

# HUNGARY



**Crossing Back Surveys with  
Ukrainian Nationals**

July – September 2023  
Country Report & Data Analysis

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Cover photo: IOM protection assistant welcome people from Ukraine in Záhony to support them

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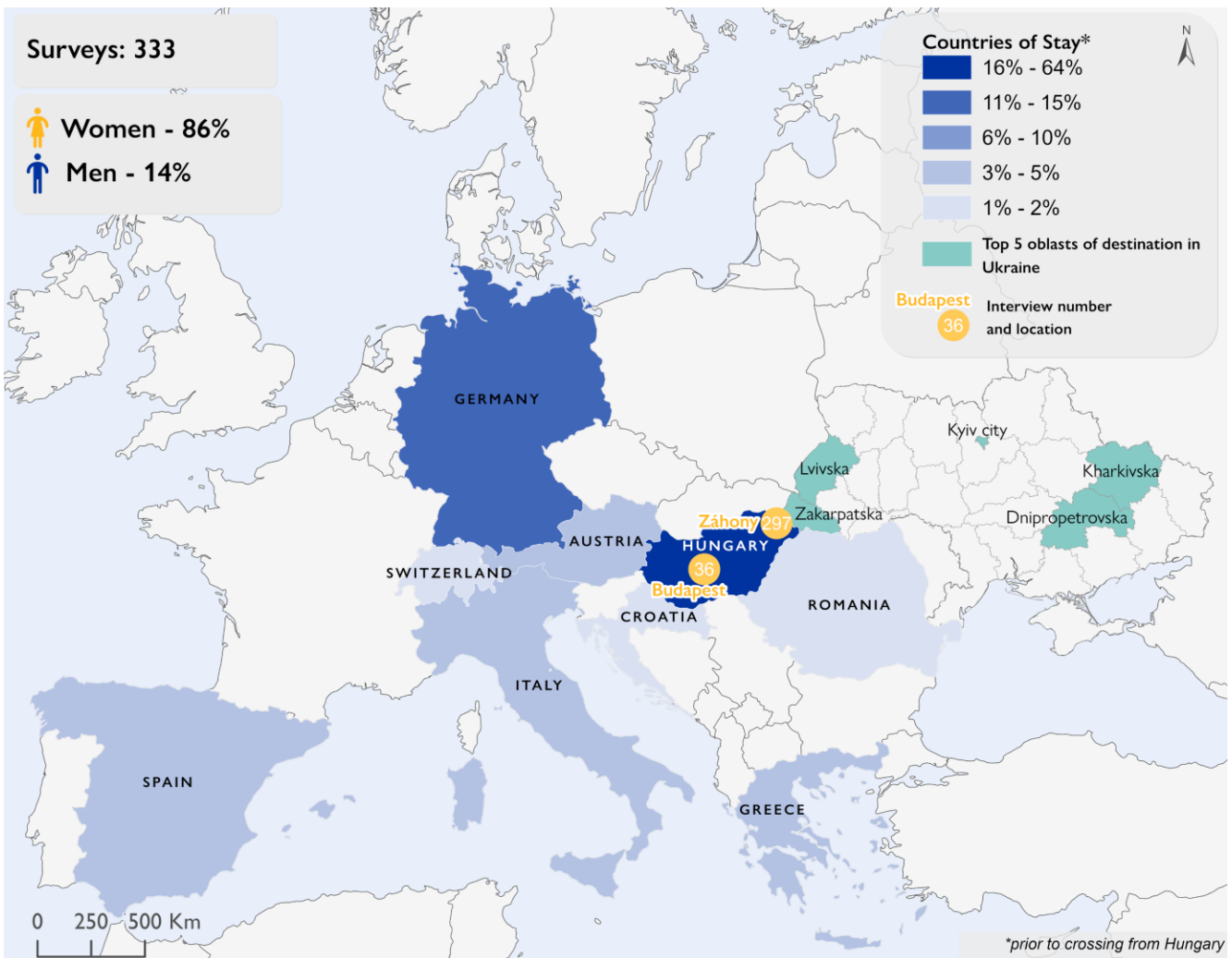
Data collected: 01 July – 30 September 2023

## KEY FINDINGS

- **Top 3 countries of stay:** Hungary (63%), Germany (12%), Austria (5%).
- **Top oblasts of origin:** Kyiv (24%), Zakarpatska (18%), Dnipropetrovska (14%).
- **Destinations in Ukraine:** returning to oblast of origin (85%), returning to a different oblast (14%). Among those intending to return to a different oblast, top intended destinations included: Zakarpatska (68%), Kyiv city (21%), and Lvivska (6.5%).
- **Most frequent mode of transport:** train (86%).
- **Intentions upon crossing back:** long-term stay (over 30 days) - 23%, short-term visit (60%), does not know (17%).
- **Top needs upon crossing back\*:** financial support (39%), accommodation (39%), transport (35%).
- **Top areas of assistance received\*:** transport (67%), accommodation (46%), food (37%).

\* More than one answer possible

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

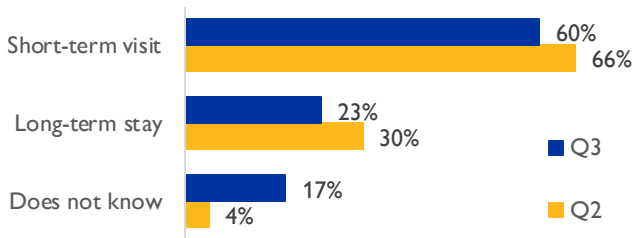


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## TRENDS AND CHANGES IN THE 2<sup>ND</sup> AND 3<sup>RD</sup> QUARTERS OF 2023

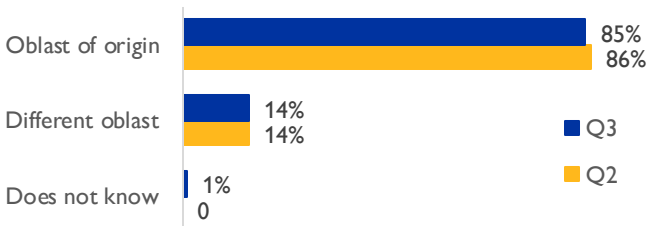
Sixty per cent of all Ukrainian nationals surveyed in Hungary between July-September 2023 (Quarter 3 – Q3) intended to cross back to Ukraine for a short period of time (60%), similar to the proportion (66%) of those surveyed between [April-June 2023 \(Quarter 2 – Q2\)](#). A smaller proportion intended to stay in Ukraine for a longer-term stay (23% in Q3, 30% in Q2).

Figure 1: Length of stay upon return in Q3 and Q2 (%)



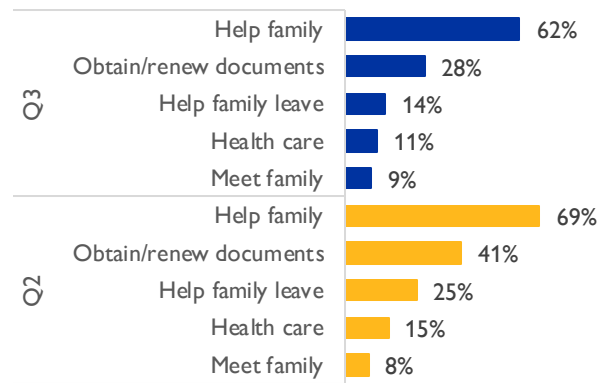
Nearly the same proportion of respondents in both Q3 and Q2 intended to return to the oblast of origin (85% versus 86%, respectively). A smaller percentage (14% in both quarters) intended to cross back to a different region in Ukraine. Among the respondents intending to return to a different region, the top destinations included Zakarpatska (62% in Q2, 68% in Q3) and the city of Kyiv (15% in Q2, 21% in Q3).

Figure 2: Destination of return in Q3 and Q2 (%)



The reasons reported by those intending to return to Ukraine for a short-term visit varied slightly between Q3 and Q2. Visiting family was the most frequently cited reason in both quarters (62% in Q3, 69% in Q2). Health care remained the second most cited reason (28% in Q3, 41% in Q2). Other cited reasons for short-term visits in Q3 included: supporting families (62%), obtaining or renewing documents (28%), and helping family members leave (14%).

Figure 3: Top five reasons for short-term visit in Q3 and Q2 (%) (More than one answer possible)



The most pressing needs reported by respondents also varied slightly across the two periods. In July-September 2023, the most cited needs were financial support (39% of respondents), long-term accommodation (39%) and transport support (35%). In April-June 2023, respondents cited transport (52%), information (43%) and financial support (39%) as the most pressing needs.

Figure 4: Top immediate needs upon return in Q2 and Q3 (%) (More than one answer possible)



## 1. Socio-Demographic Profile

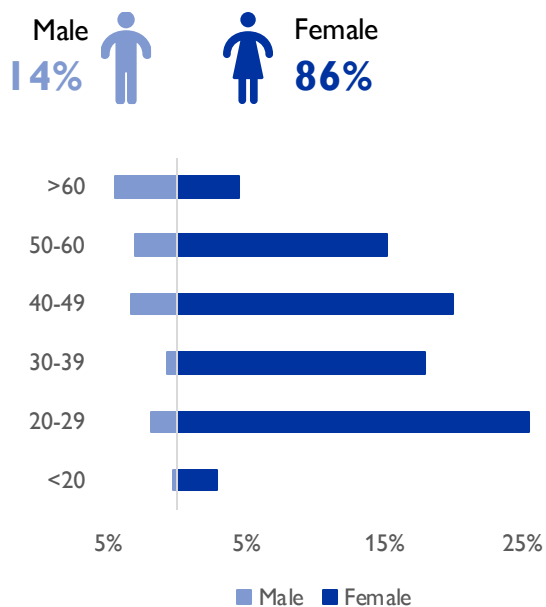
### Gender and age

The present survey was carried out among individuals crossing back from Hungary to Ukraine. Among the 375 survey respondents, 89 per cent (N=333) were Ukrainian nationals (UA), while 11 per cent (N=42) were Third-Country nationals (TCNs) from Ukraine. The rest of the report considers the answers of the UA respondents only (N=333).

Women accounted for 86 per cent of the UA nationals, while men represented 14 per cent of UA nationals. The average age for male respondents was higher compared to female respondents (50 versus 39 years-old). Most female respondents were between 20-29 years-old (26%), while most male respondents (5%) were over 60-years-old.

The average age of all respondents was 40 years-old. Ninety-one per cent of all respondents were of active age (between 18-60 years-old).

Figure 5: Respondents by age and gender (%)

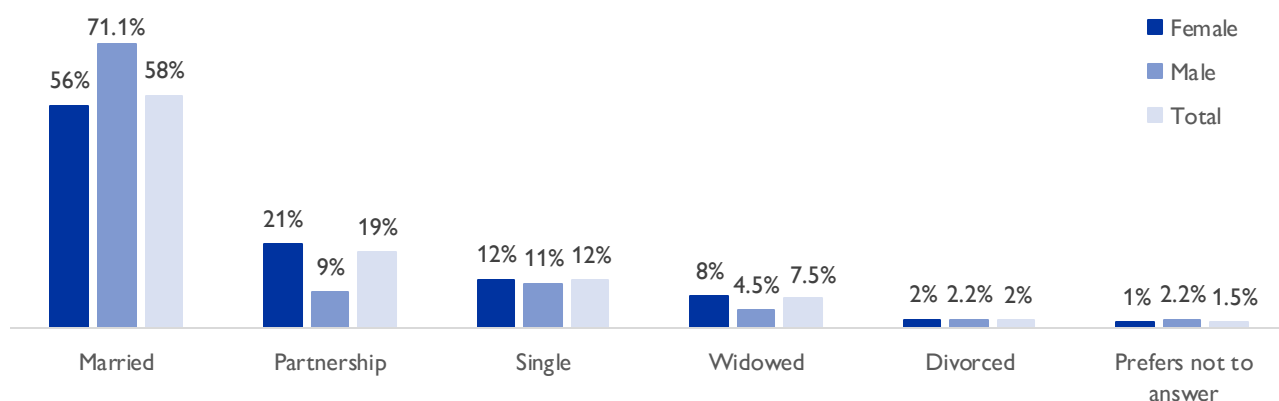


### Marital status

More than half of the surveyed UA nationals were married (58%), while 19 per cent of the respondents were in some kind of partnership. Others reported being single (12%), widowed (7.5%), or divorced (2%). A higher proportion of

men reported being married compared to female respondents (71% versus 56%). More women in the sample were in partnerships compared to men (21% versus 9%) and a higher proportion of women were widowed (8% versus 4.5% of men).

Figure 6: Marital status by gender (%)



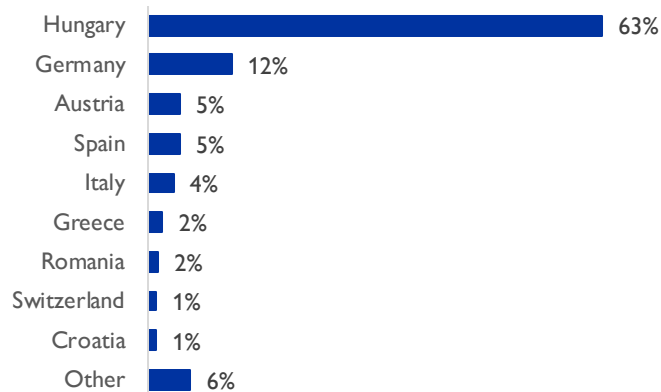
## 2. Time Outside Ukraine

### Countries of stay while abroad

Over sixty per cent of the surveyed UA nationals had been living in Hungary prior to crossing back to Ukraine. Others had been staying in Germany (12%), Austria (5%) and Spain (5%).

To a lesser extent, some of them stayed in Italy (4%), Greece (2%), Romania (2%), Switzerland (1%) and Croatia (1%). The remaining six per cent of respondents lived in another 16 countries (with 69 per cent of those countries being in Europe) before returning to Ukraine through Hungary.

Figure 7: Countries of stay (%)



### Average time since initial displacement

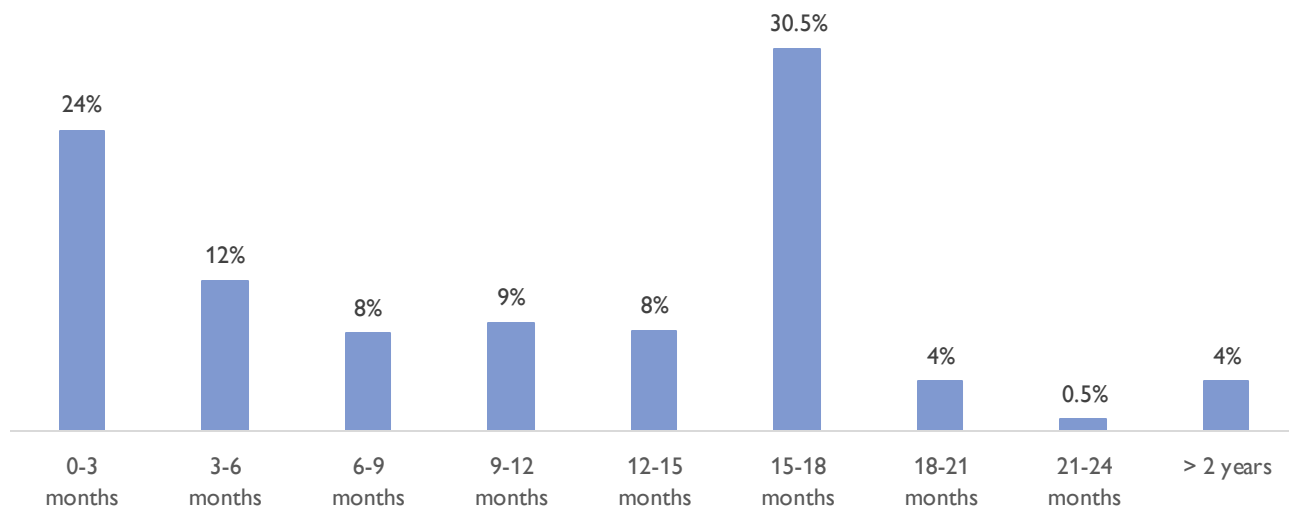
The average time spent in displacement was assessed by calculating the difference between the initial date of displacement and the date of the survey for UA nationals. The highest proportion of respondents were displaced between January-March (22%) and April-June 2022 (18%), indicating that they had already spent over a year displaced.

According to the chart below, most respondents (nearly 31 per cent) spent between 15-18 months in displacement until the date of interview. This

was followed by individuals who spent a maximum of three months in displacement (24%), referring to those who entered Hungary between July-September 2023.

The smallest proportion of respondents (below one per cent) left Ukraine more than one and half a year ago. Four per cent of the respondents had left Ukraine before February 2022, who therefore already spent more than two years in displacement.

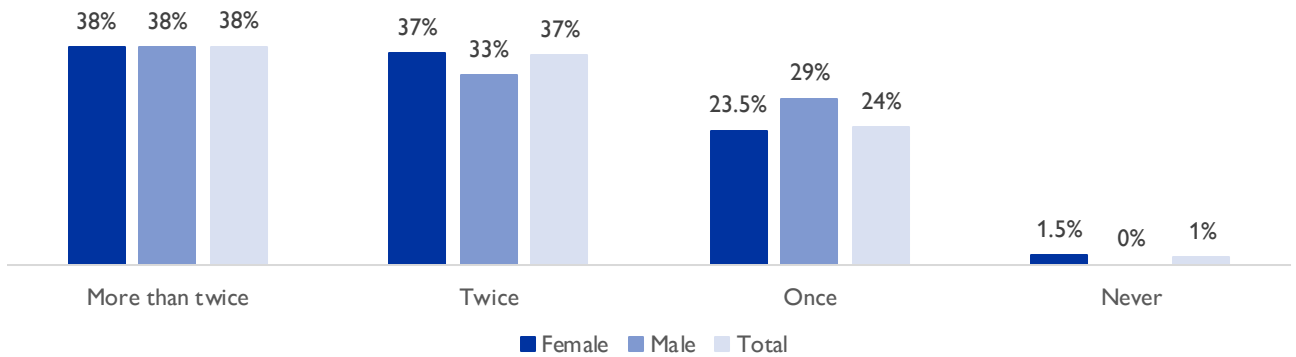
Figure 8: Length of displacement until survey date by proportion of respondents (%)



**Number of exists/entries to and from Ukraine**

Since February 2022, 99 per cent of all respondents had crossed back to Ukraine at least once, with women accounting for 85 per cent of all returns. Most respondents have entered/exited Ukraine either twice (37%) or more than twice (38%), while 24 per cent of respondents had left and returned to Ukraine once before. Only one per cent of respondents had not crossed back. Most women entered and exited Ukraine more than two times (38%) or twice (37%). The one per cent who never crossed back were only women. Among men, the highest proportion travelled back more than twice (38%), with a smaller percentage returning two times (33%) or once (29%).

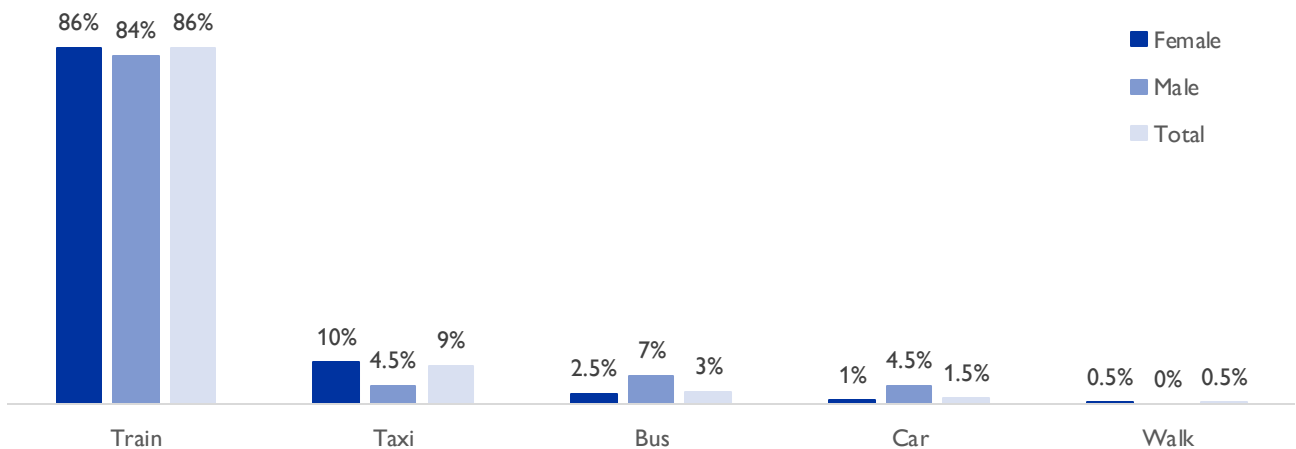
Figure 9: Number of entries/exits between 24 February 2022 and 30 September 2023 (%)



**Transport**

Eighty-six per cent of all respondents had travelled to Ukraine by train. Other respondents reported traveling by taxi (9%), buses (3%) and cars (1.5%). Less than one per cent of all respondents reported walking across the border. After applying a gender lens, most women (86%) and men (84%) preferred travelling by train. While taxi was a preferred means of transport for women (10%), a bigger proportion of men (7%) travelled by bus than their female counterparts (2.5%).

Figure 10: Transport by gender (%)





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

#### Origin or habitual residence

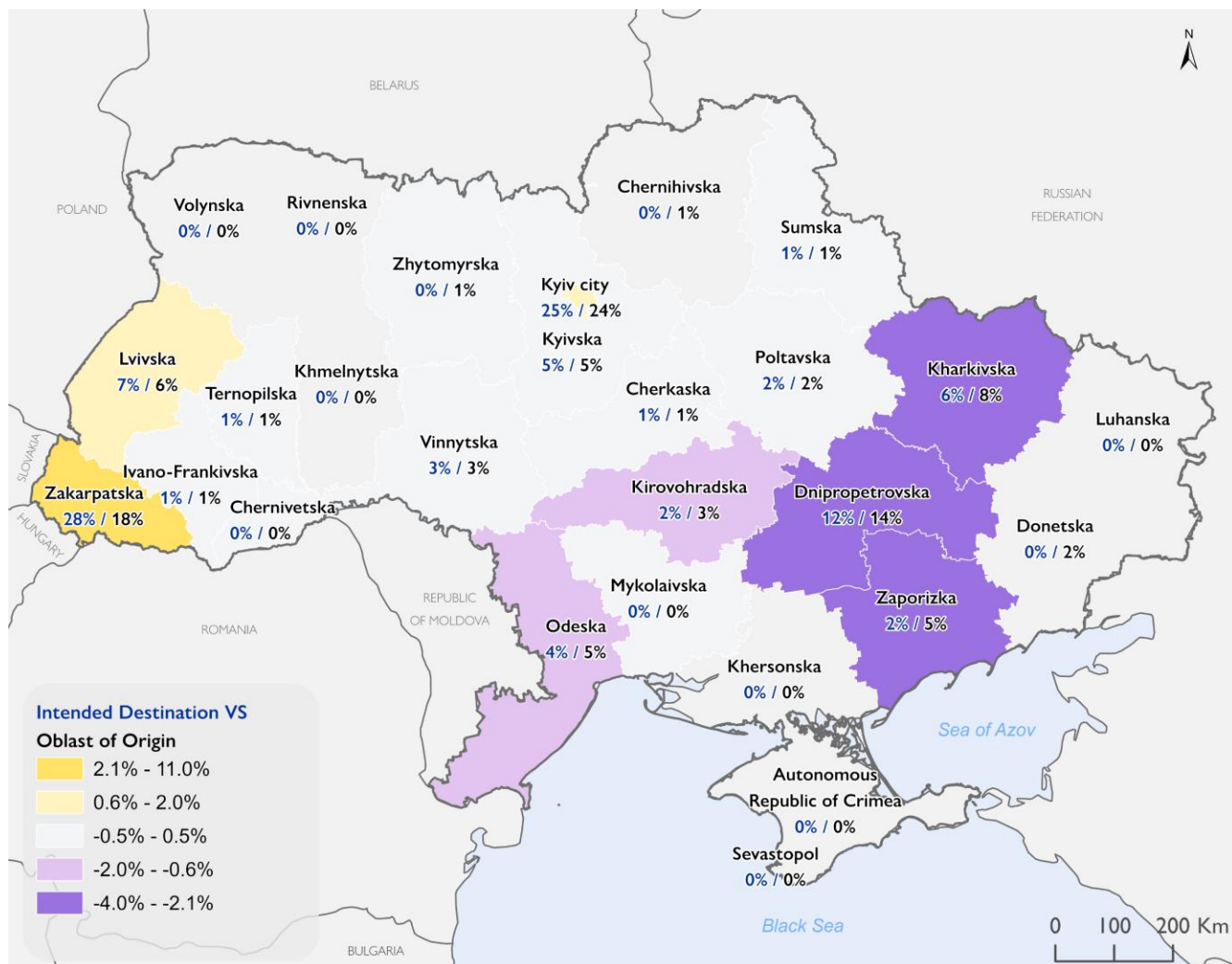
Eighty-five per cent of respondents came from the following eight oblasts in Ukraine: Kyiv (24%), Zakarpatska (18%), Dnipropetrovska (14%), Kharkivska (8%), Lvivska (6%), Zaporizka (5%), Odeska (5%) and Kyivska (5%). The remaining 15 per cent came from another 14 different oblasts.

#### Intended destination

Most respondents (85%) intended to return to the same oblast where they originated from. Fourteen per cent (N=47) intended to return to a different oblast from where they originally departed from, while one per cent did not know or were undecided.

Of all surveyed UA nationals, 78 per cent intended to return to the following five regions: Zakarpatska (28%), Kyiv (25%), Dnipropetrovska (12%), Lvivska (7%) and Kharkivska (6%). Among the respondents intending to return to a different oblast (not their oblast of origin), the top destinations included Zakarpatska (68%), Kyiv (21%), Lvivska (6.5%), and Kyivska (4.5%).

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

### Long-term stay

Among the surveyed UA nationals crossing back to Ukraine (N=333), 23 per cent were planning to stay in Ukraine for the long-term. Seventeen per cent of respondents were unsure about the length of their intended stay in Ukraine.

Among those planning to stay in Ukraine for a longer time period (N=76), 46 per cent said they were visiting someone abroad, outside of Ukraine. Eighteen per cent intended to reunite with family members. Others cited a lack of accommodation (12%) and employment (11%) in Hungary or other countries of stay. Eleven per cent of respondents cited missing home as a reason for crossing back to Ukraine.

### Short-term visit

Sixty per cent of respondents (N=199) intended to cross back to Ukraine for a short-term visit.

Among them, 62 per cent were planning to visit family and 28 per cent were seeking healthcare services in Ukraine. Another 14 per cent were traveling to help their families leave and get to the border, while 11 per cent were returning in order

Figure 11: Length of intended stay upon return (%)

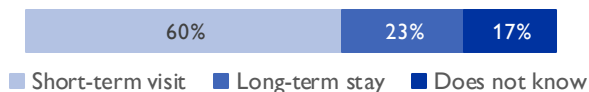
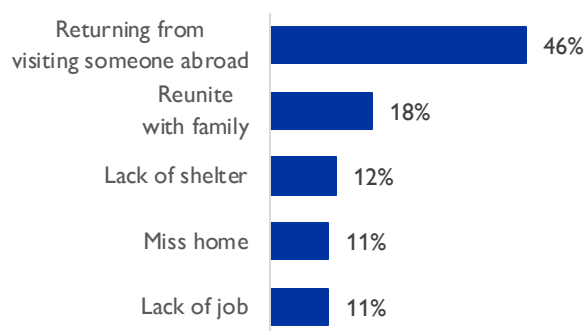


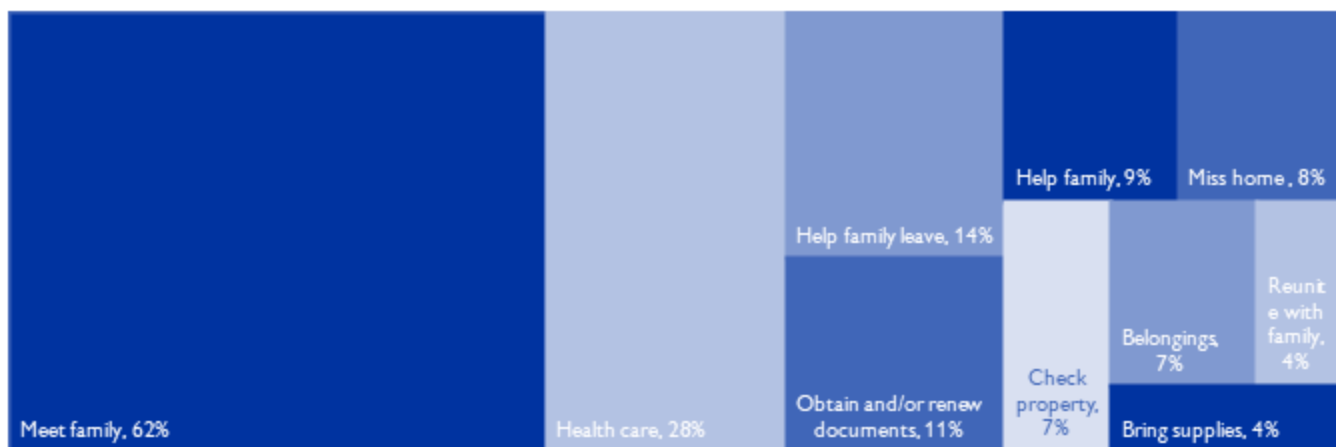
Figure 12: Top five reasons for long-term stays in Ukraine (%) (N=76) (More than one answer possible)



to obtain and/or renew necessary documents.

Respondents also crossed back in order to help their families who still live in Ukraine (9%) or because they missed home (8%). Other reasons included checking on properties (7%), gathering belongings (7%), reuniting with family (4%), and taking supplies to Ukraine (4%).

Figure 13: Main reasons for visiting Ukraine for a short-term period (%) (N=199) (More than one answer possible)



## 5. Needs, Assistance Received and Challenges

### Immediate needs upon crossing back

Financial support (39%), long-term accommodation (39%) and transportation support (35%) were the three most frequently cited needs among respondents. Respondents also cited health services (29%), personal safety (26%) and food supply (25%) as top needs. Other needs included assistance with information (21%), medicines (19%), employment (18%) and hygiene (12%).

Figure 14: Top ten needs upon crossing back (%) (More than one answer possible)

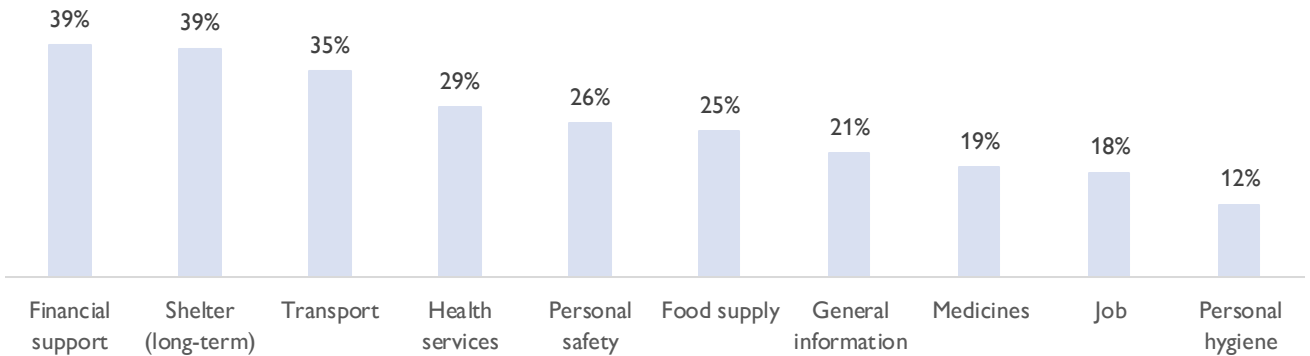


Figure 15: Respondents having received assistance (%)

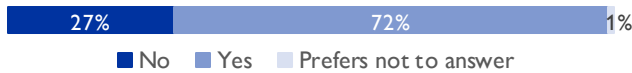
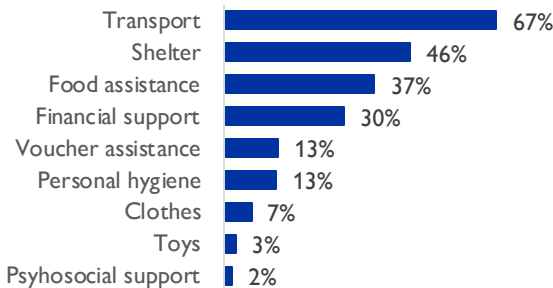


Figure 16: Main areas of assistance received (%) (N=239) (More than one answer possible)



### Difficulties and experience of discrimination

Among all surveyed UA nationals, 81 per cent did not report facing any difficulties in receiving assistance. Three per cent reported facing challenges, while 16 per cent did not know or preferred not to answer.

### Assistance in Hungary

Nearly three-quarters of respondents (72%) report having received some kind of assistance while in Hungary.

Among them, 67 per cent received transportation support and 46 per cent received assistance with shelter. Thirty-seven received food assistance, while 30 per cent received financial support.

Other types of assistance received in Hungary included voucher support (13%), hygiene items (13%), clothes (7%), toys (3%) and psychosocial support (2%).



Ninety-eight per cent of the respondents reported not having experienced any kind of unequal treatment. One per cent reported having experienced discrimination since being displaced, and less than one per cent did not give an answer.

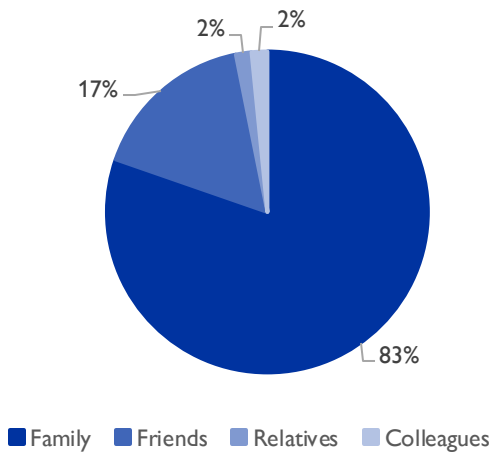
## 6. Current Group Composition

### Travel mode

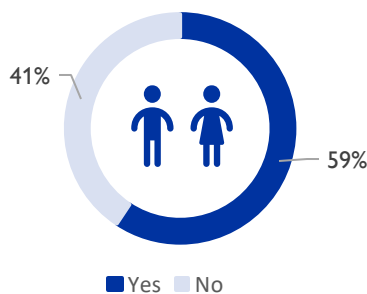
Nearly 35 per cent of all surveyed UA nationals initially left Ukraine alone and were returning to Ukraine alone, while nearly 29 per cent were returning to Ukraine alone, despite having initially left in a group.

Thirty-seven per cent of all respondents were returning in a group. Of these respondents, 36 per cent were returning with the same group with which they had initially left. Less than one per cent were travelling in a group that included some of the same members as the group with which they had left Ukraine and less than one per cent were returning with a completely different group.

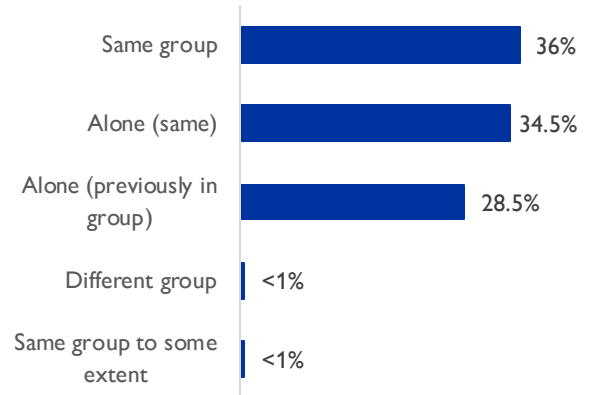
**Figure 18: Group composition (%) (N=123)**  
*(More than one answer possible)*



**Figure 19: Groups traveling with children (%) N=123**



**Figure 17: Travel mode (%)**

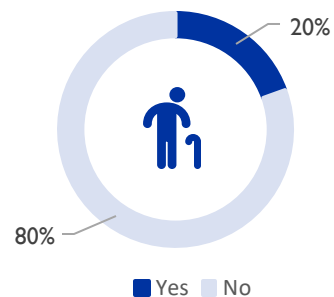


Of those travelling in a group (N=123), 83 per cent were returning to Ukraine with immediate family members. Others reported traveling with friends and/or neighbours (17%), relatives (2%), and colleagues (2%).

 **2.5** individuals  
average group size

Among those traveling in a group (N=123), 59 per cent were traveling with at least one child between 0-17 years-old. Twenty per cent of the groups were travelling back to Ukraine with at least one person above 60 years-old.

**Figure 20: Groups traveling with elderly (%) N=123**



## 7. 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 full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Nearly six million refugees from Ukraine were recorded across Europe as of October 2023. In Hungary, 38,185 refugees have applied for Temporary Protection or similar protection schemes as of October 2023.

In July 2022, IOM deployed its Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) tool in Hungary to collect individual surveys with persons crossing back to Ukraine, with the aim of improving understanding of the main profiles, displacement patterns, intentions and needs of those returning to Ukraine. This report is based on surveys collected among Ukrainian nationals in Hungary between 01 July and 30 September 2023 in two locations, Budapest and Záhony (Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county). The survey was conducted at various sites, including transit points (such as train and bus stations) and IOM premises.

### Methodological framework

IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) is a system that tracks and monitors displacement and population mobility. It is designed to regularly and systematically capture, process and disseminate information in order to improve 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 Ukrainian refugees and TCNs crossing back to Ukraine since 24 February 2022. In Hungary, IOM's DTM trained enumerators conducted surveys in Ukrainian, Russian, and English using a mobile application.

All surveys are carried out one-on-one with respondents, provided they consent to the survey after a brief introduction. Enumerators, trained on ethics of data collection, information provision and protection principles, approach people crossing back to Ukraine to verify their willingness to complete the survey. All respondents are adults (18+) and all survey responses are kept anonymous.

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 their travel group (if any); it asks about intentions related to their stay in Ukraine; and it gathers information about their main needs.

Various settings were identified to conduct surveys in order to maximise the number of responses and reach individuals with different profiles. Surveys are carried out in selected exit and transit locations, as well as information and collective centres identified to be the most frequently visited by refugees returning to Ukraine.

Limitations in data collection include the limited time to carry out surveys at transit points and the limited number of enumerators available between July and September 2023. To address these limitations, a mixed sampling strategy guided the data collection. There were also limitations in terms of comparing the data longitudinally as the survey design and sampling method was modified between each quarterly report.

This analysis does not represent the whole population and results cannot be deemed representative of a full picture of mobility towards Ukraine from Hungary.

## DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX (DTM)

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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>

DTM is part of IOM's Global Data Institute.

