

CROSSING TO UKRAINE: SURVEYS WITH UKRAINIAN AND THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS

Round 6 - Data collected from 06 Oct to 18 Nov 2022

Since the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation on 24 February 2022, people have been fleeing from Ukraine to the neighbouring countries in high numbers. As of 17 November 2022, 695,159 refugees and Third-Country Nationals (TCNs) from Ukraine were registered at border crossing points (BCPs) entering the Republic of Moldova. Simultaneously, movements of persons crossing back to Ukraine have been reported. According to national authorities, 200,400 Ukrainian nationals and TCNs who entered the Republic of Moldova from Ukraine after 24 February 2022, have since then travelled back (Source: General Inspectorate for Border Police).

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has conducted surveys with adults (18 years and above) crossing back to Ukraine, through CBS Axa Research, since April 2022. Data is collected at two main border crossing points (BCPs) with Ukraine – Palanca and Otaci. This report presents the main findings based on data collected between 6 October and 18 November 2022.

Individuals crossing into Ukraine are not necessarily returnees and conclusions on definitive trends cannot be drawn. The sample is not representative of all persons crossing to Ukraine, and results should only be considered as indicative.

1 005
Survey Respondents

541
In Palanca BCP

464
In Otaci BCP

KEY FINDINGS

- 97% Ukrainian nationals, 2% Moldovan nationals, 1% TCNs
- 83% women and 17% men
- Women respondents are younger than men respondents
- 58% have been staying in the Republic of Moldova; 51% of them in the capital Chisinau
- 29% have been staying in other European countries (Romania, Germany, Bulgaria mainly)
- 73% crossing to Ukraine alone, 27% in a group
- 74% of surveyed women were travelling alone
- 48% travelling to Ukraine for a short visit; of whom 42% reported that they wanted to meet with family members
- 40% intend to remain in Ukraine; of whom 45% want to reunite with family
- 91% intend to stay in the habitual place of residence
- 57% were crossing to Ukraine via cars, 15% by foot and the remaining 28% by buses and minibuses
- 42% reported Odeska as the region of origin
- Priority needs: 16% financial assistance, 6% food, 5% healthcare services and medicine, 5% employment opportunities and other 5% non-food items and hygiene items.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

A total of 1,005 individuals were interviewed, 549 respondents between 6 and 31 October and 456 respondents between 1 and 18 November 2022. All survey participants indicated that they were going to Ukraine and cited the war in Ukraine as the main reason for displacement from the country. Most of the respondents travelling to Ukraine were Ukrainian nationals (97%) and the remaining (3%) were citizens of other countries, mainly from the Republic of Moldova (61%), Armenia and Azerbaijan (8% each), followed by citizens from China, Türkiye, Belarus (6% each), Russian Federation and Germany (3% each).

Figure 1: Distribution of respondents by nationality (%)



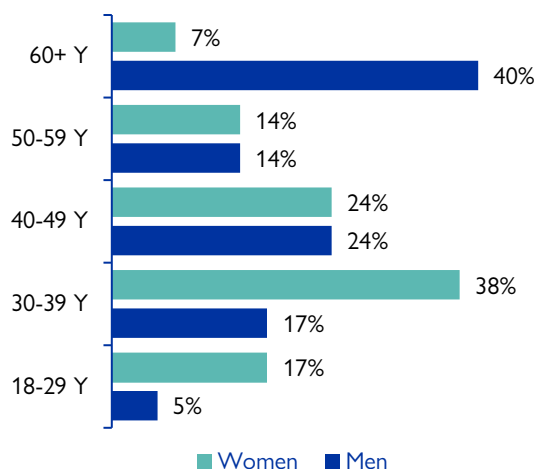
Figure 2: Distribution of all respondents, by gender (%)



Most respondents, or 83 per cent, were women, while men represented 17 per cent of the sample. No respondent identified as neither female or male. The share of women was higher among Ukrainian nationals (84%) and lower among respondents of other nationalities (61%). The average age of respondents was 42 years old.

The breakdown of interviewed respondents by age cohorts reveals that women, on average, are younger than men in the sample. Over one third of women, or 38 per cent, were aged 30-39 years, compared to 17 per cent of men from the same age group. A plurality of men, 40 per cent, were above 60 years old, while only 9 per cent of women comprised the same age group.

Figure 3: Age distribution of all respondents, by gender (%)



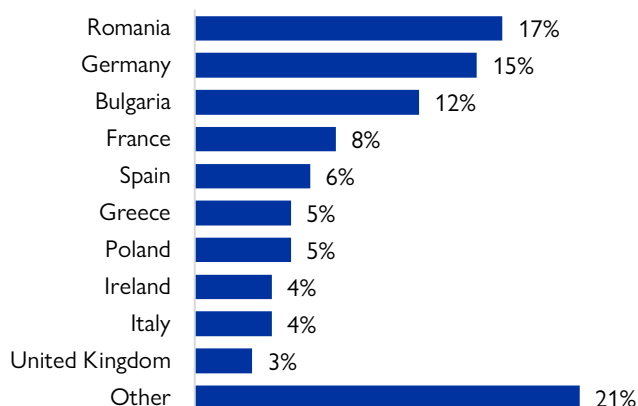
Out of the total 1,005 respondents, 58 per cent have been staying in the Republic of Moldova after leaving Ukraine, 29 per cent were staying in other European countries, and the remaining 13 per cent have been staying elsewhere.

Figure 4: Main countries of staying since fleeing Ukraine (%)



Among those who have been staying in Europe, higher shares reported staying in Romania (17%), Germany (15%), followed by Bulgaria (12%), France (8%), Spain (6%), Greece and Poland (5% each), with smaller shares reporting to have stayed in 22 other countries in Europe. The majority of those who have been staying in other countries than Europe or the Republic of Moldova (almost 13% of respondents) were living in Türkiye (36%), Egypt (17%), Israel (16%), Georgia (9%) and other countries (22%).

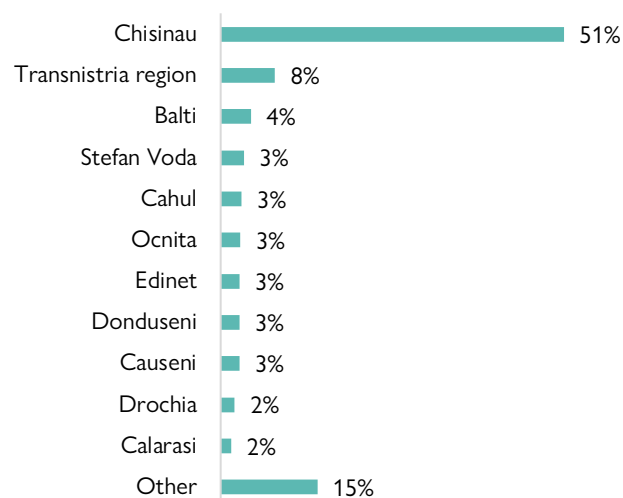
Figure 5: Main countries of stay in Europe since fleeing Ukraine (%)



Respondents who reported staying in Europe, n=290

Half of those who have been staying in the Republic of Moldova were residing in Chisinau (51%). Smaller shares of respondents reported staying in Transnistria region (6%), Balti (4%), Stefan Voda, Cahul, Ocnita and Edinet (3% each), and others (29%).

Figure 6: Main areas of residence in the Republic of Moldova since fleeing Ukraine (%)



Respondents who reported staying in the Republic of Moldova, n=579

TRAVEL CHARACTERISTICS

Around 73 per cent of those surveyed were going to Ukraine alone, and the remaining 27 per cent were travelling in a group, with the same or different group of people than those they exited Ukraine with.

Figure 7: Distribution of respondents by travel mode (%)





Out of those travelling back to Ukraine alone, 38 per cent were alone when they left Ukraine and 62 per cent were with a group at the timing of exiting Ukraine.



In the case of respondents travelling in a group, 74 per cent were crossing with the same group of people they left Ukraine with, 23 per cent with some of the same group members they left with and 3 per cent with a different group.

Among the 27 per cent travelling in a group, around 86 per cent were going to Ukraine with immediate family members, 8 per cent were travelling with relatives and 6 per cent were travelling with friends and neighbours.

Among the 73 per cent travelling with a group, 64 per cent were travelling with at least one child below 18 years of age. About 31 per cent of respondents reported that they were travelling with at least one older person (60 years and above) and 15 per cent were travelling with a person with a serious health condition.



64 %
Travelling with at least one child in the group



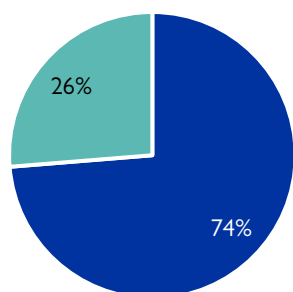
31 %
Travelling with at least one older person in the group



15 %
Travelling with a person with serious health condition

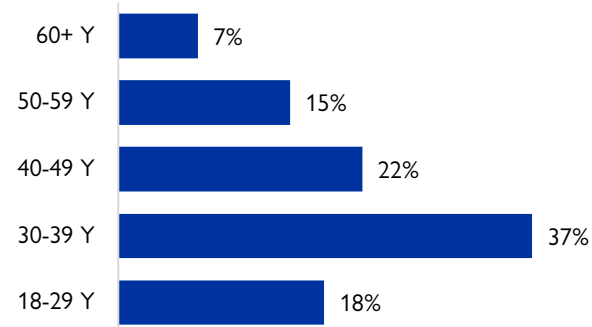
Women were the majority among those travelling to Ukraine alone (74%), many of them aged 30-39 years (37%). However, about 18 per cent of women travelling alone were young women aged 18-29 years and other seven percent were older women aged 60 and above.

Figure 8: Distribution of women respondents, by women travelling alone and, in a group, (%)



■ Women travelling alone ■ Women travelling in a group

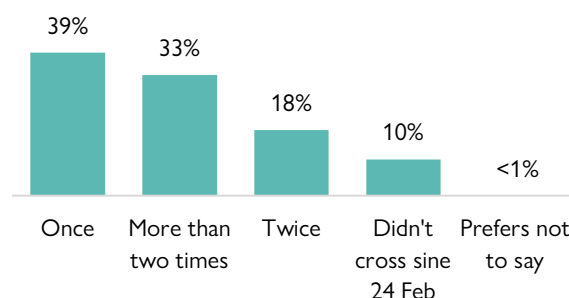
Figure 9: Age distribution of women respondents travelling alone (%)



Women respondents who reported travelling alone, n=617

Around 39 per cent of respondents had crossed the border between Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova only once since the beginning of the war, while 18 per cent crossed it twice, 33 per cent travelled back more than twice, 10 per cent did not cross it since 24 February 2022 and less than 1 per cent preferred not to answer to this question.

Figure 10: Number of crossings at Moldovan/ Ukrainian border (%)



INTENTIONS

When asked about their intentions, 48 per cent of respondents reported that they were travelling for a short visit, 40 per cent reported that they intend to stay in Ukraine, around 11 per cent were unsure of their intentions and one per cent preferred not to answer. The share of respondents who intend to travel to Ukraine for a short visit is higher for those who were residing in the Republic of Moldova (65%) than those who were travelling from Europe and other countries (35%).

Figure 11: Reported intended duration of stay of respondents, by nationality (%)

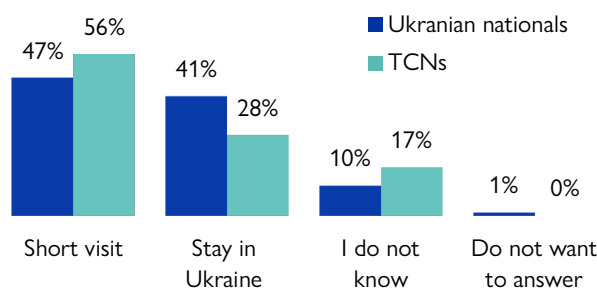
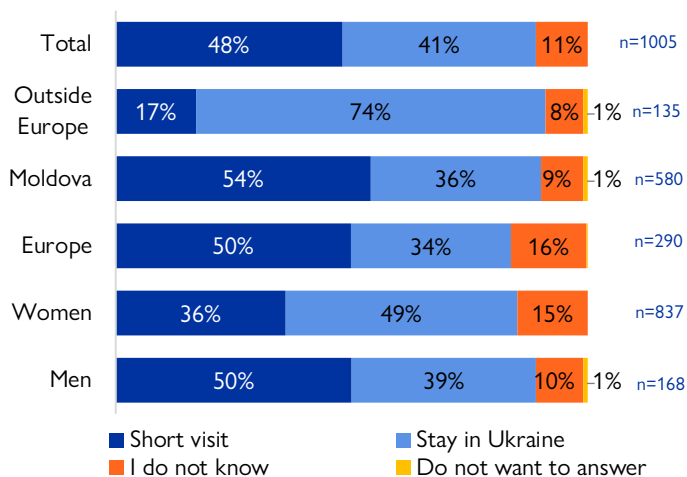
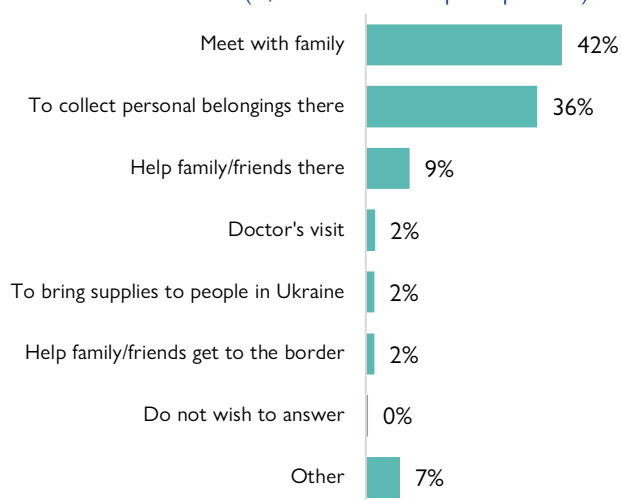


Figure 12: Distribution of respondents by intended duration to stay by gender and main country of residence outside of Ukraine (Europe, Republic of Moldova, other) (%)



Among those who intended to do a short visit to Ukraine, 42 per cent reported that they wanted to meet with family members in Ukraine and 36 per cent were travelling to collect personal belongings that were left in the country. Around nine per cent wanted to help family members or friends in Ukraine. Other reasons expressed by respondents were doctor's visits, the intention to bring some supplies to people in Ukraine and helping someone else reach the border (2% each).

Figure 13: Reported reasons among respondents intending to do a short visit to Ukraine (% , more than one option possible)

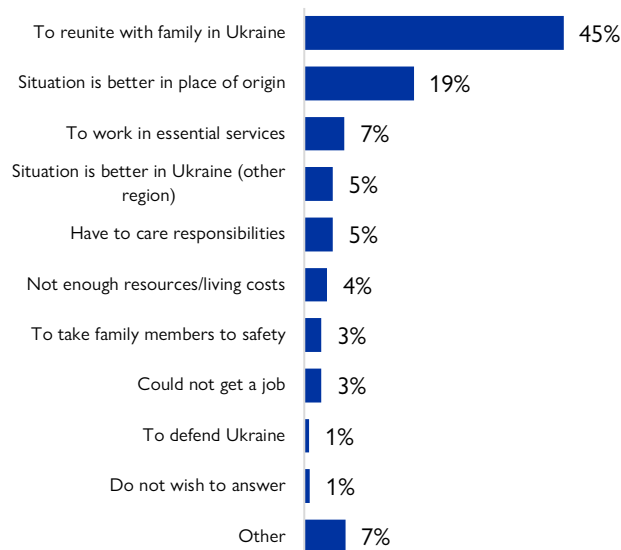


Reported reasons for a short visit, n=682

Of those intending to do a short visit, the majority planned to spend a few days in Ukraine (44%), while 39 per cent intended to stay for about one week, 16 per cent for about one month and the remaining 1 per cent did not specify.

Among those who reported their intention to remain in Ukraine, around 45 per cent reported that they want to reunite with family members, 19 per cent perceived that the situation was improving in their place of origin and other 7 per cent reported to work in essential services. About five per cent perceived that the situation was improving in Ukraine and other five per cent had to care responsibilities. About 19 per cent reported other reasons.

Figure 14: Reported reasons among respondents intending to stay in Ukraine (% , more than one option possible)



Reported reasons for stay in Ukraine, n=457

Among the female respondents, 50 per cent intended to stay for a short period of time and 39 per cent had an intention to remain in Ukraine, 10 per cent were unsure of their intended duration of stay and the remaining 1 per cent did not want to answer.

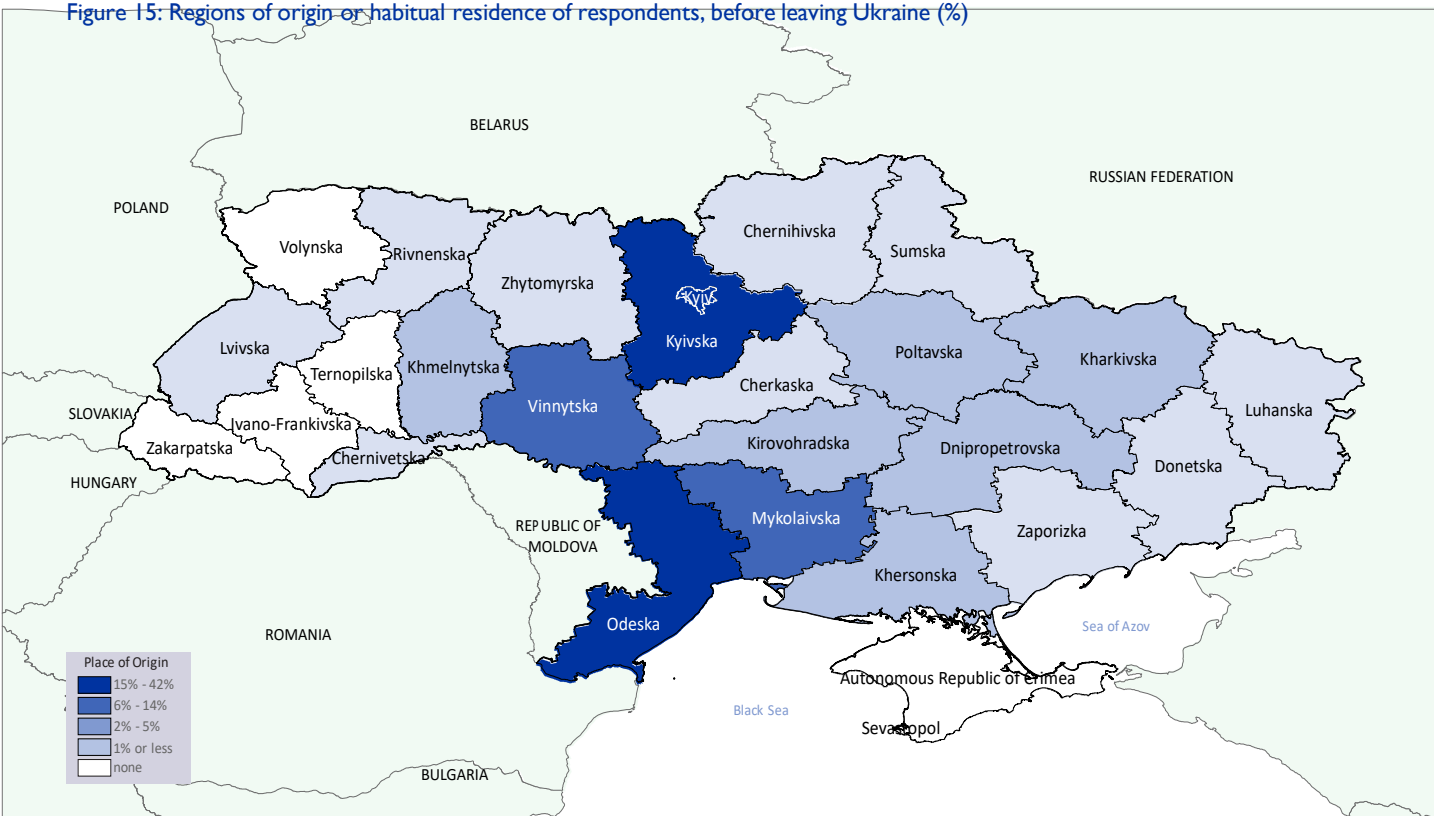
Most refugees from Ukraine and TCNs interviewed reported that they intended to stay in their homes or their usual place of residence in Ukraine (84%), while seven per cent were planning to be hosted by friends and another five per cent to stay with relatives. Around three per cent planned to stay in hotels or other private accommodations and one per cent were unsure.

Out of all respondents, 57 per cent were travelling back to Ukraine by car and 15 per cent by foot, while 18 per cent in buses and around 10 per cent in minibuses. The main mean of transportation slightly varied between two BCPs where interviews were collected. In Otaci BCP, in the northern part of the Republic of Moldova, most respondents were travelling by car (52%), by bus (27%) or minibus (2%) and almost 19 per cent reported leaving Republic of Moldova by foot. In the south of the country, in Palanca BCP, most respondents were travelling by car (61%), by minibus (17%) and bus (11%). A lower share reported leaving Republic of Moldova by foot (12%).

REGIONS OF ORIGIN AND DESTINATION IN UKRAINE

Odeska was reported by 42 per cent of respondents as the region of usual residence before leaving Ukraine, followed by Kyivska (17%), Vinnytska (9%), Mykolaivska (7%), the city of Kyiv (4%), Kharkivska (3%) and other regions (18%). The vast majority of respondents (91%) reported that they intend to go back to the same region, nine per cent reported their intention to go to another region while one per cent didn't know. Among the respondents going to another region, the most reported region was Odeska (43%), followed by Vinnytska (26%), Kyivska (16%), city of Kyiv (5%) and others.

Figure 15: Regions of origin or habitual residence of respondents, before leaving 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 the International Organization for Migration.

Figure 16: Distribution of respondents by intended destination (%)



Among the reasons not to go back to their place of origin, 44 per cent of respondents perceived their place of origin was currently unsafe and 37 per cent mentioned that their family had moved or was displaced to another part of the country.

Others reported that their house was destroyed (8%), or their property is occupied (3%), and some respondents reported other reasons, for example the need to visit a doctor (3%) or to take documents or belongings (2%).

Figure 17: Main reasons travelling to a different oblast than the one of origin/ habitual residence (%)

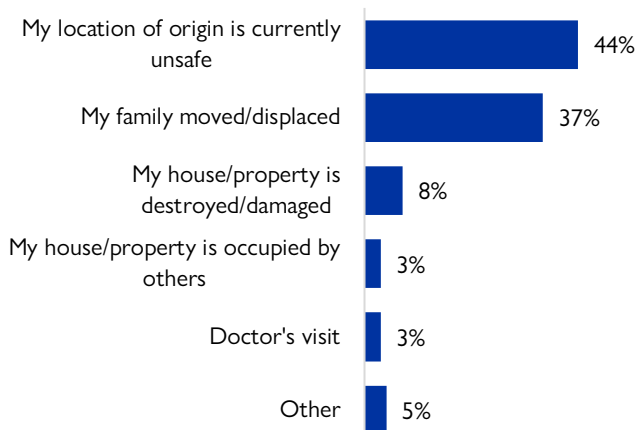
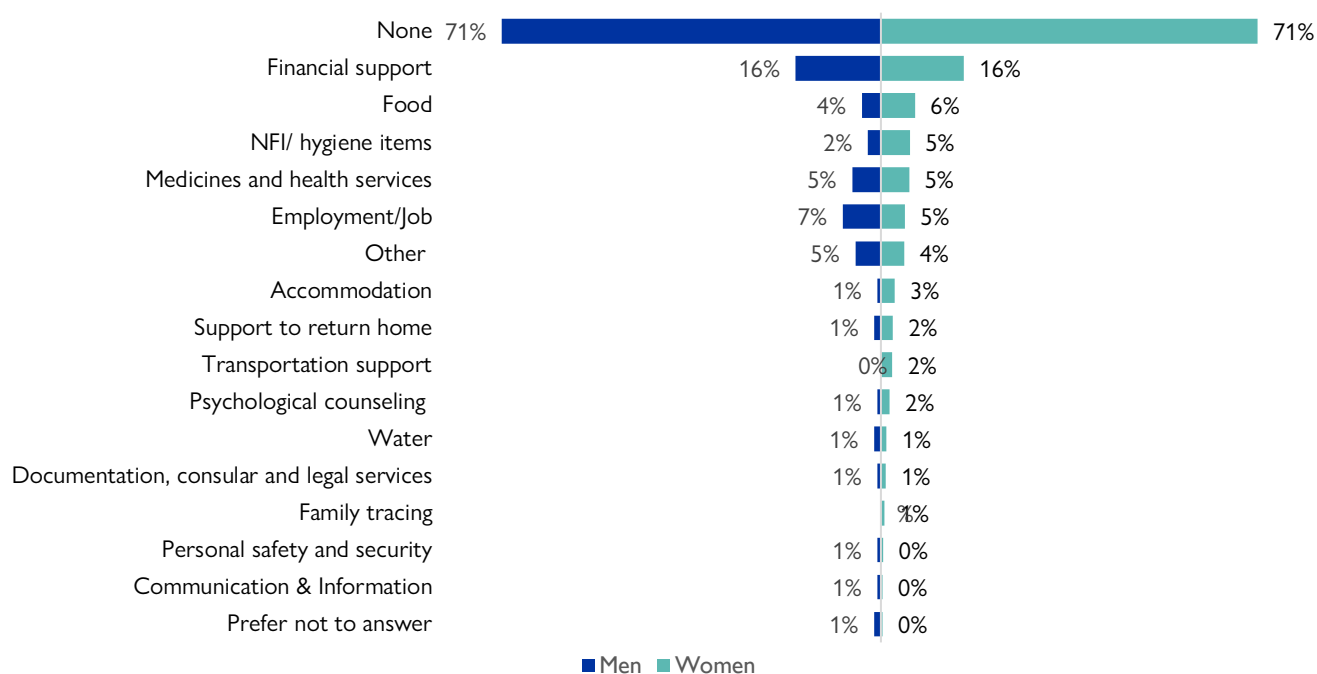


Figure 18: Main needs reported at the exit crossing points, by sex (% , more than one possible option)



MAIN NEEDS AT EXIT POINTS

Most respondents (71%) reported having no specific needs whilst crossing the border. However, among those who expressed specific needs, 16 per cent reported the need for financial support, 6 per cent for food, 5 per cent health care services and medicine, 5 per cent for non-food or hygiene items and employment opportunities as the most reported needs at the time the interviews were conducted.

Women reported more frequently need for food and hygiene items, while men reported to a higher extent the need for employment among the most pressing immediate needs.

Around five per cent of all respondents reported that they and/or family members experienced discriminatory treatment based on nationality, ethnicity, or gender since they left their usual place of residence in Ukraine. Majority (95%) did not report any such experience.

METHODOLOGY

The International Organization for Migration’s (IOM) 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.

These surveys are part of IOM’s DTM activities to monitor the displacement patterns, movement flows and intentions, regions of origin and most immediate needs of refugees from Ukraine and TCNs who fled from Ukraine into neighbouring countries and other European countries since 24 February 2022 and are crossing back into Ukraine. The survey is based on DTM’s tools to captures the demographic profiles for refugees of any nationality who fled Ukraine, and of the group they are travelling with, if any; it asks about intentions relative to their stay and destination; it gathers information regarding a set of main needs that the respondents expressed as more pressing at the moment of the interview. Data are collected at selected border crossing points, at entry, exit and transit locations, between the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. Face-to-face interviews were conducted in Russian, Romanian and English, by trained enumerators of IOM’s implementing partner, CBS Axa Research, using a mobile application. The interviews are anonymous and conducted one-on-one with respondents, provided they consent to be interviewed after a brief introduction. Only adults (18+) were approached, in a simple random sample, and those interviewed in the survey were only those populations who were crossing back to Ukraine from the Republic of Moldova since April 2022. The data presented in this document are representative of the individuals surveyed in the covered locations and during the indicated timeframe.