



**REFUGEES FROM UKRAINE  
IN POLAND  
PROFILING UPDATE  
SEPTEMBER 2022**

UNHCR/R.Kostrzynski

**INTRODUCTION**

More than 7.4 million refugees from Ukraine have been recorded across Europe. Over 1.4 million individuals registered for Temporary Protection in Poland as of 17th of October 2022, the highest number among the EU countries<sup>1</sup>.

To understand the demographics of the Ukrainian refugee population, their intentions, immediate needs, access to information and their displacement patterns, UNHCR, in partnership with REACH, launched a region-wide [profiling exercise](#). Interviews were carried out in multiple locations, including border areas, transit and reception centres, collective sites and information and assistance points. Since the interviews were conducted only in selected voivodeships and in selected locations, the results cannot be extrapolated to the population of all refugees from Ukraine residing in Poland and the findings remain indicative. Variations in types of locations visited also may impact findings vis-à-vis previous reports. Respondents were randomly selected and asked for their consent to participate in structured interviews using a harmonized regional questionnaire. This update presents results from [3,596 interviews](#) conducted with refugees currently residing in Poland and includes cumulative responses from [1st to 30th September 2022](#).

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Operational Data  
Portal - Ukraine  
Refugee Situation:  
**POLAND**

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Most respondents were women with higher education. Over half of the respondents (64%) plan to stay in Poland, motivated mostly by safety. The vast majority (77%) travelled to Poland accompanied - most often by close or extended family.

- More than half (64%) of the respondents plan to stay in Poland in the near future, 15% intend to return to Ukraine and 6% to go to another country. The main motivation to stay - indicated by 29% - is safety in the area of displacement, followed by the family ties (20%). The highest percentage of people planning to stay in Poland is among those arriving from Volynska (77%) and Vinnytska (73%) oblasts. Return to Ukraine, on the other hand, is planned by 29% of refugees from Ivano-Frankivska oblast.

- About a third (30%) of the refugees travelled with at least one older person. Those travelling with older persons more often declared food and material assistance as their priority needs.

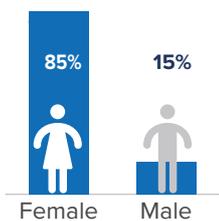
- Financial support, access to employment and accommodation were the most frequently reported immediate needs. Additionally, respondents declared a necessity of access to healthcare and material assistance. As the findings reveal, this influences the information needs of refugees, who mostly requested additional information about the financial aid, job opportunities, and medical care, preferably through social media and messaging apps.

## DEMOGRAPHY

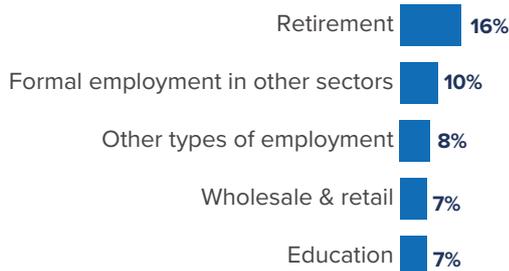
Refugees interviewed in September were mainly women traveling with close relatives, mostly with children and/or other women. Almost half of them (46%) held university degrees, a third (33%) had obtained technical or vocational education and one fifth (19%) - secondary education. Prior to displacement a vast majority (69%) were employed and 16% - retired.

**77%** of respondents were travelling with other people, of whom 93% with close family. Half of the respondents were with at least one child, a fifth (19%) with at least one infant and 30% with at least one person aged 60 or more. On average, respondents were travelling with 2 other people.

### Gender breakdown (n=3,585)\*



### Top 5 pre-displacement employment status



### Age structure in employment:

The rate of unemployment was overall very low (3%), reaching the highest value in the age group of 18-24-year-olds (14%).

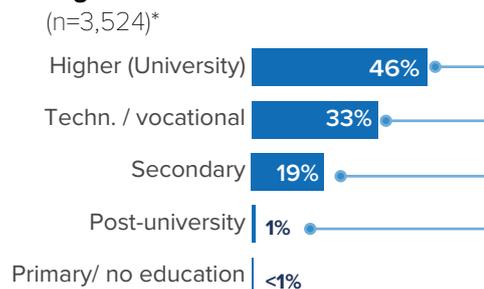
The majority of the oldest respondents, 60 y.o. and older, (73%) declared to have retired prior to the war.

The dataset contains as well answers from 14- to 17-year-olds (n=29), most of whom were students\*\*.

### Nationality (n=3,548)\*



### Highest level of education (n=3,524)\*



### by age group

	18-24	25-39	40-59	60+
Higher (University)	22%	55%	46%	41%
Techn. / vocational	32%	27%	36%	42%
Secondary	44%	16%	16%	16%
Post-university	1%	2%	2%	1%

\*NA excluded.

\*\*All the interviews for September, including those with minors, were conducted by the UNHCR.

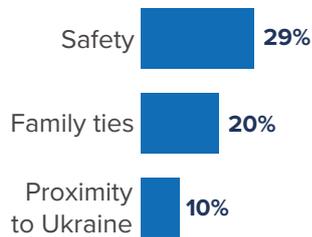
## FUTURE PLANS

The majority of respondents planned to stay in Poland (64%), mainly due to safety reasons. The intention to stay was higher among refugees traveling with at least one person with special needs (68%), especially single parents and persons with a medical condition. 15% of respondents intended to return to Ukraine, while another 15% were uncertain about further plans<sup>2</sup>. Only 6% planned to move to another country, with Germany, Canada and Norway being the most frequently reported destinations. The wish to move onward was more popular among those who arrived in August and September (18%), than among those who arrived in the previous months (3%).

### Intentions: Staying in Poland

**64%** of respondents plan to stay in Poland

#### Top 3 reasons for staying (n=2,286)



#### Top 3 oblasts of origin by intention to remain in Poland\*



#### Top 3 oblasts of origin by intention to return to Ukraine\*



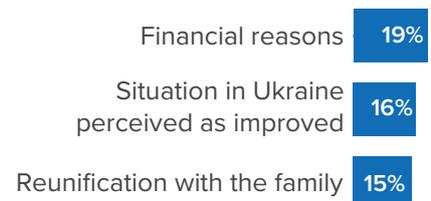
\* % shows the proportion of respondents from an oblast intending to stay in Poland or return to Ukraine

### Intentions: Returning to Ukraine

The share of respondents planning to return to Ukraine reached 15% in September. Most frequently this decision was motivated by financial reasons, a perceived improvement of situation in Ukraine or the wish to reunite with family. The highest proportion of those planning to return was among respondents from Ivano-Frankivska, Kirovohradka and Ternopilka oblasts.

**15%** of respondents plan to return to Ukraine, 90% of whom to the oblast of origin. 78% have concerns about returning.

#### Main reasons for return (n=541)



### Intentions: Moving onward

Intention to move to another country was expressed only by 6% of respondents. Family ties are the most common motivation to move onwards, followed by asylum procedure and community ties.

**6%** of respondents plan to move to another country

#### Top final destinations (n=220)



#### Top reasons for moving onward (n=220)



#### Top accommodation arrangement for those moving onward (n=220)

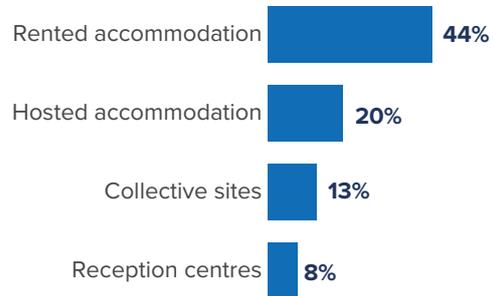


## ACCOMMODATION

Refugees interviewed in September were most often staying in rented accommodation (44%). Renting was significantly more frequent among those who left Ukraine between February and May (49%) than among those who left later (33%). A fifth of the respondents were staying with hosts, while 13% in collective sites.

There was a significantly higher proportion of respondents staying in rented accommodation among those who travelled with at least one child (50% vs. 37% among those with no children).

### Top current/planned accommodation types

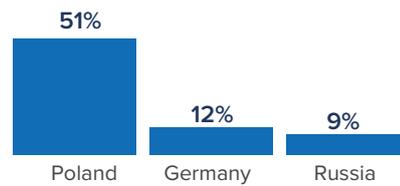


## SUPPORT NETWORKS

Location of relatives influenced future plans of the refugees, as those who had relatives in Poland were more likely to stay (76%), while those who had relatives outside of Ukraine or Poland were more inclined to move onwards.

### 30% of respondents have relatives residing outside Ukraine

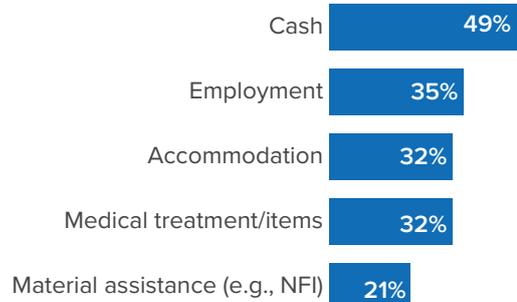
Top 3 countries of relatives (n=1,009)



## PRIORITY NEEDS

Cash (49%), employment (35%), accommodation (32%) and healthcare (32%) were among the most often mentioned priority needs. Additionally, respondents frequently indicated the need to access material assistance (21%) and food (16%).

### Most frequently reported basic needs



- Cash was more often a priority need among those travelling with older persons (57% compared to 46% among those travelling without them), who also more often needed food (22% vs. 13%).

- A fifth of respondents with children in the household reported needing education services (20% vs. 8% within childless households). Those travelling with infants more often indicated material assistance (27% vs. 19% among those without infants).

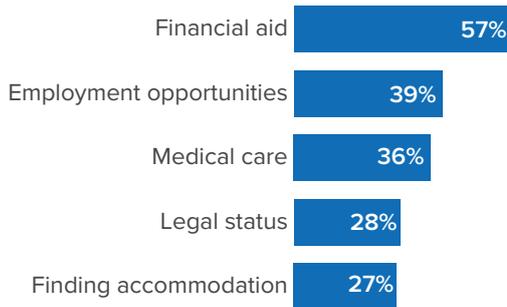


\* While cash is the priority basic need reported by refugees, it covers several underlying needs, which will be explored in the future reports.

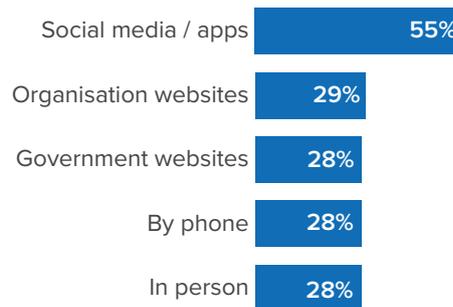
## INFORMATION NEEDS

Refugees interviewed in September most often indicated the need to receive further information about financial aid, job opportunities and accessing medical care. Respondents sought as well information about their legal status and finding accommodation. Social media and messaging apps were the preferred methods of communication, with Telegram, Facebook and Viber being favored by the highest share of respondents.

### Top 5 reported information needs\*



### Preferred methods of receiving information\*



### Top 3 preferred social media channels\*\* \*\*



\*Multiple responses permitted. The sum might exceed 100%.

\*\*Among those who indicated social media/apps as a preferred method of communication.

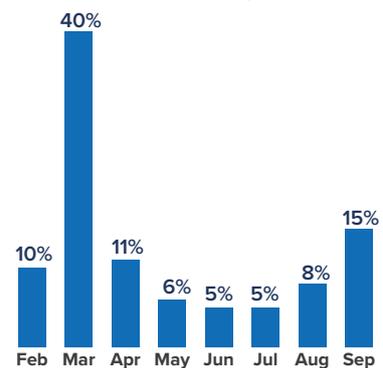
## ORIGIN & ARRIVAL

The largest share of respondents arrived from the regions that are highly affected by hostilities: Khersonska, Kharkivska, Dnipropetrovska, Zaporoska and Donetska oblasts. Half of the interviewed refugees left their place of origin between late February and March. 100% of respondents had national passport or national ID with themselves. 12% were internally displaced within Ukraine prior to leaving the country.

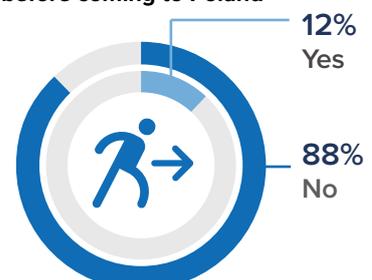
### Most frequent oblasts of origin



### Month of departure



### Were internally displaced before coming to Poland





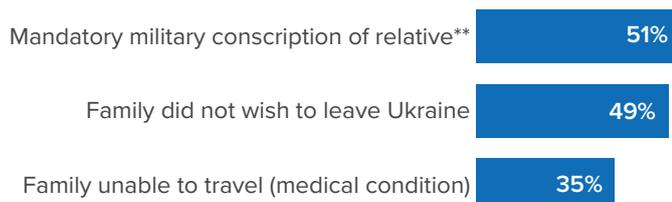
## FAMILY SEPARATION

The majority of respondents (80%) were separated from immediate family members since the onset of war. This was most often caused by the martial law preventing men aged 18-60 to leave the country, or the fact that family members did not wish to or could not leave Ukraine.

## 80% of respondents were separated from immediate family members

### Top 3 reasons for separation

(n=2,877)\*



\*Multiple responses permitted. The sum might exceed 100%.

\*\*Military conscription applies to martial law in place in Ukraine which prevents men from 18-60 from leaving the country, however it does not imply that those who remained are in active military service.

### Limitation of findings

- Non-probability sampling was applied and therefore the results cannot be extrapolated to the population of all refugees from Ukraine residing in Poland.
- Conflict is ongoing and rapidly changing, and population movements continue, therefore results might differ significantly in the next round of data collection.
- Data was collected only in certain regions, including border areas in Podkarpackie and Lubelskie voivodeships, as well as major cities like Warszawa, Kraków, Wrocław, Lublin and Poznań - the situation might differ in other regions and smaller cities.
- The factsheet is based on interviews conducted, unlikely to the previous release, mostly in Blue Dot centres, collective and planned sites, therefore presented results cannot be extrapolated for the entire population and cannot be used for the purpose of comparison.
- As questions weren't mandatory, a few percent of responses were blank. The overall percentages were counted based on a sample including blank answers.

### Endnotes

1. [UNHCR Operational Data Portal for Poland](#)
2. Such findings are in line with earlier regional studies, according to which the majority of refugees from Ukraine in Poland and other countries hoped to return home as soon as possible, while the majority expected to stay in host countries until hostilities subside and the security situation improves. <https://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2022/7/62ce6ad64/unhcr-survey-finds-refugees-ukraine-hope-home.html>

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