EUAA

Surveys with Arriving Migrants from Ukraine

Movements and Returns

Thematic Report

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Key points

Displacement from Ukraine to the EU+ continues to comprise mostly women and children, though more men have been coming recently. This report focuses on some 7,800 responses by displaced Ukrainians to a EUAA survey collected from February 2023 to November 2024. Respondents were on average 40 years old, mostly women with children with them.

Most resided in Germany and Poland, but two fifths still considered not being at their destination. Accommodation and employment were decisive factors for this choice. Safety and work opportunities were at the top of the reasons for selecting a country to live. Family and friends in the country, access to support and the language spoken were also significant. Family members planned to join many respondents in the host country. Few registered for a legal status in multiple EU countries, with trends indicating movements mainly to Germany.

One in three respondents were not intending to return, while a third were undecided. One in three respondents in 2024 were determined (20%) or leaning (14%) towards returning, a significant drop from one in two respondents in 2023. Men, younger age groups, respondents unaccompanied by partners and those in Germany and the Netherlands were least inclined to return. Reasons not to return were multiple and complex and related to the economic and security situation in Ukraine, increasing integration in the host countries and family considerations.

About 40% had engaged in back-and-forth movements while 20% plan to do so in the future. Maintaining family ties and checking on property/belongings were the main reasons for short visits to Ukraine after displacement. Men, respondents from the East and South regions and women accompanied by spouse/partner were less likely to engage in back-and-forth movements. Still, 40% of women who were unaccompanied by partner/spouse had not visited Ukraine despite considerable duration of displacement indicating significant strain on family relations.

Respondents were highly educated and often overqualified for their current jobs in Europe: having high employment rates but mostly in jobs not matching their skills. Most respondents enrolled their children at local schools. Language skills and childcare needs negatively impacted the capacity of respondents to access work.

Migration intentions among Ukrainians currently in Ukraine remain low, as indicted by a survey of 1,250 individuals conducted in October 2024 by Gradus Research. Thereat to life and territorial occupation could change migration perspectives. Consistently with EUAA data, work opportunities, safety and presence of family friends are the top reasons for choosing a future destination, although women tend to give more importance to the presence of networks.

Introduction

The EUAA Surveys with Arriving Migrants from Ukraine (SAM – UKR) project collects data directly from displaced people from Ukraine. The surveys, translated into Ukrainian and Russian, are conducted anonymously on a voluntary basis. Data collection has been conducted via promotion on social media and directly by national authorities across countries of the EU+.[1]

This report focuses on movements from Ukraine to the EU, within the EU and returns of displaced people from Ukraine, along with the demographic and socio-economic profile of respondents. **Data come from 7,776 adult participants, based in EU+ countries, who were residents in Ukraine before the onset of the war**. Respondents filled in the survey between February 2023 and November 2024. In addition to the results of the SAM – UKR closed-ended questions, nearly 800 free-text testimonies submitted after September 2023[2] were mined for additional insights and context for the quantitative data. Each section further incorporates comparisons with relevant literature and insight from expert interviews.[3] Lastly, a contribution from Gradus Research provides insights on data collected from 1,250 respondents in Ukraine.

Demographic profile

Most respondents were Ukrainian citizens (98%), while Russian was the second most frequent nationality. **The average age of respondents was 40 years**, with a normal distribution around this age. Consistent with external sources reporting 75% of Ukrainian refugees being women and children,[4] amongst respondents, 76% were females. About one in five were single and half were married or in a civil partnership. Of those married, two thirds were in the EU with their spouse. The majority of respondents came from regions most affected by the war, East Ukraine (38%) and South Ukraine (18%), closely followed by Kyiv city (17%).[5]

More than half of all respondents reported having children with them, half of whom were with at least two children. Almost one out of five respondents was caring for a dependent adult[6] and one in five of those respondents with children also cared for a dependent adult.

Most respondents (82%) left Ukraine in 2022, with 6 in 10 of these arriving in the first quarter of 2022 and 8 in 10 being women, slightly more often than men accompanied by children (56%). **Those who left Ukraine in 2023 and 2024** corresponded to 14% and 4% of respondents respectively and **exhibited rising proportions of men** (34% and 44%). More of those displaced since 2023 were in recognised partnerships but were slightly fewer accompanied by children and dependent adults.

Figure 1 describes the legal status of the sample. **Most respondents had registered for temporary protection** (TP) **in the country of current reported residence (88%), while 3 in 10 reported having applied for international protection** (IP; multiple answers were possible). Overall, those who left Ukraine since 2023 more often had applied for both, an upwards trend which continued in 2024.

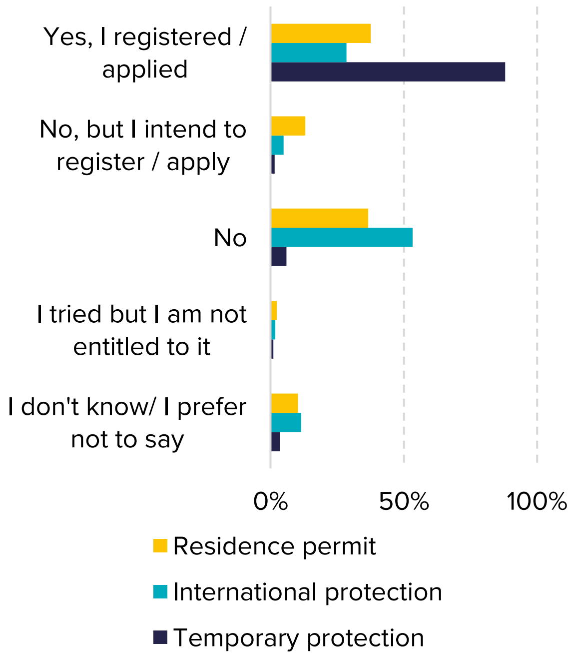

Figure 1: *Legal status of respondents (Source: EUAA SAM-UKR)*

Note: *Multiple choices were possible.*

Socio-economic profile

A highly educated population, looking for work opportunities

Consistently with external sources,[7] **more than half** (63%) of the respondents in the sample **were highly educated**, having completed at least undergraduate education, with 3 in 10 having completed secondary or professional education as displayed in Figure 2.

More than half reported not speaking the language of the host country, with this share increasing even more for those displaced since 2023. At the same

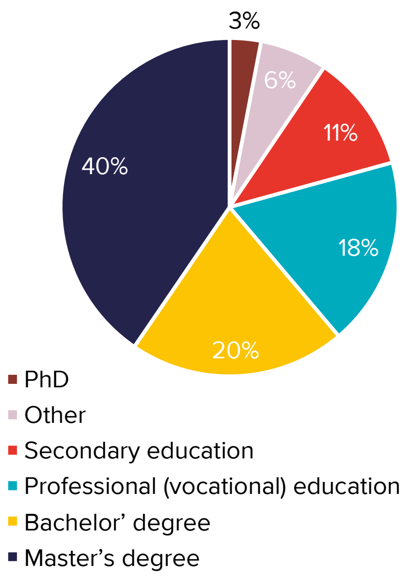

Figure 2: *Educational background (Source: EUAA SAM-UKR)*

time, **most respondents with children indicated their enrolment in local schools in the hosting countries (76%)**, with significantly less in distance learning in Ukraine (6%) or not enrolled at all (6%). For those in Europe since 2023, the share of enrolment in local schools fell slightly, while less than half of those who arrived in 2024 enrolled in local schools, mainly due to searching for school facilities or following the Ukrainian curriculum.

About 4 in 10 respondents were either studying or planning to study in host countries, whilst 3 in 10 were working or looking for a job. More than half of those 18-24 years old dedicated time to education. These shares remain consistent when considering time of displacement.

Overall, the great majority of respondents (85%) used to work in Ukraine before the war. The main sectors reported were education and teaching, followed by sales and communication, management and administration, and engineering, science and technology. Yet, while at the time of filling in the survey 4 in 10 respondents worked, either in the host country or remotely, half did not, and the rest preferred not to say. **Those who spoke the local language were more likely to be employed locally**. Those displaced in 2023 or 2024 were more likely to be unemployed (about 6 in 10). Interviewed experts highlight that in recent Ukrainian migration, workers are becoming increasingly confident in entering the EU labour market, especially if they possess linguistic skills of the host country.

In our sample, proportions of employed (approximately between 10% and 40%) are higher than those found in other studies, which suggest employment rates of about 10% in Italy, 15% in France and particularly 20% in Germany where the majority of the Ukrainians displaced in the EU+ live.[8]

Based on 3 in 10 respondents who answered this question, the main sectors of current employment include cleaning/housekeeping, engineering, science and technology as well as education and teaching.

Not speaking local language a major hurdle for employment, followed by challenges of entering local job markets

Consistently with external research,[9] **barriers to employment** across EU+ countries **are diverse,** with the main reported factors **including not speaking the local language** (54%), **waiting for qualification recognition** (19%) **and children caretaking needs** (16%). Women reported similar overall patterns except for slightly higher caretaking needs, increasing further especially for those with children. Not speaking the local language was a slightly higher barrier to work for those recently arrived.

Coping with expenses in displacement depends on mixed sources of income for respondents, with most reporting income from work/pension/business (46%) and government allowances (43%), followed by savings (25%). Those displaced since 2023 tended to rely slightly more on savings as well as family and community. Naturally, unemployed respondents relied more strongly on government allowances and at increased rates on family/community and NGOs.

EU movements and drivers for choosing a host country

Most resided in Germany and Poland but only 60% were at their preferred destination

Half of the respondents in SAM – UKR reported having entered the EU through Poland, followed by Romania (11%), Germany, Hungary and Slovakia (6% each) and other EU countries at lower rates. At the time of participation in the survey, **most respondents were residing in Germany** (27%) **and Poland** (19%), **with smaller numbers in Czechia,**

Spain, Romania, Italy and others. This indicates a high level of correspondence of our sample to the overall distribution of displaced Ukrainians in Europe. According to UNHCR data, there are 6,192,000 refugees from Ukraine in Europe, as of October 2024[10] and most were in Germany and Poland, followed by Czechia, Spain, Italy and Romania.[11] **However, only 6 in 10 SAM – UKR respondents indicated being at their preferred destination in the EU**, while one fifth remained undecided and 12% stated their current country was not their preferred destination.

In addition to SAM – UKR results, other studies also identified Germany as a key destination due to its strong economy, social welfare, favourable integration policies and employment opportunities.[12] **Ireland and Norway were the countries where most respondents considered being at their preferred destination with rates above 80%.** The Netherlands, Slovenia and Luxembourg had rates above 75%, followed by Portugal, Germany and France with rates above 68%.

Despite the conflict persisting for more than 1,000 days and many respondents being displaced for months (on average more than 15 months at the time of response), **there has been minimal change in the percentage of those who feel they are at their destination.** In 2023, this group accounted for 60% of respondents, rising only slightly to 63% between January and October 2024. Likewise, during this period, there was a slight decrease of those undecided or not yet at their destination. This trend may suggest a continued unstable and precarious situation, highlighting both the resilience and ongoing challenges displaced persons from Ukraine face in their search for a host country.

Respondents living in host-provided accommodation, such as apartments or rooms provided by the government, local hosts or family and friends, were more likely to consider being at their destination, compared to those who were renting their own accommodation. This may indicate financial barriers to self-funded options which seem less feasible or less attractive for the respondents, pointing out support in accommodation as a key factor in perceiving the host country as their destination (Fig. 3). This finding is consistent with experts' perceptions regarding key criteria for choosing a country. According to interviewed experts, having access to financial assistance and housing support is the top reason influencing the choice of a destination, thus playing also a crucial role in shaping respondents' feelings regarding being (or not) settled in the host country.

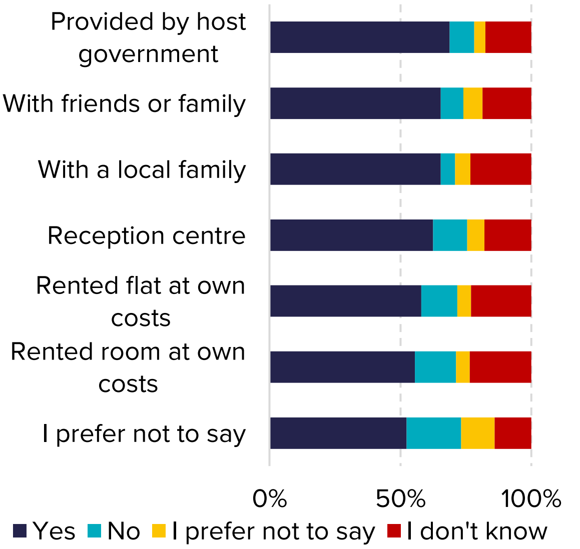

Figure 3: *Preferred destination outside Ukraine (legend) by accommodation (Source: EUAA SAM)*

Close to half of **those who stated not being at their destination**, mentioned they were still undecided where to go. Among those who had a clear idea, **the top three preferred destinations were Germany, the United States and the United Kingdom.**

Safety and work opportunities key factors for choosing a destination in the EU

The main reasons for selecting a preferred destination[13] were being a safe country and work opportunities, each indicated by slightly more than half of the respondents. Having family or friends living in the country (38%) and education opportunities for children (35%) were also among the top reasons, followed by access to benefits and support (30%), language spoken in the country (26%) and study opportunities (25%). Family and friends were pointed out by other studies as a major factor in destination choice, making EU+ countries with large pre-war Ukrainian diaspora key destinations.[14]

Differences were found between age groups for the reasons to select a host country, with younger respondents (below 45 years old) indicating work opportunities as the top key factor, alongside higher rates for study opportunities for adults and children. In contrast, **older respondents** (above 65 years old) **placed greater relevance on having family or friends in the host country, access to** benefits or support and meeting specific health needs (Fig. 4).

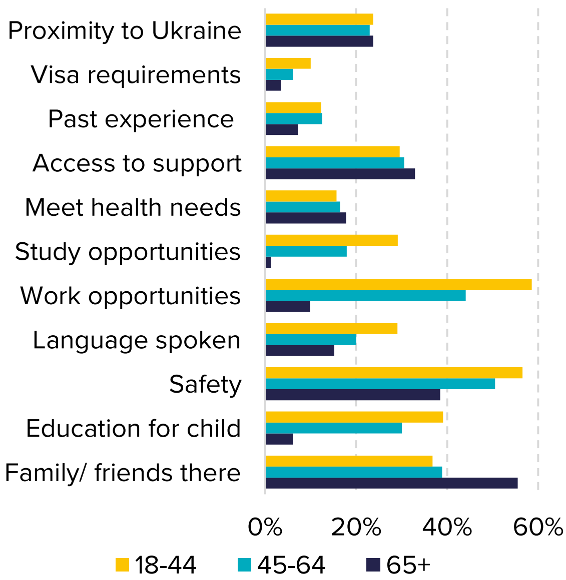

Figure 4: *Reasons for selecting a preferred destination by age groups (Source: EUAA SAM – UKR)*

Note: *Multiple answers were possible.*

Additionally, educational background also influenced responses. Persons with lower levels of education considered having family or friends in the host country as slightly more relevant than work opportunities, making it their top reason, and placed higher relevance on access to benefits and other forms of support, compared to respondents with higher education levels.

These reasons align with the experts' perceptions on the primary criteria to choose a country, with housing, established social networks and employment being the top three reasons mentioned, followed by education for children, health, ease of adaptation (which might relate to local language) and the attitude of the local population.

Two fifths of the respondents indicated that other family members or close friends plan to join them in the host country, signalling the potential for more arrivals. This was more significant for the countries hosting higher numbers of displaced people from Ukraine – Germany and Poland, followed at a large distance by Czechia, Romania and Spain. Conversely, one third responded negatively, and a quarter preferred not to say, possibly due to the high uncertainty of the war or the martial law restrictions imposed on Ukrainian male citizens to leave the country.

SAM – UKR inquired about multiple registrations for TP, IP or residence permit in EU countries. Only 589 (7% of the total) respondents replied positively, indicating that they had registered before in a different EU country. Of those, most stated having registered in only one country before (96%). More than one fifth of those who reported multiple registrations were in Germany, followed at a distance by respondents in Poland (9%), Spain (8%) and Romania (8%). The most commonly reported movements within the EU, based on multiple TP registrations were: from Poland to Germany or Spain, from Czechia or the Netherlands to Germany, and from Hungary to Germany[15] (Fig. 5). Another study reported that the move from Poland to Germany or other Western European countries was primarily driven by recommendations from friends and family already living in these countries, better social benefits and job opportunities with higher income prospects. The same study found that most Ukrainians who moved from Poland to Germany do not plan to go back to Poland, leading to a visible decrease in the number of Ukrainians working in Poland from March 2023 to March 2024.[16]

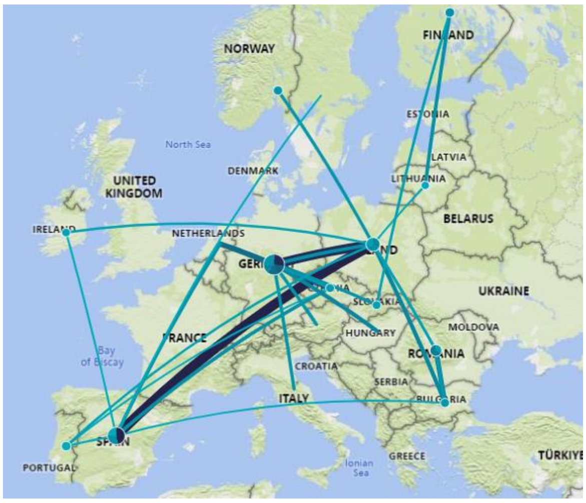

Figure 5: *Multiple applications for TP, IP or residence permit – first country where registered and current country (Source: EUAA SAM)*

Note: *Thickness of the lines corresponds to the magnitude of each movement. Only paths with more than 3 cases were included. Multiple answers were possible.*

Additionally, interviewed experts highlighted that employment opportunities elsewhere are the primary driver for relocation within the EU. Aligning with the survey results, experts pointed out that secondary movements (within the EU) remain low, mainly due to the financial burden of relocation, uncertainties related to the war and the future conditions in the host country. The main reasons for relocation in the EU are considered to be directly associated with job opportunities or the presence of family members and/or acquaintances in another country. Experts assess the role of social networks, especially for families with children as particularly relevant. These networks provide crucial support managing household and childcare responsibilities, thereby improving the likelihood of entering the labour market and improving overall quality of life.

Nearly 1 in 10 open-text SAM – UKR testimonies pertained to movements within or towards the EU. Most cited war, concern for loved ones and safety-related anxiety as primary reasons to flee Ukraine. In contrast, **bureaucratic issues related to temporary permissions and verification of documents, were identified as the key barriers to mobility within the EU.** Some raised their concerns about differing rules regarding the renew of TP and access to benefits across countries as well as the consequences this entails in their daily life. Recently, many mentioned issues with the renewal of their passports and related concerns. Employment and accommodation shaped respondents' experiences in the host country, with many facing challenges in these regards. Additionally, lack or reduced access to support and discrimination also influenced the desire to move to another country. Despite these challenges, many expressed gratitude to Member States for providing temporary shelter.

Back-and-forth movements and returns

6 in 10 respondents had not been to Ukraine since their displacement abroad[17]

This section and the next focus on the sample of respondents who participated to the survey in 2024 as returns and back-and-forth movements are time-sensitive topics. Just under **60% of respondents in 2024 had not been to Ukraine since their displacement** whereas **21% went once, 17% between two to four times** and only **2% five times or more**. Among those who had not been to Ukraine, more than two thirds indicated that they do not intend to go, whereas one third pointed to plans to go in the near future. Interviews with experts indicated that **the possibility and frequency of visits to Ukraine tended to be constrained by financial means**, while visits by women with children were further constrained by school vacation periods, with back-and-forth movements increasing during summer months. Back-and-forth movements differed significantly for various demographic groups:[18] proportionally **fewer men went back to Ukraine since their displacement** (14% vs 52% for women), a likely consequence of the martial law in Ukraine. Furthermore, proportionally **fewer women from the macro-regions East** (43%) **and South** (49%) **went back to Ukraine compared to women from Kyiv city** (65%) **and the West** (72%), with free-text testimonies indicating ongoing armed conflict in the area, loss of homes and military occupation as the main blockers.

In addition, proportionally **more women who were not accompanied by their partners/spouses went at least once to Ukraine** (60% compared to 46% for women who were accompanied), although as many as 40% did not despite an average duration for displacement of almost 20 months. Free-text testimonies emphasised the difficulties of being separated from partners, the strain this puts on relationships and the risks undertaken by going to Ukraine to maintain family ties. Finally, **women who were displaced in 2023 and 2024 were less likely to have gone back to Ukraine** (45%) compared to those displaced in 2022 (54%), possibly indicating the need for an adjustment period in the host countries before travel to Ukraine can take place. In addition, respondents from later waves may have been able to prepare more fully their departure and, accordingly, require less follow-up visits to Ukraine as opposed to those respondents who left in the first days or weeks of the full-scale invasion.

Visiting family and checking on property main reasons for visits

Close to **7 out of 10 respondents went to Ukraine to visit family and/or friends while 3 out of 10 did so to check on property and/or belongings**. Other reasons, such as providing humanitarian support or planning to enlist in the military, were mentioned by a limited number of respondents. Reasons for back-and-forth movements differed only slightly across genders with **women being slightly more likely to indicate family/friends visits** (71% vs 61% for men) while **men being slightly more likely to indicate checks on property/belongings** (40% vs 29% for women). Reasons were broadly stable across those who filled in SAM – UKR in 2023 and 2024.

Data from a IOM survey at Ukrainian border areas found that most back-and-forth movements are of short duration: three-quarters of respondents intended to visit Ukraine for one month or less between April and June 2024, while only 8% intended to stay more than one month and 17% were undecided.[19] SAM – UKR free-text testimonies and expert interviews suggest that such **short visits are essential for accessing/continuing dedicated medical treatments**, for **maintaining family ties** with partners/spouses and elderly family members **and** for **preparing returns to Ukraine** by upkeeping homes and scoping opportunities for socio-economic re-integration. A flexible and pragmatic approach, as suggested by ECRE[20] and an interviewed expert, that would accommodate such "pendular movements" without undue risk to TP status may ultimately facilitate returns.

A third of respondents does not intend to return, while another third remains undecided

About **one in three respondents in 2024 were determined (20%) or leaning (14%) towards returning**, which is a significant drop from **one in two respondents in 2023** (Fig. 6). Different demographic groups showed different intentions to return.[21] **Women were more likely to return than men** (40% vs 23%). **Older respondents were also more likely to return than younger ones**: 63% of those aged 65 or above, 43% of those between 45 and 64 and just 28% of those between 18 and 44. Respondents unaccompanied by their partners also had a slightly higher tendency (44%) compared to those who were accompanied (31%). All groups showed **significant decreases between 2023 and 2024**, with **males aged between 18 and 44 showing the largest drop in willingness to return** (43% in 2023 to 18% in 2024).

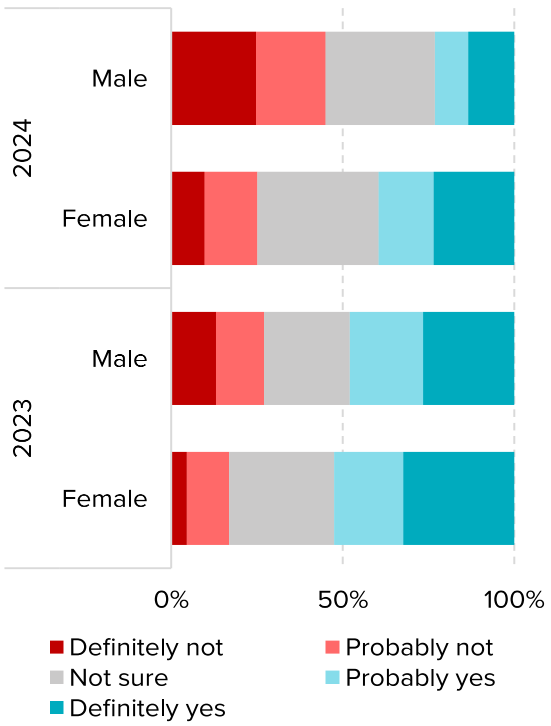

***Figure 6:** Return intentions by gender and year of participation (Source: EUAA SAM – UKR)*

Respondents from the top six countries of participation in 2024 showed different willingness to return. **Respondents from the Netherlands and Germany were least likely to consider returning** (16% and 24% respectively) **compared to 44% of respondents from France and 38% from Poland and Czechia** who were determined or inclined to return. **Gender was the most important predictor for willingness to return in Germany and Poland** (men being less inclined to return) **while being employed was the most important determinant in Czechia and speaking the local language in the Netherlands**, with the employed and those speaking Dutch less likely to return.

Finally, data from surveys by the UNHCR and Gradus Research further suggest that even for those respondents who intend to return to Ukraine, the timeline for returning was most often at least one year ahead from the time of responding.[22]

Situation in Ukraine, integration abroad and family main reasons not to return

Perceptions about **safety and security in Ukraine** (63%) and **expectations about its economic prospects** (65%) **were the main blockers to return to Ukraine**, along with **better opportunities for respondents and/or their families in the host countries** (56% and 58% respectively, Fig. 7).

Reasons not to return remained relatively stable across participants in 2023 and 2024 and were broadly similar across gender and age categories, suggesting resilient and widespread perceptions. Respondents gave a median of four reasons for not intending to return. **Just over half indicated a mix of reasons** that spanned across the **situation in Ukraine**, their increasing **integration in the host countries and family considerations** more broadly. Enabling the return of displaced people to Ukraine would require comprehensive incentives and policies, in view of such diverse and resilient

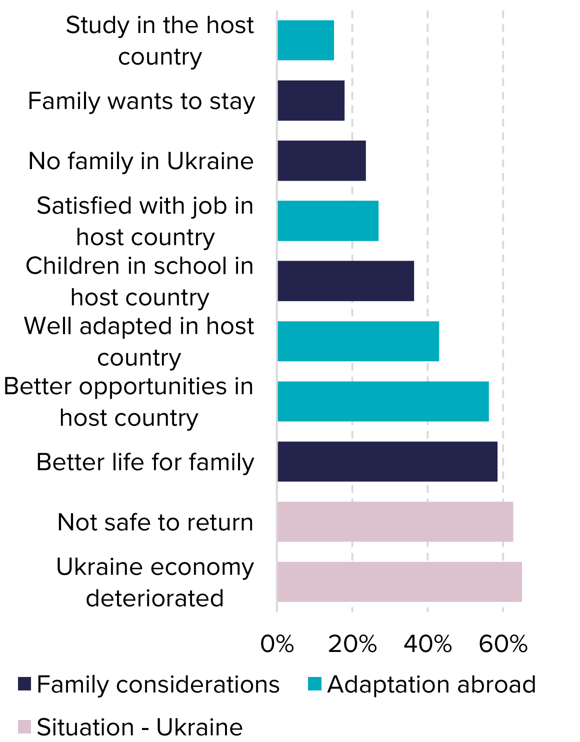

Figure 7: *Reasons not to return by broad groupings (Source: EUAA SAM-UKR)*

Note: *Multiple answers were possible.*

blockers. In fact, findings by Gradus Research and expert interviews show that stable employment in Ukraine and assistance for re-integration (access to housing, education, healthcare, financial support), along with improved security, would act as strong motivators for returns. Some of the interviewed experts also indicated the importance of positive signals from the Ukrainian government on welcoming returnees and the relevance of managing relations between those who remained in the country during the war and those returning from abroad.

Respondents intending to return to Ukraine indicated most often the intention to reunite with family and/or friends (56%), wish to return to their previous lives (56%) and desire to help rebuild the country (47%). Expert interviews suggest that the wish to return to previous lives may go beyond future aspirations strictly and relate to potentially higher quality of life in Ukraine, despite the risks of wartime, because of owning own accommodation, receiving a job offer or a combination of these elements.

Factors related to the host country such as the cost of living (22%), difficulties finding a job (11%) or integrating more broadly (22%) were only secondary drivers of return intentions of SAM – UKR respondents compared to developments in Ukraine. Specifically, less than 40% indicated factors related to the host country as their reasons to return and only 5% referenced these alone without referring to any pull factors in Ukraine. Free-text testimonies similarly indicate that challenges with integration in a host country may not necessarily generate returns to Ukraine but may rather lead to intra-EU movements, barring important pull factors in Ukraine.

A perspective from Ukraine (Gradus Research)

The vast majority Ukrainians in Ukraine do not plan to migrate in the next six months

Gradus Research regularly conducts waves of surveys with respondents based in Ukraine. The last round of research (October 2024) reached out to 1,250 individuals currently living in Ukraine, on intentions to leave, on the factors that might urge those who currently plan to stay in Ukraine to leave the country; and on the factors that for respondents willing to leave are important in selecting a preferred destination. The sample was composed by half men and half women, adults, 34% below 35 years old, 30% between 35 and 44, and the rest between 45 and 60.

In October, there was a marginal increase of respondents willing to migrate outside Ukraine within the next six months compared to August (from 11% to 13%), a quarter of whom was originally from Kyiv region. Yet the vast majority wants to remain. Most of the interviewed experts support this claim, considering migration from Ukraine as stabilised and believe no significant additional waves of migration should be expected, unless major changes in the conflict developments take place.

In addition, experts seem to highlight a change in the way migration-related decisions are taken. At the beginning of the conflict, individuals tended to migrate and then explore conditions offered by different countries in their temporary location. Now, individuals first perform prior research on conditions, seeking contacts, and only then decide on their migration trajectory. Consistently with the SAM – UKR results on migration intentions, the top three countries of intended destinations indicated by a proportion of respondents (approx. 10%) **were Germany** (18%), **Poland** (10%) **and Czechia** (7%).

Threat to life and territorial occupation could trigger new migration

Amongst those reporting not to be willing to leave Ukraine in the next six months (70% of the sample) **about half referred to threat to their life/health or that of their family and possible occupation of the region by Russia as potential reasons to change their view** (Fig. 8). About a third mentioned also absence/loss of housing, followed by lack of household conditions/services (water, heating, light, 23%), financial hardships (21%), and permission for men to travel abroad (17%). **Compared to data collected in August**, the relative importance of different factors has remained the same, except for **the potential outages in basic services**, which **has increased**.

Amongst those planning to leave Ukraine in the next six months, the **factors most important when choosing a destination country** (for temporary or permanent living) **relate to work opportunities, benefits, safety and family and friends** – each indicated by more than one in three respondents (Fig. 9). Women (half) give a stronger weight than men (quarter) to the presence of personal networks in potential destinations during decision making.

At the same time, as of November 2024 **migration sentiments and the Ukrainian population's general expectations regarding the war's further course are marked by negative uncertainty**. For the second consecutive year, citizens' assessment of the country's development trajectory continues to deteriorate. Currently, this negative assessment has surpassed even the evaluation of the situation during the summer of this year, when Russia's massive strikes on Ukraine's energy infrastructure – ongoing since May – were at their peak. Belief in Ukraine's ability to recover and become stronger after the end of the war continues to decline. In November 2024, only 44% of respondents expressed this confidence, compared to 53% a year ago.

This is linked to the rising war-weariness of the Ukrainian population, visible in different recent public opinion studies. According to a Gallup poll conducted in August and October 2024, a narrow majority of Ukrainians (52%) support peace negotiations as soon as possible, which is a huge increase from 2023, when the proportion represented just over a quarter (27%).[23] According to a Razumkov Centre poll, as of September 2024, a relative majority (48%) still disagreed that negotiations with Russia were “an effective way to achieve peace that should be pursued right now” but the share of those in favour of this view rose to 35% (from just 21% a year ago).[24]

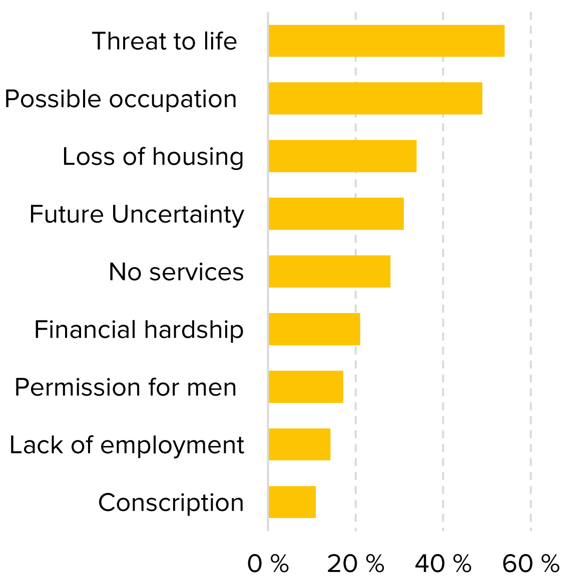

Figure 8: *Potential push factors from Ukraine (Source: Gradus Research)*

Note: *Multiple answers were possible.*

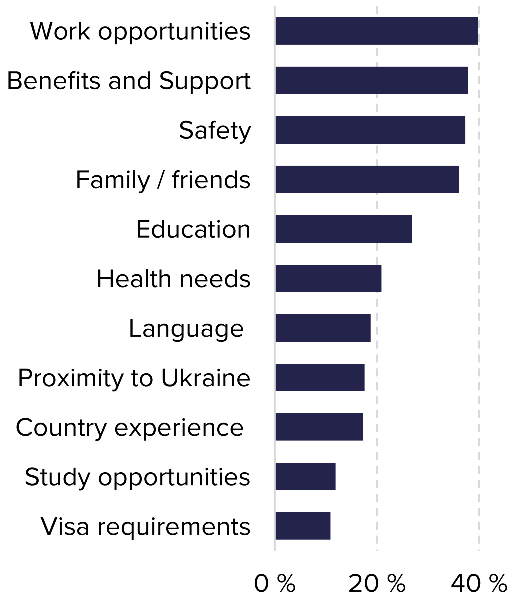

Figure 9: Reasons for selecting potential destinations (Source: Gradus Research)

Note: *Multiple answers were possible.*

Conclusions and implications

Findings indicate that **migration from Ukraine to the EU has stabilised, with no significant recent surges observed or likely to occur in the near future**, provided the situation in the country remains unchanged. The nature of migration has evolved from being driven by immediate urgent need to becoming a more planned and deliberated process.

Four main types of migration from Ukraine can be identified.[25]

1) Security-driven migration primarily involves residents from Eastern Ukraine motivated by safety concerns, with most expressing preference to stay within the country.

2) Planned migration involves individuals who carefully prearrange their relocation by securing housing or employment in a host country before departure, reflecting a more strategic approach to migration.

3) Repeated migration includes individuals who initially left Ukraine to the EU, returned in the summer or fall of 2022 and then decided to leave again due to the prolonged conflict and worsening of the economy and education.

4) Family-driven migration includes individuals who have family abroad and emigrate due to a significant decline in the quality of education for children in Ukraine. This type of migration is anticipated to continue even after the conflict is resolved, though at a moderate scale.

Addressing language barriers, recognitions of certifications and support measures for childcare are perceived by Ukrainians as facilitating their integration into local job markets.

Germany is the top preferred destination for Ukrainians within the EU. However, a high number of displaced persons still consider not being at their preferred destination. Despite extended displacement periods, only a slight increase was observed in the number of those feeling settled, with support in accommodation and employment being key factors in this regard. **This highlights the relevance of support policies focusing on housing and employment to promote a sense of permanence** in displaced persons from Ukraine. Moreover, two fifths of SAM - UKR respondents stated that their family members still aimed to join them in the host country, which implies a potential increase in migration flows to key destinations in the EU, which might also depend on the level of integration.

Displaced persons from Ukraine engaged in back-and-forth movements to maintain ties with family members home and to check on property and belongings. These short visits to Ukraine are seen to be essential for preparing a possible return and for successful re-integration. With EU Member States regulating differently short-term travel to Ukraine, from strict limitations to more permissive rules, **a pragmatic approach that would accommodate "pendular movements" without undue risk to TP status may ultimately facilitate returns**.

Policies intended to facilitate returns to Ukraine would require **addressing diverse and resilient blockers related foremost to the economic and security situation in Ukraine.** Furthermore, increasing **integration in the host countries and family considerations**, such as family members' preferences to remain in a host country, **additionally make it more difficult to take a decision to return**. For a significant share of respondents, the **security situation in Ukraine** needed to improve as a necessary condition for return, while other studies have found **stable employment on return** and **financial support for re-integration** to be highly effective incentives. Priority in policymaking should be given to such factors in Ukraine given how salient these were for both respondents who intended to return or not and given that restrictive policies in the host countries may result in intra-EU movements rather than returns.

[1] The EU+ countries include the EU Member States, plus Norway and Switzerland.
[2] Cutoff date of September 2023 for the analysis of qualitative ensured consistency and overlap between data sources.
[3] Five interviews were conducted in preparation for this report. They comprise:
• *A representative of the UNHCR mission in Ukraine.*
• *A representative of the think tank Center of Social Changes and Behavioral Economy, adviser of the Ukrainian government on social and demographic policy issues.*

• *A representative of the think tank Center of Economic Strategy, adviser of the Ukrainian government on economic policy issues.*
• *A representative of the Ministry of Social Policy,*
• *A representative of the Embassy of Ukraine in Germany.*

[4] Klára Fóti, *Social impact of migration: Addressing the challenges of receiving and integrating Ukrainian refugees | European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions*, Eurofund, 28 March 2024, p. 5.

[5] The macro regions in Ukraine are the same as they were defined in EUAA, *Voices in Europe: Experiences, hopes, and aspirations of forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine*, 8 March 2024, p. 70.

[6] Dependent adults comprise elders, persons with disabilities, serious health conditions etc.

[7] Klára Fóti, *Social impact of migration: Addressing the challenges of receiving and integrating Ukrainian refugees | European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions*, Eurofund, 28 March 2024, p. 5.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid; IOM, *Socio-economic inclusion of refugees from Ukraine (Thematic Snapshot – IOM Regional Ukraine response) January - June 2024*, 19 September 2024, p. 4.

[10] UNHCR, *Ukraine Situation Flash Update #74*, 25 October 2024. *Please note that UNHCR uses data available from relevant authorities, which have varying levels of reliability and may be updated retroactively*: UNHCR, *Ukraine Refugee Situation : UNHCR Data Explanatory Note – 14 June 2023*, n.d., accessed 31 October 2024.

[11] UNHCR, *Ukraine Refugee Situation*, 27 October 2024, accessed 31 October 2024.

[12] Zekiye Gürun, *Ukrainian Refugees in the European Union: A Closer Look at Germany's Role*, European Studies Review, 11 January 2024.

[13] Multiple answers were possible.

[14] The Migration Observatory, *Ukrainian migration to the UK* (Fig. 7) 27 August 2024.

[15] The analysis includes: Poland to Germany (21 respondents) or Spain (18), from Czechia (14) or the Netherlands (12) to Germany, and from Hungary to Germany (9).

[16] EWL and the Centre for East European Studies at the University of Warsaw, *From Poland to Germany: New trends in Ukrainian refugee migration*, 15 September 2023, p. 3, p. 5 and p. 11.

[17] The focus in this section and the one on returns is on respondents who participated to the survey in 2024 for up-to-date situational awareness. Intentions to return and back-and-forth movements vary across time with references to earlier periods being deployed whenever necessary and to identify trends.

[18] Back-and-forth movements for 2024 and overall were modelled against current macro-region in the EU (Neighbouring, CEE, North, South, West), gender, age group, partner/spouse status, Ukraine macro-region of origin, year of displacement and whether respondents have minor children in their care. Only variables that were statistically significant are reported in the text. The regions in Europe are the same as they were defined in the publication EUAA, *Voices in Europe: Experiences, hopes, and aspirations of forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine*, 8 March 2024, p. 69.

[19] IOM, *Ukraine — Returns Report — General Population Survey Round 17 (August 2024)*, 4 September 2024, p. 5.

[20] ECRE, *Movement to and from Ukraine under the Temporary Protection Directive*, January 2023, p. 2-3.

[21] Intentions to return for 2024 and overall were modelled against current host country in the EU (overall and for top six countries by respondents), gender, age group (three categories), partner/spouse status, employment status, knowledge of local language (two categories) and English, Ukraine macro-region of origin, educational qualification and whether respondents have minor children in their care. Only variables that were statistically significant are reported in the text.

[22] UNHCR, *Lives on hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees, Refugee Returnees and IDPs from Ukraine #5 Summary Findings*, 20 February 2024, p. 7.

[23] Benedict Vigers, *Half of Ukrainians Want Quick, Negotiated End to War*, Gallup, 19 November 2024.

[24] Razumkov Centre, *Support among citizens for Ukraine's accession to the EU and NATO. Attitude to foreign countries. Attitude to peace talks (September, 2024)*, 31 October 2024.

[25] Identified by the interviewed experts.

Methodological note

The EUAA SAM – UKR survey collects data from forcibly displaced adults from Ukraine following Russia's invasion in February 2022. The survey is voluntary, anonymous, available online in English, Ukrainian and Russian and self-administered using a device with internet access.

The EUAA SAM – UKR questionnaire includes 38 questions, organised in five sections. A privacy policy and data protection notice developed in agreement with EUDPR are available for consultation on the survey platform, in English, Russian and Ukrainian. An ethics self-assessment was conducted to ensure compliance with fundamental ethical principles of surveying vulnerable populations.

The SAM – UKR questionnaire dissemination strategy comprises a multi-channel approach including EUAA's professional networks with national authorities, international organisations, OECD's networks, the EUAA websites and social media pages, sponsored campaigns on Facebook, organic posts on Facebook groups and pages, posters and flyers in national migration centres and reception places, and EUAA's operational staff deployed in the Member States where the EUAA provides operational support. Considering the voluntary nature of the survey and the wide dissemination strategy, the sampling process originated a non-probabilistic sample, possibly biased towards persons with digital literacy and smartphone ownership, internet access and adequate reading literacy. Moreover, the sampling was influenced by the distinct levels of support from Member States at different times. Nonetheless, to offer insightful results an effort to reach a proportional sample was made along with the dissemination strategies, and post-stratification of data using weights was performed during the analysis when appropriate. Population data on Temporary Protection was collected from Member States and guided the weighting factors which were estimated per EU country. Data quality evaluation was established using eligibility criteria for sample inclusion/exclusion, internal validity and duplicate monitoring. The SAM – UKR survey delivers regular outputs – reports, factsheets and dashboards aiming to provide close-to-real time situational awareness to EU+ countries.

Data for this report come from integrated sources. The data from the 7,776 respondents of the EUAA SAM-UKR survey obtained via online sponsoring and with the support of national authorities of EU+ countries over the period February 2023 and November 2024, are complemented by data collected and analysed by Gradus Research – an independent research company from Ukraine – based on a panel of 1,250 individuals living in Ukraine. Lastly, a qualitative analysis of transcripts of interviews with five experts in migration based in Ukraine has been conducted by Gradus Research.

This thematic factsheet focuses on specific themes explored in the survey and is produced with intermediate results. The survey is still ongoing, and trends may change with additional responses and the evolution of the situation on the ground

Surveys with Arriving Migrants from Ukraine, Thematic Report: Movements and Returns, 2024

This document is produced by the EUAA's Situational Awareness Unit (SAU) and it is based on data collected in the context of the Surveys with Arriving Migrants from Ukraine (SAM – UKR) from February 2023 to November 2024.

List of terms and abbreviations:

EU+	European Union Member States plus Norway and Switzerland
TP	Temporary Protection
IP	International Protection
SAM	Surveys with Asylum-related Migrants
SAM – UKR	Surveys with Arriving Migrants from Ukraine

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