

2022

FLOW MONITORING
SURVEYS WITH MIGRANTS
TRANSITING THROUGH
THE REPUBLIC OF
NORTH MACEDONIA
FIRST REPORT

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2022



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is based on the Flow Monitoring Survey carried out by IOM field staff in North Macedonia in February and March 2022. A total of 209 interviews were collected in two locations – Temporary Transit Centre (TTC) Vinojug (Gevgelija) and TTC Tabanovce (Kumanovo). Survey data provide an insight of the profile and other relevant aspects related to the irregular migrants.

They show following:

- By country of citizenship about 81 per cent of the respondents were from five countries – Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Syrian Arab Republic and Morocco. Almost the same is the structure of respondents by country of origin or habitual residence. Only seven respondents were internally displaced persons.
- Most of the respondents were male (203 migrants) and young persons (average age 27.3 years). Out of the top 5 nationalities surveyed, the youngest were respondents from Morocco and oldest were those from India (23.9 and 29.1 years of average age, respectively).
- The vast majority (88.5%) of respondents was single at the moment of the interview, and 10.5 per cent of them had children. About 29.1 per cent of the respondents have primary level of education, 67.6 per cent secondary and only 3.3 per cent had tertiary level of education. More than half of respondents were unemployed and inactive at the time of departure from countries of origin, whereas about 26 per cent were employed or self-employed. Hereof, economic reasons (57.4%), followed by war or conflict (26.3%), were the initial first main reasons for leaving their countries of origin.
- Majority of the respondents (84.2%) in North Macedonia arrived from six countries where they spent at least one year (Greece, Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Syrian Arab Republic and Morocco). More than one third (35.9%) of respondents were travelling alone, while 64.1 per cent travelled with a group.
- Great part of the respondents (47.9%) has left the departure country more than 1 year ago (36.4% of them, more than 3 years ago). Ninety respondents (43.1%) have left the departure country in the last year, (23.0% of them, less than 2 weeks ago). Survey data show the route of the respondents, confirm a relatively long stay in transit countries and work as the main reason for it, then that most of them had private accommodation and that walking on foot was the main mode of transport. Most of the respondents (91.4%) reported they have stayed in North Macedonia for less than two weeks.
- The journey of the respondents was quite costly. Overall amount paid individually since the beginning of the journey, for 77 per cent of the respondents, was between 1,000 and 5,000 USD. Two thirds (66.5%) of the respondents reported having paid for the journey with their own money only.
- Germany remains to be the country of intended destination for the greatest part of the respondents its share is higher at the time of departure (40.2%) than as a final destination country at the time of interview (33.5%). Similar are changes related to other final destination countries. For 47 per cent of the respondents, the main reasons for choosing final destination country are related to appealing socio-economic conditions and for 26 per cent of them it is the ease of access to asylum procedures.
- Related to human trafficking / other exploitative practices respondents were asked six questions. On each of them 90 per cent of the respondents answered that they were not faced with such experience.
- Related to COVID-19, 207 respondents were aware of the pandemic. Most of them (85%) received information from media, followed by local / national authorities (62%), family / friends (58.4%), civil society / NGOs (56.5%), medical staff (28%) and UN or other international organizations (7.2%).
- Almost all of the respondents (207) did not consider the option of returning during their journey.

INTRODUCTION

DTM Flow Monitoring Surveys in Europe – The Flow Monitoring Surveys (FMS) are part of IOM’s Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) activities in the Mediterranean and Western Balkan regions, conducted within the framework of IOM’s research on populations on the move by land and by sea to Europe. Surveys are analysed to provide information on profiles, transit routes and vulnerabilities of respondents.¹

The FMS gather information on profiles of migrants, including age, sex and gender, areas of origin, levels of education and employment status before migration, key transit points on their route, cost of the journey, reasons for leaving the place of residence, intended destination(s), expectations from the host government/ network of co-nationals there, as well as information on human trafficking, exploitative practices and abuse.

FMS in the Republic of North Macedonia – FMS in North Macedonia are part of the Migration Resource Allocation Committee (MIRAC) funded project “Effective evidence-based responses through strengthened migration data collection and capacities in the South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia Region” and has been developed as a tool to support data collection on mixed migration flows in the country. Its aim is to support effective evidence-based responses through strengthened migration data collection and capacities in the South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA) Region.

This report is based on the FMS carried out by IOM field staff in North Macedonia in February and March 2022. A total of 209 interviews were collected in two locations – TTC Gevgelija and TTC Tabanovce and they provide insight into the profile of migrants and refugees who transit through the country. The present analysis focuses on data are related to: nationality, country of origin and internal migration of respondents; migrants’ demographic and socio-economic profile; the journey and reasons for leaving countries of origin (including transit countries); cost of journey; intended destination; current status of the respondents and the problems they faced; human trafficking and other exploitative practices; COVID-19 experience; intentions and motivations to return.

Methodology – FMS in the Republic of North Macedonia covered only migrants and refugees who have arrived by land in the country no more than one year prior to the interview. The FMS questionnaire was available in e-format in Kobo² (English and French) and in paper form, translated into Arabic, English, French, Farsi, Italian, Spanish and Urdu. The survey was anonymous and voluntary. Respondents were approached in an ad-hoc manner by IOM field staff, with those who give their informed consent to be interviewed, proceeding with the remaining questions. Only migrants above 15 and above were approached. In case of respondents aged between 15 and 17 years, the informed consent was signed by the parent/guardian present during the interview. Migrants can decline to respond to individual questions or to interrupt the interview if they wish to do so.

¹ The term “respondents” refers to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers as the reference population consists of persons from within mixed migration flows. These terms are used interchangeably throughout the report.

² Kobo Toolbox is a free toolkit for collecting and managing data in challenging environments and is the most widely-used tool in humanitarian emergencies. Collected surveys are stored on IOM’s Kobo server in Geneva.

1. Nationality, country of origin and internal migration

The total sample was of 209 persons, who in February and March 2022 resided in TTC Vinojug and TTC Tabanovce. All of them agreed to participate in the survey and stated that they had not participated in this survey in the previous 12 months. Regarding their participation in another survey (apart from national and international border authorities deployed in the country) only 2 migrants answered YES, 125 that they did not participate in such surveys, and 82 migrants did not answer this question. Both migrants who answered YES were interviewed in Greece, one in Athens (UNHCR survey) and the other in Samos (other survey, by Frontex). This shows that the majority of respondents do not have experience with this type of survey.

Nationality and country of habitual residence

Out of the total number of 209 respondents, 23 per cent reported to be nationals of Pakistan, followed by respondents from India (19.6%), Afghanistan (16.7%), Syrian Arab Republic (13.4%) and Morocco (8.6%). Their joint share in the total number of respondents is 81.3 per cent, while the remaining 18.7 per cent were respondents from thirteen other nationalities (Table 1).

Table 1. Respondents surveyed in North Macedonia, by nationality (country of citizenship) and Country of origin (habitual residence)

Nationality / country of citizenship	Number of respondents	Share (in %)	Country of origin / habitual residence	Number of respondents	Share (in %)
TOTAL	209	100.0	TOTAL	209	100.0
Afghanistan	35	16.7	Afghanistan	35	16.7
Algeria	2	1.0	Algeria	2	1.0
Bangladesh	4	1.9	Bangladesh	4	1.9
Cuba	4	1.9	Cuba	4	1.9
Democratic Republic of Congo	1	0.5	Democratic Republic of Congo	1	0.5
Ghana	4	1.9	Ghana	4	1.9
Guinea	4	1.9	Guinea	4	1.9
India	41	19.6	India	42	20.1
Iraq	2	1.0	Iraq	1	0.5
Kenya	1	0.5	Kenya	1	0.5
Libya	2	1.0	Libya	2	1.0
Mauritania	1	0.5	Mauritania	1	0.5
Morocco	18	8.6	Morocco	18	8.6
Pakistan	48	23.0	Pakistan	48	23.0
Palestinian Territories	3	1.4	Palestinian Territories	4	1.9
Republic of Congo	2	1.0	Republic of Congo	2	1.0
Republic of Türkiye	2	1.0	Republic of Türkiye	2	1.0
Somalia	7	3.3	Somalia	7	3.3
Syrian Arab Republic	28	13.4	Syrian Arab Republic	27	12.9

The structure of respondents by country of origin or habitual residence it is almost the same as the structure by nationality, except for two migrants.

Internal displacement

Only seven of the 209 respondents stated that they were internally displaced in their countries of origin, three of whom are from the Syrian Arab Republic and two from Afghanistan (Table 2). For the majority of them, this movement happened in the period 2018-2021. All of them were accommodated in a private arrangement (including family members).

Country of origin	Admin 1 (Province)	Admin 2 (District or city)	Date of movement (month/year)	Estimated duration of stay (in month)	Place of stay
Afghanistan	Kabul	Bagram	2/1/2020	5	Private arrangement
Afghanistan	Kabul	Kabul	11/1/2020	10	Private arrangement
Ghana			1/15/2019	1	Private arrangement
Syrian Arab Republic	Idleb	Idleb	5/10/2018	48	Private arrangement
Syrian Arab Republic	Idleb	Idleb	7/1/2015	72	Private arrangement
Syrian Arab Republic	Idleb	Idleb	12/10/2021	3	Private arrangement
Republic of Türkiye	Kocaeli	Kocaeli	7/29/2019	16	Private arrangement

2. Demographic and socio-economic profiles

Demographic structure

Sex and gender structure – The majority, such as 203 of the respondents were male and only 6 female (Figure 1). When asked about their gender self-identification, more than 80 per cent (171 respondents) declared as male, 5 as female and 33 respondents did not answer this question (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Share of respondents, by sex (in %)

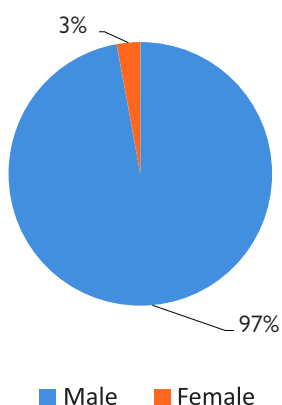
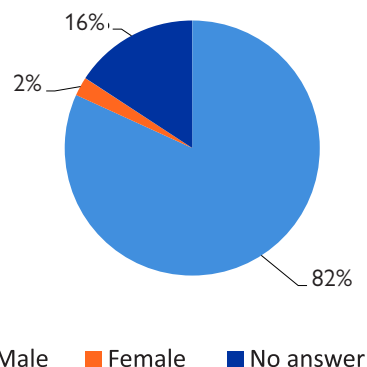
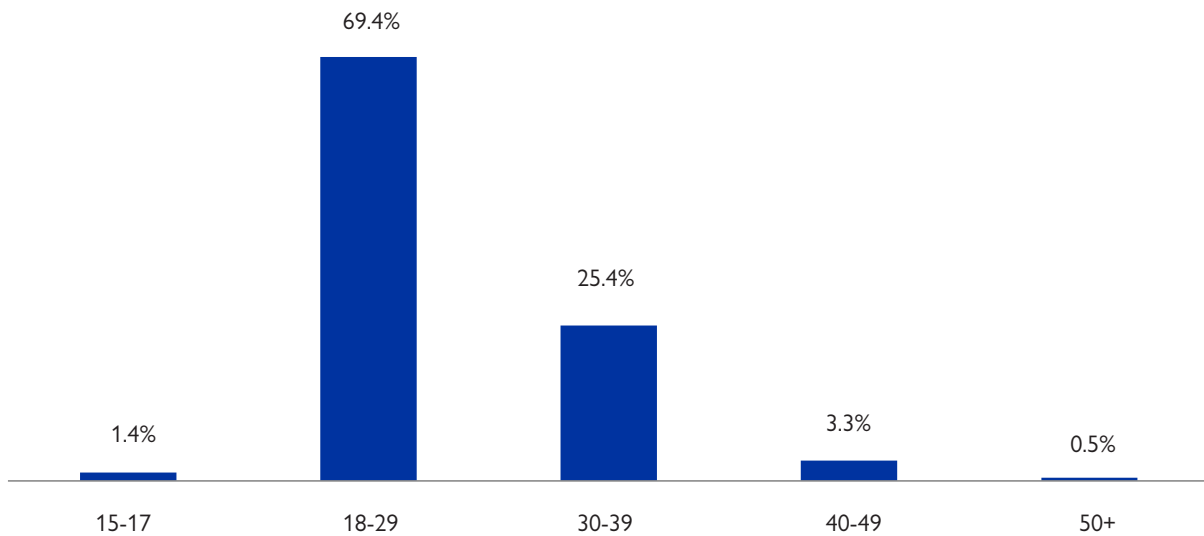


Figure 2. Share of respondents, by gender (self-identification) (in %)



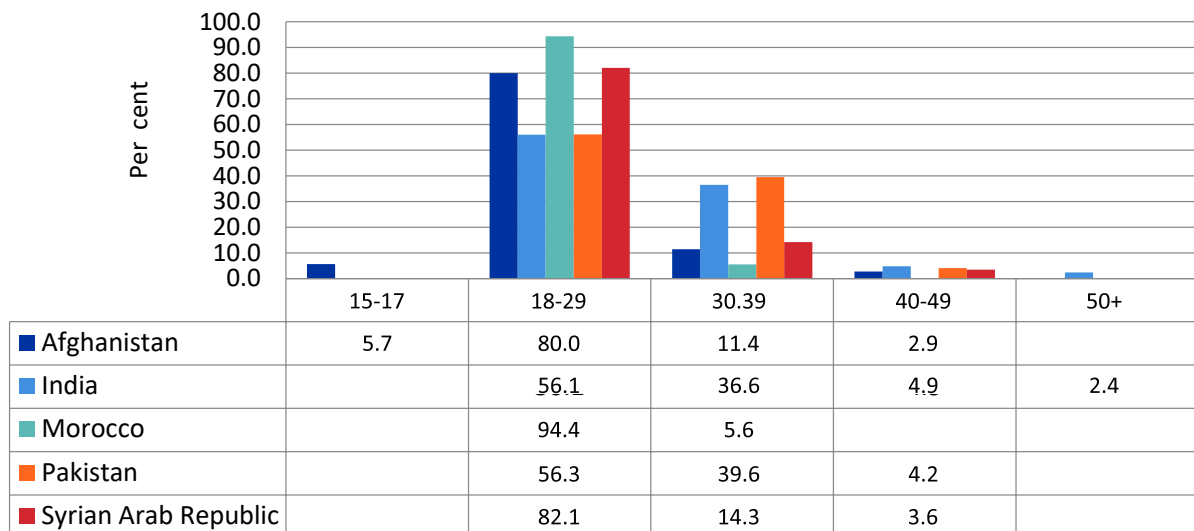
Age structure – The average age of respondents was 27.3 years old, which means that the majority were young persons. According to the age structure of the respondents, more than two thirds (69.4%) were aged 18-29 years, about one fourth (25.4%) were younger middle-aged persons (30-39), 3.3 per cent older middle-aged persons (40-49) and very small is the share of aged 50 and over (0.5%). Only 3 respondents (1.4%) were adolescents aged 15-17 years (Figure 3). Female respondents (only 6 in the sample) were slightly younger than males, with an average age of 26.5 years old compared to 27.3 years old, respectively. Out of the total number of 6 females, 5 were aged 20-28 years and one was 33 years old.

Figure 3. Share of respondents by age (in %)



Average ages of the top 5 nationalities surveyed show that respondents from Morocco were the youngest on average (23.9 years old) with a dominant share of aged 18-29 years (Figure 4). They are followed by those from Syrian Arab Republic (25.4 years old on average) and Afghanistan (25.7 years old). Respondents from Pakistan and India had a higher average age (28.9 and 29.1 years, respectively).

Figure 4. Share of respondents by age of the top 5 nationalities surveyed (in %)



Language spoken

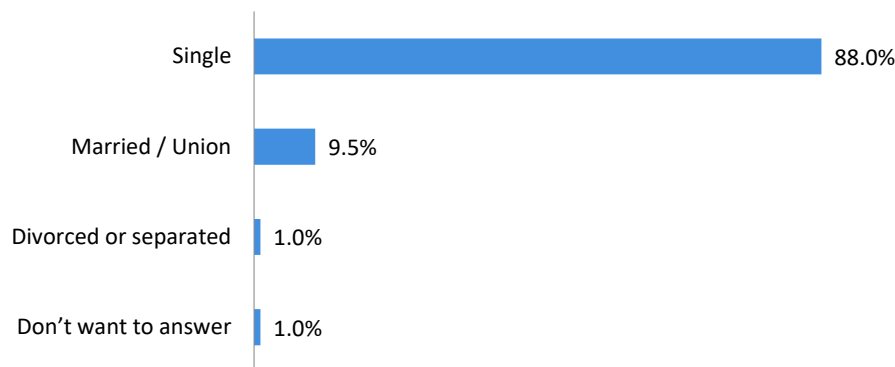
Respondents were asked about the first and second language spoken. This was not a mandatory question and was answered by approximately half of the respondents. A total of 110 respondents answered the question about the first language spoken (Table 3). More than one third (35 migrants) said that they speak Arabic, and relatively large is the number of respondents who speak Urdu (16) and Dari (10). As for the second language spoken, out of the 83 respondents that answered the question, more than half (47 migrants) said that they speak English.

First language	Amazght language	Arabic	Bengali	Dari	Farsi	French	Gujarati	Hindi	Indian	Kanda	Lingala	Marathi	Punjabi	Pashtu	Punjabi, Hindi	Somali	Spanish	Tamil	Turkish	Twi	Urdo, Panjabi	Urdu	Wala	
Number of respondents	4	36	1	10	2	1	1	7	1	1	1	1	7	6	1	6	1	1	1	3	1	16	1	
Second language	Arabic	Atabic	Dari	English, Hindi	English, Hindi	Farsi	FRANS	French	Kurdish	Little Greeke	Marathi	Pashto, English, Dutch	Pashtu	Punjabi	Rajasthani	Turkish	Urdo	Urdu, English						
Number of respondents	9	1	2	47	1	1	1	6	1	1	1	1	2	3	1	3	1	1						

Marital status and children

Most respondents (185, or 88.5% of the total) reported to be single (Figure 5). Only 20 respondents (9.5%) reported to be married, 2 that were divorced and 2 did not want to answer. The structure of the respondents by marital status and sex show that females were more likely than the male respondents to be married. Half of the females (50%) reported to be married compared to only 8.4 per cent of male respondents. About 90 per cent of male and one third of female respondents reported to be single.

Figure 5. Share of respondents by marital status (in %)

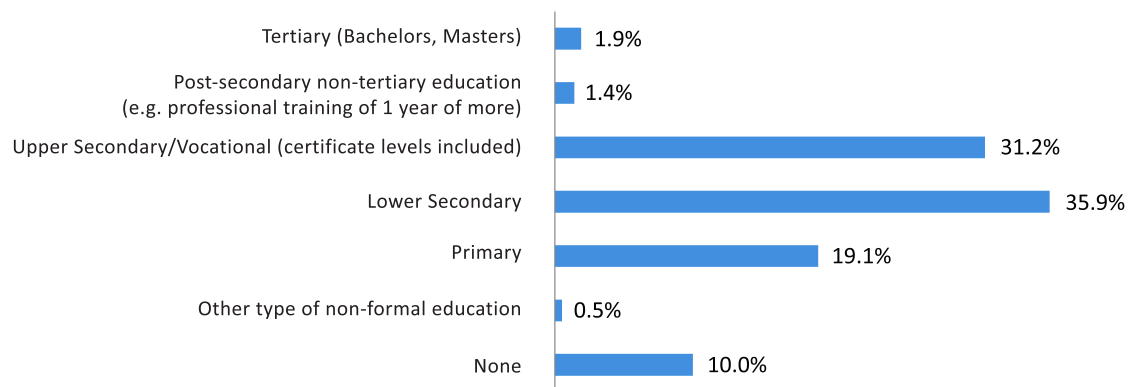


Only 10.5 per cent of the respondents reported that they had children. Among them, 72.7 per cent (16 migrants) said that their children were in the country of origin or habitual residence, and 13.6 per cent (3 migrants) reported that their children were travelling with them. Of those whose children were in the country of origin, 3 respondents reported that they had one child, 5 that have two children, 7 that have three children, and only 1 respondent has four children. Of the 3 respondents who reported that they have children with them, 2 have one child each, and 1 respondent has four children. Two of these 6 children are aged 0-4, and 4 are aged 5-14 years. One respondent who has one child with him reported that also has one child in the country of destination. Three respondents (13.6%) reported that have children in a country different from that of origin (one has two children, one has four and one has five children).

Education level

Approximately one fifth of the respondents (19.1%) reported having completed only primary education, and 10 per cent not having any completed formal level of education (Figure 6). More than one third of the respondents (35.9%) were with lower-secondary education and the share of those whose highest completed level of education was upper-secondary/vocational education amounts to 31.1 per cent. Total number of these two categories of migrants (140 persons) corresponds with the number of the respondents who reported 9-12 years of education. About 1.4 per cent of respondents completed post-secondary non-tertiary education (e.g. professional training of 1 year of more), and 1.9 per cent reported having completed tertiary education (that is 17-18 years of education).

Figure 6. Share of respondents by highest completed level of education (in %)

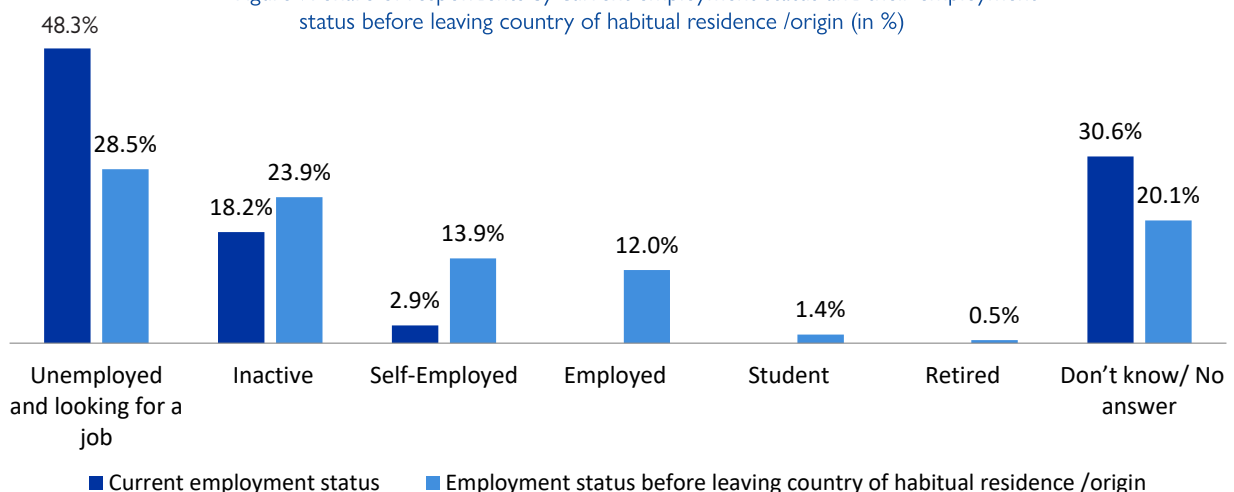


Out of a total of 72 respondents having completed upper-secondary education or more, only 17 specified the field of their education, as follows: education (4 migrants), business, administration and law (4), arts and humanities (3), health and welfare (2), services (2), social sciences, journalism and information (1), information and communication technologies (1). Out of the three children aged 15-17, 2 of them went to school 2 years prior to the interview, and 1 never went to school.

Employment status

Almost half (48.3%) of the sample reported to be unemployed and looking for a job at the moment of the interview, and 18.2 per cent were inactive (unemployed and not looking for a job) (Figure 7). Only 6 migrants (2.9%) were self-employed. The share of respondents who did not answer this question is relatively high (30.6%).

Figure 7. Share of respondents by current employment status and their employment status before leaving country of habitual residence /origin (in %)



More than 50 per cent of respondents reported that they were unemployed at the time of departure from the countries of origin or habitual residence (28.2% unemployed and looking for a job and 23.9% unemployed and not looking for a job). At the same time, 12 per cent were employed and 13.9 per cent were self-employed, while 1.4 per cent were students and 0.5 per cent retired. About one fifth (20.1%) of respondents did not answer this question.

Occupation and sector of employment

Out of the 55 respondents who reported to have been employed at the time of departure, one quarter (25.5%) said they were service and sales workers, followed by those who reported they were skilled manual workers (18.2%), craft and related trade workers (18.2%) and with elementary occupations (12.7%). Others stated that were professionals (7.3%), technicians and professional associates (3.6%) and managers (1.8%), followed by 5.5 per cent plant and machine operators and installers, and the same share (5.5%) of respondents who listed other occupations.

Regarding the employment sector of those employed at the time of departure, one fifth (20.4%) said they were employed in construction, followed by respondents employed in agriculture and accommodation and food activities with the same share (11.1% each), as well as transport / storage and other services activities (9.3% each). With the same share (5.6%) of employed respondents before departure are distinguished and the following sectors: fishing; mining and quarrying, wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; professional, scientific and technical activities; other sectors. A relatively small share of the respondents was employed in financial and insurance activities or human health and social work activities (3.7% each) as well as electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply and real estate activities (1.9% each).

3. The journey and reasons for leaving

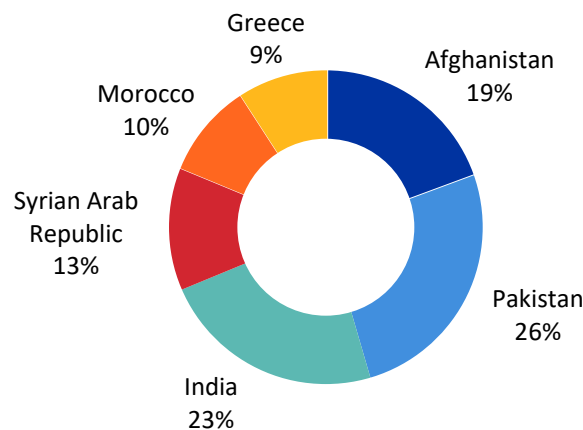
The journey

More than one third (35.9%) of respondents were travelling alone, while 64.1 per cent travelled with a group. As for those who reported travelling with the group, for 59.8 per cent of respondents, it consisted of non-family members, followed by 3.3 per cent family/relatives and 1 per cent facilitators (agents / employers / smugglers). Only 7 respondents were travelling with family / relatives, out of them: 2 with spouse / partner only, 2 with children only, 1 with parents only and 2 with siblings only. Only 2 respondents stated that they were separated from family / relatives during the trip (one in Serbia and the other one does not know where it happened).

Departure countries

The survey data show that for 21 respondent (10%) of the country of departure is different from the country of origin. Most respondents (176 migrants or 84.2%) reported that arrived in North Macedonia after departing from 6 countries that were either those of origin or those where they spent at least one year before moving again (Figure 8). The other 33 respondents stated that their departure countries were: Bangladesh, Guinea, Republic of Türkiye, Cuba (4 migrants each); Ghana, Palestinian Territories (3 migrants each); Algeria, Republic of Congo, Libya (2 migrants each); Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Kenya, Mauritania, Serbia (1 migrant each).

Figure 8. Share of respondents by top six countries of departure (in %)



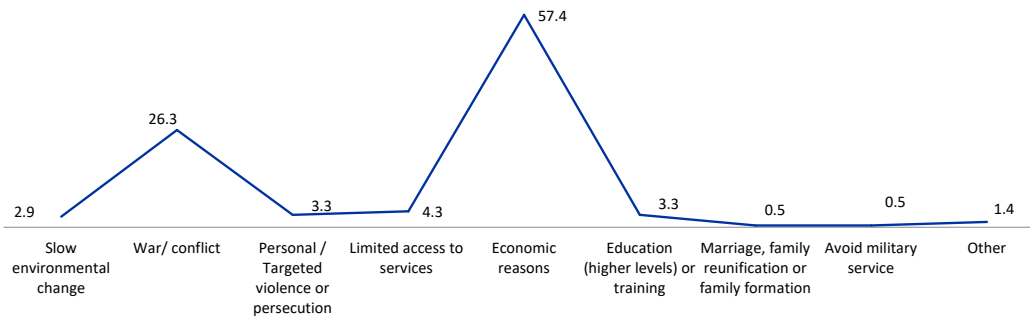
Twenty-one respondents answered the question of how long they stayed in the country of departure (residence for 1 year or more). Out of them, 18 respondents reported staying in the country of departure for 1-2 years (15 migrants in Greece, while in Islamic Republic of Iran, Serbia and Republic of Türkiye 1 migrant each), and 1 respondent who stayed in Greece reported staying there between 2 and 3 years. More than a 3-year stay in the country of departure was reported by 2 respondents, 1 in Republic of Türkiye (in Istanbul, 84 months) and 1 in Syrian Arab Republic (in Damascus, Al Maze, 276 months).

Reasons for leaving countries of origin

More than half (57.4%) of the respondents reported that they have left their countries of origin due to economic reasons (Figure 9) as first main reason, followed by those who cited war or conflicts (26.3%). Significantly lower share of respondents reported that they have left their countries of origin due to

limited access to services (4.3%), personal or targeted violence, education (higher levels) or training (3.3% each), as well as slow environmental change (2.9%).

Figure 9. Share of respondents by first main reason for leaving countries of origin (in %)

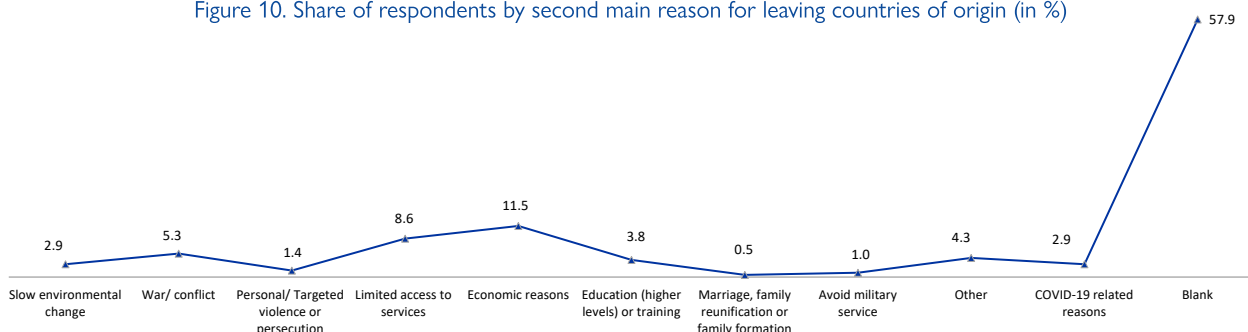


Only 10 respondents specified the type of violence they reported under personal violence, giving some qualitative accounts that spanned from issues with the family of origin for marriage or other reasons, fights over land and inheritance, conflicts during the election period, discrimination of sexual orientation. Among those who reported limited access to services, 21 respondents specified that these referred to better access to basic services (primary health care and primary education) at the place of intended destination, while 3 respondents reported better access to specialised medical care at the place of intended destination and 2 respondents reported better access to food and water at the place of intended destination.

Those who reported economic reasons for deciding to move were asked to specify rank 3 main motivations. The top economic motivation, reported by 138 out of 144 respondents, was looking for job or other livelihood opportunity. Some 52 respondents specified also the second most important economic reasons: 25 for commuting regularly (such as daily or weekly) for work or shopping; 11 for travelling to conduct business; 8 for conducting an agro-pastoral activity; 2 for looking for job or other livelihood opportunity. Finally, 46 respondents ranked their third most important economic reasons: 12 of them for commuting regularly (such as daily or weekly) for work or shopping; 12 for conducting an agro pastoral activity; 9 for travelling to conduct business; 1 for looking for job or other livelihood opportunity.

Respondents could also select a second main reasons for leaving the origin country. The largest part of the respondents (121 migrant or 57.9%) did not give any answer on this question (Figure 10), while others declared economic reasons (11.5%), followed by limited access to services (8.6%), war or conflicts (5.3%), slow environmental change and COVID-19 related reasons (2.9% each).

Figure 10. Share of respondents by second main reason for leaving countries of origin (in %)



Regarding the second main reasons for leaving the countries of origin, very few respondents specified the type of violence and limited access to services, or rank the top 3 most important economic reasons.

Drivers for migration – a focus on migrants leaving Afghanistan

The respondents from Afghanistan were asked how important these 13 listed reasons were for their decision to leave their home country, ranking them from 1 = very unimportant to 5 = very important:

- a. Lack of jobs/livelihood (personal/household level);
- b. No economic growth / prosperity (country level);
- c. Repayment of debt (personal/household level);
- d. Troop withdrawal (country level);
- e. Conflict and general security situation in my district of origin;
- f. Discrimination because of ethnicity/religion/gender (personal/household level);
- g. No human rights (country level)
- h. No healthcare / poor quality health care;
- i. No education opportunities / poor quality education;
- j. Food shortages;
- k. Financial access issues: cash and banks;
- l. Floods/landslides/droughts [Natural disaster]
- m. No hope for the future

Out of the 35 respondents of Afghanistan, 34 migrants answered this question, but only stating the first two reasons (a & b).

Lack of jobs/ livelihood (personal/ household level) was very important (ranked 5) for 14 and important (rank 4) for 13 respondents, slightly important (ranked 3) for 4 and very unimportant (ranked 1) for 1 migrant. Did not want to answer and not applicable - for 1 respondent each.

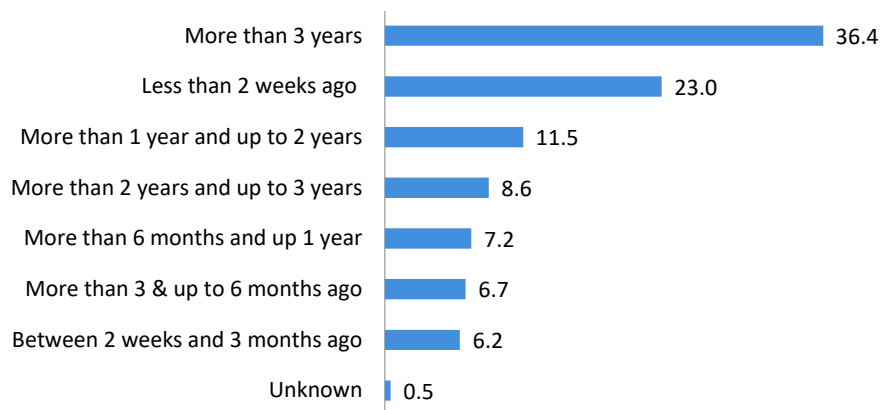
No economic growth/ prosperity (country level) was very important (ranked 5) for 13 and important (ranked 4) for 16 respondents, slightly important (ranked 3) for 3 and very unimportant (ranked 1) for 1 migrant. One respondent did not want to answer.

Journey from departure country

Majority of the respondents (76 persons or 36.4%) reported that they have left the departure country more than 3 years ago (Figure 11). Relatively high is the number and share of respondents who have left the departure country more than 2 years ago and up to 3 years ago (18 persons or 8.6%) and more than 1 year ago and up to 2 years ago (24 persons or 11.5%). It means that more than half of the respondents (56.5%) have left the departure country 1 year ago and over.

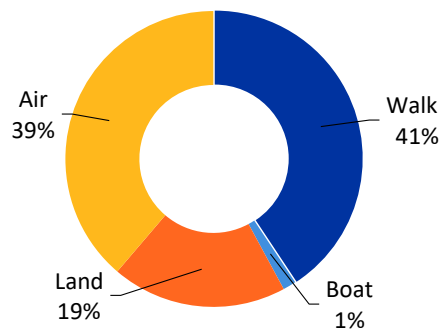
Additionally, 90 respondents (43.1%) reported that they have left the departure country in the last year, majority of them (48 respondents or 23.0%) - less than 2 weeks ago. Smaller and relatively similar is the share of respondents who reported that they left between 2 weeks and 3 months ago (6.2%), between 3 and 6 months ago (6.7%), more than 6 months and up to 1 year (7.2%).

Figure 11. Share of respondents by time since leaving the departure country (in %)



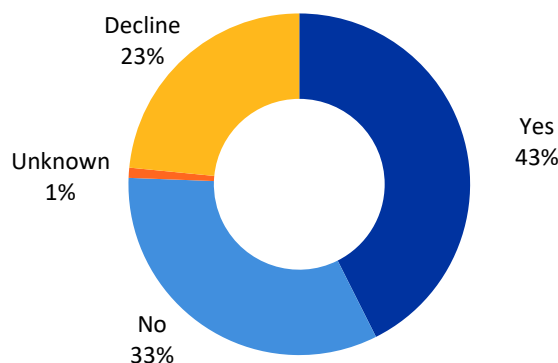
The main two modes of transport from the country of departure to the first transit country were walking on foot and air (41% and 39%, respectively), while the share of respondents travelling by land (vehicles or trains, public transport, bicycles, hiding in trucks / containers) is twice as low (19.1%) (Figure 12). Only 3 respondents reported that they have travelled by boat (in general, by sea or through other waterways, including jet-ski, dinghies, swimming across a river).

Figure 12. Share of respondents by main mode of transport, from the country of departure to first transit country (in %)



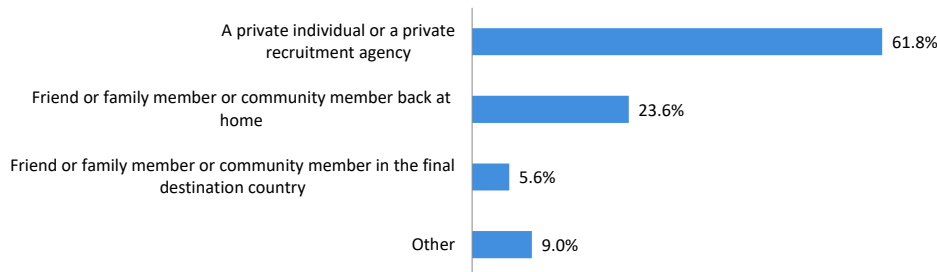
More than two-fifths of respondents (89 people) said they had help in organizing their journey, while one-third (69 people) had no help. A relatively high share of respondents (23.4%) declined to answer this question, and for 2 migrants, it is unknown (Figure 13).

Figure 13. Share of respondents by anyone help in organizing their journey (in %)



Out of 89 respondents who reported that somebody has helped them in organizing a journey, 55 migrants (61.8%) said that it was a private individual or a private recruitment agency, for 21 (23.6%), it was a friend or family member or community member back home, and for 5 respondents (5.6%), it was a friend or family member or community member in the final destination country. Only 8 respondents (9%) reported that there were other persons, specifying them as smugglers (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Share of respondents that have help in organizing their journey (in %)



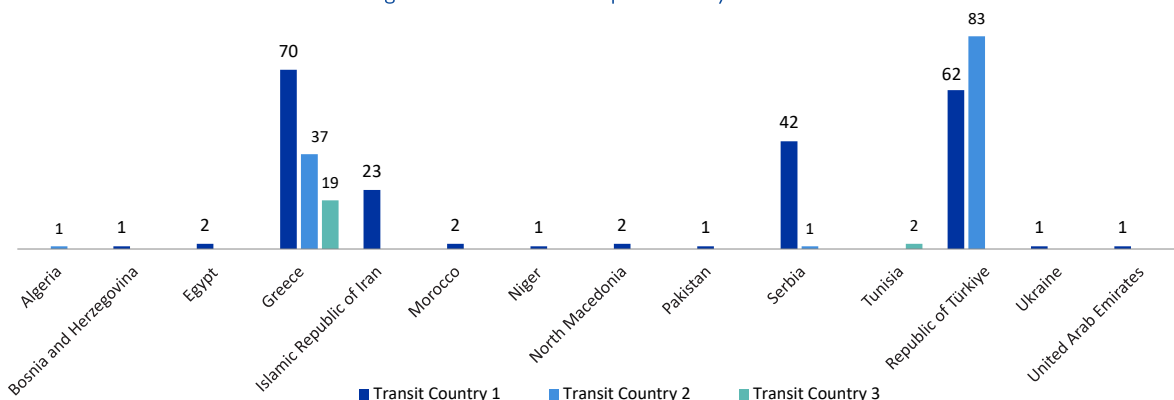
Transit countries

The survey inquired about transit countries, hence all countries where respondents passed on their journey from the country of departure (either that of origin or where the persons spent one year or more) until the last country before arrival into North Macedonia. Per each of the transit country, the survey asked about the time, the number of days spent there, the main reasons for their staying there for more than one year, the accommodation and how they left the country.

a) Countries

Respondents reported up to five transit countries before arrival in North Macedonia. For most (197 persons, 94.3%), the first transit country was either Greece, Republic of Türkiye, Serbia or the Islamic Republic of Iran (Figure 15). Relatively small number of respondents reported that, for them, the first transit countries were Egypt, Morocco, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Niger, Pakistan, Ukraine and the United Arab Emirates.

Figure 15. Number of respondents by transit countries



From the countries of origin or the countries of departure until their arrival in North Macedonia respondents generally followed the routes here described. Out of 35 respondents of Afghan nationality 34 (97.1%) started their journey departing from Afghanistan, and only one from Greece after spending more than one year there. Three fifths (60%) of Afghan nationals stated only two transit countries before arriving in North Macedonia, first Republic of Türkiye and second Greece, while 28.6 per cent travelled first to Islamic Republic of Iran, followed by Republic of Türkiye and Greece.

A total of 42 respondents of India were surveyed. Out of them 41 respondent (97.6%) started their journey from India and one respondent from Serbia. Most (88.1%) of respondents from India arrived in North Macedonia from Serbia. As for the rest of respondents from India 4.8 per cent travelled first to Republic of Türkiye and after that to Greece, while 2.4 per cent first to United Arab Emirates and then to Serbia.

Most of the 18 respondents of Moroccan nationality 17 (94.4%) started their journey from Morocco, and only one person from Greece. Majority (88.8%) of respondents from Morocco traveled first to Republic of Türkiye and after that to Greece.

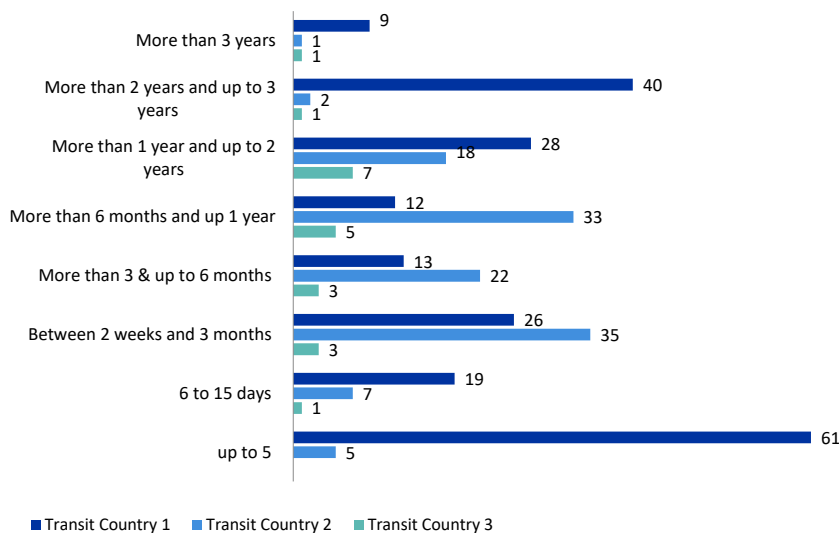
Out of 48 respondents of Pakistani nationality 46 (95.8%) started their journey from Pakistan, one from Greece and one from Islamic Republic of Iran. About three fifths (60.4%) of respondents from Pakistan traveled first to Republic of Türkiye and after that Greece, while 14.6 per cent traveled first to Islamic Republic of Iran, followed by Republic of Türkiye and Greece.

As for the Syrian Arab Republic, 42 respondents of were surveyed. Out of them 21 respondent (77.8%) started their journey from Syrian Arab Republic, five (18.5%) from Greece and one (3.7%) respondent from Republic of Türkiye. Nineteen (70.4%) of respondents from the Syrian Arab Republic travelled first to Republic of Türkiye and after that to Greece, and 3 respondents (11.1%) arrived in North Macedonia from Greece.

b) Number of days spent in the transit country

More than half (51%) of the respondents stated that they stayed in the first country of transit for up to three months (29.3% for 5 days, 9.1% for 6 to 15 days and 12.5% between 2 weeks and 3 months) (Figure 16). As for the others, more than one third of the respondents have a relatively long stay in the first transit country such as more than 1 year and up to 2 years (13.5%), more than 2 years and up to 3 years (19.2%) and more than 3 years (4.3%).

Figure 16. Number of respondents by number of days spent in the transit country

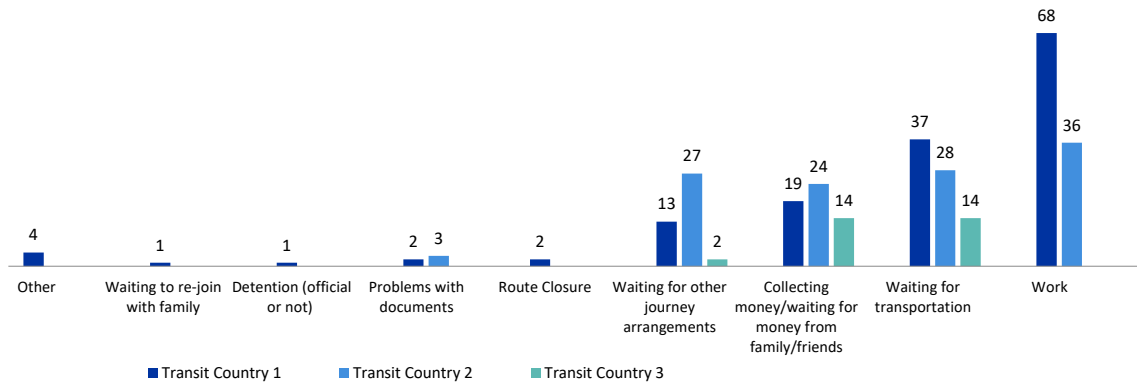


Regarding the second transit country, most of the respondents reported that they stayed between 2 weeks and 3 months (28.5%), between 3 and 6 months (17.9%), more than 6 months and up to 1 year (26.8%) and more than 1 year and up to 2 years (14.6%). For those who reported a third country of transit, 21 respondents reported, and half of them stayed more than 6 months and up to 1 year and more than 1 year and up to 2 years. The stay of 2 respondents in country 4 and country 5 is relatively shorter (between 2 weeks and 6 months).

c) Reason for stay in the transit country

The main reason for remaining in the first transit country for more than five days was related to work (46.3%), followed by those who reported they needed to wait for transportation (25.2%) (Figure 17). Significant is, also, the share of those who stayed more than five days because they needed to collect money or to wait for money from family or friends (12.9%), as well as waiting for other journey arrangements (8.8%).

Figure 17. Number of respondents by reason why they stayed in the transit country for more than 5 days

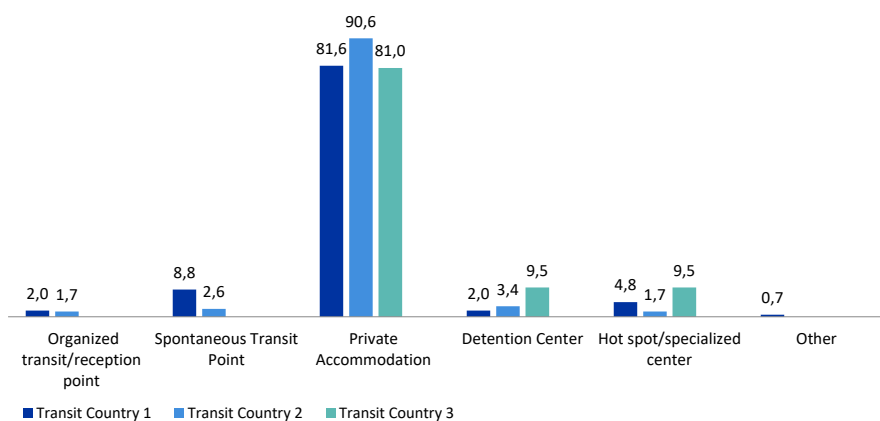


Similar reasons are also reported for more than 90 per cent of 118 respondents who reported a long stay in the second country of transit: 30.5 per cent remained for more than five days to work, 23.7 per cent waited for transportation, 22.9 per cent waited for other journey arrangements and 20.3 per cent waited for money from friends for family. Out of the 30 respondents who reported about reasons for their stay in the third country of transit, the highest (dominant) and equal (46.7%) is the share of those waiting for transportation and for collecting money / waiting for money from family / friends.

d) Accommodation in transit country

In most cases (80% in the first transit country), respondents reported that they stayed in the transit countries in private accommodation (hosted or paying a rent to the owner or some facilitators (Figure 18). Other types of accommodation were spontaneous transit points (improvised shelter, public space, etc., mentioned by 8.8 per cent in the first transit country), and hot spot or other specialized centres (4.8%).

Figure 18. Share of respondents by accommodation in transit country (in %)

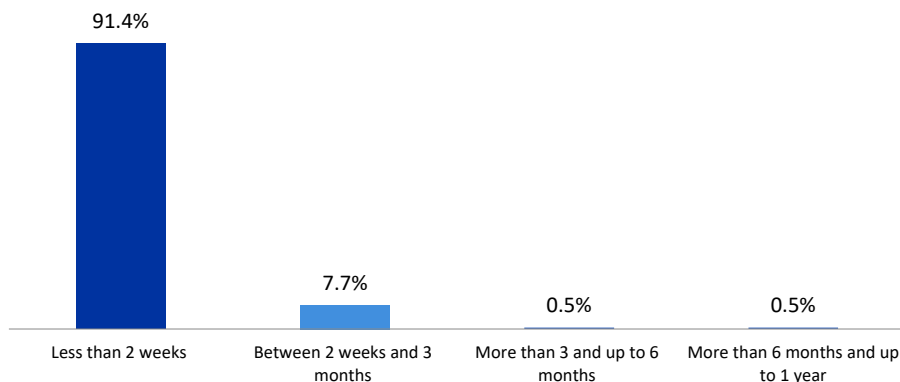


A relatively small share of respondents staying in the second transit country were accommodated in a detention centre (3.4%) and spontaneous transit point (2.6%), as well as in organized transit / reception area and hot spot / specialized centre (1.7% each). Accommodation of the rest of the respondents staying in third transit country was in a detention centre and a hot spot / specialized centre (2 migrants or 9.5% each).

Entry and length of stay in North Macedonia

Most of the respondents (91.4%) reported that they have stayed in North Macedonia less than two weeks at the moment of the interview (Figure 19), followed by 16 respondents (7.7%) who stayed between 2 weeks and 3 months. Only 1 respondent was in the country more than 3 and up to 6 months, and just as many, for more than 6 months and up to 1 year. No one reported to have been returned to his or her country of origin, while one respondent reported to have been readmitted once to another country while on the journey.

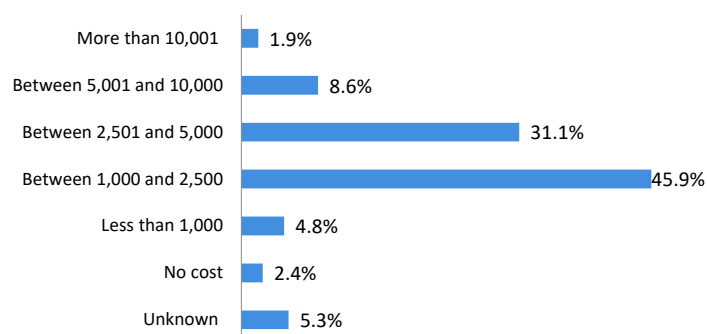
Figure 19. Share of respondents by time of stay in North Macedonia (in %)



4. Cost of the journey

Respondents of the survey were asked to estimate the overall amount paid individually since the beginning of the journey. The largest number and share of respondents (96 persons or 45.9%) reported that the estimated cost of the journey was between 1,000 and 2,500 USD. For 65 respondents (31.1%), it was between 2,501 and 5,000 USD, while 18 respondents (8.6%) have reported that the estimated cost was between 5,001 and 10,000 USD (Figure 20). 10 respondents reported estimated cost of the journey less than 1,000 USD and 4 respondents more than 10,001 USD. Only 5 respondents reported no cost, while the rest (11 migrants) could not estimate the cost of the journey.

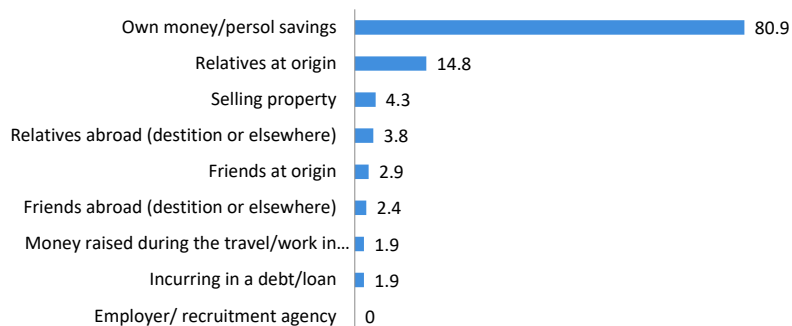
Figure 20. Share of respondents by the estimated cost of the journey in USD per person (in %)



The respondents were also asked about the cost of the last leg, from the last transit country to the country of the interview. The answer to this question shows that 82 respondents (39.2%) reported no cost to enter North Macedonia from the previous country. For 20 respondents (10%) the cost of the journey was between 10 and 100 USD, and for 7 respondents (3.3%) it was between 130 and 300 USD. Relatively large number of respondents paid between 400 and 850 USD, more precisely for 39 respondents (18.7%), the cost of the journey was between 400 and 650 USD and for 45 (21.5%), it was between 700 and 850 USD. As for the rest 8 respondents, they paid 1,000 USD, for 6 the cost was 1,200USD, and 2 respondents reported 1,400 USD and 2000 USD each.

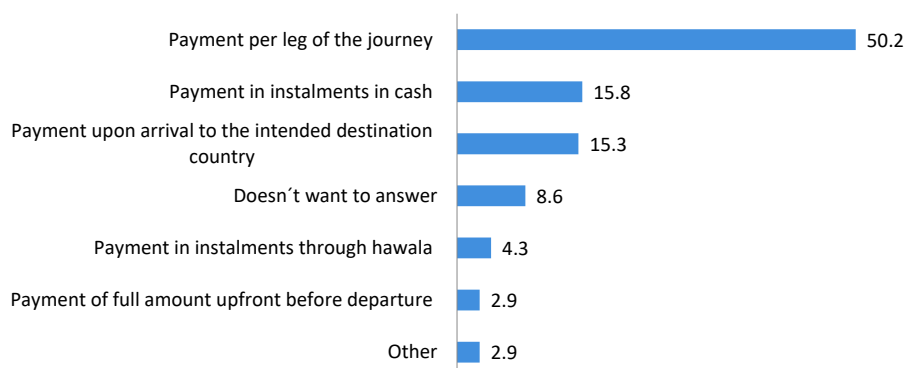
The majority (80.9%) of respondents stated that they paid for the trip with their own money or only personal savings, while 14.8% stated that it was the financial resources of relatives (Figure 21). There is a significantly lower share of positive responses related to other opportunities for providing the necessary money, such as the sale of property (4.3%), financial resources of relatives abroad (3.8%) or friends at origin and abroad (2.9% and 2.4%).

Figure 21. Share of positive responses by how was the money raised (multiple responses possible) (in %)



More than half of the respondents (105 persons or 50.2%) reported that it was payment per leg of the journey (Figure 22). Similar is the share of respondents who reported payment in instalments in cash and payment upon arrival to the intended destination country (15.8% and 15.3%, respectively). Nine respondents reported that their payment was in instalments through hawala and 6 respondents paid full amount upfront before departure. Relatively high is the share of respondents (8.6%) who did not want to answer this question.

Figure 22. Share of respondents by how the journey was paid (multiple responses possible) (in %)



Finally, 173 respondents (82.8%) said that upon arrival at the destination they will not have to repay (part of) the expenses of the journey. Only 21 respondents (10%) will have to repay (part of) the expenses of the journey, while for 15 respondents, it is unknown.

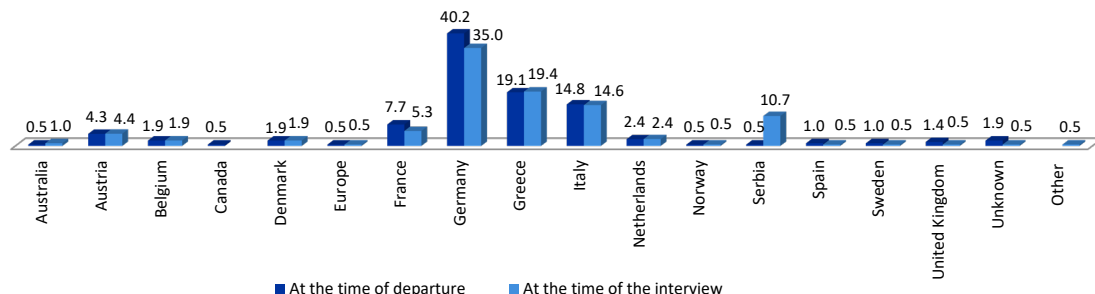
5. Intended destination

Countries of intended destination

Migrants' intentions in terms of final destinations are dynamic and change over time. They can change during the journey, as a result of the experiences *en route* i.e. the conditions and possibilities in the transit countries, as well as in the country where the survey is carried out. In the survey conducted in North Macedonia, the respondents answered three questions related to the countries of intended destination: at the time of departure, next destination and final destinations at the time of interview. Given that the Western Balkan countries usually are not the final destination of migrants travelling from the south to the north of the country, it would be most appropriate to compare the answers of the respondents related to the countries by intended destinations at the time of departure and final destination country at the time of interview, while intended next destination at the time of the interview to be observed separately.

Indicators in Figure 23 show that Germany remains to be the country of intended destination for greatest part of the respondents, although its share is higher at the time of departure (40.2%) than as final destination country at the time of the interview (33.5%). In the same direction, but with different intensity, are changes related to Canada, France, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom as final destination countries. The share of respondents that did not change their statement referred to the following countries: Belgium, Denmark, Europe, Netherlands Norway. As for the countries whose share is lower at the time of departure than as the country of final destination at the time of the interview, Serbia stands out (0.5% and 10.7%, respectively).

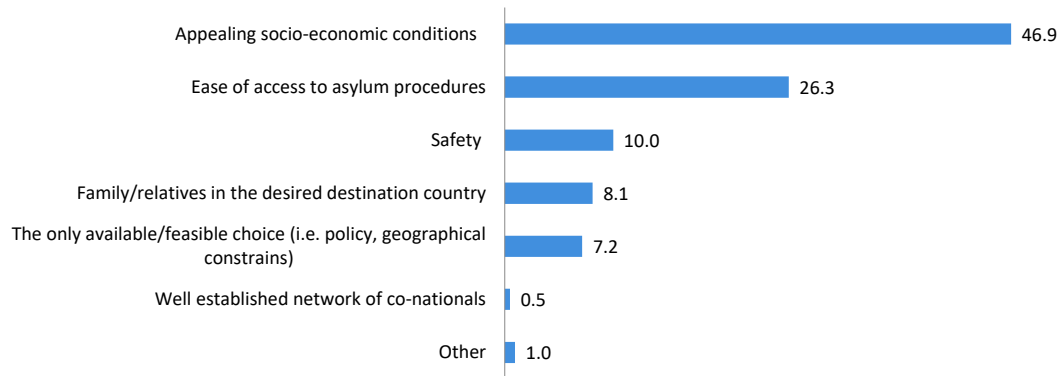
Figure 23. Share of respondents by countries of intended destination at the time of departure and final destination country the time of interview (in %)



At the time of the interview, most of the respondents reported that their next destination after North Macedonia was Serbia (148 persons, or 70.8%), followed by Greece (22%) and other countries (7.2%).

As for the reasons for choosing a final destination country, almost half of the respondents (98 persons or 47%) reported that they were related to appealing socio-economic conditions (education and welfare systems, social security, job opportunities) and more than one fifth (55 persons or 26.3%) that it was linked to the ease of access to asylum procedures (Figure 24). Relatively smaller is the share of respondents who, as reasons for choosing the final destination country, pointed out to the safety (10%), the presence of family members in the desired destination country (8.1%) or the fact that it was the only available or feasible choice due to policy or geographical constraints (7.2%). One per cent each is the share of respondents that reported well established network of co-nationals and other reasons.

Figure 24. Share of respondents by reasons for choosing final destination country (in %)



More than three fourths (161 person or 77%) of the respondents reported that have no information about asylum or how to get documents to stay regularly in the country of intended destination, and one fifth (42 or 20.1%) of them said that have information about the asylum procedure. The remaining 6 respondents did not reply to this question.

Relatives / family members at destination

More than half (51.7%) of the respondents reported that they have no first line relatives/family members and 4.3 per cent have first-line relatives (spouse, parent and children) in the country of destination (Figure 25). The rest 92 respondents (44%) reported that they have no relatives/family members in the intended destination country. Moreover, 24.4 per cent of the respondents said that they had non first-line relatives in another European country and only 1 (0.5%) had first-line relatives (spouse, parent and children). Three fourths of the respondents (75.1%) reported that they had no family members in another European country (Figure 26).

Figure 25. Share of respondents by having relatives / family members at destination (in %)

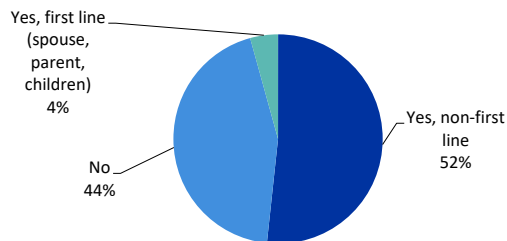
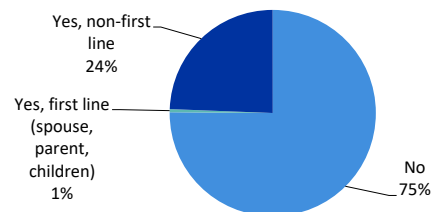
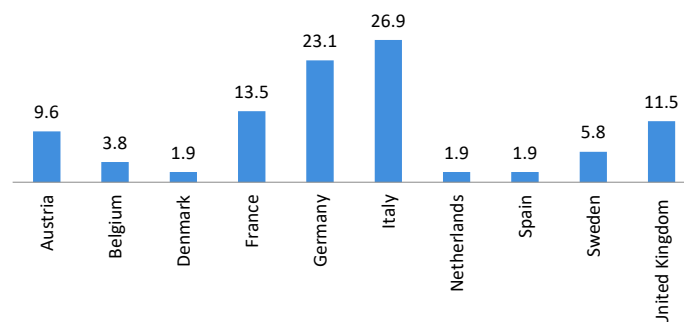


Figure 26. Share of respondents by having relatives/family members in another European country (in %)



Out of the 52 respondents that have relatives/family members in another European country, most of them (84.6%) reported that they were in five European countries - Italy, Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Austria (Figure 27).

Figure 27. Share of respondents that have relatives/family members in another European country (in %)



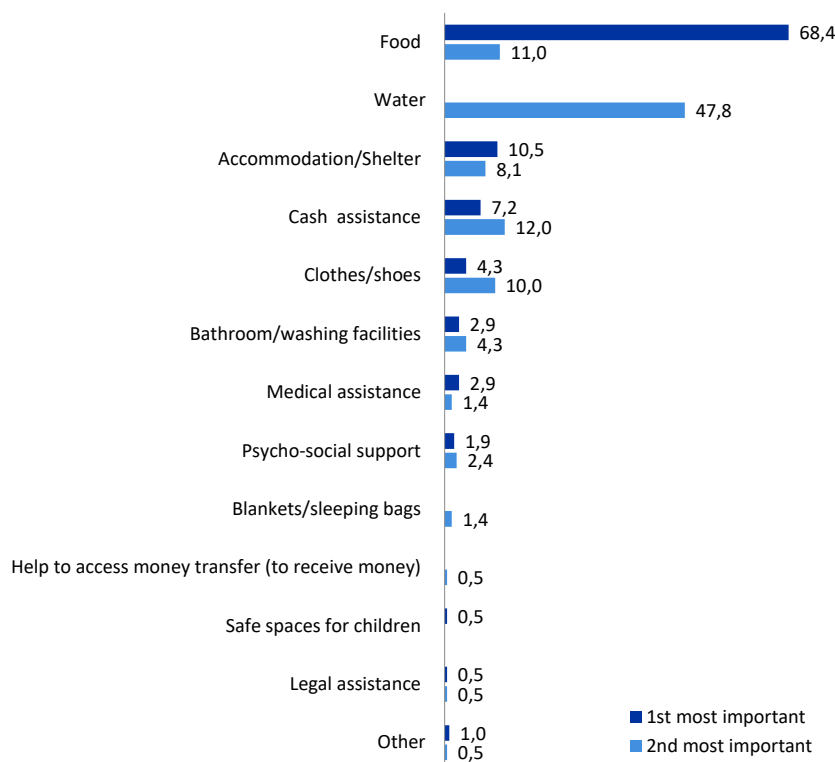
More than half (56.5%) of the respondents reported that they had not tried to join their family members abroad through legal procedures, while only 2.4 per cent did try. As for the other 86 respondents, 2 did not know and 84 migrants (40.2%) did not give any answer. Among those who did try (5 individuals), the reasons why it did not work were related to lack of support from authorities of origin and destination countries, the fact that family reunification channels being available only for first-line family members, the fact they got a rejection or that their visa expired during the closures related to the COVID-19 pandemic. As for the 118 respondents that did not try to join their family members through legal procedures, 106 migrants said that they have no information about family reunification in the country where their relative(s) live, 10 had information and 2 did not know.

6. Current status of the respondents and the problems they faced

Almost all (99.5%) respondents reported to be currently irregular in North Macedonia, with only one respondent who reported to have a work permit in another country (Netherlands).

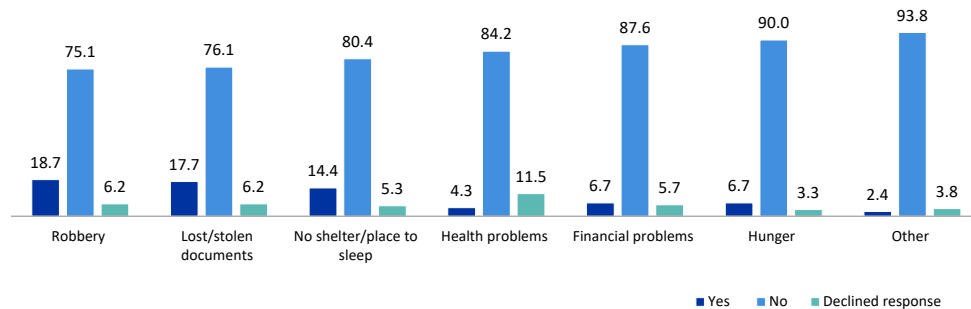
Respondents were asked to select 2 options, by prioritizing 1st and 2nd most important immediate needs, for services or good that they were unable to access or are not available at the moment. More than two thirds (68.4%) of the respondents mentioned food as the first most important immediate need (Figure 28), followed by the need for accommodation/shelter (10.5%), cash assistance (7.2%), clothes/shoes (4.3%), bathroom/washing facilities and medical assistance (2.9% each). With regards to the second most important immediate need, 47.8% of the respondents prioritized water. It is followed by the need for cash assistance (12%), food (11%), clothes/shoes (10%), accommodation/shelter (8.1%) and bathroom/washing facilities (4.3%). This shows that the prioritized 1st and 2nd most important immediate needs of migrants were related to their existential needs - food and water.

Figure 28. Share of respondents, by their 1st and 2nd most important immediate needs at the time of interview (in %)



Migrants were also asked about several types of problems they were faced during the journey from a given list. Financial problems were reported by about 18.7 per cent of respondents. Others reported that they had experienced hunger (17.7%), that they had no shelter/place to sleep at some point during the journey (14.4%). Also, 6.7 per cent was robbed, the same share (6.7%) reported having had health problems and 4.3% was faced with lost/stolen documents (Figure 29). Overall, most respondents reported to have not experienced any of the mentioned types of problems.

Figure 29. Share of respondents that during the journey so far have faced any problems (himself or his family) (in %)



Among respondents that reported some problems during the journey, those reporting to have experienced robbery, the lack of shelter or their document stolen stated that it happened when they were in transit countries. Among those reporting hunger, financial problems and health problems respondents stated that these happened not only in transit but also quite frequently in North Macedonia (between 55% and 41% of the cases).

7. Abuse, violence and other exploitative practices

Within this module, respondents were asked six questions relative to experiences of abuse, violence and exploitation and on when and at which point during journey (transit country) these occurred.

Working or do other activities without getting the expected payment

Ten respondents (4.8%) reported such exploitative practice, while 188 migrants (90%) did not experience it, and the remaining 11 respondents (5.3%) declined to reply. Most of the reported experiences of unpaid work took place while in transit in Greece and Republic of Türkiye and were related to work experiences in a restaurant, in agriculture, in doing daily jobs (e.g., cleaning).

Forced to perform work or other activities against will

Only two respondents (1%) reported this experience, and that it took place in Greece where they were forced to do cleaning jobs. Most respondents (199 or 95.2%) did not report to have been forced to work, and other 8 (3.8%) declined to reply.

Approached by someone offering marriage (for the respondent or for close family member – child or sibling)

No respondents reported this experience, most of them (203 or 97.1%) answered “no”, and six refused to answer this question.

Kept at a certain location against will

Three respondents (1.4%) reported such experience, 199 migrants (95.2%) answered “no”, and seven respondents (3.3%) declined to reply. The experiences of being held against will were reported in Greece and Republic of Türkiye, in camps and in closed spaces by smugglers with no possibility to go out.

Physical violence

Ten respondents (4.8%) reported to have suffered from physical violence, 188 migrants (90%) answered “no”, and eleven respondents (5.3%) refused to answer this question. The physical violence took place in Greece (4 persons), while for others in Republic of Türkiye and North Macedonia (2 persons each) as well as in Croatia and Hungary (1 person each). Among the forms of physical violence reported, there were beatings (one case with a broken nose), including for stealing documents by smugglers; pushing for paying money, and stabbing with knives, all such acts occurred among migrants or done by smugglers.

Threats with sexual violence during the journey

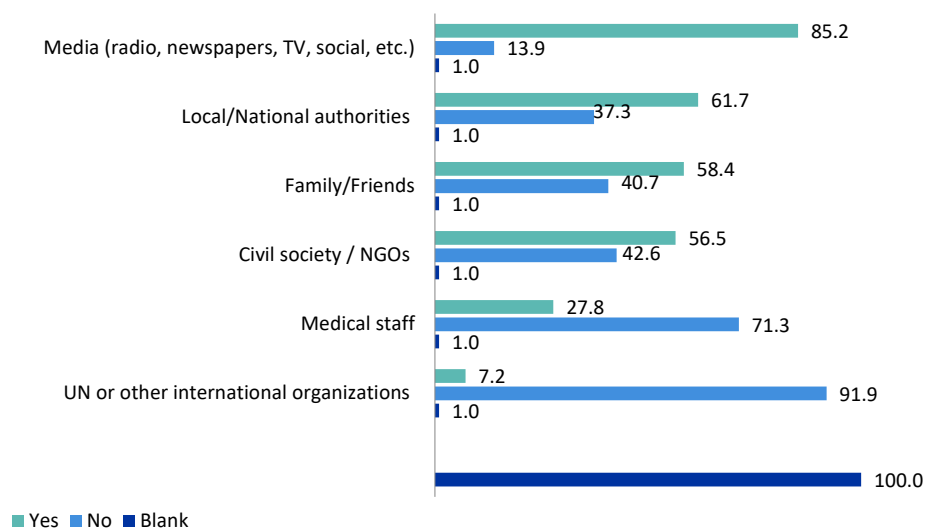
Only one respondent (0.5%) reported to have been forced to sexual activity in Istanbul (Republic of Türkiye). Most of the respondents (202 or 96.7%) answered “no”, and six (2.9%) respondents declined to reply.

8. COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic outbreak in early 2020 undoubtedly affected migration due to lock downs and limited movements within and across countries. Hence, a new module of questions associated to the experience of the respondents with the pandemic was introduced that year. The survey results show that most of the respondents (207 out of 209 migrants) were aware of the COVID-19 Pandemic, while the remaining 2 migrants did not answer.

Respondents reported different sources of information on COVID-19: media (radio, newspapers, TV, social, etc.) were pointed out by largest number of the respondents (178 or 85.2%), followed by local or national authorities (129 respondents or 61.7%), family and friends (122 or 58.4%), civil society and NGOs (118 or 56.5%), medical staff (58 or 27.8%) and UN or other international organizations (15 or 7.2%) (Figure 30).

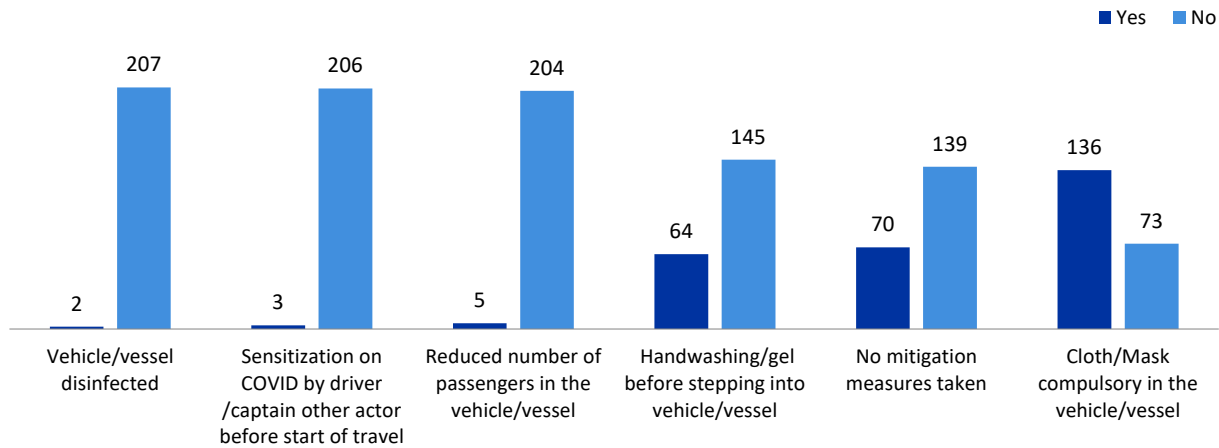
Figure 30. Share of respondents that during the journey so far have faced any problems (transit countries and in North Macedonia) in %



Respondents were asked about COVID-19 mitigation measures applied during their current journey, in the vehicles or vessels and other means of transportation they travelled in, with possibility to select multiple answers if needed. Almost two thirds (65.1%) of respondents reported that the use of mask was compulsory (Figure 31). Also, hand washing/gel before stepping into the means of transportation was mentioned by 30.6 per cent of respondents, followed by reduced number of passengers (5 or 2.4%),

sensitization on COVID-19 by driver or other actor before the start of travel (3 or 1.4%) and means of transportation disinfected (2 or 1%). One third of the respondents (33.5%) reported no mitigation measures taken.

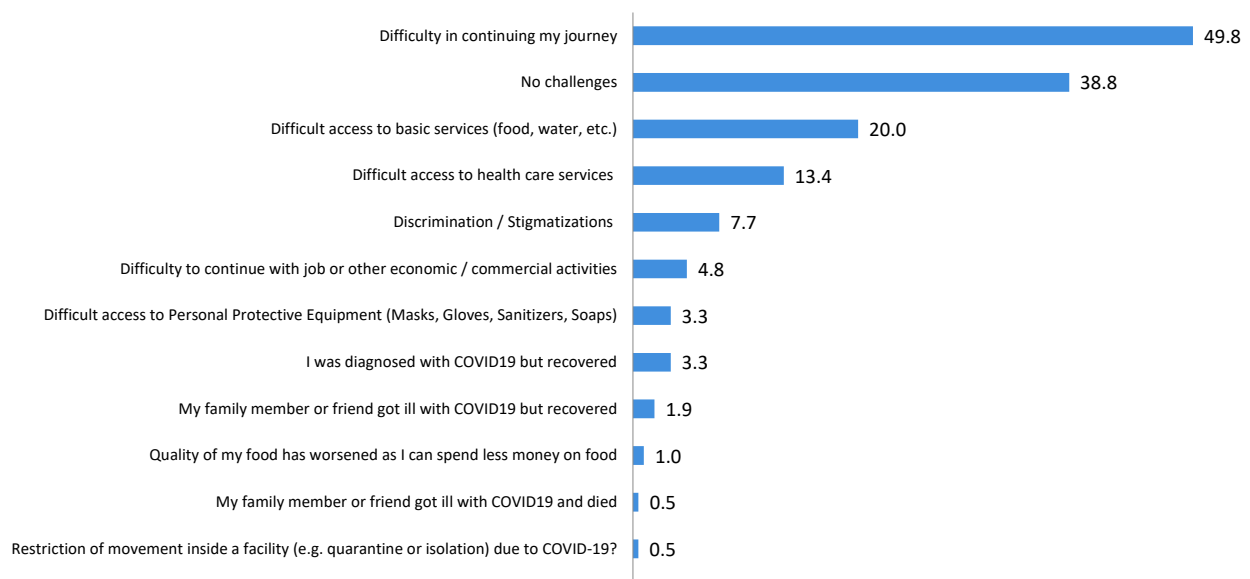
Figure 31. Number of respondents, by COVID-19 mitigation measures applied during their current trip/ in the vehicle/vessel they travelled in



Ninety (43%) respondents reported that they have been vaccinated, 118 migrants (56.5%) said they are not vaccinated and for 1 respondent (0.5%) it is unknown. Out of 118 not vaccinated respondents, 16 reported that they would you like to be vaccinated, the 60 migrants answered that they were not willing to, and quite a big number (42 migrants) did not know.

Regarding the challenges encountered during the journey since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, respondents also had the opportunity to choose among multiple options (Figure 32). Half of the respondents (104 migrants) reported that it was difficulty in continuing their journey. Relatively high number of the respondents (32 migrants or 15.3%) was faced with difficult access to basic services (food, water, etc.), difficult access to health care services (28 migrants or 13.4%) and discrimination or stigmatizations (16 respondents or 7.6%).

Figure 32. Share of respondents by encountered challenges since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic during the journey (multiple responses possible) (in %)



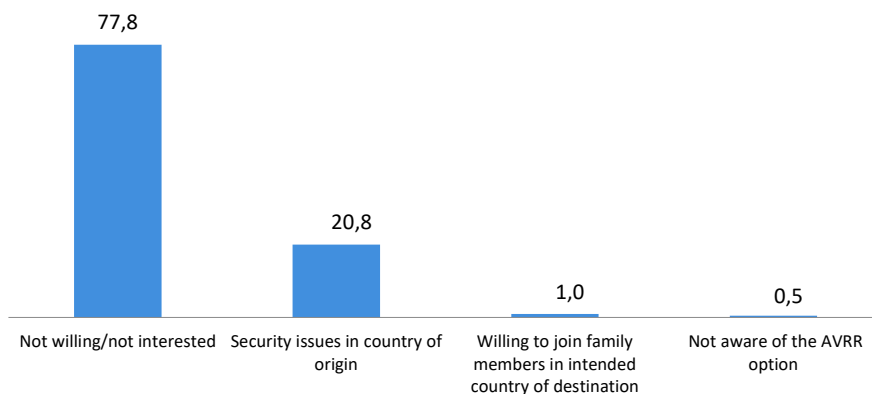
No one respondent pointed out difficulty with sending or receiving remittances from abroad. Therefore, there were no answers to additional questions related to the explanation which difficulties they experienced with sending or receiving remittances from abroad as well as to clarify how difficulties with sending or receiving remittances have impacted the respondent and his family.

9. Interest and motivations to return

The last module of the survey included questions relative to the awareness and interest by respondents in the possibility of being assisted with voluntary return (AVRR). Only two respondents reported they had considered returning during the journey, and in particular in the current location. The main reasons for considering return were the barriers for staying in the country legally, and better conditions in the country of origin (one respondent each).

Among that had not thought about returning to their country, most of them (161 respondents or 77.8%) reported they were not willing or not interested, while 48 respondents (20.8%) said they feared for their security at origin. Two respondents reported that they wanted to join family members in the intended country of destination, and only one respondent was not aware of the AVRR option at the moment of the interview.

Figure 33. Share of respondents by reasons why they did not consider return (in %)



Among those not intending to return, most (205 migrants or 99%) said they would continue their journey to the intended destination, while two respondents reported to be willing to stay in the country.



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