

ROMANIA

Crossing Back Surveys with Ukrainian Nationals



July - September 2023
Country Report & Data Analysis

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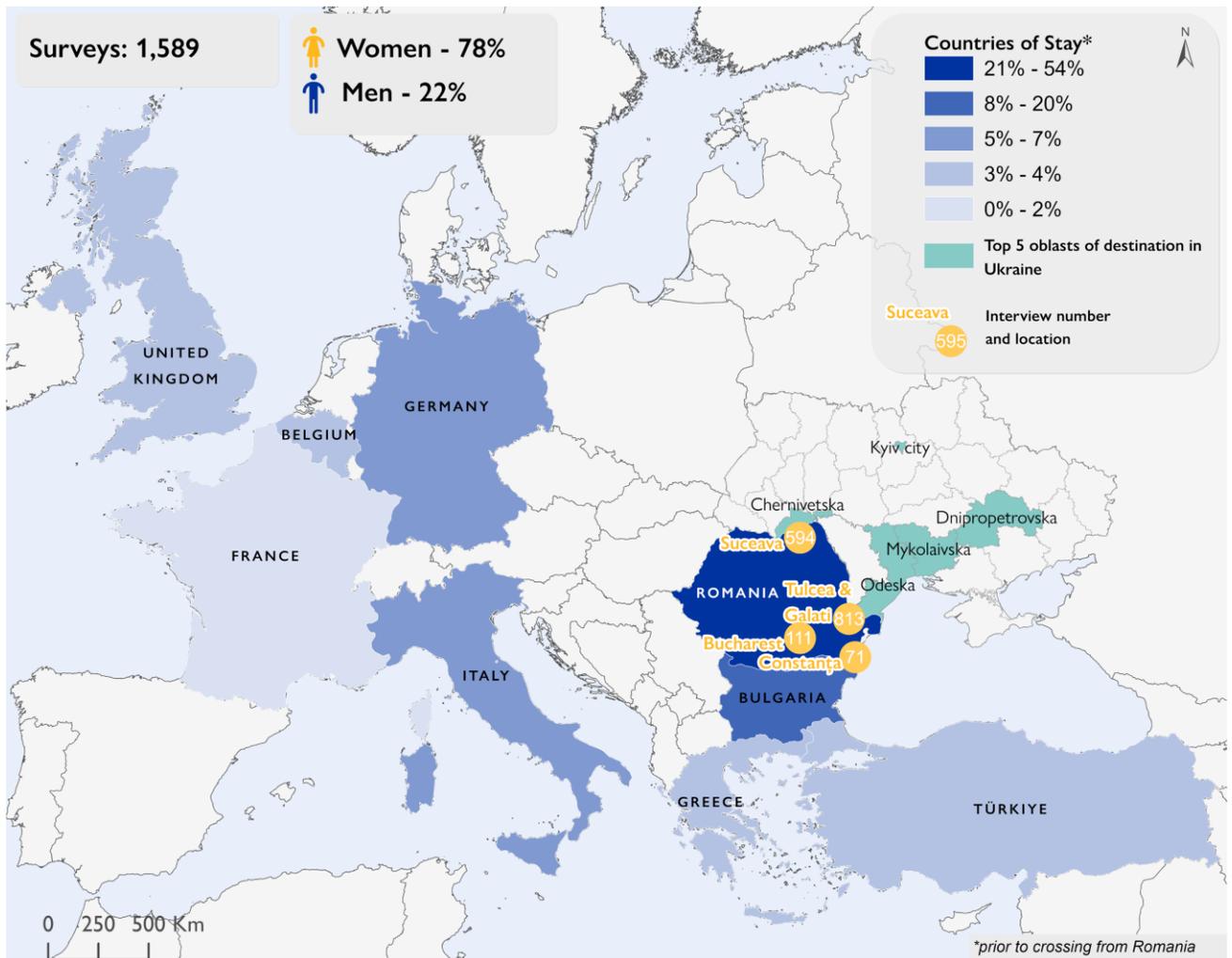
KEY FINDINGS:

This report analysed data from a survey carried out between July and September 2023 (Quarter 3, Q3). The survey sample included 1,601 individuals who were crossing back to Ukraine, including 1,589 Ukrainian nationals and 12 Third-Country Nationals (TCNs). The analysis focuses on Ukrainian nationals.

- Top 3 countries of stay abroad: Romania (53%), Bulgaria (19%), Italy (5%).
- Top 3 oblasts of origin: Odeska (38%), Chernivetska (16%), Kyiv city (9%).
- Transport to Ukraine: car (68%), bus (14%), walking (10%), minibus (8%).
- Top areas of assistance received*: food (27%), sanitary supplies (19%), accommodation (18%), and financial support (17%).
- Top 3 needs upon crossing back*: financial support (26%), personal safety (19%), and food supply (17%).

* Multiple answers possible

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



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.

TRENDS & CHANGES - APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2023

Period of stay in Ukraine

- In Quarter 3 (Q3) of 2023, fifty-four per cent of respondents intended to cross back to Ukraine for a short visit (less than 30 days), while 43 per cent fall into the category of prospective returnees, meaning they intended to cross back to Ukraine for longer periods (from a minimum of 30 days to indefinite time). This represents an increase compared to survey data from April-May 2023 (Q2), when 18 per cent of respondents intended to cross back to Ukraine for a longer visit.
- Among the respondents crossing back for a longer period, 22 per cent report that they had been in Romania to meet friends or family members who were residing abroad. Thirteen per cent intend to visit family and friends in Ukraine, and 9 per cent cross back since they do not have sufficient resources to continue living outside of Ukraine.

Needs

- Twenty-six per cent of respondents indicated that they would need financial support upon arriving in Ukraine, compared to only 10 per cent in Q2 survey. The increase in reported financial need may be related to changes in the benefits allocated under Temporary Protection (TP) status in Romania.
- Nineteen per cent of respondents reported needing assistance with personal safety and security, compared to 7 per cent in Q2.

Countries of stay

- In Q3, respondents reported living in Romania (53%), Bulgaria (19%) and Italy (5%) before crossing back to Ukraine.
- In Q2, respondents reported living in Romania (56%), Bulgaria (16%) and Germany (7%) before crossing back to Ukraine.

Oblast (region) of destination in Ukraine

- In Q3, ninety-three per cent of respondents intend to cross back to their oblast of origin in Ukraine, while six per cent intend to cross back

to a different oblast. In Q2, 94 per cent intended to travel back to their oblast of origin.

- The top oblasts of destination in Q3 were Odeska (41%) Chernivetska (16%), Kyiv city (10%) and Mykolaivska (5%)
- The top oblasts of destination in Q2 were Odeska (33%), Chernivetska (23%) Kyiv region (7%) and Ivano-Frankivska (7%).

Assistance received

- In Q3, respondents report having received assistance with food (27%), sanitary supplies (19%) and accommodation (18%).
- Similarly, respondents in Q2 reported having received assistance with food (29%), sanitary supplies (21%), and accommodation (16%).

Group Composition

- Seventy per cent of respondents were traveling back to Ukraine in a group, while 30 per cent were traveling alone.
- Thirty per cent report crossing back to Ukraine alone, compared to 25 per cent of respondents in Q2.
- Of those traveling in a group, 20 per cent report traveling with someone over 60-years-old. In comparison, in Q2, only nine per cent of the respondents reported being accompanied by elders.
- Sixty-five per cent of respondents traveling in a group reported traveling with children, compared to 57 per cent in Q2.
- Ninety-two per cent of respondents traveling in a group report traveling with their family members, compared to 81 per cent in Q2.

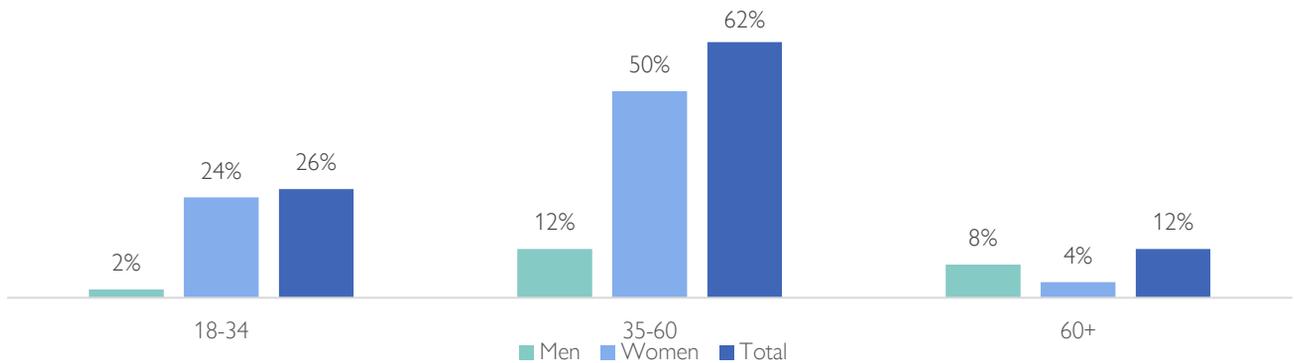
For more detailed information on Q2 2023, please see the [detailed report](#).

I. Socio-Demographic Profile

Gender & age

Out of 1,601 total respondents, over 99 per cent (N=1,589) were Ukrainian nationals, while less than one per cent were Third-Country Nationals (TCNs, N=12). This report only analyzes the data on the Ukrainian nationals surveyed. Seventy-eight per cent of respondents were women, while 22 per cent were men. The average age of respondents was 42.8 years-old. The average age of surveyed men (54 years-old) is higher than the average age of surveyed women (40 years-old). Eighty-eight per cent of respondents were of working age, between 18-60 years-old.

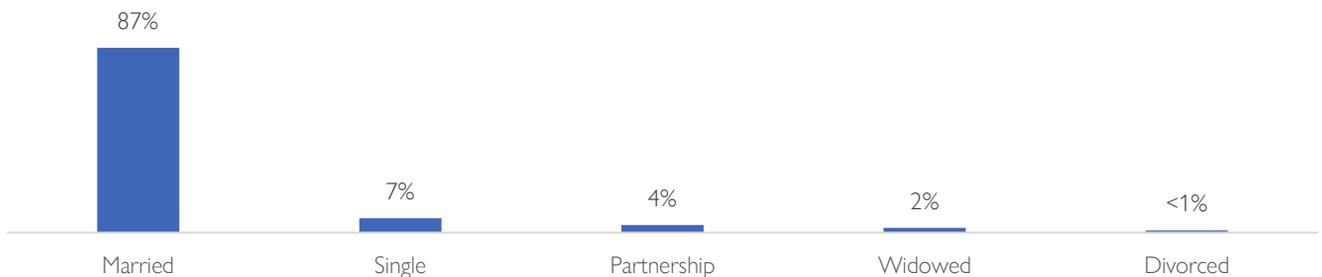
Figure 1: Age by gender and total**



Marital status

Around eighty-seven per cent of respondents were married, while others report being single (7%), in a partnership (4%), or widowed (2%). Less than 1 per cent were divorced.

Figure 2: Marital status**



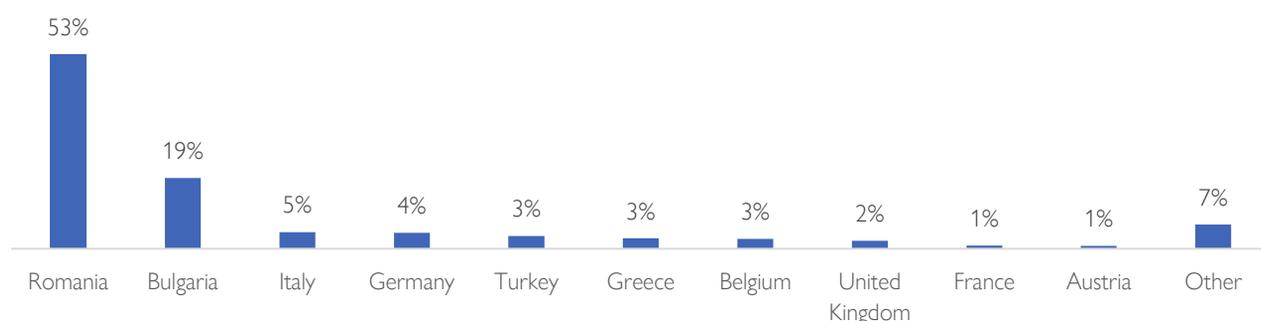
**Total percentages may not equal 100 per cent due to rounding

2. Time outside of Ukraine

Countries of stay abroad

Fifty-three per cent of surveyed respondents had been staying in Romania. Other respondents had been living in Bulgaria (19%), Italy (<5%), Germany (4%), Turkey (3%), Greece (3%) and Belgium (3%). A few respondents had stayed in the United Kingdom (2%), France (1%), or Austria (1%). The remaining seven per cent had been living in 25 various countries before crossing back to Ukraine through Romania.

Figure 3: Countries of stay (%)**



Average time since initial displacement

The approximate duration of displacement can be assessed by looking at the difference between respondents' initial date of displacement from Ukraine and the date when the survey was conducted. Most respondents were displaced either before June 2022 (30%) or within the past three months, between July and September 2023 (36%). Ten per cent were displaced between March and May 2023, while another 10 per cent were displaced between August and June 2022, indicating that they have been displaced for over a year.

Table 1: Approximate time displaced (%)

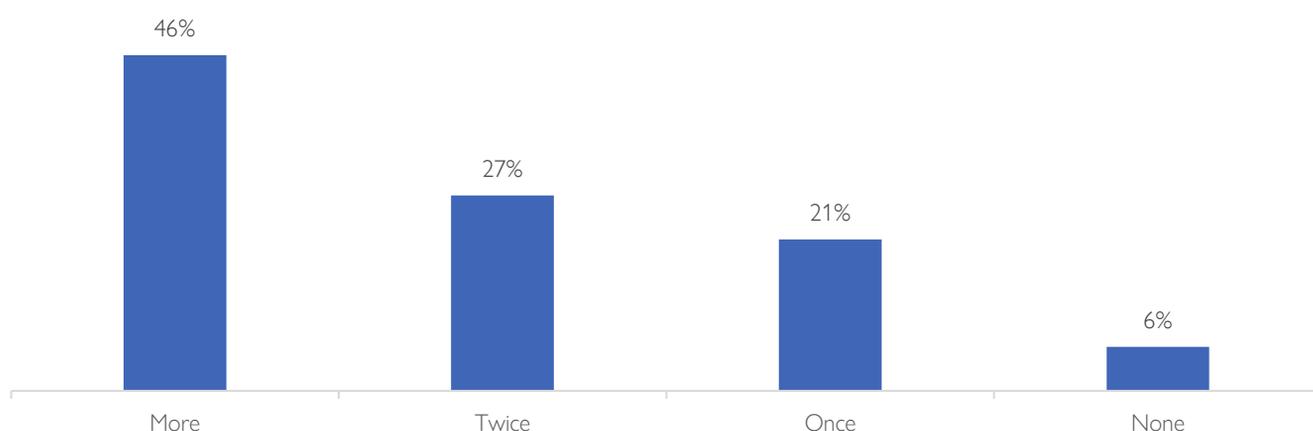
Date of initial displacement	Approximate time spent until date of interview	% of respondents
Over two years	Before June 2022	30%
12-14 months	Aug-June 2022	10%
9-11 months	Sept-Nov 22	8%
6-8 months	Dec 22-Feb 23	6%
3-5 months	March-May 23	10%
Two months or less	June-July 2023	25%
Around a month	Aug-23	5%
Less than a month	Sep-23	6%

**Total percentages may not equal 100 per cent due to rounding

Number of exists/entries to and from Ukraine

Given Ukraine and Romania are neighboring countries, many respondents cross back on a regular basis. Most respondents report having crossed the Ukrainian border either twice (27%) or more than twice (46%) since their initial displacement. Twenty-one per cent of respondents report having entered/exited Ukraine only once since February 2022. Another six per cent have never travelled back to Ukraine since their initial displacement.

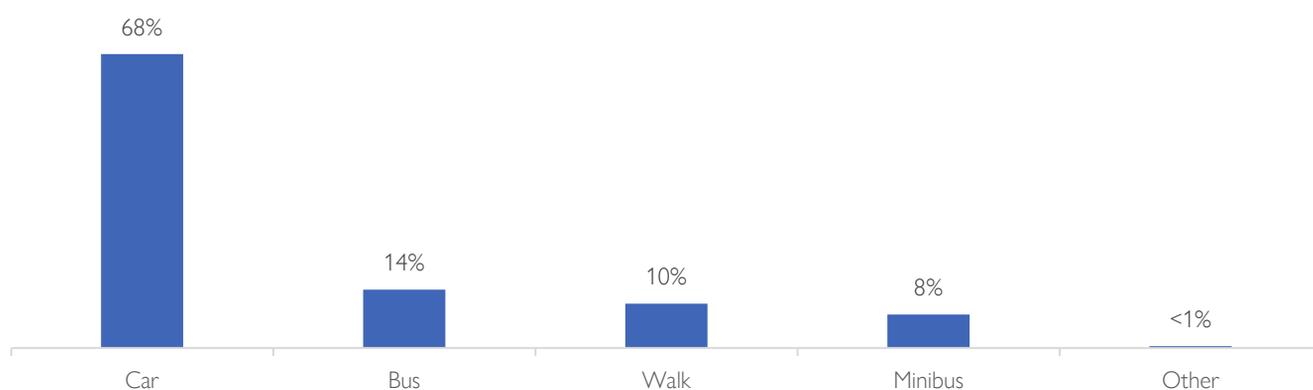
Figure 4: Number of entries/exits between 24 February 2022 and 30 September 2023 (%)



Transport

Sixty-eight per cent of respondents report travelling to Ukraine by car. Others used buses (14%), walked (10%) or took minibuses (<8%). Less than 1 per cent used other means of transport, such as trains or taxis.

Figure 5: Methods of transport used to cross back to Ukraine (%)**



**Total percentages may not equal 100 per cent due to rounding

3. Oblast (region) of Origin and Destination

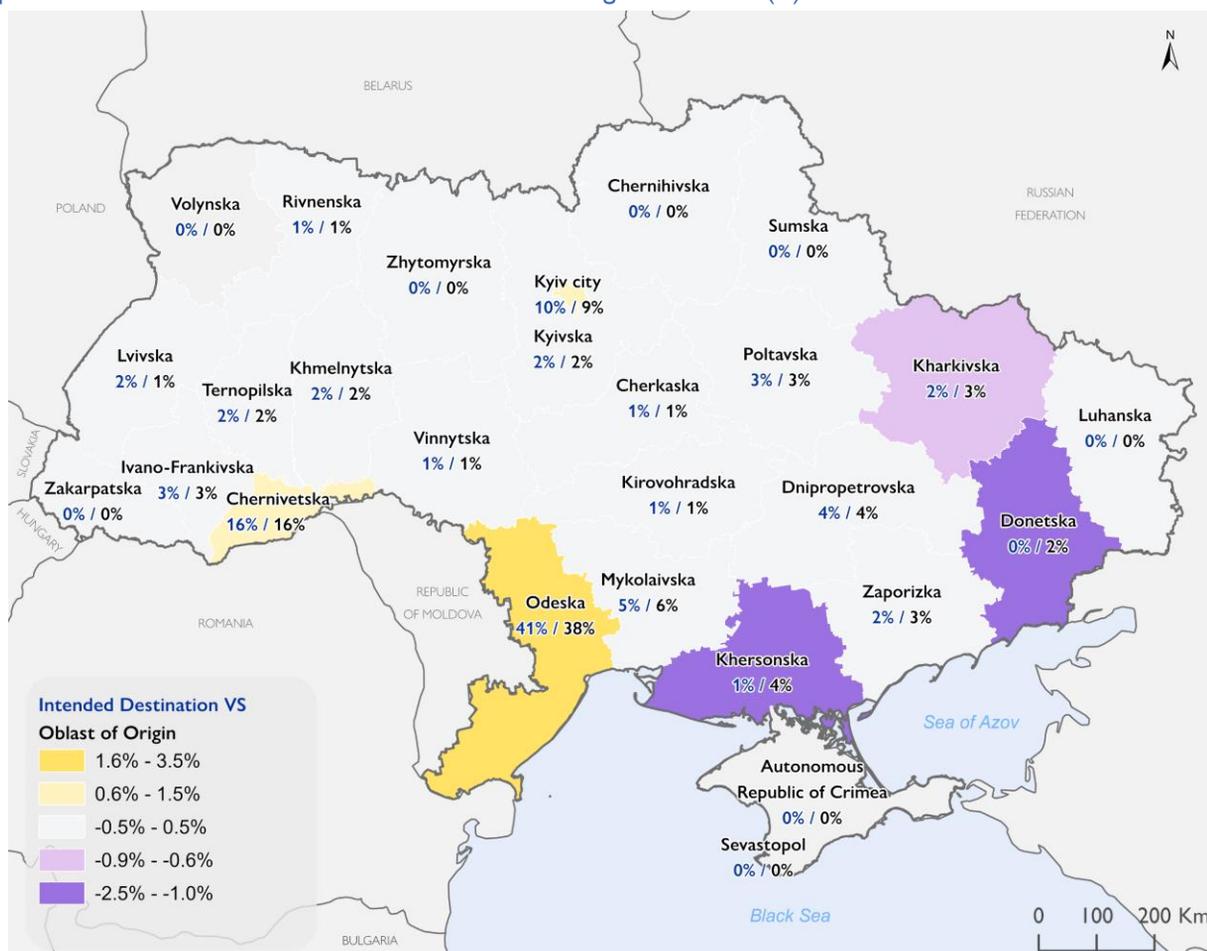
Origin or habitual residence

Over 75 per cent of surveyed respondents came from six oblasts in Ukraine: Odeska (<38%), Chernivetska (<16%), the city of Kyiv (<9%), Mykolaivska (<6%), Dnipropetrovska (4%) and Khersonska (4%). The remaining 25 per cent of respondents came from 18 other oblasts.

Intended destination

The majority of respondents (93%) intended to cross back to their oblast of origin. Six per cent intended to cross back to a different oblast, while one per cent had not yet decided. The top intended destinations were: Odeska (41%), Chernivetska, (16%) the city of Kyiv (10%), Mykolaivska (5%), Dnipropetrovska (4%) Ivano-Frankivska (3%), and Poltavka (3%).

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



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.

4. Intentions and Reasons to Cross Back to Ukraine

Prospective returns

Forty-three per cent of respondents intend to cross back to Ukraine for long (a minimum of 30 days) to indefinite periods of time (prospective returnees) (N=542).^{*} Of these respondents, 22 per cent indicated that they had only been in Romania for vacation or to visit relatives. Nineteen per cent stated that they wanted to cross back to Ukraine to reunite with the family members, while 17 per cent declared they missed being at home.

Thirteen per cent were crossing back to Ukraine to visit family members. Respondents also reported that they were crossing back due to challenges related to living abroad, including a general lack of resources (9%), a lack of shelter (6%), insufficient humanitarian aid (3%), poor education opportunities (2%), insufficient healthcare (1%), and unemployment (1%).

Table 2
Main reasons for staying in Ukraine, for long-term (N=542)

Listed reasons	Total (%)
Visit someone abroad	22%
Reunite with family	19%
Miss home	17%
Meet family members	13%
Lack resources	9%
Study in Ukraine	8%
Help family	7%
Offer essential services	7%
Lack shelter	6%

(Multiple answers possible)

Short-term visit

Fifty-four per cent of respondents intended to cross back to Ukraine for a shorter visit (N=671), either for less than a week (around 28%) or for less than a month (around 25%). The main reasons cited included obtaining necessary documents (28%) and seeing family members

who had stayed in Ukraine (24%). Others were traveling back to access healthcare services (15%), check on property (13%), reunite with family members (7%), or check on belongings (6%).

Table 3: Main reasons for staying in Ukraine for a short-term period (N=671)

Listed reasons	Total (%)
Bring documents	28%
Meet family	24%
Healthcare	15%
Check property	13%
Reunite with family	7%
Check belongings	6%
Visit someone abroad	4%
Help family member	4%

(Multiple answers possible)

Three per cent of respondents did not know how long they intended to stay in Ukraine or preferred not to answer.

^{*}See methodology section

5. Needs, Assistance Received, and Challenges

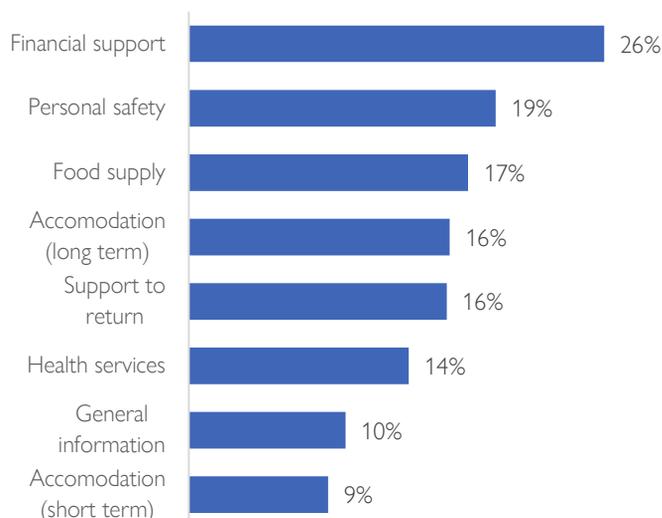
Immediate needs upon crossing back

Twenty-six per cent of respondents indicated that they would need financial support upon crossing back to Ukraine. Only 10 per cent of respondents reported needing financial support in the Q2 survey. This increase may be due to changes in the benefits allocated under temporary protection status in Romania.

Respondents also report needing assistance with personal safety (19%), food supply (17%), long-term accommodation (16%), support to travel to the intended destination in the Ukraine (16%) and health services (14%). Other reported needs include general information (10%), assistance with short-term accommodation (9%), sanitary supplies (4%), medicine (2%), and document assistance (2%).

Four per cent of respondents reported no needs.

Figure 6: Needs upon crossing back (%)
(Multiple answers possible)



Assistance received in Romania

Sixty-seven per cent of the respondents report having received some form of assistance, including food supplies (27%), sanitary supplies (19%), accommodation support (18%), and financial support (17%). Other types of assistance received included vouchers (8%), clothes (3%), transport assistance (3%) and toys (2%).

Table 4: Main areas of assistance received
(Multiple answers possible)

Type of assistance received	Total (%)
Food	27%
Sanitary supplies	19%
Accommodation	18%
Financial support	17%
Vouchers	8%
Clothes	3%
Transport	3%
Toys	2%
Psychological counselling	2%
Other	1%

Experiences of discrimination

Ninety-eight per cent of respondents reported not having experienced discrimination in Romania. The remaining two per cent of respondents stated either

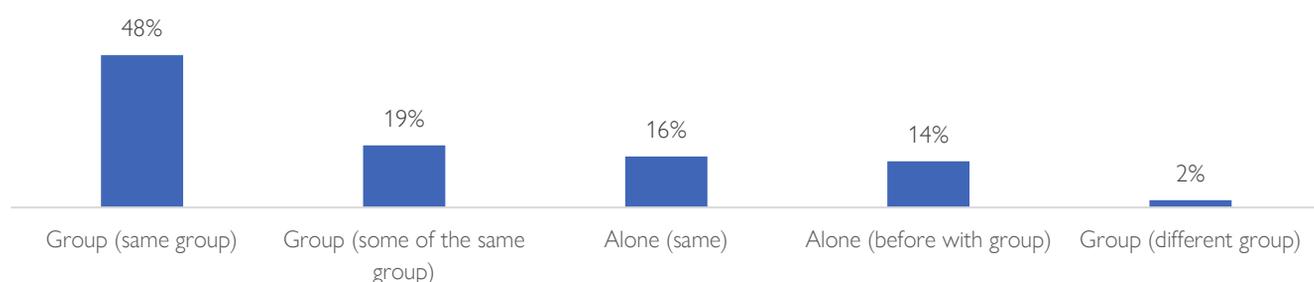
that they have experienced some form of discrimination, or that they did not know/preferred not to answer.

7. Current Group Composition

Travel group composition

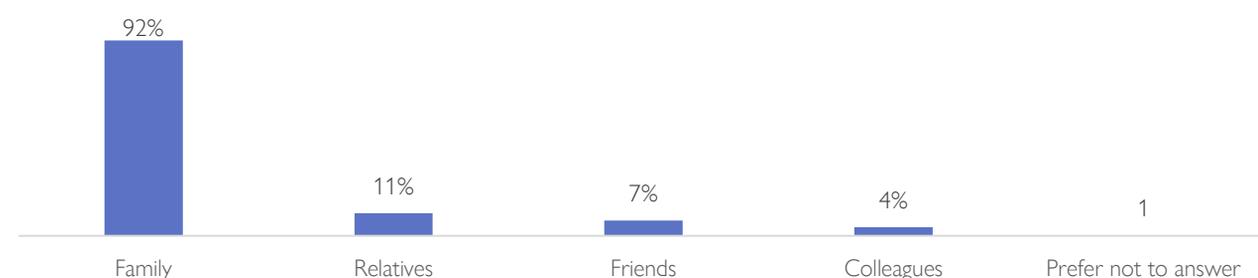
Seventy per cent of respondents were traveling back to Ukraine in a group, while 30 were traveling back alone. Forty-eight per cent of respondents were crossing back with the same group with which they had originally entered Romania. Nineteen per cent were travelling back to Ukraine with part of their original travel group. Sixteen per cent left Ukraine alone and are crossing back to Ukraine alone, while 14 per cent are crossing back to Ukraine alone, even though they entered Romania with a group. Over two per cent report travelling back to Ukraine with a different group than the one with which they originally left.

Figure 7 : Travel group composition (%)**



Out of those traveling in a group (N=1,105), 92 per cent were travelling with immediate family members. Respondents also report traveling with other relatives (11%), friends (7%), and work colleagues (4%).

Figure 8 : Group composition (%)**
(Multiple answers possible)



Concluding remarks

Most respondents intend to cross back to Ukraine only for a short visit in order to see family members, check on property and belongings, or help those who remained in Ukraine. Twenty-six per cent of respondents indicate that they will need financial assistance upon arriving in Ukraine, compared to only 10 per cent in Q2. This increase may be related to changes in benefits allocated under Temporary Protection Status in Romania due to recent policy changes. Most respondents report not facing any form of discrimination in Romania.

**Total percentages may not equal 100 per cent due to rounding

8. Methodology

Background

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 crossings have been reported at the borders of neighbouring countries since February 2022. Almost six million refugees from Ukraine were recorded across Europe as of October 2023.

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 between 01 July and 30 September 2023. 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.

The Quarter 2 report is available at the following [link](#).

Methodological framework

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.

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). All enumerators received training on data collection and information provision and protection principles. 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 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 (2 in Tulcea, 1 in Suceava and 1 in Galati).

In order to ensure consistency between the Crossing-Back Surveys and surveys carried out by IOM Ukraine, the question regarding the duration and the type of visit (long term vs. short term) were merged into one single question assessing the intended period of stay in Ukraine. A total of 79 per cent of respondents (N=1254) answered the questions regarding their intended period of stay, of which 11% answered the older version of the question and 89% answered the newer version of the question.

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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