

## **ROMANIA**

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



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**January - March 2023**  
**Country Report & Data Analysis**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. Socio-Demographic Profile</b>	<b>5</b>
Gender and age	5
Marital status	5
<b>2. Time Outside Ukraine</b>	<b>6</b>
Countries of Stay while abroad	6
Average time since initial displacement	6
Number of exits/entries from and to Ukraine	7
Transport	7
<b>3. Oblast (region) of Origin and Destination</b>	<b>8</b>
Origin or habitual residence	8
Intended Destination	8
<b>4. Intentions and Reasons to Cross Back to Ukraine</b>	<b>9</b>
Long-term stay	9
Short-term visit	9
<b>5. Needs, Assistance Received, and Challenges</b>	<b>10</b>
Immediate needs upon crossing back	10
Assistance received in Romania	10
Experiences of discrimination	10
<b>6. Group Composition</b>	<b>11</b>
Travel mode	11
<b>7. Methodology</b>	<b>12</b>
Background	12
Methodological framework	12

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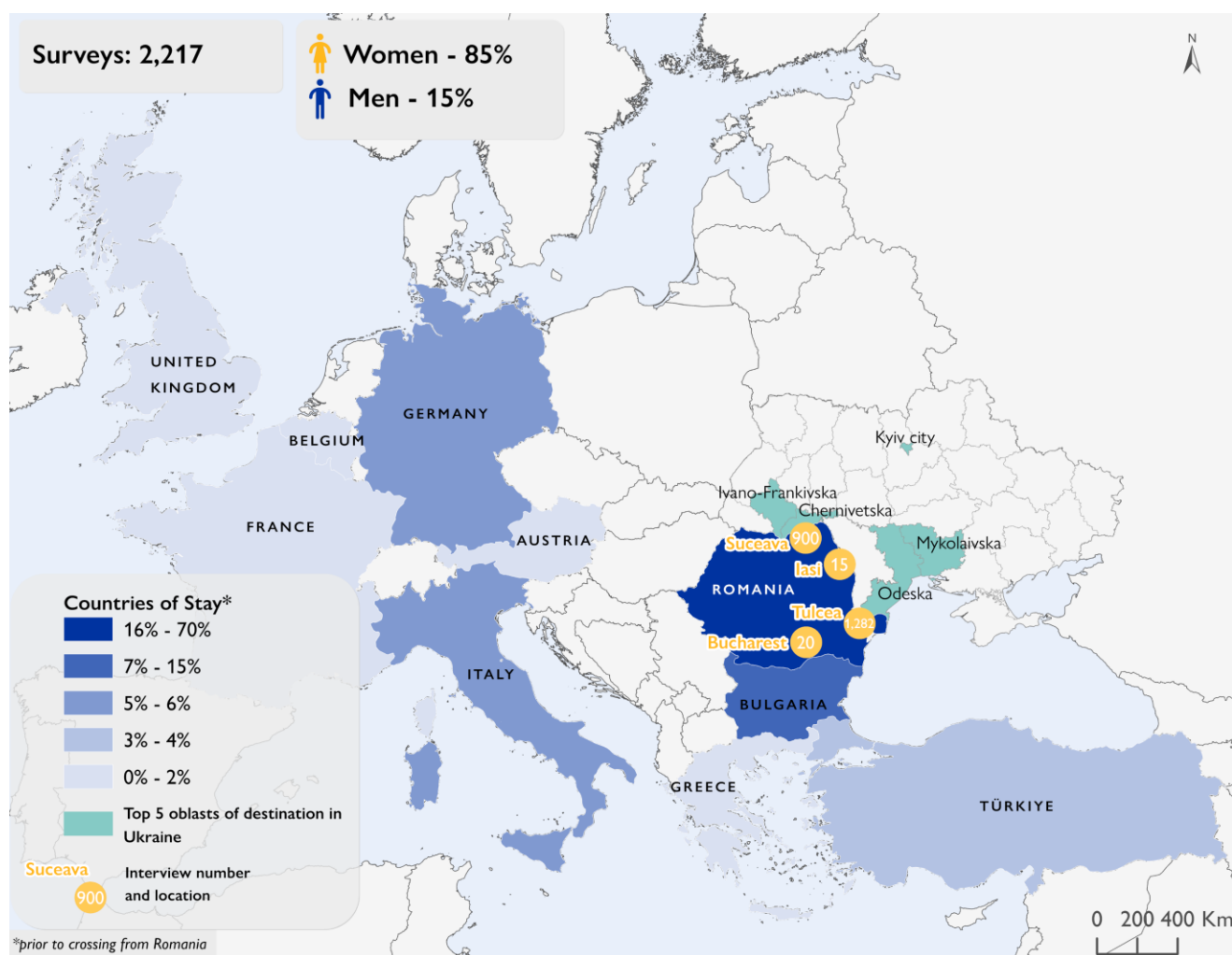
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## KEY FINDINGS

- **Top 3 countries of stay abroad:** Romania (67%), Bulgaria (13%), Italy (4%).
- **Transport to Ukraine:** car (65%), minibus (12%), bus (9%).
- **Top oblasts of origin:** Odeska (40%), Chernivetska (20%), Mykolaivska (7%).
- **Destinations in Ukraine:** going to same oblast of origin (96%), to a different oblast (3%) - Odeska, Chernivetska, Mykolaivska & Kyiv.
- **Intentions upon crossing back:** long-term stay (28%), short-term visit (58%), 13% do not know. One per cent (15p.) did not answer.
- **Top needs upon crossing back:**\* food supply (45%), financial support (15%), information (14%).
- **Top areas of assistance received:**\* accommodation (20%), food (20%), financial support (18%), sanitary supplies (18%).

\* more than one answer possible

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



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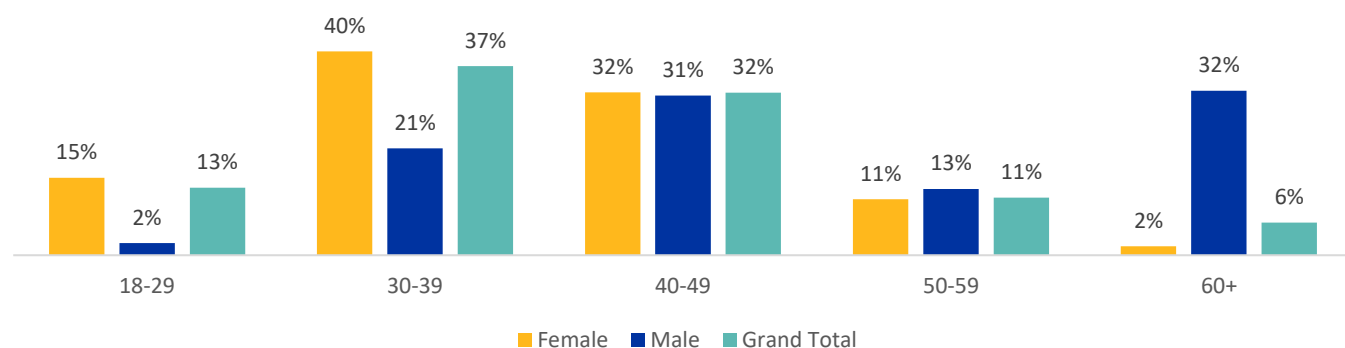
### I. Socio-Demographic Profile

#### Gender and age

Out of the 2245 respondents surveyed, one per cent were TCN's (N=25) and 99 per cent (N=2217) were of Ukrainian nationality. Eighty-five per cent of the Ukrainian nationals were women and 15 per cent of them were men. The overall average age of the UA nationals was 41 years old, and 94 per cent of the respondents were of active age. Even if the number of men UA nationals is smaller than the number of women, the average

age of men (50 years old) is higher than the average age of women (39 years old). Most respondents were aged between 30-39 years old (37%) and 40-49 years old (32%). If for men, the most common ages were between 40-49 years old (31%) and 60+ years old (32%), for women, the most common age groups are 30-39 years old (40%) and 40-49 years old (32%)

Figure 1: Age by gender and total

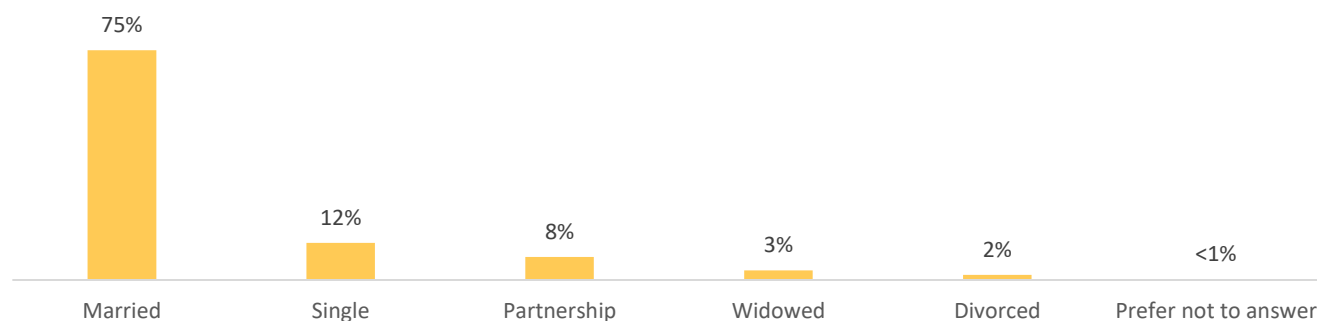


#### Marital status

Most respondents who answered this question (N=973) were married at the time of assessment (75%). This was followed by 12 per cent of the respondents who were single. Another eight per

cent were in a partnership, while three per cent were widowed. The remaining three per cent were either divorced (2%) or preferred not to answer this question (less than one per cent).

Figure 2: Marital status

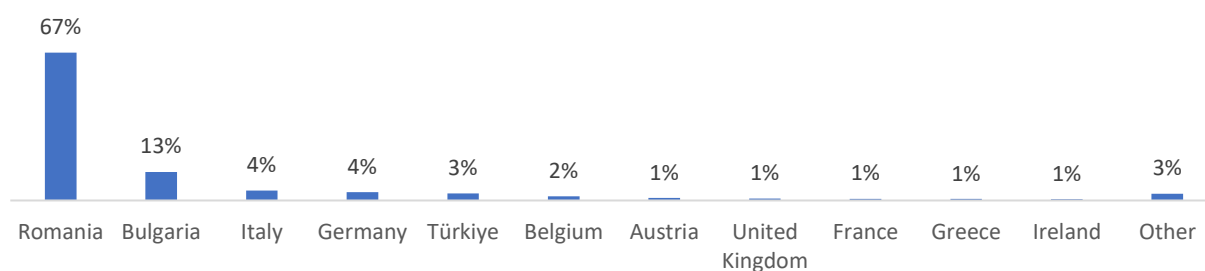


## 2. Time outside Ukraine

### Countries of stay while abroad

Over 50 per cent of the surveyed UA nationals stayed in Romania, where the current survey was conducted, before returning to Ukraine. Other countries of destination for the interviewed UA nationals were Bulgaria (13%), Italy and Germany (4%). A reduced share of the respondents also stayed in Türkiye (3%), Belgium (2%), Austria (1%), United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (1%), France, Greece and Ireland (1%). The remaining three per cent of the respondents were living in other 23 different countries before crossing back to Ukraine through Romania.

Figure 5: Countries of stay (%)



### 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. Out of the total sample of respondents, most were displaced between April and June 2022 (31%). Another 24 per cent of the surveyed UA nationals were displaced between January and March 2022. Therefore, by the time the interviews were conducted (January - March 2023), they had spent about one year outside Ukraine. The few months between July 2022 and December 2022, displacement fluctuated between 14 per cent to 11 per cent, giving them between two and seven months in displacement.

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

Date of initial displacement	Approximate time spent until date of interview	% Of respondents
Before 2022	Over 2 years	0.30%
Jan-March 2022	11-14 months	24%
April - Jun 2022	8-10 months	31%
Jul-Sept 2022	5-7 months	14%
Oct - Dec 2022	2-4 months	11%
Jan-23	1-2 months	9%
Feb-23	Around one month or less	4%
Mar-23	Less than a month	7%

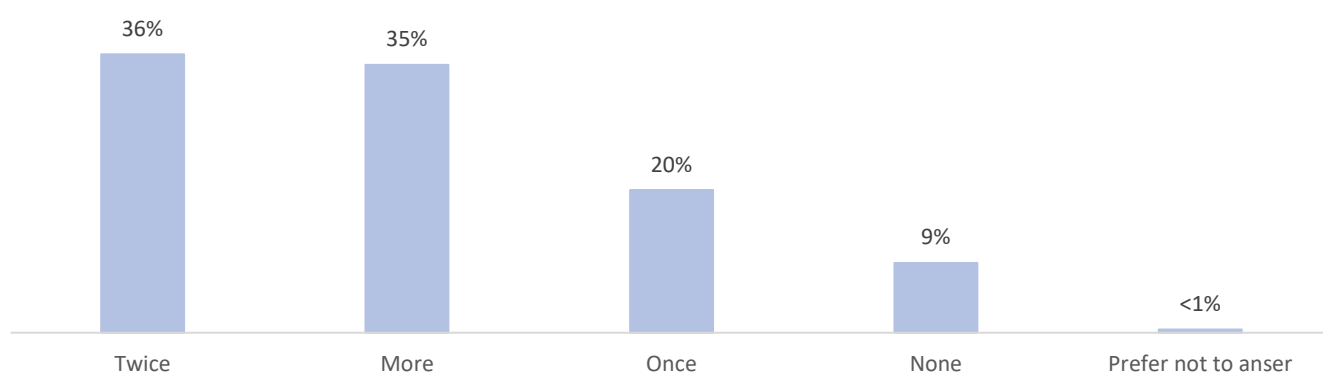
## Number of exists/entries to and from Ukraine

Out of the total number of the respondents, most of them have entered/ exited Ukraine twice (36%) or more (35%). The high number of transits between Ukraine and Romania is also due to the fact that the countries are neighboring. Twenty per cent of the surveyed UA nationals

have entered/ exited the country only once since February 2022, while more than nine per cent never returned to Ukraine since the displacement time.

Less than one per cent preferred not to answer this question.

Figure 10: Number of entries/exits between 24 February 2022 and 31 March 2023 (%)

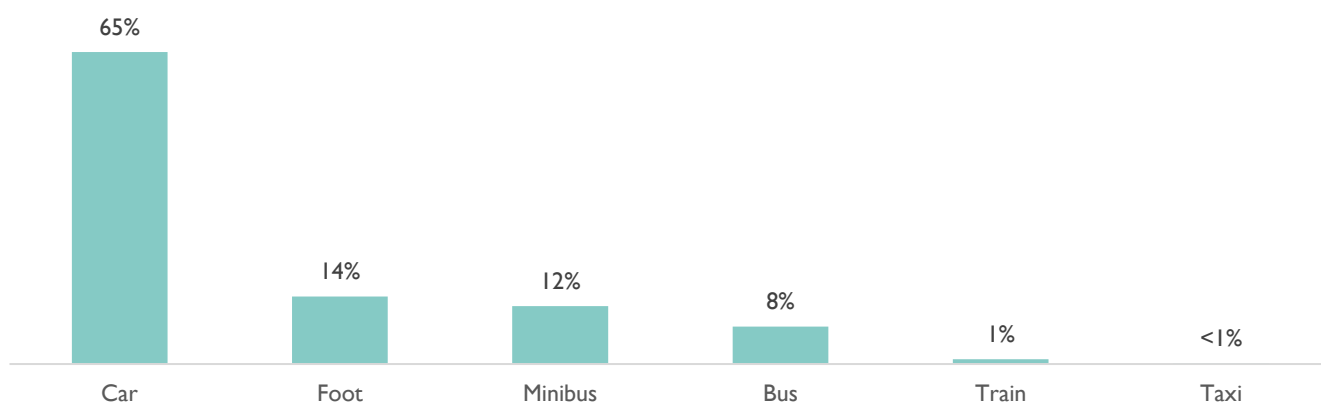


## Transport

More than half of the surveyed UA nationals were travelling to Romania by car (65%). This was followed by more than 20 per cent who entered the country using public transport such as minibus, used by 12 per cent of the respondents, bus, used

by up to eight per cent of the surveyed UA nationals and train (1%). Because some communities of Ukrainians live close to Romanian border, they have entered the country by foot

Figure 12: Transport (%)





## 3. Oblast (region) of Origin and Destination

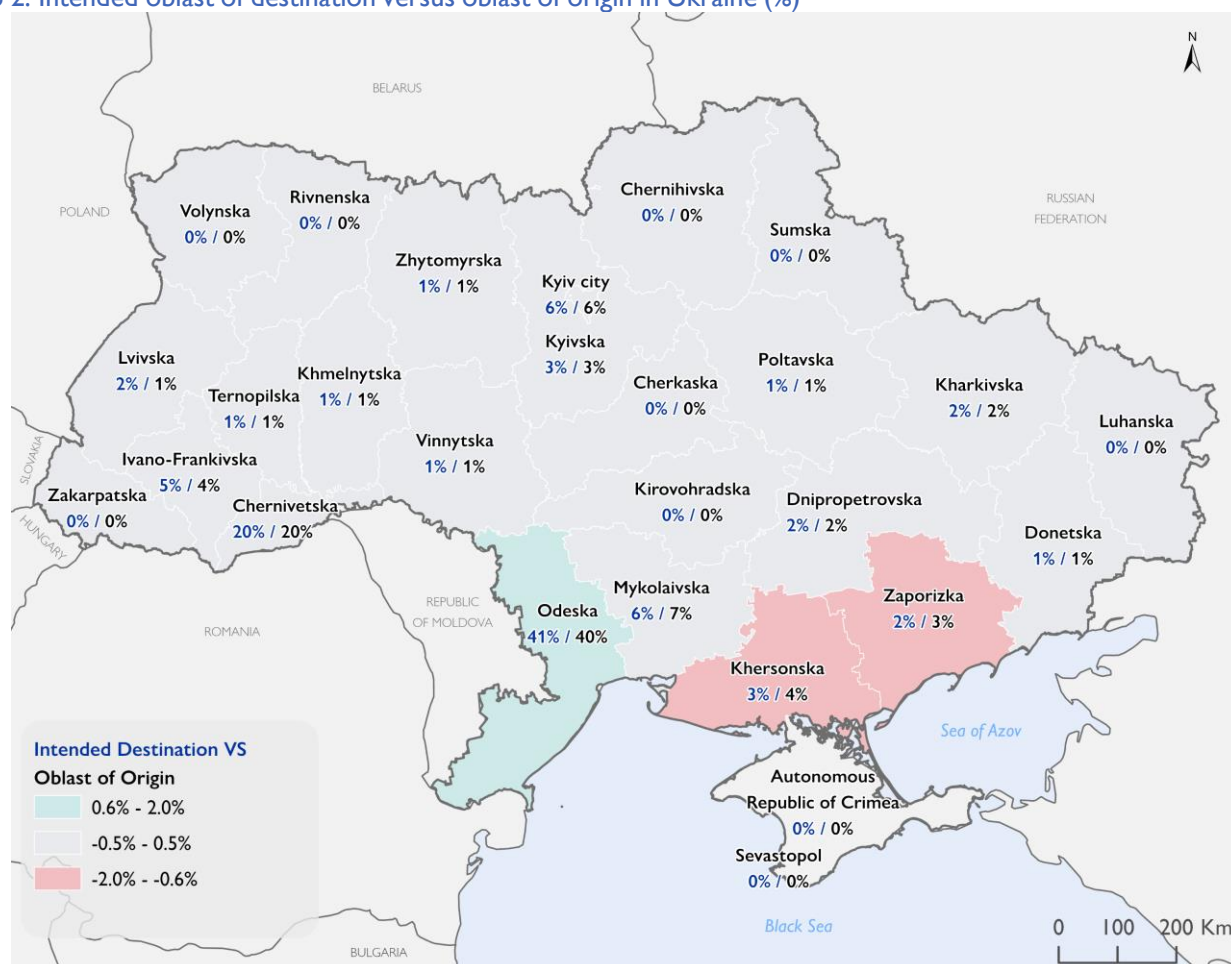
### Origin or habitual residence

More than three-quarters (81%) of the surveyed UA nationals came from six oblasts in Ukraine; the respondents came from 19 other oblasts in namely: Odeska (40%), Chernivetska (20%), Ukraine. Mykolaivska (7%), Kyiv (6%), Ivano-Frankivska and Khersonska (4%). The remaining 19 per cent of

### Intended destination

Almost all respondents (96%) stated that they intended to return to the same oblast they were displaced from. A small percentage, the other four per cent aimed to return to a different oblast - The top oblasts they expect to return to are Odeska, Chernivetska, Lvivska, Kyiv, Kyivska and Ivano-Frankivska.

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

### Long-term stay

Twenty-eight per cent of respondents aim to stay in Ukraine upon return. Out of this share (N=612), 24 per cent indicated that they planned to return due an improvement in their place of origin.

This was followed by 15 per cent of respondents who stated that they wanted to return as to reunite with the family members that have remained in Ukraine and 10 per cent who were returning because they considered that the overall

situation in Ukraine has improved.

Another 10 per cent were returning because they lacked the resources to maintain a comfortable life in Romania, while other eight per cent mentioned returning to Ukraine because they miss home.

To a lesser extent, other mentioned reasons included shopping abroad (6%), returning to help family (6%), lack of employment in Romania (5%), needing to return because they work in essential services (3%) or to keep their family safe (2%).

Table 2.  
Main reasons for staying in Ukraine, by gender and total (%) (N=612)

(more than one answer possible)

Listed reasons	Total (%)
Improved situation in place of origin	24%
Reunite with family	15%
Improved situation in Ukraine	10%
Lack resources	10%
Miss home	8%
Shopping abroad	6%
Help family	6%
Lack of employment	5%
Offer essential services	3%
For family safety	2%

### Short-term visit

On the other hand, 58 per cent of respondents were planning to go to Ukraine for a short-term visit only. The main cited reasons for visiting Ukraine were to meet family members that stayed back (34%) and to collect belongings that had remained in Ukraine (25%). Another nine per cent of the UA nationals were travelling back either to

bring supplies (9%) or to bring other necessary documents (9%). A small percentage travelled for a short visit to help family members still living in Ukraine (8%), to check on property (8%), to seek healthcare (4%), or to aid remaining family members or friends reach the border with Romania (4%).

Table 1: Main reasons for staying in Ukraine for a short-term period, by gender and total (%) (N=1293)

(more than one answer possible)

Listed reasons	Total (%)
Meet Family	34%
Collect belongings	25%
Bring supplies	9%
Bring documents	9%
Help family	8%
Check property	8%
Health care	4%
Help family leave	4%

## 5. Needs, Assistance Received, and Challenges

### Immediate needs upon crossing back

The most immediate need upon return reported by the interviewed UA nationals (N=2217) was the need for food supplies (45%). This was followed by the need of financial support, reported by 15 per cent of the respondents and the need of general information, mentioned by 14 per cent of the surveyed Ukrainian citizens. Other imminent needs reported were the one for long-term accommodation (10%), health services (10%), sanitary supplies and document assistance (8%).

Needs less frequently mentioned included: support to return (6%), the need of short-term accommodation (6%), support to communicate to other places (5%) and the need for transportation (5%).

Other needs mentioned were the need for personal safety, psychological counseling, medicines or household goods. Eight per cent reported having no needs at the time of survey.

### Assistance received in Romania

Forty per cent of the respondents declared having received accommodation assistance, or food supplies (20% each). This was followed by 18 per cent who received personal hygiene products and 18 per cent who received financial support. Other areas of assistance included vouchers (9%), transport assistance (8%), clothes (4%), toys (3%) and psychological counseling (1%).

### Experiences of Discrimination

Ninety-nine per cent of respondents reported not having encountered any form of discrimination in the country of displacement. The remaining one

Figure 6: Needs upon crossing back (%)  
(more than one answer possible)

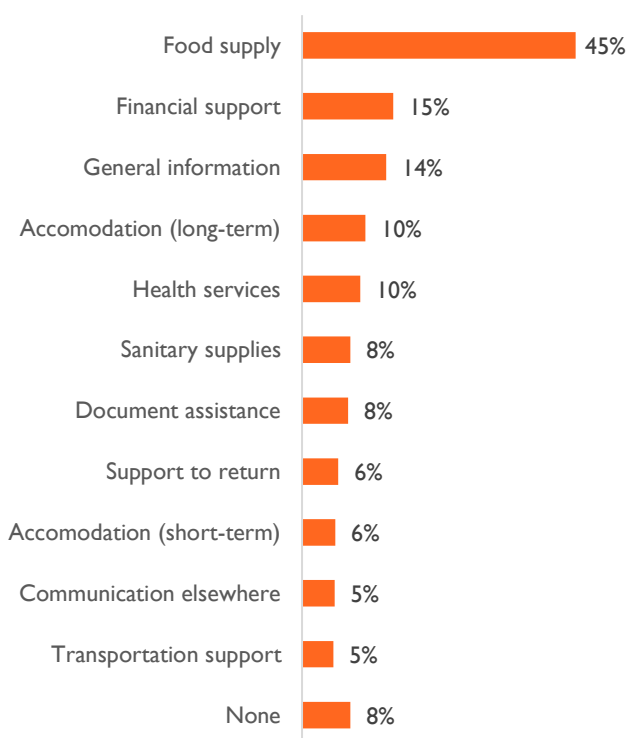


Table 4: Main areas of assistance received  
(more than one answer possible)

Type of assistance received	Total (%)
Accommodation	20%
Food supplies	20%
Personal hygiene	18%
Financial support	18%
Vouchers	9%
Transport	8%
Clothes	4%
Toys	3%
Psychological counselling	1%

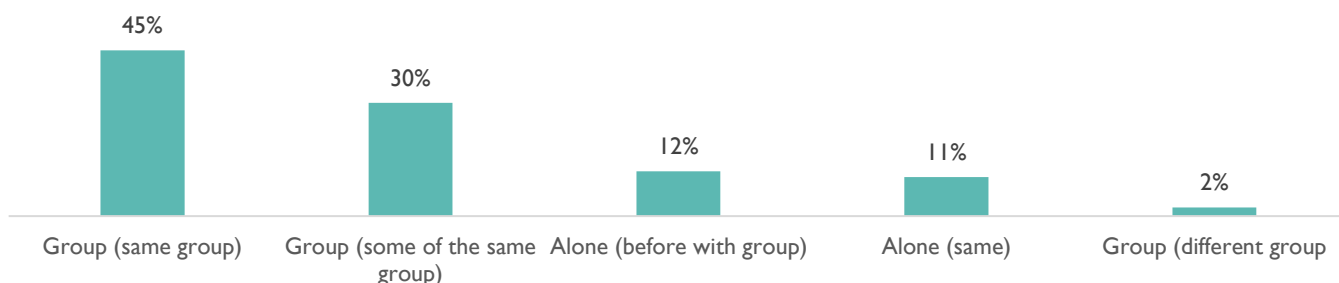
per cent either reported having experienced some form of discrimination, did not know, or preferred not to answer.

## 7. Current Group Composition

### Travel mode

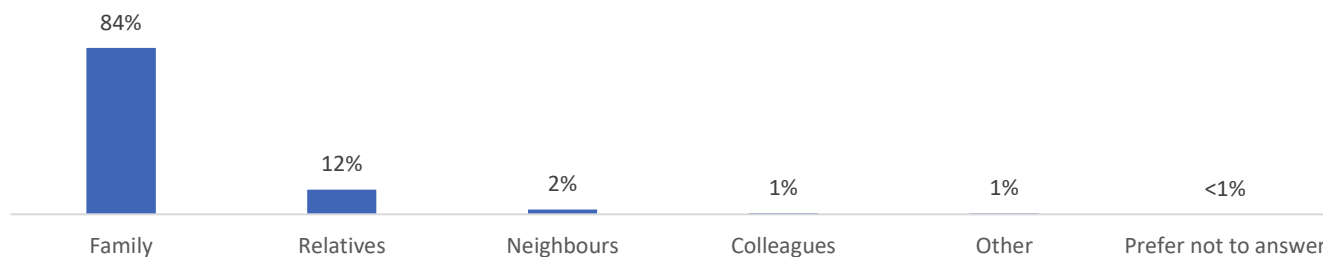
Out of the 2217 UA nationals surveyed, 45 per cent stated that they are returning with the same group they entered the country of displacement. Another 30 per cent are returning to Ukraine with part of the group they exited the country with. Twelve per cent of the respondents are returning to Ukraine alone, when they entered Romania with a group, while 11 per cent are exiting Romania alone, just as they came in the first place. A small portion of (2%) are returning to Ukraine with a different group to the one they exited the country with.

Figure 30: Travel mode (%)



Out of those traveling in a group (N=1716), 84 per cent were travelling with family and 12 per cent were travelling with other relatives. Two per cent were travelling with their neighbors, while one per cent came accompanied by work colleagues. Another one per cent came with other people.

Figure 31: Group composition (%)  
(multiple answers possible)



### Concluding remarks

The assessment on the travel intentions of the Ukrainian citizens returning home shows that most respondents are returning to Ukraine for short periods of times, for personal reasons such as visiting family members, checking on valuables or helping those left in Ukraine. During their stay in Romania, with few cases, they have not experienced discriminatory behavior. A short analysis on the assistance received shows that their most basic needs have been met.

## 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 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 Romania between 01 January and 31 March 2023 in various locations, such as Bucharest, Siret, Isaccea, Iasi county or Galati county, as well as in various settings, including transit points (e.g., train and bus stations), 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 Romania, surveys were conducted in Ukrainian, Russian, Romanian 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 their enumerators at the crossing points, two in Tulcea and one in Suceava. 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 Romania.

## 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.

