

UKRAINE & NEIGHBOURING
COUNTRIES 2022-2024

2 YEARS OF RESPONSE



Ukrainian refugees and Third Country Nationals (TCNs) arrive at the Palanca border point in Moldova. © IOM 2022/Muse Mohammed



FOREWORD

February 24, 2024 marks the two-year anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation. The war has resulted in massive displacement, extensive destruction, and profound human suffering.

Over **14 million** persons, nearly 35 per cent of the population, have been forced to flee from their homes, seeking refuge both within Ukraine and beyond. This has resulted in the separation of families, abandonment of homes, and loss of possessions, and has exacerbated numerous protection risks for displaced people. Sadly, the toll stands at more than **ten thousand civilian deaths, including over 560 children**.



Amidst this hardship, the courage and resilience of the affected population is truly remarkable.

During these past two years, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has supported over 6.5 million people inside Ukraine and in neighbouring countries through a comprehensive crisis response that spans the humanitarian, development and peace nexus. IOM was able to leverage its presence and capacity pre-war in both Ukraine and the neighbouring countries to quickly respond in a holistic manner. Our agile and flexible programming model has also allowed us to adequately adjust to unpredictable challenges, such as the Kakhovka dam destruction, and to respond to acute humanitarian needs in hard-to-reach areas of the country and during the harsh winter months. Throughout its emergency response, IOM has prioritized protection of the most vulnerable people and provision of mental health and psychosocial support services.

While approximately **4.5 million** people have returned to their homes, many have encountered lasting challenges to durable solutions including insecurity, loss of livelihoods, damaged housing and infrastructure, and strained services. With over **24 per cent** of the Ukrainian population now below the poverty line, we must focus on economic recovery and building back better.

Against this backdrop, IOM programmes have evolved to focus more on the restoration of livelihoods, strengthening resilience and facilitating medium to long-term recovery as well as durable solutions for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other affected population groups. One of IOM's most significant contributions to durable solutions programming is the restoration of damaged physical infrastructure. Our large-scale water and energy projects are innovative and sustainable. For example, we are supplementing damaged centralized heating plants with biomass-fuelled boilers. These innovative solutions, part of a green transition, benefit communities and offer transformative impact on a large scale.

The Ukraine response is a testament to IOM's commitment to localization. We currently collaborate with **over 80 partners** in Ukraine and more than **150 local partners** in neighbouring countries, including private sector partnerships with Amazon, Airbnb.org and Flexport – each providing in kind services with large-scale impact.

The current situation remains precarious and the prospects for resolution seem limited as the war enters a protracted stage. IOM remains committed to serving the needs of affected people and to contribute to durable solutions in line with the organization's **Strategic Response Plan: Ukraine and Neighbouring Countries for 2024-2026**. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our donors, our valued partners and all the IOM staff who continue to work so diligently to address the mobility dimensions of this emergency.

Soda Federico

Director, Department of
Humanitarian Response and Recovery



9.7M
CURRENTLY DISPLACED



3.7M
INTERNALLY
DISPLACED
IN UKRAINE



6M
REFUGEES
IN EUROPE



4.5M
RETURNEES IN
UKRAINE

Operationally defined as people who have been displaced for at least two weeks and have now returned to their place of residence. The unpredictable situation across many areas of Ukraine drives complex mobility dynamics, and impacts return scenarios. However, as early as April 2022, IOM began observing significant returns of displaced people back to their habitual place of residence. Even as the war continues, with the previously occupied or frontline areas becoming more accessible, people have already started returning and rebuilding.



1M
BORDER CROSSINGS BY
THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS

from Ukraine into neighbouring countries recorded since 24 February 2022

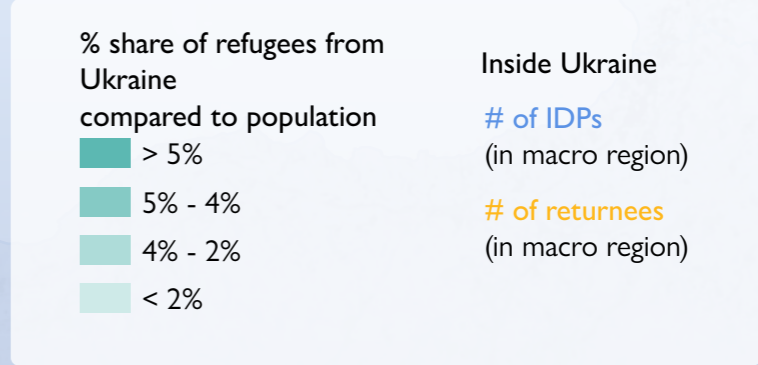
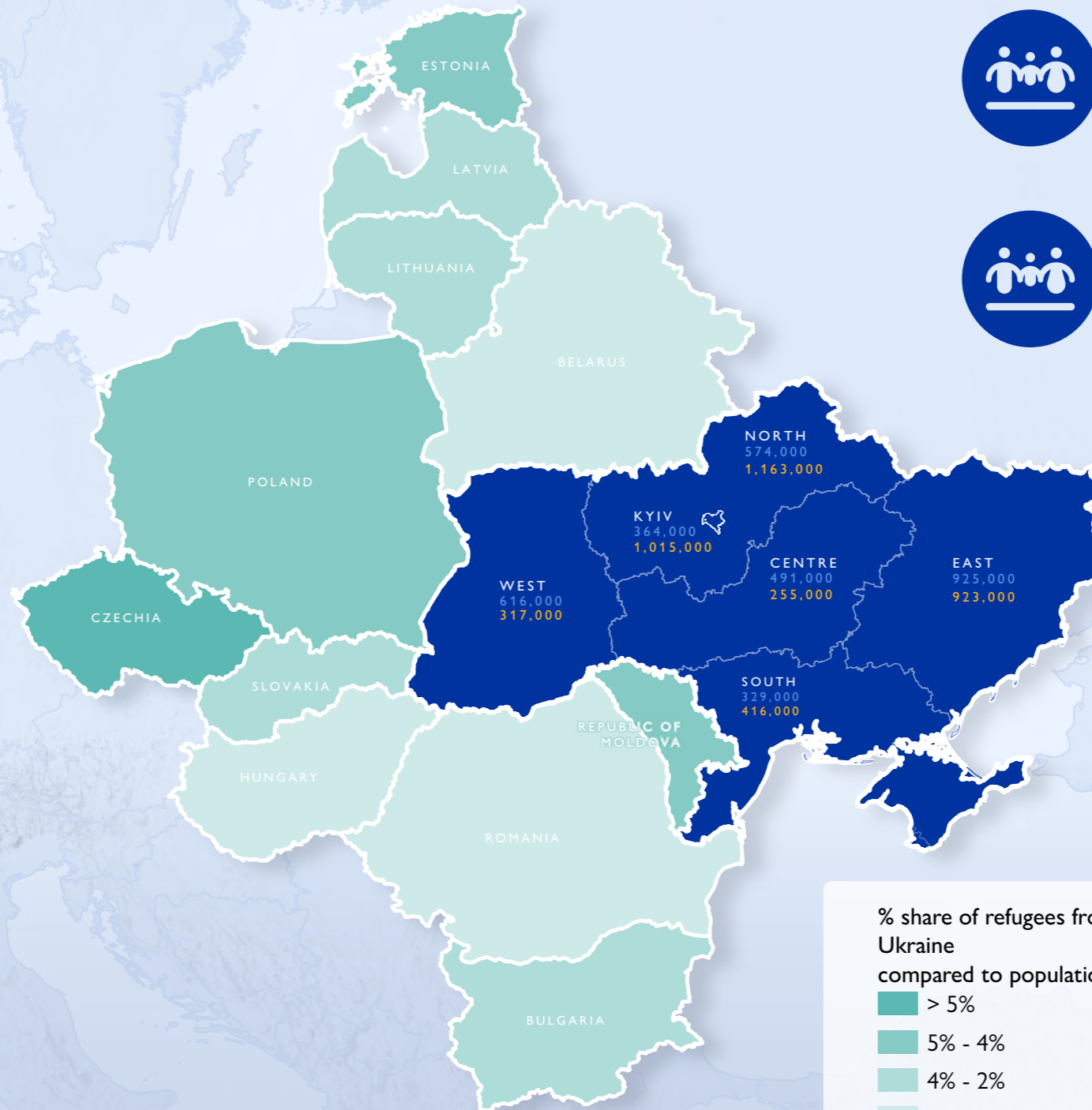
According to the latest international migrant stock estimates, almost five million foreign nationals were present in Ukraine before the war (UN DESA). Of these, the majority were family members of Ukrainian citizens, as well as people of Ukrainian origin and their descendants who are eligible for Ukrainian citizenship. This category of refugees has particular needs and shows the complexity of displacement patterns.



14.6M
PEOPLE IN NEED
IN UKRAINE



2.2M
PEOPLE IN NEED
IN NEIGHBOURING
COUNTRIES



Note: The estimates for the eastern region (Donetska, Zaporizka, Luhanska, and Khersonska Oblasts) is not represented due to their likely under-representation as a result of coverage being limited to government-controlled areas and the limited number of respondents reached in occupied areas.

This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

More than two years have passed since the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022. The widespread destruction and loss of life have resulted in the largest humanitarian emergency in Europe since the Second World War. Over 14 million people including refugees, returnees and internally displaced people, have been forced to flee their homes, seeking safety elsewhere in the country or abroad. Entire cities and villages have been bombed and over 28,000 civilian casualties have been reported, including more than 10,000 killed, according to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)).

Intense fighting in the frontlines continues to make humanitarian assistance increasingly difficult to provide in areas where needs are acute. In June 2023, the destruction of the Kakhovka Dam led to widespread flooding, resulting in loss of life, property damage, and displacement. The collapse of the dam created additional challenges for the country's economy and farmers already struggling due to the heavy land mine contamination and access to water. Continued long range attacks on critical civilian infrastructure across many areas of Ukraine challenge the safety and security of the population and humanitarian actors, as well as the availability of public services. The harsh winters have also taken a toll on the most vulnerable, particularly older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, children, and those living in poverty.

Approximately 14.6 million people continue to be in need of humanitarian assistance in Ukraine as massive destruction further impacts essential services already decimated by the war, including access to education, health services and water ([OCHA](#)). As of December 2023, [IOM](#) estimated 3.7 million persons being internally displaced within Ukraine with 70 per cent reporting to have been displaced for one year or longer. Similarly, the number of refugees and third-country nationals (TCNs) in neighbouring countries continue to grow, with 5.9 million refugees recorded as of end of 2023 ([UNHCR](#)). The impacts of the continued destruction have led to heightened protection risks and negatively affected the mental health and psychosocial well-being of people affected by the war.

Although the inflow of refugees and TCNs continues to be met with solidarity in Ukraine's neighbouring countries, changes in protection and benefits schemes introduce new challenges, particularly for financial and shelter support for arriving refugees. In October 2023, [IOM](#) data indicates that 65 per cent of refugees from

Ukraine reported intentions to stay in their host country, while 12 per cent planned to move to another host country or return to Ukraine. As the humanitarian crisis progresses, [IOM](#) continues to monitor refugees' intentions and their needs to promote social cohesion and equal access to services in all countries of the response.

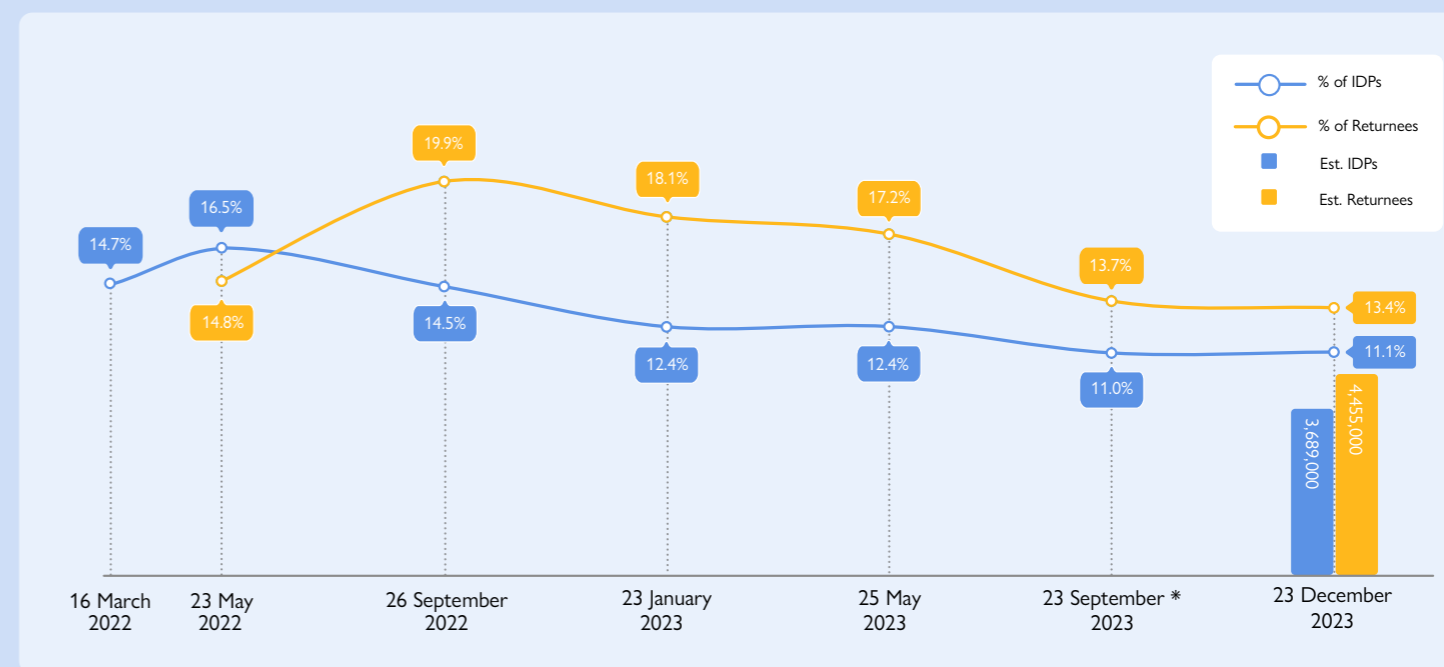
Working closely with partner agencies, [IOM](#)'s involvement has been characterized by resilience and adaptability. With over 1,900 staff members working in Ukraine and neighbouring countries, 80 per cent whom are nationals of the country they work in, [IOM](#) has been working to find long-term solutions for people affected by the war.

[IOM](#)'s funding needs have been substantial, matching the unprecedented scope of the emergency. Thanks to the combined efforts of partners, [IOM](#) managed to mobilize 63 per cent of funding needs since the beginning of the war, allowing us to reach over 6.5 million people by December 2023. However, as the war enters its third year, the situation remains complex and challenging, underscoring the urgency of finding a lasting political solution. The people of Ukraine, despite enduring unimaginable hardships, continue to demonstrate remarkable resilience, and [IOM](#) remains committed to supporting their journey toward a more stable future.

We would like to thank our donors for their continued support to our response in Ukraine and Neighbouring Countries

[Click here for more information on our donors](#)

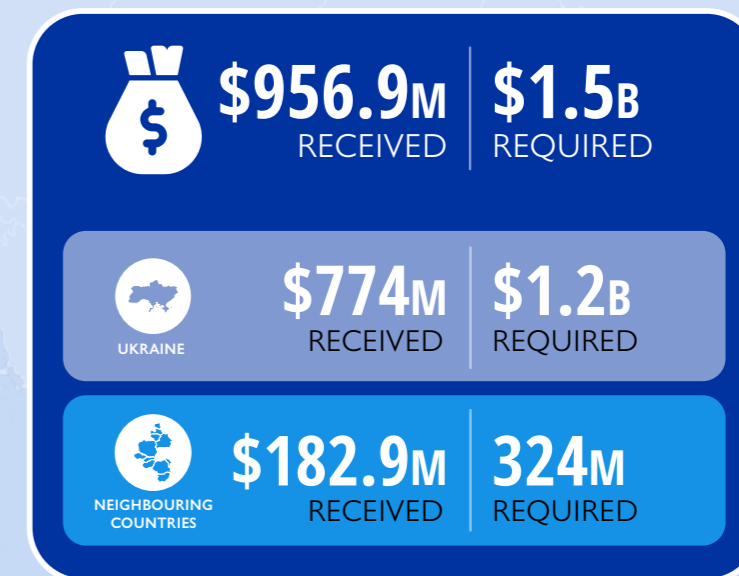
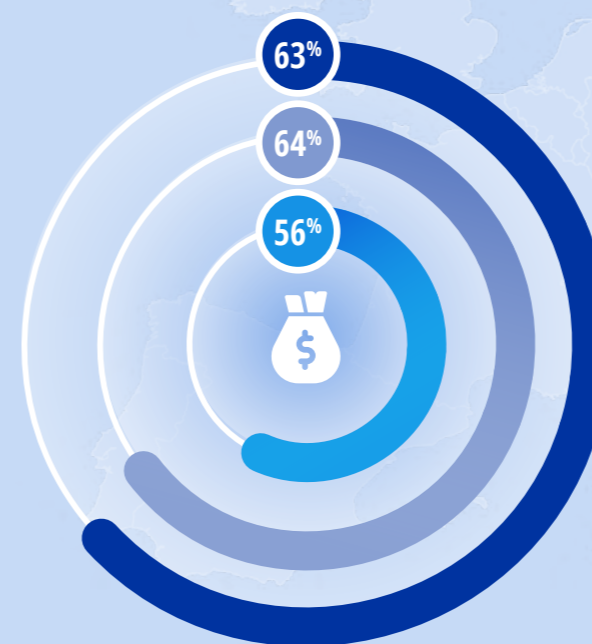
INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE AND RETURNEES OVER 2022-2023



Disclaimer: The UNFPA Population Baseline, on the basis of which IDP and returnee population figures are extrapolated, underwent several changes between March 2022 and June 2023, impacting the comparability of population estimates over time. Trends unaffected by the extrapolation are shown by the line chart and expressed in % of the total population in Ukraine. Percentages have been rounded for visualization purposes.

Source: [DTM for internal displacement and returns](#)

FINANCING THE RESPONSE (2022-2023)



OUR OPERATIONAL PRESENCE IN THE REGION

WORKFORCE OVERVIEW



1,943

Total number of staff



851

TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF IN UKRAINE



1,092

TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

GENDER BREAKDOWN



59%

FEMALE



41%

MALE

OPERATIONAL PRESENCE



30

Offices and sub-offices



+2,500

Collective centres



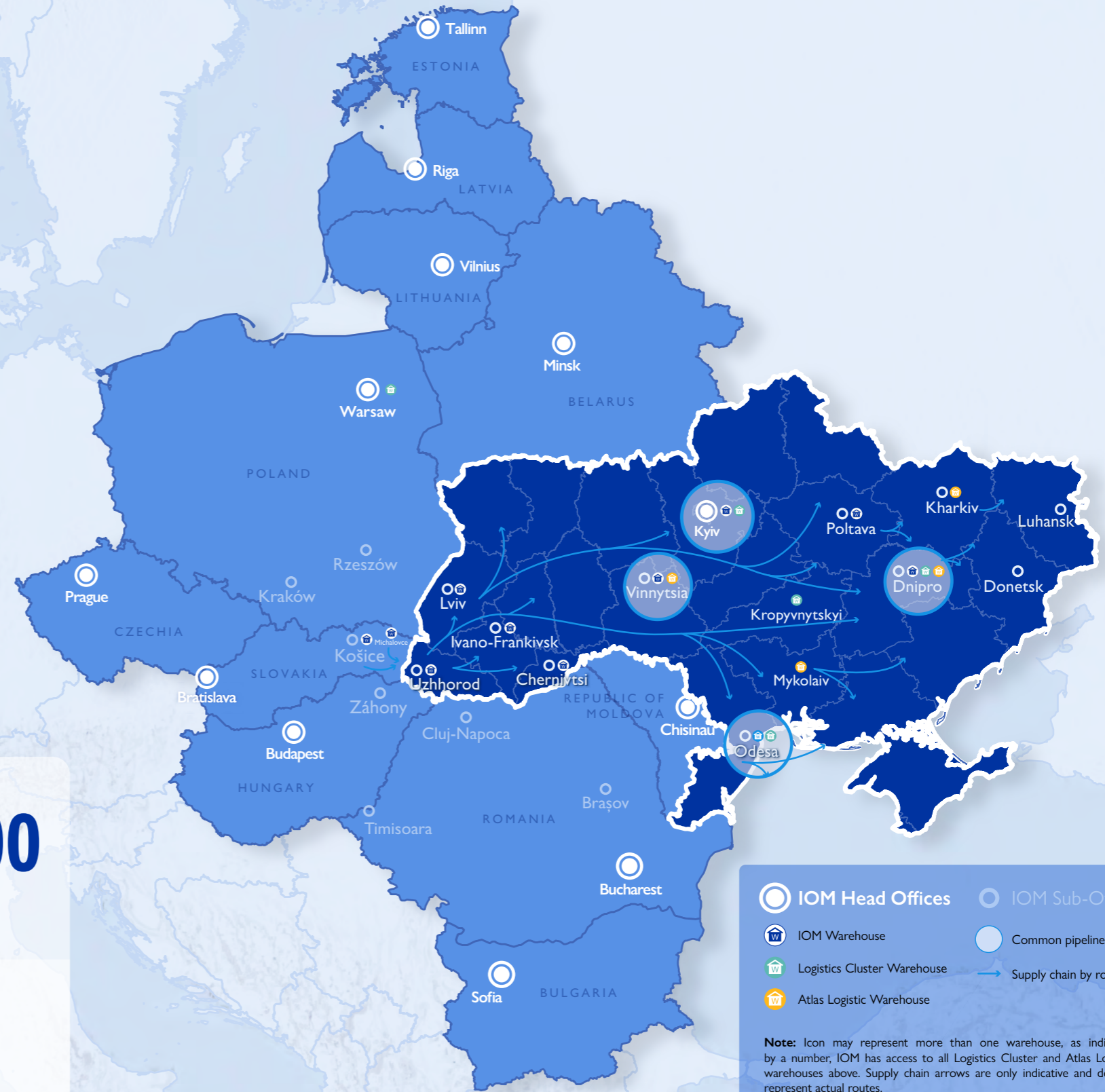
22

Warehouses



34

Migrant resource centres



Legend:

- IOM Head Offices
- IOM Sub-Offices
- IOM Warehouse
- Common pipeline hubs
- Logistics Cluster Warehouse
- Supply chain by road
- Atlas Logistic Warehouse

Note: Icon may represent more than one warehouse, as indicated by a number. IOM has access to all Logistics Cluster and Atlas Logistic warehouses above. Supply chain arrows are only indicative and do not represent actual routes.

This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

This report marks the two-year milestone of IOM’s response since the onset of the war in Ukraine in February 2022. The report highlights the progress made in pursuit of its four Strategic Objectives – outlined in the [IOM Appeal for Ukraine and Neighbouring Countries \(2023\)](#) – which serve as the cornerstone for IOM’s strategic planning and operational efforts, addressing both immediate humanitarian needs and enduring recovery initiatives for those impacted by the war. Structured around these objectives, the report delves into the impact of selected key interventions and flagship approaches and incorporates stories from people IOM encountered throughout its response efforts in Ukraine and neighbouring countries, such as Belarus, Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, the Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

IOM works in conflict and displacement-affected areas with its robust operational presence covering both crisis programmes and development. This enables effective implementation of response and recovery measures addressing diverse needs simultaneously. Operating within the [Humanitarian, Development, and Peace Nexus \(HDPN\)](#), IOM fosters connections and coherence among humanitarian, development, and peace initiatives. Detailed in the [IOM Migration Crisis Operational Framework \(MCOF\)](#), this approach guides IOM’s involvement in crises, reinforcing the HDPN strategy to reduce vulnerabilities and build resilient societies.

IOM’s approach addresses immediate needs and pursues long-term solutions, articulated around **four strategic objectives**:

- **Save lives and respond to needs through humanitarian assistance and protection, including strengthening preparedness and reducing risk.** IOM responded to urgent needs by providing life-saving assistance and protection to affected communities, offering humanitarian movement support for border-crossers, and delivering essential items like non-food items (NFIs) and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH). In hard-to-reach areas in Ukraine, IOM swiftly distributed crucial items through the Common Pipeline, addressing the post-Kakhovka Dam catastrophe in June 2023. Simultaneously, IOM supports IDPs and refugees in securing shelter and works to improve living conditions in collective centres, providing integrated services, including mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and cash-based interventions. Notably, IOM deployed mobile teams for holistic care, including MHPSS and protection assistance, in remote locations during the ongoing war.

- **Contribute to the efforts of countries hosting refugees and TCNs to enhance their access to services and enable socioeconomic inclusion.** In collaboration with governments and local actors, IOM works to enhance socioeconomic inclusion for refugees and TCNs in refugee-hosting countries. The goal is to enable access, provide agency, and support beneficiary-driven solutions. Operating across seven neighbouring countries, IOM’s Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) act as hubs for information, orientation, service delivery, and referrals. Language courses, interpretation support, vocational training and job placement address refugees’ top needs, improving access to vital services such as health care and employment. Additionally, IOM fosters social cohesion through educational access, diverse recreational activities, mental and physical health care, and transitioning housing assistance to sustainable, long-term rental programmes.

- **Support national efforts to enable safe and dignified return, sustainable reintegration, socio-economic recovery and durable solutions in Ukraine.** IOM collaborates with the government of Ukraine and host countries to address long-term socioeconomic impacts, empowering IDPs and returnees through durable solutions and community stabilization programmes. Facilitating an environment for returns and local integration requires a multi-sectoral, area-based approach, spanning governance, infrastructure, services, and individual family needs. IOM invested in economic revitalization, access to health services, housing rehabilitation, MHPSS for veterans and families, social cohesion as well as investments in large-scale reconstruction of infrastructure. Contributing to systemic change, IOM


supports policies, such as reparations for conflict-related sexual violence (CSRV) and housing land and property, advancing long-term restorative justice mechanisms.

- **Contribute to an evidence based and more efficient crisis response system, including enhancing the availability, coherence and timeliness of data collection and analysis and promote data-driven response programming.** In recognizing the critical role of data and evidence to inform effective response and recovery, IOM remains a primary data source for UN agencies as much as government and other partners on the needs, locations, and intentions of displaced people and migrants using the [Displacement Tracking Matrix \(DTM\)](#).

In addition, throughout its response efforts, IOM integrates cross-cutting principles that impact the lives, dignity, and agency of people in need including accountability to affected populations (AAP), protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), and localization.

Interventions in Ukraine align with the [Ukraine Humanitarian Response Plan \(HRP\) for 2023](#), the [Ukraine Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan \(2023\)](#) as well as the [United Nations in Ukraine Transitional Framework \(September 2022-December 2023\)](#). As a member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), IOM worked closely with partner agencies to ensure robust coordination during implementation, including UN agencies, international and local organizations, civil society, and government counterparts, while strongly adhering to IASC commitment to the centrality of protection.

FOUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2022-2023




STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

Save lives and respond to needs through humanitarian assistance and protection, including strengthening preparedness and reducing risk.




STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

Contribute to the efforts of countries hosting refugees and TCNs to enhance their access to services and enable socioeconomic inclusion.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

Support national efforts to enable safe and dignified return, sustainable reintegration, socio-economic recovery and durable solutions in Ukraine.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

Contribute to an evidence based and more efficient crisis response system, including enhancing the availability, coherence and timeliness of data collection and analysis and promote data-driven response programming.



SHELTER & NFIs

4.7M
people reached

- **989,708** people assisted with NFI support
- **31,420** light, medium and heavy house repairs completed
- **172,747** emergency shelter kits distributed



WASH

4.2M
people reached

- **3,231,394** people reached through water systems repair and maintenance interventions
- **587,515** people reached through district heating operations repair and maintenance
- **85,067** people received emergency WASH NFIs



SITE MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

414,188
people reached

- **114,038** people reached through refurbished collective centres
- **892** collective centres supported with NFIs
- **299,227** collective centres residents reached with essential items & equipment



PROTECTION

164,758
people reached 314,800 people reached through information provision

- **87,698** people received information through the 'Safe Migration' hotline
- **33,434** people received case management services
- **4,958** people supported with capacity development sessions



MULTI-PURPOSE CASH ASSISTANCE

616,945
people reached

- **\$108M** provided through MPCA transfers
- **+40,000** households in Ukraine provided with cash for winter and solid fuel



RECOVERY & DURABLE SOLUTIONS

126,729**
people reached

- **11,375** housing units rehabilitated for approx. 34,125 people
- **164** social institutions supported with renovations or rebuilds
- **796** micro-enterprises benefitted from grants



TOTAL:
5.8M*
PEOPLE REACHED
SINCE FEBRUARY 2022



HEALTH & MHPSS

172,983
people reached

- **178,472** people received health services from mobile teams
- **123,906** mental health and psychosocial support services provided
- **63,563** people received community and family support services

Note: The figures in bullet points indicate the total number of people reached per flagship activity in each sector.

* People reached is an aggregate of people reached by all sectors excluding some activities, such as information provision campaigns and referrals.

** Note that this aggregates the total people reached through dedicated programming towards durable solutions. Programming such as long-term housing and infrastructure, captured in other sectors, may also be applicable in this area.

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SHELTER & NFIs

214,060
people reached

- 164,345 people received NFIs
- 13,734 people supported with private accommodation
- 4,224 people supported with rental assistance



HEALTH & MHPSS

59,068
people reached

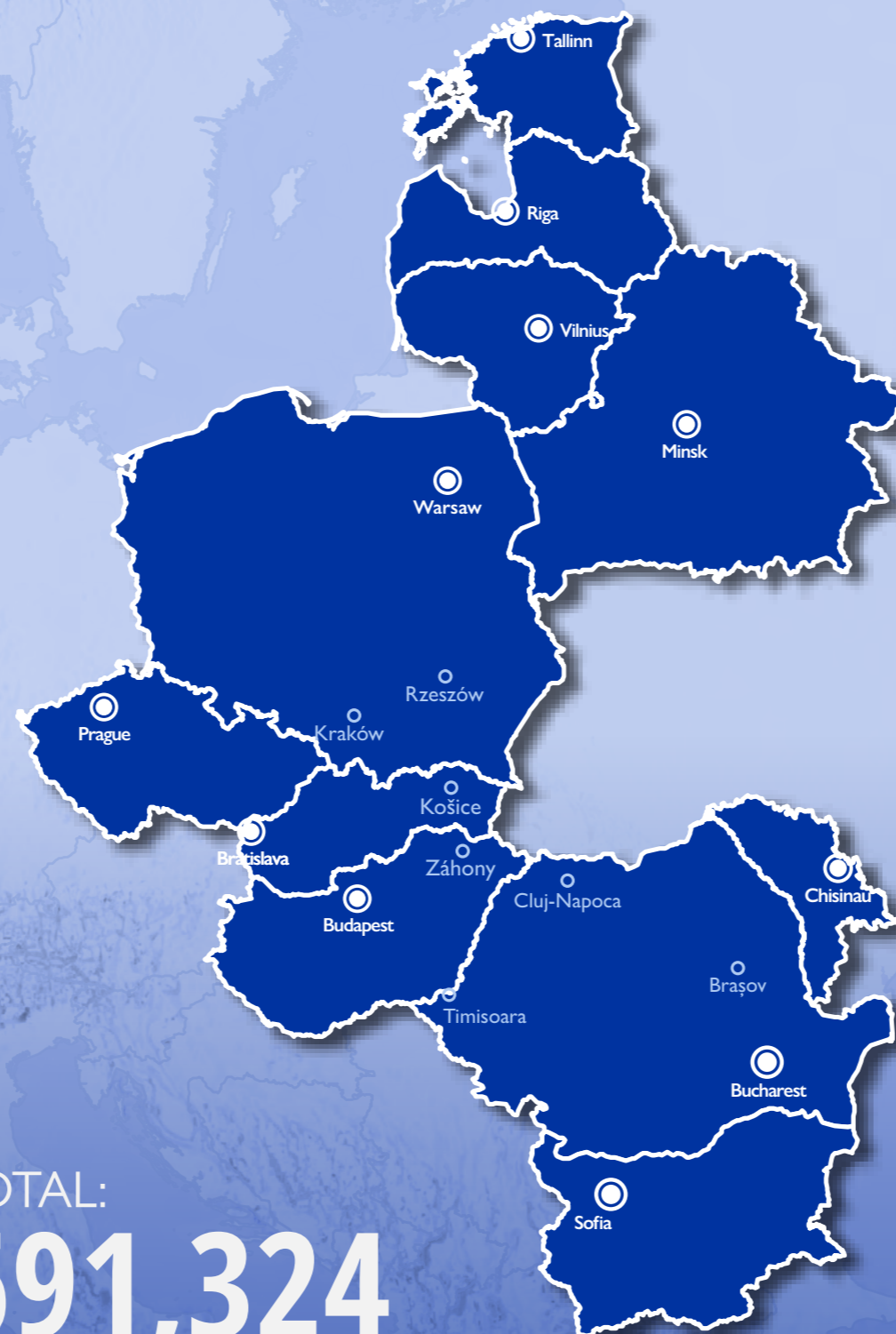
- 39,531 people provided with health assessments
- 34,872 people participated in group recreational activities
- 23,356 people received psychosocial consultations



CASH

46,880
people reached

- 27,838 people received MPCA
- 19,242 people received vouchers



TOTAL:
691,324
PEOPLE REACHED
WITH IOM SUPPORT



PROTECTION

204,155
people reached

1,699,773
people reached through
information provision

- 16,352 people received case management services
- 10,416 people reached through capacity building and institutional support
- 4,677 people screened for protection needs



SOCIOECONOMIC INCLUSION

144,158
people reached

- 47,925 people reached with livelihoods support
- 85,407 children reached with education support
- 67,231 people reached with inclusion, integration and social cohesion related activities



WASH

142,156
people reached

- 94,579 people received hygiene related items
- 49,916 people received water bottles at key crossing border points
- 16,681 people gained access to WASH facilities

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

SAVE LIVES AND RESPOND
TO NEEDS THROUGH
HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE
AND PROTECTION,
INCLUDING STRENGTHENING
PREPAREDNESS AND
REDUCING RISK



KEY FIGURE

● **350,000**

items released to partners for distribution in Ukraine

● **989,708**

people assisted with NFI's in Ukraine

● **17**

regions covered in Ukraine

● **51**

Common Pipeline partners in Ukraine

With the risk of air attacks, unpredictable road conditions, landmines and shelling, convoys are high risk undertakings, but they are commonly the only humanitarian lifeline available for the communities they serve. © IOM 2022

IOM's Common Pipeline programme serves as a vital supply chain solution during major crises, aiming to enhance the capabilities of humanitarian partners. Its primary objective is to ensure a consistent and abundant supply of non-food items (NFIs) for distribution by smaller, grassroots, and sub-national partner organizations. The pipeline effectively delivers NFIs to local organizations operating throughout Ukraine, with a focus on prioritizing the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach communities.

Since its launch in October 2022, the Common Pipeline has distributed over 350,000 essential items to partners and has been instrumental in supporting organizations across 17 regions, supporting more than 270,000 persons. Many smaller partners, who are deeply trusted within their communities and possess insight into specific needs, lack the financial or logistical resources to procure necessary assistance items. In such cases, IOM's Common Pipeline acts as a bridge, providing the

essential items needed to support these communities. Notably, the Pipeline mechanism demonstrated efficient responsiveness during crises following the Kakhovka Dam destruction on 6 June 2023, where NFIs were delivered to partners within less than 72 hours after the explosion.

[Click here for more on IOM and partners' support to Kherson using the Common Pipeline.](#)

In 2023, IOM carried out 1,500 surveys among NFI beneficiaries. The findings reveal a positive impact resulting from the assistance, with 92 per cent of the beneficiaries confirming increased accessibility to essential items, which would have otherwise been difficult to get, and 93 per cent reported utilizing all items for their intended purposes, including improvements in winter preparedness, cooking conditions, and access to hygiene items. Notably, 75 per cent of beneficiaries confirmed the items enabled them to save their available resources to cover other needs, including health, education, other house items and food.

REACHING THE MOST VULNERABLE IN HARD-TO-REACH AREAS

"I remember how one day the Russian military came to us. The soldiers pointed their weapons at us and said that we had five minutes to gather our things. I helped sick neighbours out. So, I didn't take anything, even my "treasure" - dentures - remained in that basement," says 81-year-old Maria, who survived the terrible fighting in Mariupol. Like thousands of other people, Maria had to leave Ukraine for a neighbouring country after the fall of Mariupol. With the help of volunteers, she was eventually able to return to Ukraine and reached Uzhhorod, in the far western Ukrainian region of Zakarpattia. There, she received assistance at the 'I am Mariupol' community centre. She was provided with essential items, including free bedding, hygiene kits and a kitchen set. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 4.2 million older persons need humanitarian assistance in Ukraine. The upheavals of displacement and dispossession have been extremely hard for this already-vulnerable population and IOM data reveals clearly that individuals aged 60 and above struggle the most to meet basic needs. Therefore, providing assistance to the most vulnerable, including older persons, especially those living in remote areas, like Maria, is a core component of IOM's programming. Beneficiaries are able to receive household essentials, protection services, and any needed medical or psychological assistance from IOM. One key mechanism for this aid is the Common Pipeline Programme.



Maria survived the horrific battles for Mariupol last year before finding shelter in Uzhhorod, Daria Dovzhenko. © IOM 2023

[Click here for more on Maria's story.](#)

BENEFICIARY FEEDBACK

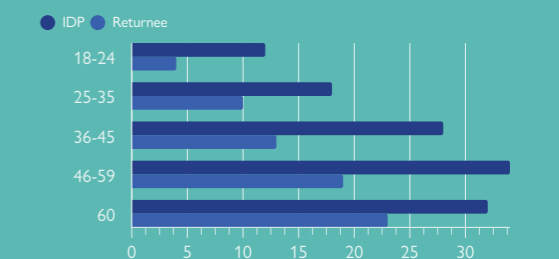
- 98% of the beneficiaries were satisfied
- 96% of the distributed items had been used by beneficiaries
- 93% of the distributed items had their intended purposes
- 92% of the beneficiaries confirmed the distributions increased their access to items that would have been otherwise difficult to access
- 75% of the beneficiaries confirmed that the assistance enabled them to save resources to fulfill other needs

HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

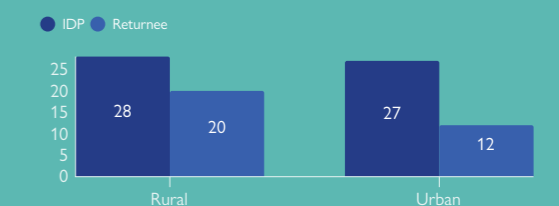
DIFFICULTY MEETING BASIC NEEDS: BY AGE AND GENDER



DIFFICULTY MEETING BASIC NEEDS: BY AGE AND DISPLACEMENT STATUSES



DIFFICULTY MEETING BASIC NEEDS: BY URBAN/RURAL AND DISPLACEMENT STATUSES





- **Over 44,000 people displaced** from their homes in flood-affected areas as of 25 July 2023 (DTM's Mobility & Needs Assessment)
- **200,000 people** reside in Hromada's where they cannot source water from the main network since June 6
- **32 settlements** on the right bank of the Dnipro River severely affected by the flood, with at least 3,801 houses recorded as damaged (Ministry for the Restoration of Ukraine)

IOM partners bringing aid items to rural areas in Kherson region. © Rescue Now 2023

On the morning of 6 June 2023, the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant dam in southern Ukraine was destroyed, leading to widespread flooding in both Ukrainian and Russian-occupied areas of the Kherson Region. This resulted in death, property damage, and displacement and had far-reaching effects, affecting surrounding regions and causing extensive damage to homes, businesses, agriculture, land, and community infrastructure. Tens of thousands of people in the neighbouring Dnipropetrovsk Region lost access to piped water as the reservoir's capacity decreased by 70 per cent in the first week, impacting around 700,000 persons depending on it. The destruction of the dam not only raised immediate humanitarian concerns, but also posed threats to livelihoods, food production, and food security. As the largest humanitarian organization operating in [Ukraine](#), IOM and its partners played an active role in addressing both immediate and long-term

recovery and resilience needs. Utilizing Rapid Needs and Mobility and Needs Assessments published within 48 hours following the event, IOM identified the primary concerns of people in need. Leveraging the regional hubs in Odesa and Dnipro, IOM worked in close coordination with the cluster system, relevant national entities, regional and local authorities to deliver a comprehensive and multi-sectoral response. Two additional DTM reports to assess the immediate and up-stream impact of the devastation were produced.

[Click here for more on IOM's immediate humanitarian response.](#)

"The impact of this calamity extends far beyond the immediate destruction of the dam and subsequent floods," said former IOM Director General António Vitorino. Sustained support for Ukraine's Kherson Region is crucial for long-term recovery. IOM has focused on

mitigating health risks and livelihood impact by ensuring water and energy security. IOM supported 202,984 persons through water system rehabilitation, emergency points installation, water trucking, and hygiene kit distribution. Looking ahead, IOM plans mid-to-long-term solutions, reconstructing and modifying damaged water and wastewater systems. This includes repairing existing infrastructure, upgrading systems, and installing treatment stations and alternative water sources. The goal is to provide clean drinking water as an alternative to the now-unreliable Kakhovka reservoir. [A Rapid Environmental Assessment of Kakhovka Dam Breach](#), published on 25 October 2023, reveals irreversible damage with potential impacts on ecosystems and human health. Addressing the full scale of environmental impacts across the affected territory will require multiple assessments and substantial funding.

KAKHOVKA DAM FLOOD RESPONSE

NFI NFIs

- **39,741** people supported
- **8,501** household hygiene kits distributed
- **1,331** kitchen sets distributed
- **2,347** jerrycans distributed
- **4,252** mattresses distributed

HEALTH

- **1,258** medical items provided to local health facilities
- **5,032** medical items prepositioned to respond to waterborne disease/ cholera outbreaks
- **71** people supported with MHPSS services

DTM

- **3** rapid needs assessment conducted

DONATIONS

- **43** Boats and Engines
- **11** Motor pumps
- **2,000** Fire hoses

WASH

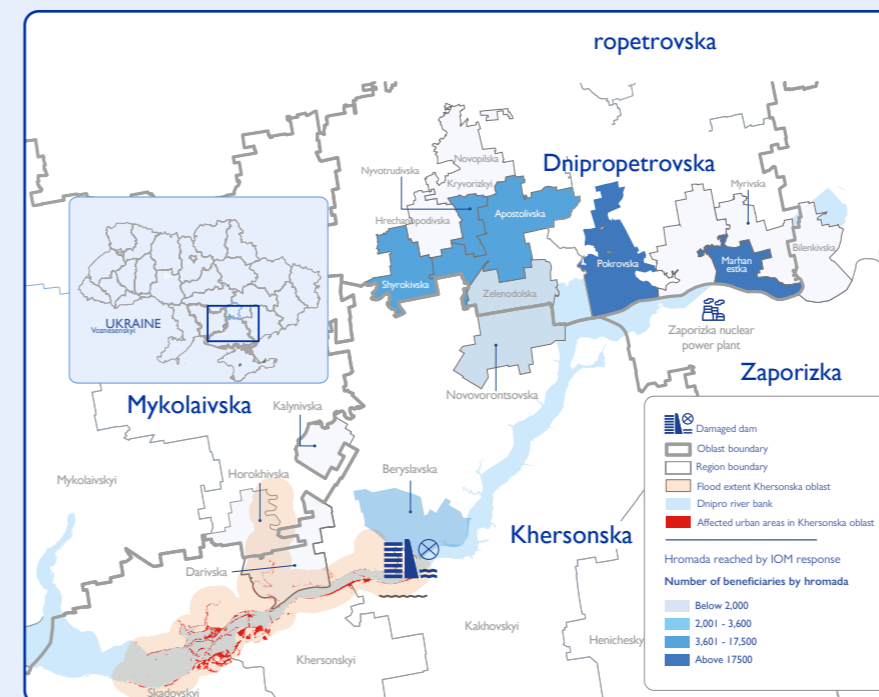
- **202,984** people supported
- **138,112** people benefitted from water points
- **8,393** received bottled water
- **66,909** people benefitted from water trucking
- **18,408** people received hygiene kits

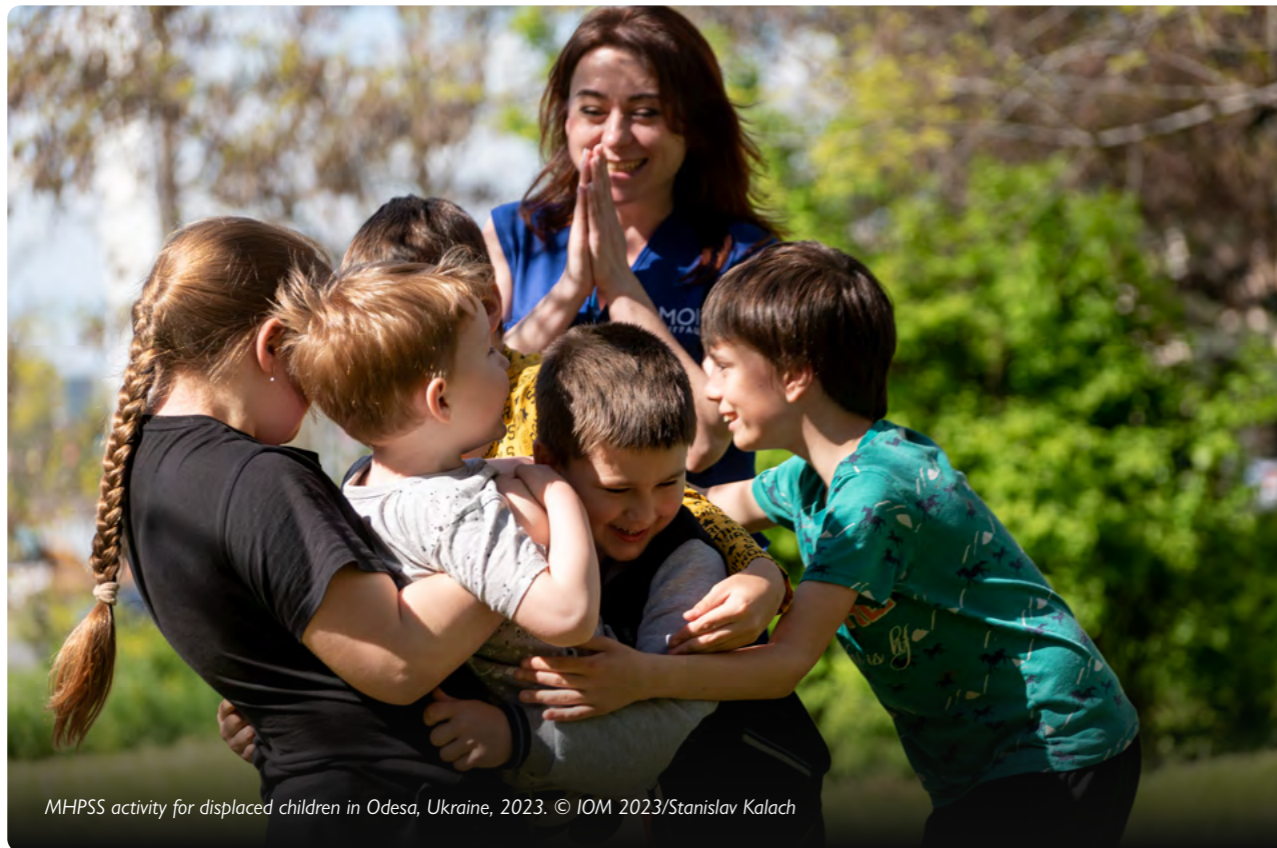
SHELTER

- **1,350** people supported
- **8,501** emergency shelter kits distributed

CBI

- **2,593** persons' payment process completed
- **40,000** targeted with cash-based interventions (CBI)





MHPSS activity for displaced children in Odesa, Ukraine, 2023. © IOM 2023/Stanislav Kalach

The war has had a severe impact on individuals, families, and communities, leading to mounting stressors and a feeling of uncertainty. This has significantly impacted people’s mental health and psychosocial well-being, with war-related stress, anxiety and daily stressors linked to displacement and loss, identified as commonly reported issues affecting displaced, host and returnee communities. In a survey conducted in September 2023, IOM found that almost a fifth of all respondents reported themselves or someone in their family as needing psychological counselling. As the war goes on, frontline personnel continue to need capacity strengthening on psychological first aid (PFA), stress management and prevention of burnout and compassion fatigue.

IOM’s MHPSS programme operates across several streams, including the provision of direct services to war-affected and displaced communities, sociorelational activities, integrated livelihood and MHPSS, durable solutions programming including local integration, and strengthening national and local MHPSS-related systems.

IOM’s strategic approach is to implement awareness campaigns and community outreach to destigmatize mental health issues, facilitate easier access to support

services, and build family and community support networks. This is being done through cultural and ritual activities, as well as individual and group counselling provision in underserved areas and referral to specialized care, if needed. Moreover, collaborations with the Ministry of Veteran Affairs, the Ministry of Health, health care providers, and international experts have been instrumental in developing evidence-based policies and enhancing the technical capacity of MHPSS practitioners in Ukraine and in neighbouring countries.

IOM has established information and support hotlines for people within Ukraine and those who have fled to neighbouring countries. The hotline has proven to serve as a critical channel for people to seek support. Notably, this hotline addresses a critical gap in MHPSS, as it serves a higher proportion of adult men compared to typical MHPSS programmes, underscoring the significance of reaching and aiding an often-underserved demographic. Across the two years, the hotline recorded 17,103 calls from 6,994 unique callers. Call volumes have increased in response to critical events over the last two years, with the hotline offering a confidential and non-judgmental platform. This anonymity allows callers to discuss their emotions, concerns, and mental health issues, promoting open conversations about emotional well-being.

PARTNERSHIPS MATTER

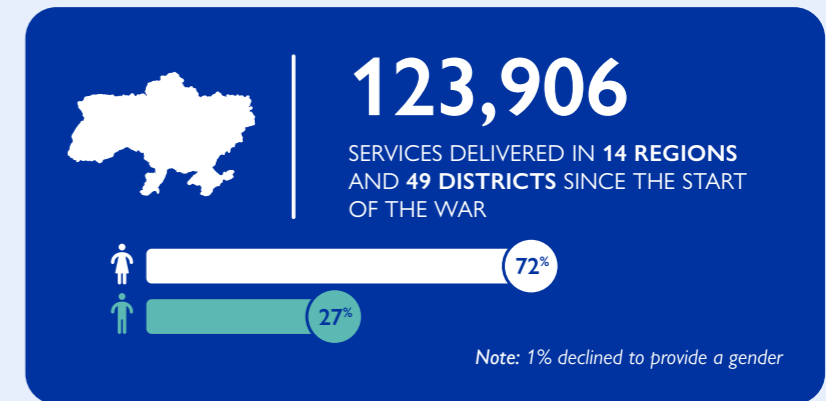
IOM collaborates closely with and aligns its MHPSS programming model to Ukraine’s First Lady’s “All-Ukrainian Mental Health Programme,” as well as the Mental Health Coordination Centre under the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. Under this initiative, IOM is piloting sensitization programmes with academic institutions and various Government of Ukraine Ministries to enhance the MHPSS certification process.

Moreover, the IOM manual on Community-Based MHPSS in emergencies and displacement, translated in Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, Romanian, and Slovak, is considered the operational framework for community based MHPSS in the Ukrainian Prioritized Multisectoral Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Actions During and After the War: Operational Roadmap. Results obtained from M&E data highlight the affirmative effects of community-based services on beneficiaries, with 97 per cent of the beneficiaries acknowledging that these services played a crucial role in enhancing their psychosocial well-being, whilst 98 per cent confirmed that service providers considered their needs and perspectives, underscoring the positive impact of these services on a holistic level. Collaborations with local authorities, volunteers and NGOs like Pectoral, Slavic Heart, Peaceful Sky, Welfare Workshop, and The Centre for Civic Initiatives “The Intellect of Sumy Region,” each an IOM implementing partner, ensure culturally resonant MHPSS activities, build community trust, and enhance the sustainability of initiatives. Moreover, IOM partners

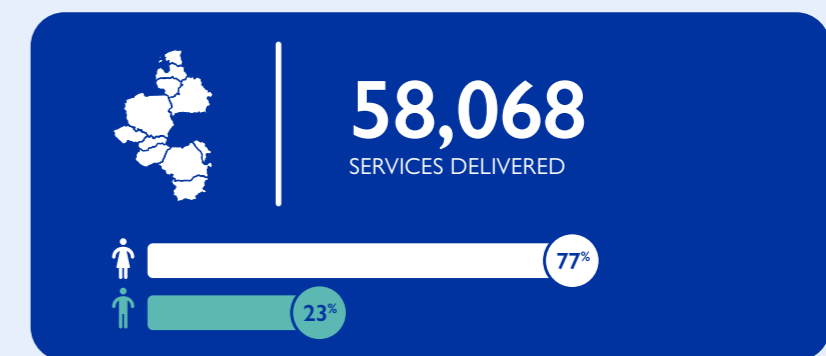
“I received not only consultations but also practical recommendations. I was immediately shown and helped to perform exercises that I continue to do on my own. My psycho-emotional state is gradually improving.”

Female IDP in Vinnytsia who attended an individual session, 2023

MHPSS KEY FIGURES



- **4,705 people** supported by awareness raising sessions
- **63,563 people** received with community and family support services (e.g. sociorelational and cultural, creative, and arts-based activities)
- **7,825 people** received focused support services including individuals and group counselling
- **14,998 calls** to the IOM MHPSS hotline
- **1,421 specialized MHPSS services** provided
- **25,851 MHPSS consultations** delivered through mobile health teams
- **3,577 MHPSS training** delivered for first responders
- **Translation of the IOM Manual on community based MHPSS** in emergencies and displacement into Ukrainian
- **5123 partner staff** received capacity building training



- **34,383 people** received Community and Family Support services
- **20,092 people** received Focused Support services
- **1,358 people** participated in psycho-education group sessions
- **1,199 people** were trained on Psychosocial First Aid
- **Translation of the IOM Manual on community based MHPSS** in emergencies and displacement into Russian, Slovak, Polish and Romanian

with global organizations like WHO, UNHCR, UNICEF, and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, promoting a multi-dimensional approach to MHPSS. As an active member and co-chair of various MHPSS working groups, including the MHPSS sub-working group in the Dnipro, coordinating programming across Eastern Ukraine, and the national task team on MHPSS for Veterans and their families, IOM ensures a unified and effective approach to MHPSS across Ukraine.

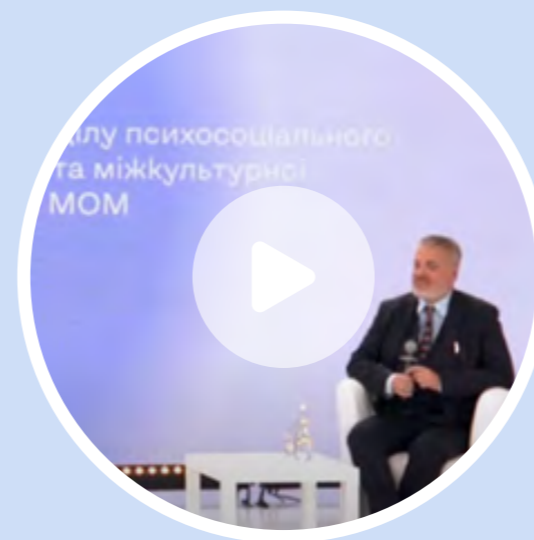
Finally, IOM engages with academic institutions to research mental health in war and displacement. These insights guide future programming and support ongoing capacity development initiatives, such as ongoing partnerships with universities across Europe. Specifically, in order to gain more specialized knowledge on MHPSS and population mobility, IOM developed a course on MHPSS and Population Mobility with the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj, Romania, in 2023. Similar courses will be available in Warsaw and Tallin during 2024 and partnerships are ongoing at the Ilia State University, in Tbilisi, Georgia and Maria Grzegorzewska University in Poland. M&E results reflect the effectiveness and practical utility of the IOM's MHPSS capacity-building efforts, with 91 per cent of participants confirming that training improves the work of their organization, whilst 80 per cent of people are actively applying the acquired knowledge and skills in their respective roles.



To support those who fled the war in Ukraine, IOM conducts forest therapy sessions led by certified IOM psychologists with the purpose of reducing stress and anxiety. © IOM 2023/Alexey Shvirin

FRAGILITY AND RESILIENCE OF THE FUTURE - THIRD FIRST LADIES AND GENTLEMEN SUMMIT IN UKRAINE

In 2021, an international platform was launched to address global humanitarian challenges, with a focus on Mental Health. Guglielmo Schinina, IOM Head of Mental Health, Psychosocial Response and Intercultural Communication, and Renos Papadopolous, Director of the Centre for Trauma, Asylum and Refugees at the University of Essex, spoke in 2023 on the mental health needs of displaced people. Recent data indicates a shift in the narrative by young people, with 50 per cent experiencing emotional distress due to war. Mr. Schinina suggested that this statistic may reflect the openness of younger people in acknowledging and reporting emotional needs, contrasting with societal stigma often faced by adults in mental health care.



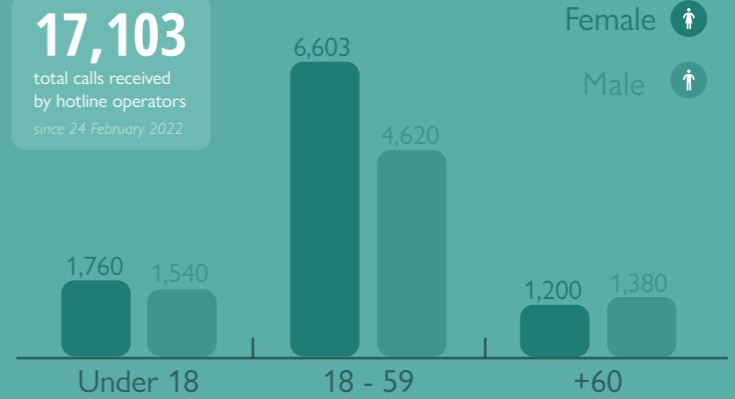
[See the full interview here.](#)

“I stopped saying “I understand you” to people who are vulnerable, and I use the phrase “I’m sorry it happened” – the phrase we were taught during the training. I also learnt not to be overly pushy with help for vulnerable people.”

Humanitarian aid worker who attended a Psychological First Aid training, 2023

BREAKDOWN OF CALLERS OF THE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT HOTLINE IN UKRAINE

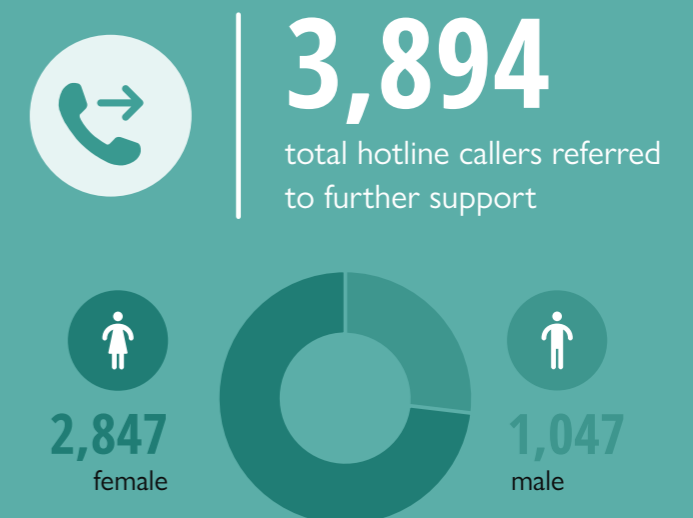
BREAKDOWN OF CALLS BY GENDER AND AGE GROUP



BREAKDOWN OF CALLS BY UNIQUE CALLERS



BREAKDOWN OF CALLERS REFERRED





KEY FIGURE

● **49,912**

people supported with specialist medical consultations in Ukraine

● **43,055**

people supported with specialist medical consultations in neighbouring countries

A health care provider during a medical consultation.
© IOM Moldova 2023

Initially concentrated on providing urgent medical support during the emergency, IOM expanded its support to ensure sustained and tailored health care for refugees over the two years, recognizing the importance of continuity in long term health care. This shift underscores a commitment to the holistic well-being of refugees from Ukraine, aiming to address both immediate health concerns and pave the way for sustained, specialized medical assistance in their host countries as well as strengthening national health systems to respond to increased needs.

ADDRESSING CHRONIC CONDITIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

In collaboration with the Oncology Institute and the National Health Insurance Company (NHIC), IOM Moldova has been supporting 1,166 refugees from Ukraine through the provision of cancer diagnosis and treatment services and dialysis sessions. The support has contributed to alleviating the substantial strain placed on the Republic of Moldova’s national health budget due to

the influx of refugees who need specialized health care services. *A patient with a rare diagnosis shared, “We came to the Oncology Institute, and together with the IOM, they found a solution to offer us help. In a week or two, all the details were settled. Everything is very operational.”* This testimonial underscores the tangible outcome of IOM’s assistance in meeting the unique health care needs of the affected population. IOM also [donated cancer medicines and medical equipment](#) to the Oncology Institute to further improve health care access to people facing cancer.

[Click here for more on the cancer care and treatment.](#)

IOM’s [“Breast Cancer Early Detection Campaign”](#) across October to December 2023, strived to enhance awareness of early cancer detection. In Chisinau, Balti, Ungheni, and Causeni, regional centres offered free medical services, information, and tests to women refugees and migrants across the Republic of Moldova.

An IOM Moldova *Emergency Coordinator emphasizes the campaign’s significance, stating, “The difficulty of refugee women, often in fragile settings, compounds challenges in health care access. Language barriers and unfamiliar systems hinder early breast cancer detection. This campaign is crucial.”* The campaign’s impact extends beyond its duration, aiming for lasting changes in mindset and health care-seeking behaviour, improving access to services and potentially preventing and detecting breast cancer cases in the future. As part of this intervention, since March 2022, IOM Moldova, in collaboration with the NHIC, has supported 68 people with 1,934 dialysis sessions. A patient from Odesa expressed gratitude *“I found out that the service was free. I did not know it would be such a high level of comfort. We are doing well and grateful for the medical help received. I can say that the nurses and the whole dialysis centre saved my life.”* -

[Click here for more on the specialized dialysis services provided by IOM.](#)



Due to lack of medicines, poor medical facilities and frequent shelling of hospitals, Svitlana decided to leave with her three children for Slovakia, leaving her husband and oldest son behind. © IOM Slovakia 2023

FINANCIAL AID FOR PATIENTS IN SLOVAKIA

IOM Slovakia designed a financial support programme for carers of persons with disabilities or other special needs. The programme was initially planned for 400 people, but it has outperformed expectations, highlighting the importance of this type of support for people facing specialized health issues, in addition to being displaced from their homes.

The programme provided cash assistance for six months to 211 people with disabilities and 527 people with specific needs. Among these were 51 cancer patients, including *Svitlana*, a mother of four from Kramatorsk, Ukraine. 41-year-old Svitlana was diagnosed with cancer during her fourth pregnancy shortly before the Russian invasion began. The war disrupted Ukraine’s health care system and hers was one of the many cancer surgeries that was forced to be postponed. As her health continued to deteriorate, Svitlana was given only three months to live and faced severe supply shortages for

her treatment. *“Doctors told me that they no longer had the capacity to help me and that my bed was needed for another patient with better odds of surviving. They said I had two to three months at most,”* recalls Svitlana. To protect her children from the encroaching war, Svitlana sought refuge in Slovakia. Once there, she received medical care and cash assistance through IOM support. Now, after over a year in Slovakia, Svitlana’s health has improved, and doctors estimate she needs at least two more years of treatment. She appreciates the support of the Slovak people and her new life there but longs for her homeland. Despite the challenges, she remains determined to recover and return to Ukraine one day.

IOM’s programme has aided hundreds of individuals, including cancer patients like Svitlana, providing them with a chance for a better future.

[See link for more on Svitlana’s story.](#)

The health care sector has been particularly impacted by the war in Ukraine, at a time of increased demand. As of December 2023, WHO reported that 1,482 health care facilities had been attacked and damaged including 149 attacks affecting medical transportation, 94 attacks injuring health care workers, 316 attacks disrupting medical supply chains, and 18 attacks damaging medical supply warehouses. Additionally, over 2,273 health care professionals have left Ukraine since the start of the war. In some areas, the complete destruction of health facilities poses a significant threat to medical care, even in areas where there are still available health care professionals.

UKRAINE

To address these challenges, IOM chose to expand the reach of its health mobile teams and clinics. Staffed by medical doctors, nurses and psychologists, these conduct integrated primary health care consultations, psychological consultations and mental health support, blood tests, diagnosis of medical conditions and prescriptions, donate necessary medicine, provide referrals, and raise awareness on health topics.

Access to health care becomes particularly challenging in remote areas. This difficulty is exacerbated for persons with disabilities or of older age. In Khrystoforivka village, as in other remote regions across Ukraine, [they have provided a lifeline](#). Khrystoforivka village in the Mykolaiv Region in southern Ukraine has been profoundly impacted by the war. Despite a reduction in the village's population as many sought refuge elsewhere, those who remain face challenges in accessing adequate health care. Poor access to proper medical facilities within the village necessitates a journey of an hour to the nearest hospital: ***"The road here is very bad. It takes 40 minutes for the ambulance to arrive, sometimes even longer. A woman once told me that, during transportation, she had to lie on top of her mom because the ride was so shaky due to the bumpy road," says the Deputy head of the village council.*** IOM, in partnership with organizations such as Sheptytsky Charitable Institution, Medicover Ukraine, Medical Teams International, Med-Ok, ALIMA and UK-Med, have provided much-needed medical assistance to those who often have no other access to health care, particularly in Eastern and Southern parts of the country.

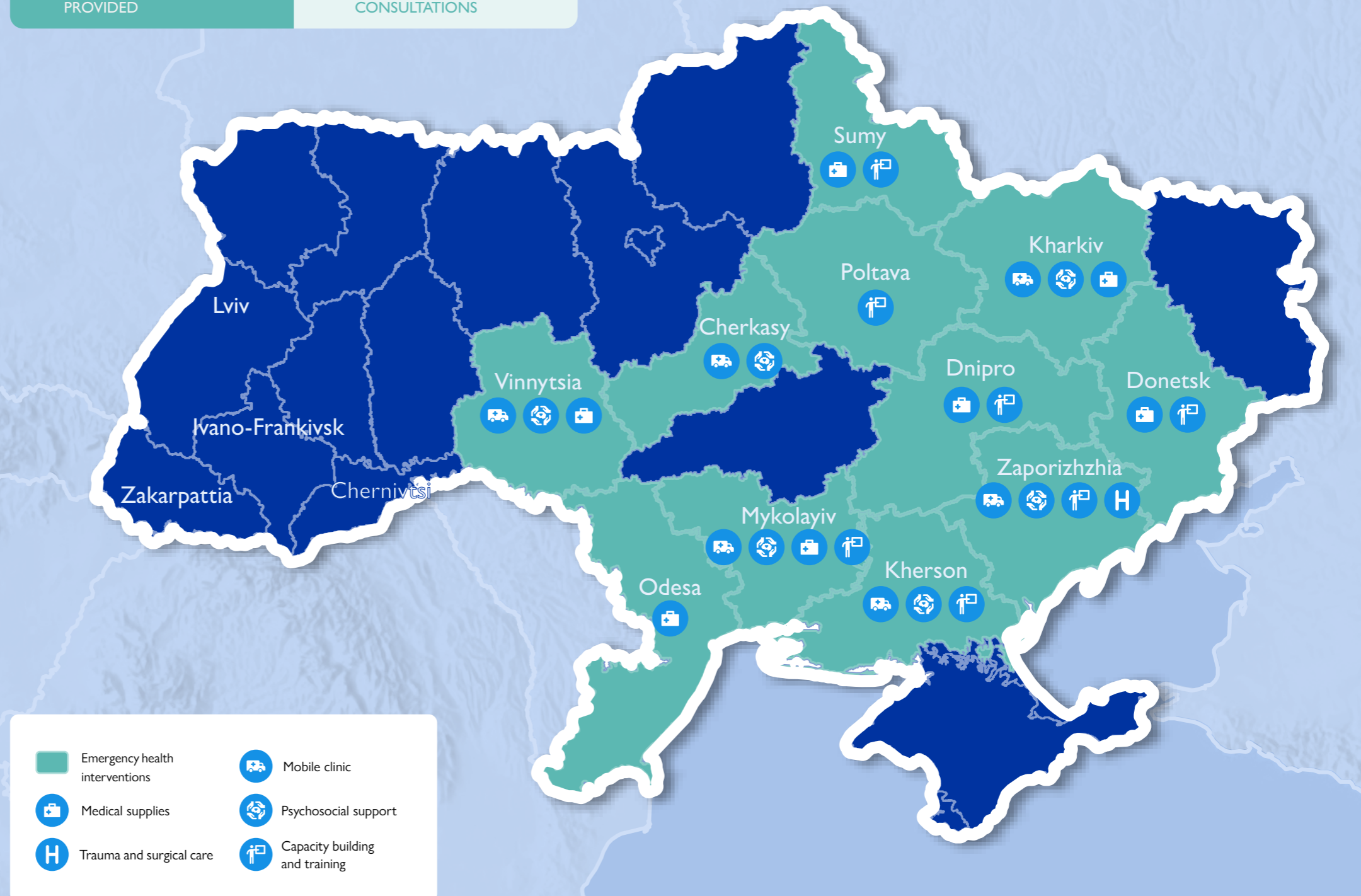
RAPID RESPONSE THROUGH MOBILE SOLUTIONS ACROSS CITIES IN UKRAINE

25,851

TOTAL MHPSS SERVICES PROVIDED

82,507

TOTAL OUTPATIENT CONSULTATIONS



This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

Halyna, a woman in her sixties made the choice to remain in her home village in the Zaporizhzhia Region despite living less than 15km away from the frontline. Halyna's decision to remain is deeply rooted in her personal life story and convictions. Thanks to the mobile clinic, which visited her village a few kilometres away from the frontline in the Zaporizhzhia Region, Halyna received support to services as well as a full medical checkup including an electrocardiogram and was advised on specialist care. For Halyna and others like her, receiving humanitarian aid was essential. Halyna is one of thousands of Ukrainians who have accessed the services of IOM and partners' mobile clinics in Ukraine.

[Click here for more on Halyna's story.](#)

Aside from medical support, IOM acknowledges the critical importance of prioritizing mental health support in Ukraine, deploying mobile teams. Yevhen and Yana are psychologists working with mobile medical teams in the Kherson and Mykolaiv regions. Because of the proximity to active hostilities, doctors are frequently forced to leave this area, resulting in local towns and villages not having the necessary medical support. The people they assist encompass a spectrum of needs, including children and older persons, persons with disabilities, displaced individuals and those choosing to remain, patients in health facilities, and their doctors. Many people who have endured the atrocities of war find themselves without anyone to confide in. There's a shortage of mental health professionals to address these specific needs: **"We offer one-to-one consultations as well as group sessions. Additionally, we provide socialization support for children and offer specialized training sessions for adults upon request. For instance, we receive requests from people experiencing panic attacks or struggling with anger issues that impact their personal and professional lives,"** explains Yana. Currently, Yana and Yevhen continue their work in Kherson and Mykolaiv regions, amidst the ongoing war.

[Read more on Yevhen and Yana's work here.](#)

Over the two years of response, a total of 178,472 people have benefitted from the services of mobile clinics. M&E data underscores the positive impact of these services — notably, there is a high level of satisfaction among beneficiaries, with 93 per cent expressing that the services effectively addressed their most immediate health needs.



Halyna is one of thousands of Ukrainians who have accessed our mobile clinics in Ukraine. © UKMed 2023

NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

In neighbouring countries, refugees from Ukraine often encounter obstacles in accessing comprehensive health care, especially mental health services, despite equal health care rights under the EU temporary protection directive. Challenges include limited access to information access, language barriers, scarcity of health care in non-urban areas, complexities of life in collective centres, stigma and an overwhelmed health service infrastructure.

In Slovakia, IOM in collaboration with its implementing partner, [IPcko](#), responded to these challenges by deploying psychosocial mobile teams (PMTs) to remote areas. Comprising skilled psychologists and social workers, PMTs engage communities to address mental health needs, providing psychosocial support and facilitating connections to specialized services. They follow up on referrals, collaborating with relevant stakeholders to create a comprehensive service map. **The director of IPcko underscores the impact of community involvement, stating, "IPcko's mobile teams provide assistance on an individual, family, and community level. They also involve communities themselves, which has a positive impact on mental health and reduces psychological and social vulnerability...We also help many of them repeatedly."** These efforts have benefited 6,777 individuals, including women and children affected by the war who sought refuge in Slovakia.

Following this model, in the Republic of Moldova, IOM deployed Mobile Protection Teams (MPTs) and MHPSS mobile teams to border crossing points (BCPs), refugee accommodation centres (RACs) and local communities, to assist people in need. MHPSS activities range from psychological counselling, and sociorelational activities such as football/volleyball tournaments, yoga and dance classes, chess, and board games to creative and art-based activities (e.g., painting classes for children and adults), psychosocial arts, cultural celebrations, and the provision of Moldovan language classes.

Tetiana arrived in the Republic of Moldova with her one-year-old daughter on 24 February 2022, seeking refuge from the war. In the beginning, she was overwhelmed and uncertain about her future, feeling lost. Tetiana's journey of recovery included connecting with others, forging new friendships, and seeking solace in the community. **"I started socializing and making friends," she explained, "which helped me overcome anxiety and fear."** In Ukraine, she had been a dance and yoga

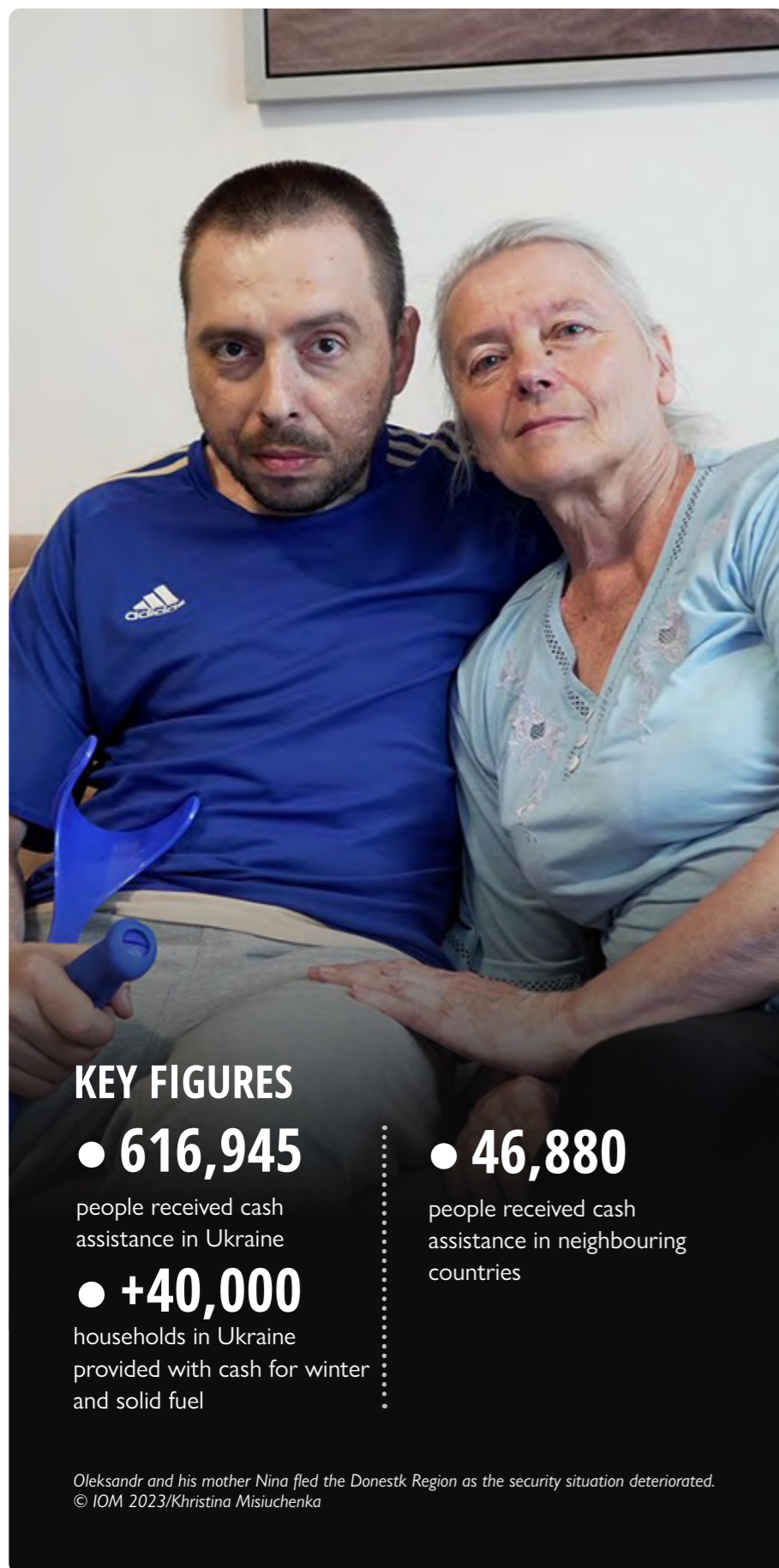
teacher, running her own studio. Now, she has started collaborating with IOM as a yoga instructor for refugees from Ukraine in the city of Balti. Tetiana emphasizes the importance of yoga classes, underscoring the impact not only on her personal journey but also on the well-being of the Ukrainian women who participate in her courses: **"Organizing these yoga classes is important to me, but it is even more so for the Ukrainian women who attend my courses. It helps them forget the war for a few hours."**

[Read more on Tetiana's story here.](#)



One of Tetiana's yoga classes in Balti. © IOM Moldova 2023

Comprehensive support provided by the MPTs also includes information dissemination, awareness campaigns on available support, legal counselling, social assistance, and facilitation of referrals. Collaborating closely with local Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MLSP) offices and partnering with NGOs, MPTs offer one-off and case management services. 5,535 individuals have benefited from MPTs, including **Larisa**, a Russian Roma who was residing in Ukraine and fled the country while pregnant. She entered the Republic of Moldova with her family, facing housing challenges and lacking documents for her two-and-a-half-year-old son. Confronting hurdles like the absence of proper documents, Larisa received support from IOM's MPTs, consisting of lawyers, social assistants, and Roma cultural mediators. The team helped Larisa to secure housing and obtain identity documents for her son. Despite significant challenges, IOM's MPTs guided the family through the paperwork process, and in January 2023, Larisa successfully obtained a birth certificate and a passport for her son. This opened up new opportunities and access to essential services within the country for Larisa and her family while reducing her exposure to protection risks.



KEY FIGURES

● **616,945**

people received cash assistance in Ukraine

● **+40,000**

households in Ukraine provided with cash for winter and solid fuel

● **46,880**

people received cash assistance in neighbouring countries

Oleksandr and his mother Nina fled the Donestk Region as the security situation deteriorated. © IOM 2023/Khristina Misiuchenka

Cash-based interventions encompass diverse forms of support, such as multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA), rental aid, and targeted assistance for specific needs like winter preparedness. IOM DTM needs assessments conducted in Ukraine and neighbouring countries, have consistently shown cash as a top priority amongst IDPs and refugees across 2022 and 2023, to cover their most essential and pressing needs. Similarly, Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) conducted across the response in Ukraine show that IDPs generally express a preference for cash as their primary form of assistance.

To ensure transparency, equity, and to mitigate any potential tensions among people in need, IOM works collaboratively with governments and partners to define the parameters for assistance and identify target beneficiaries. Over the two years of response, IOM, co-lead of the Cash Working Group with OCHA, has supported 616,945 persons in Ukraine and 46,880 in neighbouring countries through cash assistance.

MULTIPURPOSE CASH ASSISTANCE (MPCA) TO ADDRESS WINTER NEEDS

IOM stands out as the only UN organization equipped with a financial mechanism capable of operating in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova. In this area, IOM covers a substantial service gap in humanitarian assistance, ensuring timely delivery of cash assistance in case of any sudden surge of humanitarian needs. For example, to support vulnerable Moldovans through the winter period, IOM provided MPCA supplements to 7,145 beneficiaries. Similarly, to address the immediate demand for winter clothing for refugees from Ukraine, IOM Moldova launched voucher assistance initiative for winter clothing, reaching over 5,310 refugees. Overall, market assessments by UNHCR have confirmed that Moldova’s markets are well-equipped and have the necessary items to support this approach, allowing multiple modalities of cash assistance.

CASH FOR SHELTER

The war in Ukraine caused widespread damage to infrastructure with over 26 million square meters of private housing directly impacted and facing issues such as broken windows, doors, walls, and collapsed roofs. In Ukraine, **Oksana** started to rebuild her flat after the Government managed to retake her city from Russian forces. Support was needed as the cold house was affecting her son’s already frail health. Between

April and June 2023, IOM distributed cash for shelter repair to 260 war-affected families in Sumy Region. This intervention supported the rehabilitation of balconies and new windows, as well as the installation of new entrance doors and roofs. Thanks to this service, Oksana’s family and many others were able to move back into their homes before the cold could set in. Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) data indicates the effectiveness of the cash assistance programme in addressing diverse shelter-related needs in Ukraine. All beneficiaries expressed high satisfaction, with 99 per cent considering the assistance value sufficient for house repairs, 96 per cent reporting that the assistance significantly improved their winter preparedness, while 82 per cent confirmed that the cash allocated for construction enabled them to enhance their shelter conditions.

TOP NEEDS BY YEAR

NEEDS	2022	2023
FINANCIAL SUPPORT	45%	48%
HEALTH SERVICES	41%	37%
MEDICINES	30%	26%
FOOD SUPPLY	33%	23%
LANGUAGE COURSE	29%	23%
PERSONAL HYGIENE ITEMS	22%	21%
EMPLOYMENT	29%	23%
CLOTHES AND SHOES	21%	13%
ACCOMODATION (LONG)	25%	19%
GENERAL INFORMATION	48%	21%
NONE	10%	15%

Refugees’ needs and intentions (10 countries)

In 2022: 40,030 surveys (Belarus, Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Republic of Moldova, Latvia, Lithuania, Türkiye)
 In 2023: 28,712 surveys (Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovakia)



Anna, her husband, and their fourteen kids lost all hope when their van broke down. IOM supported them with shelter and transport assistance towards their destination. © IOM Latvia 2023

VOUCHERS FOR PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Since the beginning of the war, Latvia has been hosting more than 35,000 refugees from Ukraine, most of them escaping occupied territories, transiting through the Russian Federation, and often requiring urgent humanitarian assistance. To respond to this need, IOM Latvia provided border assistance in the form of hostel vouchers and basic services through partners such as **Tavi Draugi**. This service allows refugees time to settle in their new environment, benefiting over 3,140 people with shelter assistance. In addition, Latvia is for many a critical transit country in their journey to a further destination. Only 10 per cent of the refugees crossing the border remain in the country, however, not everyone has the means to continue their journey. To help people reach their final destination, IOM Latvia provided 5,766 people with bus and ferry tickets. This assistance allows people in need to reach their destination more easily, whether in Latvia or abroad, and avoid using services of untrusted carriers. This was the case for **Anna**, who had lost all hope when, after fleeing from a village near Nova Kakhovka, their old minivan broke down. With her 14 children, she managed to arrive in Latvia but could not continue her journey. **“We lived there, had greenhouses, a farm, but then shooting started, military actions, and there were no options left. No house, nowhere to live, nothing left. First, we will go by train, then by bus to Tallinn, and further by water transport to Helsinki, hoping to find someone that can help us,”** says the father of this big family. In response, IOM provided vouchers for shelter and emergency transportation, allowing them to find a way to reach their destination.



KEY FIGURES

● 82,458

people supported with movement assistance in neighbouring countries

● 2,999

TCNs assisted with voluntary return to their home countries

● 38,721

people received transportation assistance through the Green Corridor between the Republic of Moldova and Romania

● 79,852

people benefitted from safe and dignified transportation within and across neighbouring countries

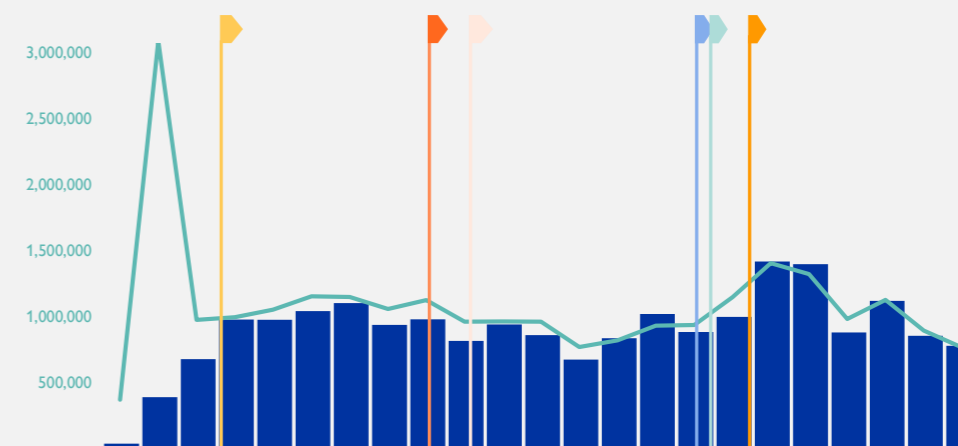
Denys and Irina left Radensk in the hope of finding peace for their newborn daughter. © IOM Latvia 2023

Crossing the border can be extremely stressful and challenging, and sometimes risky. **Denys and Irina** left with their four-month-old daughter spending two days on a bus from Radensk, in Kherson Region, through Crimea, to the Russian border. Irina was let through easily, thanks to her young daughter. **Denys instead, was separated from his family, stopped, and interrogated by Russian forces. “They yelled at me and called me names. Angry and disappointed I went to pick my passport as I wanted to return home but then the military man said that, out of humanity, he would let me through because of the baby, and he did.”** The family finally reached Latvia where IOM supported them with transport, shelter, and medicines for their young daughter.

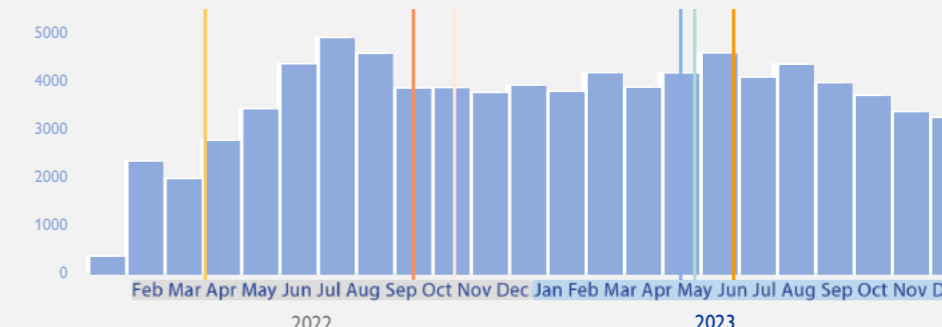
Throughout the response, IOM continued to ensure that all people crossing borders can travel in a safe, dignified, and orderly manner to their final destination. This includes both Ukrainians and Third Country Nationals (TCNs). In addition, IOM continues to support the humanitarian Green Corridor between Palanca, Republic of Moldova and Husi, Romania to alleviate traffic at border crossing points and a total of 11,768 persons have been transported through the Green Corridor in coordination with UNHCR and local authorities. As movements at the borders evolved, IOM expanded from simple information provision to include movement activities aimed at decongesting border areas. IOM also organized and facilitated charter flights from the Republic of Moldova and Poland in partnership with receiving European countries for vulnerable refugees. To date, a total of 1,798 persons have received such support, in coordination with UNHCR, and reached their final destinations in Austria, Germany, France, Spain, Switzerland, Netherlands, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, and Norway.

Many refugees from Ukraine including TCNs find themselves disconnected from support networks, stuck, or stranded without sufficient funds and adequate information, unable to coordinate or afford onward transport. **Harold**, a 23-year-old Colombian who had moved to Ukraine for studies and work, found himself caught during the war. Celebrating a birthday in Kyiv, he suddenly faced the harsh reality of war when an air raid siren sounded. **“We were told it was easier via Romania, so we hopped in a car and came this way”** — fleeing with 13 other Colombian students, they sought refuge in Romania. Amidst the chaos,

MONTHLY CROSSING FROM/TO UKRAINE



SECURITY EVENTS IN UKRAINE



- ▶ Battle of Kyiv (Feb – Mar 2022)
- ▶ Liberation of Kherson (Nov 2022)
- ▶ Kakhovka Dam destruction (June 2023)
- ▶ Kharkiv counter-offensive (Mar – Oct 2022)
- ▶ Battle of Bakhmut (Oct 2022 – May 2023)
- ▶ “Wagner” mutiny (June – July 2023)

IOM played a crucial role in supporting Harold. Upon reaching Romania, he was provided with shelter and was assisted in securing travel documents to facilitate his return to Colombia. **“Everyone has been very welcoming, which has made this experience much easier,”** says **Harold**, who expressed gratitude for the warm welcome he received during this challenging time. Leveraging expertise in humanitarian movement and returns assistance, IOM is committed to ensuring safe and dignified voluntary return for people like Harold, ensuring in-country transportation, food, fitness to travel, lodging, and petty cash and tickets for charter or commercial flights to enable onward travels for all those wishing to return home.

[Read more on Harold's story here.](#)



The first time Harold ever saw snow was in Ukraine in 2020. © Harold's archive, 2022



KEY FIGURES

Ukraine and Neighbouring countries:

- **368,923**
people supported through protection services
- **571,435**
people reached through campaigns and awareness raising
- **130,491**
protection hotline consultations
- **15,287**
capacity building trainings

In summer 2023, IOM carried out a campaign in a Kyiv metro train to promote IOM-supported Counter-Trafficking and Migrant Advice Hotline 527. © IOM 2023/Roman Shalamov

War and resulting mass displacement has created a fertile ground for family separation, service disruption, and the breakdown of community networks, exacerbating existing risks such as Trafficking in Persons (TIP), gender-based violence (GBV), and exploitation. New risks have emerged, including family separation, presence of landmines and other explosive ordnance among others. Faced with the large numbers of people fleeing the war in Ukraine, the European Union (EU) enacted the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) in early March 2022, alongside similar national initiatives in countries outside the EU, to provide immediate protection to displaced people.

Throughout the past two years, IOM has collaborated with government, civil society, and other humanitarian partners to deliver holistic, targeted, and coordinated protection assistance to those at risk both within Ukraine and in refugee-hosting countries. Immediate assistance remained a priority, which included vulnerability screening and identification, case management, including specialized case management for survivors of trafficking and GBV, as well as unaccompanied and separated children, referrals and rehabilitation, information and counselling (hotlines, mobile outreach) and awareness raising. Through protection teams at border crossing points and in communities hosting large numbers of refugees from Ukraine, assistance continued to be provided to new arrivals with protection needs.

In the past year, IOM expanded immediate protection support to longer-term inclusion support, linking individuals with accommodation, social aid, financial assistance, education, daycare, vocational training, job placement, livelihoods, and community cohesion programmes. Mainstreaming protection across all sectors and strengthening the nexus between programming, such as labour migration, social inclusion, and health, was pivotal to deliver this comprehensive protection support. Migrant Resource Centres across seven neighbouring countries played a crucial role in facilitating these inter-sectoral linkages, demonstrating IOM's commitment to the centrality of protection across its diverse sectoral responses.

Ensuring inclusivity in protection programming is vital, particularly given the significant percentage of persons with disabilities, both physical and psychosocial, affected by the war. In its 2023 assessment, OCHA found that over 7 per cent of refugees reported a disability. IOM

provided tailored assistance and protection services that cater to the unique requirements of this diverse group.

Ivan's family decided to leave Ukraine once the situation became unsustainable. Because of his psychological disability, Ivan was seriously distressed by the air raids and shelling and often had suicidal thoughts in fear of being captured by soldiers. Once in the Republic of Moldova, IOM's Mobile Protection Team approached his family to gather information on Ivan's situation and needs, particularly those relating to medical treatment and MHPSS assistance. *"On the eve of the Christmas holidays we were told by the IOM that a medical institution could take care of my son's case. We were so happy and surprised. Ivan has been examined, he has received medical treatment, and he meets with a psychologist twice a week"* says Svitlana, Ivan's mother. Ivan was referred to a special shelter and is now enrolling in vocational training courses.

[Read more on Ivan's story here.](#)

IOM recognizes that children and youth are among the most affected by the war and require tailored support. In Poland, IOM has partnered with the Warsaw-based [Fundacja PoDrugie](#) to support Ukrainian youth leaving foster care in their transition to adulthood. To address the specific needs of young refugees from Ukraine at risk of homelessness, including those who have left or have never been to a foster care institution, IOM covers a substantial gap in assistance in both Poland and Ukraine through the partnership. *Iryna*, from Vinnytsia, left foster care in Ukraine at the beginning of the war and now often participates in the activities provided by the foundation. After losing her friends in Ukraine, she is provided with psychological and inclusion support to build a new life in Poland: *"I have met people from Poland, and it was a good chance for me to practice speaking in Polish. I have met people with whom I can talk and to whom I can write."* The cooperation with PoDrugie enabled many young adults, like Irina, to access housing, MHPSS and inclusion activities.

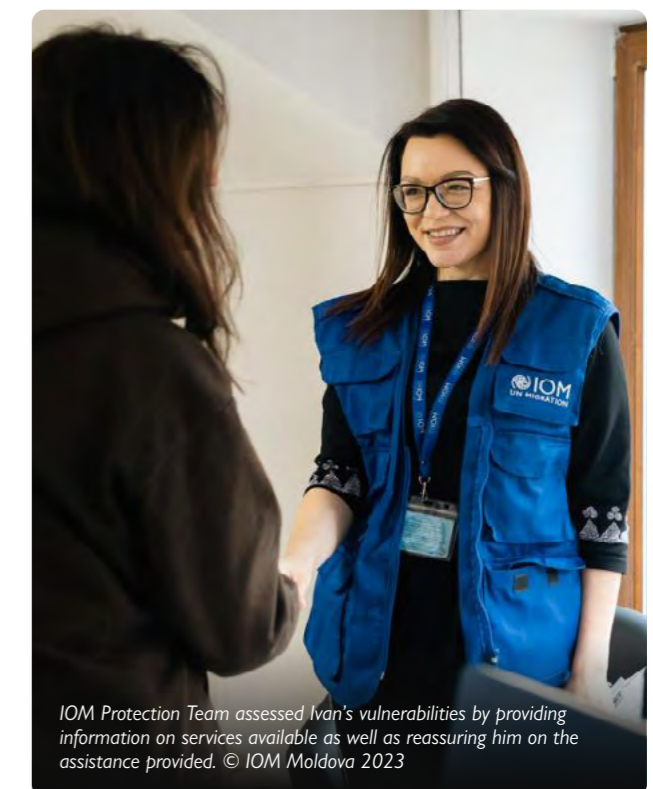
[See more on PoDrugie's activities here.](#)

In its commitment to addressing specific vulnerabilities and protection risks, IOM has placed special emphasis on assisting individuals at risk and survivors of GBV, human trafficking, and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). Between February 2022 and December 2023, IOM and its partners identified and supported 624

survivors of trafficking (23% of those identified in 2023 were internally-displaced) as well as 766 people who suffered from forced labour (without trafficking signs).

After being forced to relocate from Donetsk in 2014, **Petro** and his family were faced with war again as the Russian military established control over their new home city in 2022. Petro decided to stay to take care of the house, while his family fled to safety. Over time, the Russian military established control and began to enumerate the remaining population. Petro was taken away, and his documents were seized. With five other men, Petro was brought to the forest and forced to dig trenches from morning until late at night every day, under constant threat from soldiers, and without rest, adequate water and food. The Ukrainian Government eventually regained control and demining works started in the area, but Petro's house had been seriously damaged by the shelling. After contacting IOM, Petro received comprehensive assistance through protection case management for victims of forced labour and human trafficking, including the replacement of broken windows and the provision of warm blankets, winter shoes and clothing, as well as food. Petro's family was able to return to their home safely.

[Click here for more on Petro's story and IOM's involvement in counter-trafficking.](#)



IOM Protection Team assessed Ivan's vulnerabilities by providing information on services available as well as reassuring him on the assistance provided. © IOM Moldova 2023

Beyond direct assistance, IOM's prevention efforts encompassed extensive awareness-raising initiatives targeting protection risks. One such impactful initiative was the ["LOOK AGAIN" campaign](#) to help people understand the risks that can come with employment opportunities that seem too good to be true. As part of the campaign, IOM Ukraine organized thematic exhibitions in 21 regions on 18 October 2023, coinciding with the European Day Against Trafficking in People, disseminating materials through TV, social media and public spaces and transport. The campaign's multimedia approach featured [three 30-second videos](#), broadcasted on top Ukrainian TV channels, social media platforms, TV morning shows, and even public spaces like trains, metro stations, shopping malls, and other high-traffic areas. The estimated number of people reached through this campaign is more than 29 million. In addition to its direct interventions and prevention campaigns,

IOM has taken a leading role in different coordination platforms, such as Anti-Trafficking Task Forces at regional and national levels. As part of its contributions, the Regional Task Force published a [research paper](#) on the vulnerability to and risks of trafficking in persons in the context of the war in Ukraine. While the level of protection granted by the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD), combined with the humanitarian response and anti-trafficking programmes mitigated widespread trafficking, the report highlights persisting risks. With the war entering its third year, lack of savings and stretched coping capacities increase risks of trafficking in persons for sexual and exploitative labour.



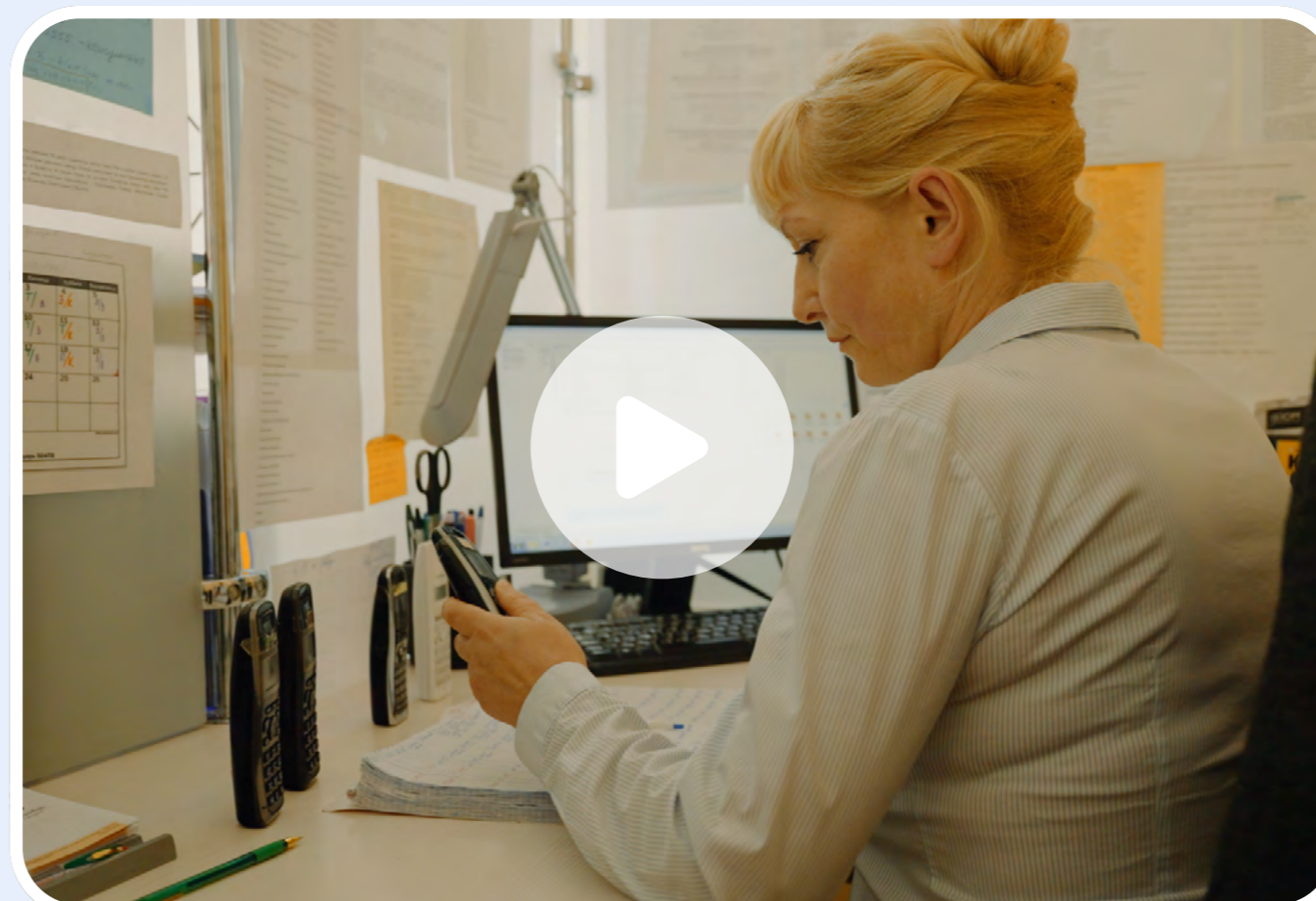
IOM has partnered with LOT Polish Airlines to conduct counter-trafficking trainings for cabin crew. © IOM 2023/Alexey Shvirin

HOTLINES TO HELP SAFEGUARD HUMAN RIGHTS AND COMBAT TRAFFICKING

IOM's support in Belarus includes maintaining a crucial anonymous and toll-free [hotline](#) on safe migration and combatting human trafficking. Since the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, this hotline serves as a vital information resource for migrants, including refugees from Ukraine. Managed by the NGO "Businesswomen Club," a longstanding partner of IOM in combating trafficking, the hotline has played a crucial role in the referral mechanism. It offered advice on migration procedures, emergency and longer-term assistance, and early identification of trafficking cases. The hotline has provided 11,044 consultations, addressing various topics such as entry to Belarus, transit, exit, available assistance, contacts, employment, education abroad, and visa regulations. Other services include essential counselling, individual vulnerability assessments, and referrals to targeted specialized protection services.

"For over twenty years I have been working on the hotline for safe travel and countering human trafficking. In the last two years, the number of inquiries from Ukrainians has significantly increased, almost fivefold. Most questions relate to how to enter Belarus, transit through its territory, find a job in the country preferably with accommodation, as well as humanitarian assistance," says Valentina, a hotline consultant.

Similarly, the National Toll-Free Counter-Trafficking and Migrant Advice Hotline in Ukraine, administered by the NGO ["Revival of the Nation"](#), a long-standing partner of IOM, initially focused on counter-trafficking efforts. However, in early 2022, its scope expanded to provide essential information tailored to the current operational context. The National hotline is available for all in Ukraine at 527 (www.527.org.ua; @SafeMigrationBot). In addition to these services, IOM and partners continue to conduct prevention activities locally, regionally and nationally as appropriate, specifically targeting persons vulnerable to trafficking and other protection threats.



NATIONAL COUNTER-TRAFFICKING AND MIGRANT ADVICE HOTLINE SNAPSHOT

93,604
total calls received by hotline operators of which **63%** came from IDPs



386,959
total consultations provided

TOP 3 AREAS OF INTEREST

1. General information about human trafficking and safe travel (**18.6%**)
2. Work of different organizations, including diplomatic institutions (**7.1%**)
3. Receiving social support (**2.3%**)



KEY FIGURES

● 1,025

collective centre interventions across Ukraine

● 114,038

people reached through refurbished collective sites in Ukraine

● 112,392

people benefitted from cash grants for site managers in Ukraine

An IOM worker providing assistance to a collective centre. © IOM Ukraine 2023

In May 2022, the number of IDPs reached almost seven million in Ukraine (IOM). Fast forward two years, and a significant transformation took place. Many left the country, while some returned to their now-accessible towns. As of December 2023, the number of IDPs stood at approximately 3.7 million, with over 122,000 IDPs residing across 2,500 diverse collective centres (CCs). Addressing the needs of displaced individuals demanded comprehensive interventions at both collective and individual levels, emphasizing safety, privacy, and dignity. IOM played a crucial role in supporting displaced individuals and families across various locations in Ukraine, tailoring assistance to meet the unique needs of each group.

When rental access became unattainable, IOM stepped in to provide accommodation assistance at the collective level. However, many sites posed challenges, with poor accessibility for people with disabilities and limited government services due to remote locations. In response, IOM helped refurbish community facilities to provide safe short-term solutions and services. Upgrades to essential infrastructure, such as water and sanitation

facilities, windows, partitions, ramps for accessibility, and other modifications, were implemented to enhance safety and dignity for residents. The comprehensive M&E data collected across 193 collective centres, sheds light on the effectiveness of such assistance, as reflected in the satisfaction and perceived improvements reported by site managers. Ninety-two per cent believed that the repairs significantly contributed to improving overall services at the centres and 75 per cent indicated that the repairs played a crucial role in enhancing winter preparedness. Similar findings are reflected regarding cash grants for the centres, with 81 per cent of managers acknowledging that the cash grants contributed to enhancing winter preparedness. Notably, all managers considered the equipment and furniture provided as appropriate for all residents, meeting their needs.

In addition to reviving community infrastructure, IOM distributed an array of essential items—including blankets, mattresses, hygiene kits, kitchen sets, and washing machines—to CC's, improving comfort and hygiene. Simultaneously, IOM organized community outreach MHPSS activities for people residing in

collective centres were, as well as capacity-building trainings for government officials to strengthen the MHPSS response in the country.

Collective centres represent the first step in establishing a small-scale solutions policy and programming model. Recognizing the need for sustainable solutions as the war enters its third year, IOM is supporting pathways towards solutions for displaced people in collective centres, emphasizing the importance of medium- to long-term strategies to integrate IDPs into local communities while ensuring basic service standards. Comprehensive assessments at individual and household levels to understand IDPs' intentions inform the selection of priority collective centres that will be used for mid-term accommodation of relocated IDPs. For those willing to voluntarily leave the centres and integrate into local communities, IOM provides tailored livelihood and housing assistance. The comprehensive approach empowers IDPs in their decision-making processes while prioritizing their well-being and dignity.



Nina and her two daughters in the collective centre in Zhovti Vody, Dnipropetrovsk region. © IOM 2023/Anna Tsybko

360 SUPPORT AT ZHOVTI VODY COLLECTIVE CENTRE

Nina and her husband, originally from Bakhmut in Eastern Ukraine, faced unimaginable challenges from the war, but found safety after months of living in an area of active hostilities. Their journey, with the help of volunteers, took them to a collective centre in Zhovti Vody in the Dnipropetrovsk Region. The collective centre serves as a temporary residence for IDPs who were evacuated from Bakhmut and Popasna. At present, the dormitory accommodates 90 persons, with a total capacity to house up to 300. As a crucial support facility, it provides shelter for Ukrainians displaced by the war, offering temporary refuge while they navigate challenges and work towards more permanent housing solutions. Nina's family relies on the support of organizations like IOM to cover their basic needs. They left Bakhmut with just essentials, and employment opportunities were scarce. Still, they remain optimistic clinging to the hope of returning to their native Bakhmut, which fell under Russian control in May 2023. "It is our

home. Even if there is nothing much to go back to, we would like to return one day, when it's safe to do so," says Nina. "We stayed as long as we could, and finally decided to leave because of our children." IOM Ukraine's support at the centre is noteworthy, addressing a wide array of needs for those affected. IOM has supplied kitchen appliances and furniture as well as cash grants for utilities and washing machines. Additionally, IOM facilitated the coordination of activities through the provision of kits and tablets for site management and educational purposes for children. Cash assistance involved the registration of local residents for cash support, providing a monthly allowance to cover their most urgent needs for three months. Moreover, ongoing MHPSS initiatives encompass community-based activities both on-site and at the nearby public library, engaging site residents.

[Click here for more on Nina's story.](#)

FLEXIBLE AND NEEDS BASED SUPPORT THROUGH CBI

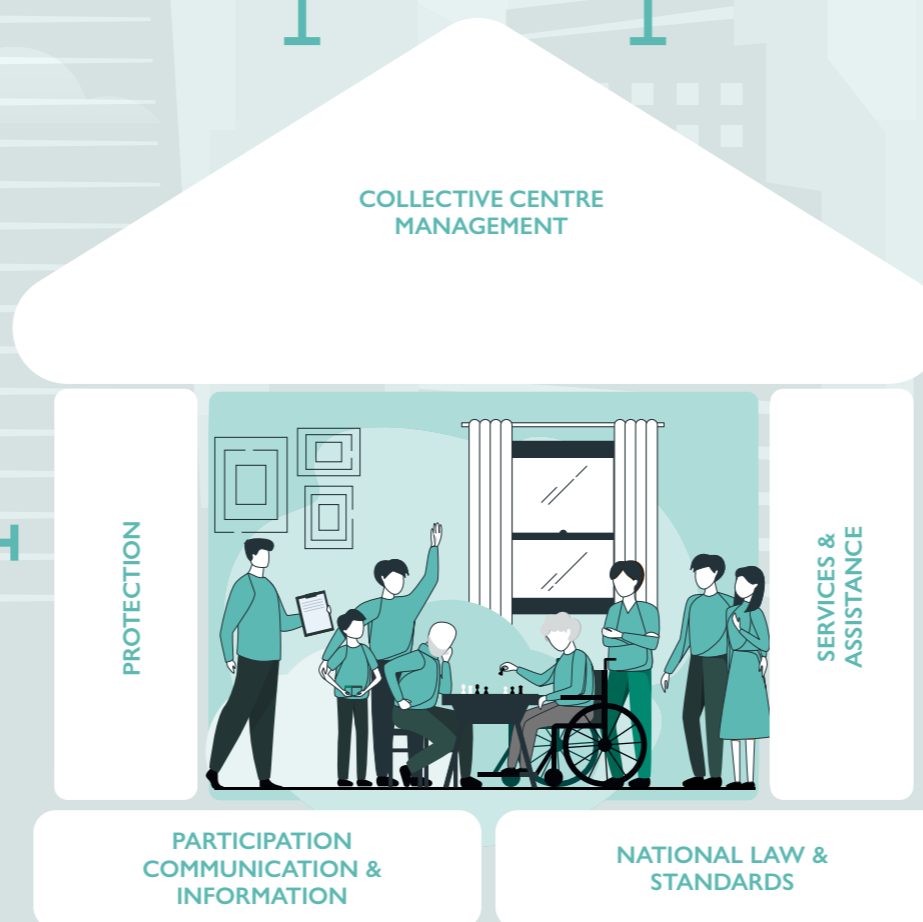
Collective Centre Site Managers, acting as the direct link between displaced people and general coordination mechanisms, can receive cash grants to cover common expenditure, such as supporting care and maintenance and the running of the centers, including cost of utilities, procurement of basic items and repairs. This ensures timely and appropriate responses to priority collective needs, to effectively manage resources and provide essential services within the collective centers.

REFERRALS AND MITIGATION

Working closely with local social services and humanitarian partners, IOM establishes referral mechanisms for IDPs with specific needs to access specialized support, including referrals to specialized healthcare providers, geriatric centres and protection services

LINKAGES TO SOLUTIONS

To ensure IDPs are at the center of identifying appropriate and adequate solutions, comprehensive assessments at individual and household levels take place to understand IDPs' intentions and inform the selection of priority collective centres that will be used for mid-term accommodation of relocated IDPs. For IDPs willing to voluntarily leave the centers and integrate into local communities, IOM provides tailored livelihood and housing assistance. The comprehensive approach empowers IDPs in their decision-making processes while prioritizing their well-being and dignity.



STRENGTHEN LOCAL OWNERSHIP & CAPACITY

To operationalize localization, the aim is for CC programming to be owned by actors who operate at the most granular level possible of the response. IOM's objective is to improve the capacity of local actors, including various CSOs or Community Based Organizations (CBOs), in managing displacement in CCs, and in understanding durable solution principles using a people-centred approach.

SERVICE MONITORING AND COORDINATION

Individuals and groups from the displaced community residing in CC's are asked to identify and express their own views and needs for collective action to be taken and contribute to solutions. Stressing the inter-sectoral nature of the response, CC Managers will ensure IDPs have access to services including shelter, WASH facilities, non-food items (NFIs) and MHPSS support, such as professional counselling and community-based activities.

ASSESSMENTS

It is important to link the assistance provided with a regular needs assessment of the population residing in a Collective Centre, to ascertain the appropriateness and nature of the required assistance. IOM ensures that services and assistance remain responsive to critical needs through assessments, with special emphasis on vulnerable groups, including older persons, individuals with disabilities, pregnant/nursing, and young children, etc.

IOM's CCCM team serve as the primary coordinators for IOM's response at collective centers. They establish and facilitate crucial linkages with other relevant IOM sectors (including shelter, health, MHPSS, protection, CBI, and WASH) to ensure a comprehensive approach that is based on the identified needs of IDPs.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

CONTRIBUTE TO THE
EFFORTS OF COUNTRIES
HOSTING REFUGEES AND
TCNS TO ENHANCE THEIR
ACCESS TO SERVICES AND
ENABLE SOCIOECONOMIC
INCLUSION



KEY FIGURES

● 85,407

children/youth participated in social cohesion interventions

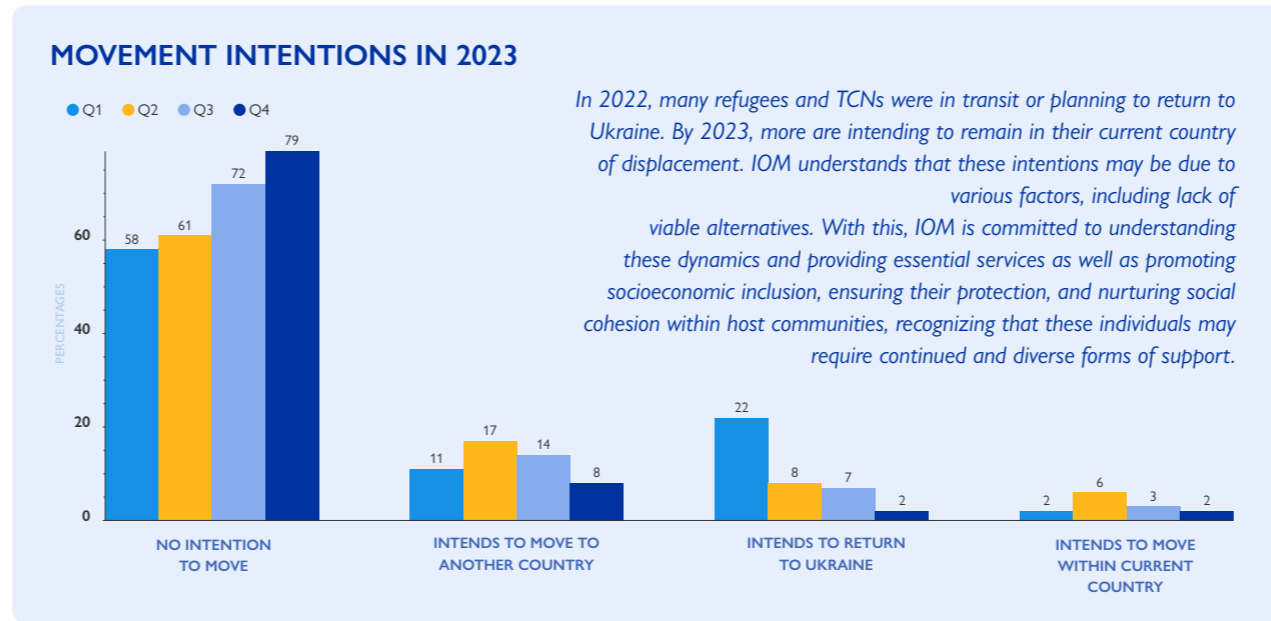
● 43,286

children/youth reached with socioeconomic support (e.g. language courses, learning materials, career counselling)

● 42,121

children/youth participated in MHPSS socio-recreational activities (summer camps, music, sport, play activities, art-based activities, rituals and celebrations)

An Estonian police officer explaining the importance of reflectors in the dark winters to Ukrainian kids. © IOM 2023/Anastasiia Hladcehnko



Following the war, numerous children and their families found themselves displaced, with instances of parental separation, orphanhood, and family fragmentation. According to UNICEF, in the first 11 months of the war in Ukraine, more than five million boys and girls have been impacted in some way. This number continues to grow. Children encounter diverse threats such as psychological trauma, susceptibility to sexual violence, exploitation, trafficking risks, abuse, neglect, and persistent disruptions to their education, carrying potential long-lasting repercussions. In response, alongside immediate protection assistance, IOM prioritized social cohesion and inclusion activities, through establishing nurturing environments that foster the development of youth and children. This involves facilitating access to education, providing opportunities for recreational activities and ensuring appropriate mental and physical wellbeing.

OUR STRENGTH IN “UNITY”

Community-based and NGO partners are integral to IOM response. *Unity Ukrainian Association* in Hungary — a women and refugee-led organization that was initially established to promote Ukrainian culture in Hungary, rapidly shifted to a full-fledged humanitarian response after the invasion of Ukraine. In partnership with IOM, the NGO provided assistance to 415 refugees from Ukraine — majority of which are women and children — that started seeking refuge in the country.

“A year ago, having neither premises nor financial support, but seeing the frightened eyes of Ukrainian

mothers who had just arrived in Hungary fleeing the war and bombings with babies in their arms, we made a decision — we needed a kindergarten,” says **Victoria Petrovska, head of Unity**. In partnership with IOM, Unity opened its E-Kindergarten, introduced an educational space and youth centre (E-Space), followed by *Eco-Space*, a centre that offers a variety of weekly classes for both kids and their parents while focusing on ecology and sustainability. Recently, Unity also started *Art-E*, an art programme providing a large variety of classes benefiting children and adults. Unity also offers daily activities and summer camps for Ukrainian children. The partnership has proved to be a success, fostering inclusion and cross-cultural communication through its unique approach. **Igor**, a 16-year-old boy, got involved with Unity by chance when he entered a Ukrainian piano teacher’s class at a music school in Budapest. The teacher happened to teach at Unity’s Eco Space and invited him to join. Igor had never attended music classes in his life but became a star of the institution in less than four months. His ability to rapidly learn and memorize sheet music enabled him to participate in concerts and competitions.

IOM’s support for organizations like Unity, and the delivery of services through similar partners help ensure refugee communities, as well as ensure community ownership and sustainability of interventions. Through these interventions, children like Igor get the opportunity to participate in activities with peers, developing skills and learning to deal with traumatic experiences.

INTEGRATION GRANT FOR SCHOOLS IN POLAND

In Poland, IOM launched an integration grant programme for schools, benefiting more than **13,000 children** between March and June 2023 from both migrant and local communities across **76 cities**. The goal of the grant, to promote social inclusion between migrant children and the local community, was achieved through activities such as theatre, sports, and artistic workshops.

[Click here for more on the grant programme here.](#)

In parallel, IOM partnered with the *Mudita Association*, a longstanding organization dedicated to supporting individuals affected by the war from its onset. The Mudita Association extends a range of services for people with disabilities and their families, including access to multilingual psychologists, childcare services, and engaging activities tailored for caregivers. Mudita’s Day Activity Centre — Integration Support Point in the centre of Warsaw host various paintings on display, including Oleksii’s.

Oleksii, diagnosed with Stargardt disease causing vision loss, embraced painting at the age of seven. By 11, his vision dropped to 5 per cent, retaining only peripheral sight. Arriving in Poland from Kyiv in 2022 due to the war, Oleksii, with parents in IT jobs, adapted swiftly. Despite his visual challenges, he thrives in a Polish school and actively pursues art, with fourteen of his paintings now on display at Mudita. His mother, Tetiana, wishes for Oleksii to inspire children globally. Despite his visual hurdles, Oleksii finds joy in his new life, playing with friends and expressing himself through art at the centre in Prague.

[Click here for more on Oleksii’s story.](#)

IOM Poland’s integration grants and partnership with Mudita addresses key identified needs from *DTM surveys* with children and families. Findings show that language barriers hinder refugee children’s school attendance, while those in school face challenges like limited social interactions with Ukrainian and Polish peers and constraints associated with online schooling. In addition, parents needing childcare for work encounter challenges like resource scarcity, insufficient information, and a lack of available childcare places.

ESTONIA: SAAREMAA ISLAND'S INITIATIVES FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

In furthering its commitment to fostering social inclusion of refugees from Ukraine in Estonia, IOM Estonia organized a specialized summer camp in Kihelkonna, Saaremaa Island. This initiative, catering to 31 children, blended language learning with diverse activities. The positive feedback from both children and parents serves as a testament to the success of this collaborative effort. One anecdote shared by a newly arrived mother highlights the effectiveness of the camp in accelerating language acquisition: ***“I was surprised to see my daughter correcting me when I had taken a wrong carton assuming it was milk – indeed I had taken buttermilk, which is a completely different word! But she knew it!”*** This transformative experience illustrates the tangible outcomes of IOM’s dedication to empowering refugees from Ukraine through educational and immersive programmes.

Recognizing the challenges newcomers face during Estonia’s dark and stormy winters, particularly on islands like Saaremaa, IOM Estonia responded to a request from Saaremaa municipality. In an innovative initiative, IOM provided 1,000 reflectors to refugees, aimed at enhancing pedestrian safety during extreme weather conditions. The collaboration with the local municipality and the Estonian Police and Border Guard included a series of events on 27 November 2023, emphasizing the importance of visibility and proper reflector usage. These events, including reflector-walks, fostered widespread participation, demonstrating the community’s engagement in promoting safety and inclusion.

[Click here for more on the reflector initiative.](#)



“Approximately 2% of the population here has a refugee background. They do their best and, as they all went through a traumatic experience, it’s not very easy for them. The most vulnerable perhaps, are the children.”

Local Refugee Coordinator



To respond to the needs of refugees from Ukraine in the Saaremaa island, IOM partnered with the local police for a series of events on reflectors’ usage awareness and children inclusion.
© IOM 2023/Anastasiia Hladcehnko





KEY FIGURE

● 80,515

people supported through language courses, translation and interpretation services in neighbouring countries

In Bulgaria, IOM provides Bulgarian language courses on ZOOM with limited participants to focus on each beneficiary. © IOM Bulgaria 2022

Recognizing the pivotal role of language proficiency for successful inclusion, IOM has dedicated efforts to help refugees overcome communication barriers. This includes providing tailored language courses, which are instrumental in fostering effective communication, self-sufficiency, and meaningful engagement with host communities. Concurrently, IOM provides language interpretation services as an essential temporary measure, which are vital in enabling refugees to access adequate health care and navigate various other services in their host countries.

EMPOWERING TOMORROW: BRIDGING LANGUAGE GAPS FOR YOUTH IN LATVIA

In response to the language needs of refugees from Ukraine and the expiration of municipal funding for language courses, IOM Latvia, with support from [The Education Development Centre \(EDC\)](#), provided remote and face-to-face language courses for 153 students (79 girls, 74 boys) students in grades 2-11 from January to March 2023. Notably, a teacher observed, **“There are several students whose achievements after two weeks of classes are very good. Last year all children were at the same level of Latvian language — zero level, but now there are already significant differences. Language working groups are very helpful and useful.”** The success of these initiatives highlights the vital role played by the ten Latvian language support groups established across the country. IOM’s commitment went beyond course provision, covering the costs of learning process assistants who provide Latvian language support to refugee pupils during their classes. Additionally, afterschool groups were established in the Latgal region and in Adamova, both near the Russian border and hosting a large number of refugees. Teachers have noted significant improvements, with some adults participating as well as children. IOM’s support both enhanced language proficiency but also fostered a sense of community, promoting inclusion for refugee children and youth in Latvia.

UNLOCKING SOCIOECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES IN HOST COUNTRIES

Recent [DTM data](#) on Access to Labour Markets and Employment underscores the significance of language as a primary employment barrier, with three-quarters of respondents highlighting its challenge. The survey indicates a notable “language premium,” with those proficient in the local language enjoying employment rates 13 percentage points higher. IOM’s language courses directly address this

finding, recognizing the role of improved language skills in unlocking enhanced job opportunities for refugees while reducing protection risks such as labour exploitation.

IOM [Bulgaria’s language courses](#) have been transformative for refugees from Ukraine, equipping them with essential language skills, boosting their self-confidence, and aiding their inclusion into the Bulgarian society. As of December 2023, the language programme has successfully supported 1,211 refugees from Ukraine. Upon completing the courses, beneficiaries have expressed increased confidence when entering the Bulgarian job market and engaging with various services, including interactions with state authorities regarding health, rent, and education. In addition, through participation in informal learning groups, the participants forged connections with individuals beyond their immediate family, enriching their sense of community and support in Bulgaria. A survey conducted among 185 programme graduates provides evidence of the programme’s effectiveness, with 97 per cent expressing that it played a significant role in facilitating their inclusion into the Bulgarian society. The growing interest in the programme serves as a testament to its impact with respective students eager to enrol in these free Bulgarian language classes, highlighting the need for such services within the refugee community.

[See more on the language courses here.](#)

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS WITH THE SENTINEL NETWORK

IOM Romania’s Sentinel network, comprised of 50 intercultural mediators fluent in Ukrainian, Romanian, and English, has [supported](#) over 50,000 refugees from Ukraine. These Sentinels are strategically placed in key locations such as border crossing points and transit centres, where they provide vital interpreting services and information. Trained by IOM staff, these Sentinels are equipped with crucial knowledge in protection, GBV, PSEA, safe referrals, and legal frameworks in Romania. Notably, in the academic year 2022-2023, Sentinels facilitated the integration of 31 Ukrainian children into Romanian schools, with ongoing support for approximately 180 children in the 2023-2024 school year.

[See more on the sentinel network here.](#)

Anna and her young son arrived in Romania in the early days of the war. Back at home in Ukraine, Anna had been diagnosed with cancer and was undergoing medical

treatment. After the start of the war in Ukraine, she decided to flee to Romania, where thanks to assistance from IOM Romania’s medical team and the services of the Sentinels, she successfully finished her cancer treatment. **“That is why I am very happy to be here in Romania and I have a lot of kind words towards IOM and Romanians.”** Anna is also enormously proud of her son, who is playing football at a Romanian football club and beginning to settle into life in Romania. She expressed a lot of gratitude to IOM Romania and the Sentinel network for providing information, advice, and interpretation, adding **“when I was at my most vulnerable, I urgently needed the help to break through the language barrier and receive my treatment.”** Beyond their work helping refugees, the Sentinels also report on the situation, needs, and requests of people in need, thus enhancing IOM’s real-time situational awareness and supplementing the data collected through DTM. As of the end of 2023, the pressing need for medical assistance remained a top priority with 48 per cent of requests, followed by jobs at 19 per cent, accommodation at 14 per cent, and language courses at 11 per cent.

Two years into its Ukraine Response, IOM Romania’s efforts have adapted to the evolving situation. While continuing to supporting those fleeing Ukraine to meet their basic needs, the focus has increasingly shifted towards socioeconomic inclusion. A Call Centre, established with the Romanian Government and UN Agencies, is a key channel for streamlined information, having already directed over 5,000 refugees to services and information on benefits and opportunities. Intercultural mediators at Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) offer tailored assistance, aiding refugees in navigating complex systems. Additionally, over 2,000 refugees from Ukraine have benefited from language training at the MRCs. These elements together are pivotal in IOM Romania’s strategy, not just providing immediate aid but also ensuring sustained support for refugees’ successful inclusion into their new communities.

“When I was at my most vulnerable, I urgently needed the help to break through the language barrier and receive my treatment.” Anna



IOM organized a unique fashion show featuring migrants displaced from Ukraine, posing as models and engaged in artistic activities in Rzeszow. © IOM Poland/Alexey Shvirin 2023

FASHION FOR SOCIAL COHESION

Social cohesion manifests in various forms, and an example of this phenomenon is evident in Rzeszow, a city located in the southern region of Poland. In a collaborative effort between IOM, the Ekos Foundation, and Germanitas, an initiative took shape on August 19, 2023—a fashion show designed to foster inclusion. This unique event sought to promote social cohesion by showcasing the talents of refugee women. The inception of this event originated at the IOM-supported integration centre in the city, where these women discovered the opportunity to participate. Seizing this opportunity, they not only exhibited their artistic abilities but also actively engaged in Polish social life. The cornflower, the city’s symbol, served as an inspiration for the show. **“The petals of these cornflowers converge at a single point, embodying our vision for Rzeszow to evolve into a hub where the paths of individuals from different countries intersect,”** explains Agnieszka Buk, Vice President of Germanitas. This event not only celebrated diversity but also exemplified the power of collaborative efforts in fostering unity and inclusion within the community.

[Watch the video here](#)

INTERACTING THROUGH IMPROV

Within the vibrant cultural landscape of Bucharest, the Ukraine Improvisation Group stands out as a notable crowd-pleaser. This group has drawn audiences numbering in the hundreds. Distinguished by its innovative approach, the group’s unrehearsed content, opting for spontaneous improvisation, is a dynamic and interactive format which not only captivates diverse generations but has led to the organization of its sixth public event, attracting a growing community of amateurs and audiences. This initiative, which began in May, aligns with the broader inclusion programming of IOM in Romania. Comprising activities such as language classes, career counselling, and psychological support, the Ukraine Improvisation Group’s performances is a testament to the multifaceted efforts undertaken to foster inclusivity and cultural enrichment within the community.

[Watch the video here](#)



IOM Romania’s second Ukrainian Improv Performance. © IOM Romania 2023



IOM brought together 10 Moldovan women and 10 Ukrainian women to showcase their culture. © IOM Moldova 2023

WHEN BORDERS DIVIDE, CULTURE UNITES

Social cohesion is more than just the participation of all groups in society. It means strong bonds and unity in a community, vital for a peaceful and secure society. In October 2023, IOM Moldova brought together 10 Moldovan and 10 Ukrainian women in Cahul, celebrating beauty, strength, and cultural exchange through traditional songs, food, crafts, and grape harvesting. In a mix of colors and culinary activities, the women found that when borders divide, culture unites. A testament to this event came from **Ianina, a participant from Ukraine, who expressed, “I want to express my gratitude for making this wonderful event possible; it was the happiest day of my life in a long time. It felt like we were a family.”** The event resonated as a success, not only for showcasing the similarities and differences between cultures but, more significantly, for forging bonds that transcend immediate connections, thereby influencing and shaping future generations.

[Read more here](#)



KEY FIGURES

● 175,889

Airbnb safe nights provided for displaced families in neighbouring countries

● 4,224

people received rental assistance in neighbouring countries

● 14,858

people were supported with transit-, short-, medium- and long-term accommodation in neighbouring countries

IOM provides repairs to damaged buildings and supports jobs for war-affected people in Ukraine. © IOM Ukraine/Viktorria Shtukun 2023

Housing needs depend on the context, needs and possibilities at any given time. IOM has undergone a transformative shift in its approach to housing assistance for refugees, transitioning from short-term solutions to adopting more sustainable, long-term housing programmes. In response to the evolving challenges faced by displaced people, IOM developed a wide range of needs-based accommodation activities. Whilst shelter and settlement activities, such as hotel assistance, catered for transit or short-term accommodation, social housing schemes

were well placed for long-term accommodation. Rental assistance was appropriate for all categories, from transit accommodation (e.g. Airbnb programme) to long-term accommodation (e.g. social rental agencies). In acknowledging the need to coordinate short-term emergency actions and longer-term shelter and housing inclusion and recovery needs, IOM is developing two guides for rental assistance and affordable and social housing. These guides will enable the assessment, development, and implementation of bridging actions between humanitarian and development response.

A FLEXIBLE PARTNERSHIP: AIRBNB

Through a strategic partnership with Airbnb, IOM successfully addressed the accommodation needs of over 7,000 individuals in 112 cities across seven countries. This initiative, characterized by its flexibility, offered tailored support for arriving families in locations of greatest need. While many refugees from Ukraine received transit or short-term accommodation from governments, some cases with specific needs required private arrangements. The Airbnb project efficiently bridged the gap between transit and long-term stays, leveraging the platform's extensive listings and ensuring a swift programme rollout. The programme facilitated more than 175,889 safe nights for displaced families, offering immediate access to safe accommodation within hours, thanks to Airbnb's self-check-in and instant reservation features. Beyond temporary relief, the project also served as a bridge to link the target population with medium- and long-term housing programmes. Notably, some refugees continued renting the same apartments for extended periods after the project concluded, such as **Olga Trofimenko** and her family. Olga made her way to Lithuania with her two children and two teenage sisters, after her brother, who is fighting in the war, urged her to go. Olga said that being forced to leave your country is like the ground slipping from under your feet – you do not know where you will end up or what to expect. But being in Lithuania has been a blessing, especially for her 14-year-old sister Viktoria. She has scoliosis, a curvature of

the spine. Doctors in Ukraine were not optimistic about treating Viktoria's condition. They said the treatment was long, expensive, and complicated. In Lithuania, however, they found doctors who were willing to help, and Viktoria managed to have a successful operation and rehabilitation. **“Overall, a wonderful thing happened in this very difficult situation – my sister feels much better. She even looks different,”** Olga said as she expressed her gratitude to all those who helped Viktoria. Olga and her family are sheltering in a temporary apartment during these difficult times, which, thanks to a partnership between Airbnb and IOM, is free of charge.

The project ensured efficient communication and transactions, overcoming language barriers, and minimizing exposure to fraud or misunderstandings. The immediate relief provided by the project allowed those fleeing the war in Ukraine to assess and plan their next steps, fostering inclusion and cohesion. The initiative also opened doors to essential opportunities, such as accessing livelihood options through activities like opening bank accounts and applying for jobs.



Refugees receive help from IOM Poland in finding accommodation in their host city. © IOM Poland 2023

LONGER TERM HOUSING SOLUTIONS

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY POLAND

As Poland faced a severe housing crisis, the situation was compounded by the arrival of over two million refugees from Ukraine across the past two years. Prior to this influx, housing challenges had been significant, with the Shelter Working Group noting that refugees who were initially accommodated with host families or in short-term options like hotels, began seeking more stable, long-term shelter, exacerbating the housing shortage. In response, IOM Poland in partnership with [Habitat for Humanity Poland](#) responded by adjusting and scaling up its Social Rental Programme to provide rental assistance for approximately five months, supporting vulnerable families to find decent and stable rental accommodation. Maintaining capacity for short-term accommodation support, Habitat utilized beneficiary-driven approaches to enhance refugees' mid to long-term access to the rental market. This geographically inclusive strategy was designed to build on existing capacities, avoid duplication of resources, and minimize operational bottlenecks, while also strengthening the host community's capacity and beneficiary participation. The project targeted refugees and vulnerable households seeking durable housing solutions, particularly those at risk of eviction, homelessness, or living in substandard collective centres.

The partnership improved access to affordable and adequate accommodation for 647 refugees from Ukraine and vulnerable host community households. In addition, Habitat for Humanity Poland renovated 13 apartments, prioritizing distribution to families in urgent need. Its housing [Hotline](#) also connected migrants with consultants, guiding them through the apartment search process, offering expertise in navigating lease agreements, and providing insights on fraud prevention. The ongoing partnership between the government and civil society is essential for making meaningful strides in supporting the most vulnerable communities, as highlighted on [#WorldHabitatDay](#).

Drawing on IOM's presence in all countries hosting refugees prior to the onset of the war, IOM strategically redirected its existing capacities to address pressing humanitarian needs by utilizing its Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs). While MRCs may vary in their names and setups across different countries, they all share a consistent, holistic approach. As a kind of one-stop-shop model, offering a comprehensive range of services for migrants in a single location, MRCs operate not just as physical centres but as part of a broader, multi-channel approach. This includes direct service provision at physical locations, as well as extending support through mobile units, info lines, and online information portals, ensuring comprehensive reach and accessibility. To ensure coherence, avoid duplication, and enhance sustainability, MRCs operate within a complementary ecosystem. They refer and connect individuals to government and civil society services, often partnering with local authorities and NGOs in establishing such spaces.

The MRC network totals 34 structures across seven countries, which function as dynamic hubs for a range of services, MRCs provide guidance for navigating new environments, supporting self-reliance, and ensuring rights are exercised. By addressing the diverse needs of individuals in comprehensive and easily accessible ways, these centres became integral components of broader refugee and migrant support systems. Trained intercultural mediators, often with a migrant or refugee backgrounds, bring multilingual skills and personal experiences to facilitate communication and orientation, while caring for specific needs and vulnerabilities.

This network continues to expand, with the recent opening of IOM Lithuania first MRC in Vilnius. Responding to the significant influx of refugees from Ukraine, which comprises almost 3 per cent of Lithuania's population as of December 2023. The centre serves as a safe haven for people struggling to arrange the necessary documents on their arrival. Whilst the number of refugees increases, **“the issues remain the same - travel documents, residence permits, employment, integration”** says the IOM MRC Programme Coordinator. **“At the moment, we are focusing on making services accessible to migrants, and some services are targeted at Ukrainians who have come to Lithuania to flee the war. Starting next year, we plan to increase services for migrants from other countries who have chosen Lithuania and want to become part of society...migrants will be**



Opening of a new Migrant Resource Centre in Vilnius. © IOM Lithuania 2023

able to receive legal, career guidance, psychological counselling, attend various activities and just spend time together,” says IOM Lithuania's Head of Office.

In Slovakia, MRCs have branched out to a total of eight locations in the country, having presence in the main refugee hosting regions. The decision to establish regional branches was reflective of the regional needs for up-to-date information and tailored assistance in relation to enhanced inclusion. Swiftly, the MRCs became part of local platforms for coordination of partners responding to the needs of refugees from Ukraine. The city of Trenčín signed a Memorandum of Understanding with IOM in 2023 and efforts will continue to establish similar partnerships with other relevant authorities. In the course of 2023, MRCs managed to solidify their role in providing comprehensive inclusion support, tailored to the regional needs.

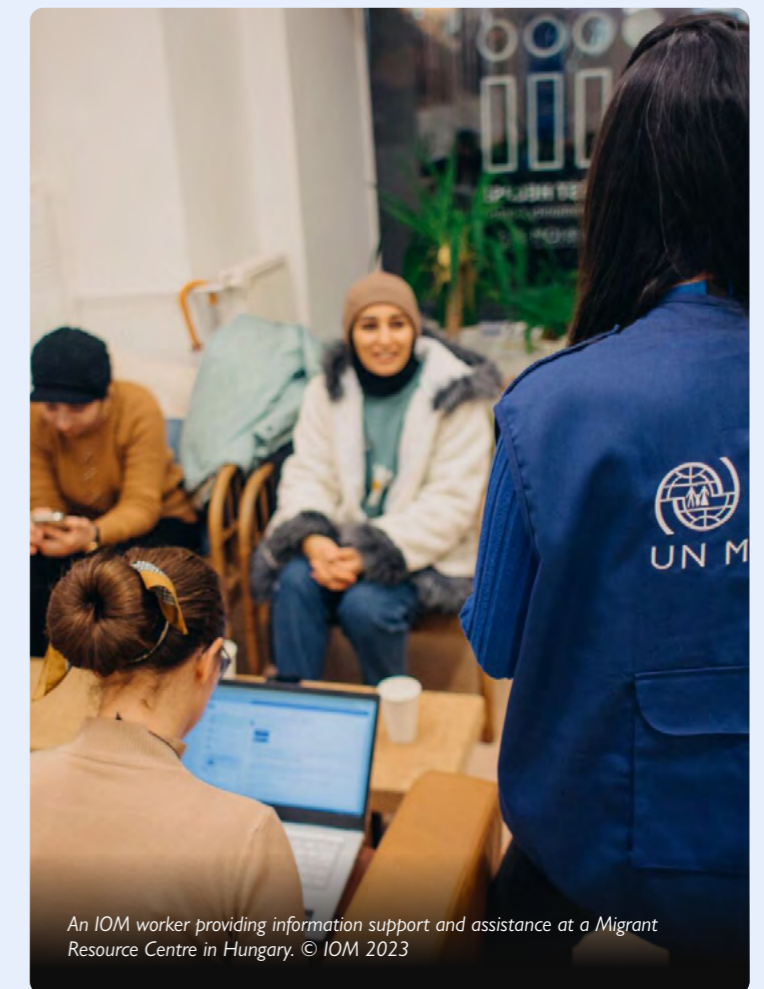
Some of the most requested services are medical referrals. In Romania, **Nataliia and her mother Iryna**, saw the MRC as a place with people she could trust and rely on. After fleeing from Odesa, they had driven to the border and found a place to stay in Bucharest. However, upon arrival, Nataliia and Iryna encountered difficulties accessing services. Nataliia was particularly concerned about her mother's poor health. That is

when she heard about the IOM-run MRC in Bucharest. IOM immediately referred Iryna for specialized medical care and she received medication. Since then, the MRC has been a point of reference for Nataliia and Iryna to access information and services, including support with their official registration in Romania and help finding a job. In addition, Iryna and Nataliia continue to use a range of social group activities offered by IOM and its partners, including acting classes language classes and other group psycho-social activities at the MRC. While missing their home in Ukraine, they see hope in Romania.

To date, 144,158 beneficiaries, have received diverse livelihood support. This support encompasses labour market counselling, vocational training sessions, joint job fairs with UNHCR, skill-building programmes, and thematic workshops covering interview techniques, CV writing, translation, and legal rights. Beyond these initiatives, refugees benefit from guidance on their legal rights and entitlements. IOM extends a free interpretation service, aiding people in reviewing contracts and engaging with employers, doctors, recruitment agencies, and government offices. This suite of services helps to identify and prevent abusive working conditions, along with various forms of labour exploitation.

IOM HUNGARY AND MENEDÉK: STRENGTHENING LABOUR MARKET ACCESS AND SAFEGUARDING AGAINST EXPLOITATION

For three decades, the *Menedék Association for Migrants* has assisted foreigners in Hungary, prioritizing displaced individuals from Ukraine amidst the ongoing war. As a key partner of IOM Hungary, Menedék aligns with IOM's labour migration programme, establishing a comprehensive *Labour Migration Website*. Covering essential topics for successful employment, it includes information on the Hungarian labour market, residence procedures, labour law, and protection against exploitation. Menedék conducted Employment Workshops addressing critical issues and produced an *informative video* simplifying the residence permit process. Through these initiatives, Menedék empowers individuals, aiding their inclusion into Hungary's labour market while actively preventing exploitation and supporting victims.

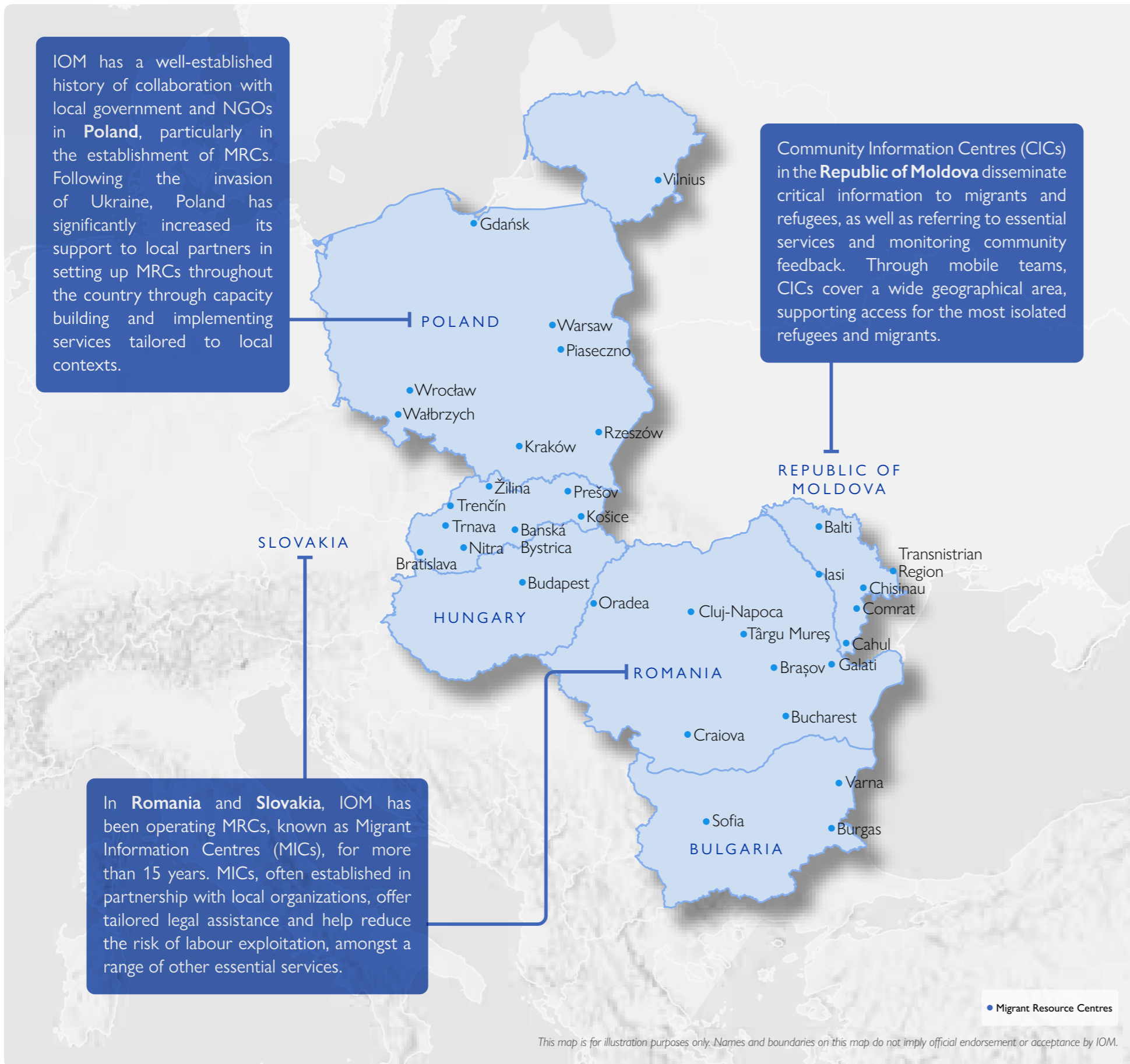


An IOM worker providing information support and assistance at a Migrant Resource Centre in Hungary. © IOM 2023

IOM has a well-established history of collaboration with local government and NGOs in **Poland**, particularly in the establishment of MRCs. Following the invasion of Ukraine, Poland has significantly increased its support to local partners in setting up MRCs throughout the country through capacity building and implementing services tailored to local contexts.

Community Information Centres (CICs) in the **Republic of Moldova** disseminate critical information to migrants and refugees, as well as referring to essential services and monitoring community feedback. Through mobile teams, CICs cover a wide geographical area, supporting access for the most isolated refugees and migrants.

In **Romania** and **Slovakia**, IOM has been operating MRCs, known as Migrant Information Centres (MICs), for more than 15 years. MICs, often established in partnership with local organizations, offer tailored legal assistance and help reduce the risk of labour exploitation, amongst a range of other essential services.



BOOSTING LOCAL CAPACITIES FOR REFUGEE INCLUSION IN CZECHIA

The onset of war disrupted **Lesia and Olexandr's** life. After months of living in fear, Olexandr reached out to a colleague in Krupka, Czechia, and they decided to relocate for their children's well-being. Their initial weeks in Czechia were challenging, sharing a two-room apartment with Olexandr's colleague and his family, totalling ten people. Lucie Beyerová, co-owner of the [Humanitarian Aid Center \(CeHuPo\)](#), explained that overcrowded living situations are common in Teplice, with refugees staying for weeks before finding suitable housing. Finding permanent housing proves difficult for newcomers throughout Czechia due to limited contacts and available options. Lesia and Olexandr initially settled in a small apartment in Krupka but found it uncomfortable and unsafe for their large family.

Lesia began offering free hairdressing services at CeHuPo across from the Teplice train station. The local community had created a shelter for the new arrivals there, providing everything from basic necessities, help with finding housing, assistance at the authorities, Czech language lessons, yoga, gymnastics and Thai boxing classes. Lucie Beyerová eventually helped them secure a vacant house through her friends. They now rent their own house, their children attend school, and Olexandr works as a bus driver. Their financial situation, however, remains challenging. They had to pay two months' rent and other living expenses, which brought a considerable financial burden. In response, IOM Czechia, in cooperation with CeHuPo, helped the family to pay the security deposit and enable them to move into decent housing.

[Read more about Lesia and Olexandr story here.](#)

Research in 2023 revealed financial constraints as a common barrier for refugees seeking rental properties. This issue affects those residing in hostels, state humanitarian accommodation, or housing provided by Czechs or Ukrainians, emphasizing the housing challenges refugees face in Czechia.

IOM Czechia have responded flexibly to this trend and launched a comprehensive assistance programme in cooperation with local governments at the municipal level. Initiated in November 2023, the partnership with CeHuPo was spurred by several discussions between municipal representatives, focusing on addressing the needs of municipality of Teplice regarding individuals with temporary protection. **“Teplice acknowledged the necessity for workshops and courses catering to employees of organizations in contact with refugees. Simultaneously, there was a recognition of the need for educational initiatives directed at the refugees themselves,”** says the founder of CeHuPo.

IOM, with its extensive humanitarian and socioeconomic inclusion expertise, provides tailored tools and strategies to assist local partners in effectively incorporating the needs of refugees into their cross-sector planning. IOM has initiated collaborations with ten municipalities in Czechia, sharing best practices and address common challenges.

START HERE

Reception and Orientation

As people enter an MRC, they are received by specialized intercultural mediators who provide reception and orientation - a first point of contact, information, and support. Depending on needs and a person's situation, more specialized support can be provided through 'protection screening' to identify and support the most sensitive cases.

Socio-economic inclusion & Livelihoods

MRCs foster socio-economic inclusion via support with job placements and private sector engagement. They enhance labour market inclusion by target assistance, language and vocational training, support with the recognition of foreign qualifications. MRCs also support capacity building for labour offices and employers, and facilitate networking with job-matching platforms. MRCs promote entrepreneurship with seed funding, and mentorship. MRCs also work to protect people against labour exploitation and to foster social cohesion. To give people a stable base – often the cornerstone of their recovery – MRCs collaborate with governments and civil society to facilitate access to longer-term housing options through programs involving repair, retrofit, construction, and social rentals. They provide essential information and mediation on security of tenure and occupancy contracts.

Special needs and special support

MRCs provide safe, dedicated spaces and specialized support for the most vulnerable people, including persons with disabilities, survivors of gender-based violence and human trafficking, and children. MRCs can be a safe haven for survivors and others with specific needs, fostering growth and empowerment. Childcare facilities within MRCs accommodate families during consultations and activities, and specialists provide support for children with special needs. MRCs promote child inclusion through extra-curricular activities and social engagement.

Referral – connecting to services provided by gov't and civil society outside the MRC

To ensure coherence, avoid duplication, and enhance sustainability, MRCs operate within a complementary ecosystem. They refer and connect individuals to government and civil society services, often partnering with local authorities and NGOs in establishing such spaces. MRCs prioritize capacity-building of local actors, promoting equitable access to essential services, and facilitating the inclusion of affected people with tailored support. Together, as a united front, MRCs work with host communities to address specific needs and foster long-term resilience.

Acute needs

MRCs address the most acute needs with various kinds of assistance, including cash support, medicines, psychosocial support, and short-term accommodation solutions. In-house physicians conduct assessments and directly refer beneficiaries for healthcare, working closely with local clinics and state hospitals. MRCs also offer specialized psychosocial support, from individual and group counselling to socio-relational activities.

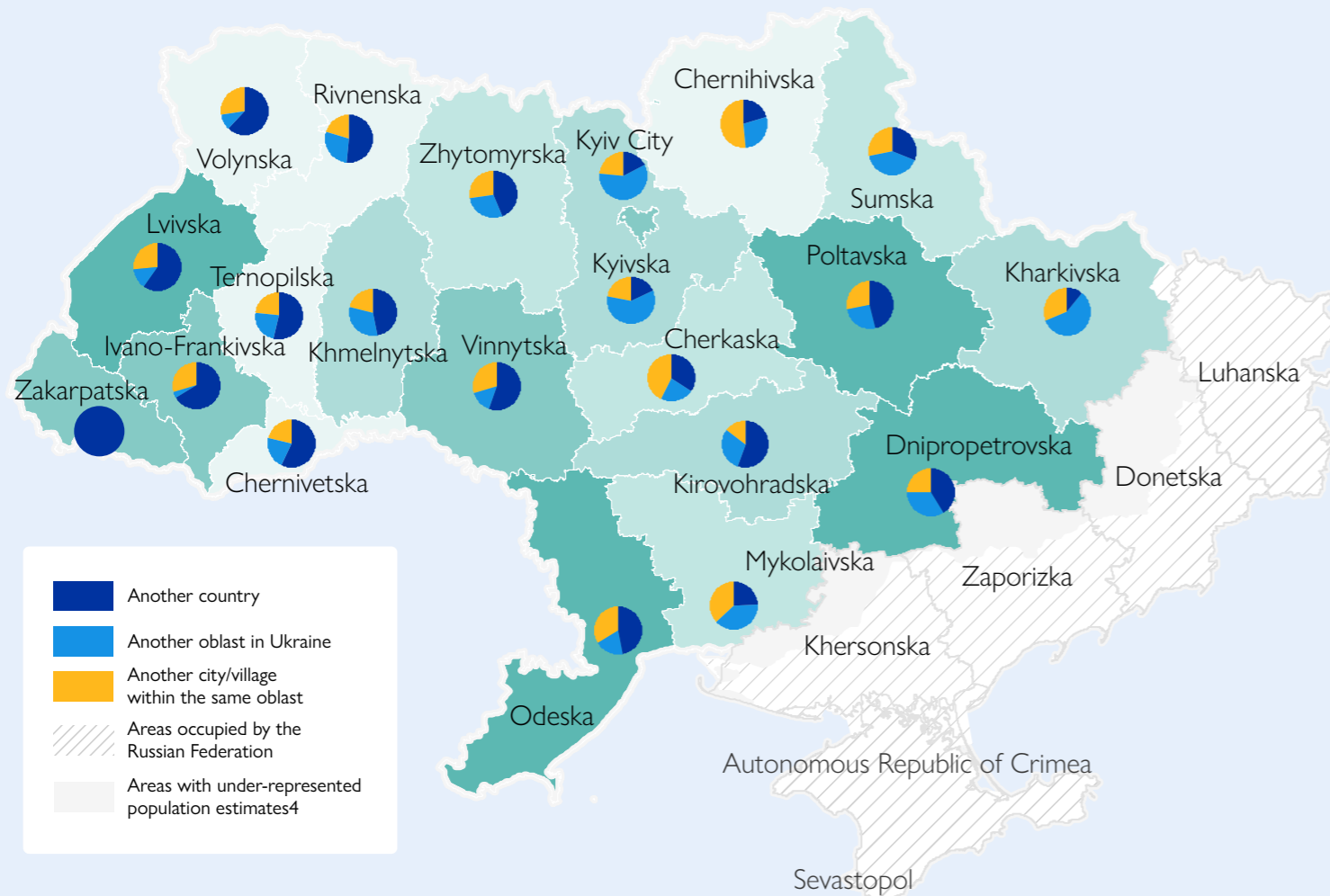




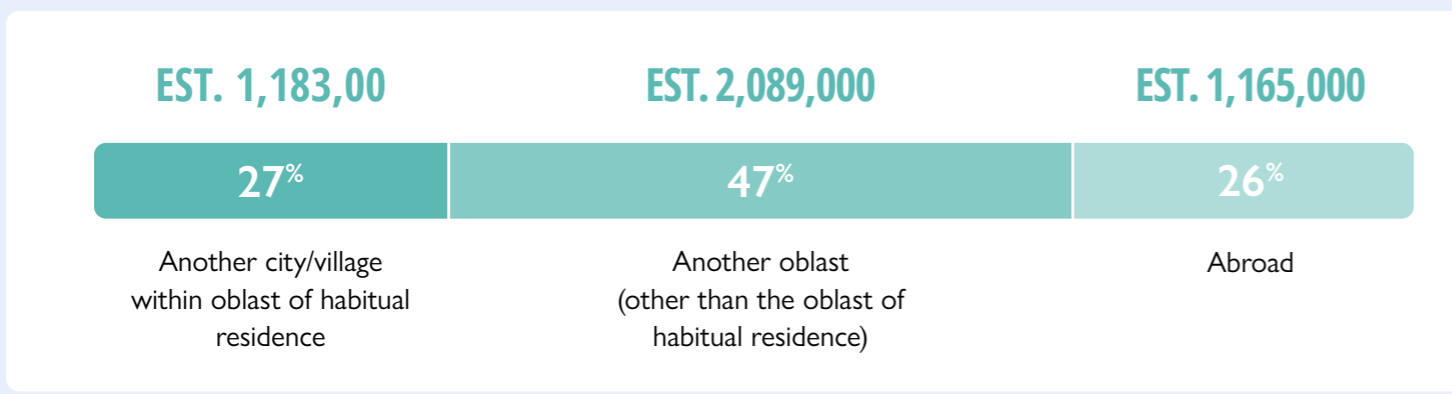
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

SUPPORT NATIONAL EFFORTS TO ENABLE SAFE AND DIGNIFIED RETURN, SUSTAINABLE REINTEGRATION, SOCIOECONOMIC RECOVERY AND DURABLE SOLUTIONS IN UKRAINE

DISPLACEMENT LOCATION OF RETURNEES AND THEIR IMMEDIATE AREAS OF ORIGIN



- Another country
- Another oblast in Ukraine
- Another city/village within the same oblast
- Areas occupied by the Russian Federation
- Areas with under-represented population estimates⁴



Source: *Ukraine Internal Displacement Report — General Population Survey Round 15 (November – December 2023)*

In 2023, IOM prioritized its *Durable Solutions programming* to enable returns and local integration amidst ongoing war. A key focus was the establishment of a robust data infrastructure for assessments, especially for tracking return conditions.

As of December 2023, 4.45 million people in Ukraine have returned to their area of habitual residence following a period of displacement. Return dynamics, tracked by IOM, demonstrate that mobility patterns are staying primarily national, with most IDPs (47%) returning from another oblast within Ukraine. Moreover, returns from abroad have been quite robust to the Eastern oblasts.

However, a discussion on returns is highly dependent on solutions for displacement within Ukraine. IOM is not currently providing assisted voluntary returns to Ukraine as the conditions for facilitating safe and dignified return and sustainable reintegration across Ukraine are not yet in place. In collaboration with the Government of Ukraine and UN partners, IOM's focus is to improve conditions in areas experiencing high numbers of spontaneous returns and will continue to support communities to increase social and economic absorption capacity. This intervention aligns with

government priorities set forth by the Government of Ukraine Sectorial Working Group on Return led by Government of Ukraine and co-chaired by IOM and UNHCR.

[See IOM's Position on Returns in Ukraine focused on linking return and reintegration with reconstruction and recovery efforts.](#)

With resources directed towards recovery and reconstruction, IOM aims to contribute to the overall safe and dignified conditions for returns and is committed to supporting returnees and their communities to the long-term stability and development of the country. Specifically, IOM recognized the need for economic and social investments in future solutions programming to enable returns and local integration. This investment encompasses hard infrastructure, housing rehabilitation, economic revitalization (support to local businesses), and mental health and psychosocial support for veterans and frontline staff training. In addition, ongoing support for policy, particularly in areas such as reparations for conflict-related sexual violence (CSRV), housing land and property, and systemic legislative backing, is a pivotal part of IOM's commitment as Ukraine moves forward with long-term restorative justice mechanisms.



IOM offers a wide range of services to refugees from Ukraine to make their protection journeys as smooth as possible © IOM Bulgaria 2023



ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND BUSINESS RECOVERY

The City of Dnipro, in the east of Ukraine, has become a logistical hub for humanitarian aid and a reception point for IDPs. Equidistant from most of the war's major battlegrounds – Donetsk, Mariupol, Kherson, and Karkhiv — Dnipro's central location makes it a critical for the provision of aid. For IOM, this includes individual support at all levels. Through employing an area-based approach in Dnipro, IOM is fostering an environment conducive to returns and supporting local integration, where this is desired. Emphasizing collaboration for durable solutions, programming emphasizes community-based planning and integrating community resilience, livelihoods and investments in economic development, along with addressing protection risks.

One such example is **Oleh Koshelenko**, a business owner from Dnipro whose team has been producing modular buildings for eight years. Their clients were metro builders, farmers, small shop owners, and even police and firefighters. However, with the ongoing war, the demand for modular buildings from entrepreneurs and private individuals dropped down drastically. Oleh started participating in tenders from international organizations and humanitarian missions. *"In 2022, we set up modular medical examination rooms and reception centres in the city of Izium after it was retaken by the Government of Ukraine: there were no other premises in the city to do this. Also, after the Kakhovka dam was blown up in June 2023, we built water distribution points that were transported to the Kherson region."* With a grant received from an IOM project, **Oleh** was able to rent additional workspace and purchase production material. This support enables his company to keep meeting the demand for modular buildings that are needed for early recovery efforts in Ukraine. *"Without the IOM grant, our company would have been in a far worse situation. However, I was lucky to find out about the grant programmes. After researching, I applied for the IOM programme, knowing that my company met all the necessary grant requirements. In February, I applied, had an interview, and soon received a positive result,"* says Oleh.

Oleh's grant is part of a bigger service offering grants to small and micro enterprises (SME). IOM's [SME Boost](#) initiative has proven to play a crucial role in Ukraine's economic recovery efforts by aiding micro and small enterprises affected by the war. In cooperation with local

governments and business partners, SME Boosts also support learning and networking events geared towards re-establishing, adapting, and growing business activity, mitigating the impact of the war, retaining existing jobs, and creating new work opportunities. Since the beginning of the war, IOM has provided financial grants to 796 micro and small enterprises.

The comprehensive M&E efforts of IOM in Ukraine underscore the impact of IOM's support on the sustainability, income, and overall growth of SMEs in Ukraine. Among a sample of 100 SMEs benefiting from financial grants, 96 per cent confirmed improved operational sustainability, with 72 per cent noting increased income. In consultations involving 90 businesses, 72 per cent confirmed that the consultations will contribute to improved economic stability, while 74 per cent believed the skills gained would contribute to business growth. Technical training attended by 130 SMEs resulted in 93 per cent reporting successful networking and partnerships, 91 per cent implementing the knowledge retained in their work, and 87 per cent foreseeing strengthened businesses resulting from the capacity-building initiatives.

BENEFICIARY FEEDBACK

96% of the beneficiaries reported improvements in operational sustainability

72% of the beneficiaries noticed increased income

72% of people confirmed that SME Boost consultations contributed to improved their economic stability

74% of beneficiaries believed the skills gained would contribute to business growth

87% of people participating in technical trainings foresaw strengthened businesses resulting from the capacity-building initiatives

KEY FIGURES

● **11,375**

housing units supported for approx. 34,125 people

● **€6.2M**

awarded to micro and small enterprises

● **796**

grants provided for micro-enterprises

● **301**

people benefitted from business vocational trainings

● **2,237**

jobs created

Workers on a roof damaged by hostilities in Ukraine © IOM/Stanislaw Kalach 2023



Oleh in the factory rented with the support of an IOM grant. © IOM 2023/Anastasiia Rudnieva



KEY FIGURES

● 3.2M

people benefited from water systems maintenance and repairs

● 587,515

people benefitted from district heating support and repairs

● 85,067

people benefitted from WASH NFI distributions

● 39,203

people supported with generators and winter heating

An IOM worker distributing water bottles to hard to reach areas. The constant bombing affected the filtering systems of a lot of villages, leaving many without water. © IOM Ukraine/ Anastasiia Rudnieva 2023

INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF WATER, WASTEWATER, AND HEATING SYSTEMS

The ongoing war in Ukraine has inflicted continuous damage on water, wastewater, and heating systems. Direct shelling of infrastructure and frequent power outages have severely affected access to essential services. Amidst a harsh Ukrainian winter, this has left thousands of people without heating, enduring freezing temperatures due to the disruptions. In response, IOM and partners are reconstructing and strengthening local infrastructure to restore access to community services, in an environmentally sustainable way. The capabilities of local service providers to assess damage and design projects for community-driven reconstruction have been strengthened to enable localized and sustainable recovery. Since the start of the war, IOM has supported 217 vodakanals (local water and heating management facilities) and delivered 295 generators to critical WASH facilities in Ukraine in 21 regions of Ukraine, helping to restore, sustain and modernize their operations. Meanwhile, IOM continued the distribution of hygiene and emergency water supplies and has so far supported over two million individuals.

Centralized district heating, established during the Soviet era in Ukraine, faces challenges due to outdated heat plants, contributing to inefficiencies, high energy costs, and environmental impacts. The collapse of the Soviet Union has left cities burdened with obsolete technology. Delivery mechanisms, reliant on power plants vulnerable to air strikes, exacerbate challenges, leaving critical infrastructure, including homes, schools and hospitals, dependent on these vulnerable systems. A single targeted missile can disable water supply for hundreds of thousands of people, highlighting the urgent need for more resilient and sustainable heating solutions. In recognizing this, both Ukraine and European strategies prioritize decentralization as a key component of the green transition. In alignment with this vision, IOM is spearheading initiatives to replace large, centralized heat plants with smaller, modern systems situated within local communities. This localization strategy reduces system losses by eliminating the need for extensive heat transmission networks, resulting in significant reductions in both energy costs and CO2 emissions. For example, in Dnipro, IOM exemplifies its commitment to serve health care facilities by constructing localized thermal energy plants. These innovative plants, with three mobile biomass boilers, utilize agricultural waste for renewable energy. The adaptability of these

boilers, mounted on trailers, enables easy relocation based on community needs. Similarly, IOM is involved in two projects in Pokrovske and Dnipro city, replacing gas-fuelled district heat plants. These efforts contribute to modernizing Ukraine's heating infrastructure, enhance energy efficiency, and promote sustainable practices aligning with broader environmental goals.

The war's aftermath in Dnipro had a ripple effect on neighbouring Mykolaiv, causing a water crisis for around 300,000 residents due to shelling damage to a connecting pipeline. IOM aided Mykolaiv vodakanal by supplying 2,000 tons of sand to prevent leaks and contamination. Assistance included a new Reverse Osmosis system, pipes, generators, and boreholes with pumps for critical facilities like the Central Heating Plant and Mykolaiv Regional Blood Centre. As part of this intervention, IOM extended support to over 40 rural boreholes, ensuring their functionality with specialized equipment for safe water access in rural areas. In addition, IOM has partnered with the municipal heat and water departments across for the installation of a cogeneration plant that will ensure 65,000 war-affected people have access to water and heat. This innovative system enables the generation of electricity and heat at the same time, using fuel in a more efficient and sustainable manner. Through cogeneration, winter heating will be produced for the community by the same power system that delivers drinking water at no extra cost.

In remote areas, the demand for WASH services became even more critical. **Valentyna** a resident of Zavorychi village, Kyiv Region, lost her lifelong home due to heavy shelling, leaving her family without access to clean water as wells were destroyed. The problem affected the whole community. Because of the old infrastructure and the continuous shelling, the water quality was very poor, with a yellow colour and containing a lot of metal making the community heavily reliant on household wells for clean drinking water. IOM assisted 50 families like Valentyna's by providing modern water purification filters. **Marianna**, mother of 10-month-old Mia, expresses her gratitude for the water filter **"We were very lucky to receive a filter from IOM. This is very valuable when you have a baby in your arms because the water is now safe and the child does not have indigestion. Now we can finally save money for our many other needs."**

[Learn more about IOM's intervention here.](#)

Looking ahead, IOM continues to prioritize environmental sustainability in its policy and programmatic approaches for WASH and energy reconstruction efforts across Ukraine. This commitment translates into 'building back better' systems that aim to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. This poses a significant challenge, considering the historical and current reliance on solid fuels and generators to maintain warmth in service points and households during winter.



IOM looks at accelerating change for water and sanitation utilities in Ukraine. © IOM Ukraine 2023

IOM ASSISTS WAR-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES AHEAD OF THE COLD SEASON

Whilst IOM tackles systemic thermal energy challenges, offering innovative solutions and alternative energy sources, IOM's winterization programme continues to play a crucial role in addressing the immediate pressing heating needs of households, social institutions, and medical facilities by providing coal and firewood to ensure a warm environment for those seeking medical attention or refuge. **Svitlana Zaichenko**, Head Nurse at Kharkiv City Hospital, highlights the challenges faced by the medical facility and IOM's support; *"Our outpatient clinic serves 3,000 people, our premises are also used for a children's clinic, which serves about 1,000 children. Last winter was very difficult for us: severe blackouts [ed. caused by attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure] left us without electrical heating, and coal was our only source of heat. Despite these challenges, we have not stopped working for a minute. This year, thanks to IOM, our hospital received 10 tons of coal, sufficient for heating it for two months."*

IOM's assistance also encompasses equipment repairs and rehabilitation of centralized heating systems. In Balakliia, Kharkiv region, an artillery strike damaged the centralized heating system, leaving 5,000 households without heat due to power outages and frozen water. IOM partnered with the local heat department to replace damaged components, ensuring uninterrupted heating. As IOM Ukraine engages in essential winterization efforts, including supplying solid fuel, distributing winterization kits, repairing individual homes and social institutions, and providing technical support to vital utility services, it not only meets immediate requirements but also establishes the foundation for long-term recovery and durable solutions for individuals navigating the challenges the war.



Svitlana Zaichenko, the Head Nurse at the Kharkiv City Hospital No.1 that received coal as part of IOM's winterization efforts. © IOM Ukraine 2023/Anastasia Rudnieva



Workers repairing pipes in Balakliia, Kharkiv region. © IOM Ukraine 2023



IOM team delivering coal to Tsyrukun community in Kharkiv region. © IOM Ukraine 2023/Kostiantyn Dmytriev



Displaced people receiving winterization kits, warm blankets and solar lamps. © IOM Ukraine/ Maryna Orekhova 2023



KEY FIGURES

● 164

social institutions supported with renovations or rebuilds

● 321

social institutions assisted with material donations

Valentyna recalling how the war destroyed her home she built for 45 years.
© IOM 2023/ Zavorychi SHTUKUN Viktoriia

REBUILDING COMMUNITIES FOR LONG TERM RECOVERY

In parallel to supporting WASH and energy infrastructure, IOM's shelter and housing team, skilled in construction and property law, constructs affordable, efficient, and accessible housing across Ukraine. IOM has supported 164 social institutions with renovations or rebuilds through mobile teams and contractors. In addition, 321 social institutions received material donations. Special attention is given to the inclusion of older individuals, persons with disabilities, and veterans.

In collaboration with the Government, the UN Resident Coordinator's Office, and partners, IOM supports the Community Planning on Durable Solutions and Recovery Working Group (CPDSR WG) to pilot projects for area-based, community-level reconstruction and reintegration support. Since September 2022, UNDP, UNHCR, and IOM have been undertaking inter-agency pilot projects on durable solutions and early recovery.

Situated 90km from Kyiv, the Ivankiv community, the largest in the region, consists of 81 settlements with a pre-war population of 30,000, rural. Ivankiv Town, the central hub, houses around 10,000 residents. The war inflicted damage on 47 settlements, impacting 2,200 structures across various sectors. Public services faced severe disruptions due to facility damage, heightened demand, and a displaced population. Several projects

coordinated by CPDSR WG addressing recovery needs of Ivankiv community have taken place, focusing on community engagement, debris removal and rehabilitation of infrastructure, support to service provision and support to economic initiatives. Looking ahead, insights from the Ivankiv pilot will shape a methodology and coordination framework for area-based programming supporting durable solutions and community-led recovery. This extends to the CPDSR WG in other priority regions and selected communities.

With thousands of homes destroyed following the escalation of the war, IOM Ukraine has used multiple approaches to restore access to safe, dignified, and private housing options at both individual and communal levels. In line with Government priorities, the transitional housing approach provided affordable and social housing solutions for displaced persons, to those who remained behind or those who are returning to their areas of origin. The approach focuses on remodelling government buildings into apartments, constructing new apartments, and repairing affected apartments and integrating social cohesion and community-based governance. Programming acts concurrently with light, medium and heavy repairs of homes for war-affected people and is informed by data and assessments collected as part of IOM's Pathways to Solutions programme, supporting durable solutions.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PILOT PROJECT IN IVANKIV



IOM is providing stable accommodation for IDPs in Ukraine to contribute to the long term recovery process of the country. © IOM Ukraine 2023

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING FOR MARIUPOL RESIDENTS

Upon the devastating impact of the Russian Federation's capture of Mariupol in May 2022, the Mariupol City Council, in collaboration with IOM, demonstrated a commitment to public service. In the face of widespread displacement, with 90 per cent of residential buildings damaged or destroyed and 350,000 people forced to flee, the Council operated remotely from 16 different locations through an initiative focused on repurposing disused public buildings to create high-quality, dignified transitional housing for vulnerable residents. The objective is to provide stable accommodation for at least one-year post-martial law or until individuals can return to their homes or secure sustainable alternatives. This collaboration went beyond the immediate challenges, mobilizing resources from various sectors, including other localities, government bodies, and the private sector. **"A home can hardly be replaced. But this accommodation and support will allow the families to adapt and have more confidence in their tomorrow."** **Nadiia Astanina, Dnipro dormitory acting director.** The result is a concerted effort to address the urgent pressing needs of the displaced population and contribute to the long-term recovery and stability of Mariupol and its residents.



KEY FIGURES

● 749

people benefitted from in-kind assistance to Community Support Groups (CSGs)

● 6,900

people benefitted from social cohesion events by CSGs

IOM arranged a tree planting in the war-affected town of Irpin, Kyiv Region © IOM 2023/Viktorii Shtukun

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND COHESION

IOM's Community Participation and Cohesion (CPC) programme under the Transition and Recovery Unit focuses on building resilient communities that are empowered to be drivers of peace and positive change. Targeting possible sources of tensions within and between communities, the programme adopts a community-based planning and cohesion approach (CBPC) that engages local communities to drive their recovery pathways. The programme includes three key pillars, (i) knowledge generation on social cohesion dynamics; (ii) inclusive and participative governance; and (iii) grant mechanisms for social cohesion activities, which ensures its responsiveness to local needs and opportunities, flexibility and adaptability to dynamic contexts, and grounding in research.

In 2023 alone, the CPC programme has engaged more than 16,000 community members, local authorities, and civil society representatives in its CBPC programming, increasing resilience to multidimensional shocks across more than 251 communities by implementing 90 community-driven social cohesion initiatives and developing 150 local recovery plans. Through these activities, more than 7,300 local actors were trained on issues related to social cohesion, responsible social entrepreneurship, and participative governance.

One example of the CPC team's activities this year is its participation in the recovery efforts in the aftermath of the Kakhovka dam destruction in June 2023. The destruction resulted in substantial water supply disruptions, particularly affecting the central water supply system in Tomakivska community of the Dnipro Region. Responding to this critical situation, under the CPC programme, IOM's **"Everyone Counts – Inclusive data for stability and development"** played a pivotal role in fostering inclusive dialogues, leading to the Community Response Plan (CRP) developed through community-driven data collection and analysis. The assessment identified the need for a purification system and purchasing a reverse osmosis system as the main priority. Through active involvement from various community groups, including IDPs, to ensure inclusivity in decision-making, IOM's grants now cover the installation of the reverse osmosis system and a cargo e-moto for water delivery to individuals with limited mobility, fostering hope for improved well-being and hygiene in Tomakivska.

CRSV AND REPARATIONS

IOM Ukraine has played a pivotal role in collaborating with government and local stakeholders to develop policies supporting restitution and reparations, particularly for conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), housing, land, and property (HLP), and recovery. In 2023, IOM focused on providing a platform for government officials, experts, and stakeholders to collaboratively shape reparations frameworks through improving capacity of 387 government officials on human rights, transitional justice and reparations and supported in drafting the law on Unified Domestic Register of Losses and Damages which successfully registered in the

Parliament, and the law on Urgent Interim Reporative Measures to CRSV survivors through commentary. Furthermore, IOM provided three guiding documents on the establishment of the Secretary under the Draft Law on the Unified Domestic Register, Action Plan for Operations of the Task Force on the Comprehensive Reparations Legislation, and on the Organization and Procedures of the International Register of Damage. IOM will continue effort on identifying victim categories, formulating eligibility criteria, and efficient mass claim processing models for successful implementation of reparations framework and contributing to addressing the needs of CRSV survivors.



A veteran speaking about the importance of veteran employment for their reintegration into civilian life. © IOM Ukraine 2023



KEY FIGURES

● **540**
veterans and 2,847 to veterans' family members benefited from over 1500 MHPSS services

● **28**
organizations and communities benefitted from capacity building

● **4M**
people reached through a campaign to reduce mental health stigma

Olesia and her daughter decompress during an IOM-organized event for veterans and their families. © IOM 2023/Daria Dovzhenko

VETERANS' REINTEGRATION

In Ukraine the Ministry of Veterans' Affairs foresees that there will be between 5 and 8 million veterans, including their family members. Acknowledging the challenges Ukrainian veterans and their families face upon reintegration into civilian life, IOM scaled up its MHPSS service provision at the national, community, family, and individual levels in 2023.

IOM is one of the leading actors on advancing policy provision, community and individual levels support for sustainable reintegration of veterans and the families of fallen through the provision of MHPSS and livelihood assistance. In recognizing that sustainable reintegration requires all associated groups to be equipped with enabling environments, IOM promotes broader community engagement activities to facilitate inclusive participation and social cohesion throughout interventions.

In 2023, IOM created Ukraine's first Veterans' Development Centres, built the capacities of 28

organizations and communities across the country, delivered a campaign to reduce mental health stigma by reaching over 4 million people, and delivered over 1,500 MHPSS services to war-affected communities across Ukraine. As of 31 December 2023, IOM has delivered services to 540 veterans and 2,847 to veterans' family members. *"Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians have become soldiers during the past year. It means that Ukraine is increasingly becoming a veterans' society. I am glad that IOM is meeting the multiple challenges of veterans' reintegration"* noted the Second Secretary Political with the German Embassy in Ukraine.

Olesia, a former civil servant and a veteran, was living in the Mykolaiv Region with her young daughter, Veronika-Maria, when a shell exploded near their house in January 2023. The distress they endured caused Veronika-Maria to suffer from panic attacks. Seeking refuge and support, Olesia and Veronika-Maria left for Zakarpattia soon after. There, the family found support through IOM-organized activities such as hiking trips, which helped

them establish new social connections and begin creating a new life away from home. Such outings are designed to provide community-based psychosocial support to veterans and their families and help them find the strength to move forward and connect with members of the communities in which they now live.

Such opportunities to recharge are important for veterans and their family members. You need to 'change the scenery' sometimes to feel alive."

Olesia

VETERANS' SOCIAL REINTEGRATION THROUGH THE "PATH OF RESILIENCE:"PROJECT



Oleksandr Ratushniak, a veteran and educator from Vinnytsia region. © IOM 2023/Maryna Orekhova

With a similar experience, *Oleksandr*, a veteran from Vinnytsia, was eager to resume his teaching career and decided to become a secondary school teacher, in efforts to reintegrate into his new life. This is not the case for many others as a national survey *"Social Reintegration of Veterans in Ukraine"* revealed that a quarter of the veterans surveyed reported difficulties reintegrating into community life, citing obstacles such as injuries, trauma that affected their physical and mental health, as well as issues with obtaining documents confirming their veteran status and finding new sources of income.

Together with his wife, *Oleksandr* took part in a retreat for veterans' families organized in Lviv, under IOM's *"Path of Resilience"* project, implemented together with the Ministry of Veterans' Affairs of Ukraine. There, they had the opportunity to work on their psychological well-being and better understand each other's needs. Connecting with other families and veterans, Oleksandr decided to continue his studies to become a veteran trainer and gain the necessary knowledge to help veterans like himself in the future through IOM's peer-to-peer programme: *"We understand these people better than anyone because we were there ourselves and came back from there, so we can help them," says Oleksandr.* For Oleksandr, being a veteran's assistant is not a job. He views it as his personal social initiative, which he is committed to continuing.

[Read more about Oleksandr's story here.](#)



KEY FIGURES

● 25

border crossing points with HBM activities

● 9

line ministries and agencies supported with capacity development initiatives

● 15

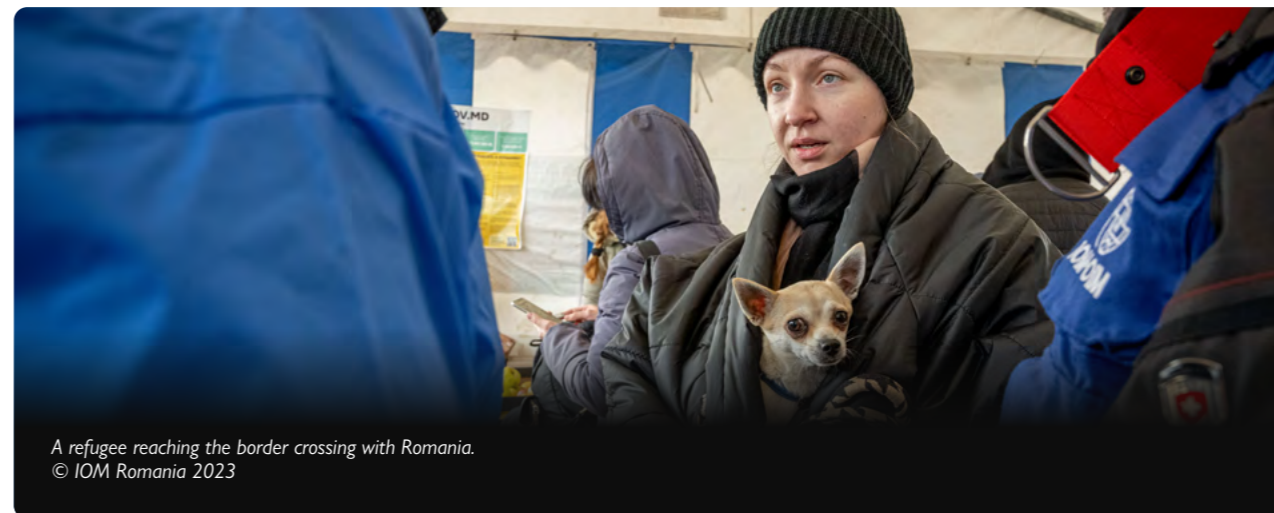
regions reached with Migration and Border Governance (MBG) activities

● 7

regions supported with border infrastructure and trade facilitation support

Human trafficking awareness leaflets being distributed to railway passengers in Kyiv. © IOM 2023/Roman Shalamov

Humanitarian Border Management (HBM) activities have been an integral part of the recovery model for Ukraine throughout the war. As articulated in Ukraine's National Recovery Plan, these include capacity building, emergency preparedness and response, reconstruction, and bilateral and regional cooperation to resume growth and stability. Initially, IOM's HBM response to the Ukraine emergency focused on supporting Ukraine and neighbouring states to ramp up border operations to safely process exits and arrivals. This involved advising on streamlined procedures and a means of decongesting border crossing points (BCPs) through effective management of entries. Additionally, IOM equipped border authorities, and distributed multi-lingual information leaflets with tips on safe border crossing, access to the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) in the EU and non-EU countries, indication of relevant hotline numbers, and various protection risks, such as trafficking in persons. In Ukraine, 15 regions were reached with border governance activities (related to improving the policy, legislation, operational systems, human resources and administrative and technical structures required to respond more effectively to diverse migration and border management challenges), 25 BCPs and 13 regions were reached with HBM activities (including over 250,000 people provided with information on the EU TPD), seven regions were reached with border infrastructure and trade facilitation support and nine Ukrainian line ministries were supported with capacity development initiatives.

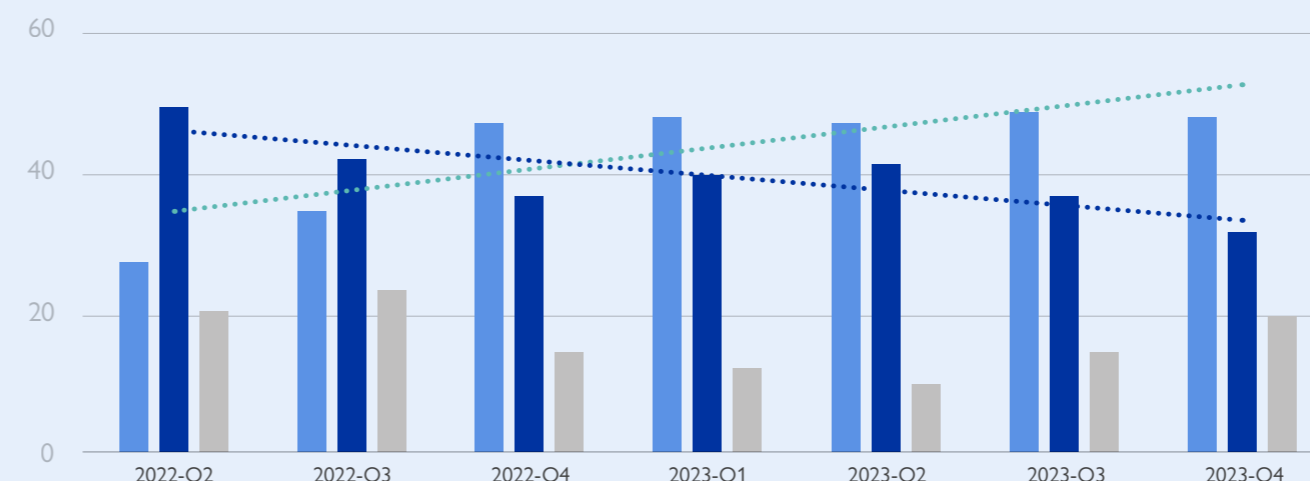


A refugee reaching the border crossing with Romania. © IOM Romania 2023

Over the past year, border crossing assessments show a steady increase in the number of Ukrainian nationals and TCNs exiting Ukraine and spontaneously returning, highlighting the complex patterns of cross-border mobility, and reinforcing the need for support to enable movement in all directions. Operationally, IOM's focus includes closely monitoring trends in refugee movements across the border and staying abreast of changes in cargo flow and customs procedures, as well as providing support at the border crossings through hands-on support in managing flow, and the transportation of humanitarian aid and on-the-spot consultations to the partner agencies at the border. DTM data shows an increasing share of short-term visitors between 2022 and 2023 – people continue to return and leave. Out of the almost 28,000 interviewed while crossing back to Ukraine in 2023, more than half

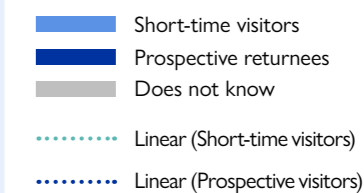
(53% of the total) included family-related motives as part of their reasons to cross back to Ukraine either for a short visit or for return. This includes the desire of meeting family members, or reuniting with them, and helping them (to leave or to stay). Most respondents (80%) were women, who were often married (62%), between 18 and 49 years of age (73%) and planned a short visit (49% of them) to meet family members left behind (mostly men). Among men (20% of the total), three fourths were between 18 and 60, the age indicated for mandatory military service, while 26 per cent were older than 60 years of age. As expected, people travelling to reunite with their families or missing home are the most likely to stay in Ukraine. Other reasons for the short visit are the desire to obtain or renew documents, to go to the doctor or to collect personal belongings.

CROSSING BACK TO UKRAINE



NUMBER OF SURVEY

- In 2022 (Apr – Dec): **24,393** (Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Republic of Moldova)
- In 2023 (Jan – Dec): **27,653** (Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Republic of Moldova, Latvia)





STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

CONTRIBUTE TO AN EVIDENCE
BASED AND MORE EFFICIENT
CRISIS RESPONSE SYSTEM,
INCLUDING ENHANCING THE
AVAILABILITY, COHERENCE
AND TIMELINESS OF DATA
COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS
AND PROMOTE DATA-DRIVEN
RESPONSE PROGRAMMING

COUNTRIES AND LOCATIONS OF DTM SURVEYS

KEY ACTIVITIES IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

- Surveys to understand the needs and movement intentions of newly arriving refugees and TCNs
- Monitoring of collective shelters housing displaced people
- Surveys of people crossing to Ukraine from neighbouring countries or transiting through the territory of the Russian Federation to understand reasons for travel, intended duration of stay, and possible returning trends.

KEY ACTIVITIES IN UKRAINE

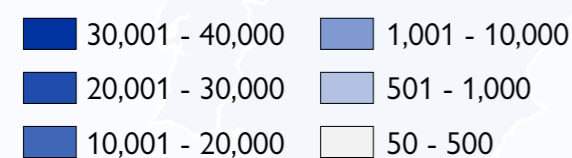
- General Population Survey to estimate the number and location of internally displaced and other affected people, including returnees, as well as their needs
- Collation of official registration data from municipal governments on displaced people (Area Baseline)
- Additional studies aligned to particular information needs including: rapid needs assessments in areas newly accessible to humanitarian actors, fuel market reviews to prepare for winter programming, and studies on conditions people face when they return.



[For all DTM reports related to the Ukraine crisis, see dedicated page here.](#)

Disclaimer: For Ukraine, each hromada covered by the Area Based Assessment is considered as a "location". For other countries, each location is separated into admin level units and the number of interviews and location areas of admin units differs per country

NUMBER OF DTM SURVEYS



• **Survey locations in 2023**
(inside Ukraine based on hromadas covered in Area Baseline Assessment)

• **Survey locations in 2022**
(inside Ukraine based on hromadas covered in Area Baseline Assessment)

This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.



KEY FIGURES

- **99,035**
surveys conducted in Ukraine
- **150,000**
downloads
- **20**
countries covered by DTM
- **150,556**
surveys conducted in Neighbouring Countries
- **136**
reports generated
- **1,300**
citations in the media

A DTM enumerator completing the Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA) led by UNHCR in close collaboration with IOM. © IOM 2023/Alexey Shvirin

IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) has been a vital resource since the early days of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, providing crucial insights for humanitarian efforts. DTM data is widely used to align programming with the needs of different population groups, including those displaced and non-displaced, as well as returnees. It serves to highlight immediate humanitarian needs while also evidencing long-term recovery initiatives, offering a deeper understanding of the evolving situations faced by war-affected people.

In leveraging the data collected through DTM programming, IOM was able to inform and shape its operations and programming effectively. This dynamic programming not only facilitated a responsive approach to the changing circumstances but also aligned with the specific needs and priorities outlined by key stakeholders, including requests from the government or other humanitarian actors in the affected regions.

The [Ukraine Response DTM assessments and relevant reports](#) in the country and in the region attracted the attention of thousands of readers across the globe – the number of reports' downloads for the last two years is approximately 150,000. Amongst the top 10 countries where users consulted IOM collected and analysed data are the USA, the UK, Sweden, Germany, France, Poland, and Ukraine itself.

The reports published on the DTM portal were regularly quoted (more than 1,300 citations since the beginning of the war in February 2022) by reputable news & media outlets (BBC, Deutsche Welle, MSN, etc.) and social media platforms, as well as by the OCHA's humanitarian data service. This has generated additional 97,500 users of the data the assessments in Ukraine and in the region of the response contain.

On the other hand, the DTM's Online Interactive Resources (dashboards) on IDPs' movements within Ukraine, Needs & Intentions of refugees from Ukraine

“More than ever we need data and analysis that inform fact-based narratives”

*Daniels Ugochi,
Deputy Director General of IOM*

DATA FOR ACTION: ENHANCING THE IMPACT OF CASH ASSISTANCE

In collaboration with various sectoral teams and partners, IOM Ukraine utilizes DTM data to inform operational decisions across multiple sectors. In 2023, IOM data experts supported eight sectors in leveraging data for crucial decision-making, ensuring that assistance aligns with the actual challenges faced by the people of Ukraine, as consistently monitored through assessments.

An illustrative example of the influence of evidence-based decision-making is with the case of multi-purpose cash transfer values. Cash assistance is cited as the most needed assistance among all population groups (non-displaced, displaced, and returnees), with women disproportionately citing the need for cash (DTM, IOM Ukraine, September 2023), in addition to access to health services and non-food items, including heating sources. Post-distribution monitoring data indicates that most of the cash assistance in Ukraine is spent on food, clothing, utilities, and health care/medicines. In August 2023, IOM collaborated with the Ukraine Cash Working Group to reassess the adequacy of cash assistance provided to people affected by the war. Utilizing extensive household income data from IOM's nationwide General Population Surveys, IOM supported the Cash Working Group in calculating a new minimum transfer value based on a gap analysis between median household income and the humanitarian Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB). The recalibration of the transfer value, guided by evidence generated by IOM, played a crucial role in a significant decision by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT): an increase in the multi-purpose cash transfer value from UAH 2,220 (\$62) to UAH 3,600 (\$101) per month per individual. [IOM Ukraine's cash programme](#) implemented the revised transfer

value from 1 October 2023, with more than 80 humanitarian partners expected to follow suit. This adjustment ensured that the humanitarian cash assistance met its goal of helping families live in dignity and respond to their most pressing needs.

DATA FOR SOLUTIONS IN UKRAINE

“Internal and external displacement entails enormous complex changes at the individual and societal levels. Accordingly, social policies need to be adjusted to meet the actual needs of people, and data on real needs and clear stats will be key to reformatting the system.”
Minister of Social Policy of Ukraine.

In response to the need for a standardized understanding of 'durable solutions' in Ukraine, IOM and the UN Resident Coordinator's office (RCO) held a [symposium](#) on 30 and 31 March 2023 and proposed a strategy and [Action Plan](#). Engaging key stakeholders, including the Government of Ukraine, donors, and affected communities, the plan aims to establish a ['Joint Analytical Framework'](#) for data collection on durable solutions. IOM leads in the Data for Solutions and Recovery (D4SR) working group and participates in the Assessments and Analysis Working Group and the Data Task Force, with a goal to harmonize approaches and collaboratively analyze data, particularly focusing on integrating mobility data into population statistics. IOM successfully directed the D4SR group to prioritize localizing and government ownership of data. In 2023, a key achievement was using IOM-DTM's data to select priority areas for a joint inter-agency Community Planning, Durable Solutions, and Recovery pilot action in six regions and 12 communities. This initiative, implemented under RCO leadership, established a precedent for evidence-based location selection and a 'leave no one behind' approach, highlighting the needs of vulnerable people seeking durable solutions.

EVIDENCE-BASED GOVERNANCE: IOM'S SUPPORT FOR THE IDP COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

In 2023, building the capacity of government officials and stakeholders in managing migration and mobility data has been a priority. IOM focused on strengthening systems, enhancing analytical functions, and supporting the flow of data amid decentralization and digitalization reforms. Specifically, IOM worked with the IDP Commissioner's office in the Ministry of Reintegration of Temporary Occupied Territories (MRTOT) to boost its ability to assist internally displaced persons (IDPs) and those affected by war. Since May 2023, IOM-appointed experts have been seconded to the ministry, analyzing the mobility and needs of IDPs and regularly updating interactive dashboards for the IDP Commissioner and the ministry's decision-making. IOM has also helped the ministry identify existing data sources, map current dataflows, and respond to information requests from regional authorities.

IOM further aided the Ministry by implementing a dedicated software platform for information and knowledge management, specifically enhancing information management for the Ministry of Reintegration of Temporary Occupied Territories (MRTOT) assistance hotlines. These hotlines, hosted by the Ministry's call centre, offer diverse support to war-affected citizens, addressing needs such as missing persons, financial assistance for IDPs, legal advice, and psychological support. With tens of thousands of monthly calls, the hotlines play a crucial role in delivering essential services. IOM's assistance will significantly enhance the hotlines' capacity and responsiveness to requests from IDPs and other war-affected individuals. Moreover, the implemented solution will empower the Ministry to systematically collect data on citizens' needs and conduct its own analysis, reinforcing evidence-based policymaking.

“By leveraging our data and partnerships we give more people the chance to flourish in peace and safety.”

Amy Pope, Director General of IOM



On the occasion of Children's Day, over 10,000 people came together in Rzeszów, Poland, to enjoy a festival of colours. IOM Poland 2023 Alexey Shvirin

IOM, as a Grand Bargain signatory, is committed to the localization agenda by supporting local responders like community groups, civil society and government bodies in war-affected areas. IOM prioritizes working with those rooted in the local community to make interventions more sustainable and contribute to a strong exit strategy. In collaboration with Member States at both national and local levels, IOM is aligning its efforts with government plans and striving to prioritize localization, improve policy environments while providing direct assistance. After two years of the response, IOM has established and strengthened partnerships with over 80 partners in Ukraine and over 150 partners in the neighbouring countries. IOM's partnerships with local and national authorities in Ukraine strengthen its distribution capability, even in challenging areas. Looking ahead, IOM aims to expand and deepen these partnerships, focusing on providing more technical assistance, capacity development, and organizational support. This ensures that national and local actors play a primary role in response, recovery, and solutions. As part of its localization efforts, on 11 October 2023, IOM hosted the Sixth annual IOM-NGO Humanitarian Consultation with humanitarian NGO partners in Geneva to discuss joint approaches to locally led responses and meaningful participation. The consultation brought together over 80 representatives from 40 NGOs across 17 countries and fostered open and constructive dialogue on complementarity-based IOM-NGO humanitarian partnerships.

LOCALIZATION FOR SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE RESPONSES IN UKRAINE

80

NGO Implementing Partners since February 2022 with 48 currently active in Ukraine

93%

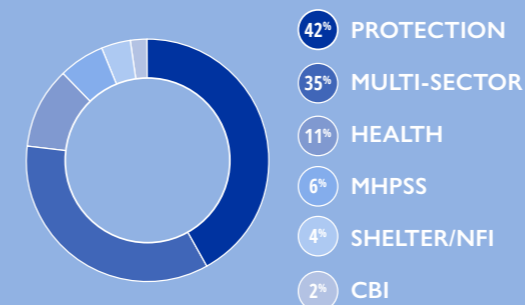
of that amount to national, regional & local entities

7% other



Little Andriy moved to Kalyta from Zaporizhzhia, overcoming hundreds of kilometers and hundreds of security fears. © IOM Ukraine 2023

MAIN SECTORS OF PARTNERSHIPS WITH NGOS



10%

of operational funding is disbursed directly through implementing partners as part of the regional response since February 2022

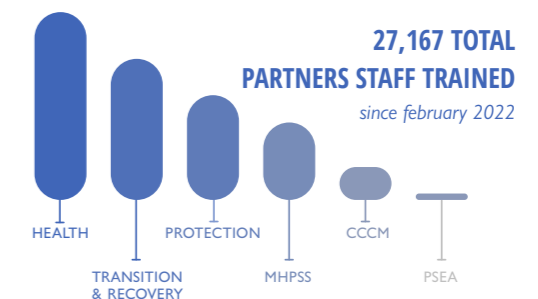


IOM has formed 14 cooperation agreements with key Ministries and formed working relationships with all 24 regions.

30M

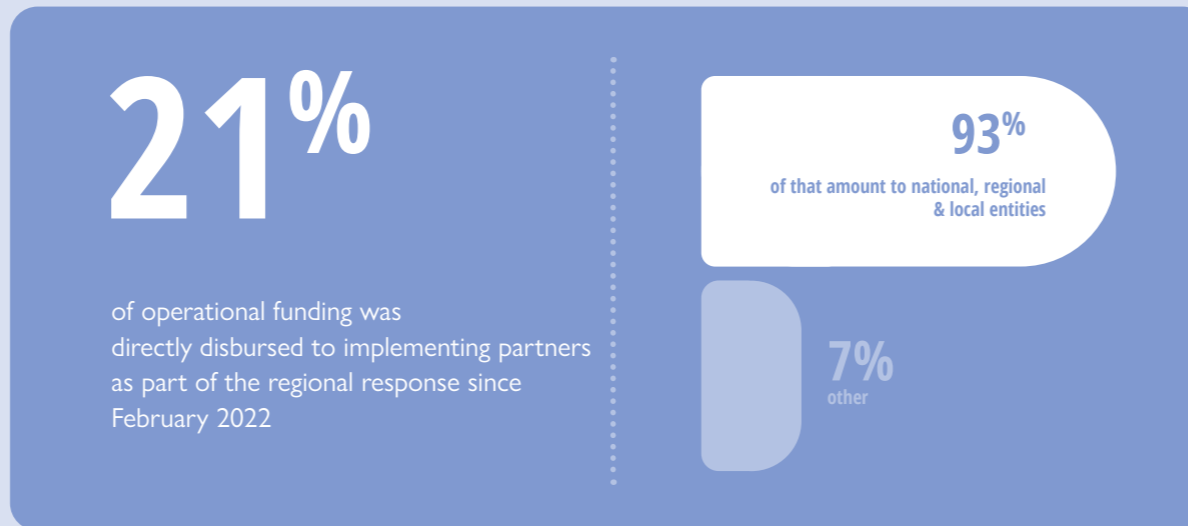
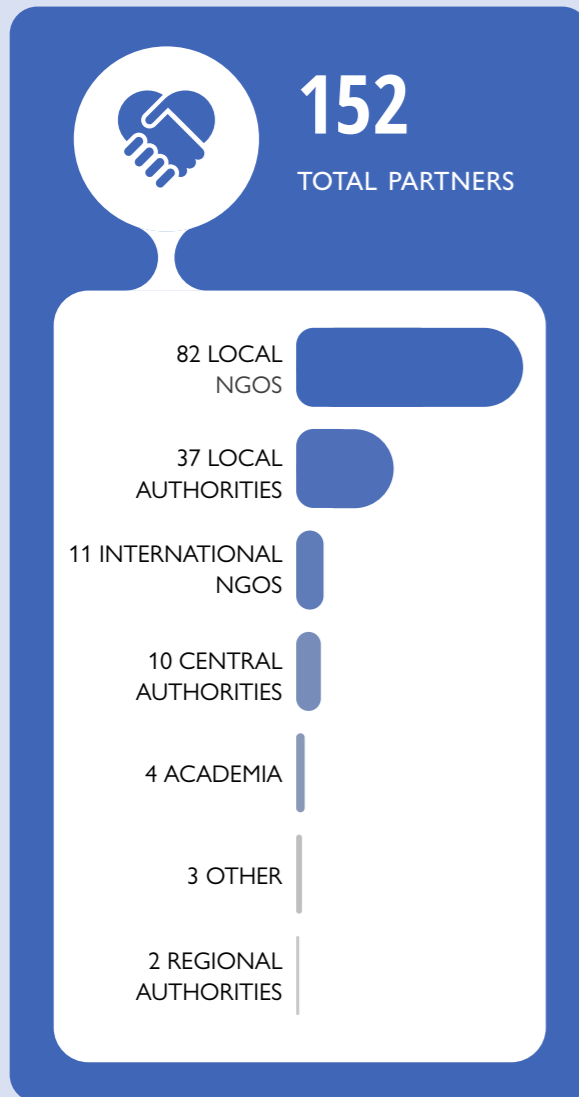
dedicated to partners capacity building

AREAS OF CAPACITY BUILDING



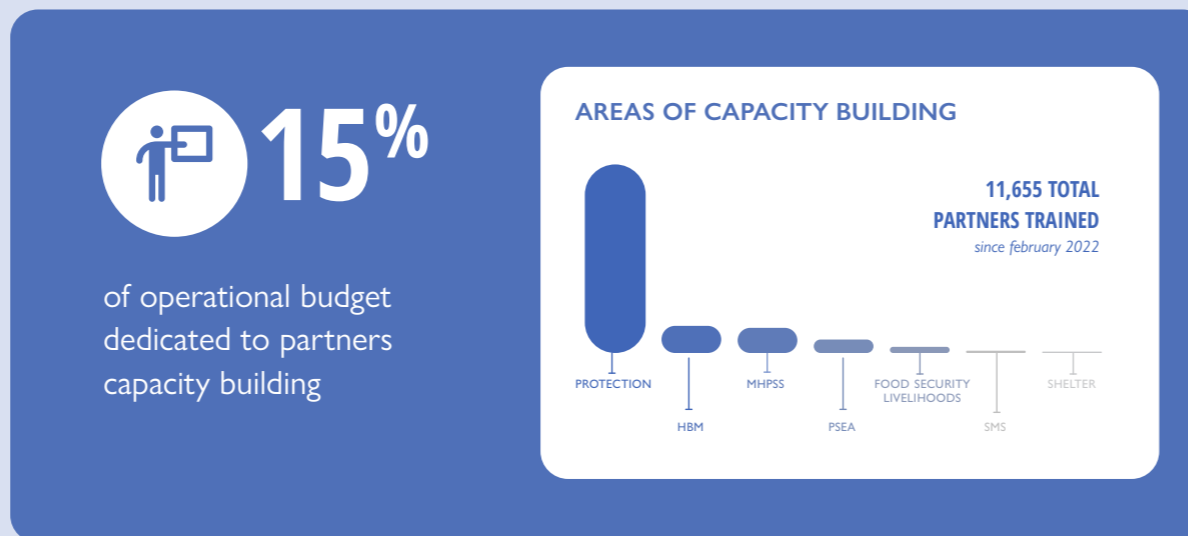
IOM Common Pipeline partner Rescue Now delivering aid to the flood and war affected village of Fedorivka, Kherson region. July 2023. © IOM 2023/Stanislas Kalac

LOCALIZATION FOR SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE RESPONSES NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES



NUMBER OF PARTNERS PER COUNTRY

CZECHIA	27
POLAND	25
ROMANIA	21
REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA	20
HUNGARY	18
LATVIA	14
SLOVAKIA	11
ESTONIA	9
LITHUANIA	4
BELARUS	3



UKRAINE LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITY FINDS HOPE



Partnerships with NGOs are essential in reaching out to marginalized communities and promoting diversity, inclusiveness, and gender-sensitive approaches. This is exemplified through collaborative efforts with organizations like *Lambda*, a Polish NGO based in Warsaw. *Denys*, a social worker from Kharkiv, Ukraine, arrived in Poland in March 2022 with his family. Despite facing intolerance in Ukraine, Denys experienced a shift in societal attitudes during the war, where unity prevailed over prejudices. Lambda has played a pivotal role in supporting persons with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) fleeing Ukraine. Lambda and IOM's collaborative efforts empower individuals like Denys through legal advice, psychological, social support, and activities to support their inclusion. Denys, who openly shared his sexual orientation with his siblings at 18, expresses hope that the unity witnessed during the war will persist in post-war times. Since August 2022, Lambda, in partnership with IOM, has supported over 900 people. Every year, the NGO helps between 4,000 and 5,000 people with diverse SOGIESC of various nationalities across Poland.

[Click here to know more about Denys story.](#)



KEY FIGURES

● \$14M

worth of in-kind and funding secured from private sector donors

● 253

truckloads supported by private companies to deliver relief items in Ukraine

● 15,000

items of winter clothing delivered by Amazon in Ukraine

When temperature dropped under -15 degree Celsius, our partner Amazon donated winter clothes and items to refugees across Romania © IOM Romania 2023

UNLOCKING SUPPORT THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

A key component of IOM's response has been the partnership with the private sector which partnerships have helped empower people displaced by war with dignified solutions and agency. For example, a shelter programme supported by Airbnb is the first of its kind and has played a pivotal role, providing 175,889 safe nights to 7,008 refugees across seven countries. The private sector's capacity and specialization, exemplified by partners like Flexport and Amazon, facilitated rapid mobilization of logistics capacity and quick delivery of life-saving relief. Private donations by individuals, either channelled through USA for IOM or through the [IOM website](#) – have supported cash and livelihood initiatives and specific programming aligned to the First Lady of Ukraine's initiative to strengthen mental health and psychosocial support systems.

SAME DAY DELIVERY: IOM'S PARTNERSHIP WITH AMAZON

To help thousands of people who fled the war in Ukraine, as well as their host communities, keep warm this winter, Amazon partnered with IOM to provide much-needed clothing. Amazon has donated over USD 8 million's worth of winter clothes in Romania and Slovakia and hygiene kits and mattresses in Ukraine. A variety of items and availability of infant clothes and big sizes that are usually limited in standardized distribution was appreciated by the beneficiaries. This kind of partnership complements our substantial global supply chain by helping bridge gaps, especially in the initial stages of an emergency.

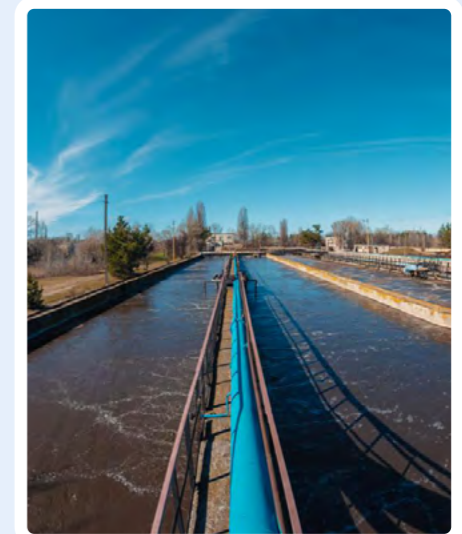
In October 2023, over 1,100 pallets of brand-new winter clothes were delivered from Amazon warehouses directly to IOM Romania. The distribution of these items began at RomExpo in Bucharest on 16 October and continues throughout the whole country, in partnership with local government, social services, civil society, volunteers, and other partners, including the Department of Emergency Situations (DSU) of the Government of Romania, who are transporting the aid on behalf of IOM. *Elina* and her family arrived in Romania just two days prior to the start of the clothing distribution at RomExpo. **"I came here from Ukraine with my parents to stay and be safe,"** she said. When fleeing their home, Elina explained that her family was only able to pack a small suitcase, forced to leave everything else behind. She expressed her thanks to Amazon and IOM for the new clothes, adding, **"We are in dire need of new, warm clothes, especially now as winter is approaching"**.

Similarly, supported by the generosity of Zalando, IOM Ukraine was able to support 34 orphan children (aged 3-16 years), and nine counsellors from a social support centre in Dnipro who were relocated to Ukraine's Zakarpattia region, near the border of Slovakia, where they found safety. The children were in urgent need of clothing, shoes, and other basic items, including dishes. There, they were provided with the clothing and shoes they needed, as well as plates and cups for their meals.

LEVERAGING PUBLIC-PRIVATE SYNERGY: IOM PARTNERSHIP WITH VODAKANALS

KEY FIGURES

- IOM has supported 217 vodakanals in Ukraine in 24 regions covering 343 communities.
- 169 generators supported reaching 680,776 people



IOM supports water and sanitation infrastructure to ensure essential services to people affected by the war. © IOM Ukraine 2023

Around 16 million people in Ukraine, including IDPs and those in war-affected communities, required WASH assistance due to severe damage to critical infrastructure by December 2022. Access to safe water and sanitation remains a challenge in 2023, leading to constant disruptions in energy supply, interrupted services, limited maintenance, and a heightened risk of diseases related to poor sanitation and hygiene.

IOM collaborated with public-private municipal utility services, known as vodakanals, to upgrade existing water supply infrastructure and implement water purification technologies. This strategic partnership harnesses the local expertise and infrastructure of vodakanals, coupled with IOM's extensive international experience in humanitarian aid and development. Together, they work to address the urgent needs of millions in Ukraine, ensuring that essential services such as electricity, heat, and water are provided to hospitals, homes, and businesses. Since the start of the war, IOM has supported approximately 217 vodakanal's water and heating facilities.

For example, IOM has played a pivotal role in delivering safe water to 3,200 individuals in the Kherson and Donetsk

regions. This achievement is the result of collaborative efforts with vodakanals, involving the replacement of crucial equipment and machinery. Notably, the positive impact of this collaboration extends to major urban centres, such as Bila Tserkva, where the water supply company – vodakanal - serves a population exceeding 300,000, making it one of the largest cities on the Right Bank. In Bila Tserkva, IOM supported the replacement of the water pipe in the town centre, contributed to the maintenance of the wastewater system, and provided a variable speed drive to enhance the energy efficiency of a pump supplying water to the entire town.

[Click here for more on the initiative in Bila Tserkva.](#)

IOM's commitment to supporting vodakanals extends to Chernivtsi and Zhytomyr, where the organization supplied one 512 kW and one 478 kW generator. These generators aid water utilities in producing water consistently around the clock, benefiting over 142,000 people in these regions.



The IOM Moldova team that participated in the first #askIOM session included experts from a variety of areas of humanitarian response, including protection, humanitarian transportation, and livelihoods. © IOM 2023

The Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) Framework establishes IOM's common approach for implementing and mainstreaming AAP throughout its crisis and recovery related work. AAP helps ensure that programming is right-based, and that the IOM implements quality and responsive programming in line with the evolving needs of affected persons and communities. The tools, systems, and procedures used to mainstream AAP contribute to the our zero-tolerance policy against sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and other misconduct. The Framework's various commitments were developed in line with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) commitments to AAP and adapted to meet IOM's operational realities.

IOM prioritizes the direct involvement of affected people in decision-making, recognizing them as active partners and stakeholders in their recovery. This commitment extends to employing AAP principles, especially transparent information provision, participation and implementation of feedback mechanisms, to enhance equal and inclusive engagement, utilizing various channels, spaces, and mechanisms. The Ukraine regional response incorporates adaptive approaches, considering the dynamic nature of the situation over the past two years. Meaningful participation not only informs IOM's programmes but also empowers communities, fostering a secure, dignified, and sustainable recovery at household, community, and national levels.

Since February 2022, IOM Ukraine has significantly increased the size of humanitarian assistance, including the transformation of a small hotline receiving dozens of weekly calls, into a formal Complaints and Feedback Mechanism (CFM) receiving thousands of enquiries and requests for support every week. CFMs enable IOM to understand displaced people's experience, needs, and capacities to later adapt programmes and activities, and inform sustainable solutions. The mission in Ukraine identified the most common and trusted sources of information and communication channels, including the use of email and social media. IOM continuously monitors the channels of communication preferred by affected people, observing differences among groups of the populations by age and gender for example, to ensure they have safe and effective access to information and can provide feedback. Furthermore, the systematic analysis of the CFM data through a web-based platform ([Community Response Map](#)) has allowed the mission

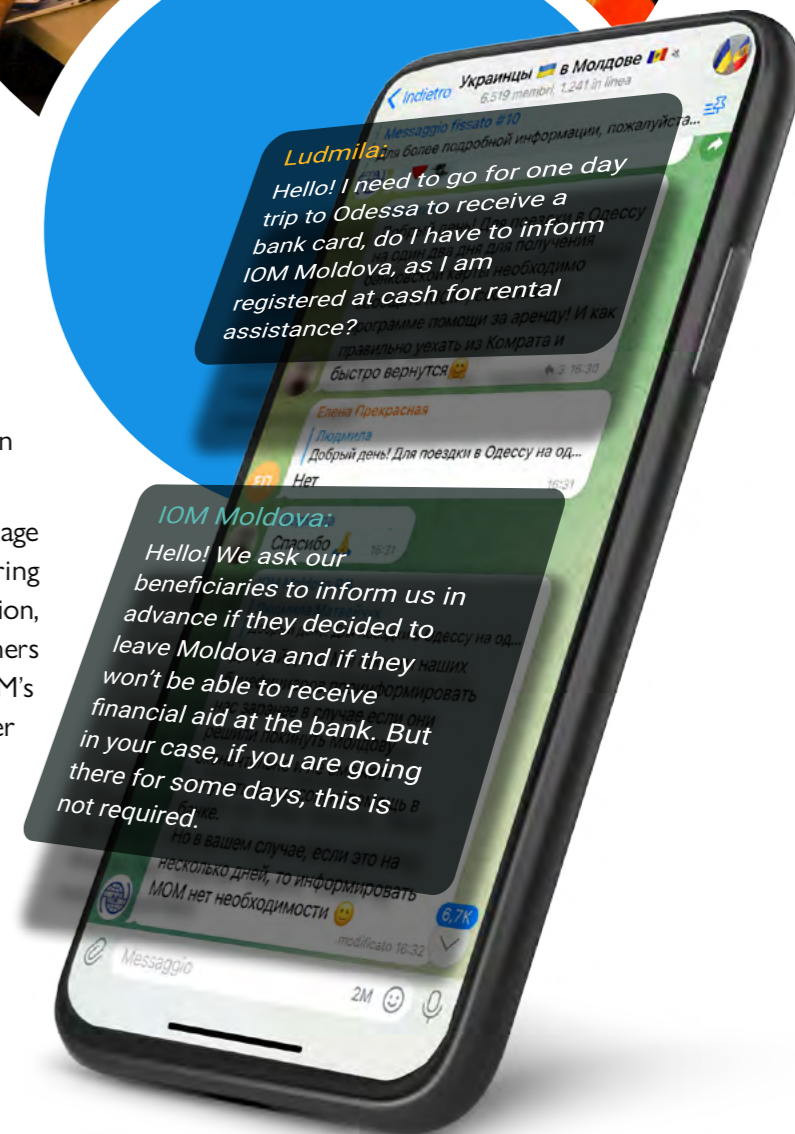
to communicate findings to all programming units, allowing for an effective and flexible response in a changing context.

In the Republic of Moldova, IOM employed Telegram as a key tool in February 2023, hosting #askIOM live sessions to address queries regarding the recently granted temporary protection status. These sessions, held within Telegram groups identified as the most frequented community communication channels, including 'Ukrainian Mums and Bubs' and 'Ukrainians in Moldova,' functioned as virtual town halls for refugees and third-country nationals. They became vibrant spaces for discussions, information sharing, and addressing concerns related to war and displacement.

"As a refugee, it can be challenging to navigate the complex system of laws and regulations in a new country, but the #askIOM session made it much easier for us. The opportunity to interact with experts in the field and get answers to our questions in real-time was invaluable. Moreover, the event was conducted on Telegram, which made it very accessible to many of us," said Marina from Ukraine during an IOM Moldova #askIOM live sessions.

The interactive sessions, held in the preferred language used by the target audience, identified recurring concerns, including issues with temporary protection, available IOM programmes, and support for mothers and children. Insights gained not only shaped IOM's initiatives but were also shared with the broader humanitarian community, influencing collective response strategies. As part of their measures, IOM ensured that Protection Mobile Teams systematically covered temporary protection in their outreach efforts for newly arrived individuals.

This initiative provided relevant information to inform IOM Moldova's programming, while empowering individuals to actively participate in their recovery by providing firsthand and actionable information on a familiar platform.



FROM FOUNDATIONAL SUPPORT TO VISIBLE IMPACT

LEAVES (VISIBLE IMPACT)

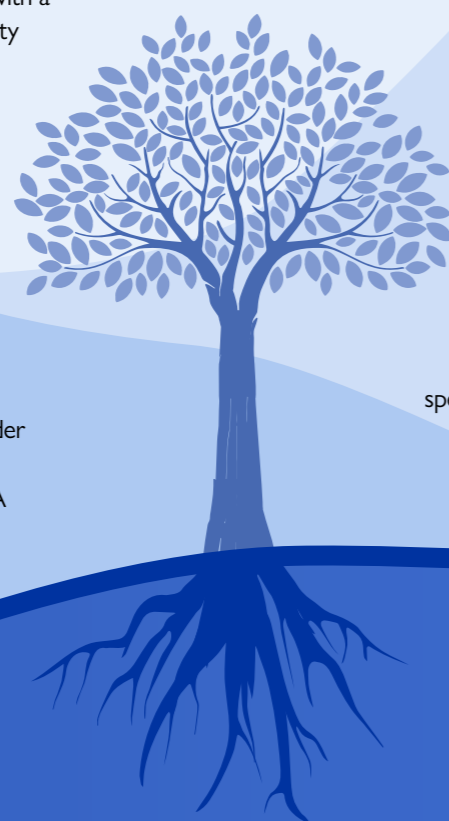
In every country, IOM designates a PSEA focal point trained to integrate PSEA into interventions, offering training and support in local languages. Focal points monitor PSEA mainstreaming, mitigating risks to ensure meaningful interventions with a core focus on accountability and preventing aid diversion.

BRANCHES (OUTREACH AND APPLICATION)

IOM has developed guidelines for PSEA-focused Focus Group Discussions, informing beneficiaries about their rights in interactions with humanitarian providers. These guidelines address the multifaceted nature of SEA, providing qualitative insights for tailored interventions and fostering informed beneficiaries, ultimately preventing incidents of exploitation or abuse. IOM also collaborates with UN agencies to provide specialized investigation training for Implementing Partners.

TRUNK (CENTRAL PILLAR)

IOM continuously monitors refugees' and third-country nationals' information access preferences since the emergency's onset, particularly focusing on gender and age dynamics. Tailoring communication strategies by sector, IOM ensures effective PSEA messaging and confidential reporting, mapping touchpoints with beneficiaries and developing specific materials for each, ensuring safe and comprehensive information dissemination.



ROOTS (FOUNDATION AND SUPPORT)

Recognizing that effective PSEA cannot operate in isolation, IOM has embraced collaboration with law enforcement and border guards agencies, who have increasingly become de facto humanitarian service providers. To support the implementing partners internal capacity to their teams IOM developed a Training of Trainers (ToT) package, blending technical PSEA information with facilitation skills.

IOM's commitment to preventing and responding to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) is a continual journey, deeply integrated into all interventions. In the evolving emergency context of Ukraine, IOM's approach to PSEA has adapted and matured, reflecting the complex realities on the ground. IOM emphasizes the importance of meaningful discussions with beneficiaries, ensuring that their voices are not only informed but also heard and acknowledged. IOM's PSEA efforts go beyond policy statements, translating principles into practical and effective actions. This includes ongoing training for staff and implementing partners, comprehensive risk assessments, implementing partners assessment and support and active listening to beneficiaries, fostering an environment where they feel safe and empowered to express their concerns and needs. Additionally, IOM engages in proactive participation in interagency PSEA collaborations. Visually, these interventions can be summarized by the image of a tree, showing involvement from foundational support to visible impact.

As part of our 2023 interventions, we adopted a novel approach designing campaigns to resonate with local tendencies in Ukraine and communicate with the target audience. A particularly successful campaign, aimed at teenagers, linked the topic of SEA to broader issues of sexual violence among teenagers, a pressing concern in the local context, especially considering recent related events. This innovative approach recognized the importance of culturally and contextually relevant messaging in creating impactful and meaningful conversations about sensitive topics like SEA. Participants deeply resonated with the campaign:

"I am profoundly thankful that we are addressing this critical issue. Violence, in any form, should never be normalized. It is our collective responsibility to amplify this message and advocate for change. We must inform the whole world about the importance of preventing violence and promoting safety for all."

This sentiment encapsulates the spirit of our initiative and the urgent need for continued dialogue and action in combating violence and abuse.

In 2023, IOM also trained a total of 28 implementing partners across the region. Furthermore, in collaboration with UN agencies, IOM trained an additional 78 international/national NGOs and partners involved in the humanitarian response. Recognizing the vital role of law enforcement agencies in responding to incidents of SEA,

IOM has partnered with UNHCR and Interpol to initiate the training package "Partnership for Protection" that focuses on fostering collaboration between humanitarian service providers and law enforcement agents. This package equips law enforcement officials with the knowledge and tools needed to work effectively with UN agencies in addressing SEA occurrences. In the Ukraine emergency response, it has been shown that police remain the go-to institution if beneficiaries would like to report misconduct. To address this need, this package, piloted in Poland, the Republic of Moldova, and Lithuania, provides using interactive methodologies, tools to enhance law enforcement officials' capacities on how to respond appropriately and how to work with UN agencies more effectively. Some innovative efforts included the development of a short film used as a training tool in the Republic of Moldova, the participation in an anti-harassment campaign, and the organization of workshops for the development of PSEA policies. These initiatives exemplify an innovative, multimedia, and multi-faceted approach to PSEA education and policy formation, contributing significantly to the regional initiative on protection partnerships.

[Click here for more on PSEA in the Ukraine Response.](#)

Looking ahead, IOM's priority is sustainability. IOM aims to empower local partners to continue this essential work, ensuring that the PSEA approach becomes a legacy, embedded within the communities IOM serves. This shift towards local engagement and capacity building marks a significant step in the commitment to protecting the most vulnerable during emergencies.

KEY FIGURES

- **3,998** people trained on PSEA, including police officers and government representatives
- **24** PSEA partnerships formed
- **14** Training of Trainer sessions for staff and IPs held
- **16** IOM PSEA Focal Points across the Ukraine and regional response



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON IOM AND
THE UKRAINE CRISIS RESPONSE

