



Since mid-March 2022, UNHCR and its local NGO partners Right to Protection, NEEKA, and The Tenth of April, have conducted border monitoring at 30 crossing points between Ukraine and Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Moldova. The border monitoring teams provide information, legal assistance, protection counselling and social support to people leaving Ukraine to seek international protection or to those returning to Ukraine.

## 1. MOVEMENTS

### Ukraine western border movement (in and out)



Source: State Border Guard Service (SBGS)

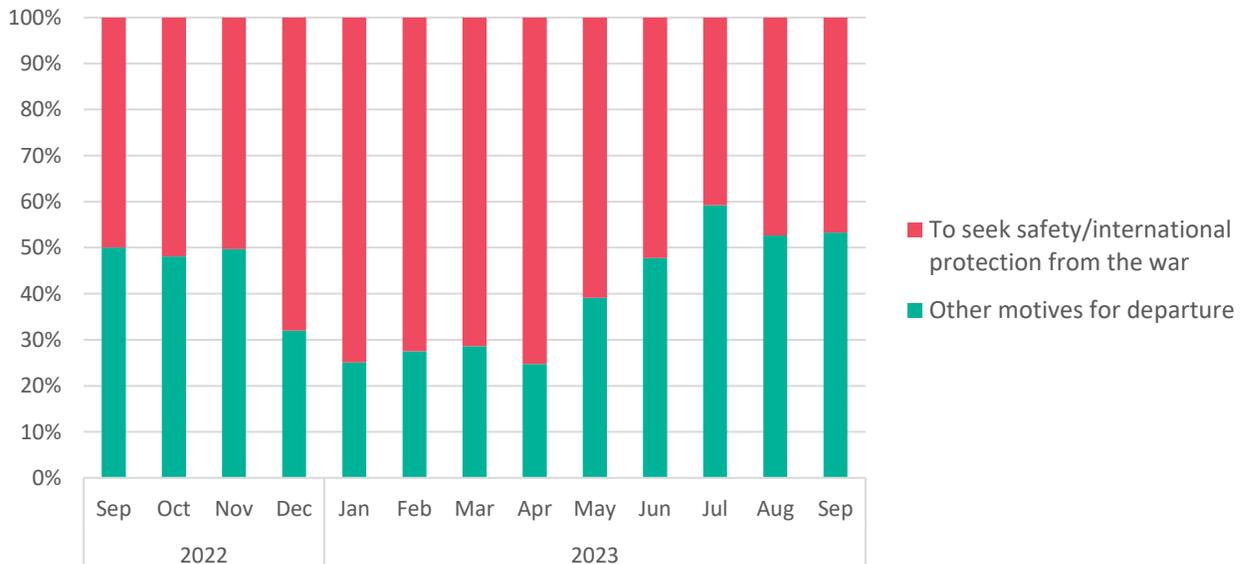
In September 2023, more people left Ukraine than entered the country as a **net outflow of 68,000 individuals** from Ukraine was recorded. In contrast, in August 2023 there was a **net inflow of 103,000 individuals** into Ukraine.

Note: This data is based upon publicly available data from the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, and pertains to the Ukrainian borders with four countries: Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania, and does not include the data for the border with Moldova.

## 2. BORDER MONITORING FINDINGS

In September 2023, UNHCR Border Monitoring Teams reported that among all individuals interviewed when leaving Ukraine, 50% indicated that they were leaving to find safety abroad (compared to 65% of individuals interviewed in the first quarter of 2023). Among the 50% of individuals who were leaving Ukraine for reasons other than to seek safety and international protection abroad, they reported that they were crossing the border to visit relatives, shop in neighboring countries, attend business missions, holiday abroad, seek medical services abroad, and to pursue education abroad. Students and other individuals who had returned to Ukraine for the summer reported that they were leaving Ukraine to resume their studies abroad or to return to their countries of asylum ahead of the winter months.

**Proportion of respondents seeking safety abroad (by month)**



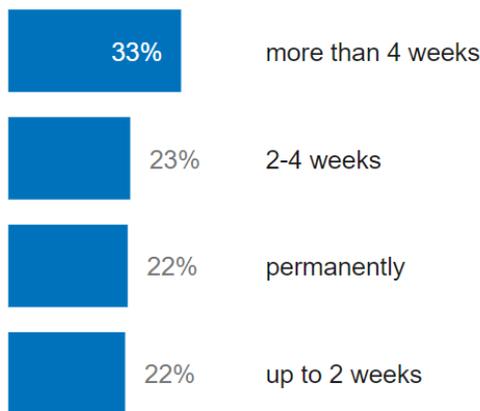
\*Data based on UNHCR border monitoring

Respondents seeking safety abroad highlighted the following main apprehensions regarding their stay in a country of asylum: language barrier (27%); family separation (21%); access to education (15%); and access to health care (8%).

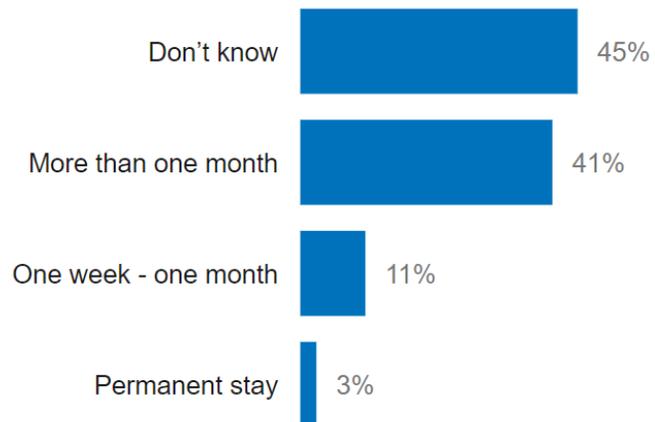
In September 2023, 48% of respondents seeking safety abroad reported that they are leaving Ukraine for the first time, up from the yearly average of 41%. However, this proportion is still much lower than in 2022, when an average of 67% of the people interviewed throughout the year said they were leaving Ukraine for the first time.

In September 2023, 45% of respondents seeking safety abroad were uncertain about the duration of their stay abroad, while 41% anticipated staying abroad for more than a month. Among those refugees returning, 33% reported that they planned to stay in Ukraine for more than four weeks, while 22% reported that they intended to return permanently.

#### Intended stay upon return to Ukraine



#### Intended stay outside Ukraine



(Both tables above represent responses from people who reported they were leaving or had left Ukraine to seek safety abroad)

The three main reasons for return cited by refugees returning to Ukraine in September 2023 were: reuniting with family, improved security in their home region and lack of access to healthcare in their countries of asylum. These reasons were similar to those reported by persons interviewed in August.

In September, third country nationals, especially those from the Russian Federation, Belarus and other countries from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), continued to be denied entry into Moldova if these individuals were unable to provide appropriate documentation, such as flight tickets, to confirm that they were not intending to remain in Moldova, and that they were only transiting.

### 3. UNHCR ASSISTANCE PROVIDED AT THE BORDER

A total of 1,322 individuals who crossed the border in September 2023 received support from UNHCR partners conducting the border monitoring. The assistance provided included legal aid, protection counseling, social assistance, and transportation services.

During the month of September 2023, UNHCR partners - Right to Protection, NEEKA, and The Tenth of April - conducted 320 monitoring visits to the border crossing points with Poland, Slovakia,

Hungary, Romania and Moldova. During these visits, a range of services was provided to persons crossing the border, including 1197 instances of protection counseling, 249 instances of legal assistance, 46 persons received social accompaniment, and 39 persons were provided with transportation services.

The Border Monitoring Teams observed an increase in the number of women in the medical and pharmaceutical professions requesting information on mandatory military registration (as introduced by Law No [2664-IX](#) of October 07, 2022) and concerns about potential travel restrictions.

In September 2023, UNHCR and IOM conducted three training sessions for the State Border Guard Service targeting 67 border guards in Chernivtsi, Odesa and Izmail. The trainings focused on combatting human trafficking risks and enhancing the ability of border guards to identify and support unaccompanied and separated children at the border, and were a continuation of the series of joint trainings initiated in August, where 52 border guards received training in Uzhhorod, Mukachevo, Lviv and Lutsk.

#### Note on Methodology

**Number of people interviewed in September 2023: 3,190 (comprising 63% females 18-59 years of age, 21% males 18-59 years of age, 6% females 60+ years of age, 10% males 60+ years of age, and 1% persons with disabilities).**

In mid-March 2022, UNHCR deployed border monitoring teams through local NGO partners to provide information and assistance to people crossing the border with EU countries (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania) and Moldova. These teams provide legal assistance, protection counselling and social support to people leaving Ukraine to seek international protection, or who are returning to the country.

Protection monitoring teams conduct individual interviews with people who are exiting and entering Ukraine. The purpose of these interviews is to gather information about the individual's circumstances, reasons for moving and their protection needs. The border monitoring methodology is focused on assessing and responding to the protection and humanitarian needs of people crossing the border between Ukraine and the EU countries and Moldova. By conducting interviews, gathering data, and providing necessary support, the goal is to enhance protection measures and ensure the well-being of those who are on the move.

The monitoring findings are based on individual interviews conducted with people crossing the border, both those entering and exiting Ukraine and other observations made by the border monitors.

