

Poland

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



© IOM 2023

January - March 2023
Country Report & Data Analysis

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout the report do not imply expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IOM concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

This publication was made possible through the support provided by Council of Europe Development Bank, U.S Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), the German Federal Foreign Office, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Publisher

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

International Organization for Migration
Country Office Poland

Wiejska 12 str., Warsaw, Poland
+48 22 538 91 03
Website: <https://dtm.iom.int/poland>
Contact: iomdtmpoland@iom.int

This report was issued without formal editing by IOM.

Cover photo: An enumerator speaks with a refugee from Ukraine. © IOM 2023

Citation: International Organization for Migration (IOM), May 2023. DTM Poland “Surveys with refugees from Ukraine: needs, intentions and integration challenges” IOM, Poland. For more information on terms and conditions of DTM reports and information products, please refer to: <https://dtm.iom.int/terms-and-conditions>

Release date: 07 June 2023

© IOM 2023



Some rights reserved. This work is made available under the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 IGO License \(CC BY-NC-ND 3.0 IGO\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/igo/legalcode).*

For further specifications please see the [Copyright and Terms of Use](#).

This publication should not be used, published or redistributed for purposes primarily intended for or directed towards commercial advantage or monetary compensation, with the exception of educational purposes, e.g. to be included in textbooks. Permissions: Requests for commercial use or further rights and licensing should be submitted to publications@iom.int.

* <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/igo/legalcode>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

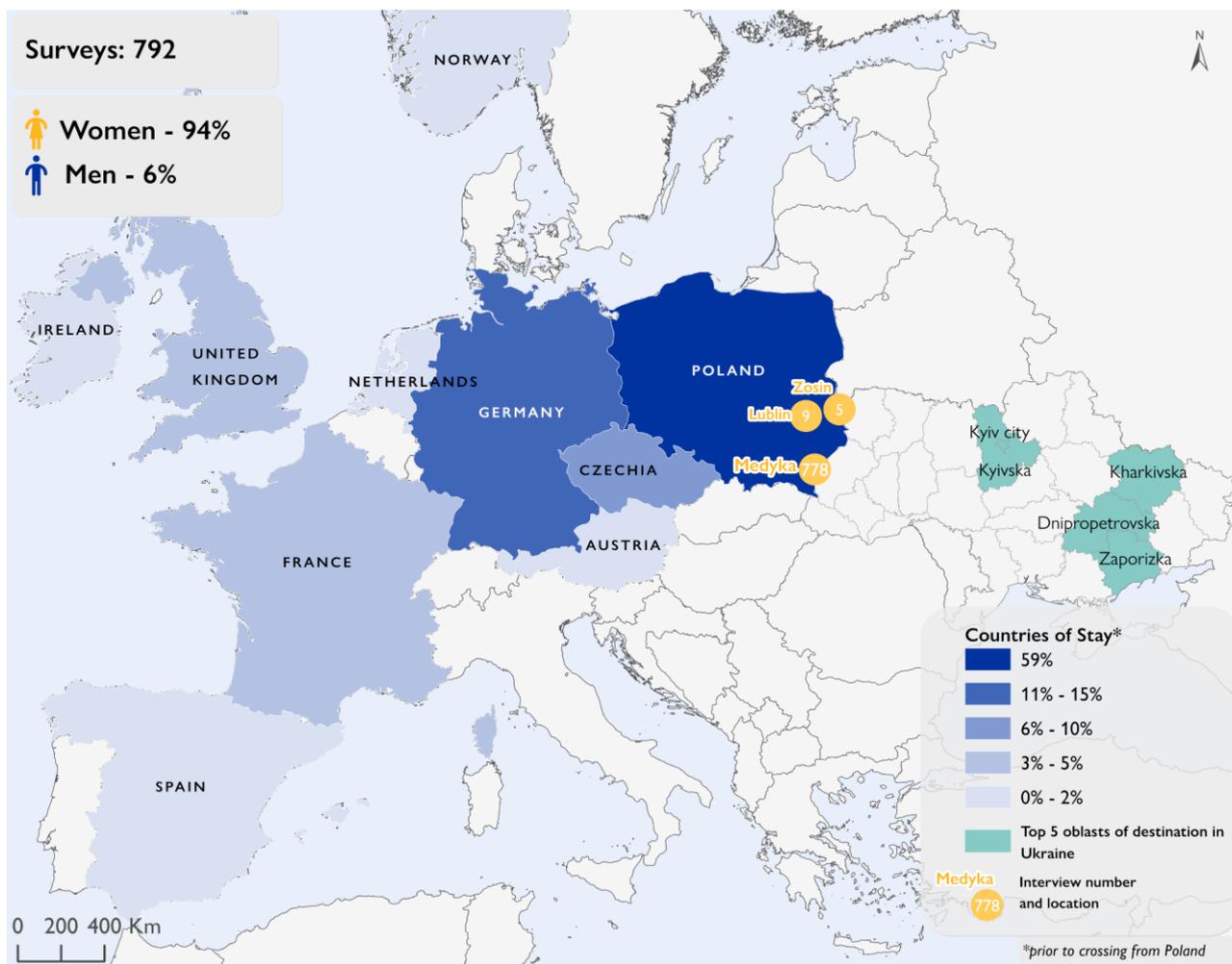
1. Socio-Demographic Profile	5
Gender and age	
Marital status	
2. Time Outside Ukraine	6
Countries of Stay while abroad	
Average time since initial displacement	
3. Oblast (region) of Origin and Destination	7
Origin or habitual residence	
Intended Destination	
Number of exits/entries to/from Ukraine	
4. Intentions and Reasons to Cross Back to Ukraine	8
Long-term stay	
Short-term visit	
5. Needs, Assistance Received, and Challenges	9
Immediate needs upon crossing back	
Assistance received in Poland	
Experiences of discrimination	
6. Group Composition	10
Travel mode	
Age groups	
7. Methodology	11
Background	
Methodological framework	

KEY FINDINGS

- Demographics of respondents: 94% of respondents were females. Among male returnees, 69% were over the age of 60 years.
- Top 3 countries of stay abroad: Poland (59%), Germany (12%), Czechia (7%).
- Top oblasts of origin: Dnipropetrovska (23%), Kharkivska (13%), Kyiv city (12%).
- Intended destination: 91% of respondents were planning to return to their oblast of origin. The 9% of those, who intended on returning to another oblast, were mainly from Donetsk, Khershonska, and Luhanska oblasts.
- Intentions upon crossing back: long-term stay (44%), short-term visit (42%), 15% were not yet sure.
- Top needs upon crossing back:* financial support (16%), health services (13%), medicine (10%), and psychological counselling (5%). 47% of respondents did not declare any needs..
- Top areas of assistance received:* financial support (39%), food assistance (21%), accommodation assistance (17%), clothes (9%), WASH (Water, sanitation and hygiene) items (8%).

* more than one answer possible

Map I: Poland, 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.

1. Socio-Demographic Profile

Gender and age

Out of the 795 refugees from Ukraine who were interviewed prior to crossing back from Poland, 94 per cent were women, and 6 per cent were men. When looking at the data disaggregated by gender, it appears that men were underrepresented, with only 2 per cent in the age category of 46-59 and 4 per cent

the category of 60+. Women make up the majority of respondents who were crossing back from Poland to Ukraine, with a total of 30% in the age category 18-35, 47% in the category 46-59 and 17% in the category of 60+.

Figure 1: Surveyed individuals by gender (%), N=795

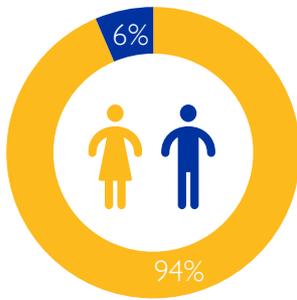
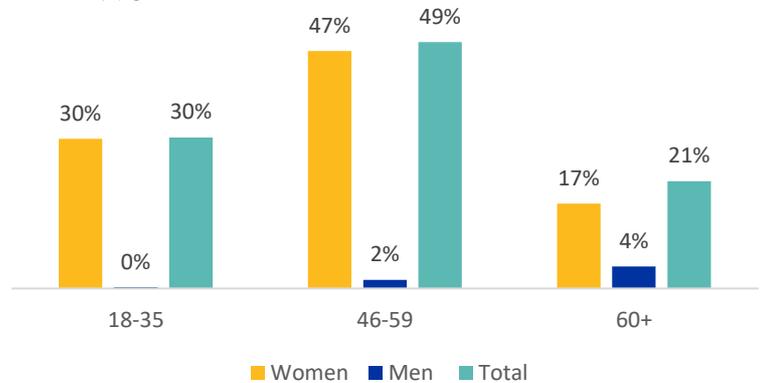


Figure 2: Age, by gender and total (%), N=795

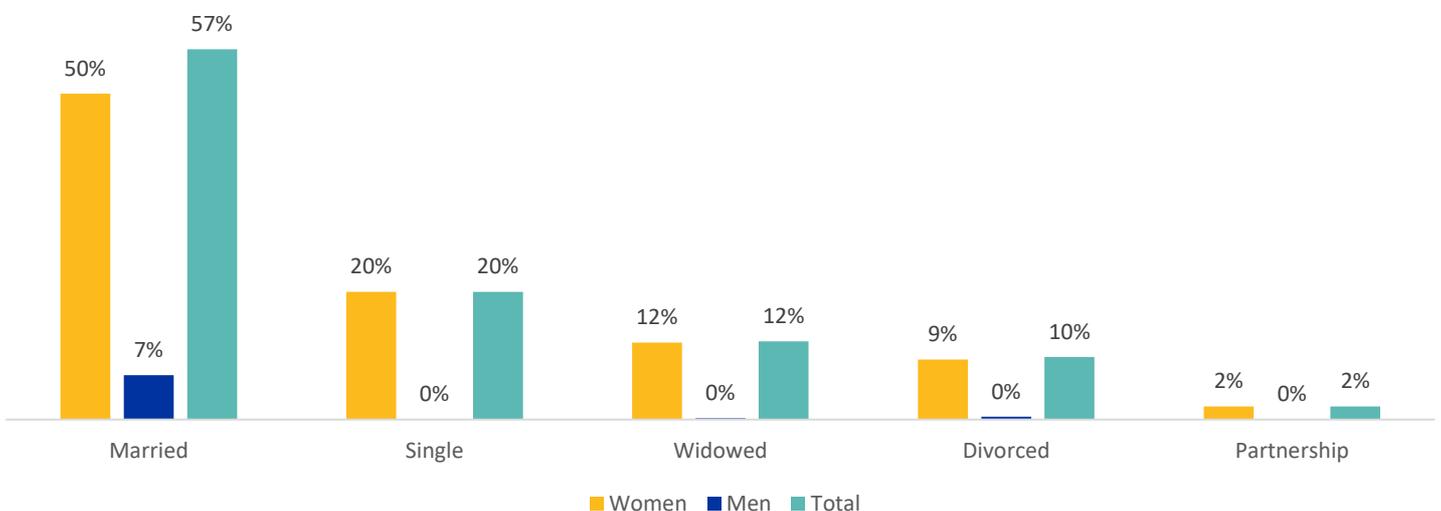


Marital status

Out of those who responded to this question (501 individuals), more than half of the respondents (57%) were married. This was followed by twenty per cent

of respondents who were single, twelve per cent who were widowed, ten per cent who were divorced and two per cent who were in a partnership.

Figure 3: Marital status, by gender and total (%), N=501



2. Time Outside Ukraine

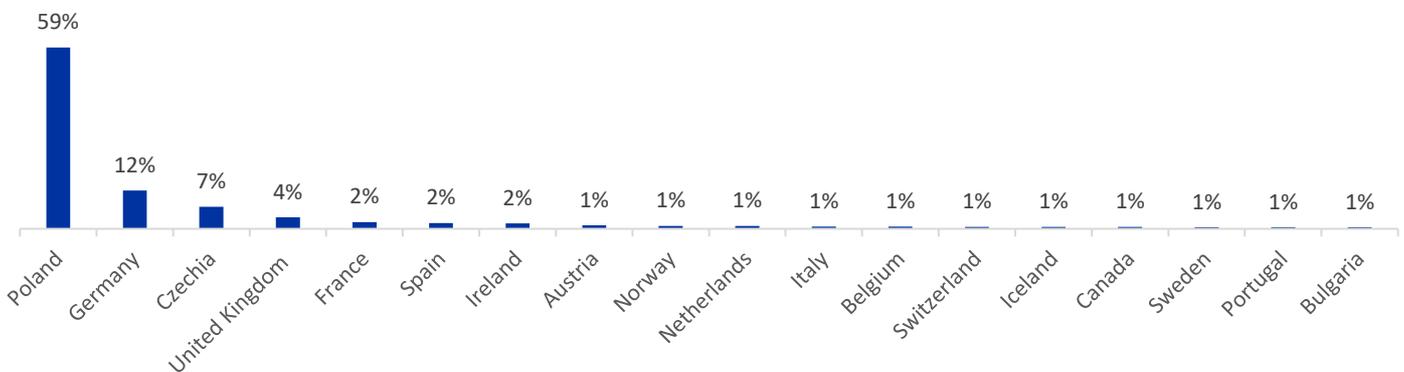
Countries of stay while abroad

More than half (59%) of respondents predominantly stayed in Poland, where the assessment was conducted, before crossing back to Ukraine.

This was followed by those who mainly stayed in Germany (12%), Czechia (7%) and the United Kingdom (4%).

Other countries that were mentioned by respondents were France (2%), Spain (2%) and Ireland (2%). The remaining percentage of respondents (11%) stayed in other 11 countries across different continents before travelling back to Ukraine.

Figure 4: Countries of stay (%), N=795



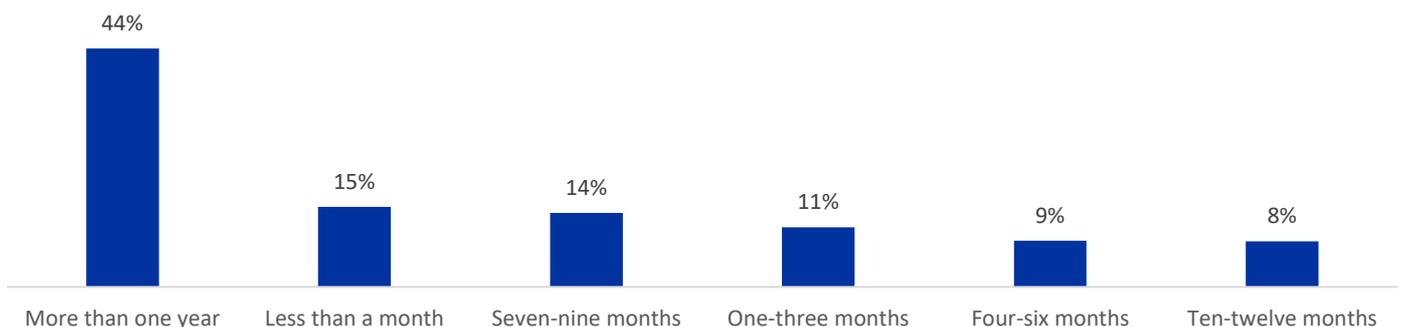
Average time since initial displacement

The approximate duration of time spent outside Ukraine can be assessed by looking at the difference between respondents' initial date of displacement from Ukraine and the date of interview.

Forty-four per cent of respondents spent more than one year in displacement. Fifteen per cent of respondents have spent less than a month in displacement at the time of the interview, which means

they arrived between April and March 2023. This group was followed by those, who have spent seven to nine months in displacement (14%). Thirteen per cent have been displaced for a duration of one to three months, nine per cent between four to six months and eight per cent have spent ten to twelve months outside of Ukraine.

Figure 5: Approximate time in displacement until the date of interview (%)



3. Oblast (region) of Origin and Destination

Origin or habitual residence

More than half of respondents (61%) came from four Oblast in Ukraine: Dnipropetrovska (23%), Kharkivska (13%), Zaporizka (13%) and Kyiv city (12%). The remaining respondents (39%) came from 16 other oblasts in Ukraine: Kyivska (6%), Odeska (6%), Lvivska (4%), Cherkaska (3%), Donetsk (3%),

Khersonska (2%), Khmelnytska (2%), Kirovohradska (2%), Mykolaivska (2%), Poltavska (2%), Ternopilska (2%), including Chernihivska, Luhanska, Sumska, Vinnytska and Zhytomyrska with 1% of respondents each.

Number of exits/entries from and to Ukraine

Most respondents have entered/exited Ukraine only once since February 24, 2022 (43%). Twenty per cent had entered/exited more than two times, nineteen per cent twice and eighteen per cent haven't entered/exited more than once.

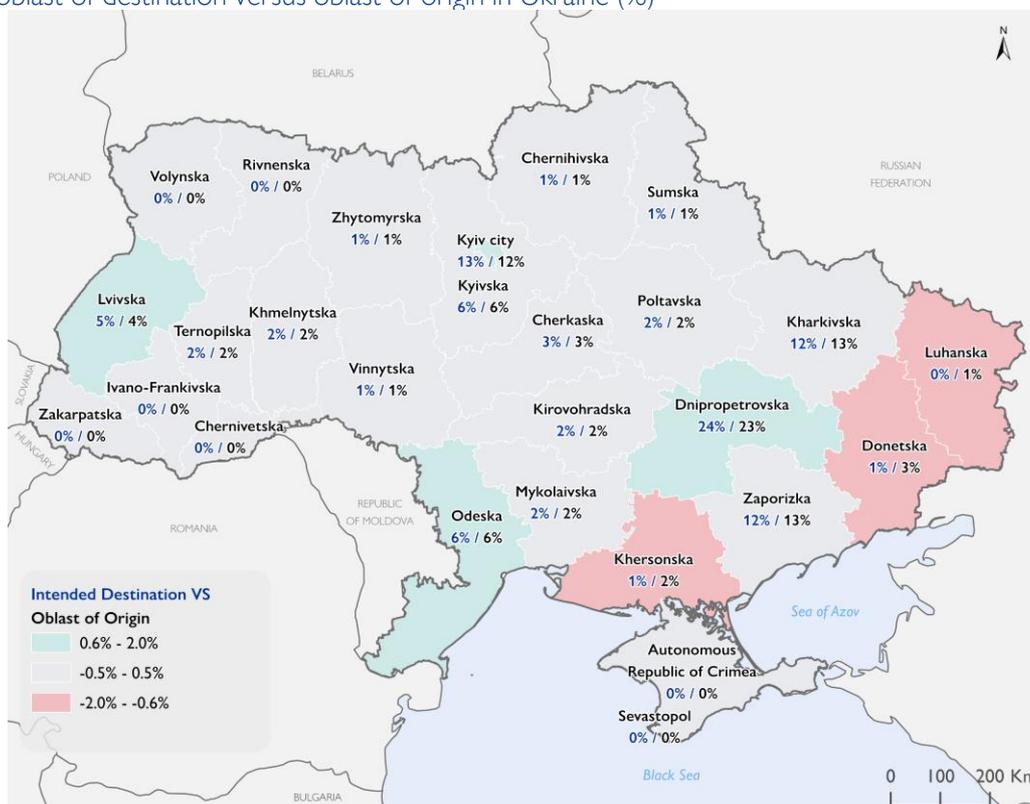
Intended destination

Out of 500 respondents who answered this question, 91 per cent were planning to return to the same oblast of origin while another nine per cent aimed to reach a different one. Out of those returning to a different oblast, 23 per cent were originally from Donetsk oblast, 17 per cent from Khersonska, 15 per cent from Luhanska, and 13 per cent from Kharkivska. The main oblasts of destination of those returning to a different oblast are Kyiv (21%), Lvivska (19%) and Dnipropetrovska (17%).

Figure 6: Number of entries/exits between 24 February 2022 and 31 March 2023, by gender and total (%)



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

Intentions to stay

Forty-four per cent of respondents indicated that they are returning to Ukraine to stay. Among them, 47 per cent indicated that they were returning and staying in Ukraine because they missed home. This was followed by 22 per cent of those, who were returning to reunite with their families, 10 per cent who are working in essential services and 6 per cent who indicated reasons not listed in the survey for their return.

Other key reasons for returning were a lack of

financial resources to cover living expenses (2%), an improved situation in the respondent's place of origin (2%), family responsibilities (2%), shopping (2%) and the inability to get a job (2%).

Four per cent were evenly distributed between following reasons: returning after visiting someone abroad, inability to find accommodation, coming back to defend the country and preferring not to give an answer.

Figure 7: Reasons for returning to Ukraine (%), N=348

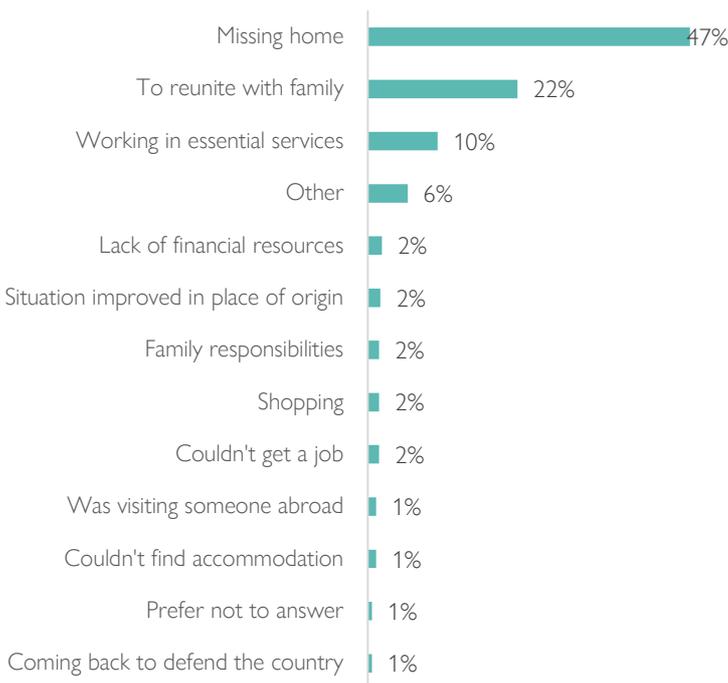
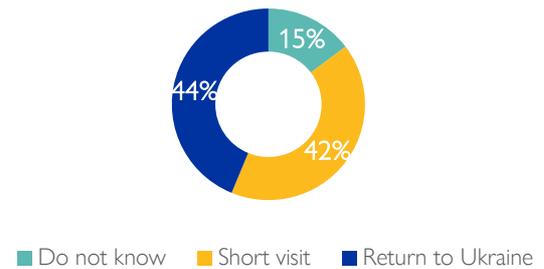


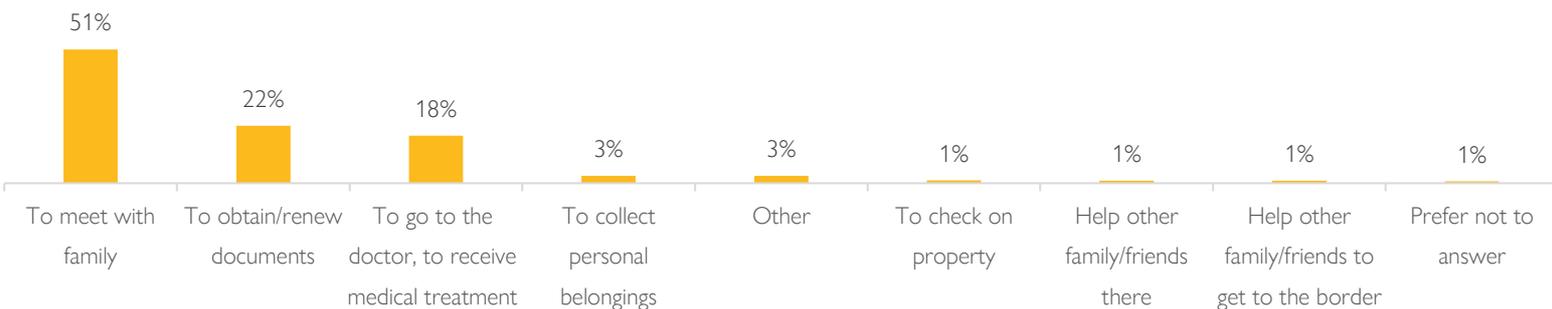
Figure 8: Length of stay (%)



Short-term visit

Forty-two per cent of the refugees from Ukraine who were surveyed were planning to stay in Ukraine for a short visit only. Out of this sample (331 individuals), 51 per cent stated that their main reason to go to Ukraine for a limited duration was to meet with family. Another 22 per cent were returning to obtain or renew their documents, followed by 18 per cent who intended to go to a doctor or receive medical treatment. Ten per cent of respondents indicated other reasons for returning.

Figure 9: Reasons for a short visit(%), N=331



5. Needs, Assistance Received, and Challenges

Immediate needs upon crossing back

Forty-seven per cent of respondents indicated no need for any kind of assistance while crossing back into Ukraine. Among those who did highlight immediate needs at the moment of the interview, the most prevalent ones were financial support (16%), health services (13%) and medications (10%). This was followed by psychological counselling (5%) and employments (4%). The remaining three per cent were evenly distributed between the need for personal safety, long-term accommodation and assistance with documentation.

Assistance received while outside of Ukraine

Thirty-eight per cent of those respondents, who indicated having received assistance outside of Ukraine (N=303) received financial support. Twenty-one per cent received food, followed by seventeen per cent of respondents who received accommodation assistance. Other relevant areas where respondents received assistance while outside of Ukraine were clothes/shoes (9%), personal hygiene items (8%) and transportation support (3%).

Figure 11: Main areas of assistance received (%), N=303
(more than one answer possible)

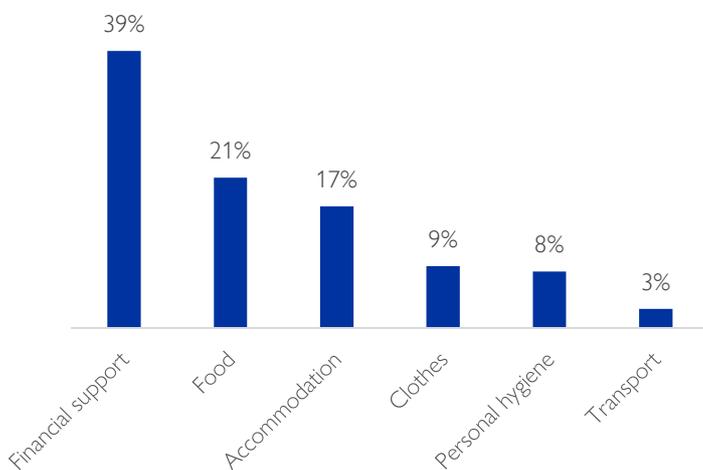
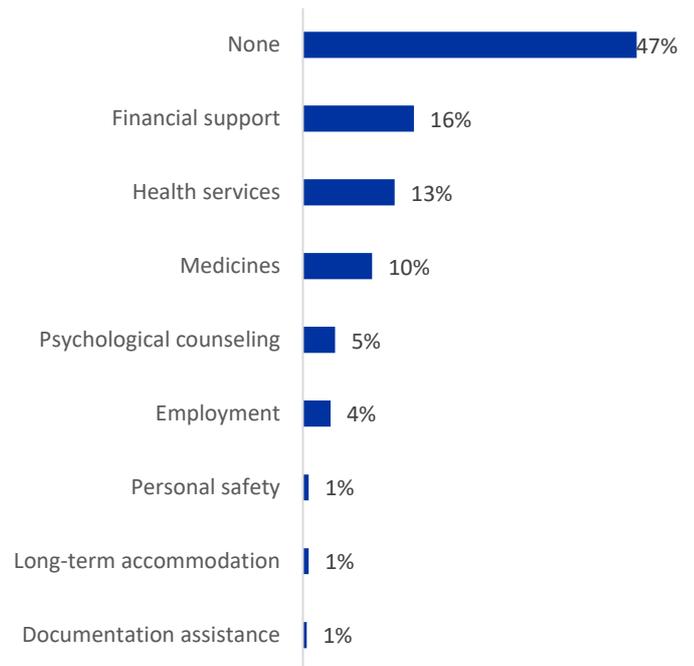


Figure 10: Needs upon crossing back (%)
(more than one answer possible)



Experiences of Discrimination

Seven per cent of respondents reported having experienced discrimination in the country of displacement. In contrast, 93 per cent of respondents reported not having had any such experiences.

Figure 12: Experiences of discrimination (%), N=303



7. Group Composition

Travel mode

The majority of 62 per cent of survey respondents was travelling alone to Ukraine. Among these 57 per cent had left Ukraine on their own and 43 per cent initially been part of a group of people leaving the country but now travelled back alone. The remaining 38 per cent of survey respondents was crossing back into Ukraine as part of a group. Among these, almost all of the

respondents were travelling with the same group. Only approximately 2 per cent of respondents had some changes in their travel group.

For those travelling in a group, whether the same one or different (N=310), the average group size was 3 persons.

Figure 13: Travel mode (%), N=793

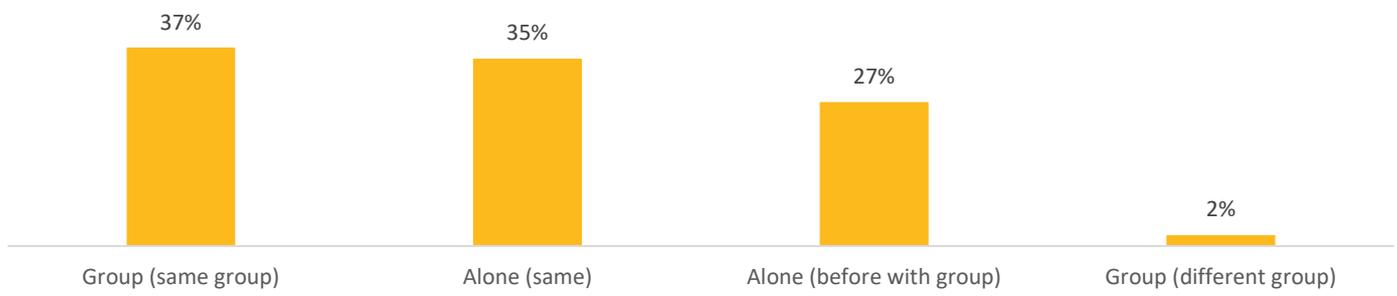
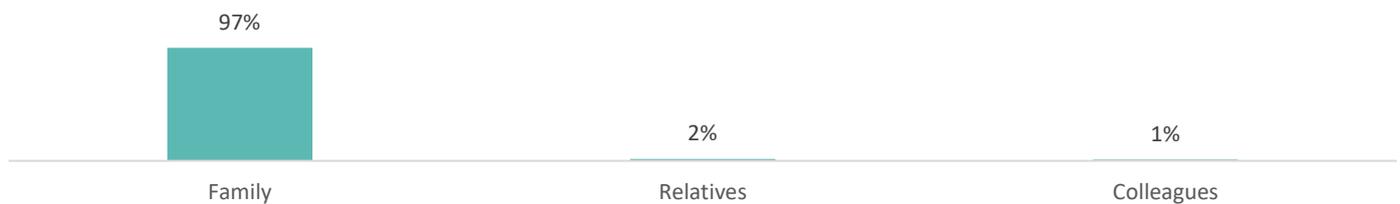


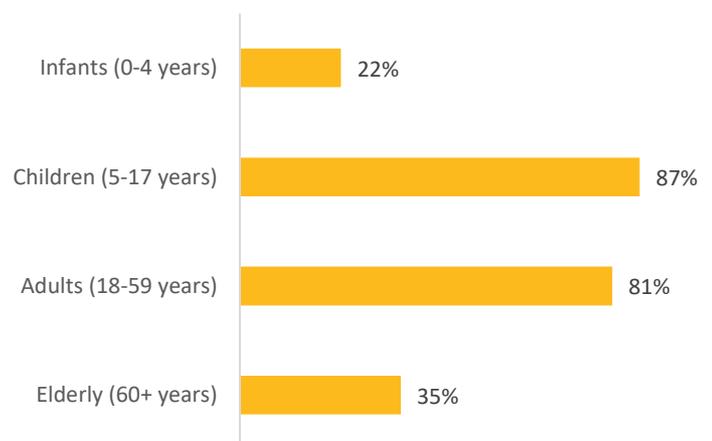
Figure 14: Travel groups (%) (N=310)



Age groups

Among those survey respondents who travelled in a group and provided information on their group composition (N=109), 81 per cent had at least one adult and 35 per cent an elderly person in their group. Only 8 per cent of respondents reported being with a male. Eighty-seven per cent of respondents reported travelling with at least one child aged between 5 and 7 years, and 22 per cent had an infant below 5 years of age at the time of the interview.

Figure 15: Travel groups age breakdown (%)



8. Methodology

Background

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

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

This report is based on surveys collected in Poland between 01 January and 31 March 2023 in various locations, such as Budapest, and Záhony – Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County, as well as in various settings, including transit points (e.g., train and bus stations), the Help Center (run by the Budapest Municipality and IOM), the Info and Community Center (run by IOM and UNHCR), collective accommodations and a food and non-food items distribution event.

Methodological framework

IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) is a system to track and monitor displacement and population mobility. It is designed to regularly and systematically capture, process and disseminate information to provide a better understanding of the movements and evolving needs of displaced populations, whether on site or en route.

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

In Poland, surveys were conducted in Ukrainian, Russian, and English by IOM's DTM trained teams of enumerators on a mobile application.

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

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

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

While in border crossing/transit points, such as train stations, the flow of people was higher and interviewees were randomly surveyed (having the same likelihood compared to others to be selected), in other settings, such collective accommodations, respondents were intentionally identified.

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

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

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

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>

DTM is part of IOM's Global Data Institute.

