UKRAINE RESPONSE

LITHUANIA

Surveys with Refugees from Ukraine: Needs, Intentions, and Integration Challenges

2023 Annual Report

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Cover photo: IOM staff members conduct DTM surveys to recent Ukrainian refugee arrivals at Palanca, Moldova. © IOM 2024

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

KEY FINDINGS

Top 3 oblasts* of origin:

- Kharkivska (15%)
- Donetska (11%)
- Dnipropetrovska (10%)
- Khersonska (9%)
- Zaporizka (8%)

* Regions in Ukraine

Needs*:

Financial support (35%)

Health services (24%)

Medicines (19%)

Employment (19%)

Multiple answers possible

Intentions:

- Will not move soon (92%)
- To the region of origin in Ukraine (1%)
- To another country (1%)
- Within Lithuania (1%)
- Unsure (5%)

Top 3 desired destinations:

- Poland
- United Kingdom
- Norway

Assistance received*:

- Food (89%)
- Personal hygiene supplies (85%)
- Financial (81%)
- Transportation (64%)

Multiple answers possible

Labour market participation:

59%
Active population

41%
Inactive population

Inclusion challenges*:

25%
Financial issues

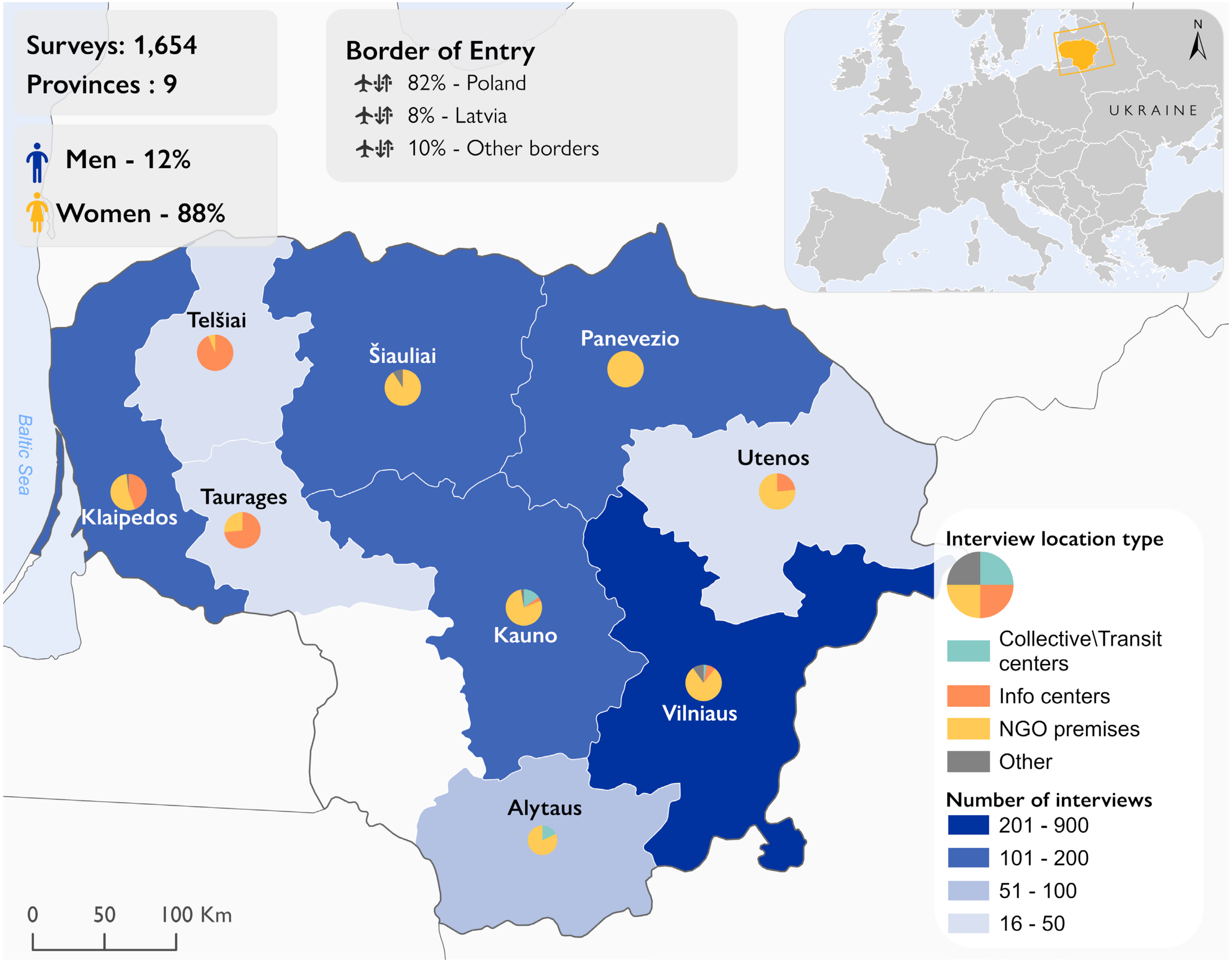
21%
Language barrier

19%
Lack of work

19%
Housing

Multiple answers possible

Map I: Number of surveys and locations of data collection in Lithuania in 2023



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

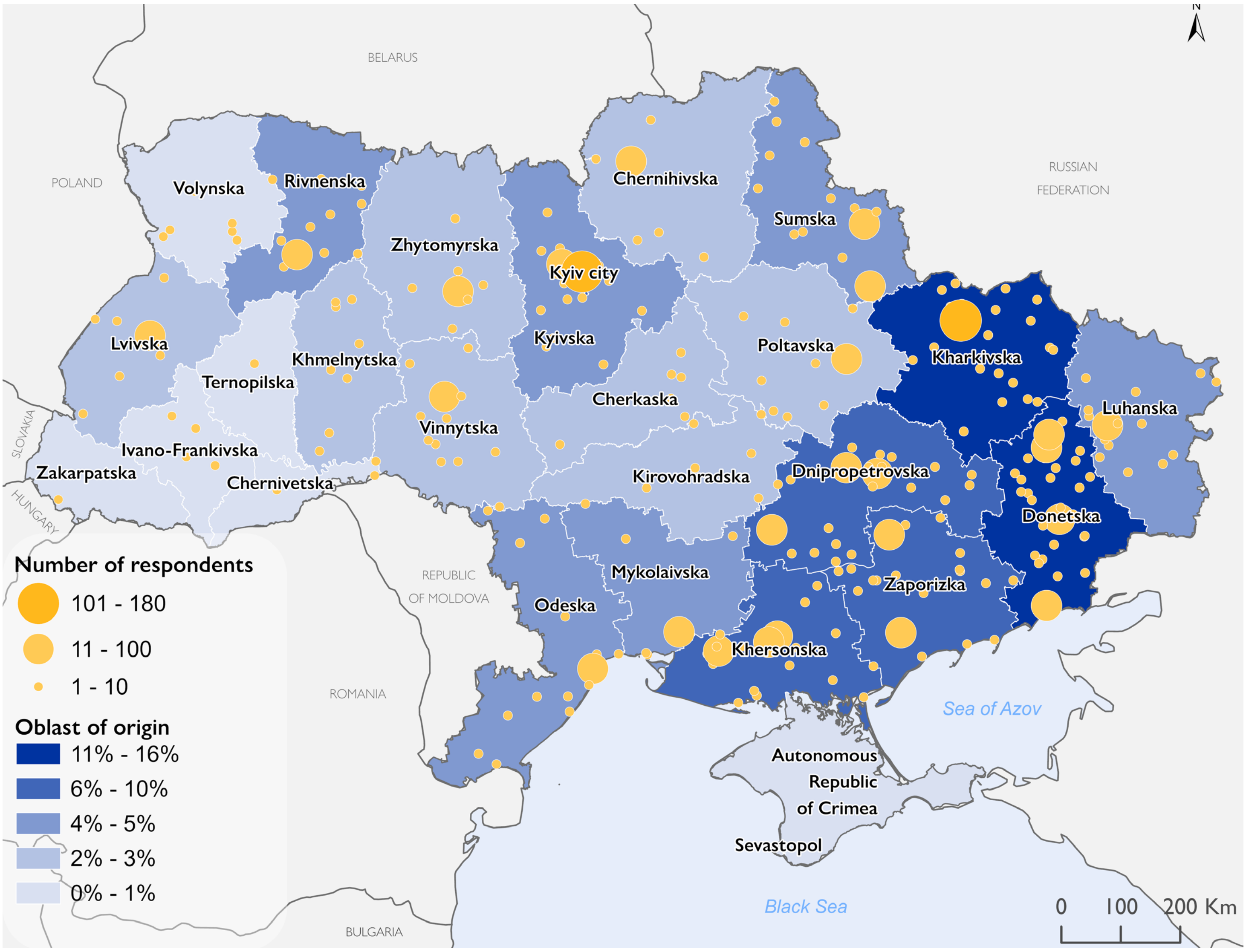
Oblast (region) of origin

Respondents interviewed for this survey originated from different regions across Ukraine, with a particular concentration in the eastern and southern parts of the country.

The majority of respondents (53%) came from only five regions of origin or habitual residence before leaving Ukraine, namely Kharkivska (15%), Donetska (11%), Dnipropetrovska (10%), Khersonska (9%), and Zaporizka (8%).

Other highly-represented regions of origin include Kyiv city (8%), Kyivska (5%), Luhanska (4%), and Mykolaivska (4%). The remaining respondents (26%) resided in 14 other regions throughout Ukraine. These included Odeska (4%), Rivnenska, Sumska, Vinnytska (3% each), Khmelnytska, Poltavska, Zhytomyrska (2% each), Cherkaska, Chernihivska, Chernivetska, Lvivska, Kirovohradska, Ivano-Frankivska, and Volynska (1% each).

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

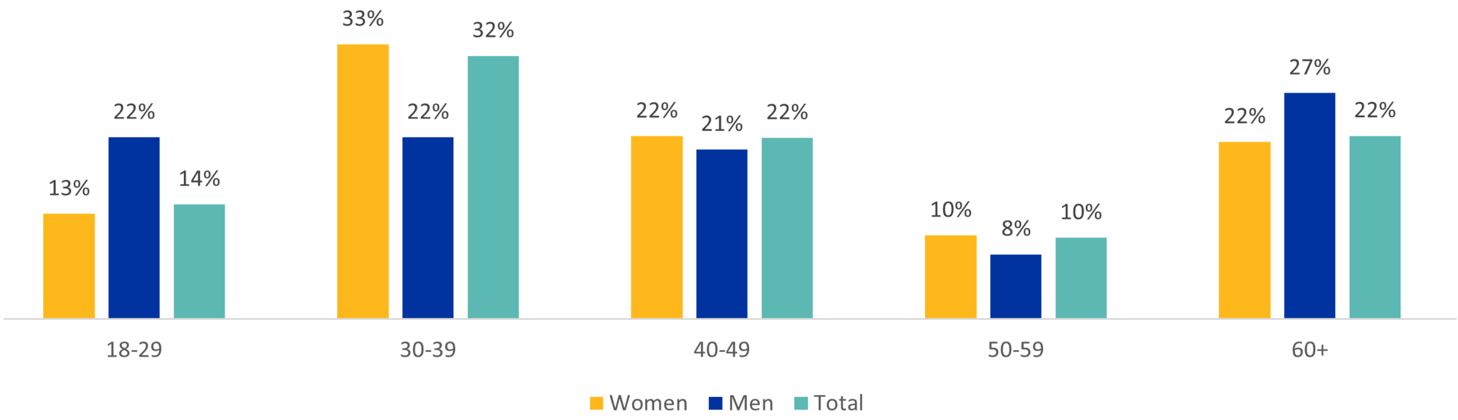


This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown, and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

Gender and age

Eighty-eight per cent of the respondents were women, while men constituted twelve per cent of the sample. The most represented age groups of respondents were between 30 and 39 years old (32%), followed by those between 40 and 49 years old (22%), and those aged 60 years and above (22%). The average age for the sample was 44 years old for both women and men. Among women, the largest age group represented was 30 to 39 year olds (33%), followed 40 to 49 year olds (22%). Among men, the most represented age groups were 60 years and above (27%), followed by 30 to 39 year olds (22%).

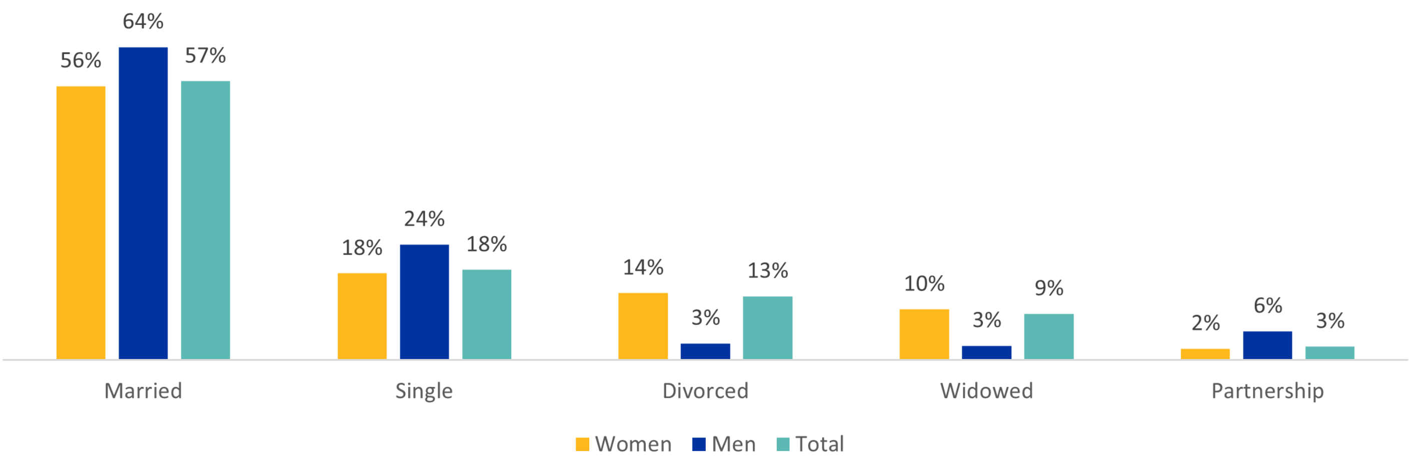
Figure 1: Age by gender and total (%), (N=1,654)



Marital status

More than half of the respondents were married (57%), while another 18 per cent were single. Others were divorced or widowed (13% and 9% respectively). The remaining three per cent of respondents were in a partnership. The proportion of widowed respondents was higher among women than men (10% versus 3%), while more men were in partnership compared to women (6% versus 2%).

Figure 2: Marital status by gender and total (%), (N=1,654)



2. Intentions

Move elsewhere or stay

The majority of respondents expressed their intention to stay in Lithuania in the near future, either in their place of residence at the time of interview (92%) or in another location within the country (1%). One per cent of respondents intended to return to their place of origin in Ukraine, while another one per cent wanted to move to a different country. The remaining five per cent were uncertain about their plans.

Women were more likely to stay in their location than men (92% versus 87%), and women were slightly less likely to relocate to a foreign country (1% versus 3%).

The majority of respondents planned to return to Ukraine (75%) when it is safe. Additionally, 17 per cent remained unsure about their plans, while eight per cent did not intend to return at all.

Over time, the percentage of respondents intending to return to Ukraine when safe decreased. In the first half of the year, an average of 80 per cent wanted to return, compared to 68 per cent in the latter half. Additionally, the percentage of respondents uncertain about their return plans steadily increased – from 15 per cent during the first half of 2023 to 21 per cent in the latter half of the year. Those who were certain that they would not return also increased from five per cent in the first half to eleven per cent in the second half.

Figure 3: Intentions to move (%), (N=1,654)

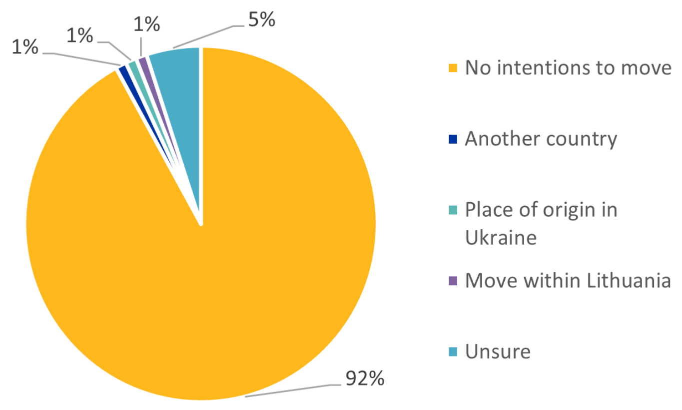
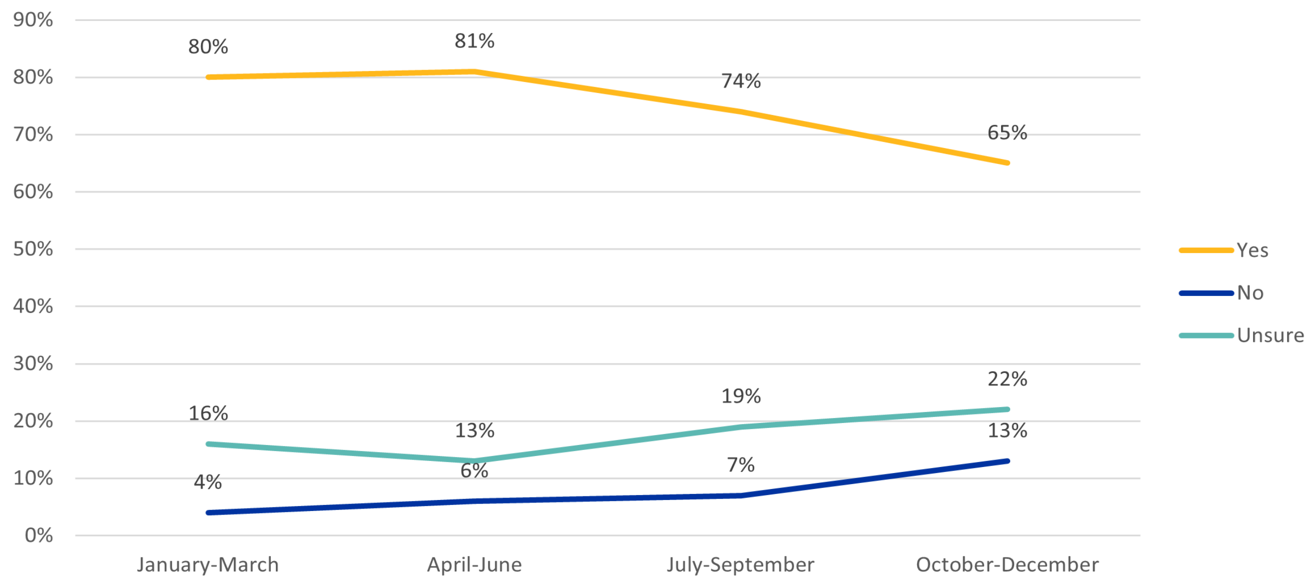


Figure 4: Return plans when safe, 2023 (%), (N=1,654)



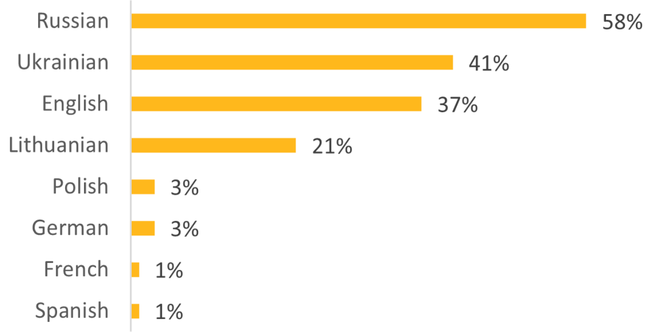
3. Education and Employment: Profile and Prospects

Main language

Over half of respondents (58%) speak Ukrainian as their main language at home, while Russian was the second most common language among respondents (41%).

When asked about other languages spoken, 58 per cent of all respondents mentioned Russian and another 41 per cent mentioned Ukrainian. In addition, 37 per cent of respondents spoke English and 21 per cent spoke Lithuanian language.Other mentioned languages included Polish, German (3% of respondents each), French and Spanish (1% each).

Figure 5: Other spoken language (%), (N=1,630) (multiple answers possible)



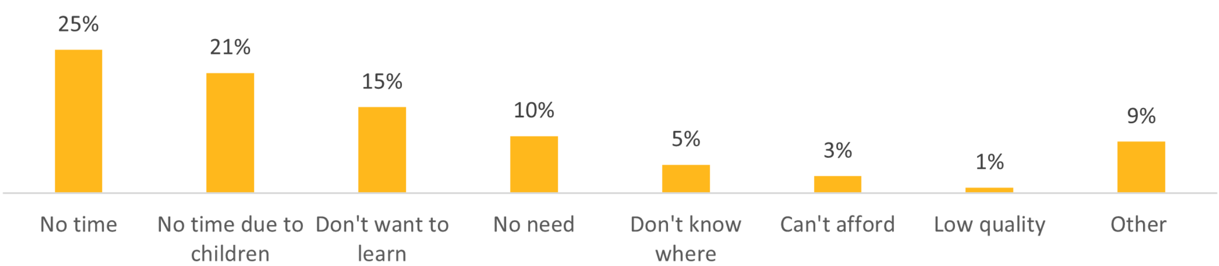
Lithuanian language proficiency and courses

Out of 839 respondents who provided their answers, 41 per cent had taken Lithuanian language courses, while 58 per cent had not and the remaining one per cent did not specify.

Ninety-seven per cent of interviewees indicated that the Lithuanian language courses were provided free of charge, while three per cent had to pay for their language courses. 420 respondents stated that they did not enroll in Lithuanian language courses. The primary reasons for this were: lack of time (25%), time constraints due to childcare responsibilities (21%), lack of interest in learning the Lithuanian language (15%), no perceived necessity to learn the language (10%), and lack of information on where to take the courses (5%).

Additionally, some respondents mentioned financial constraints (3%), dissatisfaction with the quality of Lithuanian language courses (1%), or had other non-specified reasons (9%).

Figure 6: Reasons for not learning Lithuanian (%), (N=420) (multiple answers possible)

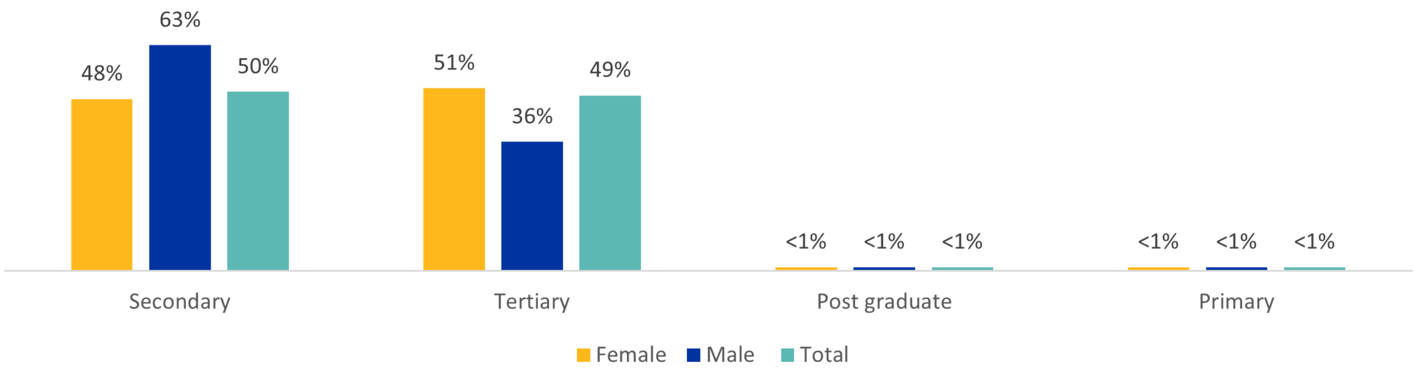


Among the respondents who participated in Lithuanian language courses (N=384), 23 per cent acquired language skills through NGO/UN agency programs, while 17 per cent indicated that the courses were provided by Lithuanian migration authorities. Additionally, respondents learned the language in schools (17%), through online platforms (11%), privately, and through courses provided by employers (5% each).The remaining respondents (22%) mentioned other sources, such as universities or learned Lithuanian themselves.

Education level

Half of respondents (50%) had completed secondary education. Forty-nine per cent had tertiary education, while less than one per cent mentioned having either post graduate or primary education. Among respondents, women were more likely than men to have reached tertiary education as their highest education level (51% versus 36%), while men were more likely to have reached secondary education (63% versus 48%).

Figure 7: Education level, by gender and total (%), (N=1,654)



Employment after displacement

At the time of the interview, 59 per cent of respondents were engaged in the labour force (out of N=1,612), while 41 per cent remained inactive. Among active respondents, the highest proportions were observed within the 30-39 (38%) and 40-49 (30%) age groups, whereas the highest percentages of inactive individuals were found in the 60 and above (47%) and 30-39 (24%) age groups.

Figure 8: Active population by age (%), (N=951)

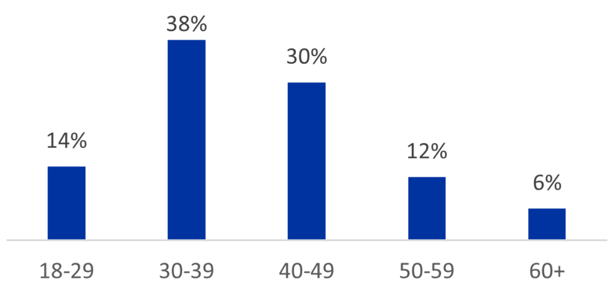
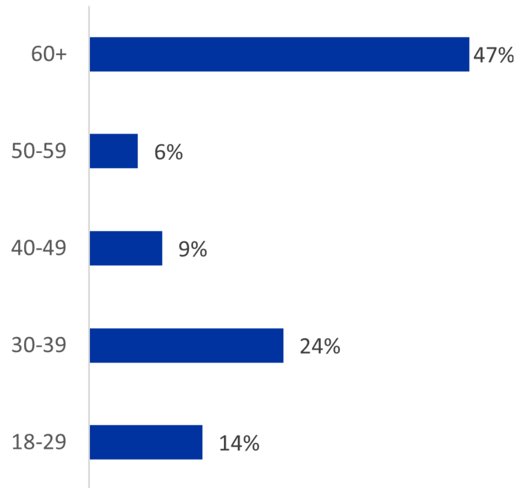


Figure 9: Inactive population by age (%), (N=661)



Within the active population (59%, N=951), 63 per cent were in employment, comprising 58 per cent in regular employment, four per cent self-employed people and one per cent as daily workers. The remaining 37 per cent reported being unemployed and seeking employment. Men are more likely to be employed than women (71% versus 62%), in addition to the percentage of self-employed people being higher among men than women (10% versus 3%). Among the inactive respondents (41%, N=661), reasons for not being part of the labour force included retirement (48%), not seeking employment (23%), parental leave (21%), and student status (8%).

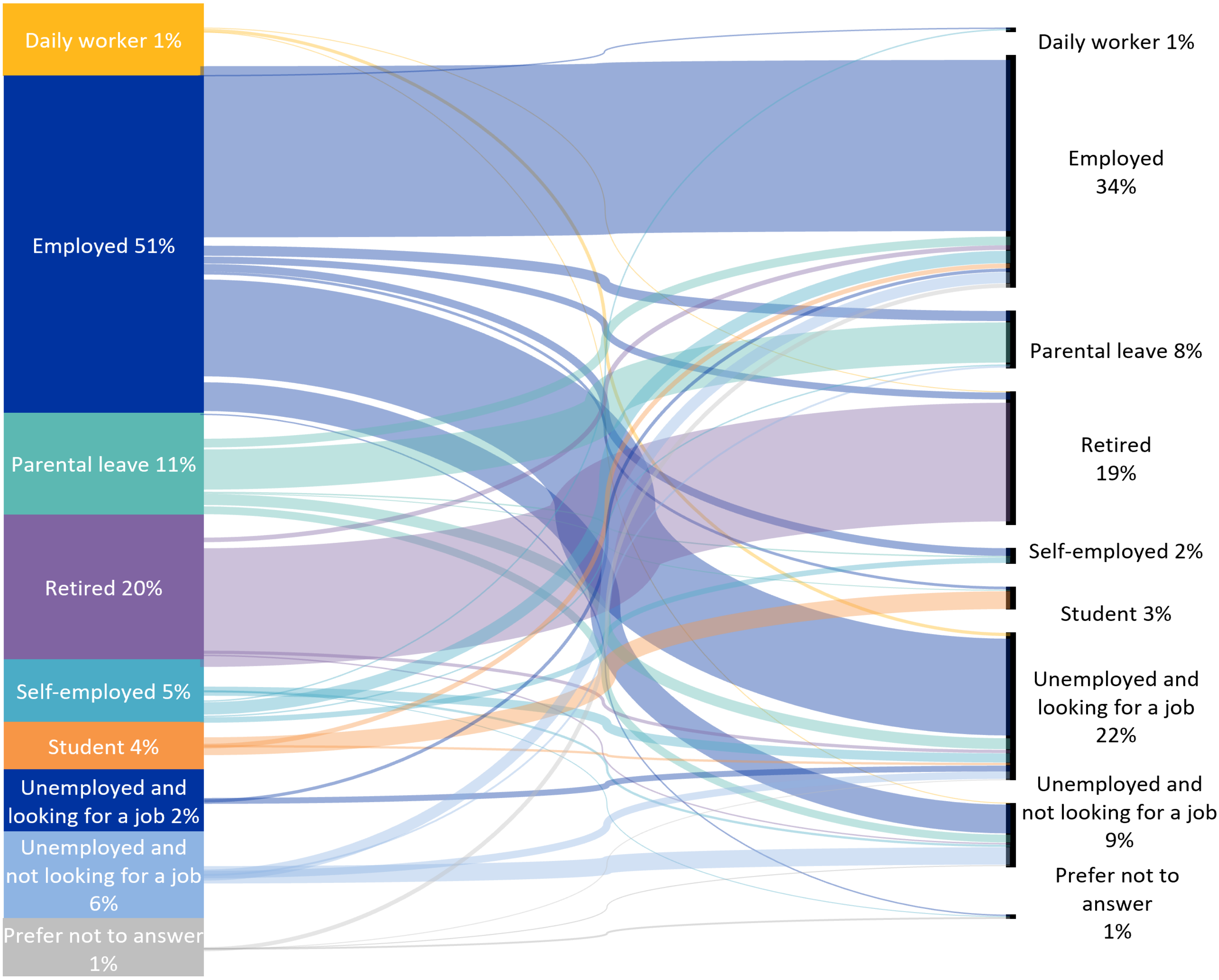
Employment before displacement

More than a half (59%) of respondents were previously actively involved in the labour market before leaving Ukraine (out of N=1,635), which represents the unchanged rate compared to the labour market participation rates in Lithuania (59%). The remaining 41 per cent were not part of the labour force.

Among the respondents who were previously active in the labour force (N=962), 97 per cent were employed (87% in regular employment, 9% self-employed, 1% daily workers). Three per cent were unemployed and seeking employment. This represents a significant decline in the rate of employment, dropping from 97 per cent before displacement to 63 per cent after displacement. Among the inactive respondents (N=673), reasons for not being part of the labour force included retirement (49%) parental leave (26%), not actively seeking employment (14%), and student status (11%).

Before displacement, within the active population, women were slightly more likely to be employed than men (98% versus 96%). Also, a greater population of women were involved in regular employment (89% versus 76%). However, a higher percentage of men reported being self-employed (17%) compared to their female counterparts (8%).

Figure 10. Status before and after displacement (%), (N=1,654)



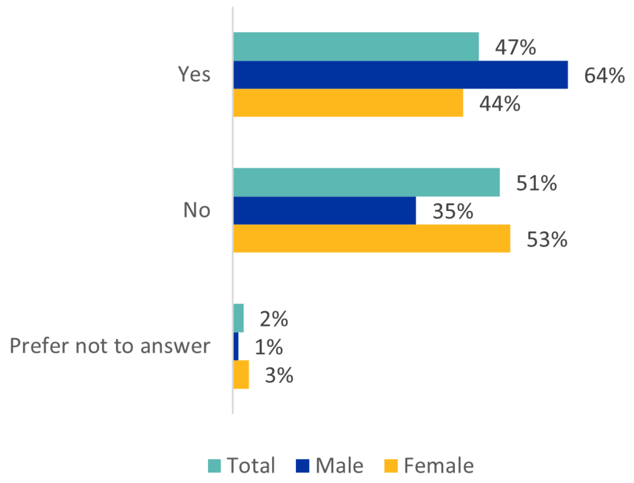
Active in Employment

Job matching

Overall, less than half of the respondents (47%) indicated that their job in Lithuania corresponded to their educational background and professional experience. Notably, men exhibited higher satisfaction with job alignment (65%) compared to female respondents (44%).

Among those whose academic and professional background did not align with their employment, disparities were evident. A significant proportion had tertiary education (57%), a smaller percentage with upper secondary education (16%), and respondents with post-secondary education accounted for 14 per cent.

Figure 11. Job matching by gender (%), (N=421)

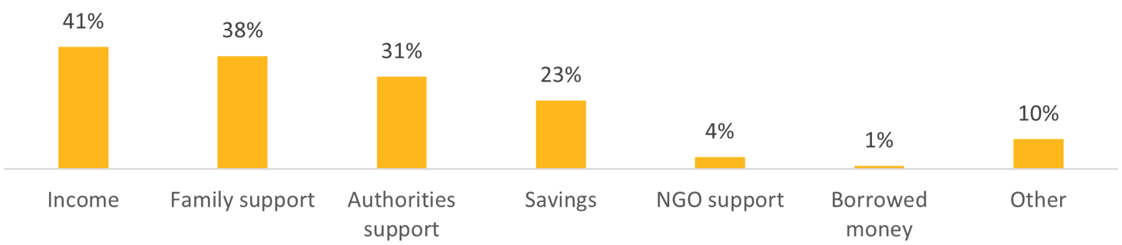


Ability to cover expenses

Sixty-six per cent of respondents reported that their average income was sufficient to cover their monthly expenses in Lithuania, while 30 per cent reported the opposite. The remaining four preferred not to answer. The majority of both active and inactive individuals reported having sufficient income to cover their monthly expenses (69% and 64% respectively).

Among respondents who answered the question regarding the means they use to pay for their daily expenses (N=839), the majority mentioned income from work (41%). Thirty-eight per cent mentioned support from their families and relatives, 31 per cent mentioned support from authorities or the government, and 23 per cent relied on their own savings. Four per cent of respondents received support from NGOs and humanitarian organizations, one per cent borrowed money.

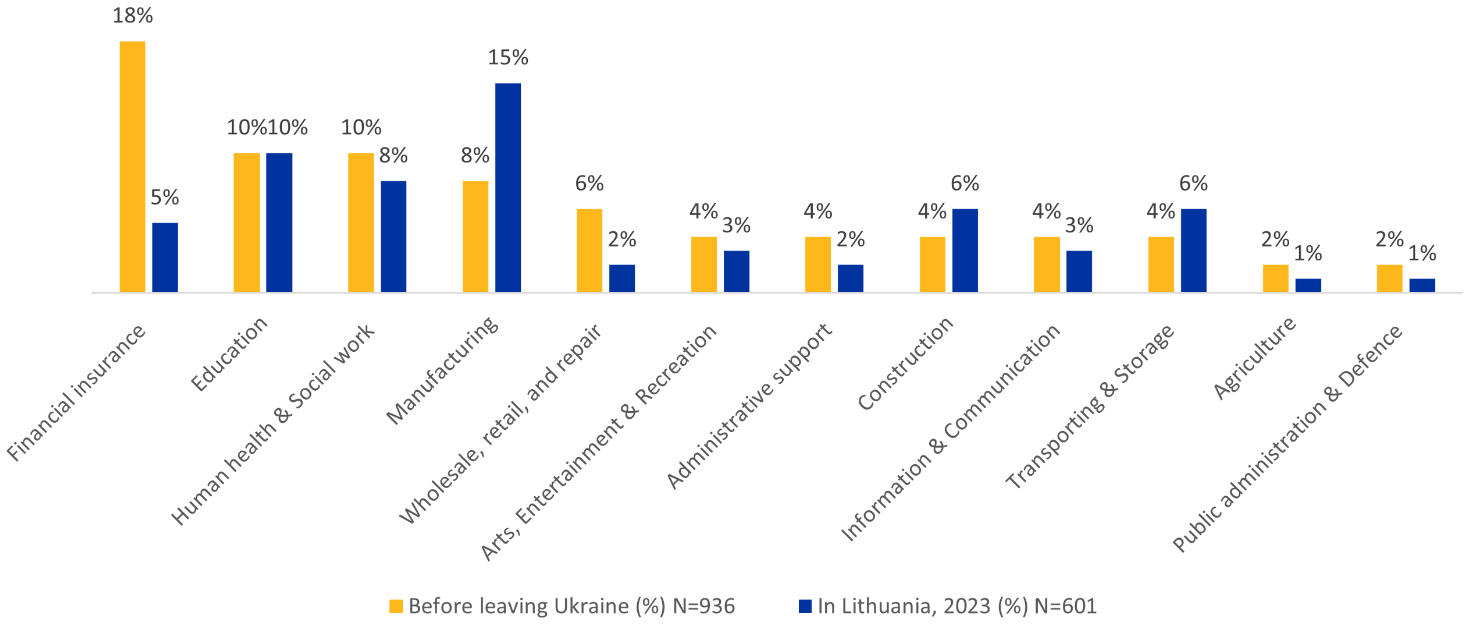
Figure 12: Sources of financial support (%), (N=839) (multiple answers possible)



Employment sector

Among the 51 per cent (out of N=1,656) of respondents employed in Ukraine, the leading fields were financial insurance, education, human health, and social work. In Lithuania, of the 34% of respondents employed after displacement, the top fields included manufacturing, education, human health, social work, and construction. In 2023, a higher percentage of women were observed in the manufacturing sector compared to men (15% versus 13%). Additionally, more women were engaged in accommodation and food services (14% versus 2%).

Figure 13: Top 15 sectors of employment in Ukraine versus in Lithuania (%)



Inactive in employment

The inactive population (N=661) consists of individuals not actively seeking employment, including retirees (48%), those unemployed and not seeking a job (23%), individuals on parental leave (21%), and students (8%). Among the inactive respondents, 24 per cent of women and 13 per cent of men indicate not actively searching for a job despite being unemployed. Notably, 23 per cent of women were on maternity leave, whereas three per cent of men were on paternity leave.

Unemployed and not looking for a job

Individuals who are unemployed and not actively seeking a job (N=153) indicate that their absence from the labour market is primarily driven by family responsibilities such as caring for children, elderly family members, or persons with disabilities (71%), and their medical condition (15%). Nine per cent did not see the need to seek employment as someone else in the household is employed. Some plan to leave soon (2%), mentioned other unspecified reasons (2%), or preferred not to answer (1%).

Desired occupation

When asked about their desired occupation in Lithuania, respondents indicated a variety of preferences. This included professional roles (29%), service and sales (9%), elementary occupations (8%), management (5%), and clerical support roles (4%).

A few respondents expressed interest in working as skilled agricultural workers (3%), technician associate professionals (3%), and plant machine operators (3%). Additionally, one per cent wanted to work in craft-related trades.

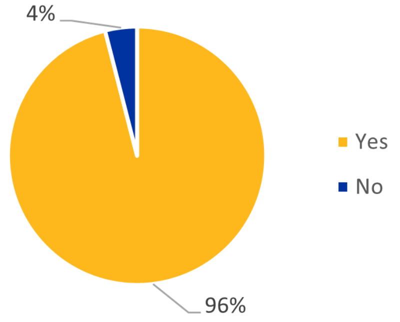
Figure 14: Desired occupation (%), (N=549)

4. Registration and Inclusion

Ninety-six per cent had already registered for Temporary Protection Status or applied to another form of protected status with the national authorities in Lithuania.

Among those who did not apply or register (N=57), 60 per cent plan to register, while 20 per cent were planning to leave Lithuania soon. Some respondents do not know how to register (5%), or claimed to be ineligible for TP (5%). The remaining respondents either were denied the status (5%) or mentioned other unspecified reasons (5%).

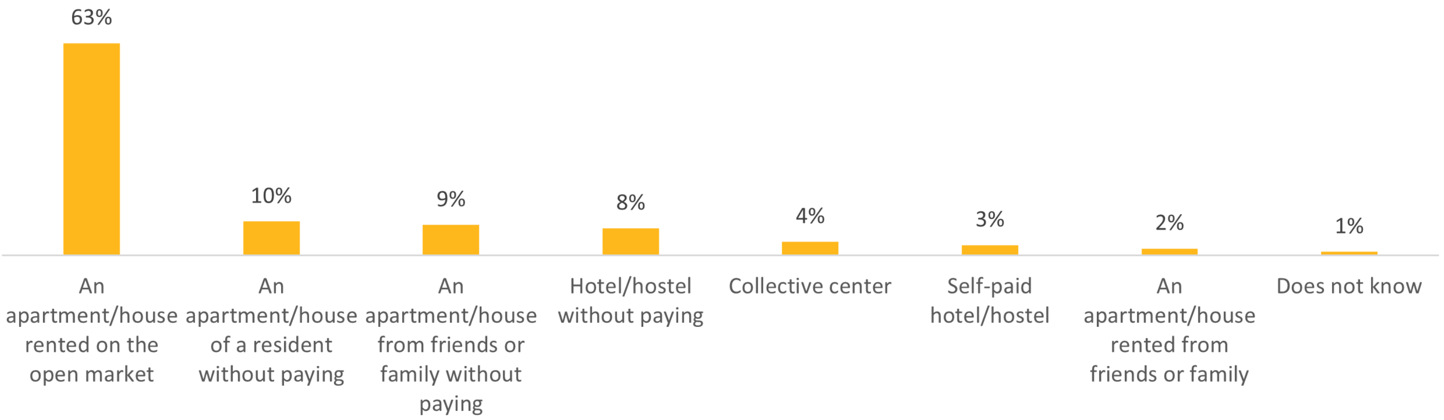
Figure 15: Applied/registered for international protection (%) (N=1,654)



Accommodation

Sixty-three per cent of respondents reported residing in apartments rented on the open market, while ten per cent lived in apartments without paying rent. Some respondents lived in apartments rented from friends or relatives (9%), stayed in hotels or hostels without paying (8%), lived in communal centers (4%), or stayed in hotels or hostels that they paid for (3%). The remaining respondents either rented the apartment from friends or family or were unsure about their accommodation (2% and 1% respectively).

Figure 16: Accommodation of respondents (%), (N=1,654)



Forty-six per cent of respondents aimed to remain in their accommodation for as long as possible. Another 36 per cent indicated their intention to continue living in their accommodation until their return to Ukraine, while three per cent specified that they intend to stay until their accommodation is available free of charge. Fourteen per cent of respondents were uncertain about the duration of their stay in accommodation at the time of interview, while the remaining one per cent cited other factors, such as waiting for an opportunity for a better apartment or buying their own apartment.

Finances

The survey included a specific set of questions for all respondents who had been in Lithuania for longer than 3 months (N=839). These questions focused on their inclusion and registration services, including access to finance, education, and consular services.

In regard to finances, 87 per cent of respondents reported having no issues accessing their finances using foreign debit or credit cards. Twelve per cent were not able to withdraw cash from ATM or make payments using their own debit or credit card. The remaining one per cent preferred not to answer.

Ninety-seven per cent of respondents reported having a personal bank account in Lithuania, while only three per cent did not. Among respondents who indicated that they had not opened a personal bank account in Lithuania (N=25), 48 per cent mentioned planning to open one, while 44 per cent reported not needing a bank account. Other reasons cited included intentions to leave soon (4%) and uncertainty about how to open a bank account (4%).

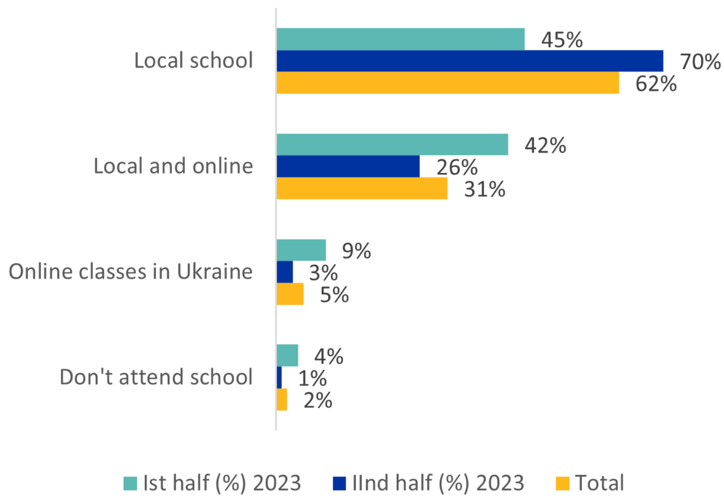
Children education

Fifty-six per cent of all respondents had children. Among them, 432 respondents specified whether their children were attending local schools and kindergartens.

Of these respondents, 81 per cent had their children enrolled and attended local schools. Twelve per cent enrolled their children in online education in Ukraine, while six per cent had their children engaged in both local and online education from Ukraine. The remaining two per cent had not been able to secure placement for their children in any educational facility. Among respondents who indicated that they did not have children enrolled in school (N=7), they either planned to enroll their children or had other unspecified explanations.

During the first half of 2023, 72 per cent of children were enrolled in local schools, whereas during the second half, this figure rose to 88 per cent. Conversely, the percentage of those enrolled in both local and online schools dropped from 11 per cent during the first half of the year to 3 per cent during the second half.

Figure 17. Children education facility (%), (N=432)



Obstacles to healthcare provision

Seventy-two per cent of respondents indicated that they did not face any difficulties accessing healthcare services, while 28 per cent reported encountering obstacles. Among those who provided information on this question (N=1,131), the most frequently mentioned obstacles included lack of documents (8%), service cost (7%), unavailability of services (5%), long queues (5%), and language barrier (2%).

Consular services

Among the respondents who have been settled in Lithuania for over three months (N=839), 76 per cent stated that they knew how to contact their consular representatives, whereas other 24 per cent did not. However, only 15 per cent had already reached out to the consulate.

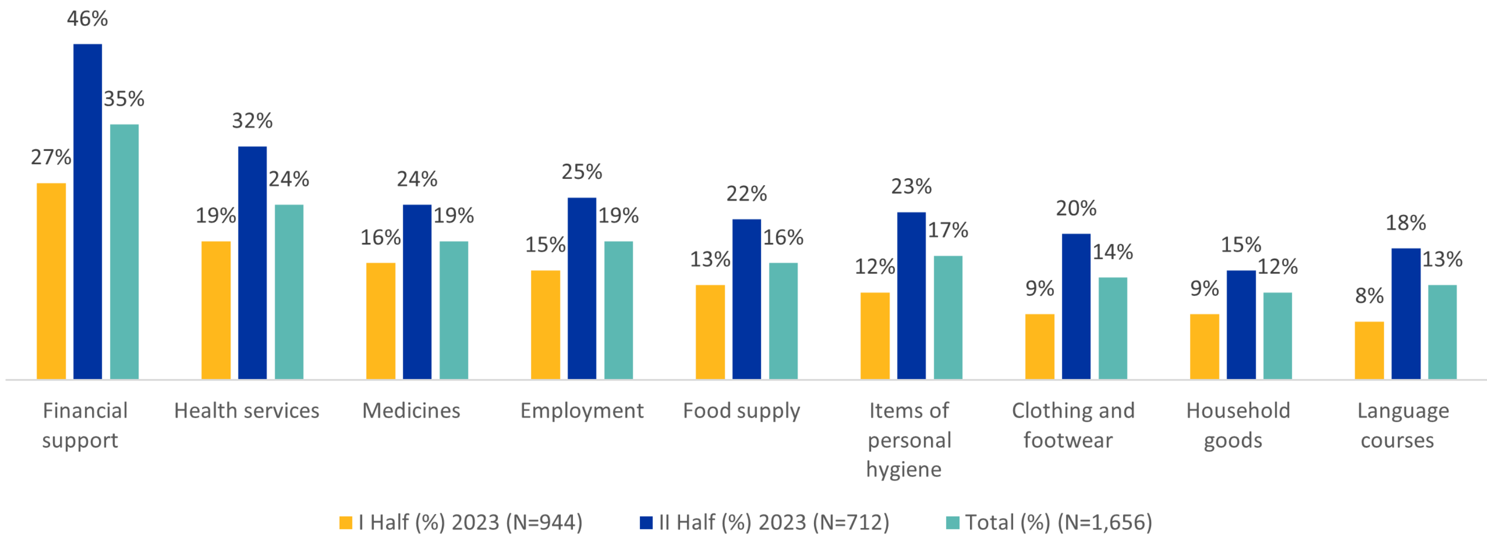
5. Immediate Needs and Assistance

When asked about priority needs, the highest proportion of survey participants cited financial support (35%), with the significance of this need substantially rising in the second half of 2023 as compared to the first half (46% versus 27%). Nearly a quarter of respondents (24%) specified health services as their priority need. The demand for health services grew considerably from 19 per cent to 32 per cent.

Similarly, the need for medicines increased from 16 per cent in the first half of 2023 to 24 per cent in the second half, totaling 19 per cent. The proportion of individuals who mentioned employment as a need increased by 10 per cent (from 15% to 25%), totaling 19 per cent per year. Material goods such as food supply (16%), items of personal hygiene (17%), clothing and footwear (14%) as well as household items (12%) were commonly mentioned among immediate needs.

In the second half of 2023, there was a surge in demand across all of these categories. The need for language courses grew from 8 per cent in the first half to 18 per cent in the second half of the year, totaling 13 per cent. In addition, respondents needed long-term accommodation (9%), with the demand rising from 7 per cent to 12 per cent.

Figure 18. Priority needs, 2023 (%) (N=1,654) (multiple answers possible)



Assistance

Eighty-eight per cent of the respondents knew where to seek humanitarian assistance, while eleven per cent stated they did not know where to see assistance. The remaining one per cent preferred not to answer.

Among the respondents who had been in Lithuania for more than three months or indicated they had settled in Lithuania (N=838), the majority (93%) claimed they had not experienced any difficulties when receiving humanitarian support.

Ninety-four per cent of respondents had received some form of humanitarian assistance since their initial displacement from Ukraine. The top forms of assistance received by respondents (N=1,553) were food supplies (89%), personal hygiene and sanitary supplies (85%), and financial support (81%). Other respondents received transportation support (64%), clothing and shoes (53%), accommodation (26%), and vouchers (25%).

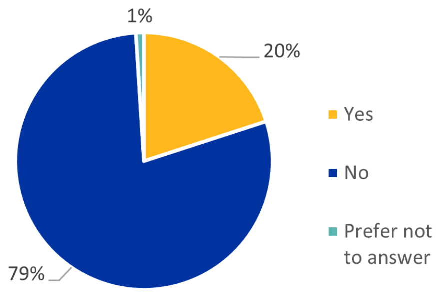
6. Challenges in the country of displacement

Experiences of unequal treatment

Seventy-nine per cent of the respondents claim they had not experienced any form of discrimination during their journey or during their time in Lithuania. However, 20 per cent of respondents reported experiencing discrimination since arriving in Lithuania. One per cent did not know or preferred not to answer.

The experiences most often were connected to securing employment, accessing healthcare services, or interacting with administrative personnel.

Figure 19. Reported experience of unequal treatment (%), (N=1,654)



Inclusion challenges

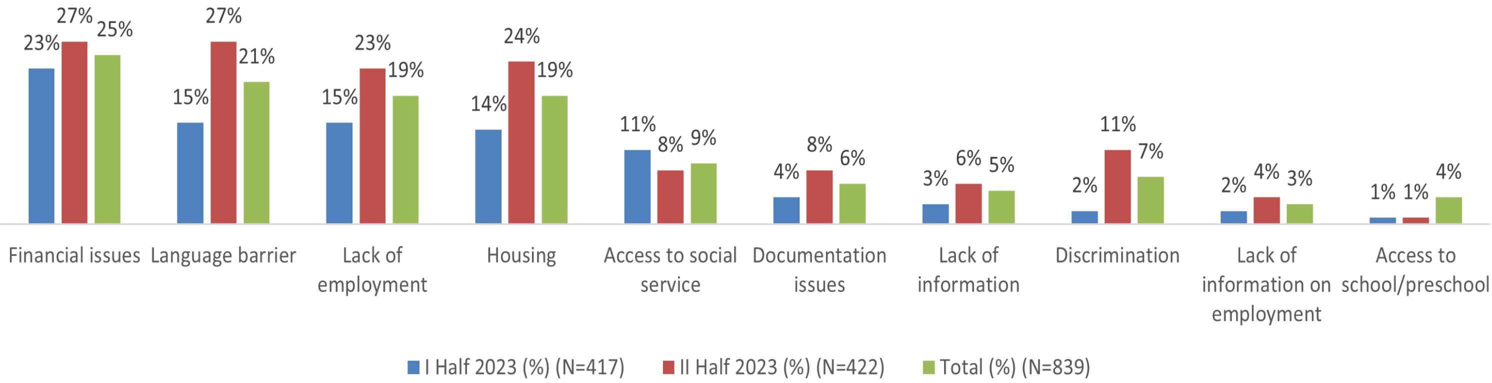
Among inclusion challenges, financial issues were mentioned by a quarter of respondents (25%), which made it the most significant inclusion challenge. The second biggest challenge was the language barrier, with 21 per cent of respondents acknowledging its impact. While the language barrier was mentioned only by 15 per cent of interviewees in the first half of 2023, the percentage almost doubled in the second half of the year (27%).

Lack of employment emerged as the third challenge hindering inclusion (19%), becoming more prominent in the second half of 2023 (23%) as compared to the first half (15%). Similarly, 19 per cent of survey participants identified housing as an important inclusion challenge. The proportion of responses mentioning this challenge increased from 14 per cent in the first half of 2023 to 24 per cent in the latter half. Access to social services was cited by 9 per cent of respondents, losing its proportion in the second half of 2023 as compared to the first half (8% versus 11%).

Other commonly identified inclusion challenges included documentation issues (6%), lack of information (5%), discrimination (7%), lack of information on employment (3%), and access to school or preschool for children (1%). The significance of both documentation issues and the lack of information doubled in the second half of the year, rising from 4 per cent to 8 per cent and from 3 per cent to 6 per cent, respectively.

The percentage of respondents who referred to the lack of information on employment similarly doubled from 2 per cent to 4 per cent, while the percentage of those who viewed discrimination as an inclusion challenge spiked from 2 per cent to 11 per cent.

Figure 20. Inclusion challenges, 2023 (%), (N=839) (multiple answers possible)



METHODOLOGY

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.

Since April 2022, IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix has been regularly surveying people who are residing in the eleven countries included in the Regional Refugee Response Plan for Ukraine. The aim of the survey is to improve the understanding of their profiles, displacement patterns, intentions and needs. The survey is deployed in 6 countries neighbouring Ukraine – Belarus, Hungary, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, and Slovakia, and other 5 countries in Europe, particularly impacted by the arrivals of refugees from Ukraine, including Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Face-to-face surveys were conducted by 7 trained enumerators, with adult refugees from Ukraine (18+ years-old). Surveys were collected at selected locations (information centres, humanitarian aid distribution points, accommodation centres, transit points and IOM premises) in nine regions of Lithuania. The survey is anonymous and voluntary, administered after obtaining consent from the respondent. Respondents can stop the survey at any time. In Lithuania, the questionnaire is available in English, Ukrainian and Russian, and the preferred language is determined by the interviewee. Only fully completed surveys are taken into account for analysis.

Prior to the start of the survey, all enumerators were trained by IOM on DTM standards, the use of Kobo application, IOM approach to migrants' protection and assistance, the ethics of data collection and the provision of information and referral mechanism in place.

About the Survey

Aim

To improve the understanding of the profiles of Ukrainian refugees residing or transiting through Lithuania, including their displacement patterns, intentions and needs.

Target population

The analysis focuses on the needs and intentions of Ukrainian refugees in Lithuania.

Location and execution

Face-to-face surveys were conducted by 7 trained enumerators stationed at selected locations in 9 regions of Lithuania. Surveys are conducted in English, Ukrainian and Russian with the help of a mobile application.

Regional data collection and analysis

The survey is deployed in 11 countries: 6 neighboring countries (Belarus, Hungary, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia), and 5 other countries (Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) impacted by the arrival of refugees from Ukraine.

LIMITATIONS

The sampling framework was not based on verified figures of refugees from Ukraine entering through all land border points or staying in the various regions where the surveys are conducted, due to the lack of baseline information.

The geographic spread of enumerators deployed captures a wide range of locations. Whilst the overall results cannot be deemed as representative, the internal consistency of data collection in each country and at the regional level suggests that the current sampling framework produces findings of practical value.

While every attempt was made to capture all types of locations, the operational reality of fieldwork was confronted with different levels of accessibility of BCPs and other transit and stay locations, including the different availability of possible target individuals to comfortably spend 10-20 minutes responding to the questionnaire depending on a mix of personal conditions. Other factors more related to the conditions at a specific location and period, such as organizational changes in the entry and transit areas from national authorities, or weather conditions, also play a role.

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.

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