

SLOVAKIA

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



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Country Report & Data Analysis

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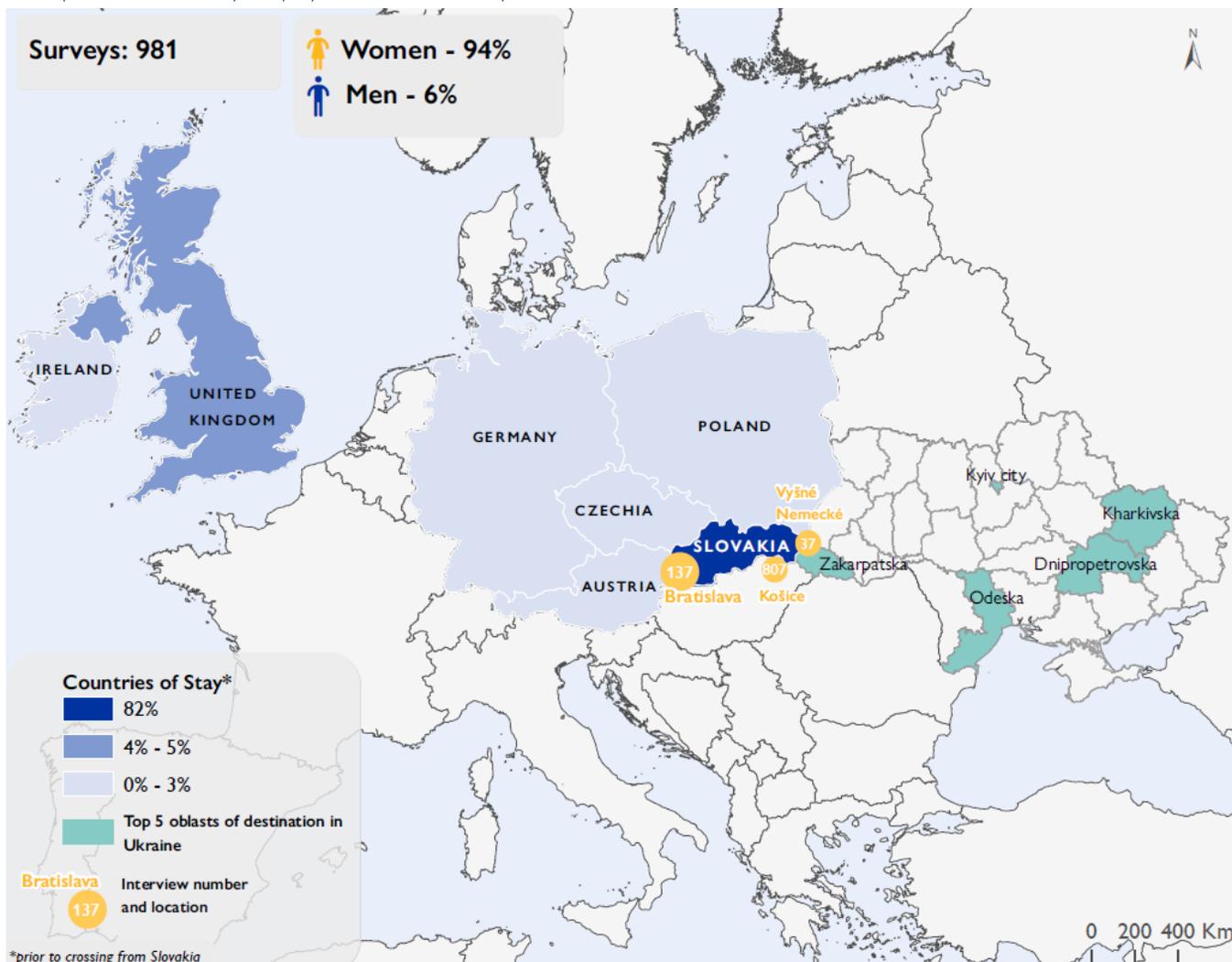
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KEY FINDINGS

- **Top countries of stay abroad:** Slovakia (82%), the United Kingdom (4%), Germany (3%), Ireland (3%) and Poland (3%).
- **Top oblasts of origin:** Zakarpatska (34%), Kyiv city (13%), Kharkivska (8%), Dnipropetrovska (7%), Donetska (5%) and Kyivska (5%) oblast.
- **Intended destination:** 77% to the same oblast of origin, 22% to a different oblast in Ukraine: Zakarpatska (79%), Lvivska (5%), Kyiv City (4%).
- **Intentions upon crossing back:** 59% going for a short visit, 36% plan to stay in Ukraine.
- **Top needs upon crossing back:** Financial support (24%), health services (20%), finding employment/job (16%), general information (12%), language courses (11%), medicines (11%). *more than one answer was possible
- **Travel mode:** 63% alone and 37% in group.
- **Experiences of discrimination:** 11% experienced discrimination throughout their journey.

Map I: Slovakia, 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 in this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM. The map shows only countries where more than one per cent of respondents stayed during displacement.

1. Socio-Demographic Profile

Gender and age

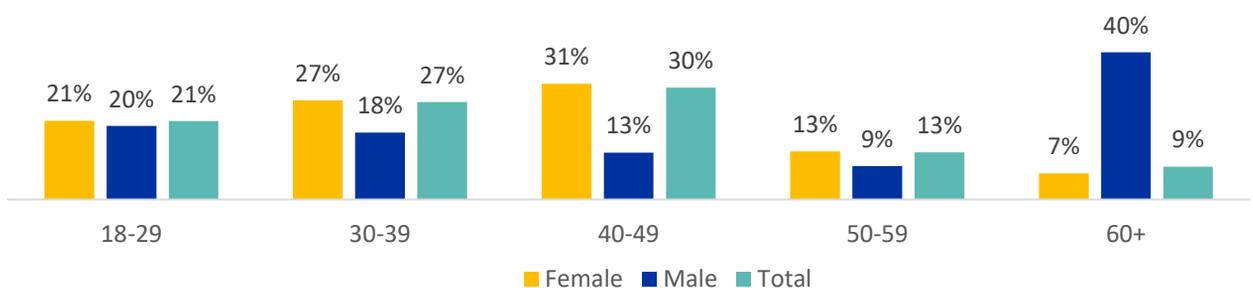
Out of the 981 respondents interviewed prior to crossing back from Slovakia to Ukraine, 94 per cent were women and six per cent men.

The average age of the total sample was 40 years, however, data disaggregated by gender showed, that male respondents were slightly older than their female counterparts (48 years in average for men and 40 years for women).

Over half of the respondents (57%) were aged between 30 and 49 years and another 21 per cent were adults younger than 30 years. Only nine per cent of the respondents were older than 60 years.

The largest age group for women was of those between 40 and 49 years, with 31 per cent of female respondents. On the other hand, men of this age group represented only 13 per cent of male population sample while 40 per cent of them were older than 60 years.

Figure 1: Age distribution of respondents by gender and total (%)



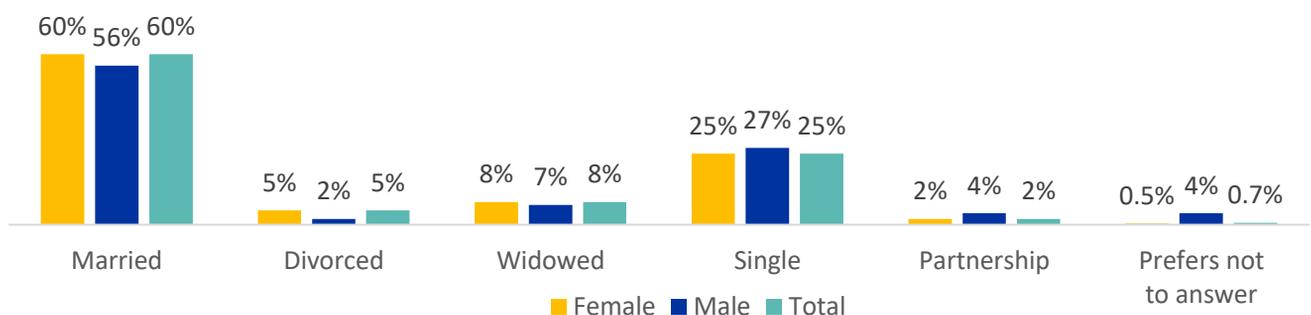
Marital status

Sixty per cent of the respondents were married. This group was followed by single persons, who composed a quarter of the total sample of the respondents (25%). Eight per cent of the respondents stated they were widowed and five per cent divorced, while only two per cent of the respondents lived in partnership or union at the time of the interview. Less than one per cent of the total sample decided not to

answer this question.

When looking at the data disaggregated by gender, slightly fewer male respondents were married compared to female respondents (56% of men and 60% of women), yet more of them were single (27% of men and 25% of women) or living in a partnership (4% of men and 2% of women).

Figure 2: Marital status of respondents by gender and total (%)



2. Time Outside Ukraine

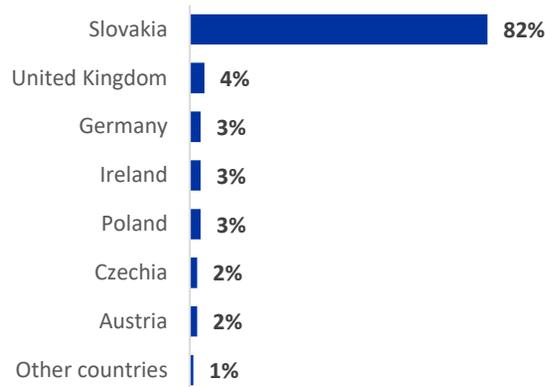
Countries of stay while abroad

Majority of the respondents predominantly stayed in Slovakia while displaced. These represent 82 per cent out of the respondents who gave answer about their country of stay (N=850).

Next most named countries were the United Kingdom with four per cent of respondents spending majority of time there, followed by Germany (3%), Ireland (3%), Poland (3%), Czechia (2%) and Austria (2%).

The remaining minority of respondents (25 respondents) stayed in other 14 countries in different continents before crossing back to Ukraine from Slovakia.

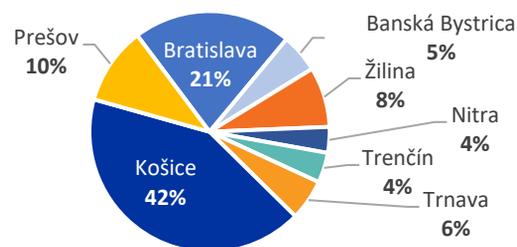
Figure 3: Countries of stay (%) (N=850)



Regions of stay in Slovakia

Out of the respondents who stayed throughout their time of displacement mostly in Slovakia (N=693), majority stated they were staying in Košice region (42%). Another 21 per cent stated Bratislava region, ten per cent Prešov and eight per cent Žilina region. Six per cent or less of the respondents stated they had stayed in other regions of Slovakia.

Figure 4: Regions of stay in Slovakia (%) (N=693)



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 the interview, which took place right before crossing back to Ukraine.

Out of the total sample of respondents, most were displaced at the beginning of the conflict, between January and March 2022. These 31 per cent of respondents spent

about one year outside Ukraine. Further 12 per cent of respondents were displaced between April and June 2022, thus between 9 and 11 months prior to the interview. The lowest proportions of respondents initially left Ukraine the months between July 2022 and January 2023, however, 31 per cent of respondents stated they were initially displaced in February or March 2023, meaning they spent only about one month or less outside of Ukraine before crossing back from Slovakia.

Table 1: Approximate time in displacement until the date of interview (%)

Date since initial displacement	Approximate time spent until date of interview	% of respondents
Before 2017	More than 5 years	2%
2021 – 2017	1 – 5 years	9%
Jan – Mar 2022	11 – 14 months	31%
Apr – Jun 2022	09 – 11 months	12%
Jul – Sep 2022	4 – 8 months	6%
Oct – Dec 2022	3 – 5 months	6%
January 2023	1 – 2 months	4%
February 2023	Around one month or less	11%
March 2023	Less than a month	20%

Number of exits / entries from and to Ukraine

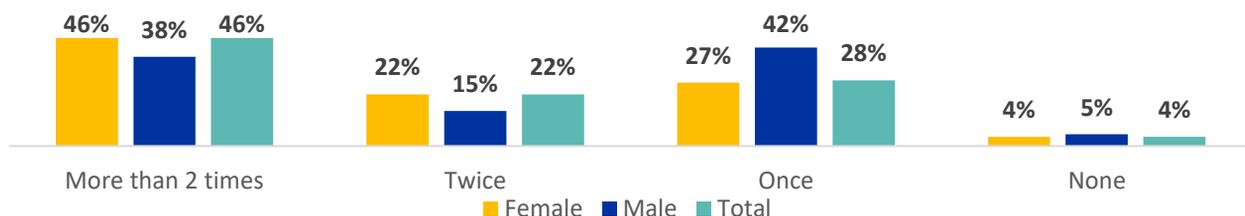
According to the data acquired from the respondents, people crossing back from Slovakia to Ukraine were often doing more pendular movements across the border. Forty-six per cent of the interviewees stated they had crossed back to Ukraine more than two times since their initial displacement and another 22 per cent crossed twice. Twenty-eight per cent said they had crossed the border back to Ukraine once before the interview and only four per cent of the respondents had not gone back to Ukraine since their initial displacement until the moment of the interview.

When looking at the data disaggregated by gender, women

were more likely to cross back to Ukraine two or more times (68% of female respondents) as opposed to men (53% of male respondents). Forty-two per cent of male respondents, on the other hand, had crossed back only once before the interview, as opposed to 27 per cent of the female respondents.

The respondents often stated they had been visiting friends or family members in Slovakia or the other countries, travelling or doing shopping in Slovakia or Poland and that they kept living in Ukraine. These respondents are part of the administrative data of border crossings processed by the authorities of Slovakia.

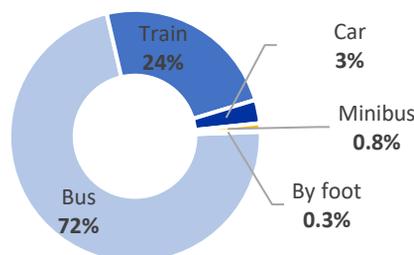
Figure 5: Number of entries / exits between 24 February 2022 and the moment of the interview, by gender and total (%)



Transport

Majority of the total number of respondents were travelling back to Ukraine by bus (72%). Another 24 per cent stated they were travelling by train and three per cent stated car as their means of transport. This information correlates with the fact that the majority of the surveys were collected at the two bus stations from where direct buses to Ukraine leave, and at a train station. Only minority of surveys were collected at a border crossing point with Ukraine (4%).

Figure 6: Means of transport to cross back to Ukraine (%)



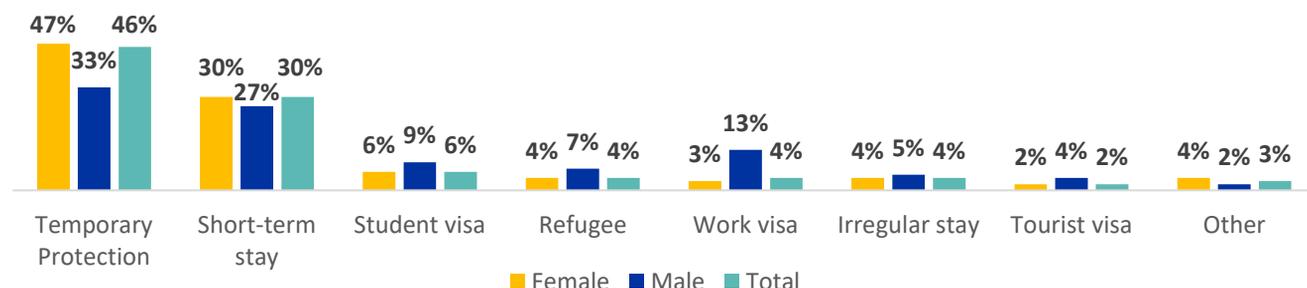
Legal status in Slovakia

Most of the respondents interviewed prior to crossing back to Ukraine stated they had Temporary Protection status in European Union (46%). Further 30 per cent were in Slovakia on a short-term entry, which allowed them to spend up to 90 days in the Schengen area. Persons with student visa account for six per cent of the sample and those with work visa or permit account for another four

per cent.

Data disaggregated by gender showed that women were more likely to have Temporary Protection status (47%) compared to men (33%), on the other hand, men were four times more likely to possess work visa or permit (13% of male respondents compared to 3% of female respondents).

Figure 7: Legal status in Slovakia, by gender and total (%)



3. Oblast (region) of Origin and Destination

Origin or habitual residence

Almost three quarters of the respondents (71%) stated as their region of origin or of habitual residence one of the six most mentioned oblasts in Ukraine. These were Zakarpatska oblast (34%), Kyiv city (13%), Kharkivska (8%),

Dnipropetrovska (7%), Donetska (5%) and Kyivska (5%) oblast.

The remaining 29 per cent of respondents came from other 20 oblasts of Ukraine.

Intended destination

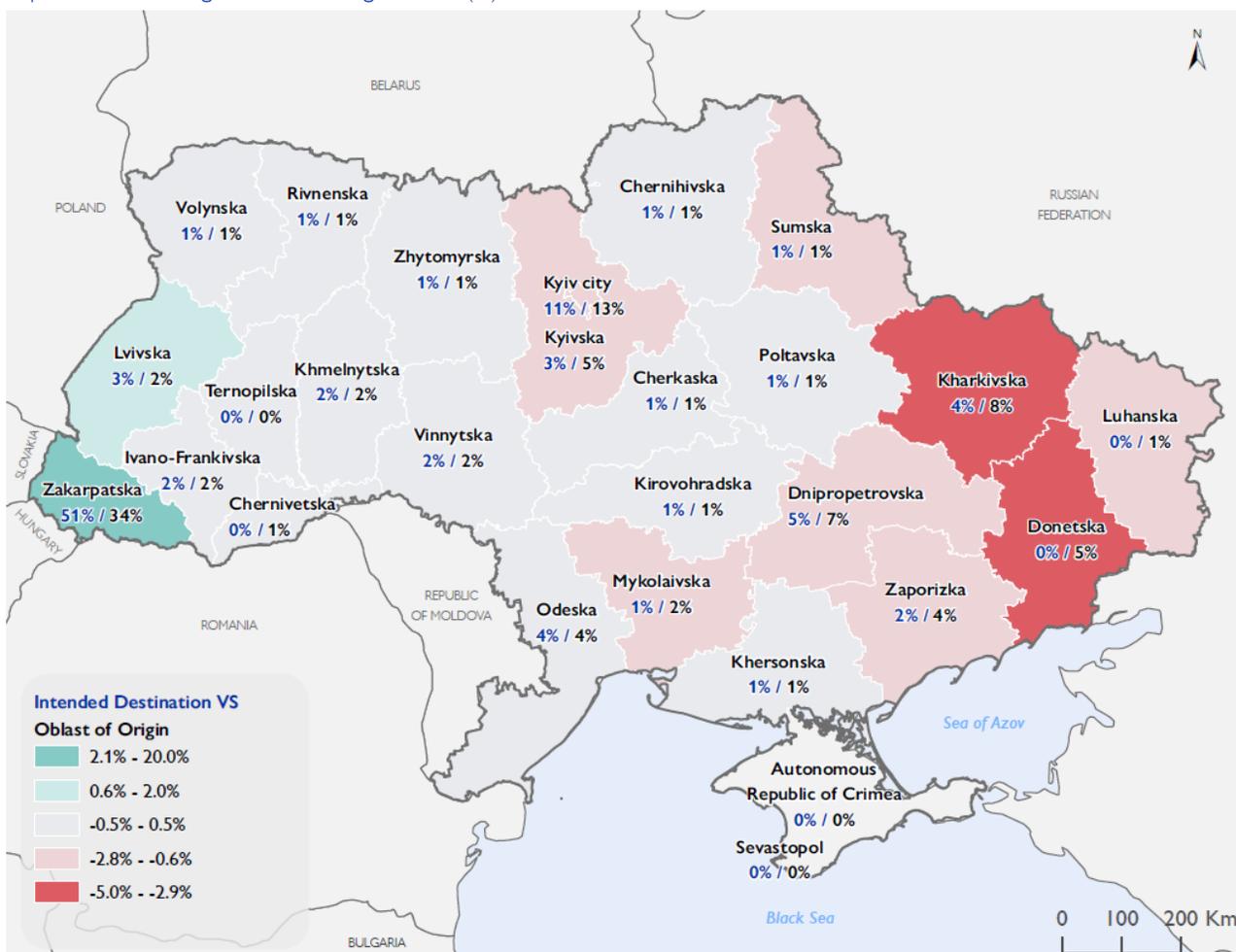
Out of the total number of respondents, 77 per cent were planning to return to the same oblast they came from and 22 per cent were returning to different oblast in Ukraine than their oblast of origin. Less than one per cent of respondents were undecided about the specific region they were going to.

intending to return to Zakarpatska oblast, which makes a 17 per cent increase compared to the proportion of respondents who came from this oblast, five per cent planned to return to Lvivska oblast and four per cent to Kyiv city.

Out of those respondents who chose different oblast than their oblast of origin (219 respondents), 79 per cent were

Data also showed that the number of people returning to Kharkivska oblast dropped by four per cent and similarly to Donetska oblast by five per cent.

Map 2: Oblast of origin before leaving Ukraine (%)



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4. Intentions and Reasons to Cross Back to Ukraine

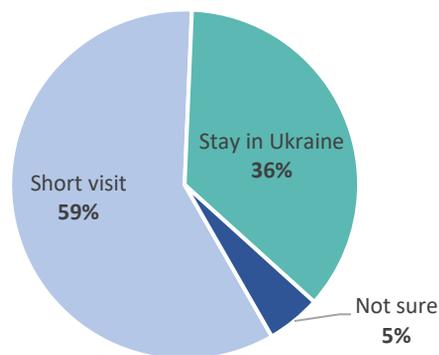
Intended stay in Ukraine or a short visit

Out of the total number of respondents, more than half indicated they were returning to Ukraine only for a short visit (59%). From these 577 respondents, 67 per cent were going to the oblast of their origin and 32 per cent to a different oblast in Ukraine.

Thirty-six per cent of all the respondents stated they were returning to stay in Ukraine. Out of these respondents (N=351), 93 per cent were returning to their region of origin while only seven per cent were going to stay in a region different from the one they came from.

Five per cent of the respondents were undecided whether they would stay in Ukraine or leave again to some other country, at the time of the interview.

Figure 8: Intended stay in Ukraine or short visit (%)



Long-term stay

Thirty-six per cent of the total sample of respondents indicated they were planning to stay in Ukraine upon their return.

When asked about the reasons for returning, 39 per cent of the respondents (N=351) stated that the situation had improved in their place of origin. Twenty-two per cent of respondents were returning to reunite with their family and relatives and 21 per cent decided to stay in Ukraine because they were missing their home. Among other reasons for returning were that the respondents were only visiting someone abroad (9%), the situation has improved in

Ukraine (5%), there was lack of resources in the country they were displaced to (5%), they were only shopping abroad (5%) or that they were returning to help their families (5%).

Data disaggregated by gender showed that women were twice as likely to return home because the situation has improved (40% of female respondents compared to 18% of male respondents), while men were twice as often returning because they were missing their home (41% of male respondents compared to 19% of female respondents).

Multiple responses were possible in this question.

Table 2: Top reasons for long-term stay in Ukraine, by gender and total (%) (N=351). (more than one answer was possible)

Listed reasons	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (%)
Improved situation in place of origin	40%	18%	39%
Reunite with family	22%	18%	22%
Missing home	19%	41%	21%
Visiting someone abroad	9%	14%	9%
Improved situation in Ukraine	5%	5%	5%
Lack of resources	5%	5%	5%
Shopping abroad	5%	5%	5%
Lack of shelter	2%	5%	3%
Lack of job opportunities	4%	0%	3%

Short-term visit

Fifty-nine per cent of respondents were crossing from Slovakia back to Ukraine only for a short visit. Majority of these 577 respondents were returning to meet with their family or relatives (71%). The second most named reason for crossing the border to Ukraine was accessing health care, given by 21 per cent of these respondents. Interviewees also mentioned returning briefly to Ukraine to obtain or renew their personal documents (13%), bring supplies to other people (9%), gather their belongings (8%)

or check on their property (8%).

Men were slightly more likely to go help their family or bring supplies (13% of men compared to 9% and 7% of women respectively) or to get health care in Ukraine (29% of men compared to 20% of women). Women, on the other hand, were crossing back to Ukraine to gather their belongings (9%) while men did not chose this reason.

Multiple responses were possible in this question.

Table 3: Top reasons for short-term visit in Ukraine, by gender and total (%) (N=577). (more than one answer was possible)

Listed reasons	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (%)
Meet with family	71%	74%	71%
Get health care	20%	29%	21%
Obtain / renew documents	13%	10%	13%
Bring supplies	9%	13%	9%
Help family members	7%	13%	8%
Gather belongings	9%	0%	8%
Check on property	8%	6%	8%

Respondents were further asked about their intended time of stay in Ukraine. Out of those who gave an answer to this question (N=568), more than a half planned to stay for around a week (54%), while 30 per cent of interviewees stated they would stay in Ukraine only for a few days.

Fifteen per cent of respondents were intending to stay for a month or longer and these options were chosen by females rather than the males (15% of women compared to 10% of men).

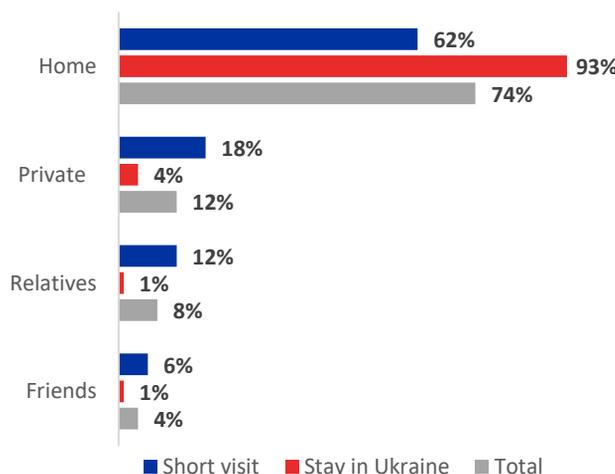
Place of stay in Ukraine

All the 981 respondents crossing from Slovakia back to Ukraine were asked about where they planned to stay while in Ukraine. Seventy-four per cent of them stated they were going to stay in their homes, while another twelve per cent planned to arrange private accommodation for themselves. Eight per cent of respondents intended to stay with their relatives and four per cent with their friends.

One per cent of respondents were not sure about the place of their stay and another one per cent chose other options in this question.

Persons going to Ukraine for a short visit were more likely to mention private accommodation or staying with relatives, compared to those planning to stay in Ukraine (18% and 12% compared to 4% and 1% respectively).

Figure 9: Intended place of stay in Ukraine, by length of stay and total (%).



5. Needs, Assistance Received, and Challenges

Immediate needs upon crossing back

Twenty-four per cent of respondents indicated financial support as their most immediate need at the moment of interview. Further mentioned pressing needs were support with receiving healthcare services (20%), support in finding employment or job (16%), support with receiving general information (12%) and support in accessing language courses (11%) or medicines (11%). Ten per cent of the respondents also mentioned support with finding long-term accommodation as one of their most urgent needs upon crossing back.

To a lesser extend food supplies (5%), support with legal assistance (4%), material help such as clothes, shoes or personal hygiene (3%), support with education for adults (3%) or with transportation (3%) were mentioned .

Forty-three per cent of respondents stated they had no immediate needs at the moment of interview.

Assistance received in Slovakia

Of all the respondents interviewed, 57 per cent stated they had not received any kind of humanitarian assistance in Slovakia. Assistance was received by 406 respondents (41%).

Women were more likely to receive the humanitarian assistance than men (42% of females responded positively to this question compared to 35% of males).

As for the type of assistance received during their journey, majority of the interviewees mentioned food (73%) and financial support (60%).

Other often mentioned forms of humanitarian assistance were personal hygiene items (49%), clothes (42%), and accommodation support (34%). Psychological counselling was received only by two per cent of the respondents receiving help in Slovakia.

Experiencing discrimination

Ninety-four per cent of the total sample of respondents did not experience any difficulties receiving support they needed during their journey. However, eleven per cent of respondents stated they experienced discrimination. Women were much more likely to experience such situation, with 11 per cent of female respondents stating this as opposed to four per cent of male respondents.

Figure 10: Immediate needs at the moment of interview, upon crossing back (%). (more than one answer was possible)

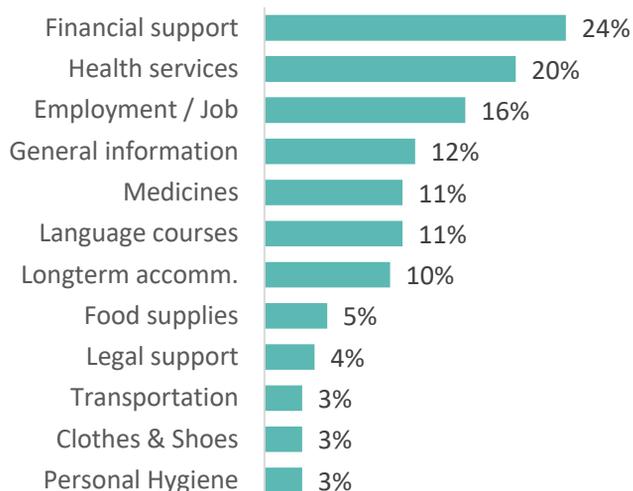


Table 4: Assistance received, by gender and total (%) (N=406). (more than one answer was possible)

Listed reasons	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (%)
Food	73%	68%	73%
Financial support	60%	58%	60%
Personal hygiene items	49%	47%	49%
Clothes	41%	58%	42%
Accommodation	33%	53%	34%
Transport	10%	11%	10%
Vouchers	10%	5%	9%
Toys	4%	5%	4%
Psychological counseling	2%	11%	2%

Among the specific situations were mentioned discrimination against the language as well as nationality in dealing with neighbours, persons working in private and public sector services or at schools, as well as attitudes and hatred perceived by people in public. Some respondents experienced discrimination in their workplace in Slovakia or while accessing support and services.

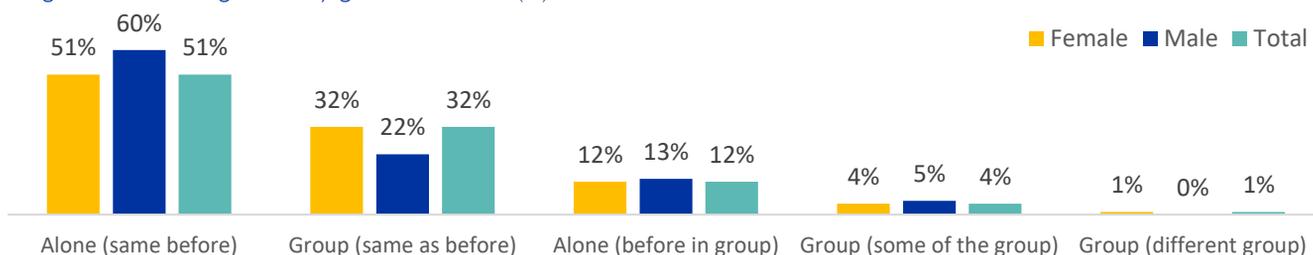
7. Group Composition

Travel mode

Fifty-one per cent of the total respondents were crossing back to Ukraine alone. They were also alone when they left Ukraine. Another 12 per cent were returning alone, yet they were in a group when they first left Ukraine. As for the groups, 36 per cent of all respondents travelled back to Ukraine in a group, out of them four per cent were returning with only some persons from their original group.

Women were more likely to travel with the same group they left with than men (32% of female respondents compared to 22% of male respondents) and men were more likely to be travelling alone the whole journey, compared to their female counterparts (60% of men compared to 51% of women).

Figure 11: Travelling mode, by gender and total (%)



Out of those travelling in a group (N=362), 85 per cent were travelling with family members, 12 per cent with friends and six per cent with their relatives. Two per cent of these respondents were travelling with colleagues from work.

As for the size of travelling groups, almost half of the travelling groups consisted of three to five persons (49%) and five per cent of the groups had more than five members.

Male respondents did not travel in group with friends or relatives, while they were more likely to travel with colleagues (7% of men compared to 2% of women).

Children under 18 years of age were travelling with 65 per cent of the respondents who travelled in groups.

Twenty-two per cent of all the respondents (N=981) were travelling with one other person.

Figure 12: Traveling groups, by gender and total (%) (N=362)

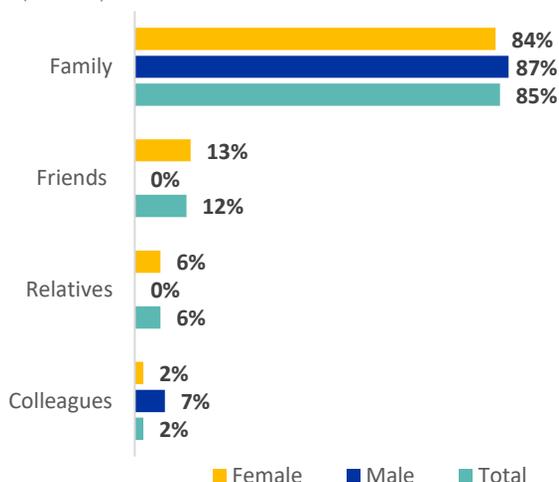


Table 5: Group composition, by age and gender (%) (N=362) . (more than one answer was possible)

Age group	Female (%)	Male (%)
Infants (<4)	7%	10%
Children (5-17)	35%	27%
Adults (18-59)	90%	7%
Elderly (60+)	4%	10%

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 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) tool in 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 Slovakia between 15 February and 31 March 2023 in various locations, in Bratislava, Kosice and Presov regions, as well as in various settings, including transit points (e.g., train and bus stations) and border crossing points in Vysne Nemecke and Ubla.

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 Slovakia, surveys were conducted in Ukrainian or Russian language 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 as information centers, respondents were intentionally identified.

Among the limitations encountered during data collection were the reduced time to carry out surveys at transit points and sometimes the same respondents appearing in various days of collection.

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 Slovakia.

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.