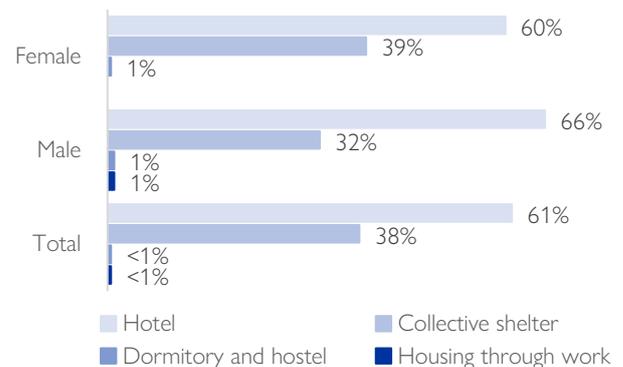


Figure 4. Collective housing types (%) n=810



TYPES OF ACCOMMODATION BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Among respondents who are not part of the labour force (n=838), more than half of the respondents stay in apartments that they do not pay for (59%). Twenty-seven per cent stay in collective shelters or hotels covered by state subsidies, while a smaller percentage stay in apartments or hotels that they pay for themselves (14%). Within the active population, the majority of unemployed respondents who are seeking employment opportunities stay in apartments covered by subsidies (48%), while an

additional 33 per cent stay in collective shelters. A smaller share stay in apartments for rent or hotels that they pay for themselves (19%). Among those who are employed, the majority live in private apartments (43%) covered by state subsidies, followed by those who stay in rented apartments or hotels that they pay for themselves (34%). The smallest share of employed respondents stay in collective shelters, dormitories or hotels (23%) under the state subsidies mechanism.

¹ Financial scheme of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, designed to reimburse the expenses incurred by owners of private apartments and collective centres open for interim (non-commercial) accommodation purposes.

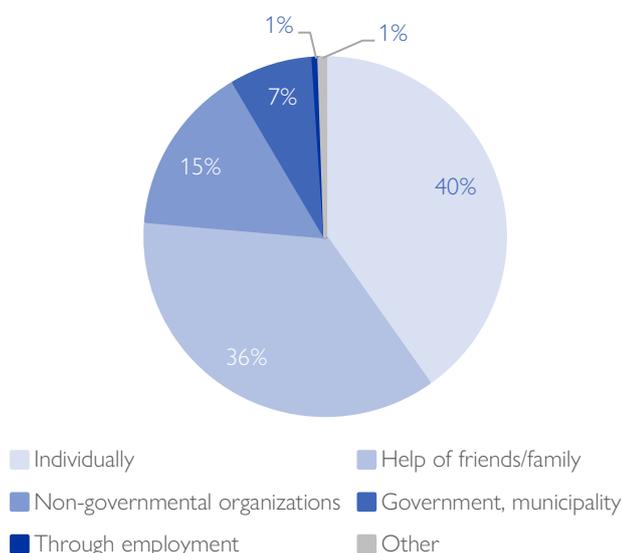
² Supported by the financial scheme of the Ministry of Transport of the Slovak Republic or by the Order of the Crises Management for Rescue Works.

TRENDS AND MOVING INTENTIONS

FINDING ACCOMMODATION

Upon examining the methods of finding accommodation (n=1,148), 40 per cent of respondents indicated finding accommodation by themselves, while 36 per cent received support in securing accommodation from family or friends. Additionally, 15 per cent received support from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and 7 per cent credited government support. The remaining 2 per cent was either provided accommodation by their employers (1%) or mentioned other channels for securing accommodation in Slovakia (1%).

Figure 5. Finding accommodation (%) n=1,148



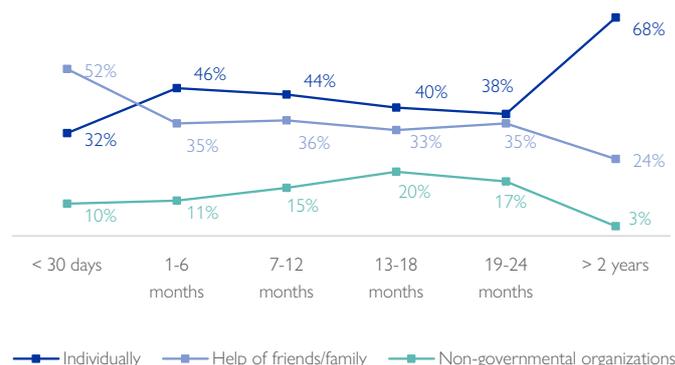
MOVING BETWEEN ACCOMMODATION TYPES

Half of the respondents are currently staying in the same housing option where they originally moved in, with the remaining 50 per cent indicating that they have already changed accommodation at least once during their displacement. Remarkably, a larger share among single-headed households reported changing accommodation (60%) than households without children (42%).

Among those who have already moved apartments during their displacement at least once (n=313), the study revealed that among those who stayed in apartments covered by state subsidies (40%), most either stayed in other subsidised apartments or moved to subsidised collective sites or to apartments for rent. Among those having previously stayed in rented apartments (15%), the majority moved into subsidised apartments or apartments for rent. In addition, among respondents who have previously stayed in subsidised collective sites, the largest proportion moved to subsidised apartments or stayed in subsidised collective sites.

Upon comparison with the duration of displacement, it becomes apparent that there is a general decline in the share of respondents relying on the support of their families and friends, decreasing from 52 per cent among those having stayed less than a month in Slovakia, to 33 per cent among those who have spent between one and a half to two years in the country. On the contrary, the percentage of respondents securing accommodation by themselves shows an upward trend, increasing from 32 per cent among those with a duration of less than a month in Slovakia to 40 per cent among those with a duration of stay of more than a year, reaching 68 per cent in the case of respondents who have spent over two years in the country. Remarkably, relying on support from NGOs demonstrated a relatively consistent trend, fluctuating between 10 and 20 per cent receiving shelter support from NGOs among respondents, only declining to 3 per cent among those who have stayed over two years in Slovakia.

Figure 6. Finding accommodation over time (%) n=1,148





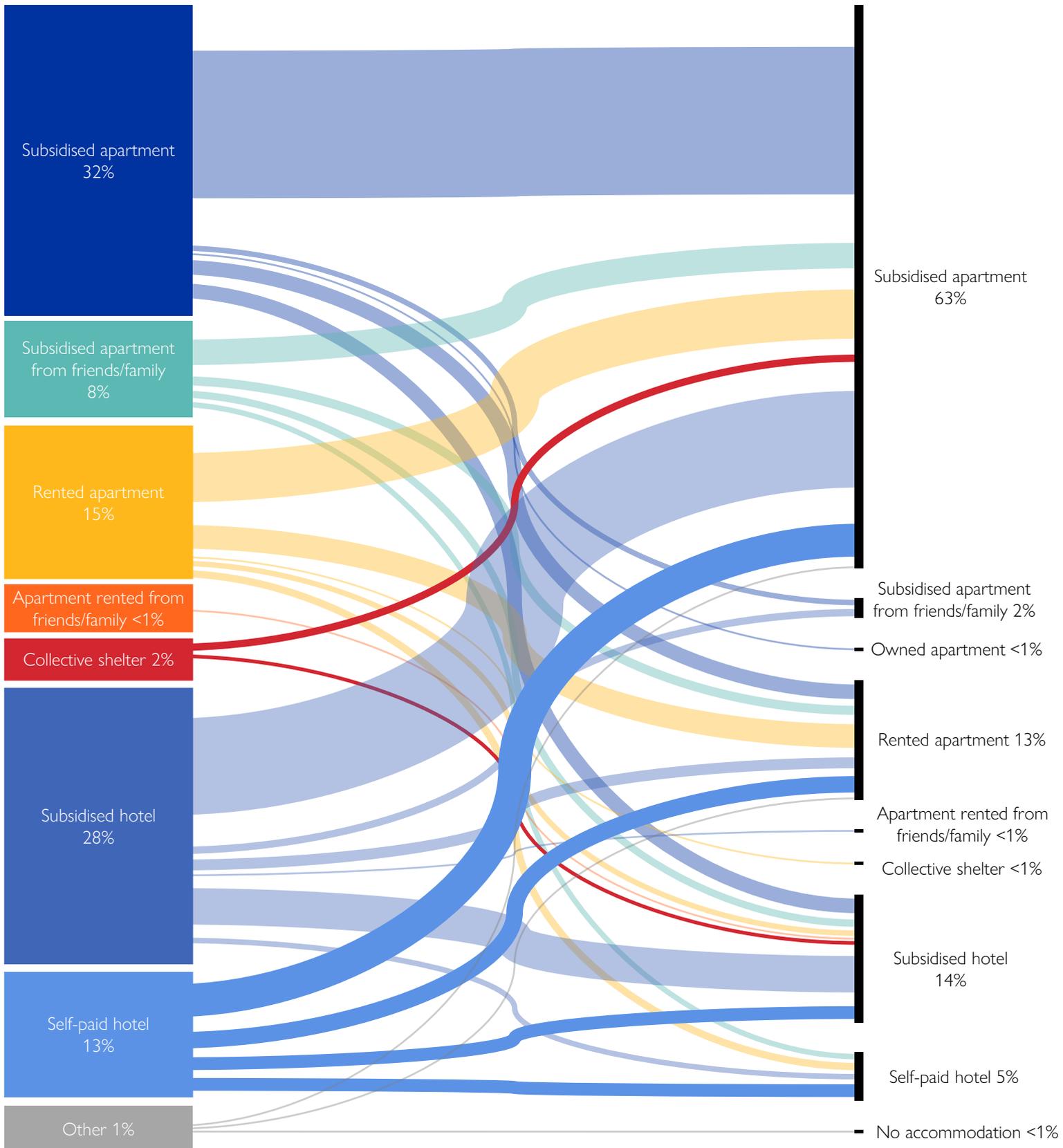
50%

of respondents have changed accommodation at least once during their displacement in Slovakia

INTENDED STAY IN ACCOMMODATION

When respondents were asked about their intended duration of stay in their respective accommodations, a larger share expressed the intention of staying until it is possible (37%), followed by those who would stay until it is covered by state subsidies (21%), or until they return to Ukraine (20%). Another 21 per cent of respondents were uncertain about their intentions, while 1 per cent based their intention on whether they could find a job to cover their housing-related expenses.

Figure 7. Moving between accommodation types in Slovakia (%) n=313



EXPENSES RELATED TO HOUSING

From the total sample (n=2,600) surveyed in 2023, 77 per cent of respondents do not pay for their accommodation as it is covered by the mechanism of state subsidies for accommodation of Ukrainian refugees,³ whereas 23 per cent cover their accommodation expenses by themselves.

For this study, subsidised accommodation refers to apartments offered by organizations and entities providing shelter assistance, apartments provided by friends or families, collective sites and housing provided through employment.



Over time, the share of respondents who take care of the housing-related expenses themselves remained relatively low irrespective of their duration of stay in Slovakia. Twenty-six per cent of those who have spent less than 30 days in the country pay for their accommodation, while 21 per cent and 18 per

cent of respondents cover these expenses among those who have spent between one and one and half a year or between one and a half a year to two years in the country. A substantial increase was recorded only among those who stayed for over two years in the country (83%).

HOUSING EXPENDITURES

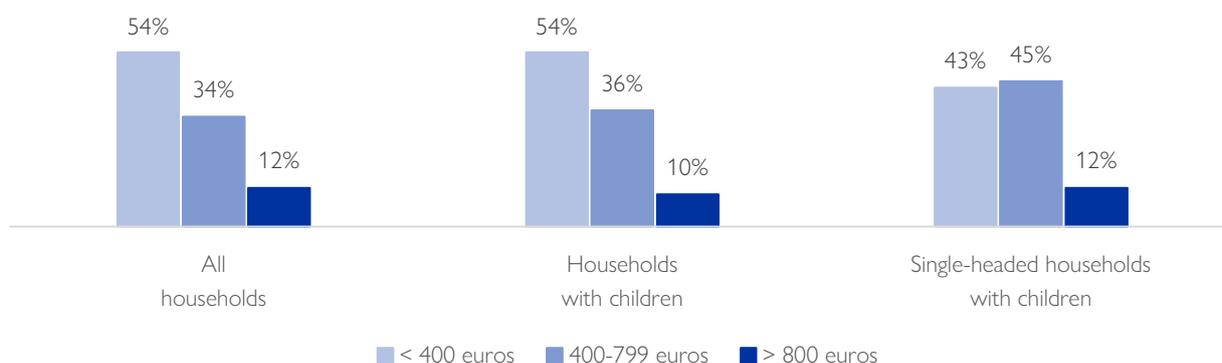
Upon examination of household expenditure on accommodation (rent, mortgage, etc.) in the last 30 days before the interview (n=276), it is revealed that the majority of respondents spent no more than 400 euros on accommodation (54%), while one-third (34%) allocated between 400 and 799 euros to housing, with the remaining 12 per cent spending 800 euros or more. Given the amount spent on household bills (electricity, water, gas, exclusive of rent) in the last 30 days before the interview, the study found that the majority (94%) of respondents (n=914) did not spend on household bills at all, followed by 5 per cent who spent between 1-200 euros with the remaining one per cent spending over 200 euros on household bills per month.

EXPENDITURES OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN

Among households with children (n=132), the same share spends less than 400 euros on accommodation (54%), while a higher share (36%) spend between 400 and 799 euros on housing compared to all households with or without children. A lesser share (10%) spend more than 800 euros on expenses related to housing in a month.

Single-headed households (n=42) were found to spend more on accommodation. Among them, 43 per cent spend less than 400 euros, while 45 per cent spend between 400 and 799 euros on accommodation. In addition, 12 per cent spend over 800 euros on housing expenses.

Figure 8. Housing expenditures by household type (%) n=276



³ Financial scheme of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, designed to reimburse the expenses incurred by owners of private apartments and collective centres open for interim (non-commercial) accommodation purposes, or supported by the financial scheme of the Ministry of Transport of the Slovak Republic or by the Order of the Crises Management for Rescue Works.

NEEDS, ASSISTANCE RECEIVED, AND CHALLENGES

CHALLENGES WITH ACCOMMODATION

The most frequently mentioned challenge faced by respondents staying in individual housing (n=108) is related to the fact that apartments are overcrowded (41%). Among them, the average group size was 3.2 individuals, higher than the total sample's average household size of two individuals. This was followed by challenges linked to the condition and quality of the apartments, namely bed bugs (11%) and mould (10%). A lesser share of respondents mentioned stress (9%), lack of privacy (8%), or challenges related to the facilities in the apartments, such as problems with heating (8%), lack of kitchen facilities (6%), or problem with accessibility for people with disabilities (4%) and the lack of dedicated safe spaces for women and girls (4%).

Among respondents staying in collective housing (n=58), the biggest challenge remained the overcrowdedness of accommodation (45%). This was followed by stress (28%), and problems linked to lack of facilities, such as the lack of a kitchen (17%). In addition, while lack of privacy was mentioned by 14 per cent, the challenge of being isolated was also mentioned by 10 per cent of respondents.

PRIORITY NEEDS

The need for accommodation (14%) did not emerge as one of the top priority needs⁴ among respondents (n=2,600), mentioned by 13 per cent of respondents for long-term accommodation and 1 per cent for short-term housing. In addition, the need for household goods was mentioned by 18 per cent of respondents (20% of women and 9% of men).

Figure 9. Need for housing support over time n=2,600



INFORMATION NEEDS

Upon examining the need for additional information on available assistance, long-term accommodation ranks among the most frequently cited information needs (16%)⁵ among respondents



ASSISTANCE

Nearly two-thirds of respondents (71%) benefitted from accommodation support during their stay in Slovakia (n=2,008), ranking as the third most frequently received form of assistance.⁶

Among those who have received shelter support (n=735), most respondents received support from UN agencies (84%), government or municipality (82%), non-governmental organizations (76%), local volunteers (61%), or religious organizations (55%).



Over time, there is a general decline among respondents mentioning the need for short- or long-term accommodation. Those who have stayed less than 30 days in Slovakia mention the need for shelter support most frequently (34%). Those who have stayed between one to six months and half a year to one year, cite the need for support less frequently (13%). Respondents who have spent more than a year in the country need of shelter support to a lesser extent (8%), while among those having stayed for over two years in Slovakia, only 1 per cent is in need of support with accommodation.



I am uncertain about how long I will be allowed to stay in my accommodation for. If I have to move out, I would need assistance with finding a new home.



44-year-old woman originally from Dnipro region, residing in Kosice in Slovakia.

(n=352). In addition, information needs related to support with household goods and short-term accommodation are highlighted by 5 per cent and 2 per cent of respondents, respectively.

⁴ The top priority needs among respondents (n=2,600) include healthcare services (51%), financial support (48%), medication (42%), language courses (30%), and employment support (23%).

⁵ Other top information needs include healthcare services (54%), medication (24%), employment opportunities (24%), and financial support (18%).

⁶ The most frequently received forms of assistance include food assistance (85%), personal hygiene items (77%), accommodation (71%), clothes (64%), and financial support (61%).

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 people 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 17 trained enumerators, with adult refugees from Ukraine (18+ years-old). Surveys were collected at selected locations (information centres, humanitarian aid distribution points, accommodation centres, transit points, BCPs and IOM premises) in six regions of Slovakia. The survey is anonymous and voluntary, administered after obtaining consent from the respondent. Respondents can stop the survey at any time. In Slovakia, the questionnaire is available in Ukrainian and Russian, and the preferred language is determined by the interviewee. Only fully completed surveys are taken into account 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 refugees residing or transiting through Slovakia, including their displacement patterns, intentions and needs.

Location and execution

Face-to-face surveys were conducted by 17 trained enumerators stationed at selected locations in 6 regions of Slovakia. Surveys are conducted in Ukrainian and Russian with the help of a mobile application.

Target population

The analysis focuses on the access to housing for Ukrainian refugees in Slovakia.

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 a wide range of locations. 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 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>