

# DISPLACEMENT SURVEY OVERVIEW: UKRAINIAN REFUGEES AND THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS

DISPLACEMENT PATTERNS, NEEDS AND INTENTIONS SURVEY, 9 MARCH – 22 APRIL 2022



## INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED AT:

- 2** entry border crossings
- 2** exit border crossings
- 3** transit locations
- 10** temporary placement centres and private accommodations



Since 24 February 2022, increasing numbers of refugees and third-country nationals entering the Republic of Moldova have been registered amid the war in Ukraine. As of 22 April, Moldovan authorities have reported 430,226 arrivals from Ukraine, of whom 393,192 are Ukrainian refugees and 37,034 third-country nationals<sup>1</sup>.

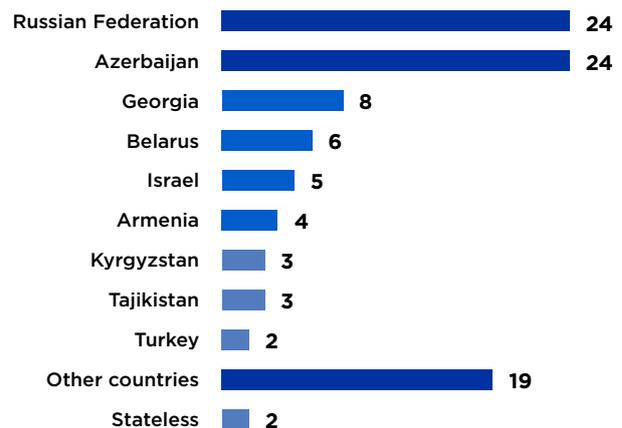
This is the third fact sheet that summarizes the results of displacement surveys initiated by IOM in partnership with UN Women to assess the needs and vulnerabilities of refugees and third-country nationals fleeing into the Republic of Moldova from Ukraine. This report presents an analysis based on the 9,978 interviews conducted between 9 March and 22 April 2022, out of which 9,045 were interviewed at four Moldovan border crossing points – Otaci and Palanca (at entry), and Leuseni and Giurgiulesti (at exit) – as well as in three transit locations – MoldExpo, the Ukrainian Consulate, and a bus station in Chisinau, the capital city. Additionally, 933 interviews were conducted in temporary placement centres and private accommodations, using an extended questionnaire based on the Displacement Tracking Matrix tool.

## SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Of the 9,978 respondents, **97 per cent were Ukrainian and 3 per cent were either Moldovans (0.7%) or third-country nationals (2.3%)**. Among TCNs, the top countries of reported nationalities were Russian Federation (24%), Azerbaijan (24%), Georgia (8%), Belarus (5%), Israel (5%) and Armenia (4%), representing together 71 per cent of all TCNs.

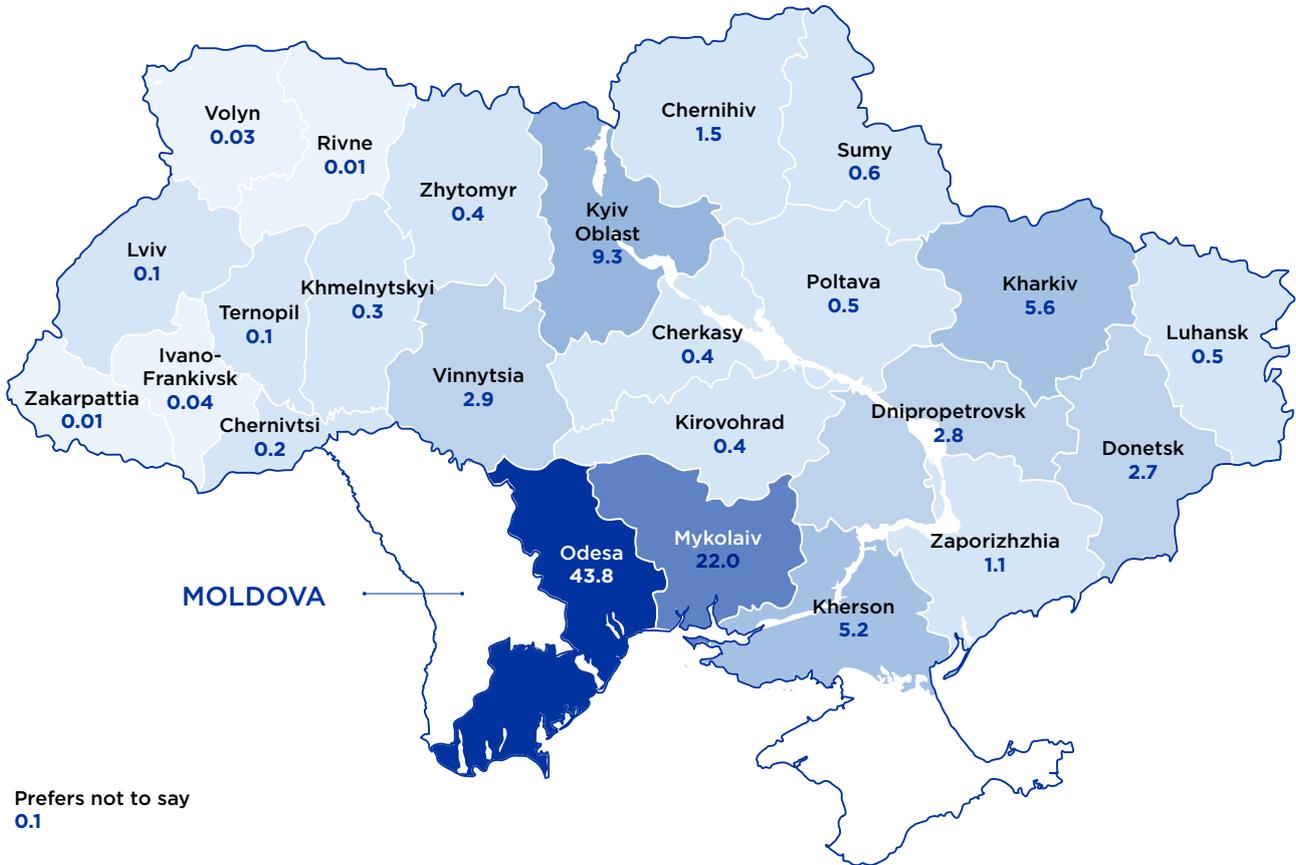
<sup>1</sup> General Inspectorate for Border Police of the Republic of Moldova, <https://www.border.gov.md/index.php/>

Figure 1. Distribution of third-country nationals (%) by country of origin



During the whole period, **the top five regions of origin among all respondents were:** Odesa region (44%), Mykolaiv region (22%), Kyiv city and region (9%), Kharkiv region (6%), and Kherson region (5%) with other 14 per cent reporting to be originating from other regions of Ukraine. Nevertheless, the share of respondents coming from each region changed over time. In the first period (between 09 and 20 March), respondents from Odessa region were 43 per cent of the total, followed by those from Mykolaiv region (24%), Kyiv city and region (10%) and Kharkiv region (7%) while respondents from Kherson region represented less than 1 per cent at that time. The survey results after 04 April reveal a slight decrease of those arriving from Odessa, Mykolaiv, Kiev and Kharkiv region, and a more significant increase of refugees from Kherson, up to 7 per cent of all respondents and respectively about 4 per cent from Donetsk.

Map 1. Distribution of refugees by region of origin (%)



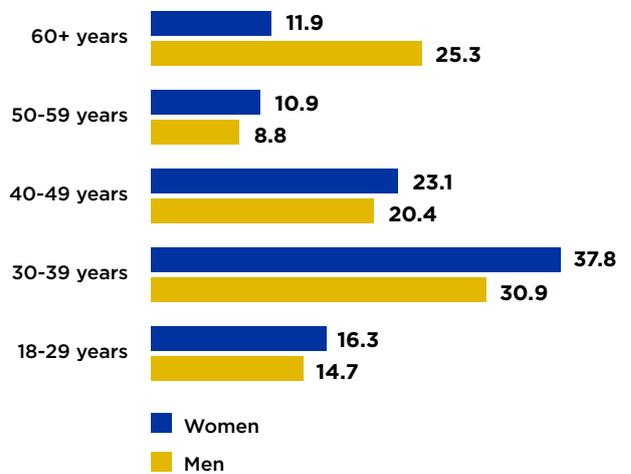
During the whole period, the majority of refugees and TCNs interviewed originated from urban areas (91%) while only 9 per cent reported to be coming from rural areas. The share of those from urban areas was higher (94%) among respondents met at exit border points to Romania and in transit locations in Chisinau, while it was lower among refugees and TCNs met at entry points into Moldova (87%) and much lower among those met in reception and private accommodation of various type (85%).

**Women and girls account for 80 per cent of all refugees.** The share of female respondents has slightly decreased from 81 per cent of the total in the first two weeks of data collection to just below 80 per cent over the last three weeks.

Men were more than the double of the average among refugees met at exit BCPs towards Romania (34.6%) than in the other locations where the share was between 14.7 to 16.4 per cent. This can be due to a higher propensity of male refugees and TCNs to move elsewhere than the Republic of Moldova, combined with the fact that most respondents interviewed in Leuseni and Giurgiulesti while exiting towards Romania were more frequently on board of private vehicles driven by men.

The average age for all respondents was 42 years old and it has increased from 41 to almost 43 years in the last period of the data collection (after 4 April). Men were 45 years old on average, while women 41 years old. More specifically, one quarter (25%) of men in the sample were 60 years old or more, compared to 12 per cent of the women.

Figure 2. Age distribution of respondents, by sex (%)

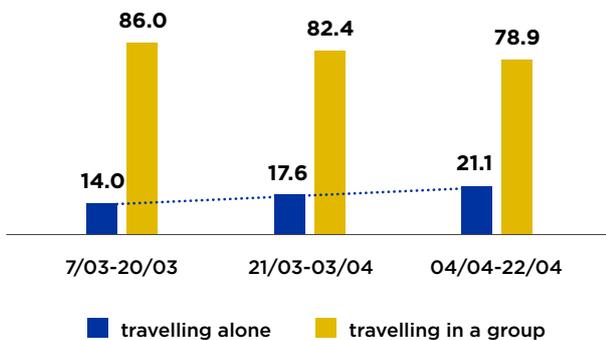


The vast majority of respondents declared to be travelling with a group (82%), mostly comprised of family members (93%). Those travelling alone represented 18 per cent for all refugees and TCNs: the share of sole travellers was 25 per cent on entry points into the country, about 18 per cent among those met at exit towards Romania and lower in transit areas in Chisinau (12%) and in reception centres (8%). Also, the share of those travelling alone has grown from 14 per cent among those interviewed in the first period to 21 per cent among those met after 4 April.



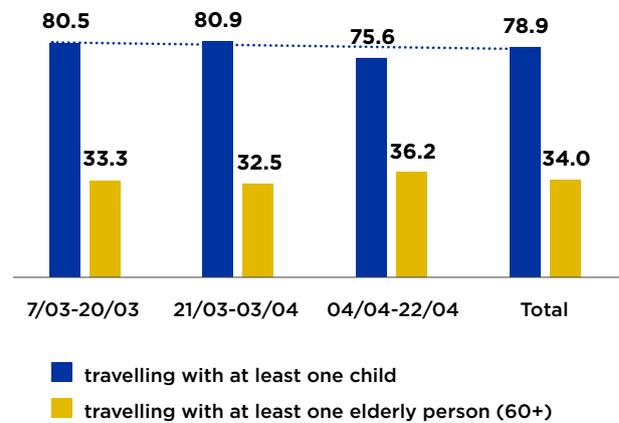
Of the 16 per cent of women who reported to be travelling alone, most were young women aged 18-39 (42%) or were elderly women aged 60 and above (24%). Among those travelling with a group, 88 per cent of women were travelling with family and 14 per cent with relatives.

Figure 3. The share of refugees travelling alone and in a group (%)



8 in 10 refugees were travelling with at least one child under the age of 18. In the period between 4 and 22 April, there was a decrease of about 5 percentage points for refugees travelling with children compared to the first period of data collection (80.5%). Almost all (92%) of respondents met in centres were travelling with at least one child, while the share was below 70 per cent among those met while exiting the country towards Romania. The presence of children seems to be one of the key factors in choosing the final destination.

Figure 4. The share of refugees travelling with children and elderly people (%)



Some 83 per cent of women were travelling with at least one child below the age of 18, the majority having one child (42%) or two (30%). Among women met in centres, every third woman was travelling with three children, while in the case of those met in transit locations, one in three was accompanied by two children. On average, there were 199 children aged below the age of 18 per 100 women refugees with children.

1 in 3 refugees were travelling with at least one elderly person aged 60 years and above. The share was quite similar among respondents in all locations covered by the survey, but it grew from 33 per cent for refugees met in the first period and to 36 per cent for those surveyed in the last period of the data collection. Additionally, 17 per cent of refugees and TCNs met at border points and in transit locations was also travelling with pets.

1 in 5 refugees reported to be travelling with or to have a serious health condition (persons with a chronic disease or a disability, wounded persons, pregnant women). Among those met in centres and private accommodation, 15 per cent reported having at least one person with a disability; and 3 per cent are travelling with a pregnant woman.



19%

have at least 1 person with serious health condition



13%

have at least 1 person with a disability among those in centres



2.4%

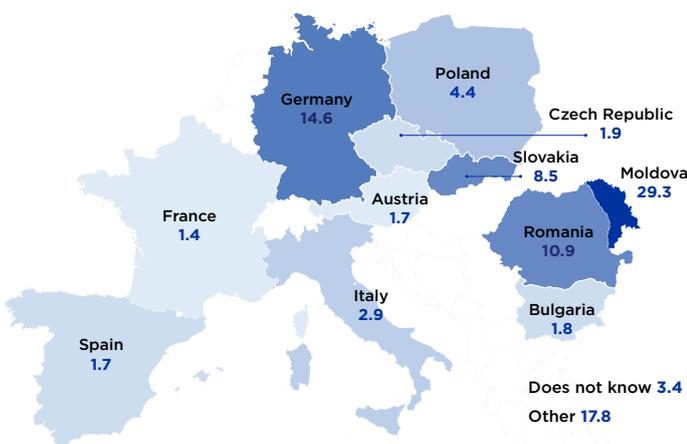
have at least 1 pregnant woman among those in centres

Among those met in reception, the share of those with some serious condition was higher than the overall average: almost one in four (23%) reported to be with a person with a chronic disease, 13 per cent to be with a person with disability, 2.4 per cent with a pregnant or lactating woman, and less than 1 per cent with a wounded person.

## MAIN INTENDED DESTINATIONS

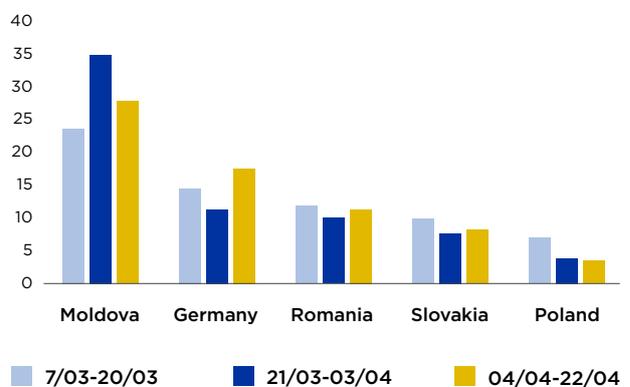
The main intended destination was the Republic of Moldova for 29 per cent of all refugees and TCNs, followed by Germany (15%), Romania (11%), Slovakia (8%), Poland (4%), Italy (3%), Bulgaria (2%), and many other countries in Europe, Central Asia and North America. The final destination was unknown at the time of the survey for 3 per cent of respondents. The share of those reporting to be intending to stay in the Republic of Moldova where higher among those met in reception and private accommodations (67%) and among those met in transit areas and locations in Chisinau (37%). Germany was most frequently mentioned among those in transit locations in Chisinau (18%) than in other locations.

Map 2. Main intended countries of destination (%)



Overall, more refugees intend to remain in the Republic of Moldova and the highest share was registered between 7 and 20 March, which decreased to 28 per cent in the period from 4 April onwards. The preference for Germany grew from 15 to 18 per cent from the first and last period, while the share of those intending to go to Romania remained quite stable throughout the data collection period. Among most frequently mentioned countries of intended destination, Poland decreased from almost 7 per cent of all respondents in the first period to slightly above 3 per cent in the last most recent period.

Figure 5. Top five intended countries of destination (%)



Overall, 33 per cent of those intending to remain in the Republic of Moldova and with no accommodation solution at the moment of the interview plan to stay with relatives, followed by 23 per cent of those to be hosted or find some sort of private accommodation, 21 per cent to stay with friends, 18 per cent to stay in a reception centre, while 5 per cent did not know yet.

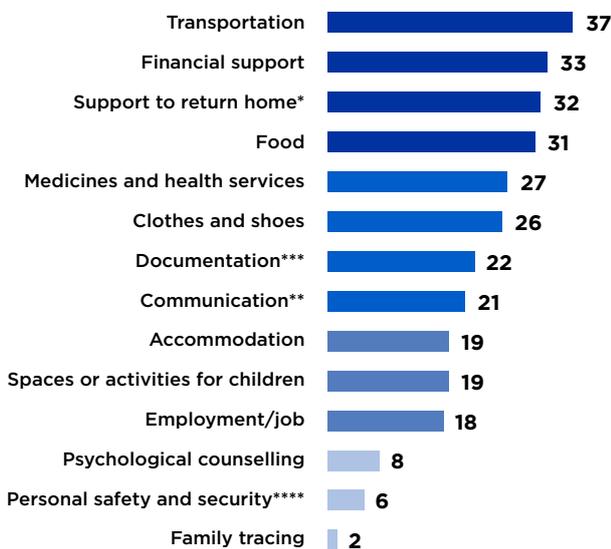
Among those intending to stay in Moldova and already with an accommodation solution, most (69%) reported to be willing to remain there while 17 per cent reported to be willing to move to a reception centre, 3 per cent wanted to rent an accommodation, 3 per cent plan to move to a relatives' place. The average number of days of stay in the country among those not intending to remain was 3.3 days.

The presence of relatives in a specific country was the pull factor in choosing the destination for 58 per cent of refugees. Yet, about 12 per cent of refugees have chosen the country due to existing social protection system, other 5 per cent because it was closer to their home. About 11 per cent preferred not to say why they chose the destination and 14 per cent had other reasons.

## MAIN NEEDS AT ENTRY, IN CENTRES AND PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION

The survey asked about the main needs in the Republic of Moldova for respondents met at entry border crossing points into the country and for those hosted in temporary centres and private accommodations. Overall, among the most pressing immediate needs were support to return home when security conditions will allow (32%), financial support (33%), food (31%), medicines and health services (27%), clothes shoes and other non-food items (26%), documentation (22%) and communication (21%). On average, 1 in 5 refugees expressed the need for accommodation, while 40% of those staying in centres also reported the need for another accommodation.

Figure 6. Main needs at the moment (%)



\* This refers to the intention to be able to return to their location of origin as soon as the security situation in Ukraine will allow.

\*\* Includes support to communicate with others in Ukraine and elsewhere.

\*\*\* Includes information and advice on legal and consular services.

\*\*\*\* Includes protection from instances of violence, harassment, theft, exploitation and reporting of incidents, grievances or assaults.

Refugees interviewed in reception centres and private accommodation reported higher levels of needs overall when compared to those met at entry border points and in transit area in Chisinau. For example, medicines and health services were reported more frequently by refugees met in centres (57%) and in private accommodation (51%) than those at border points and in transit (23%). Reported needs changed over time depending on the changing individual profiles as well as on the conditions of services offered at border points, in transit areas and in reception by the national authorities and the humanitarian actors.

The need of more information and communication services, including to reach others in Ukraine and elsewhere grew from 28 per cent in the first period to 33 per cent in the last period of the data collection. Conversely, the need of support with transportation decreased from 18 to 15 per cent of the sample from the first to the last period of data collection, possibly in parallel with an increase of services offered by humanitarian actors on the ground both at border areas and in the capital city.

## METHODOLOGY

The survey was based on IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), a system to track and monitor displacement and population mobility, and it 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 permanence in Moldova and to intended final destination; it gathers information regarding a set of main needs that the respondents expressed as more pressing at the moment of the interview. An extended version of the questionnaire was developed in partnership with UN Women to better understand the profile, education and employment background, access and awareness of essential services women refugees met in locations of stay – in reception centres or private accommodation solutions.

Only adults (18+) were approached, and the questionnaire was proposed only to migrants and refugees who arrived in the Republic of Moldova after 24 February 2022. Respondents were approached in a simple random sample by enumerators at selected entry, exit, transit locations and centres. In border crossing point areas, both persons entering/exiting by car and by foot were interviewed. In centres and private accommodations, respondents were interviewed using a mixed-mode approach through computer-assisted personal interviews and phone interviews. Face-to-face surveys were conducted in Russian, Romanian and English by trained enumerators from CBS-AXA Research at entry, exit, transit points and accommodation centres with Ukrainian refugees and third-country nationals. Data were collected and stored through a mobile application.