

# REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

## Crossing to Ukraine: Surveys with Refugees on Destinations, Length of Stay & Assistance



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Country Report & Data Analysis

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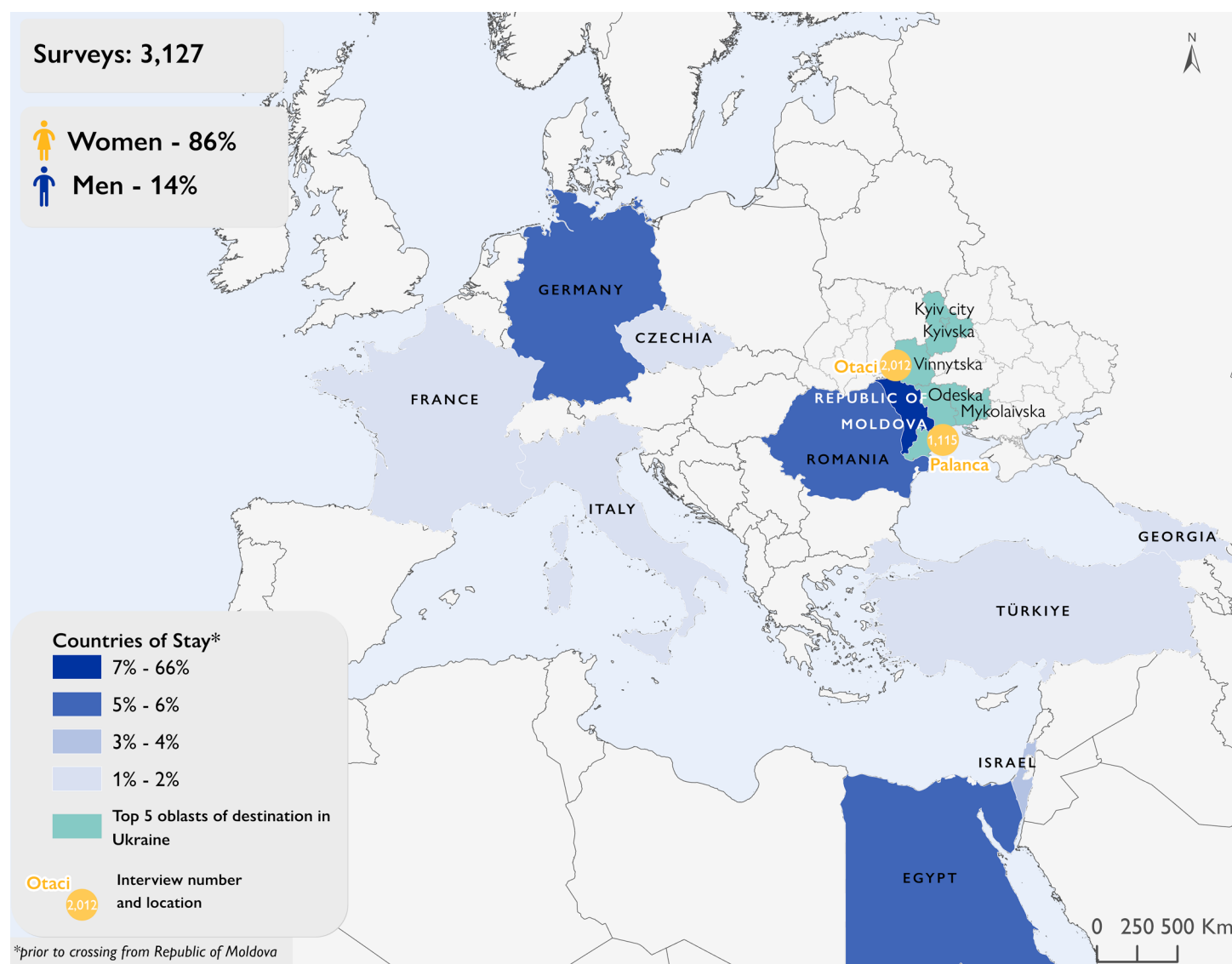
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## KEY FINDINGS

- Top 3 countries of stay abroad: Romania (25%), Germany (25%), France (9%).
  - Transport to Ukraine: car (48%), bus (26%), foot (21%).
  - Top oblasts of origin: Odeska (28%), Kyivska (18%), Vinnytska (13%).
  - Intended destinations: going to same oblast of origin (94%), to a different oblast (6%) - Vinnytska, Odeska & Kyiv city.
  - Intentions upon crossing back: long-term stay (59%), short-term visit (36%).
  - Top needs upon crossing back:\* financial support (23%), medicines and health services (16%), support to return home (10%), documentation (7%).
  - Top areas of assistance received:\* financial support (74%), food (69%), NFI/hygiene items (56%), clothes/shoes (29%), vouchers (20%)
- \* more than one answer possible

Map 1: Republic of Moldova, surveys deployed, countries of stay & oblasts of destination in Ukraine



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## I. Socio-Demographic Profile

### Gender and age

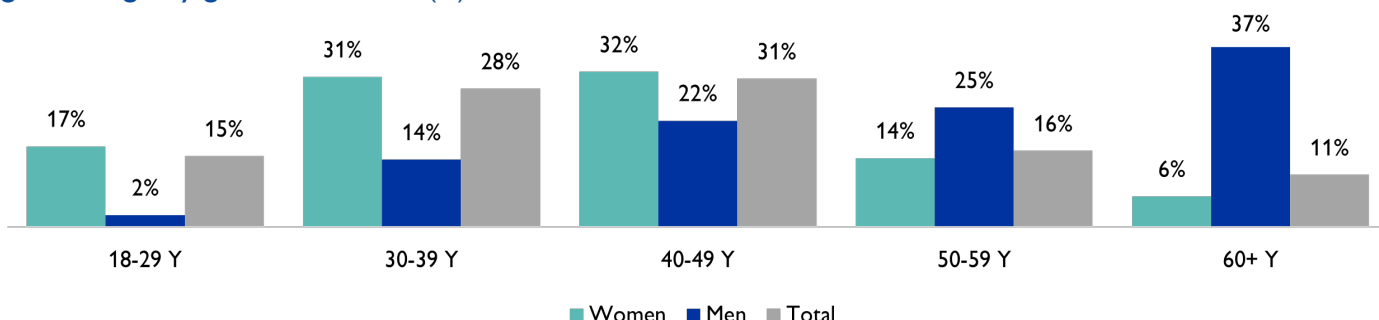
Out of the 3,127 survey respondents interviewed prior to crossing back to Ukraine, 14 per cent were men, and 86 per cent were women. The average age for the total sample was 43 years.

When looking at the data disaggregated by gender, on average, men were slightly older than their female counterparts (53 years on average age for men, versus 41 years on average age for women).

Most respondents were aged between 40 and 49 years old (31%). The largest age group for women was of those aged between 40 and 49 years old (32%) followed by those aged between 30 and 39 (31%).

Among men, the greatest age group was of those 60 years and more (37%), followed by those aged between 50 and 59 years (25%).

Figure 1: Age, by gender and total (%)

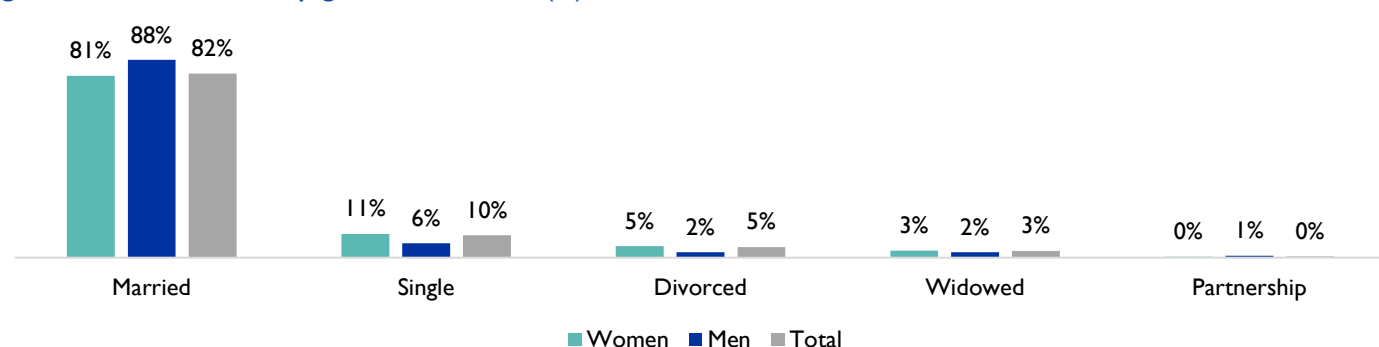


### Marital status

Out of those who responded to this question (912 individuals), the majority of respondents (82%) were married. This was followed by 10 per cent of respondents who were single, five per cent who were divorced and three per cent who were widowed. Less than one per cent reported being in a partnership. The share of married persons was higher among men

than among women (88% versus 81%), while women were slightly more likely to be single than men in the sample (11% versus 6%). Women were twice as likely than men to be divorced (5% versus 2%). The share of those widowed or in a partnership was equally low for women and men (3% versus 2% and 0% versus 1%, respectively).

Figure 2: Marital status, by gender and total (%)



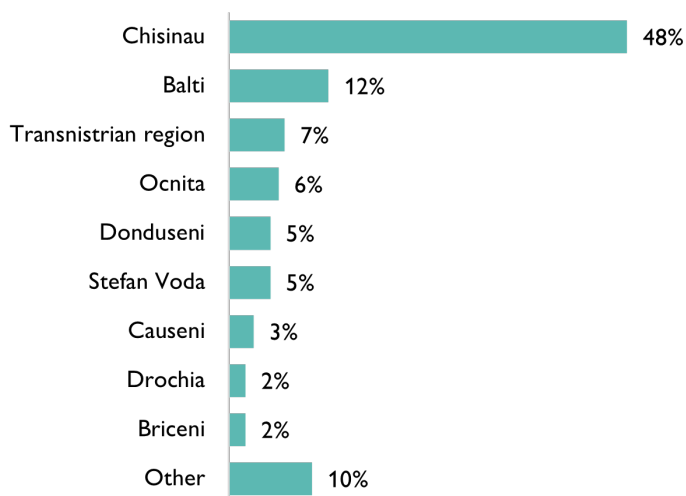
## 2. Time Outside Ukraine

### Countries of stay while abroad

Almost 65 per cent have been staying in the Republic of Moldova after leaving Ukraine, 21 per cent were staying in other European countries, and the remaining 14 per cent have been staying elsewhere.

Half of those who have been staying in the Republic of Moldova were residing in Chisinau (48%). Smaller shares of respondents reported staying in Balti (12%), Transnistrian region (7%), Ocnita (6%), Donduseni and Stefan Voda (5% each), and others (17%).

Figure 3: Main areas of residence in the Republic of Moldova since fleeing Ukraine (%), N=2,033



### Average time since initial displacement

Approximate duration of time spent outside Ukraine can be assessed by looking at the difference between respondents' initial date of displacement from Ukraine, and the date of interview. Out of those who answered to this question (N=921), most were displaced between January and March 2022 (33%). This means that by the time the interviews were conducted (January - March 2023), they had spent about one year outside Ukraine. Between April 2022 and March 2023, displacement fluctuated from two to eight per cent.

Among those who have been staying in Europe, higher shares reported staying in Romania and Germany (25% each), France (9%), Italy and Bulgaria (6% each). Smaller shares are reported to have stayed in 27 other European countries. The majority of those who have been staying in other countries than Europe or the Republic of Moldova (almost 14% of respondents) were living mainly in Egypt (38%), Israel (17%), Türkiye and Georgia (13% each), Armenia (4%).

Figure 4: Countries of stay (%), N=643

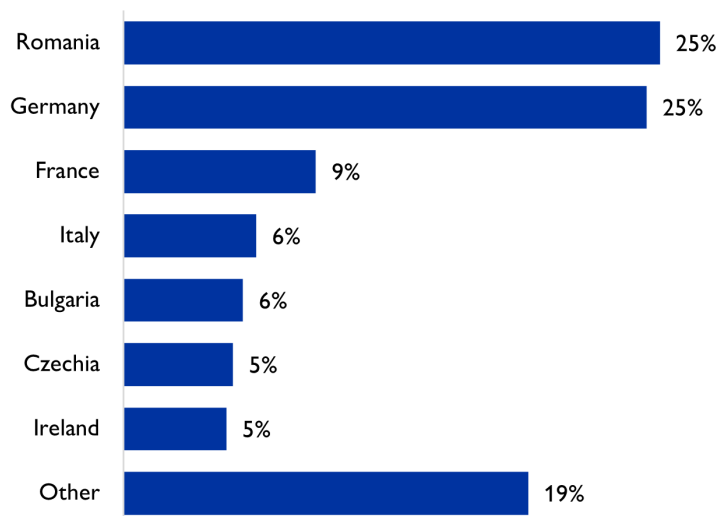


Table 1: Approximate time in displacement until the date of interview (%), N=643

Date since initial displacement	Approximate time spent until date of interview	% of respondents
Before 2022	1-2 years	0%
Jan-Mar 2022	12-14 months	33%
Apr-Jun 2022	10-11 months	19%
Jul-Sept 2022	6-9 months	18%
Oct-Dec 2022	3-5 months	22%
Jan-23	1-2 months	3%
Feb-23	around one month or less	2%
Mar-23	less than a month	3%

### Number of exits/entries from and to Ukraine

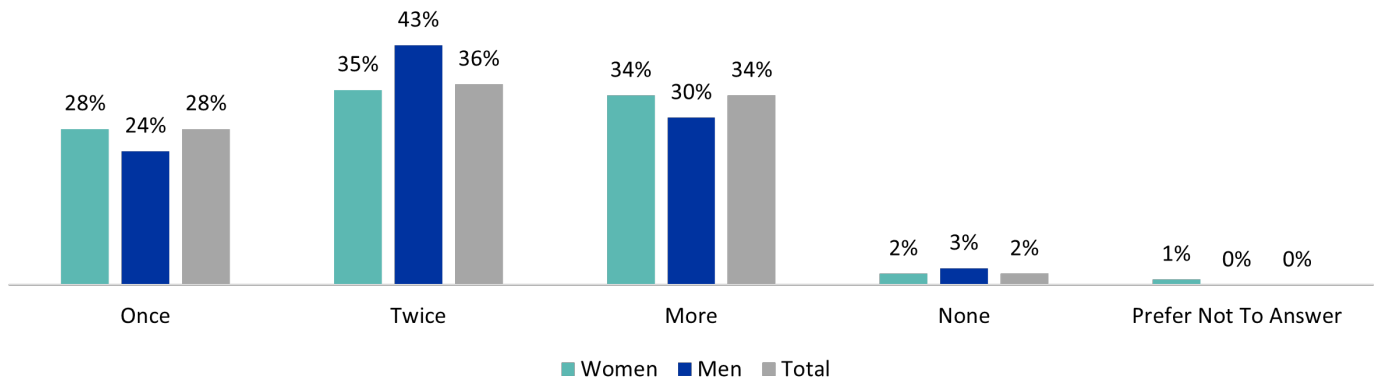
Out of the total number of interviewees (N=3,127), 36 per cent had entered/exited Ukraine twice since February 24 2022. Twenty-eight per cent had entered/exited once, while 34 per cent had done so more than twice. Only one per cent of respondents had not re-entered Ukraine before the time of survey.

When looking at the data disaggregated by gender, male respondents were more likely than female respondents

to have entered/exited Ukraine twice (43% versus 35%). Moreover, women were more likely than men to have entered/exited Ukraine once at the time of assessment (28% versus 24%).

On the contrary women and men were nearly as likely to have entered/exited Ukraine more than twice at the time the assessment was conducted (34% for women, and 30% for men).

Figure 5: Number of entries/exits between 24 February 2022 and 31 March 2023, by gender and total (%)



### Transport

Half of respondents were travelling to Ukraine by car (48%). This was followed by 26 per cent of respondents who were going back by bus and 21 per cent by foot. The remaining five per cent were going by minibus of by taxi (less than 1% or 2 respondents).

Men were more likely to travel by car (70% versus 44% for women), while women were more likely to go by bus or by foot (28% versus 16% and 23% versus 10%).

Figure 6: Means of transportation (%), N=3,127

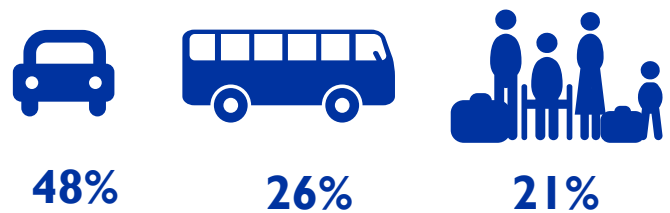
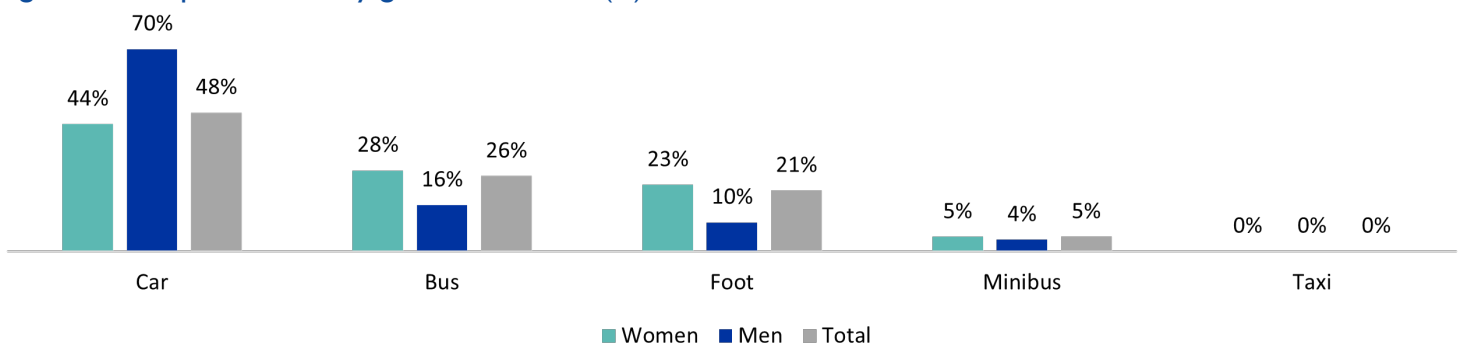


Figure 7: Transport means, by gender and total (%)



### 3. Oblast (region) of Origin and Destination

#### Origin or habitual residence

The majority (81%) of respondents came from six Oblast in Ukraine; these were: Odeska (28%), Kyivska oblast (18%), Vinnytska (13%), the city of Kyiv (11%),

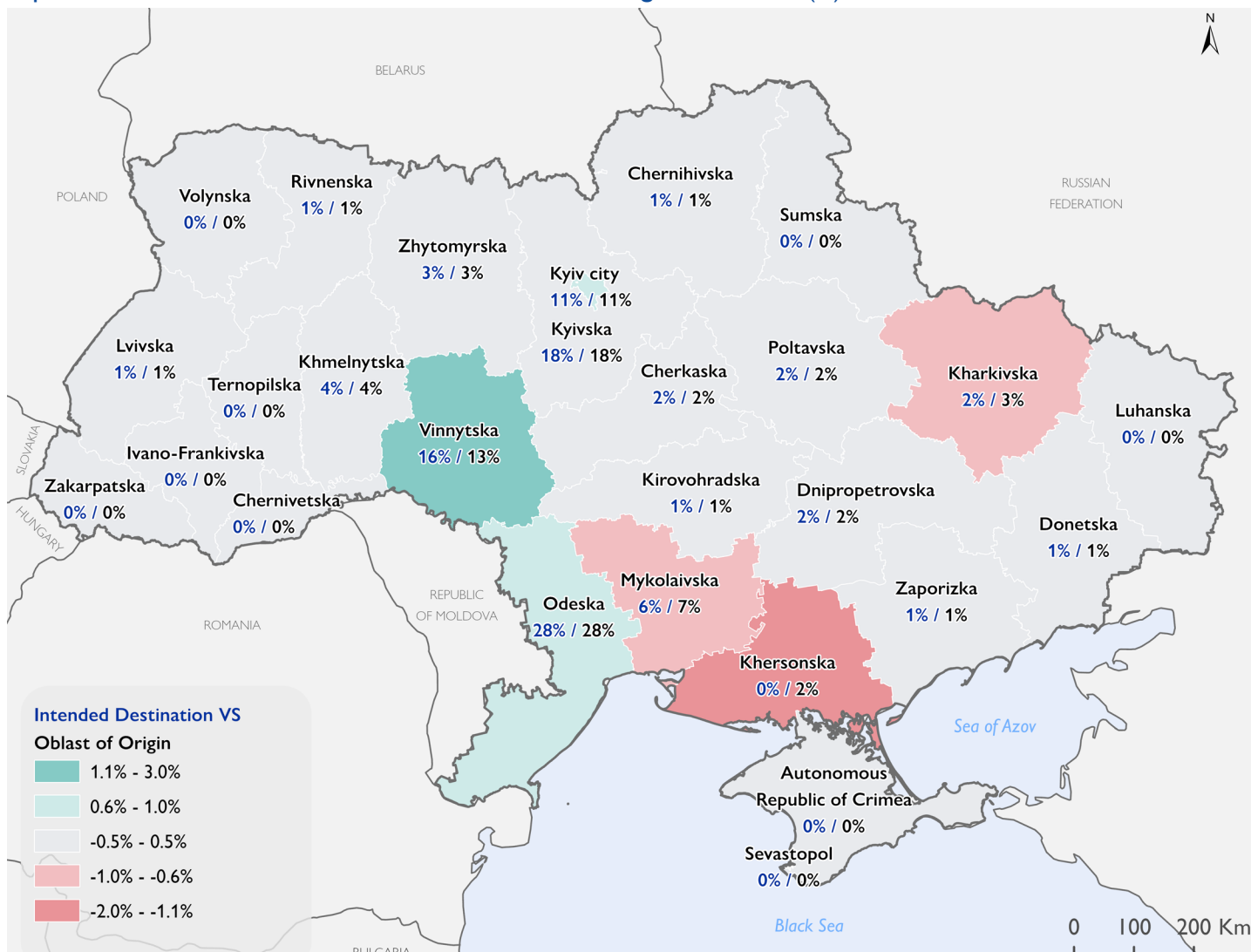
Mykolaivska (7%), Khmelnytsky (4%). The remaining respondents (19%) came from other 19 oblasts in Ukraine.

#### Intended destination

Out of the total number of interviewees, 94 per cent were planning to return to the same oblast of origin while another 192 individuals aimed to reach a different one. Out of those returning to a different oblast, half were planning to go to Vinnytska (89 respondents), 31

person to Odeska and other 31 person to Kyiv city, 28 to Kyivska oblast. Smaller shares reported going to Cherkaska, Khmelnytska, Kirovohradska, Lvivska, Poltavska, Zhytomyrska (2 person to each destination) and one individual reported going to Rivnenska.

Map 2: Intended oblast of destination versus oblast of origin in Ukraine (%)



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## 4. Intentions and Reasons to Cross Back to Ukraine

When asked about their intentions, 59 per cent of respondents reported that they intend to stay in Ukraine, 36 per cent were travelling for a short visit, around five per cent were unsure and one per cent preferred not to answer.

The share of respondents who intend to stay in Ukraine was higher among those who were residing in the Republic of Moldova and other destinations (60% and 68%) than of those who declared to be travelling from Europe (49%). Men were slightly more likely to stay in Ukraine than women (65% versus 58%).

Figure 8: Duration of stay, by gender and total (%)

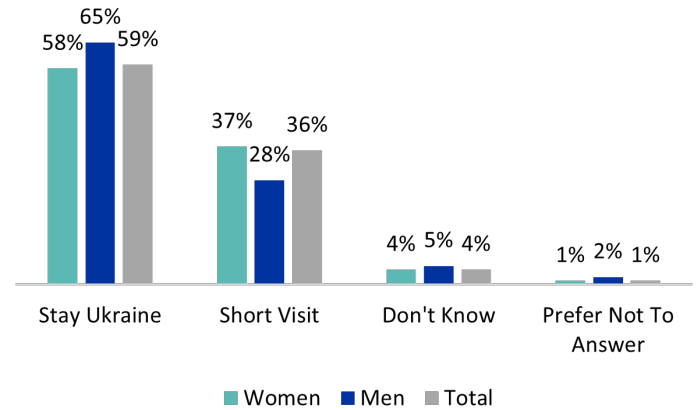
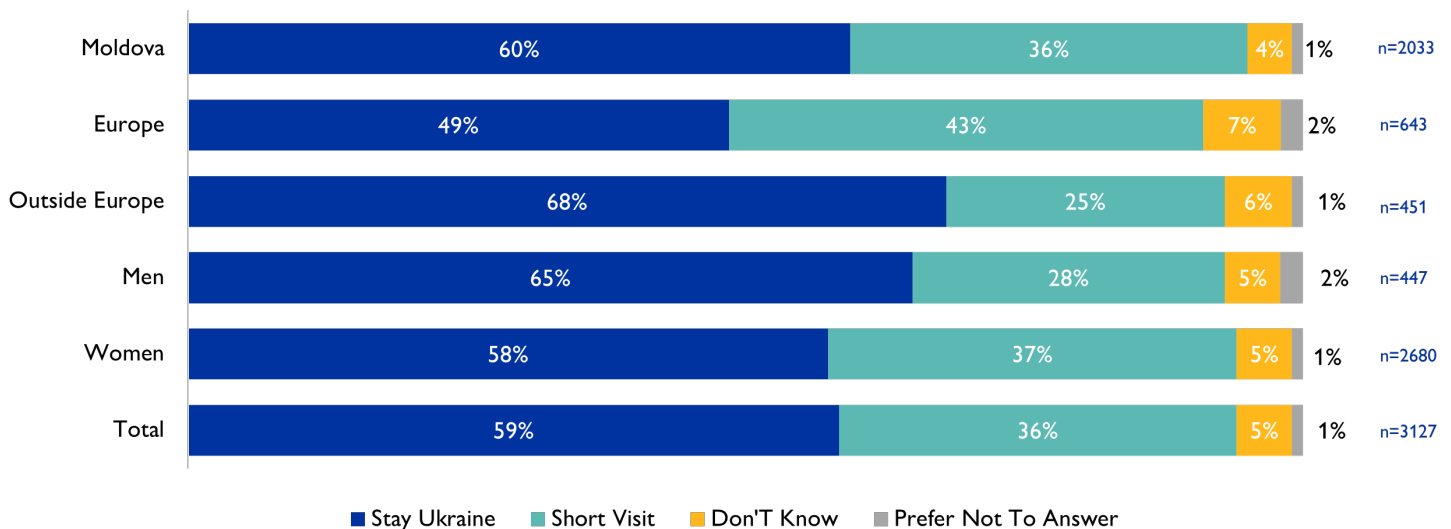


Figure 9: Distribution of respondents by intended duration to stay by gender and main country of residence outside of Ukraine (Europe, Republic of Moldova, other) (%)



### Long-term stay

Fifty-nine per cent of the interviewees intended on staying in Ukraine upon return. Out of this share of respondents (1,834 individuals), 74 per cent indicated that they were returning and staying in Ukraine in order to reunite with family. Nine per cent was returning because they missed home and eight per cent because they lacked resources. Other key reasons for returning were: work in essential services (5%), improved situation in place of origin (5%), because

they have care responsibilities (5%), take family members to safety (2%), defend Ukraine (1%), and lack of employment (1%). Women were more likely than men to have selected reunite with family or miss home as a main reason for returning to Ukraine (78% versus 54% and 10% versus 3%). On the contrary men were more likely than women to aim to move back to Ukraine because they work in essential services (10% versus 5%). Only men indicated that they were

**Table 2.**

Main reasons for staying in Ukraine, by gender and total (%) (N=1,834) (more than one answer)

Listed Reasons	Women (%)	Men (%)	Total (%)
Reunite with family	78%	54%	74%
Miss home	10%	3%	9%
Lack of resources	8%	9%	8%
Work in essential services	5%	10%	5%
Improved situation in place of origine	6%	2%	5%
Care responsibilities	5%	5%	5%
Take family members to safety	2%	6%	2%
Defend Ukraine	0%	8%	1%
Lack of employment	1%	1%	1%

### Short-term visit

Thirty-six per cent of the refugees from Ukraine interviewed, were planning to stay in Ukraine for a short visit only. Out of this sample (1,115 individuals), 49 per cent stated that their main reason to go to Ukraine for a limited duration was to meet with family. Another 30 per cent were returning to collect belongings left in Ukraine, and 11 per cent to obtain or renew documents.

This was followed by check property (7%), health care

issues (7%), help family (6%), bringing supplies (4%), and helping family to leave (3%). Women were almost twice as likely than men to go back to Ukraine to meet family (51% versus 31%). They were also more likely to return to collect belongings (31% for women versus 28% for men). On the other hand men were slightly more likely than women to go back to obtain or renew documents (13% versus 11%) or to check property (11% versus 6%).

**Table 3.**

Main reasons for staying in Ukraine for a short-term period, by gender and total (%) (N=1,115) (more than one answer)

Listed Reasons	Women (%)	Men (%)	Total (%)
Meet family	51%	31%	49%
Collect belongings	31%	28%	30%
Obtain/renew documents	11%	13%	11%
Check property	6%	11%	7%
Health care	7%	7%	7%
Help family	6%	11%	6%
Bring supplies	4%	10%	4%
Help family leave	4%	2%	3%
Health issues	2%	0%	1%

## 5. Needs, Assistance Received, and Challenges

### Immediate needs upon crossing back

The most immediate need upon return at the moment of interview was financial support for 23 per cent of respondents. This was followed by support with medicines and health services (16%), support to return home (10%), documentation, consular and legal services (7%), and non-food items (NFIs) or hygiene items (6%). Other imminent needs reported were food supply (4%), employment (3%), transportation support (2%), and other (3%).

To a lesser extent, one per cent of respondents indicated psychological counseling, one per cent communication and information and other one per cent accommodation. About 60 per cent reported having no needs upon return.

### Assistance received in the Republic of Moldova

Out of 912 respondents who answered to this question, half received assistance in the Republic of Moldova (54%). Seventy-four per cent received financial support, 69 per cent food supplies, and 56 per cent NFI and hygiene items. Other relevant areas where respondents received assistance while in the Republic of Moldova were clothes/shoes (29%), vouchers (20%), transportation support (14%), accommodation (8%), toys (2%), psychological council (1%). About one per cent preferred not to answer to this question. Both men and women reported financial support (87% and 72%), food supply (67% and 69%), NFI/hygiene items (35% and 58%), clothes and shoes (42% and 27%) as the top areas where they received assistance in the Republic of Moldova.

### Experiences of Discrimination

One per cent of respondents reported having experienced discrimination in the country of displacement (20 respondents). In contrast, 98 per cent had not no such experiences. The remaining one per cent did not know or preferred not to answer.

Figure 6: Needs upon crossing back (%) (more than one answer possible)

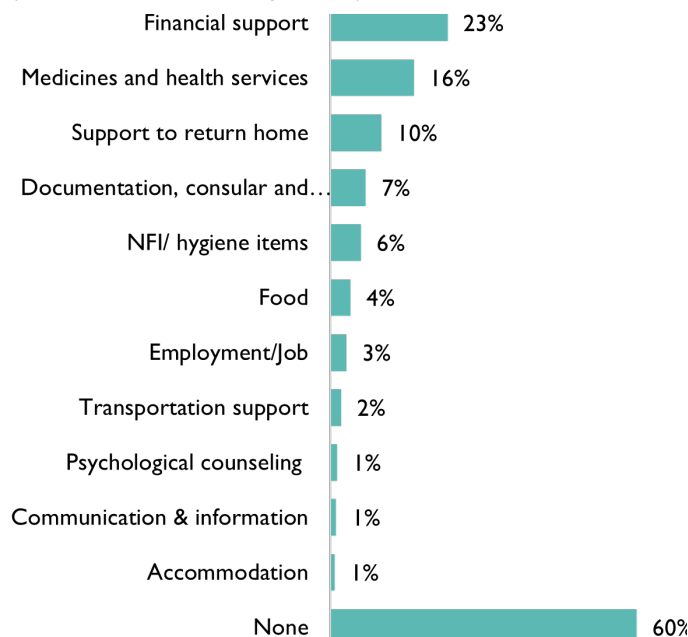


Table 4: Main areas of assistance received, by gender and total (more than one answer possible)

Listed Reasons	Women (%)	Men (%)	Total (%)
Financial Support	72%	87%	74%
Food	69%	67%	69%
NFI/hygiene items	58%	35%	56%
Clothes/shoes	27%	42%	29%
Voucher	20%	17%	20%
Transportation support	14%	15%	14%
Accommodation	7%	13%	8%
Toys	2%	0%	2%
Psychological counseling	1%	2%	1%
Prefer not to answer	0%	2%	1%

When looking at the data disaggregated by gender, female respondents were nearly twice as likely than men to have experienced discrimination (13 women versus seven men).

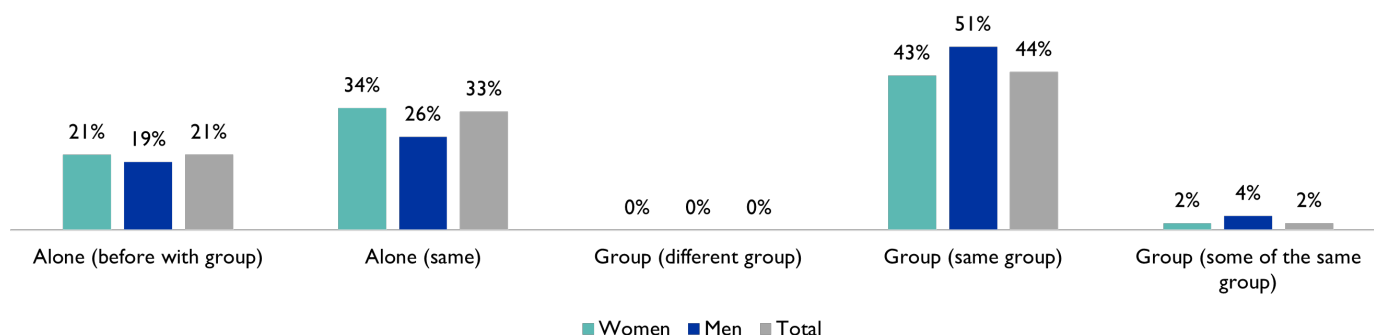
## 7. Group Composition

### Travel mode

Out of the 3,127 respondents, 44 per cent were crossing back in a group they had previously left with, 33 per cent were travelling alone, same when they exited Ukraine. Another 21 per cent were travelling alone, when they had departed with a group when leaving Ukraine. The remaining two per cent were either crossing back with a different group, or with

some of the group they had previously left with. Less than one per cent were travelling with a different group. Men were more likely to be travelling with the same group they left Ukraine (51%) than women (43%). While women were more likely to travel alone in and out of the Republic of Moldova (34% versus 26%).

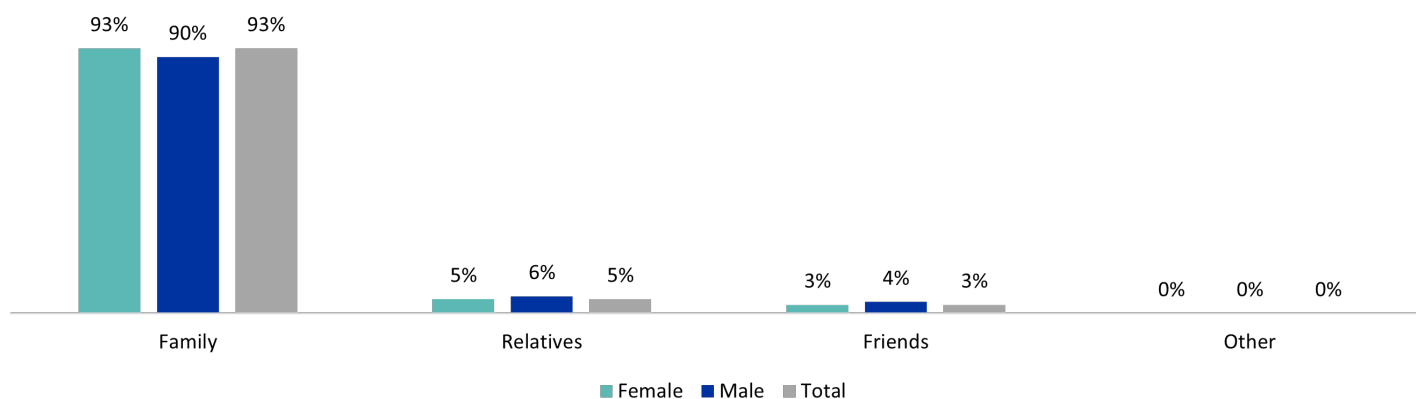
Figure 7: Travelling mode, by gender and total (%)  
(more than one answer possible)



Out of those travelling in a group (N=1,453), 93 per cent were travelling with family, five per cent with relatives, three per cent with friends, and less than one per cent with colleagues or other people. Moreover, 13 per cent were travelling with at least one elderly

person and fifty-three per cent were travelling with at least one child. Out of 770 of respondents who were travelling with at least one child, 31 per cent were travelling with a child 0-4 years old and 82 per cent with a child 5-17 years old.

Figure 8: Travelling groups, by gender and total (%) (N=1,453)  
(more than one answer possible)



## 8. Methodology

### Background

Since 24 February 2022, refugees from Ukraine and Third Country Nationals (TCNs) have been fleeing to neighbouring countries as a result of the war. As of May 2023, more than eight million refugees from Ukraine were recorded across Europe. At the same time, almost 13 million of border crossings of border crossings of Ukrainian and Third-Country refugees and migrants were reported from Ukraine into the neighbouring countries since February 2022.

IOM has deployed its Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) tools since mid-April 2022 to collect individual surveys in neighbouring countries with persons crossing into Ukraine, with the aim to improve the understanding of main profiles, displacement patterns, intentions and needs of those moving into Ukraine.

This report is based on surveys collected in the Republic of Moldova between 06 December 2022 and 31 March 2023 in two border crossing points, Otaci and Palanca. To improve the quality of the questionnaire, on February 16, 2023, additional questions related to the average time since initial displacement and to the assistance received while in the Republic of Moldova were included.

### Methodological framework

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.

This survey is part of IOM's DTM activities to monitor the profiles, displacement patterns and most immediate needs of the Ukrainian refugees and TCNs crossing back to Ukraine since 24 February 2022.

In the Republic of Moldova, surveys were conducted

in Ukrainian, Russian, and English by IOM's DTM trained teams of enumerators on a mobile application. The interviews are anonymous and carried out one-on-one with respondents, provided they consent to be interviewed after a brief introduction. Enumerators trained on ethics of data collection, information provision and protection principles, approached people crossing back to Ukraine, to verify their willingness to conduct the survey, which was only addressed to adults (18+).

The survey form was designed by IOM to capture the main displacement patterns for refugees crossing back to Ukraine following the outbreak of the war. It analyses the demographic profiles of respondents and of the group they are travelling with, if any; it asks about intentions relatively to the permanence in Ukraine; and it gathers information regarding a set of main needs at the moment of the interview.

Various settings were identified to conduct surveys, to maximise the number of interviews, and reach out to different profiles of individuals.

Among the limitations encountered during data collection were the reduced time to carry out surveys at border crossing points and the presence of only four enumerators at the moment of the interviews.

To address the aforesaid shortcomings, and cover different viewpoints, a mixed sampling strategy guided the data collection exercise.

Consequently, this analysis does not proportionally represent the whole population and results cannot be deemed representative of a full picture of mobility towards Ukraine from the Republic of Moldova.

## DTM

Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) is a system to track and monitor displacement and population mobility. The survey form was designed to capture the main displacement patterns – origin country and region – for refugees of any nationality fleeing from Ukraine because of the war. It captures the demographic profiles of respondents and of the group they are travelling with, if any; it asks about intentions relative to the intended final destination and prospects of permanence in the country of the survey/first reception; it gathers information regarding a set of main needs that the respondents expressed as more pressing at the moment of the interview.

Since the onset of the war in Ukraine, several IOM's DTM tools were deployed in countries neighbouring Ukraine and in other countries particularly impacted by the new arrivals of migrants and refugees from Ukraine.

For more information, please consult: <https://dtm.iom.int/responses/ukraine-response>

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